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An exploration of young South African Indian women's lived experiences of the intergenerational transmission of trauma in the post-Apartheid context in Johannesburg

A mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MA Counselling Psychology

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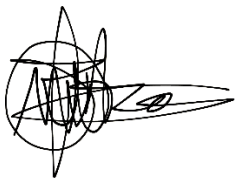
I remember telling my father about my hopes and dreams of one day becoming a fashion designer. Later, that changed to wanting to become a movie producer and eventually, an artist. He never discouraged me and instead chose to relentlessly support each and every endeavour which existed in my heart, from such a young and tender age. Decades after his passing, I still attribute much of my perseverance and passion to his way of expressing support of my heart's desires. My education would hence not be possible without the continuous encouragement and love from my late father Mohummed Amien Surtee, to whom I owe much of who I am today. I am so thankful to God to have been granted the opportunity to study in a field for which I have unlimited passion and still in some way, do consider myself an artist – but rather one of the heart and mind. The support of my husband, Ziyaad has carried me through the most difficult and testing periods of completing this degree. I watch in awe at how his patience and effortless support has helped me through the most testing years of my life. For these two very special individuals, I consider myself blessed and highly privileged by God. Rarely have I interacted with many academic staff who imbue a sincerity such as that of my supervisor, Dr. Sibanda. She has taught me just as much about what it means to be a kind, encouraging and sincere human being, as she has assisted me throughout this personal process of completing and submitting my research, in fulfilment of my Master's degree. I am grateful to have come across many delightful and inspiring souls along this journey, including both her and my participants. Perhaps that has been my true gain of knowledge, alongside the completion of this degree – what I learnt from other human beings walking similar paths as mine and knowing that in many ways, our paths cross and intertwine to reflect the intricate human journey at large. A journey in which many of us feel alone, only until we read another's story of pain, heartache, overcoming and triumph. That is my wish for whoever picks up this research and reads it.

DECLARATION

I, **Zahraa Surtee**, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and that, where applicable, every effort has been made to correctly reference the work of other authors. Furthermore, I declare that this dissertation is to be submitted to the University of Pretoria and has not previously been submitted to this university or any other tertiary institution.

Signed this 11th day of September 2022



ETHICS STATEMENT

I, Zahraa Surtee (u15276458), have obtained applicable Faculty research ethics approval for the research work titled '**An exploration of young South African Indian women's lived experiences of the intergenerational transmission of trauma in the post-Apartheid context**' on 15 November 2021(reference number: HUM040/0721). I, furthermore, declare that I have observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's code of ethics for researchers and the policy guidelines for responsible research.

ABSTRACT

South African Indians endured a unique history related to the historical trauma of slavery and displacement. However, there is still a paucity of trauma related research conducted amongst individuals of Indian descent. In an attempt to address this gap, the current research focuses on the lived experiences of intergenerational transmission of trauma on young South African Indian women. The aim of this study was to capture and illuminate the perceived, rich and subjective lived experiences of young South African Indian women, with an emphasis on highlighting how their experiences of intergenerational trauma may influence their identities today. Historical trauma theory was the primary lens through which the intergenerationally embedded lived experiences of Indian women were interpreted. A total of five participants were interviewed using semi-structured interviews to gain rich and detailed information of their experiential reality. The data gathered was analysed and interpreted using thematic analysis. This research study recognises the unique challenges faced by South African Indian women in integrating their different 'selves' within the various spaces they occupy. Through the findings, participants reflected on their lived experiences, emphasising how rigid mindsets and unique fears were cultivated, through the processes of their parents' and grandparents' collective traumas. Participants further highlighted the role of culture and parenting styles in their own lives, which can be understood as significant mechanisms through which certain values and collective traumas were transmitted to them. Furthermore, they highlighted how these all came to impact on their own identities, elaborating on their struggles between their 'individual' and 'collective' selves, associated shame and guilt and perfectionism. Intergenerational trauma can be understood as having a significant effect, affecting South African Indian women's identities and resultant relationship choices, mental models and career paths chosen.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

With continued research being conducted in the field of intergenerational trauma and exploring the effects of the Holocaust, results have elucidated a variety of conscious and unconscious trauma responses in descendants, such as denial, repression, memory loss and unresolved grief, all in relation to their parents' direct experiences (Starman, 2006). However, while there is a continued and ever-increasing amount of research conducted in the field of trauma and how this may have a significant and long-lasting impact on the individual's identity in general, most of the research conducted on trauma de-emphasises context, culture, history and race (Menzies, 2007). The current research attempts to address this gap, by exploring the lived experiences of young South African Indian women's intergenerationally transmitted trauma and how this specifically informs the underlying dynamics of Indian women's identity development today.

South African Indians are living in the aftermath of an oppressive and traumatic regime, which extends far beyond just the apartheid era. In 1684, the first Indians arrived in South Africa during the Dutch colonial era and in the following decades 1690 to 1725, over 80% of the slaves were Indians. This practice continued until the end of slavery in 1838. Indians made up the majority of slaves that came from the Far East and were by the 1880s, totally integrated into the Cape White and Coloured communities (Mountain, 2004). There is hence a strong background of historical trauma of slavery and trauma of displacement in relation to the South African, Indian population (Desai & Vahed, 2019). Furthermore, within the Indian minority, South African Indian women's experiences very much represents an under-researched area of interest, with much of the research conducted on the Asian Indian Immigrant minority woman in the United States, Europe, Australia and New Zealand instead (Hiralal, 2013).

1.2 Background

Traumatic events to which parents have been exposed can have profound psychological impact on their descendants, in many populations. This is referred to as intergenerational trauma, where unresolved traumas from one's past are consciously and unconsciously transmitted from one generation to the next and play pivotal roles in shaping identity, behaviour and psychological functioning (Yehuda et al., 2008). The South African Indian family can be understood as being nuanced, enriched by different cultural, religious and traditional beliefs and value-systems. Within this complex embedded system, exists the young South African Indian woman who is often characterised by both her sense of individualism and her own desires, preferences and contributions to modern-day society; alongside her assigned role and status within the family system and community to which she belongs (Archary & Landman, 2021). Young South African Indian women can also be seen as playing important socio-economic and socio-emotional roles in contemporary society. Not only do Indian women contribute significantly to the workplace and economy at large, but they are also seen as managing and balancing various important roles tied to their collectively and individually embedded identities. These roles extend to being a daughter, mother and contributing member to society all simultaneously, in ways which differ substantially from the roles which their own mothers and grandmothers have had to ascribe to during their own lifetimes (Hajratwala, 2009).

Furthermore, young South African Indian women's lived experiences can be understood as being influenced by a variety of factors. These include how traditional value-systems which they have been raised with; alongside status and expectations both implicitly and explicitly placed on them by their families have an impact on their own choices, beliefs and values today (Desai & Vahed, 2019). In cognisance of this, there is a growing body of research which illuminates how specific traumas which their parents may have experienced

through historical experiences of slavery, displacement and identity confusion have also been transmitted through generations and impact on their own unique lived experience today (Mountain, 2004). Thus, the current research intends to study the lived experiences of intergenerational transmission of trauma on young South African Indian women.

1.3 Justification, Aim and Objectives

1.3.1 Justification

There is a dynamic interplay between contemporary consciousness and intergenerational cultural principles on the crucial role the South African Indian woman plays in modern-day society (Hiralal, 2013). Today, South African Indian women are encouraged to pursue tertiary education, obtain high-ranking jobs and break out of traditional patriarchal norms, which traditionally views a woman's identity in relation to her role as a mother, daughter, sister or housewife. The definition of the Indian woman's identity is thus expanding beyond just tradition, culture and familial values of belonging, which are all more representative of a collectivistic culture, towards a greater sense of individualism, favouring her freedom of action and choice (Hiralal, 2013). Viewed through this lens, it can be seen that the Indian woman's identity is multifaceted in nature and continually evolving, informed by a variety of influences, more specifically embedded in intergenerational trauma transmitted through generations as experienced (either directly or indirectly) by her. It is therefore pertinent to give expression to Indian women's lived experiences through this research, as well as to explore how identity extends beyond just an acknowledgement of biological, psychological and social factors, to important familial factors embedded in traumatisation (Hajratwala, 2009).

While there is a growing body of research being conducted in the field of intergenerational trauma, many of these studies are quantitative in nature. However, Wiseman and Barber (2004) argue that the quantitative approach used in many studies may negate

important emotional content that is not sufficiently captured through questionnaires. Qualitative studies conducted amongst Israeli and North American samples have demonstrated a wider range of effects experienced by grandchildren of survivors, many of which are non-pathological in nature. Such effects include increased psychological wellbeing and the ability to form meaningful connections amongst grandchildren, demonstrating that while trauma may be transmitted, it may also be transmuted into something more meaningful amongst descendants. Therefore, while this study aims to capture how culture, religion and family all intertwine with the intergenerational transmission of trauma, this is primarily underpinned by an appreciation that Indian women's experiences of trauma are inextricably intrapersonal and interpersonal. This is deeply influenced by a combination of culturally transmitted traumatic external eventa or set of experiences, together with an internal process of registering it, remembering it, interlinked with other perpetuating dimensions of one's life and the manner in which meaning is made of it (Starman, 2006). This study therefore aims to capture and illuminate these perceived, rich and subjective lived experiences of young South African Indian women, with an emphasis on highlighting how their experiences of intergenerational trauma may influence their identities today. With the various roles which Indian women play in contemporary society, this study is important in helping further our understanding into how the topic of 'identity,' embedded in intergenerational trauma differs across different racial and ethnic minorities (Hiralal, 2013).

The proposed study will therefore focus on intergenerational trauma across Indian families, and the subjective lived experiences of Indian women, particularly within the South African context. This will allow the researcher to better understand the transmission of intergenerational trauma across South African Indian families and Indian women's identities post-apartheid.

1.3.2 Aim

The principal aim of this study was to explore how the lived experiences of intergenerational trauma across Indian families may inform Indian women's identities today.

1.3.3 Objectives

The objectives directing the aim of this study were three-fold:

1) To explore Indian daughters' perceived experiences of being raised in a South African Indian home

2) To identify the multiple ways in which trauma is transmitted from one generation to the next generation's identity formation.

3) To explore how this may inform the development of Indian women's identities in post-apartheid South Africa

1.4 Research question

1.4.1 Primary research question

1. What are South African Indian women's perceived experiences of intergenerational trauma transmitted through her parents?

1.4.2 Secondary research questions

The secondary research question was as follows:

2. How has this perceived experience of intergenerational trauma shaped young Indian women's identities post-apartheid?

1.5 Outline of chapters

In this section, a summary of the chapters that follow Chapter One of is provided. The contents of each chapter are thus summarised.

Chapter Two discussed a review of the literature related to intergenerational trauma and Indian women's identities.

Chapter Three discussed the methodology used in the study. The discussion includes the sample size, method of recruiting the sample and the criteria used to ensure selection of

suitable participants. Furthermore, the method of data collection, data analysis and the measures that enhanced the quality of the study are explained in this chapter.

The findings relative to the research aims and objectives are presented in Chapter Four. The findings are presented in the form of themes, which emerged from the data analysis.

Chapter Five discussed the findings in relation to the themes that emerged during the analysis of the content of the interview. Moreover, this discussion is an integration of the literature, in alignment with the overall aim and objectives of the study. Of importance, I have also included a reflexive piece, detailing how my own personal experiences of being an Indian South African woman may have influenced the current research and hence potentially biased my interpretations of findings.

Chapter 6 concludes the dissertation with a summary of my findings and overall conclusions. Both the strengths and limitations of the study are discussed, alongside directions for future studies in this area.

1.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, an overview of the study was presented. The background of the study, justification, aims, objectives, research questions, theoretical framework and research methodology were outlined. In addition, a brief outline of each chapter was presented. Literature related to the transmission of intergenerational trauma on the lived experiences of Indian women is reviewed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, literature related to young South African Indian women's lived experiences of the intergenerational transmission of trauma in the post-Apartheid context is reviewed. Historical trauma theory which was used as the theoretical framework grounding this study is firstly discussed. The reviewed literature then focuses on the history of Indian South Africans; intergenerational trauma; the mechanisms of trauma transmission; and the consequences of collective trauma, followed by South African Indian women's identities. Furthermore, South African and international studies on intergenerational and collective traumatisation are explored, as corroborating existing theory and literature embedded in historical and contemporary contexts.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Historical Trauma theory is based on the idea that populations exposed to long-term, extensive trauma demonstrate both psychological and physical disease, long after the trauma actually occurred. Through physiological, environmental and societal mechanisms, the consequences of the traumatic experience are thereby spread to subsequent generations. This can be understood as resulting in an intergenerational cycle of trauma responses (Sotero, 2006). Historical trauma theory describes trauma as a successive process beginning with a traumatic experience during which a specific group overpowers a population. This requires at least four elements: intense physical and psychological violence; segregation and/or displacement; economic loss; and cultural dispossession. This may then contribute to psychological, physical and social effects in the generation experiencing the trauma directly (Sotero, 2006).

These responses are then further perpetuated through a variety of personal and social factors, alongside ongoing racism and experienced violence (Sotero, 2006). For purposes of

this research, the ‘mass trauma’ relates to both South African Indian women’s histories of slavery, displacement and apartheid, all impacting on collective narratives and parenting styles today. These can then be understood as informing the lived experiences of South African Indian women.

Historical trauma theory connects histories of collective experiences of traumatic events to lived daily experiences and contexts. In this way, historical trauma is premised on a richly nuanced process of narrative retelling through stories, history and memory, associating history to present day identity challenges or resilience (Crawford, 2013). This theory is advantageous in that it will illuminate the experiences and traumas experienced by South African Indians preceding apartheid, helping to shed significance on its subsequent impact on future generations through various means of transmission. These mechanisms of transmission could be hypothesised to include psychological, social and familial factors within Indian families, as discussed above. These include parenting styles which are often predicated on the strict adherence of Indian daughters to cultural norms and rules, social obligations, contributing to feelings of guilt and a non-cohesive sense of self when these rules and norms are not strictly adhered to (Hiralal, 2013).

This theory builds upon three theoretical frameworks: the first is a psychosocial theory which links disease to both physical and psychological stress, stemming from the social environment. In the context of the current research, the social environment under study is that of the young Indian woman and her perceived direct and indirect traumatic experiences of her family (Sotero, 2006). As discussed in the literature review, within the family unit is the consideration of parenting styles and how this comes to inform Indian women’s lived experiences. Within the facet of parenting styles exists both spoken and unspoken rules and responsibilities, mindsets, levels of empathy and mindsets towards oneself, others and the world around us. According to Sotero (2006), trauma responses in

primary generations may include struggles with one's identity; relationship and marital conflict; Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD); depression; self-destructive behaviours; severe anxiety; shame and guilt, amongst many others.

The second theoretical framework is political/economic theory, which addresses the political, economic and structural determinants of health and disease (Sotero, 2006). For purposes of the current study, the political, economic and structural determinants under focus are the impact which slavery under colonial rule, alongside apartheid, may have on subsequent Indian generations. The research highlighted in the literature review further speaks to the multiple effects of apartheid and colonial rule and how it is inextricably linked to the identities of Indian women today. It is also a notable consideration that many first or second-generation Indian women may have been born during democratic South Africa. In this way, the impact of South Africa's new political and economic climate can also be understood as impacting on their lived experiences today (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2008). However, this research will specifically point to how parenting styles and mental models adopted by one's parents were transmitted across generations to participants today. These can then be seen as impacting on a re-negotiation of their 'new' identities and ways in which they may choose to manage these varying 'selves' today, in response to the demands of the current political climate, alongside their own personal histories (Hoosain, 2013).

The third theoretical framework is social/ecological systems theory which recognises the multi-level dynamics of the past and present, alongside life course factors that underlie disease to the psyche (Sotero, 2006). This can be used to illuminate how young Indian women's current social systems and exposure to individualistic culture have impacted her unique sense of self and identity, with an appreciation of how identity, especially within her lineage, has changed over time. While it is significant to explore one's unique history, in gaining a deeper understanding of who they are today, the third theoretical framework was

used as a means of shedding light on, but not fully accounting for participants' identities. This is based on the understanding that identity is a continuous re-negotiation of one's unique past, alongside the choices they make for themselves today. Therefore, while specific aspects of participants' identities may have been transmitted across generations, it is pertinent to explore the current lived experience of their own identity today (Hoosain, 2013). With specific reference to the conflict between Indian women's individual versus collective selves; the unique choices she makes; obtaining an education and regaining a sense of self, empowerment and independence today, her lived experience will be highlighted and further explored.

The psychological symptoms of historical trauma as a disease are the maladaptive social and behavioural patterns that were created in response to the traumatic experience, absorbed into culture and transmitted from learned behaviour from generation to generation (Sotero, 2006). Given that historical trauma theory acknowledges both context, culture, as well as how these are intertwined to influence intergenerational trauma embeddedness across time, it was advantageous in contextualising the current study and illuminating the unique, subjective and lived experiences of young South African Indian women today.

2.3 The history of South African Indians

When Indians arrived in South Africa as slaves, it could be hypothesised that what they experienced was the trauma of displacement and slavery. However, it is worthwhile to mention that not all Indians who arrived in South Africa came here as slaves, but that many Indians travelled here voluntary for business opportunities as well.

Indian labourers on sugar plantations in South Africa were often mistreated and lived in unhygienic conditions. A large percentage of labourers returned to India following the termination of their contracts and some of those who returned, notified authorities in India to exploitations occurring in South Africa. This led to new safety measures being implemented

before further recruitment (Desai & Vahed, 2019). This trauma of displacement illuminates the concept of cultural dislocation and can be understood as contributing to a loss of connection with oneself and associated family, friends and community. It can impact on and influence both collective and individual identity and lead to a sense of identity confusion, which is compounded by a stripping away of belonging and a sense of hopelessness, within both the affected individual and for subsequent generations to come (Wade et al., 2005). In research conducted on the forced displacement in Cape Town, Trotter (2009, p.62) mentions that "removees" (displaced people) idealised their previous places of residence. Stories about their personal histories were coloured with loss and reminiscence. Trotter (2009) believes that in order to cope with the trauma of their displacement, people idealised their loss through sentimental descriptions about their displacement. It is only after apartheid ended that tribute and rejoicing could publicly occur. The trauma of forced displacement was therefore only overtly recognised towards the end of apartheid, though by then it had been characteriologically ingrained. Therefore, individuals who experienced the trauma of displacement were already firmly included in activities of employment and seeking out connections within their newfound South African Indian communities.

Indians who migrated from India to South Africa carried their social practices, culture, language and religions and these traditions allowed them to uphold their cultural identities as a minority group. According to recent national South African demographics, Indian women constitute approximately 2% of the population and only 1.5% of the economically active population (Department of Labour, 2020). However, despite the Indian woman still being considered as falling under a minority grouping within South Africa, research conducted on the Indian woman's identity shows a complexity of profound results. The Indian woman's identity can be understood as being multifaceted and interwoven with an appreciation of how she carries her cultural, religious and familial obligations into her

personal choices and everyday life, alongside an integration of her internal and external self-representation (Archary & Landman, 2021).

Identity is discussed in detail within the psychological literature and can be used to further illuminate the South African Indian woman's identity today. For example, literature often demonstrates how we may possess more than one identity and that each of these identities overlap and co-exist with varying demands on internal resources. For the young Indian woman, the 'multiple roles' which she plays may include being a respectable and obliging daughter to her parents; holding the status, tradition, culture and religion which she is born into in high regard; being a student at school or a tertiary institution; and being a wife, mother and employee all at the very same time (Hiralal, 2013).

2.4 Intergenerational Trauma

2.4.1 A definition of trauma

While there is no general agreement on the definition of trauma, individual trauma is often defined as a reaction. Our brains and bodies react specifically when emotions are so intense, that they exceed one's window of tolerance. Therefore, it is not the event itself which defines trauma, but the cognitive and emotional processes that follow the event that might or might not lead to trauma (Coetzer, 2007). The effects of trauma are numerous on both biological, psychological and social levels and vary across individuals. This is dependent on one's unique biology; temperament; personal history; means of coping and adaptation; levels of resilience and support which all act together to determine one's unique reaction to trauma. Together with this, trauma is often compounded, resulting in many cumulative experiences and what is often referred to as 'complex trauma' (Wiseman & Barber, 2004). More recent literature in this area serves to further emphasise this point, indicating that trauma is a uniquely subjective experience, mediated by a variety of different factors (Coetzer, 2007). While trauma has both short-term as well as long-term consequences for the individual

concerned, an area of research into how trauma is inherited and experienced across generations is currently lacking in the literature (Coetzer, 2007). Overall research conducted in the field indicates that trauma occurs on both individual, as well as collective levels, making it pertinent to explore on both levels.

Research conducted in the field of trauma demonstrates that traumatic events often have significant consequences for those who were directly exposed to them as well as for others and more particularly family members, who were not directly exposed to the event itself. On a collective level, trauma is inherited and experienced through collective narratives, emotions and mental models/norms and values. The idea of the intergenerational transmission of trauma has been extensively studied in the framework of parent-to-child transmission. However, parent-to-child transmission might even extend beyond the second generation to affecting multiple generations thereafter (Danieli, 1998). Since the second World War when soldiers and Holocaust survivors returned back home, researchers began investigating the idea of the intergenerational transmission of trauma (Wiseman & Barber, 2004). Fraiberg (1975) a psychoanalyst and social worker who contributed significantly to this body of work, helped coin the term 'intergenerational transmission of trauma.' Since Fraiberg's (1975) pioneering work, research on the transmission of intergenerational trauma, specifically in families, has developed into a recognised field in the social sciences. However, there still exists much skepticism surrounding the topic and Danieli (1998a) attributes this to the fact that multigenerational transmission is often treated as a secondary phenomenon, because its effects may not present as overtly when compared to the effects experienced by those having experienced trauma directly.

In consideration of South Africa's unique history, it would be reasonable to expect the intergenerational transmission of trauma to manifest itself in the Black, Coloured and Indian communities (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2008). Despite this, scholarly examination of this

phenomenon is scarce, with very few scholars exploring this topic post-1994. For example, Hoosain (2013) discussed the segregation of families in the Western Cape province during the apartheid era, while Dickerson and Fish (2009) explored AIDS in the aftermath of apartheid. Coetzer (2007) studied apartheid through a systems lens, while Simpson (1998) and Gobodo-Madikizela (2008) wrote theoretical articles in which they studied trans-generationally transmitted trauma that resulted from state repression under apartheid. In consideration of both the effects of apartheid, alongside the advent of democracy, it is pertinent that South Africa's unique past is not forgotten, as it is our past which comes to influence much of our identities and ways of being today. Therefore, an exploration into the lived experiences of the South African must take into consideration South Africa's history, which impact the individual today in both direct as well as indirect ways, even long after apartheid has ended (Hoosain, 2013).

According to Kaminer and Eagle (2010), various studies exploring the effects of state perpetuated violence on victims of apartheid indicate that the South African population has an array of unmet mental health needs, which may very much be related to diagnoses such as Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (C-PTSD). For example, in 2008 a DSM-IV based psychiatric interview conducted by Jewkes et al., (2009) was used to assess a total of 14 South African torture survivors within the Western-Cape region. The results from this study demonstrated that all of the participants had PTSD and panic disorder, while 57% met the diagnostic criteria for depression. In another notable study conducted within Cape town by (Abrahams et al., 2009), volunteer participants from surrounding community settings were recruited. From here, a structured psychiatric interview was conducted amongst them. Results indicated that 55% of participants had depression, 42% had PTSD, 27% had an anxiety disorder and 54% had more than one psychiatric diagnosis. Other complaints, such as somatic concerns with no medical basis were further reported.

According to Prager (2015), the harm caused by apartheid can be understood as being inflicted upon all South Africans and is regarded as a psychic trauma. Prager (2015) argues that a nation built upon anti-human premises and which flourishes for a time inflicts traumatic injury on the entire nation, including both perpetrator and victim. Apartheid encompassed a long-standing period during which individuals of colour were ostracized and treated significantly differently, in comparison to other individuals, purely based on the colour of their skins. Research conducted in this field, highlighting the consequences of trauma on individuals directly affected by apartheid has demonstrated a variety of results. Research conducted within the South African context by Gobodo-Madikizela (2008) indicated that parents who directly endured apartheid were also more likely to be more distrustful, suspicious and hold varying degrees of anger towards those of other races today, which thereby impacted on their parenting styles and the values/thought patterns passed down to their children. This study may elucidate Prager's (2015) point that South Africa is still very much impacted by a constellation of psychological experiences such as suspicion and mistrust of the other; guilt, shame, rage and violence which all continue to reverberate throughout South Africa, influencing subsequent generations today.

When individuals experience collective trauma, their experiences may be misconstrued as individual phenomena as opposed to collective phenomena. This may then impact the intervention of redress chosen, resulting in missed opportunities for healing, alongside gaps in the research literature on trauma as a whole (Simpson, 1998). The absence of a focus on social structures may negate the extent to which trauma affects marginalised communities, leading us to inaccurately direct interventions exclusively at the individual, as opposed to a focus on both the collective, as well as individual levels (Eagle & Watts, 2002). This is evident in the South African context today which is still coloured by much racism, inequality and a lack of access to mental healthcare resources at the public health levels.

Many of those directly impacted by apartheid still face varying levels of poverty even years later, being impacted by the consequences of displacement, a lack of education and oppression. The majority of mental health interventions post-apartheid are however, still unfortunately directed towards redress at the individual, as opposed to the community, missing important opportunities for redress and collective healing to occur (Dickerson & Fish, 2009).

Research conducted in the area of apartheid generally signifies how the collective trauma experienced is inherited and impacts future generations today (Hoosain, 2013). However, research specifically conducted on identity amongst the descendants of those who endured apartheid in South Africa shows conflicting results (Simpson, 1998). With the advent of democracy, many families speak of their regained freedom of choice, which is a crucial factor determining their own lives and the lives of their children today (Herman, 1992). However, other results signify a harsher reality. For example, a study conducted by Mokoena (2019) explored the lived experiences of black South Africans with regards to the constructs of the 'rainbow nation' and 'reconciliation' following two-and-a half decades of democratic rule. In-depth interviews with black South Africans aged 40 and over were conducted. Results demonstrated that black experiences of the reality of living in South Africa is incongruent with the ideas of the 'rainbow nation' and 'reconciliation. Furthermore, the reality of post-apartheid South Africa is an unequal and divided country that requires deeper and more interrogative work and reflection in order to attain the rainbow nation as it is intended. Hence, for these participants these constructs were more ambitious than reality-based.

These studies indicated that while the children of South African victims of apartheid were grateful for their freedom of expression and movement today, many also admitted to a continued fear of poverty, racism, inequality and discrimination, similar to what their parents

and grandparents personally endured. These factors dictated a large part of their lives and experiences of themselves, others and the world today, influencing their choice of partners, career paths, personal beliefs and lifestyles (Simpson, 1998). While there is continued research being conducted in the field of trauma, the above-mentioned studies also indicate the pertinence of bringing to light how values, thought patterns, beliefs and ways of being are inherited across generations and affect the identity of younger generations today, even decades after the experience of the actual trauma.

According to research conducted by Stamm et al. (2004), it is useful to also take into consideration different understandings of 'trauma.' There exists a notion that what is often described as 'trauma' by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual-5 (DSM-5), may often be defined as 'culture' or 'religion' in many communities. For example, what the DSM-5 would classify as Major Depressive Disorder, may often be understood as a neglectful relationship with God, especially within the Muslim community. Within many Indian communities across the globe, many psychological constructs such as struggles with one's identity are instead treated as a reluctance to adhere to cultural norms, especially for women. Against the background of being either first- or second-generation Indian women, the current research illuminated participants' perceived understandings of both their parents' and their own transmitted traumas today.

However, Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) devised the term 'posttraumatic growth,' pointing to how some individuals and communities may flourish, following a traumatic incident. Post-traumatic growth can be understood as positive change, following one's difficulties with challenging circumstances. It manifests in a diversity of ways, including a deeper appreciation for life, more meaningful relationships and an amplified sense of personal strength. Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) suggest that post-traumatic growth is not a single occurring outcome, but rather an on-going and continuous process. It can also be

understood as being mediated by a variety of factors including psychological functioning, social support, meaning-making and life wisdom. This model, as proposed by Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) indicates that although communities can be understood as facing trauma following apartheid, it is also possible for post-traumatic growth to occur. Herman (1992) is a notable international author who has contributed largely to the field of trauma at large. According to Herman (1992), the recovery from trauma involves restoring connections between individuals and communities and reconstructing history in the face of public discourse. Hence, descendants of those who both directly and indirectly endured trauma can be understood as using critical thinking and their own active agency to discard, integrate and adapt pre-existing mental models, rules and ways of being, making space for healthier identities and hence, posttraumatic growth today.

2.4.2 The mechanisms of trauma

According to traumatology literature, the mechanisms of trauma transmission are biological, psychological, social and familial. However, it may be argued that the majority of Western literature focuses on a combination of these elements, to the neglect of how culturally-informed values impact on parenting (Chentsova-Dutton & Maercker, 2019). Understanding the mechanisms of transmission is crucial for the current research, as it helps identify 'what' is being transmitted and how it is being transmitted across Indian generations within South Africa (Weingarten, 2004). The current research focused on the psychological, familial and societal mechanisms of trauma transmission across Indian families, as these often overlap with each other, while the biological means of trauma transmission fall out of the scope of the current study. Furthermore, the role culture plays in parenting styles was further acknowledged.

According to Kira (2001), there exists two kinds of intergenerational transmission. This first type can be seen as occurring within a family, such as family violence. The second

type can be seen as occurring within a collective setting and is divided into two kinds: historical trauma, such as slavery or genocide and social or structural trauma. This means that trauma can be experienced in two ways by an individual - both collectively, through socio-historical or socio-cultural events and also within one's family unit. Because the Indian woman's lived experience can be understood as influenced by the dictates of both her family unit and socio-cultural community at large, both types of transmission will be considered for the purpose of this research.

Within each family unit, there are three primary means by which trauma can be understood as being transmitted to subsequent generations: (a) the influence of parenting styles on children, (b) the influence of the means of communication through which trauma is described, and (c) children adopting the identities of 'suffering' through their own parents' experiences (Doucet & Rovers, 2010). As these can all be seen as overlapping and furthermore being impacted upon by culture, they will be discussed together below.

2.4.2.1 Psychological, familial and societal mechanisms of trauma transmission. Through parental identification which can be described as a form of secondary learning, the child comes to personally identify with their parents' traumas and subsequently experience specific historical loss symptoms, such as anger and grief. Lichenstein and Annas (2000), for example, found that the relationship between parental fears and that of their descendants were explained by vicarious learning. This is further supported by Myhra's (2011) findings that all 13 participants in a qualitative study examining the relationship between substance use and historical trauma in Native American adults believed that historical trauma was crucial to their elders' dysfunctional behaviour and in particular, substance abuse. One participant characterised it as "monkey see, monkey do," in that she partook in substance abusive and abusive relationships, following her own family's personal history within these areas (Myhra, 2011, p. 26). However, it is significant to remark that participants also expressed a great

reverence and appreciation for their elders due to their strength and resiliency. This indicates that while traumas may be inherited, descendants may also gain a deeper appreciation of the personal battles endured by their ancestors (Myhra, 2011).

In contrast to what can be understood as the mimicking of parents' behaviours, Volkan (2001) suggests that there exists a noteworthy type of transgenerational transmission which pertains to the deposition of an already formed self or object image onto the developing child. In this way, the 'deposited image' becomes like a psychological gene, impacting on the child's identity. An example of this is 'replacement children' whose parents imbue their children with the unconscious image and expectations of a deceased child. Volkan (2001) proposes that transgenerational transmission is also a result of the unconscious psychological processes at play between parent and child, ultimately serving to influence the child's identity.

The interweaving of collective narratives, emotions and mental models/values all come together to impact the South African Indian woman's identity today (Hiralal, 2013). These may be narrated by one's parents, community or extended family members at large. Collective narratives of loss and despair may be internalised or actually correspond to the actual traumatisation which occurred. In this instance, members of a group continuously refer to their pasts with specific reference to guilt, victimisation and 'the other' (Becker, 2009).

Collective narratives of victimhood are further reinforced through stories of loss and despair. Becker (2009) describes this as an 'ideology of victimhood,' whereby one views themself as the victim, while positioning the other as the perpetrator. In this way, identity is built through descriptions of victimhood to the detriment of positive identity formation. For example, one's parents may carry the feelings of loss and despair about not having the opportunities to receive a decent education. This may then place an enormous amount of pressure on the child affected to complete their tertiary education and earn success,

irrespective of whether they actually enjoy their selected course of study or not (Becker, 2009). This pressure is reflected in the work of Myhra (2011) who demonstrated that children of immigrants face an enormous amount of pressure to achieve an academic degree and earn success, to compensate for the traumas which their own parents experienced. In such cases, parents can hence be understood as placing both implicit and explicit expectations on the child to compensate for their own unrealised hopes and dreams secondary to traumatisation. However, it must be noted that although educational dreams of success rigidly placed on children can be understood as falling under 'intergenerational trauma' for the participants under study, it has also been considered as beneficial for some children. For example, research conducted by Mishra and Satish (2017) indicates that educational dreams of success placed on children can also have a variety of positive implications. High expectations of educational attainment can also be understood as helping children attain financial stability in their own lives, helping them to explore the academic component of their identities in ways which couldn't be attained by their parents. Therefore, it must be appreciated that what is considered as 'trauma' for one population may be understood as serving certain benefits for others.

In contrast to the narratives of loss, despair and victimhood, the collective narratives of shame and guilt are less overt and impact on the identities of descendants through rigid rules and obligations imposed. These rigid rules and obligations contain within them an underlying desire to protect the child from perceived harms and threats which the parent may have personally endured or witnessed growing up (Becker, 2009). Aarts (1998) refers to this as 'the conspiracy of silencing.' This phenomenon refers to the ways in which trauma is transmitted in families and the powerful effects that this unspoken silence can have across generations. This type of silence can function in society in a complex manner. Hence, whereby the aim of silence is to protect the child from the experiences of the parents, children

come to unconsciously bear witness to the consequences of unresolved traumas of the parent nonetheless (Herman, 1992).

Silencing occurs within Indian families in dynamic ways. For example, it is not uncommon for those of Indian descent to cast a disproving eye towards various life experiences such as divorce and having a child out of wedlock. Hoosain (2013) argues that parents often try to avoid such shame and guilt through imposing rigid rules for their daughters to follow, which include restrictions on dating and marriage. Hajratwala (2009) expanded on these ideas, speaking to how such rigid rules later inform the identities of Indian women, causing them to carry the heavy burdens of their own shame and guilt should they get divorced or have a child out of wedlock. Thereby, parental rules are ways of indirectly communicating to the child that they should not bring upon the family any shame, through participating in 'illicit' behaviours, in consideration of the fact that status has a large bearing within Indian cultures and communities at large. These resultant feelings of shame and guilt may hence cause a disparity between the individual identity of the Indian woman which may show itself as impacting on her personal life, thoughts, values and choice of life partner, versus the collective identity of the Indian woman and who she appears to be around family members and significant others, for the sake of upholding family obligation and maintaining tradition (Hajratwala, 2009).

With regards to collective emotions, emotions such as collective angst are common amongst communities and family units. Following apartheid, many families found it difficult to trust others, considering how they were mistreated and exploited in the past. In this way, those belonging to other racial groupings are still often viewed wearily and assumed to be holding alternative agendas and not to be trusted (Becker, 2009). Children who are raised in such homes may hence grow up with similar collective angst, despite being born in an era of democracy and freedom. As far as collective mental models are concerned, values, norms,

worldviews and belief systems often reflect rigid thinking. Of significance, such mental models are often inherited without individuals being aware of them. Such dynamics feed into exclusive mental models and belief systems and are eventually defined as 'normal,' making it extremely difficult to refute and discard (Becker, 2009). This is also reflected in the work of Myhra (2011) who indicated that children of immigrant parents often feel that refuting their parents' worldviews and opinions is considered disrespectful and that they are often hesitant to have, as well as act on opinions that differ from rigid belief systems penetrating through their family units. This is further reiterated by the work of Hiralal (2013) who indicates that within many Indian families, communication tends to be one-sided. Many Indian daughters hence feel restricted with regards to emotional expression and healthy communication within family units. This can be understood as contributing to the many different 'selves' which Indian women adopt, in order to accommodate for the expectations and obligations of them, in the various spaces they occupy.

The mechanisms of trauma, as discussed above are pertinent in illuminating how trauma is transmitted and how culture comes to inform how trauma is conveyed. This is followed by a discussion of the consequences of collective trauma, as this impacts the Indian woman's lived experiences both directly and indirectly today.

2.5 The consequences of collective trauma

There are various consequences of collective trauma which are passed down through generations and come to impact one's lived experience today. These may include the loss of empathy; defensiveness and aggressiveness; powerlessness and apathy; rigid mindsets; and high stress levels which can all be understood as predisposing one to diminished psychological health over time. These can then be understood as affecting one's lived experience both directly as well as indirectly and thereby bearing upon personal choices,

fields of study chosen, relationships and belief systems about oneself, others and the world (Reimann & Konig, 2017).

2.5.1 The loss of empathy

The loss of empathy is heightened by the experience of collective trauma and has significant bearings on one's life. Like an individual, a community which is traumatised may struggle to develop healthy levels of empathy. For example, an exposure to forced migration and violence do not always result in the victim developing stronger empathy for others' who are treated similarly. On the contrary, the affected individual may be more receptive and open to biases and revenge (Reimann & Konig, 2017). This is especially likely if the individual affected did not experience strong emotional support from others following the experience of the traumatic event. On a group level, the loss of empathy can contribute to a culture of violence. This may serve to further strengthen one's means of self-protection leading to a 'survival mindset,' excessive distress and possible contempt for those of other racial and ethnic groupings (Jewkes et al., 2009). With mindsets of powerlessness and victimhood, the group may struggle to trust other groups and believe in group unity and associating with individuals from differing races, cultures and ethnicities. Furthermore, an over-emphasis on one's past sufferings might lead to getting stuck in maladaptive coping mechanisms, only serving to further reinforce inequality, poverty and hopelessness (Reimann & Konig, 2017). Jewkes et al., (2009) echo this finding and indicate that South African men who were afflicted by apartheid were more likely to engage in acts of gender-based violence within post-apartheid today.

This is further reflected in research conducted by Clack and Minnaar (2018) on violent farm killings in South Africa. This research demonstrated that the majority of farm attacks perpetrated involve acts of violence between black individuals previously victimised during apartheid, now seeking revenge against white individuals. Farm attacks have hence

turned into a battle of races between black and white individuals. Such attacks can be understood as representing a long-standing power struggle of race, further reinforced by the continued experience of poverty, inequality and unemployment, contributing to a significant loss of a capacity for empathy on the part of victim. Previous victims can hence be understood as adopting the role of 'perpetrator' and inflicting injury on those now regarded as 'weak' and 'powerless,' in an attempt to address the psychological wounds inflicted during apartheid. The results of this study can be used to further emphasise perceived Indian positionality and how many Indian families may attempt to reconstruct ideas of power for themselves, especially after apartheid and the many experiences of feeling disempowered. Attempts at regaining power can hence be seen as filtering into rigidly defended parenting styles, mental constructs and ideals which come to define each Indian family today (Hiralal, 2013).

2.5.2 Self-segregation and insulation

Defensiveness and aggressiveness are usually adopted as a means of reinforcing the existence of one's own identity group, even decades after the trauma was inflicted. Such patterns can be understood as perpetuating victim-perpetrator dynamics and ensuring collective self-image and group coherence (Reimann & Konig, 2017). This is reflected in the multiple divisions still experienced within South Africa today, described by Seekings (2011) who indicated that communities are still divided based on race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and social standing, despite the advent of democracy. Although inter-racial relationships, as an example, are today allowed, it is still very much defensively frowned upon by individuals and communities. This only serves to further reinforce the notion of the 'self' and 'other' leading to further segregation between individuals. This notion of the 'self' and 'other' is further reflected in the viewpoints held amongst many Indian families in South Africa today. For example, Indian parents still opt to live in communities where there exist a

majority of other Indian families, as opposed to multi-racial communities. The schools which parents opt to send their children to also reflect a notion of transmitted preservation of the 'self', which is also usually dependent upon whether classes may have other Indian children within them too. These are examples of how the notion of being 'Indian' can be rigidly reinforced in today's society, further reflected by stigmas within Indian communities regarding daughters' marrying out of their own racial groupings (Hiralal, 2013).

2.5.3 Rigid mindsets

According to Jewkes et al., (2009), many individuals affected by trauma adopt rigid mind-sets and biases. This can be understood as contributing to the misrepresentation and disavowal of facts, only serving to further emphasise discrimination and segregation patterns. This might further add racial and cultural aspects to conflict and enhances the risk of political and religious extremism, especially among the young. In Mzileni's (2021) study conducted in Port Elizabeth South Africa, it was found that students today are still affected by apartheid and face varying degrees of racism, inequality and socioeconomic difficulty. Students still speak of approaching individuals of other races with fear, mistrust and defensiveness, due to being 'warned' about people of colour by their own parents. As such, it is more difficult to oppose such biases which ultimately impact on student university life, field of study chosen and friends whom one associates with.

2.5.4 Survival mindsets

Older generations who were impacted by their own traumas can be seen as weaving 'patterns of survival' into their parenting styles, even today. This speaks to the work of Jewkes (2009) who discussed how a history of displacement, poverty and trauma may contribute to the development of a 'survival mindset,' which then translates into an identity and way of being. For example, immigrant parents who grew up in poverty may still hold unrealistic fears of poverty, despite overcoming these challenges and being quite financially

successful today. This may then translate into rigid money-spending behaviours as well as rules imposed upon spending for their children, due to their own unconscious fears of poverty and continued striving for survival. Such mindsets impact parenting styles in both implicit as well as explicit ways, thereby colouring the experiences and worldviews regarding socio-economic positionality, for generations to follow (Reimann & Konig, 2017).

It comes as no surprise that discrimination, race and inequality may lead to continued experiences of higher stress levels for individuals and within communities at large, impacting on their mental health for generations to follow. It becomes significant to study intergenerational trauma today as it influences meaningful mental health and treatment approaches toward Indian women, whose trauma may extend far beyond just their immediate experiences. This serves to weave a much more comprehensive picture of what shapes the identity of Indian women still affected by the conscious and unconscious transmission of the long-term impact of trauma endured by their own parents (Archary & Landman, 2021).

2.6 The South African Indian woman's identity

In consideration of the literature discussed above, it can be reasonably assumed that the identity of the South African Indian woman is inextricably influenced by both her religious and cultural obligations, alongside the collective narratives transmitted via her parents, thereby impacting parenting styles and attitudes relating to defensiveness and aggressiveness, rigid mindsets and the loss of empathy. These can then be understood as influencing her today by impacting on a conflicted sense of self and colouring the various roles she fulfills within both her individual as well as collective lived experiences. In consideration of her multifaceted identity, the lived experience of the Indian woman today is still also very much influenced by status, gender roles and the unequal regard for sons over daughters within many Indian households (Hiralal, 2013). Although these will be discussed under separate headings, it is significant to punctuate that unequal gender roles and status can

both be understood as practices perpetuated within the Indian culture, exacerbated by the interactional transmission of enduring intergenerational and collective traumatisation.

2.6.1 Unequal gender roles & status

The topic of status is very much related to unequal gender roles within the Indian community. Maintaining a high status is a common familial obligation within Indian communities, impacting on the South African Indian woman's identity today (Hajratwala, 2009). Moller et al. (2016) argue that many Indian families use their status as a means of 'social capital,' earning them privileges within the community. These privileges extend to a highly considered reputation, the community offering help and support during times of need and is also used as a means of earning one's daughters more suitable marriage proposals, often from wealthy men. Various factors come to influence one's status including family wealth, educational pursuits and degrees obtained, philanthropic work pursued, religiosity and assigned actions of the family members. With this, children within Indian families are often reminded to keep the family status in mind, as a means of inculcating within them the importance of reputation within Indian communities. In attempt to find a sense of self, children perceived to betray their families through developmentally appropriate 'rebellious behaviours' are often cast out as the 'black sheep' of the family and considered to bring shame upon the family. This may then be understood as impacting on the family's reputation, with perceived incurred lower social capital than others (Moller et al., 2016).

Although the roles of Indian men and women are more openly contested in today's day and age, given much critical thought by scholars, women and even men, it still remains that for men, the struggles between ascriptive and attained status is still less conflicting than for women (Archary & Landman, 2021).

In South Asia, it is still women who have been seen as responsible for the generational preservation and imparting of cultural, traditional and national identity. There is

an over-emphasis on the time a woman spends doing housework, to the neglect of other noteworthy aspects such as the upholding of cultural rituals and rites of passage. This aspect is significant in understanding the construction of Indian woman's identity as a mere extension of domestic chores alone. These rites and rituals are underpinned by a cultural appreciation and respect for one's parents, ensuring that the status of the family is upheld (Hiralal, 2013). This can be achieved by maintaining the family's dignity and oftentimes marrying into a family which brings respect and honour to the woman's family of origin as well. In this manner, the woman is viewed as a 'decent, 'respectable' and 'abiding' daughter and housewife and these roles come to mould how her identity is both viewed by society and herself, in general (Hiralal, 2013).

This is further echoed by Hook (2019) who described how national contexts also come to influence sex segregation and the negotiation of household tasks. Analyses from his study revealed that men in India may perform less work related to child-rearing and household-keeping, in comparison to their female counterparts. Similar trends can be seen across various Indian communities across the globe today.

To further substantiate the differing experiences between males and females especially within the corporate context, Carrim and Nkomo (2016) conducted research exploring the identities of the first group of Indian women to enter managerial positions in corporate South Africa. Results from their study indicated that women shared in three challenging identity transitions within the corporate context, including becoming more assertive; managing conflict; and working closely with males. Participants described that although they were managers today, they still struggled with asserting authority, managing conflict and working closely with males due to being taught as children the notion that one should respect one's elders at all times, submit to male elders and remain silent in the face of conflict. Whereby it may also be considered the norm for many Indian women to marry once

they have completed their schooling education, twelve of the thirteen participants in this study did not marry, until their undergraduate completion. Narratives described by participants also reflected strained relationships with their mothers, due to the expectation placed on them to be 'perfect' housewives (Carrim & Nkomo, 2016). The results from this research were significant in highlighting the unequal gender roles which still exist in post-apartheid South Africa today, leaving the Indian woman internally conflicted regarding her identity.

Within the South African context, unequal gender roles are further demonstrated by the issue of intimate partner violence (Ranganathan et al., 2021). Females are often the victims of physical, emotional and verbal violence at the hands of their male partners. The Demographic Health Surveillance survey reported a 21% lifetime and 8% past year history of intimate partner violence (Statistics SA, 2016).

The results from these studies are useful in illuminating how unequal gender roles affecting the Indian woman are perpetuated both by cultural norms, poverty and inequality and disempowerment, especially within the South African context. Thus, the different roles that Indian women progressively play have often been seen as 'modern' versus 'traditional' roles with the suggestion that there is an inherent conflict between the two.

2.6.2 The conflict between the 'individual' versus the 'collective' self

Due to prevailing gender roles, the Indian woman is seen as living a multifaceted life, with a conflicted oscillation of her identity between her 'public self,' versus her 'private self.' This can present itself within the young Indian woman as a 'conflict of self,' resulting in feelings of guilt around finding her own sense of individualism; shame around her personal choices which may differ from those of her parents and community; resentment towards her parents for not always understanding her experiences and uncertainty around how to integrate these seemingly opposed feelings and identities within her (Hajratwala, 2009). This inherent

conflict can be seen as being influenced by intergenerational trauma, with particular reference to the trauma of slavery, displacement and identity that has been transmitted through the generations preceding her, and still potentially experienced by her today (Hajratwala, 2009).

This multifaceted identity is demonstrated amongst Indian women and further highlighted by the many 'selves' which exist all simultaneously, allowing her to function both within her personal relationships, as well as broader society at large. Maintaining an equal balance between the two can prove challenging, sometimes causing her to compromise between these identities as a means of 'fitting in' and finding a sense of belonging (Hajratwala, 2009). Research conducted by Meer (1972) exemplifies this further, indicating that many younger women in India often forego their own personal hopes and dreams of travelling overseas or marrying a man out of their own race or caste simply for the sake of their collective selves and preserving their tradition and status within their family. For those who are brave enough to venture into more individual choices, they often risk family approval and support of their choices and personal lifestyles. However, it is rare that Indian families allow for both identities to co-occur without any conflict. The modern Indian daughter is hence forced to conceal many aspects of her individual identity from her parents and their more traditional ways of being. This ultimately can be understood as impacting an Indian woman's authenticity, whereby she has to forego or conceal core components of her individual self, for the sake of family approval and fitting in (Hiralal, 2013).

The conflict between her individual and collective selves can hence contribute to strong feelings of shame and guilt for the Indian daughter, who secretly feels like she is letting her parents down. This shame and guilt are only further perpetuated through stories of collective retelling of the hardship and sacrifices which many Indian parents endured, to afford their children more decent lives and a good education today. Such shame and guilt can hence cause an even further divide in her identity, causing her to strive for unhealthy levels of

perfection in multiple areas - her marriage, raising her children and even her chosen field of study (Hiralal, 2013). This can be attributed to an unconscious and prevailing fear of letting her parents down and a need to make reparation for their traumatisation. Desai and Vahed (2019) further highlight this point, indicating that Indian women may remain in abusive marriages for decades, for fear of the stigma that comes with divorce and the potential disapproval and backlash to be faced from both her family and community at large for her 'choice to leave.'

Many Indian women struggle with this conflict between their 'individual' and 'collective' selves, which then comes to impact their mental wellbeing and sense of self (Desai & Vahed, 2019). Many Indian women who opt to get divorced, move overseas or study a course of their own choice, despite their parents' disapproval, though deemed 'resilient' and 'courageous' (Hoosain, 2013), do not necessarily regard themselves as such, still bearing the consequences of 'letting their parents down' which they may face at family functions or during interactions with their parents on a recurrent basis. Nevertheless, the topic of 'resilience' amongst Indian women is slowly taking precedence in the literature today, impacted by a multitude of Indian women who are adopting lifestyles more in alignment with their 'real' selves, as opposed to living lives simply for the benefit and wellbeing of their parents and community at large (Hoosain, 2013).

2.6.3 Resilience

In discussing the various consequences of intergenerational trauma, it becomes pertinent to also include a discussion of resilience amongst South African Indian women. According to Hoosain (2013), agency refers to an individual's capability to change his or her circumstances. Research suggests that accounts of history are important in educating current generations about their lineage and also has an effect of helping build inner strength, agency and resilience for current generations today (Hajratwala, 2009). The

shift in the education and acknowledgement of the Indian woman as an individual, rather than in relation to the man exemplifies such shifts. Early on, Kuper (1956, p.26) confirmed the advent of this shift in South Africa indicating that:

> The advent of Indian women in Durban into tertiary education, the workplace and the professions, preceded their movement outside national boundaries. The challenge to the patriarchal mindset concerning the raising of daughters and the role of the wife and mother, has been the cause of anxiety and conflict within the contemporary local household despite the Indian woman's increasing autonomy and financial empowerment.

The Indian woman's identity within a more global context hence has implications for a reconfiguration of roles, responsibilities and attitudes concerning Indian womanhood and their place within their internal and external world (Desai & Vahed, 2019). Growing up and being educated about traditional roles of the Indian women, modern Indian women are also more likely to contest outdated patriarchal norms and assert their rights to lead their own lives. Indian women are progressively partaking in discussions surrounding patriarchy and even constitute the frontrunners of gender-based violence and human rights movements in some cases. For example, Manjilis Manch is a legal advocacy center that provides socio-legal supports to survivors of sexual abuse in rural Maharashtra, India. The team is led by all-women lawyers and social workers who meet with survivors interested in taking legal action. Their responsibility is to assist and educate women so that they can become more confident during procedures of a court case. Groups like Manjilis Manch are crucial for women's empowerment in India (Srinath, 2000). There are also increasingly more conversations that take place surrounding authenticity, identity and taking care of one's mental health in many spaces which include Indian women (Hajratwala, 2009).

2.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, the literature related to young South African Indian women's lived experiences of intergenerational transmission of trauma in the post-apartheid context was reviewed. Historical trauma theory was applied as the theoretical framework grounding this study and discussed further. Furthermore, various local and international studies on intergenerational and collective traumatisation were explored to corroborate existing theory and literature as embedded in the historical and contemporary socio-political, as well as psycho-social contexts. The reviewed literature focused on the history of Indian South Africans; intergenerational trauma; the mechanisms of trauma transmission; and the consequences of collective trauma, followed by the factors influencing South African Indian woman's identity.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The research methodology that guided this study is discussed in this chapter. A qualitative research approach was employed as the basis upon which this study was designed. Consequently, the method of data collection included semi-structured interviews during which the participants and the researcher interacted and influenced the discourse. Thematic analysis was used to analyse and make meaning of the findings from the interviews. Measures to ensure the credibility of this study as well as reflexivity are also explained in this chapter. Finally, the ethical considerations the researcher implemented are discussed.

3.2 Qualitative Research Approach

This study made use of a qualitative approach to explore how South African Indian women have experienced intergenerational trauma and how this, in turn, informed their lived experiences today. A qualitative approach allows for exploration and understanding of the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014). A traumatic response trajectory is a deeply personal experiential reality coloured by how an individual gives significance and meaning to it and therefore, a qualitative approach allowed the researcher to capture Indian women's lived experiences of intergenerational trauma and their understanding of the influence thereof on their identity formation (Creswell, 2014). As posited by Creswell and Poth (2017), the most meaningful feature of a qualitative approach is that themes and categories are not pre-established as in quantitative research but emerge from the data itself. Thus, the researcher analysed the data from interviews to understand Indian women's experiences of intergenerationally transmitted trauma in the development of their identity today.

3.2.1 Research design

A hermeneutic phenomenological approach premised on qualitative research was the guiding principle of the present study. In this section, the researcher explains the main assumptions of the hermeneutic phenomenological approach.

3.2.1.1 Hermeneutic Phenomenological approach. To capture the lived experiences of the participants, the research study adopted a hermeneutic, phenomenological approach. Hermeneutic phenomenology is not only descriptive as it allows a phenomenon to speak for itself but is also interpretive as it acknowledges that there exists no phenomenon which cannot be interpreted (Neubauer et al., 2019). It therefore focuses on illuminating details otherwise 'trivial' aspects of one's experience, with the understanding that these can be used as material to create meaning and achieve a sense of understanding. A researcher reads the text with the main aim of finding the meaning within it. The researcher brings his or her own subjectivities to the text while maintaining a continued sense of reflexivity, being aware of his or her own perspective (Neubauer et al., 2019). This approach was beneficial, as the researcher is of Indian descent and so while the research holds personal significance for her, it was also important that she continuously maintained her reflexivity in illuminating the direct experiences of the participants under study.

Using the paradigm of hermeneutic phenomenology as a research design also entails that when studying the text, the researcher tries to understand the entire presentation of the text, while also developing an understanding of how its constituent parts inform this whole. It is due to the emphasis on the interpretive understanding of lived experience, identity and meaning, which specifically relates to the research objectives of this study, that hermeneutic phenomenology was selected as a fitting methodological design for this study (Neubauer et al., 2019).

A narrative emerges through reconstructing the world or the situation in which we find ourselves. During the interpretation of the text, Ricoeur's (1984b) narrative theory was used. Our narratives, according to Ricoeur (1984b), should be understood as being constructed reformations of our un-reflected life. Ricoeur (1984b) expands the idea of 'Mimesis' as reformation in three stages. Mimesis 1 refers to one's lived experience of life prior to it being spoken or captured in narrative and is also referred to as one's 'life-world,' or the everyday or pre-scientific world in which we live. As part of the current research, the researcher first and foremost took time to understand the interviewee's unique and subjective 'lifeworld' perspective. This was done by reviewing their unique demographic information and engaging with them as human beings first and not simply as 'participants.'

Mimesis 2 represents the act of 'creating.' Each narrative has a beginning, middle and end and Ricoeur (1984b) refers to this as 'the configuration of the narrative.' The interview thus allows participants to recount their lived experiences and through this, the interviewer has the opportunity to gain insight into the phenomenon which the narrative is about. Therefore, although the interview is semi-structured, it is up to the participants to select and put words into meaningful events and experiences. In this way, the task of the researcher was not to look behind the text, but rather to interpretively reveal the issue which the text was pointing to.

The third phase is referred to as Mimesis 3 or 'reconfiguration' and should be seen as the completion of the interpretation process and the point at which the text and reader meet. According to Ricoeur (1984b), 'living communication' involves joining interpretation of text together with the world of the reader, in order to find something new. Therefore, as the researcher approached the text, a number of various factors were taken into account. These included what the researcher had thus far gathered about the participant and what the participant revealed of themselves in the transcripts. Therefore, interpretation moved from

'immature understanding' to a much deeper understanding of the text. This was important in steering away from reducing participants to 'research subjects,' to human beings with unique worldviews.

3.2.1.2 Limitations of hermeneutic phenomenology. Hermeneutic phenomenology has been criticised on the basis that it presents itself as vague and abstract, lacking clarity needed to achieve a good grasp of certain phenomena. Hence, participants' experiences are described in essence, while the very nature of hermeneutics also places significance on interpretation in the process knowledge formation. However, while both of the epistemologies are limited when viewed separately, they can be understood as being of greater benefit when combined (Dowling, 2007). Therefore, both the essence of personal experience, alongside interpretation allows for rich, valuable and descriptive material to emerge out of data (Bauman, 2010).

3.3 Sampling of Participants

The study was conducted in Johannesburg, South Africa. Participants were recruited through the non-probability procedure of snowball sampling. The snowball sampling technique is used in cases wherein the samples have traits that are rare to find (Dawson, 2019). Snowball sampling can be understood as a purposeful method of data collection, whereby the researcher asks the first few participants, who are usually selected via convenience sampling if they know of anyone else with similar views or experiences to participate in the research. In this way, participants were purposefully selected for the research, so as to provide an in-depth understanding of their lived experiences of the transmission of intergenerational trauma on their identity formation (Naderifar et al., 2017).

The study was conducted amongst South African Indian women. The sample was recruited in the following ways: 1- one unit from the desired population was identified; therefore, a South African Indian woman was identified. This woman was someone whom

the researcher knew, 2- Using this unit, other units were identified until the required sample size was met. The researcher approached a participant whom she knew to inform her about the study and then asked her to refer her to potential voluntary participants. Data saturation was reached through the means of snowball sampling alone. After possible participants were identified, a participant information sheet (Appendix A) was sent out to potential participants, informing them of the nature of the study and steps to take should they be willing to participate in the research study (Maxwell & Chmiel, 2014). Prior to commencing with the research process, the researcher also obtained written informed consent (Appendix B) from the participants to proceed with conducting and video recording interviews online via the Zoom platform, due to COVID-19 restrictions. The written informed consent (Appendix B) outlined what the research was about as well as indicated voluntary participation, informing participants of their right to withdraw from the research at any point in time (Dawson, 2019).

3.3.1 Selection criteria

Potential participants were also required to meet certain inclusion criteria in order to participate in the study. They had to be of Indian descent; either second/third generation Indian women; they had to be between the ages of 25-34 years old; they must have been raised in a household with a parent/s who are South African Indians; the women had to be willing to participate in the study and be fluent in English. Women between the ages of 25-34 years were specifically chosen to form part of the criteria as research conducted by Hook (2019) suggests that identity becomes more deeply ingrained within us around the age of 25. Due to the nature of this particular study and the significance of exploring South African Indian women's identities, this was considered as significant.

The exclusion criteria included males; women who are younger than 25 and older than 34 years old; women who were not of Indian descent; and women who were fourth/fifth

generation Indian women as fourth/fifth generation Indian women are more likely to be a lot younger than the age of 25 years old.

As qualitative data provides rich information, a maximum sample of five Indian women was recruited and used to gather relevant information. This proved a large enough sample, enabling the gathering of sufficient data and reaching of data capacity (Maxwell & Chmiel, 2014).

A biographical description of the participants whose transcripts were used in this study is provided in the table below.

Table 1

Participant Statistics

Participant Pseudonym	**Age**	**Gender**	**Marital status**	**Religious affiliation**	**Second/Third generation**
Ayesha	25	Female	Single	Muslim	Third generation
Firdaus	28	Female	Single	Muslim	Third generation
Samiera	33	Female	In a relationship with a white male	Muslim	Third generation
Divya	35	Female	Divorced & currently single	Hindu	Second generation
Priyanka	27	Female	Single	Tamil	Second generation

3.4 Data collection

An appropriate time was set for the interview process conducted over the Zoom online platform, with cognisance of the Covid-19 protocols, alongside possible electricity cuts in participants' areas. The semi-structured interview guide (Appendix C) allowed the researcher to establish rapport and collect in-depth information on the topic of study. Establishing rapport was particularly useful in allowing the participants to become comfortable with the researcher, ensuring that she could then begin her line of questions from

the semi-structured interview guide. The semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix C) allowed room for both flexibility and probing, thus gathering the necessary information from participants (Qu & Dumay, 2011), to answer the study's research questions in line with the guiding objectives.

Questions from the semi-structured interview schedule guided this study and the researcher probed, in order to allow more in-depth information to be gathered. Examples of these open-ended questions included: Please tell me: In your opinion, what are some of the traumas which your parents experienced, being of First Generation or Second Generation South African Indians? What were the experiences which stood out the most to you, being raised in a household with two Indian parents? What are some of the values which you have been raised with as an Indian woman and how do you feel about this today? Once this was complete, the researcher thanked the participants for allowing her to conduct this research and informed them that if they require the results from the study, they were welcome to request this from her, using the contact details provided on the Information sheet. This process was followed for all participants. Once all the data was collected, it was transcribed and analysed (Dawson, 2019).

Due to the global Covid-19 pandemic and social distancing, qualitative researchers have had to look for alternative means of collecting data during this period (Nguyen et al., 2020). With this, the rise of using online platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet had taken precedence and allowed researchers the opportunity of conducting interviews with participants, irrespective of geographical location (Nguyen et al., 2020). Although convenient and safer to use, online platforms may be disadvantageous in that the quality of voice, video quality and direct interaction may be compromised. However, a few advantages to using such online platforms do exist. These include being provided with the option of recording interviews for future transcription, which will assist with analysis of the data. Bearing all this

in mind, it was crucial that in making use of an online platform for the purpose of the current research, the researcher tested her own, as well as the participant's internet connection, sound and video quality, prior to the actual interview. This ensured that the interview proceeded as smoothly as possible, with minimal distraction from the actual interview process itself (Teti et al., 2020).

3.4.1 Transcription

Phenomenological researchers tend to make use of linguistic data (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Audio recordings of each interview were anonymised and then transcribed verbatim by the researcher. The researcher listened to each interview carefully and repeatedly in order to ensure that the meaning participants ascribed to what they said was captured fully. The transcriptions consisted of both verbal and nonverbal information which was noted during the interviews. These included verbalisations, tone and bodily gestures. Thematic analysis was used to extract the relevant themes and subordinate themes from the transcriptions. These are presented as findings in Chapter 4 and discussed in relation to the literature in Chapter 5.

3.5 Method of data analysis

After transcription of the audio recording, the data gathered was analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis allows for the identification, organisation and analysis of data which provide rich and detailed themes and patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The unit of analysis here was the young Indian woman. The target of analysis was the experiences of intergenerational trauma and young Indian women's lived experiences. Thematic analysis aims to establish meaning through the analysis of themes and in doing so through the proposed study, meaning was generated from the interviews in efforts to gain insight into intergenerational trauma on the lived experiences of young Indian women (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Braun and Clarke (2012) describe six stages in thematic analysis. The researcher used these six steps to identify, analyse and report themes, accordingly.

3.5.1 Steps in the thematic analysis

Step 1: The first step encourages the researcher to immerse themselves in the data and gain an appropriate understanding of the data. After the interviews were transcribed, familiarisation with the data was achieved through reading and re-reading of the data. The researcher ensured that she was fully immersed in the data by reading carefully through each transcript, until a feeling of familiarity with the data was established. As the researcher familiarised herself with the text, immersion moved from an 'immature understanding' to a much deeper understanding of what was conveyed by each participant. This was significant in allowing the researcher to engage with the research subjects as actual human beings with unique worldviews (Ricoeur, 1984b). It was during this phase that ideas for coding were also formulated.

Step 2: During step 2, relevant responses were highlighted, colour-coded and sorted into meaningful groups. This was important in capturing dominant and recurrent themes which emerged from the data. Once the researcher was familiar with each transcript, the researcher made relevant notes on the actual transcript, using a side column on Microsoft word (Appendix E).

Due to the research adopting a hermeneutic phenomenological approach, it was important to allow phenomena to first speak for itself, prior to the process of actual interpretation. During this stage, the researcher captured recurrent phrases and ideas which emerged from the transcripts. No interpretation was made just yet, in attempt to first capture the participants' lived experiences as accurately as possible. This was significant in attempting to illuminate details and seemingly trivial aspects of experience that may be taken for granted, in order to achieve a deeper sense of understanding of the data. Hence, the researcher read the text with the intention of discovering the meanings embedded within it (Neubauer et al., 2019). It was also during this stage that the researcher attempted to maintain a continued sense of reflexivity, trying to stay as close to the data as possible, while also

acknowledging her own perspectives and biases as a South African Indian woman (Willig, 2013). In Appendix E, an example of a transcript which was actively engaged with is presented. Appendix F presents how certain themes were arrived at. The researcher also noted down her own biases and was continuously reflexive during the process of data analysis, which allowed her the opportunity to more accurately recognise her own biases and perceptions, allowing themes to reflect participants' true responses (Willig, 2013).

Step 3: Codes were then organised into relevant themes, by identifying the levels of the themes as well as the relationship between the codes and themes. Again, hermeneutic phenomenology guided this approach, as the researcher absorbed herself into the various themes and viewpoints presented as a whole, while also developing an understanding of how its parts related to the whole (Neubauer et al., 2019). A total of 5 themes were formed: intergenerational trauma; South African Indian history; culture; identity; and breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma.

Step 4: After themes were created, new themes were extracted from these themes, further creating new categories of ideas. This involved reading the texts and the emergent themes once again, with the intention of expanding each theme and revealing sub-themes that were of relevance (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The subthemes which emerged were: the impact of parenting style on daughters' lived experiences; inter-generational dreams of educational success rigidly passed on to children; rigid mindsets; fear and a 'survival mindset;' the trauma of displacement; the role of women in society; status; the struggle between the 'individual self,' versus the 'collective self'; shame and guilt; perfectionism; and integrating collectivism with individualism.

Step 5: Themes were then evaluated and refined, by taking into account what idea the theme captured as well as its relevance (Braun & Clarke, 2012). A table of themes was created and then refined between both researcher and supervisor, until it was agreed that both

the themes, as well as sub-themes accurately reflected the data which emerged from the interviews.

Step 6: The themes were brought to life in the context of the relevant theories which support this research as discussed in the literature review.

3.6 Measures to enhance the quality of the research

In order to determine the quality of the study, trustworthiness, transferability, credibility, dependability and confirmability were taken into consideration (Stenfors et al., 2020).

3.6.1 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness describes how qualitative researchers guarantee that transferability, credibility, dependability, confirmability and reflexivity are evident in their research. Each research study is conducted with both an awareness and description of its particular scope and this assists in determining how applicable it is across various contexts (Stenfors et al., 2020).

3.6.1.1 Transferability. According to Treharne and Riggs (2014), transferability is understood as the extent to which the results from a particular study can be applied to other contexts. With regards to qualitative research and more specifically, within the realm of phenomenology, the aim is to provide in-depth understandings of experiences. The researcher hence ensured transferability by including rich descriptions of participants' responses as well as her own interpretations which would allow readers to have a thorough understanding of the phenomenon under study. In this way, readers could use their own judgement about generalising to other contexts (Stenfors et al., 2020).

3.6.1.2 Credibility. Credibility is a procedure that ensures that the participant's point of view represents their actual experiences. This is achieved through the process of member checking, whereby specific checks regarding the accuracy of the data occur both during and following the data collection (Brantlinger et al., 2005). In order to maintain the credibility of the research, the researcher sent participants their transcripts to read through, accompanied by an additional explanatory aid which briefly demonstrates her interpretation of the interview as well. This allowed the participant to confirm whether what has been captured was the most truthful interpretation of their actual experience (Stenfors et al., 2020).

3.6.1.3 Dependability. Dependability is the extent to which the research methodology and data collection processes can be replicated (Stenfors et al., 2020). It was therefore pertinent that the study adopted a clear research methodology. In order to ensure that dependability was maintained, an audit trail of the research was conducted. This audit trail included an in-depth approach relating to how the research was conducted from the start of the research project to the development and reporting of findings. This ensured that important details were recorded, to ensure transparency, allowing the reader to interpret results themselves and thus ensuring dependable findings, as well as for the research to be replicated in future (Stenfors et al., 2020).

3.6.1.4 Confirmability.Lastly, confirmability reflects the extent to which participants' responses match interpretations and findings. Because the researcher is also of Indian descent and the topic under study has personal relevance for her, it is acknowledged that her own biases, motivations and interests would have an impact on the findings of the research. It was therefore important that the researcher maintains reflexivity (Stenfors et al., 2020). Reflexivity is an integral part of ensuring quality in qualitative research (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

3.7 Reflexivity

Adopting a reflexive stance allows the researcher to personally acknowledge their subjectivity during the process of research, helping them to witness both how they personally impact on and are impacted upon by the process (Willig, 2013). Only once this occurs, can a researcher personally challenge both their own perspectives, as well as those of the larger social world. Willig (2013) describes the differing approaches which qualitative studies adopt in ensuring reflexivity, including personal reflexivity and epistemological reflexivity.

3.7.1 Personal reflexivity

According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), personal reflexivity reflects the extent to which the researcher's own viewpoints naturally weave into the unique narratives described by participants, thereby impacting upon the process of research, alongside data analysis. The researcher is of Indian descent and is female and this had to be considered when interviewing each participant, because the research held a very personal significance for the researcher's own life. Therefore, many of the questions asked of participants reflected both an academic, as well as personal interest.

The researcher found that during each interview, there existed a natural and preconceived understanding of participants' narratives and unique life experiences. This could be because the researcher experienced many similar events in her own personal life, as described by participants. The benefits of this could be that participants may have felt heard and understood as they spoke and they may have related well to the researcher herself. The disadvantage of this process could reflect the researcher possibly not probing deeply enough, due to her own preconceived notions of what participants meant when they answered questions, due to her own experiences and underlying assumptions. Therefore, the researcher kept a journal which she made use of throughout the process, whereby she jotted down her

own experiences and viewpoints and tried to keep these as 'separate' from participants' viewpoints, as far as possible.

The results from the study naturally stirred up distressing emotions, such as frustration, deep empathy and sadness on the part of the researcher. Thus, after each interview, the researcher took some time out to process these emotions, reflect on them in her journal and ensure that these emotions reflected her own, rather than participants' emotions in her data collection and analysis.

3.7.2 Epistemological Reflexivity

Epistemological reflexivity adopts the stance that what a researcher assumes about reality, naturally comes to impact aspects of the research process (Willig, 2019). An assumption which I currently hold about reality is that Indian women lead conflicting lives, causing them to feel guilt and shame about their identities and life choices. This is reflected in my choice of research topic under study.

In interpreting the findings, I ensured that participants' experiences were as close to their own as possible, with minimum bias from my end. My supervisor also critically reviewed my initial drafts of the study's findings, further ensuring that interpretations were a reflection of participants' own experiences, rather than my own. In this manner, the extent to which my own assumptions shaped the findings and discussed were minimised.

3.8 Ethical procedures

3.8.1 Informed consent

The researcher applied to the Faculty of Humanities Ethics Committee (Appendix H) of the University of Pretoria for permission to conduct the study as stated in the Participant Information Sheet (Appendix A). Participation was voluntary and confidentiality was maintained to protect the participants' identity in the reported results. The participants were made aware after permission was initially granted, that their video recordings would be stored

in a password protected computer which only the researcher will have access to and that transcripts would also be kept safely by the university. The identity of the participants remained confidential and were not directly associated with any data. Participants were free to take a break from or withdraw from the research at any point in time. The privacy and confidentiality of the participants was ensured by not requiring them to reveal their names or location to ensure anonymity of their responses and protect them from any retributive action (Mohd Arifin, 2018).

3.8.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Furthermore, the researcher ensured that the data collected was not disclosed to any unauthorised persons (Strydom, 2011). In addition, anonymity of research participants is a central feature of ethical research practice and all identifying data was removed prior to write up of the research report (Wiles, 2013). All of the participant's responses were coded to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, appropriate reporting and data analysis. The collected information was stored in an Excel file and maintained on a password protected flash memory data storage device, which only the researcher has access to. The hardcopies of the transcripts including the signed consent forms were kept in sealed envelopes and to be stored in a locked cabinet for 15 years at the University of Pretoria, in the department of Psychology (Strydom, 2011).

3.8.3 Emotional Risk

Participants were made aware that they will be allowed access to the results of the study, on request. The principle of non-maleficence stresses that researchers should ensure that no harm should come to participants during the research process (Townsend et al., 2010). In this study, emotional distress was the most likely source of harm that could have affected participants. The interviews required them to reflect on personal experiences that have the potential to be emotionally arousing. The topic of the study could be considered to be a

particularly sensitive topic, so the risk of emotional distress was moderate. However, there was no incident of a participant being noticeably distressed during the research process.

Nonetheless, the participants were always made aware that there are psychological services that are available at no cost to them should the need arise as outlined in Appendix A.

3.9 Conclusion

The research methodology that directed this study was discussed in this chapter. A qualitative research approach, grounded in hermeneutic phenomenology was used as the basis upon which this study was designed. Accordingly, the method of data collection included semi-structured interviews during which the participants and the researcher interacted and influenced the discourse. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the material from the interviews. Measures to ensure credibility of this study as well as reflexivity were also explained in this chapter. Finally, ethical considerations were also discussed.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The focus of this study was an exploration of young South African Indian women's lived experiences of the intergenerational transmission of trauma in the post-Apartheid context. The objectives directing the aim of the study were three-fold: To explore Indian daughters' experiences of being raised in a South African Indian home; to identify the multiple ways in which trauma was transmitted from one generation to the next generation's identity; and to explore how this informed the Indian woman's identity development in post-apartheid South Africa. This chapter presents the findings gathered through audio-recorded and transcribed semi-structured interviews which were then thematically interpreted. A total of five participants were interviewed, with interview sessions lasting approximately 45 minutes each. This chapter also gives a brief description of the participants who consented to participate in the study. Additionally, the themes and sub-themes which emerged from the interview data are explained in this chapter, followed by a more comprehensive discussion of the findings, integrated with the grounding theoretical framework and relevant literature in chapter 5.

4.2 Themes

Each participant was asked about their perceived experiences of being raised in a South African Indian home. Five major themes, alongside several sub-themes emerged from the experiences shared in addressing the research aims and objectives of this study. These themes are furthermore discussed in the following sections. The themes are all connected, but these aspects will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

Participants reflected with a mixed range of empathy, deep understanding and sadness on their parents' direct confrontations with apartheid socio-politically, socio-emotionally, and economically, which later impacted on their ways of parenting. This can be understood as

having subsequent effects on participants' underlying relational and emotional dynamics and thus identities. Participants who were second-generation South African Indian women reflected on how apartheid impacted their parents, causing them to adopt mindsets of mistrust, defensiveness and a loss of empathy as a means of coping with their own traumas experienced. Participants also reflected on what it meant for their parents and grandparents to move from India to South Africa and how this, in turn impacted on their own lived experiences as South African Indian women.

Below is a table of the main and sub-themes which emerged through the process of thematic analysis.

Table 2.

Theme outline

Main themes	Sub-themes
South African Indian history	• Rigid mindsets (mistrust, defensiveness & loss of empathy) • Fear and a 'survival mindset' • The trauma of displacement
Intergenerational Trauma	• Impact of parenting style on daughters' lived experiences • Inter-generational dreams of educational success rigidly passed on to children
Culture	• The role of women in society • Status

Identity	• The struggle between the 'individual self' versus the 'collective self' • Shame and guilt • Perfectionism
Breaking the cycle of Intergenerational Trauma	Integrating collectivism with individualism

4.2.1 Theme 1: South African Indian history

Ayesha reflected on her father's own experience of apartheid: *"My dad always speaks about how restricted they were during apartheid. He described himself as somebody who was 'young and free' but being under the control of white supremacy, he felt like he was in a cage."* Similarly, and with a tone of sadness, Firdaus expressed how skin colour played a crucial role in how her parents were treated during apartheid: *"...my parents always say that because they were so dark-skinned, they were always treated even worse than other Indians during apartheid."*

Of significance, a few participants reflected on how their parents' mindsets had not really changed, even though they were now living in a democratic South Africa. For example, Samiera shared: *"...if a white person gets a job, my father will scream and shout and say 'It's only because he's white.' Sometimes it still feels like apartheid is still going on because of how my parents react"* and, *"It's almost like apartheid made them all live in this small little world and they just never came out of it, even after apartheid finished."*

Participants can also be understood as taking note of the vast differences in their individual struggles faced today, versus the unique struggles faced by their parents. For example, Samiera described: *"...I always compare our struggles. Because like, for me... my*

struggles growing up were simple struggles about school and friends and that. I never had to fight for my life and for freedom," while Ayesha went on to describe her father's defensiveness and positionality towards individuals of other races, even till today: *"I can't really like, refute him much because apartheid is something I obviously didn't experience, you know?*

Across participants' responses, there existed a fundamental desire to understand their parents' backgrounds and traumas. This can be understood as influencing a re-negotiation of participants' own identities today. Participants can be understood as contextualising their unique Indian histories, alongside making sense of their own values, desires, hopes and dreams for themselves today. The impact of South African Indian history on participants' identities was reflected through the multiple lived experiences endured by participants today. These are related to conflict between the 'individual' and 'collective' selves; shame and guilt; and perfectionism. For example, Ayesha's father developed a loss of empathy and counter-racism following apartheid. This later came to impact on the way in which she was parented and her difficulties in forming relationships with others:

> When I was young, I also was scared of other races. So, we grew up in a very close-knit community. You know – school of all Indians. Then, suddenly at university there were these white people and I didn't even know how to make friends with them.

This can be seen as contributing to Ayesha's sense of fear around what the correct life choices to make were:

> I feel like I want to be my own person, but like I also don't know who or what that even is. Half of me wants to leave the nest and actually spread my wings and the other half is just absolutely terrified.

Hence, South African Indian history can be understood as the necessary 'starting point,' helping us to contextualise each participant's identity today. It illuminates each of the subsequent themes to follow and is interwoven together with culture and parenting styles. Therefore, each theme is discussed below, in consideration of how the South African Indian woman's identity is a constant re-negotiation of her unique history, alongside her own individuality today.

4.2.1.1 Rigid mindsets. Ayesha detailed how her father still adopts an identity of counter-racism as a means of coping with the trauma he personally endured during apartheid:

> It was like after apartheid, they trusted absolutely nobody and they didn't feel sorry for anybody. Till today, when my father sees a beggar on the side of the road, it doesn't matter what race the beggar is, but it's like his heart is gone so cold. He can't show empathy for other people because he feels like they all suffered equally and that white people should suffer today.

Priyanka described her father's persistent defensiveness, expressing that he is always looking to pick a fight. She spoke about how she believes her father still communicates through fighting, which was also his primary means of expression during apartheid, used as a means to defend himself:

> ...my father has a big mouth. So, he would fight with these 'boere' people, as he calls them. He didn't hold back. He would scream and shout at them" and, "He communicates through fighting which is scary, but also. I guess that's just the way he is. You can't change these older generation people, you know?

Samiera echoed similar sentiments in describing her parents' mistrust of others, even today: *"they usually just sit at home because sometimes even at the mall, my mum will look at*

people suspiciously or think somebody is following her or something, when nothing is happening."

In describing how parenting styles impacted her identity, Ayesha discussed how being raised witnessing her parents' mistrust of others,' later impacted on her own subsequent mistrust and relationships with those of other races:

> I had a white friend who would literally bring me spinach and cheese pies every Friday, 'cos her mother was the best baker and I would give it away to a beggar because I thought she was poisoning me or something.

Thus, participants reflected on how their parents' unique traumas and histories ultimately impacted on their mindsets, culminating in rigid ways of thinking. Such rigidity was described by participants as being related to how their parents were still mistrustful, defensive in the self-preservation of their own Indian racial background and experienced a loss of empathy for those of other races. Of significance, participants reflected on how these rigid ways of thinking had consequences for their own identities and relationships with others.

4.2.1.2 Fear and a survival mindset. Under the sub-theme of fear and a survival mindset, participants shared how their parents grew up in constant fear, especially during the apartheid era and how this in turn, affected what they refer to as their 'survival mindsets' today. For example, Ayesha expressed: "…*nothing was just for joy or because they wanted to do it – it was because if they didn't do it, they'd have no status or place in their family or society*." She further went on to say, "*I call it a survival mindset because it's never about who they are or what they want. It's always about surviving criticism and others' opinions or surviving poverty or whatever. But they don't realise that we've already survived*."

Despite having greater financial freedom in South Africa today, Firdaus described how the very same frugal lifestyle her parents grew up with were perpetuated in their own lives today. For example, she shared: *"…because THEY both grew up so poor, like literally surviving on sometimes one meal a day, they're still SO frugal with money."* Samiera shared how fear was transmitted from her grandparents to her parents:

> …when my parents got married, my grandfather's ways just rubbed off on my father and now he is also exactly the same. He is also terrified of other races and doesn't trust any of my black, white or coloured friends.

In reflecting on how their families had adopted a survival mindset, participants also described how growing up and witnessing such mindsets later impacted on their own identities. For example, Firdaus conveyed how her own parents' frugal spending habits secondary to socio-economic traumatisation had been transmitted to her and shape her own life with regards to her own spending habits today. Thus, it can be understood that both fear and survival mindsets are strong currents, impacting on how participants were raised and ultimately, how their own identities were shaped.

4.2.1.3 The trauma of displacement. Although most participants were raised in households where the experiences of displacement were openly discussed, Samiera shared that the trauma of displacement was something never directly voiced by her grandparents. She indicated: "*They never really spoke about it."*

In speaking about her grandparents, Ayesha shared the following:

> I think they were firstly traumatised because they had to move. So, my grandparents owned land in Cape Town, which they had to leave behind and they all had to move to Johannesburg in this tiny 3-bedroom house with 4 children. My mum went through similar – her parents travelled from India and then when they got here, they were poor and felt excluded because they couldn't go to parks reserved for white people and things like that...

Firdaus expressed similar views: "So, I think in a way it was traumatic for my grandparents to move from India and for my parents to live in a country which wasn't their own and still be so poor."

Thus, participants illuminated the impact that displacement actually had on their grandparents, parents and ultimately themselves. The process of narrating and acknowledging these perceived struggles can also be understood as reflecting empathy, understanding and ways of meaning-making with regard to how participants come to understand their own feelings of emotional isolation and thus non-cohesive identities today.

4.2.2 Theme 2: Intergenerational Trauma

Samiera discussed how trauma was transmitted within her family, as she spoke about how the trauma her father experienced as a child later influenced how he chose to parent her:

> he never had a good relationship with his mother and I guess that basically describes why he's so degrading to women today. And with me being like his twin, it was the perfect opportunity for him to start degrading me too.

Together with this reflection and in an attempt to better understand his behaviour towards her and how trauma was transmitted across generations within her family, Samiera further detailed, with a tone of empathy:

> I guess it was his only way of coping. Maybe that's the only way he learnt love. I don't know – it baffled me for years but after I actually sat down and spoke with him, I started to understand better where he's coming from.

Of significance, Samiera further went on to discuss how, what is now understood as trauma within Indian families is often misconstrued for 'culture' and 'normal ways of being.' This serves to further substantiate the rationale behind the current study. She critically explained:

> You know what the interesting thing is? I think that so many of us Indian people grow up like this and it becomes so normal for us, that it doesn't even strike us as 'trauma' or an 'unhealthy way of being.' It's just life.

In describing similar views, Firdaus expressed how '*ways of being'* were unconsciously transmitted intergenerationally within her family. This is significant in providing a deeper context as to how behaviours and mental models are often unconsciously replicated across generations: "I actually wanted to tell you that it's interesting how we say we won't become our parents and my mum always says that she would say the same thing growing up about herself one day and becoming a mother" and, "How is it that so often, our grandmothers and mothers lead the same lives, in different bodies?

The above-mentioned direct quotes give expression to how trauma is transmitted in both conscious, as well as unconscious ways. Below is a discussion of the sub-themes falling under the main theme of Intergenerational Trauma.

4.2.2.1 Impact of parenting style on daughters' lived experiences. In reflecting on the parenting styles which came to colour their lived experiences, participants described how their parents were often mis-attuned to their needs as daughters. For example, Priyanka discussed how her father's anger was disproportionately expressed, while she was growing up. She described an incident of a male friend calling at home to speak to her, followed by her father's reaction. This can be understood as further signalling missed opportunities for father-daughter bonding through healthy communication. For example, she described quite frustratingly: "*He swore me so badly and told me that if this boy ever calls home again, he'll take his gun out. He was Flippen' insane, man."*

Divya also reflected on her experience of this mis-attunement. She was raised as an only child, with the value that caring for one's parents both emotionally and physically was considered in high regard. This can be understood as causing a role reversal between her parents and herself, instead placing her in the position of 'parent.' For example, she described carrying the emotional obligation of her mother, even after she got married:

> I feel like she depended on me both physically, like to help at home and stuff but also emotionally. She would talk to ME if anything was bothering her and of course I would always be there for her, but it was also exhausting for me!

Of significance, participants discussed how these parenting styles later came to impact on their own identities. For example, Divya discussed how carrying the weight of her parents' troubles caused a tiredness within her and eventually felt more stifling than liberating. This then influenced her to travel to Thailand in an attempt to make deeper contact with herself

again: *"You just can't carry the weight of the world anymore. That's how I felt. So, I went to Thailand because I was tired of taking care of everybody – my parents, my ex-husband, his parents."* Thus, Divya reflected on how the intergenerational cultural demands placed on her manifested in a collective identity of people-pleasing, to the detriment of her own needs and values.

Firdaus also reflected on how she believed her parents' own trauma impacted on their mis-attunement to her needs today. She expressed, with a tone of frustration, how she felt like her parents only saw her for the various roles she fulfilled at home, such as cooking, cleaning and catering to others and hence did not really know the 'real' her: *"...they claim to 'know' us, but they don't really even KNOW us at all."* Hence, Firdaus conveyed the conflict she faced, between the various roles she felt obligated to fulfill, versus a negotiation of her own identity, needs and values.

Hence, the discussion around parenting styles gives further expression to South African Indian history and how traumas ultimately shaped parents' mental models, beliefs and values, thereby impacting on the way in which participants were parented. This can then be understood as having impacts on their own identities today.

4.2.2.2 Inter-generational dreams of educational success rigidly passed on to children. Ayesha described, with a tone of annoyance, the pressures of being raised with the expectation of achieving academic success, which was communicated by her father through the sharing of his own missed opportunities:

> My father reminds me each and every day how I'm so lucky to have the opportunity to study and that back in his day, only the rich and very high statused people could do what I'm doing today. So, like that puts pressure on me, you know?

Divya shared similar experiences of having a lot of educational pressure placed on her by her parents, to the neglect of other noteworthy aspects of her identity:

> There was also this over-emphasis on education, which again I understand and I'm grateful for because if it wasn't for them, I essentially wouldn't be half of the independent woman I am today, but still, it was like education was the only thing which existed for them.

Samiera echoed similar feelings in sharing how she faced the difficulty of trying to remain true to who she is, versus pleasing her parents and how this ultimately impacted on her career choice: *"Well, I wish I could've broken free from their hold completely, but my father did still manage to control what I studied. I did Engineering because his sister was an engineer and everybody always looked up to her."* When probed about which career path aligned more truly to who she is, she described in more detail how her parents' view of success came to define what she eventually chose: *"I've always been interested in marketing, but hey that's not a real job for Indian parents."*

Divya further expressed the unspoken obligation of earning a tertiary qualification in order to take care of one's parents, which can be understood as a common expectation placed on children, by the elders. This unspoken obligation can be seen as placing even more pressure on her to earn educational success, ensuring the future wellbeing of her parents one day. She described, in a tone of nonchalance:

> You know how it is in Indian families, where the children eventually end up supporting the parents? It's an unspoken obligation, that you must become successful not just for you, but because you need money to take care of them in old age one day.

Thus, participants reflected a consistent theme across responses related to how the Indian culture and more specifically their own fathers came to view their worth as women in

line with the careers which they were expected to attain. This can be understood as placing various pressures on the South African Indian daughter's identity today, which is further reflected in the themes below, related to identity development.

4.2.3 Theme 3: Culture

In line with the research topic, most participants expressed how they felt restricted by the cultural obligations placed on them. For example, Firdous reflected on how she was always expected to fulfil the role of being an obliging and respectable daughter. She further described how her choosing to participate in belly-dancing felt like something she had to hide from her parents. For example, she described, "*I felt caged at home you know. It's only ever about cooking, cleaning and taking care of visitors, every single weekend it's about taking care of OTHER people. And belly-dancing just make me so so happy*."

However, some participants also described what they specifically appreciated about the Indian culture. For example, Divya expressed how she values her family's inter-connectedness, how caring they are and how she feels like she has created deep and meaningful bonds with them over time. She described: *"That closeness in Indian culture is unmatched."* Similarly, Priyanka shared how her Indian heritage is something she still carries with her wherever she goes and how she values her family's role in her life. She described: *"When I need help, I'll ask my parents. They're always there for all of us, even with all their nonsense and whatever. And that comforts me, because even if I don't end up in a relationship or whatever, at least I'm not alone. I always still have them..."*

The above-mentioned findings illuminate how participants were able to reflect on the perceived joys, as well as struggles with regards to culture. Furthermore, it can be understood that culture is a significant aspect of South African Indian women's interpersonal dynamics, thereby influencing their own identity development and expression today.

4.2.3.1 The role of women in society. Each participant reflected on the unique struggles they faced being an Indian woman, while also expressing how they were both viewed and treated significantly differently from their brothers. Ayesha expressed her insights about being raised in a household where the rules differed significantly between both her and her brother: "*I used to have soooo many fights with my parents back then about how unfair it was growing up for girls*." Firdaus also described how the expectations placed on her differed significantly from that of those placed on her brother: *"I just felt like my brother had things easy because he carried the most status, having the surname*," while Priyanka expressed how her opinion is often dismissed over those expressed by her brothers: "…*I suppose I'm not taken seriously. My opinion doesn't matter much. If I say 'let's go here for holiday,' my father will be like 'no.' but if my brothers recommend a place, then he's all ears."*

Participants revealed how the views on women extended beyond just how daughters were treated, to the expectations placed on their mothers. Ayesha described how her mother's experience as an Indian woman was transmitted across generations to her. She stated:

> my dad was always super strict with my mother. Like she couldn't cut her hair above her shoulder and if she went out and even happened to look at or speak to another man, he'd get furious and not talk to her for days! So then with me, he was exactly the same and my poor mother, obviously being under his influence, actually started treating me exactly the same.

Priyanka also expressed how her mother abided by the expectations placed on her as a woman, without any objection: *"she was just this good woman who would follow the rules and keep her mouth shut."*

Divya related her experience of being a divorced Indian woman in South Africa and how this impacted on how she was viewed by others: *"It's almost like I'm treated like dirt at family functions. If a guy has to ask for my number, my aunts will them 'she's a nice girl, but shame she's divorced."*

Of significance, Firdaus further reflected on how these experiences of being raised as an Indian daughter impacted on her own identity and relationships later on in life. She discussed how her view of men was shaped by her experience of her father and described how it affected her relationships with other men: *"I put up with my ex-boyfriend's abuse for so long because I thought it was normal. Scary hey!"* In line with this discussion, she further went on to describe her experiences of being an obliging woman around the men in her life: "*[I am so] scared of even saying No to men, actually. And not even just boyfriends hey, but even like uncles. If my uncle says the sky is purple, I just nod my head and carry on."*

Cultural expectations of the role of women in society hence formed a crucial theme of the current study, providing deeper perspectives into how culture was transmitted and given expression to across generations. Culture can furthermore be understood as influencing parenting styles and mental models, gender roles and as a result, the identities of participants today.

4.2.3.2 Status. The topic of status was discussed in all the interviews, with participants expressing what it specifically meant to uphold the status of being an Indian female within their communities. Samiera concisely described how the opinions of others came to shape the way her parents raised her: *"They're just worried about what everybody else will think or say!"* She further went on to express shame associated with admitting weakness and vulnerability as an Indian woman today: "…*everything is so easily swept under the rug for Indians."*

Divya reflected on how the issue of status and being viewed by others was intricately connected to her role as an Indian woman in her household. She described a few of the statements she heard while growing up: *"…make sure you're home on time, or else people are going to think we're letting you out alone, or don't sleep till late on a Saturday because women must be up early."*

Samiera further expressed how status is often associated with shame, reflecting on how a higher status may be used to compensate for what particular struggle the family may be experiencing at home. She described: *"…If you're suffering, people must think you're happy. If you're poor, don't complain. If your husband is violent, have 'sabr.' (patience)"* while further indicating the contrast between her family's public and private lives: *"…it felt like life at home was so different to the faces [my family] showed the world."*

While most participants reflected on how the topic of status was communicated to them, Ayesha reflected on how maintaining a high status was an unspoken agreement in her household. She described: *"…it's all unspoken hey. So, like, these are not values even spoken out a lot. But like, as a conscious and aware child, you pick up on them very easily as you go through life,"* Other participants such as Firdaus described how her parents openly displayed their high status, especially for others to see: *"…I mean look at all my siblings – we're all*

successful and working. As soon as you enter my parents' house, you immediately see all of our graduation pictures hanging on the front wall."

Firdaus expressed the role of skin-colour within Indian communities and how it was also tied to status. Her parents' own experiences of being darker-skinned earned them a lower status than their fairer-skinned counterparts growing up. She described how this translated into their own fears of using certain beauty products to ensure that she wouldn't be dark-skinned today:

> [My mother] was scared that I'd be dark, growing up. 'Cos you know, being Indian and Muslim AND now being dark -you're doomed. Nobody would marry you. I remember the once my grandmother told my mother that she must start using lemon juice on her face to lighten her complexion. And she did!

Of significance, Ayesha expressed how these experiences of status later came to impact the full expression of her needs and thus identity. She described:

> I feel like I never got to be a child. Like, not the child they wanted me to be, but like an ACTUAL child, you know? Like, I wasn't allowed to have an opinion, I wasn't allowed to go to my cousins when I had a hard day. All I was meant to do was stick my head in my books and make sure that I'm not offending anybody or ruining our status.

These responses reflected how participants were negatively impacted by consciously and unconsciously transmitted communication about upholding 'status' within their own lives. Across responses, they conveyed how a disavowal of their own needs later came to impact their relationships with others and themselves. This can be understood as impacting on their identities, as discussed below, resulting in what can be understood as a non-cohesive sense of self.

4.2.4 Theme 4: Identity

4.2.4.1 The struggle between the 'individual self,' versus the 'collective self.'

Samiera reflected on her parents' hopes and dreams for her and how this caused an inherent conflict within her identity. She expressed, with a tone of frustration how their hopes and dreams for her were disguised as parental love: "…*they didn't want what was best for me. They've just always wanted what's best for THEM.*" Samiera went on further to depict this conflict which exists for many Indian women and described the following: "…*what makes me happy is not what makes [my parents] happy and vice versa. So, whose happiness do we choose? It's better that I'm happy by myself and they're happy by themselves. Everybody can survive that way."*

Ayesha described her difficulties in maintaining a coherent sense of self within the different contexts she occupied:

> I feel like I lead to completely separate lives. When I'm with my friends, I'm the carefree me and I'm happy and I don't need to worry about what I say or how they'll see me because like, they just get me. But then as soon as I go home, my parents are so strict and I have to make sure I pray on time and clean up the house and just be like, this obliging daughter who they can be proud of.

This can be seen as contributing to Ayesha's sense of fear around what the correct life choices to make were:

> I feel like I want to be my own person, but like I also don't know who or what that even is. Half of me wants to leave the nest and actually spread my wings and the other half is just absolutely terrified.

Firdaus also reflected on her difficulty in maintaining a coherent sense of self, describing how she had to sacrifice a part of herself, for her parents' approval. She expressed with a sense of despondency:

> growing up I always wanted to be my own person and do my own thing, like if I could I would be some famous chef today. I know I could've done it, but unfortunately you have to also be who your parents want you to be, as an Indian woman.

Of significance, Samiera further went on to discuss the struggles she faced between her individual self-versus collective self, leading her to then choose a more empowered individual lifestyle, aligned with her own hopes and dreams: *"When I was a teen, I was so desperate for their approval that I would try to please them by being the good A student. [Today] I don't listen to what my parents have to say."* She also discussed how her individuality has come to impact the way she is viewed by her family:

> [I'm seen as the] 'black sheep' or the odd one out. I'm definitely not like them. And I prefer that, because they must learn how to think differently. They're so closed-minded and it bothers me. Like of course I now understand their own histories of trauma and whatever, but does that even justify it?

Divya described how the expectation of taking care of everybody aside from herself eventually impacted on her:

> your body can't budge anymore. You just can't carry the weight of the world anymore. That's how I felt. So, I went to Thailand because I was tired of taking care of everybody – my parents, my ex-husband, his parents. That was the first time I ACTUALLY started paying attention to me and not the me who everybody else thought I was, but the real me.

Therefore, the abovementioned findings indicate that participants experienced a fundamental conflict between the various 'selves' they portrayed to others, in order to accommodate for both the obligations placed on them culturally, while also attempting to fulfil their own needs and develop a healthy sense of an individuated identity.

4.2.4.2 Shame and guilt. Participants expressed their guilt in both implicit and explicit ways. For example, Ayesha, while discussing her parents, described more openly that:

> They make me feel anxious, but also deeply ashamed and guilty. And I didn't even do anything wrong! But like I feel so much of shame for even desiring a life which looks different to the dreams of my parents.

She also went on further to demonstrate her conflicting feelings, by describing her parents' good intentions for her: *"...at the end of the day, maybe all they want for me is just for me to be happy and safe."*

Firdaus seemed to express her guilt regarding her conflicting feelings towards her parents more implicitly: *"I still love my parents, don't get me wrong, but we still grew up feeling like we weren't allowed to be who we wanted to be, you understand?"* Her shame can also be understood as translating into her choosing not to share her passion for belly-dancing with her parents, for fear of their disapproval: *"I just felt like they would see me as like a 'loose girl,' you know?"*

Divya described the associated shame of being divorced within the Indian community:

> [My parents] felt very ashamed. I don't think they told anybody for a good few months until they couldn't hide it anymore. For them, being a divorced woman

without children is like being a failure. Like if you're not married and a mother, then who are you?

Thus, the feelings of shame and guilt formed a fundamental component across responses, colouring participants' identities in various ways and could be traced back to parenting styles, culture, rigid mindsets and perpetuated consequences of the South African Indian history.

4.2.4.3 Perfectionism. Samiera described the high standards she faced growing up, regarding the expectation placed on her to fulfil the role of being the 'perfect' Indian daughter. She reflected on her parent's view of what the 'perfect' daughter looked like, by providing an example of her sister: *"It's already my sister – intelligent, respectful and getting married to a nice Muslim Indian man next month. My parents speak about her as if I don't exist."*

Ayesha shared how her parents' high expectations of her academic success later came to impact on her mental health: *"I struggle with perfectionism even till today. But I never knew it until I had a panic attack last year."* She further shared how perfectionism is associated with shame within her family, describing how she withheld many of her own struggles, due to a fear that she would bring shame upon her family for speaking up: *"I'm not allowed to vent or ask anybody for help or confide in my aunts."*

This perfectionism can also be understood as impacting on Indian daughters' identities. Ayesha shared, with a tone of frustration how she is often viewed by family members:

I feel like when I show up at functions and around my aunties, I have to always be perfect. If I've gained weight, they'll tell my mother and then she'll tell me and them

> very subtly insinuate that I should watch what I eat or she'll give me big eyes if I ask for takeout's during the week. Like, I can never just BE.

On the other hand, Divya expressed, with a tone of empowerment how she has overcome the false idea of being perfect, through choosing to get divorced from her ex-husband. She reflected on her identity today:

> I'm a free woman and I've given myself permission to make my own mistakes and mess up. I'm not perfect and thank God for that. I don't need to fit THEIR mould of being this decent, respectable and obliging woman.

The above-mentioned responses reflect that participants have grappled with perfectionism in various ways and how it is very much interwoven with cultural expectations placed on Indian women. While the majority of participants reflected on their struggles with perfectionism, some participants also described how growing up with this imposed value later became a breakthrough of empowerment and overcoming for them.

4.2.5 Theme 5: Breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma

4.2.5.1 Integrating collectivism with individualism. From the interviews conducted, social media appeared to provide the participants with a sense of belonging and a platform for shared experiences, especially amongst the community of Indian women. Ayesha described how following accounts which speak of intergenerational trauma have particularly helped her: "…*they're always speaking about independence and almost validating your own emotions. They've helped me so much."*

Of significance, participants also critically questioned the norms and values they were raised with, disagreeing with what has been commonly misunderstood as being 'culture.' For example, Firdaus in refuting the differing status attributed to both Indian males and females went on to express: *"…what is respect of others without true respect for oneself?"* She went

further on to question the 'freedom' attained by Indian women today and whether it was actually enough:

> Look, we do have more freedom than for example my mother and grandmothers had back in the day. But is it enough? I mean, we can work and earn money and do blah blah blah, but are we allowed to be ourselves?

In facing divorce, Divya relayed her experiences on how her identity had changed over time from only pleasing her parents, to choosing to take better care of herself:

> [I'm definitely] more critical of which aspects of culture I want to follow for myself and not treating everything as if it's religion. Take divorce for example. It's religiously allowed, but culture makes it so hard and stigmatised. So, I obviously still practice my faith with them, just the other day we all went to the temple together to tie strings, but I also have boundaries with them. I won't just tolerate any conversation or allow them to easily tell me how to live. And I do it respectfully – I'm not rude at all. They are the way they are for a reason and that's okay, but it's just not how I am and that's okay too.

Samiera described how, from a young age, she consciously chose to think and perceive the world with a renewed sense of freedom and independence. She chose to break the cycle of mistrust which had been transmitted within her lineage, contributing to her parents' suspiciousness of those from other races:

> I've broken that cycle hey. My best friends are all from different races and I just don't even care what race somebody is. My philosophy is that if somebody is a good person, it doesn't matter what race they actually are.

Samiera's choice of having a white boyfriend could also be understood as an act of breaking intergenerational trauma today: *"my partner is also white, so over time my parents*

have just had to accept him. I made sure they did – if they didn't, they would've lost me and so that was their only choice."

Of significance, Samiera also described, with a tone of pride and empowerment the actions she took to discuss the trauma which women of colour face. She described her efforts: *"I started my own support group for women of colour, who, just like me have faced similar resistance from their parents and needed to hear others' stories."* She further went on to share the type of content shared within these groups:

> we talk about how much we've overcome, what it means to be Indian, the real stories of our grandparents and all that stuff? So that's exactly what I share in my group. We're like a community of like-minded souls with similar experiences and upbringings who support each other and cheer each other along the way.

Three of the participants detailed how they chose to broke the cycle of intergenerational trauma, while the remaining two spoke in greater detail about the continuous struggles they still face with regards to forging and negotiating their identity. The process of identity development can be understood as a continuous negotiation between ones collectivistic versus individualistic identities and this was reflected amongst the participants who may still be findings ways of merging the two together. Furthermore, the above-mentioned direct quotes indicate that participants all understand the process of breaking intergenerational trauma differently. This is impacted by the unique traumas transmitted to them and how this in turn, has shaped their identity development. While some participants engaged in more explicit efforts to break free from the psychological enmeshment of intergenerational trauma, other participants were less overt, but still impactful in changing their own internal narratives, mental models and choices.

4.3 Conclusion

In conclusion and using thematic analysis, I organised the data into five themes. The first theme highlighted participants' perspectives of their own family's unique Indian history which elaborated more on rigid and survival mindsets, alongside the trauma of displacement. In the second theme, I illustrated the content of intergenerational trauma, including the impact of parenting styles on daughters' lived experiences; and intergenerational dreams of educational success rigidly passed on to children. In the third theme, participants discussed in greater detail how culture impacted their sense of self, with an emphasis on the dictates of the role of Indian women in society; status; and a disconnect from authenticity to uphold cultural expectations. The fourth theme highlighted identity and participants' struggles between their 'individual' versus 'collective' selves. Finally, in the fifth theme, breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma was discussed, elaborating more on the various processes involved in integrating individualism with collectivism. The next chapter is followed by a more comprehensive discussion of the findings, integrated with theory and relevant literature.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The focus of this study was an exploration of young South African Indian women's lived experiences of intergenerational transmission of trauma in the post-apartheid context. In this chapter, the researcher illuminates the findings of the study as discussed in chapter 4, by integrating them with historical trauma theory and relevant literature. This chapter draws parallels between the current findings and existing literature and will further answer the research questions that guided the study. Although the five themes were presented separately, all themes can be understood as being related to one another. Thus, significant connections are made between both major themes and sub-themes throughout the discussion. The discussion seeks to address the overarching research aim and objectives. As a result, the researcher will begin this chapter by revising the aim and objectives of the study. Following a discussion of the themes, a reflexive piece is also presented, in which the researcher addresses how assumptions, background, and culture may have influenced this research project.

5.2 A review of the research aim and objectives

The principal aim of this study was to explore how the lived experiences of intergenerational trauma across Indian families may inform the Indian woman's identity today. The objectives directing the aim of this study include an exploration of Indian daughters' perceived experiences of being raised in a South African Indian home; identifying the multiple ways in which trauma is transmitted from one generation to the next generation's identity; and exploring how this may inform the Indian woman's identity development in post-apartheid South Africa.

5.3 South African Indian history

Before delving into the mechanisms of trauma transmission as well as how it informed the South African Indian woman's identity today, it was crucial that the researcher gained deeper insight into participants' perceived understandings of their parents' histories. Only once the relevance of these unique histories and traumas was illuminated, could the researcher delve deeper into each participant's lived experience of being raised in a South African Indian home. The relevance of the history of apartheid and displacement in South African Indian daughters' identities today can be further substantiated by Sotero's (2006) Historical Trauma Theory, which was used as the theoretical framework to guide this study. Historical trauma theory was beneficial in depicting how trauma is transmitted across generations, as it poignantly captures complex forms of exposure to trauma that remains unresolved as a successive process.

The second theoretical framework underpinning historical trauma theory is political/economic theory which can be used to address the political, economic and structural determinants of health and disease (Sotero, 2006). The political, economic and structural determinants under focus are the impact which slavery under colonial rule, alongside apartheid have on subsequent Indian generations, thereby impacting on parenting styles and mental models today. In depicting the unique histories of South African Indians, it is noteworthy to point out that they are living in the aftermath of an oppressive and traumatic regime. This extends far beyond just the apartheid era, with over 80% of slaves being Indians during the Dutch colonial era (Mountain, 2004). There is hence a strong background of historical trauma of slavery and trauma of displacement in relation to the South African Indian population, which was further confirmed across participants' responses (Desai & Vahed, 2019).

In portraying the force of intergenerational trauma and how ways of being are transmitted across generations, a few participants reflected on how their parents' mindsets had not really changed, even though they were now living in a democratic South Africa. For example, Samiera shared:

> if a white person gets a job, my father will scream and shout and say 'It's only because he's white.' Sometimes it still feels like apartheid is still going on because of how my parents react" and, "It's almost like apartheid made them all live in this small little world and they just never came out of it, even after apartheid finished.

Prager's (2015) argument supports these findings, illustrating the long-term consequences of trauma and describing that the harm caused by apartheid can be understood as being inflicted upon all South Africans and is regarded as a psychic trauma, inflicting continuous traumatic injury on the entire nation. Research conducted within the South African context by Gobodo-Madikizela (2008) further confirms this and indicated that parents who directly endured apartheid were also more likely to be more distrustful, suspicious and hold varying degrees of anger towards those of other races today, which thereby impacted on their parenting styles and the values/thought patterns passed down to their children.

These previous findings were further confirmed by participants' reflections on their parents' rigid mindsets today. For example, Ayesha detailed how her father still adopts a mindset of counter-racism as a means of coping with the trauma he personally endured during apartheid: "*It was like after apartheid, they trusted absolutely nobody and they'll feel sorry for anybody. He can't show empathy for other people because he feels like they all suffered equally and that white people should suffer today.*" According to Reimann and Konig (2017), rigid mind-sets and biases can be found as existing in many communities affected by

collective trauma and can be understood as impacting on South African Indian daughters' identities today. This was confirmed by Ayesha, in discussing how being raised witnessing her parents' mistrust of others later impacted on her own mistrust of those from other races:

> I had a white friend who would literally bring me spinach and cheese pies every Friday, 'cos her mother was the best baker and I would give it away to a beggar because I thought she was poisoning me or something.

Samiera shared how the mindset of fear was conveyed from her grandparents to her parents, thereby illustrating how trauma was transmitted within her lineage: "*My grandparents were super fearful and aggressive…then I feel like when my parents got married, my grandfather's ways just rubbed off on my father and now he is also exactly the same.*"

Reimann and Konig's (2017) findings support participants' responses, indicating that like an individual, a community which is traumatised may struggle to develop healthy levels of empathy. This may serve to further reinforce means of self-protection, adopting a 'survival mindset,' excessive fear and possible disregard for 'the other.' Adopting survival mindsets formed another crucial theme that emerged from participants' responses. Ayesha shared how her own parents' fears of her facing financial struggle, later contributed to the pressures she faced to receive tertiary education, which impacted her own mental health. She shared: "*I'm always conflicted, because I know they want the best for me, but like, they have a survival mindset you know.*"

Of significance, although most participants were raised in households wherein experiences of displacement were openly discussed, Samiera shared that the trauma of displacement was something never directly voiced by her grandparents. She indicated: "*They never really spoke about it."* Aarts (1998) refers to this as 'the conspiracy of silencing.' This

phenomenon refers to the ways in which trauma is transmitted in families and the powerful effects that this unspoken silence can have across generations. Despite this, Samiera still described how she later came to bear witness to their uneasiness in interacting with individuals from other races. Herman (1992) supports this notion and discusses that whereby the aim of silence is to protect the child from the experiences of the parents, children come to unconsciously bear witness to the unresolved traumas of the parent nonetheless.

An understanding of parental mindsets can be used to further emphasise perceived Indian positionality and how many Indian families may attempt to reconstruct ideas of power for themselves today. This is especially after apartheid and the many experiences of their power being taken away from them through complicated overt and covert forms of exposure to trauma. Attempts at regaining power can hence be seen as filtering into parenting styles, mental constructs and ideas which come to define each Indian family today (Hiralal, 2013). It can hence be argued that rigid mindsets may serve as a means of coping with one's trauma-laden past, protecting older generations from the emotional repercussions of the various traumas endured (Reimann and Konig, 2017).

5.4 Intergenerational trauma

South African Indian history can therefore be understood as impacting parenting styles, mental models and ultimately the transmission of intergenerational trauma. Freud quite accurately depicted how we are always being influenced by our family of origin. Henceforth, research following the advent of psychoanalytic theory builds upon this framework and argues that we also endure very similar traumas which our own ancestors endured, even decades later (Lemma, 2007). Danieli (1998) highlights this point, by indicating that parent-to-child transmission might even extend beyond the second generation to affect multiple generations thereafter.

The first theoretical framework upon which historical trauma theory is built is psychosocial theory which links disease to both physical and psychological stress, stemming from the social environment. In the context of the current research, the social environment under study was that of the young Indian woman and the family within which she was raised (Sotero, 2006). Using psychosocial theory as a lens, we can further our understanding of how intergenerational trauma and more specifically parenting styles and educational dreams of success rigidly placed on children impact Indian daughters' selfhood today. Participants reflected on their experiences with various tones of dismay, empathy, disbelief and frustration. A common theme that emerged from all participants' responses, was associated with how parenting styles adopted signaled mis-attunement to daughters' actual needs.

For example, Priyanka discussed how her father's anger was disproportionately expressed, while growing up. She described an incident of a male friend calling at home to speak to her, followed by her father's reaction. This can be understood as further signalling missed opportunities for father-daughter bonding through healthy communication of appropriate relational patterns. This is further reiterated by the work of Hiralal (2013) who indicates that within many Indian families, communication tends to be one-sided. Many Indian daughters hence feel restricted with regards to emotional expression and healthy communication within family units. This can be understood as contributing to the many different 'selves' which Indian women adopt, in order to accommodate for the expectations and obligations placed on them, in the various spaces they occupy.

Psychosocial theory illuminates these findings by portraying how parents often adopted very specific parenting styles, through a multifaceted lens of their own childhood experiences and traumas endured. However, these parenting styles are further intertwined with and given expression, through culture (Sotero, 2006). Participants' responses confirmed that trauma is transmitted through psychological, social and familial mechanisms, coloured

by cultural norms and scripts of what it means to be a 'decent and respectable Indian daughter' today. This finding is significant, as contrary to the majority of Western literature in this area, the current findings give expression to the significance which culture has on parenting styles, especially within the South African context. For example, the majority of Western literature focuses on parenting styles in isolation from context, culture, race and ethnicity. The current study illuminates how these aspects undeniably have an impact on the way in which one's parents thereby come to parent their children (Doucet & Rovers, 2010).

Within the South African Indian family setting, a mis-attunement to daughters' needs is further described in how the majority of participants reflected on how intergenerational dreams of success were rigidly placed on them by their parents. For example, Samiera shared how she faced the difficulty of trying to remain true to who she is, versus pleasing her parents and how this ultimately impacted on her career choice: "*Well, I wish I could've broken free from their hold completely, but my father did still manage to control what I studied. I did Engineering because his sister was an engineer and everybody always looked up to her.*" When probed about which career path aligned more truly to who she is, she described in more detail how her parents' view of success came to define the profession she settled for: "*I've always been interested in marketing, but hey that's not a real job for Indian parents.*"

The transmission of intergenerational dreams of success can be further explained by Volkan (2001), who suggests that there exists a noteworthy type of transgenerational transmission which pertains to the deposition of preconceived self or object image onto the developing child. In this way, the 'deposited image' becomes like a psychological gene, dictating the child's identity development trajectory. From the abovementioned findings, it can be reasonably assumed that parents imbued their children with the unconscious images and expectations of educational success placed on them during their own childhoods, which they may not have had the opportunity of fully realising. Volkan (2001) proposes that

transgenerational transmission is also a result of the unconscious psychological processes at play between parent and child, ultimately serving to influence the child's identity. These unconscious processes are very much related to the expectation placed on daughters to fulfil parents' unrealised hopes and dreams, bring honour and status to the family and serving as a means of 'overcoming' for the family, especially in light of their own traumatic past experiences. Similar to how rigid mindsets can be understood as serving a protective psychological function from traumatising emotional experiences from one's past, so too can educational dreams of success rigidly imposed on children be understood as a means of 'overcoming' traumatic pasts, for participant's parents (Reimann and Konig, 2017).

However, research conducted by Mishra and Satish (2017) indicates that educational dreams of success placed on children can also have a variety of positive implications. High expectations of educational attainment can also be understood as helping children attain financial stability in their own lives, helping them to explore the academic component of their identities in ways which couldn't be attained by their parents. Therefore, it must be considered that what is considered as 'trauma' for one population may be understood as serving certain benefits in other cultures.

5.5 Culture

Historical trauma theory gives credibility to how psychosocial theory and one's social environment come to impact the trauma experienced by subsequent generations. Within the unique home environment and intertwined with parenting styles adopted, is how culture is woven within the fabric of the Indian daughters' identities and impacts her lived experience today (Sotero, 2006). However, because 'trauma' is a uniquely subjective experience and is often misrepresented as 'culture,' discussions surrounding the transmission of intergenerational trauma are still lacking, especially within the South African context (Kira, 2001).

In discussing how cultural dynamics impact them, participants provided conflicting views between what they personally enjoyed about being South African Indians, alongside the struggles they personally endured. For example, Divya expressed how she values her family's inter-connectedness, how caring they are and how she feels like she has created deep and meaningful bonds with them over time, while Priyanka shared how her Indian heritage is something she still carries with her wherever she goes and how she values her family's role in her life. On the other hand, Firdaus reflected difficulty in considering what she personally appreciates about being Indian, elaborating further that she feels like as an Indian woman, she is always at war with somebody or something. This conflict between a love and deep appreciation for one's heritage, together with a conflicted lived experience of what can be understood as 'unhealthy ways of being' is further supported by Hiralal's (2013) findings. According to Hiralal (2013), Indians who migrated from India to South Africa brought with them their religion, language, values, beliefs, culture and social practices and these traditions allowed Indians to maintain their specific cultural identity as a minority group. Nevertheless, Indians also experienced slavery, displacement and identity confusion which are all understood as impacting on their own lived experiences today and resulting in unhealthy ways of coping. This conflict between love for one's heritage, versus being internally conflicted regarding personal experiences, was evident throughout participants' responses.

All the participants reflected on what it meant for them to be a South African Indian female. Participants shared on lived experiences of how females are often treated significantly differently from their male counterparts within the Indian community, with specific reference to how this is informed by parenting styles. Participants expressed how being raised with an inherent sense of female inferiority later came to impact their own lived experiences. For example, Firdaus further reflected on how these experiences of being raised as an Indian daughter impacted her own relationships later in life. She discussed how her

view of men was shaped by her experience of her father and described how it affected her relationships with other men: "*I put up with my ex-boyfriend's abuse for so long because I thought it was normal. Scary hey!*" In line with this discussion, she further went on to describe her experiences of being an obliging woman around the men in her life: *"[I am so] scared of even saying No to men, actually. And not even just boyfriends hey, but even like uncles. If my uncle says the sky is purple, I just nod my head and carry on.*"

The differences between how males and females are treated within the Indian community is further confirmed by Hiralal (2013), who discussed how women have been seen as responsible for the generational preservation and passing-on of culture, tradition and national identity. In this way, the stark contrast between how males and females are treated can be understood as an aspect of Indian culture, transmitted across multiple generations through parenting styles and collective narratives. The Indian woman is viewed as a 'decent, 'respectable' and 'abiding' daughter and housewife and these roles come to mould how her identity is both viewed by society and herself, in general (Hiralal, 2013).

In this manner, the role of Indian women in society is very much linked to another cultural conception, which is the attainment of status (Hoosain, 2013). South African Indian daughters revealed how the pressure of upholding this status was communicated within their family contexts. Divya reflected on how the issue of status and being viewed by others was intricately connected to her role as an Indian woman in her household. She shared a few of the statements she internalised while growing up: *"…make sure you're home on time, or else people are going to think we're letting you out alone, or don't sleep till late on a Saturday because women must be up early.*" Ayesha reflected on how maintaining a high status was an unspoken agreement in her household. She described: *"…it's all unspoken hey. So, like, these are not values even spoken out a lot. But like, as a conscious and aware child, you pick up on them very easily as you go through life,*" In this way, both the spoken, alongside the

unspoken expectations placed on daughters' can be seen as impacting their life choices and identities today.

For the young Indian woman, the multiple roles which she plays may include being a respectable and obliging daughter to her parents; holding the status, tradition, culture and religion which she is born into in high regard; being a student at school or a tertiary institution; and being a wife, mother and employee all at the very same time (Hiralal, 2013). Hence, maintaining a high status is a common familial obligation within Indian communities, as though to compensate for generational traumatic experiences of slavery, displacement and apartheid. Moller et al. (2016) argue that many Indian families use their status as a means of 'social capital,' earning them privileges within the community. These privileges extend to a highly considered reputation, the community offering help and support during times of need and is also used as a means of earning one's daughters' more suitable marriage proposals, often from wealthy men.

The role of status can be understood as impacting on the lived experiences of daughters, by emphasising familial approval over an individuated identity. Of significance, Ayesha expressed how these experiences of status later came to impact her. She described:

> I feel like I never got to be a child. Like, not the child they wanted me to be, but like an ACTUAL child, you know? Like, I wasn't allowed to have an opinion, I wasn't allowed to go to my cousins when I had a hard day. All I was meant to do was stick my head in my books and make sure that I'm not offending anybody or ruining our status.

The abovementioned discussion of South African Indian history and intergenerational trauma depict the mechanisms of trauma transmission, facilitated through both culture and parenting styles. Collective narratives of hope, despair, loss and victimhood can be

understood as being intertwined with cultural values and informing specific parenting styles adopted (Becker, 2009). These findings are significant for this area of research. The majority of research conducted in the area of parenting styles and trauma tends to de-emphasise the role of both culture and context. For example, Baumrind's (1967) seminal theory on parenting styles negates a focus on culture and its intricate impact on parenting styles adopted. Similarly, research on trauma grounded in psychoanalytic theory neglects culture in explicating how trauma is both transmitted and experienced (Lemma, 2007). The current findings highlight the importance of considering parenting styles, especially within the South African context, which is coloured by a variety of races, cultures and ethnicities.

Using Sotero's (2006) historical trauma theory and the theoretical frameworks of economic/political theory and psychosocial theory, our understanding of the South African Indian daughter's lineage, as well as the environment within she was raised can be more intricately understood. Therefore, a discussion regarding how these come together to inform her identity today naturally follows.

5.6 Identity

The third theoretical framework underpinning Historical Trauma Theory is social/ecological systems theory which recognises the multi-level dynamics of the past and present, alongside life course factors in disease causation (Sotero, 2006). This can be used to illuminate how the young Indian woman's current identity is impacted upon by a variety of generational factors, with an appreciation of how identity, especially within her lineage, has changed over time.

In discussing what it means to be a South African Indian woman today, almost all participants reflected on the struggles they underwent between their 'individual' and 'collective' selves. This conflict was consistently presented across participants' responses. For example, Samiera described: "*what makes me happy is not what makes [my parents]*

happy and vice versa. So, whose happiness do we choose? It's better that I'm happy by myself and they're happy by themselves. Everybody can survive that way."

Of significance, Samiera further went on to discuss the struggles she faced between her individual self-versus collective self, leading her to then choose a more empowered individual lifestyle, aligned with her own hopes and dreams: "*When I was a teen, I was so desperate for their approval that I would try to please them by being the good A student. [Today] I don't listen to what my parents have to say*." She also discussed how her individuality has come to impact the way she is viewed by her family:

> [I'm seen as the] 'black sheep' or the odd one out. I'm definitely not like them. And I prefer that, because they must learn how to think differently. They're so closed-minded and it bothers me. Like of course I now understand their own histories of trauma and whatever, but does that even justify it?

These findings can be further understood in light of Myhra's work (2011), which confirms that this multifaceted identity is demonstrated amongst Indian women and further highlighted by the many 'selves' which exist all simultaneously, allowing her to function both within her personal relationships, as well as broader society at large. Maintaining an equal balance between the two can prove challenging, sometimes causing her to compromise between these identities as a means of 'fitting in' and finding a sense of belonging. Research conducted by Meer (1972) exemplifies this even further, indicating that many younger women in India often forego their own personal hopes and dreams of travelling overseas or marrying a man out of their own race or caste simply for the sake of their collective selves and preserving their tradition and status within their family. For those who are brave enough to venture into more individual choices, they often risk family approval and support of their choices and personal lifestyles.

The theme of shame and guilt was also evident throughout responses. Divya described the associated shame of being divorced within the Indian community:

> [My parents] felt very ashamed. I don't think they told anybody for a good few months until they couldn't hide it anymore. For them, being a divorced woman without children is like being a failure. Like if you're not married and a mother, then who are you?

These findings are supported by Hiralal (2013), who discusses that the conflict between her individual and collective selves can hence contribute to strong feelings of shame and guilt for the Indian daughter, who secretly feels like she is letting her parents down. This shame and guilt are only further perpetuated through stories of collective retelling of the hardship and sacrifices which many Indian parents endured, to afford their children more decent lives and a good education today. In contrast to the narratives of loss, despair and victimhood, the collective narratives of shame and guilt are less overt and impact on the identities of descendants through rigid rules and obligations imposed. These rigid rules and obligations contain within them an underlying desire to protect the child from perceived harms and threats which the parent may have personally endured or witnessed growing up (Becker, 2009). Thus, Divya's parents' response could be understood as perpetuating the narrative of shame for fear of the judgement cast upon divorced women within the Indian community.

In describing how South African Indian daughters strived for their family's approval, the sub-theme of perfectionism coloured many participants' reflections. For example, Ayesha shared, with a tone of frustration how she is often viewed by family members:

> *I feel like when I show up at functions and around my aunties, I have to always be perfect. If I've gained weight, they'll tell my mother and then she'll tell me and them*

very subtly insinuate that I should watch what I eat or she'll give me big eyes if I ask for takeout's during the week. Like, I can never just BE.

Such perfectionism can be further substantiated by Hiralal (2013) who discusses that such shame and guilt can hence cause an even further divide in the Indian woman's identity, causing her to strive for unhealthy levels of perfection in multiple areas - her marriage, raising her children and even her chosen field of study, at the cost of her 'true' self.

5.7 Breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma

The findings of the current research highlight the mechanisms of trauma transmission, pointing to the psychological, social and familial mechanisms through which trauma is passed down through generations. However, despite the impact of intergenerational trauma transmitted, South African Indian daughters also critically questioned the norms and values they were raised with, disagreeing with what has been commonly misunderstood as being 'culture.' From these findings, it can be reasonably inferred that both first and second generation South African Indian women are actively engaging in creating newer, more healthier narratives regarding themselves and their identities. This will hopefully impact on their own stories of retelling one day, thereby influencing both their parenting styles and the resultant lived experiences of their own children.

For example, Divya expressed with a tone of empowerment how she has overcome the false idea of being perfect, through choosing to get divorced from her ex-husband. She reflected on her identity today:

> I'm a free woman and I've given myself permission to make my own mistakes and mess up. I'm not perfect and thank God for that. I don't need to fit THEIR mould of being this decent, respectable and obliging woman.

What can be understood as 'breaking intergenerational trauma' is further exemplified by Desai and Vahed (2019) who argue that the Indian woman's identity within a more global

context exerts pressure for a reconfiguration of roles, responsibilities and attitudes concerning Indian womanhood and their place in conventional households. In line with this, all of the participants reflected themes of empowerment across their responses, in re-negotiating their identities. This is further emphasised by Hajratwala (2009) who argues that modern Indian women are also more likely to contest outdated patriarchal norms and assert their rights to lead their own lives. Education is viewed as a tool of power and agency, helping develop more critical and empowering mindsets, allowing the Indian woman greater self-awareness and independence (Laher et al., 2019).

For example, Firdaus adopted a powerful critical stance and questioned the 'freedom' attained by Indian women today and whether it was actually enough:

> Look, we do have more freedom than for example my mother and grandmothers had back in the day. But is it enough? I mean, we can work and earn money and do blah blah blah, but are we allowed to be ourselves?

Of significance, Samiera also described, with a tone of pride and empowerment the actions she took to discuss the trauma which women of colour face. This can be understood as making conscious efforts towards breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma. She described her efforts: *"…I started my own support group for women of colour, who, just like me have faced similar resistance from their parents and needed to hear others' stories…*"

According to Hoosain (2013), agency refers to an individual's capability to change his or her circumstances. Participants can hence be understood as being active agents in changing the narratives of their own lives. The ripple-effects of this provide a more hopeful and positive outlook for generations to follow. Research conducted by Hoosain (2013) suggests that accounts of history are important in educating current generations about their lineage and also has an effect of helping build inner strength, agency and resilience for current generations today. The shift in the education and acknowledgement

of the Indian woman as an individual, rather than in relation to the man exemplifies such shifts. Alongside this shift, are the accompanying efforts made by the Indian daughter in questioning outdated norms, choosing for herself and leading a life which is in greater alignment with who she authentically is, as opposed to who her family expects of her to be (Hoosain, 2013).

The 'breaking of intergenerational trauma' can be linked to a concept known as posttraumatic growth. Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) speak about posttraumatic growth and how some individuals and communities may flourish, following a traumatic incident. Post-traumatic growth is the experience of positive change that occurs as a result of the struggle with highly challenging life struggles. It manifests in a variety of ways, including an increased appreciation for life, more meaningful relationships and an increased sense of personal strength. This model, as proposed by Tedeschi and Calhoun (2004) indicates that although communities can be understood as facing trauma following apartheid, it is also possible for post-traumatic growth to occur. The above findings indicate that participants may be actively engaging in their own internal processes of posttraumatic growth, through the questioning of cultural norms, rules and expectations, as well as engaging in such conversations.

Researchers such as Dickerson and Fish, (2009) argue that it is pertinent that South Africa's unique past is not forgotten, as it is our past which comes to influence much of our identities and ways of being today. However, the current research serves to confirm that although identity formation is influenced by one's histories and ways of being, transmitted across generations through parenting styles, culture and mental models, current re-negotiation of one's integrated identity today can also be seen as impacting who one chooses to become.

5.8 Reflexivity

According to Willig (2013), reflexivity is an integral aspect of research, allowing us to intentionally reflect on how the researcher comes to influence both the research process and findings. In the following subsections, I have reflected on how my choice of research topic, the research process and my findings may have been impacted by my own past experiences and preconceived assumptions.

5.8.1 Research topic

I am a 30-year-old second generation South African Indian woman, who was born in Johannesburg South Africa. Growing up in a primarily Indian, faith-based community, I consider myself naive to how Indian positionality was both impacted by the world around me, as well as later came to impact my own worldviews and mental models. Growing up, I was rarely exposed to non-white individuals and my schooling career composed of making friends with other Indian or black individuals, who like me, had also grown up in quite a sheltered home and community.

Then, when I attended first year university at Wits, I experienced what can be referred to as a 'culture-shock' and found that I had very little social skills and knowledge about interacting with those from other races, including white individuals. Up until then, my assumptions concerning those of other races were primarily influenced by the personal stories of enduring trauma and upholding a high status within the Indian, Muslim community which both my parents had imbued me with. This translated into me viewing individuals from other races as suspicious, through the eyes of mistrust and as inherently 'different' from me. As a result of these preconceived notions, I found myself struggling to interact with individuals of other races during my initial university years and usually felt myself receding into the background, when placed in groups or when required of me to actively participate in class discussions with others.

As I progressed through university, my assumptions about individuals from other races softened and I found myself developing my own identity, ideas and opinions about both others and the world around me. However, this also resulted in an inherent conflict which I faced, between the life I lived externally which could be understood as being more 'care-free' and individuated and the guilt I felt for partially abandoning the life I was required to lead back home and within my community at large.

As I became more vocal about my personal struggles with other friends who grew up in similar environments as I did, I realised that I was not alone and that there existed a shared history between many first and second-generation Indian daughters. Thus, my choice of topic was largely influenced by my own experiences of being raised as a South African Indian woman in post-apartheid South Africa.

My primary intention behind conducting the current research included exploring more intricately the experiences of South African Indian women. However, I found that as I interacted with each participant, I was also able to process my own experiences. Rather than just conducting a research study for the purposes of completing my Master's degree, the current study served as a platform to express the many voices of the South African Indian woman, thereby giving expression to a topic which is otherwise considered as taboo within the Indian community at large. I believe that through these experiences, the current research was imbued with a deeper sense of meaning and purpose. Thus, although my research has personal significance for me, I am also grateful that it assisted participants in sharing their own experiences in a safe and encouraging environment.

5.8.2 Influence on research findings and analysis

During the semi-structured interviews, I realised how my own preconceived assumptions came to influence the findings and my analysis of the data. When I interviewed each participant, I found myself listening keenly to their own experiences while also feeling

deeply connected to what they shared. In this way, there existed a deep resonance between both participant and researcher, which was useful in allowing for meaningful rapport to occur. However, I also realised that this could have potentially impacted on the findings and my analysis of the data. There were instances where I felt that I had already understood what the participant meant, without probing deeper and this was due to my own preconceived notions and understandings of what they were communicating at the time. This was pointed out to me by my supervisor and I had to re-read each transcript to ensure that I was accurately capturing the true depth of participants' experiences, rather than my own. I realised that 'trauma' took on a very nuanced meaning for each participant and that discussions around trauma were often intertwined with 'culture' and normal ways of being. A deeper awareness of these unique perspectives allowed me to listen more deeply to each participant's understanding and experience of trauma, instead of imposing my own (Fassinger, 2005).

Therefore, I related back to my own journal and reflexivity process which I followed both during, as well as after each interview process. As each participant reflected on their experiences, I found myself experiencing significant counter-transference and feeling their emotions of frustration, anger, empathy and sadness, on my part. Thus, in an attempt to accurately convey the depth of tone, emotion and experiences of each participant, I attempted to capture these throughout my data analysis, while still continuously ensuring that the responses were a reflection of participants experiences, rather than my own. I thereby ensured that I continuously maintained a professional stance and kept the research topic in mind at all times, thereby allowing me to remain as objective as possible (Holt, 2011).

Throughout the process of data collection and analysis, I was encouraged to make use of therapeutic skill, theory and critical engagement in order to remain as objective as possible, while still appreciating that the findings of the current study are nevertheless, still a co-construction of both my own reality, alongside those of my participants. I realised that a

few of my biases included assumptions that all South African Indians experienced similar traumas and childhoods, coloured by a conflict between our 'individualistic' and 'collectivistic' selves. During each interview process, I also found myself being deeply reminded of my own childhood experiences and hence took the time out following each interview to process these emotions and memories which arose, with great self-compassion and patience.

I believe that through being able to deeply connect with participants, alongside my own identity as a South African Indian woman, I was able to build strong rapport with them, allowing for participants to feel trusting and safe enough to share their own experiences with me. This trust was furthermore conveyed, as I assured each participant that their responses would remain confidential. I also ensured that while I resonated with many participants' experiences, I did not personally share these with them, so as to further maintain a professional stance.

Finally, the current research further cemented within me the importance of speaking about our experiences as Indian women and I found myself feeling inspired and deeply encouraged by the participants' stories in their own choosing to pave healthier ways forward for themselves. This hence led me to feeling an enormous sense of both respect for my own Indian heritage, alongside pride for how current generations are actively participating in breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma.

5.9 Conclusion

Chapter five discussed the findings of the present study interpreted through the lens of historical trauma. The findings and the discussion chapters have answered the research question which guided the study. The answer to the primary research question is that the South African Indian daughter reflected a deep understanding, with various tones of empathy

and frustration that she was born into a lineage whereby her parents and grandparents experienced many traumas associated with displacement, slavery and apartheid. The Indian daughter experiences the resultant consequences of these traumas endured through the mechanisms of parenting styles adopted, collective narratives told and the unique social and cultural determinants of her upbringing. In answering the second research question, South African Indian daughters also face a conflict between both their 'individual' and 'collective' selves, which thereby colours their lived experiences. These further result in strong feelings of shame, guilt and perfectionism on her part. Of significance, many participants reflected on a breaking of such intergenerational trauma and actively participating in discussions and support groups aimed at empowering other Indian women and shedding light on shared core internal identity struggles. A section on reflexivity was then presented, where I explained how my subjective position and my past experiences of being raised as a second-generation South African Indian woman may have shaped my choice of research topic, my methods of data collection and analysis, and my interpretation of the findings. Chapter six presents a conclusion and recommendations for future studies, and further explains the limitations of the present study.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter will offer a summary of the findings and the concluding remarks. It will also explain the limitations of the present study and its contribution, and offer recommendations for future studies.

6.2 Overview of the findings and concluding remarks

In order to answer the primary research question, namely "What is the South African Indian woman's perceived experience of intergenerational trauma transmitted through her parents?", I will reflect on the major findings of the current study. Firstly, participants reflected on their parents' and grandparents' unique experiences of displacement and apartheid. In doing so, they further reflected on how their rigid mindsets and unique fears were cultivated, through the processes of these traumas. Participants further highlighted the role of culture in their own lives, which can be understood as serving as a significant mechanism through which certain values, alongside collective traumas were passed down to them. The results indicated that parents' traumas, interwoven with cultural values came together to inform their parenting styles and dreams of educational success which were rigidly placed on daughters.

In order to answer the secondary research question, namely "How has this perceived experience of intergenerational trauma shaped the young Indian woman's identity post-apartheid?" I will reflect on how the experiences detailed above come to impact on the lived experience of the South African Indian daughter today. Participants reflected on how they experienced a struggle between their 'individual' and 'collective' selves, associated shame and guilt, as well as perfectionism strivings. This impacted on their choice of romantic partners, courses of study and careers chosen and personal views of themselves.

Another major finding of the current study was that what is considered to be 'trauma' is still very much intertwined with 'culture,' thereby distorting perceptions of mental health and help-seeking behaviours. Alongside this key finding was how a few participants' chose to break the cycle of intergenerational trauma, by integrating collectivism with individualism and choosing to actively engage in efforts to create more healthier platforms for new narratives to emerge.

This research study recognises the unique challenges faced by South African Indian women in integrating their many different 'selves' within the various spaces they occupy. Much of the South African Indian woman's experience is still undocumented, with very few research articles delving into the extent and nature of intergenerational trauma and its impacts on identity today. Alongside this, there still exists a paucity of research on how culture, trauma and parenting styles all act together to impact on children's' identities today.

6.3 Limitations

There were a number of limitations identified in the study. South African Indian women from Johannesburg were included in this study. However, it is worthwhile mentioning that the experience of culture and hence what it means to be an Indian female varies across geographical location within the South African context. For example, there are distinct differences within the Indian culture amongst those living in Cape Town and Durban, in comparison to Indian women who were born and raised in Johannesburg. Furthermore, there also exists distinct differences between those of Indian descent, but who practice different religions. These points of variation can be taken into consideration in subsequent studies.

Parenting styles emerged as a noteworthy transmission route for transgenerational transmission of trauma in the experiences of the participants. While this was explored from

the experiences of the young Indian women in this study, it may be beneficial in future research to also explore this from the perspectives of Indian parents. However, a focus on parents' direct experiences of trauma and their own perceptions of how this informed their parenting styles would also be beneficial in adding more depth to the current literature. It may be argued that perceptions of parents' experiences may not accurately reflect the true extent and nature of parents' traumas endured. A first-hand account of traumas endured would be helpful in further tracing intergenerational trauma down lineages. Furthermore, due to personal experiences as well as understandings of trauma itself, it may be useful to study intergenerational trauma across both religion and culture. For example, there were some differences between the ways in which Muslim and Hindu participants expressed how they were raised and the resultant effects on their identities today.

A final limitation that I consider is how my social identity may have resulted in a biased interpretation of the findings, as well as data collection as participants might have responded with cultural bias and shared information that they thought the researcher might have wanted to hear. Given my experiences as a second-generation South African Indian daughter myself, I may have probed and interpreted certain aspects of the participants' narratives while neglecting others. However, I tried to remain as transparent as possible, by highlighting openly in section 5.7 ("Reflexivity") how both my identity and my background may have shaped the process of data collection and analysis.

6.4 Contributions

Regardless of the limitations outlined, this research study expands on and offers current knowledge, specifically on the multifaceted identities of South African Indian women. It thus contributes to the existing literature on intergenerational trauma and the identities of South African women, post-apartheid. Given that much of the work in this field has been conducted in Western contexts, such as the USA, the current study may be

particularly valuable in offering a non-Western perspective. Such perspectives may include how parenting styles, identity and trauma are understood, without the primary influence of culture, context, race and ethnicity. Secondly, by utilising semi-structured interviews, the study was able to depict participants' own lived experiences of intergenerational trauma on their identity. The study was able to give South African Indian women a voice, thereby challenging the notion that such topics should not be discussed, for fear of the cultural stigma which accompanies 'expressing one's opinion' and thus not conforming to the shared collective narrative through which inter-generational trauma is transmitted.

6.5 Recommendations for future studies

It would be interesting if future empirical studies including quantitative studies exploring the statistics of South African Indian women and resultant effects of intergenerational trauma such as mental health diagnoses are investigated. Additionally, it is recommended that future research focuses on attachment patterns and how this may influence intergenerational trauma and identity, in both parents and descendants. Reflecting on the findings of the present study, it is recommended that future research focus on 'a way forward' with regard to how South African Indian women may integrate collectivism with individualism and arrive at a more cohesive sense of self. If the above recommendations are followed, more information may be generated about intergenerational trauma, thus enabling the findings to be more meaningful.

It is also worth noting that when investigating trauma and mental illness within cultural communities, there tends to exist tension between what is considered to be 'culture,' versus what is considered 'pathology.' Therefore, this research was in line with hermeneutic phenomenology in capturing the lived experiences of Indian women, by emphasising their subjective experiences of how trauma may have been transmitted across their lineage. This was explored, rather than making use of a symptomology approach, in order to shed light on

participants' rich and detailed lived experiences. Therefore, research exploring the relationship between intergenerational trauma and mental illness more specifically may be considered in the future. Furthermore, psychological disorders can also be understood as manifesting in physical disease through unconscious intergenerational transmission of trauma, pointing to another pertinent area for future study.

6.6 Conclusion

The South African Indian family can be understood as being nuanced, enriched by different cultural, religious and traditional beliefs and value-systems. Within this complex-laden system, exists the young South African Indian woman who is often characterised by both her sense of individualism and her own desires, preferences and contributions to modern-day society; alongside her role and status within the family system and community to which she belongs (Hiralal, 2013). The principal aim of this study was to explore how the lived experiences of intergenerational trauma across Indian families may inform the Indian woman's identity today. Sotero's historical trauma theory, alongside other relevant literature formed the theoretical framework for the current study. Five participants were recruited through the non-probability procedure of snowball sampling. A semi-structured interview schedule was used to gather responses about participants' lived experiences. The data gathered was analysed using thematic analysis. The findings of the study highlighted that trauma is transmitted consciously and unconsciously across lineages through parenting styles; mental models and collective retelling of stories, which all intertwine with culture and impact on the South African Indian daughters' identity in various ways. Participants reflected on a re-negotiation of their identities, speaking to the various attempts at integrating both elements of individualism and collectivism today, in response to cultural and contemporary dictates on their sense of self.

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Appendix A – Participant information sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

An exploration of the intergenerational transmission of trauma on the lived experiences of young South African Indian women in Johannesburg.

Hello, my name is Zahraa Surtee and I am currently a Psychology Masters student at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria. You are being invited to take part in my research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you

understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take some time to read the following information carefully, which will explain the details of this research project. Please feel free to ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma across South African Indian families on young Indian women's identities today.

The overall aim of this study is to find out how this perceived experience of intergenerational trauma has impacted on young Indian women's identities today.

WHY HAVE YOU BEEN INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

- You will be invited to participate because you are an Indian woman
- You have also complied with the following:
    - You are proficient in English;
    - You are between the ages of 25-34 years old;
    - You are of Indian descent;
    - You have been raised in a household with a parent/s who are also of Indian descent;
    - You are a second/third generation Indian woman.
- You will be excluded if you are not of Indian descent, proficient in English, male or are a fourth/fifth generation Indian woman.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

You will be expected to participate in an interview with me. The interview may be conducted through an online platform such as Zoom or Google Meet. During this interview, I will ask you questions about your experience of intergenerational trauma. In this time, you will be

provided with the opportunity to be open and honest about your experiences. This interview will take approximately 45 to 60 minutes of your time. Permission to video record the interview will be asked. You will also be provided with the opportunity to ask questions regarding uncertainties or to express your feelings resulting from the interview.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason if you decide not to take part in the study without negative consequences or being penalised.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Anonymity will be ensured by keeping the identity of the research participant confidential and will not be associated with any data. Anonymity will further be ensured by ensuring that the participant's names and faces (in the case of video footage) will not be revealed. Furthermore, collected data will not be disclosed to any unauthorised persons. Confidentiality will be ensured by assigning code names/numbers to each participant, and that will be used in all research notes and documents. Findings from this data will be disseminated through conferences and publications. Reporting of findings will be anonymous. Only the researchers of this study will have access to the information.

Please note participant information will be kept confidential, except in cases where the researcher is legally obliged to report incidents such as abuse and suicide risk.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There will be no direct benefit for participation in this study. However, I hope that the information obtained from this study may contribute to understanding the intergenerational transmission of trauma on the lived experiences of young South African Indian women. This research can be seen as contributing to the body of knowledge on Intergenerational Trauma and the lived experiences of Indian women in South Africa.

WHAT ARE THE ANTICIPATED RISKS FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The risks may involve overburdening you with questions which may lead to emotional distress. Therefore, to ensure that no harm occurs, the researcher will be alert to discomfort to participants' emotions and sense of self, hence, allowing you to withdraw from the study should you so request. Furthermore, the researcher will be truthful about the purpose of the study, as well as the aims and objectives prior to the interview.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT THAT SOME FORM OF DISCOMFORT OCCUR AS A RESULT OF TAKING PART IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY?

If for any reason you are in distress or require debriefing due to the sensitivity of the research questions, you are welcome to contact the South African Depression and Anxiety Group's, 24-hour helpline on 0800 456 789 at no cost to you. Additionally, to ensure adequate support, should any discomfort arise during the interview, the researcher, as a student counselling psychologist shall attend to the participants to contain any form of presenting distress. Should you need assistance after hours you may contact SADAG on the UP careline 0800 747 747. SADAG offers peer support groups for students and may be contacted to benefit from peer support, as a result of any emotional discomfort that may be evoked.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Electronic information will be stored for period of 15 years. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable.

Participant information in hard copies of raw data will be stored in a lockup cabinet in a locked office cabinet and electronic data will be kept in a file that is password protected in the Department of Psychology

WHAT WILL THE RESEARCH DATA BE USED FOR?

Data gathered from the participant would be used for research purposes that include;

Dissertation, article publication, national and international conference presentations;

For administration purpose or policy briefs;

For further research to inform secondary data analysis.

WILL I BE PAID TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

No, you will not be paid to take part in this study. Airtime or Data bundle expenses will be covered by the researcher. This means there will be no costs involved to you, if you take part in this study. The data costs will be individualised depending on the mobile network utilised by the participant who agrees to participate in the study. The research will consider purchasing hourly data bundle rates for the participant.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL?

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Committee of Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria. A copy of the approval letter can be provided to you on request.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

The findings of the research study will be shared with you by **Zahraa Surtee** after one year or two years of completing the study.

WHO SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE CONCERN, COMPLAINT OR ANYTHING I SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE STUDY?

If you have questions about this study or you have experienced adverse effects as a result of participating in this study, you may contact the researcher whose contact information is provided below. If you have questions regarding the rights as a research participant, or if problems arise which you do not feel you can discuss with the researcher, please contact the supervisor, and contact details are below

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and in advance for participating in this study.

Researcher

Name: Zahraa Surtee

Contact number: 0718980190

Email address: Zahraa.surtee786@gmail.com

Supervisor

Name: Sharon Sibanda

Contact number: 0721385537

Email address: sharon.sibanda@up.ac.za

Appendix B – Letter of informed consent

An exploration of intergenerational transmission of trauma on the lived experiences of young South African Indian women in Johannesburg.

{ETHICAL APPROVAL NUMBER} (If available**)**

WRITTEN CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _____ (**participant name**), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

STATEMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE	NOT APPLICABLE
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, and without any consequences or penalties.			
I understand that information collected during the study will not be linked to my identity and I give permission to the researchers of this study to access the information.			
I understand that this study has been reviewed by and received ethics clearance from Research Ethics Committee Faculty of Humanities of the University of Pretoria, as well as for my data to be used for future research purposes.			
I understand that after the interviews, I will be allowed time for debriefing, as the researcher is also a Student Counselling Psychologist, where any difficult emotions which may arise will be contained. I will also be provided with the contact details of support services such as that of the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) and Lifeline, available free of charge (24-hrs a day).			

I understand who will have access to personal information and that data collected will be stored in a password-protected format at the psychology department for a minimum of 15 years. I also have a clear understanding that I will not be linked to the information in any way.			
I give consent that data gathered may be used for dissertation, article publication, conference presentations and writing policy briefs.			
I understand how to raise a concern or make a complaint.			
I consent to being audio recorded.			
I consent to being video recorded.			
I consent to have my audio/video recordings be used in research outputs such as publication of articles, thesis and conferences as long as my identity is protected.			

I give permission to be quoted directly in the research publication whilst remaining anonymous.			

I have sufficient opportunity to ask questions and I agree to take part in the above study.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date	Signature

Appendix C – Interview Guide

Hello, my name is Zahraa Surtee. I am conducting research on intergenerational trauma and identity amongst South African Indian women. Firstly, I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. Before commencing with the interview, I would like to assure you that everything you say during this interview will be kept confidential, and only my supervisor and I will have access to the voice recordings. I want to remind you that you have the right to withdraw from this study at any time during the interview. You also have the right to refrain from answering any question you are uncomfortable with. Should you wish to view the results of this research, please email me and I will forward these to you upon completion of this study. You can find my contact details on the information sheet provided to you prior to this interview.

(**Transition A (Demographic Questions):** Let me begin with some questions about yourself)

1. How old are you?
2. What is your race?
3. What is your ethnicity?

(**Transition B:** I would like to move to questions of your experience of intergenerational trauma)

1. In your opinion, what are some of the traumas which your parents experienced, being either First Generation or Second Generation South African Indians?
2. What were the experiences which stood out the most to you, being raised in a household with two Indian parents?
3. What are some of the values which you have been raised with, as an Indian woman and how do you feel about this today?
4. How have these values influenced how you see yourself as an Indian woman today?
5. What are a few of the challenges you face as an Indian woman today?
6. What are some of the positive experiences which you've experienced as an Indian woman today?

(**Transition C:** In closing for the interview, I would like to ensure that your participation in this interview will not harm you psychologically and to ensure you receive the necessary help if needed)

1. I understand that sharing your experience today could be distressing. If you are feeling distressed at any stage following this interview, I suggest that you contact the

South African Depression and Anxiety (SADAG) mental health line (0800 121314 or 011 234 4837 to receive counselling services at no cost.

2. You are also free to contact me should you have further questions pertaining to the study or the results.
3. I want to thank you for your help and taking the time to help me with my research

Signed on (date): _____

Participant: _____ Researcher: _____

Appendix D: Extract from a transcript

Participant 1: 25-year-old Second-Generation Indian Female - Muslim

Participant 1: I always talk about being Indian with my friends. I mean, some of my white friends just don't get it because like, obviously they're white, you know? But I feel like our trauma extends so far, that I'm not even really sure where to begin with your question on generational trauma (Sighs). I think because I'm already studying anthropology, I've always been very intrigued about culture, trauma and why I grew up in the home environment I did. So, do you want me to talk about like, their trauma stuff or apartheid or... what specifically... sorry I'm just making sure I answer you right, because I can go on and on and on... (giggles)

Interviewer: (laughs). Well, it would be great to hear a bit of both, because they should be connected. So, we can't consider South African Indians without looking at their PERSONAL traumas and then the traumas of this country. I feel like we can't even separate the two.

Participant 1: My dad always speaks about how restricted they were during apartheid. He described himself as somebody who was 'young and free' but being under the control of white supremacy, he felt like he was in a cage. I think they were firstly traumatised because

they had to move. So, my grandparents owned land in Cape Town, which they had to leave behind and they all had to move to Johannesburg in this tiny 3-bedroom house with 4 children. My mum went through similar – her parents travelled from India and then when they got here, they were poor and felt excluded because they couldn't go to parks reserved for white people and things like that...

Interviewer: okay, so it sounds like both your parents had their own struggles, growing up here in South Africa.

Participant 1: Yeah, you could say that. I think both my parents were raised wanting a better life for themselves, but still very much feeling like caged birds because of the apartheid restrictions. And they were both very intelligent people, so they felt like they couldn't receive the best education, etc. because of the impositions.

Interviewer: And how do you think these impositions and specific restrictions because they were Indian, actually affected their lives, personally?

Participant 1: Shew! My parents are messed up! (laughs) No I'm just kidding, but Yoh I feel like it really, like, screwed them over, you know? I mean, I can tell you this because you'll understand that I'm not just being bad, but like, they've been through a lot.

Interviewer: I understand! Thank you for being so honest with me too. So, when you say that it affected them a lot, do you mean like it affected the way they view others and the world today?

Participant 1: Others, me, women and people of other races, for sure! So, after Apartheid ended, my parents started their own clothing business and so I basically grew up in a factory with so many workers of all different races. But, Yoh, this is bad to even admit out loud, but anyway, I'm just going to tell you... they were so incredibly racist, both towards white people and black people. Actually, even coloureds. It was like after Apartheid, they trusted

absolutely nobody and they didn't feel sorry for anybody. Till today, when my father sees a beggar on the side of the road, it doesn't matter what race the beggar is, but it's like his heart is gone so cold. He can't show empathy for other people because he feels like they all suffered equally and that white people should suffer today. This is so hard to admit, but he gets so defensive whenever we speak about race. And I can't really like, refute him much because apartheid is something I obviously didn't experience, you know?

Interviewer: So, this became an identity for him?

Participant 1: Yeah, being treated badly is the story of his life. We speak about apartheid all the time at home. I think he also tells us to remind us that we should be grateful, which of course we are because I can't for the life of me imagine going through that.

Interviewer: And so, you feel like apartheid and the various losses they faced all caused this rigid-mindsets with regards to other races?

Participant 1: For sure! I always say that we would be completely different, had we grown up in America or something. I think my grandparents suffering and then my parents suffering was just too much. And now they obviously don't want us to suffer, which is why (sigh), they make my life so miserable! (laughs)

Interviewer: How would you say THEIR experiences then impacted on you guys, as children?

Participant 1: When I was young, I also was scared of other races. So, we grew up in a very close-knit community. You know – school of all Indians. Then, suddenly at university there were these white people and I didn't even know how to make friends with them

Interviewer: Do you think you were still carrying your father's mistrust at that point?

Participant 1: My father would constantly tell us stories of how white people were, as kids. And even if we go to the malls now, he always has something to say about white people.

Interviewer: So this was a narrative repeated to you, growing up..

Participant 1: I had a white friend who would literally bring me spinach and cheese pies every Friday, 'cos her mother was the best baker and I would give it away to a beggar because I thought she was poisoning me or something.

Interviewer: Really?

Participant 1: Yeah, how dumb?!

Interviewer: That's interesting. And so, you had to learn how to trust people of other races again. What were the other experiences which stood out to you the most being raised in a household with two Indian parents?

Participant 1: I think my parents tried to raise us with more of an open-mind, but they were very influenced by family.

Interviewer: In terms of?

Participant 1: Like my father is a bit more open-minded than my uncles. My uncles daughters all were married and had children by 20. But then he would always warn my father about what it means to raise a girl. You know, being a Muslim girl, your father has to also protect you. And then one of my friends got pregnant at 16 and this killed my parents.

Interviewer: And this then changed the way he raised you?

Participant 1: I used to have soooo many fights with my parents back then about how unfair it was growing up for girls. Like, my brother could be out till like 3am in the morning and my mother would still wake up at 8am to make breakfast for him specifically! (Rolls eyes) It

annoyed me SO much! So, when my friend got pregnant, it was like they were now scared that I would too. I mean, what did I even know about having a baby, let alone sleeping with somebody back then? (laughs)

Interviewer: So, when it came to you going out, what was it like then?

Participants 1: Yoh, hectic. I had to ask them like 2 weeks in advance if I could for example go to my friend's birthday. And this wasn't even a guy friend. It was like a close best friend who they even knew! They knew parents and everything. We even had them over for Eid one day. Then, they wouldn't answer me, which would leave me feeling so anxious. Then, I would make sure I did whatever I was supposed to do at home to like, make them happy you know? So, I'd wash the dishes and do the washing, and like stuff like that. Then, I'd ask them again like a week before, because now obviously I need to decide what to wear and confirm with my friend, you know. And then they'd get so upset with me and tell me that I was only interested in boys and going out! As if I went out every single weekend!

Interviewer: So, it sounds like your parents treated you very differently to your brother, simply because you were a woman?

Participant 1: Yes, and because I was THEIR daughter and so if somebody saw me out late at night, THEY would look bad. Like, how selfish is that? I can't even comprehend the way they think, but anyways, yeah... it was because I was female obviously. And my dad was always super strict with my mother. Like she couldn't cut her hair above her shoulder and if she went out and even happened to look at or speak to another man, he'd get furious and not talk to her for days! So then with me, he was exactly the same and my poor mother, obviously being under his influence, actually started treating me exactly the same.

Interviewer: So, they associated a 'good, decent and respectable woman' with 'high status.'

Participant: Well, back then it was all about 'what will people say?' And I guess it still very much is about that, you know. But if you have a girl, then you need to protect them and like take care of them. Because like, girls are vulnerable and precious and unable to take care of themselves, or whatever nonsense they believe in!

Interviewer: And this 'status,' was known how?

Participant 1: Like how was it attained?

Interviewer: Yeah...

Participant: Well, at every family function the aunties would come and ask my mother about me and what I'm doing and when I'm getting married. So, like for example, if I happened to fail matric, then I would be an embarrassment to my parents and they would hide it and not tell anybody about it. And so, at every family function they use it as an opportunity to boast to my aunties about how intelligent and well-mannered I am. it actually makes me sick sometimes to watch them pretend.

Interviewer: And this status, did it put pressure on you to always perform at your best and never 'mess up?'

Participant 1: Oh, I struggle with perfectionism even till today. But I never knew it until I had a panic attack last year. This one time at school, I remember I was really really struggling with chemistry. I didn't even want to do that dumb subject, but of course my parents told me that it opened up 'opportunities' for me in the medical field after school. Back then, I didn't even like or was even interested in anything medical, but anyways, I remember I failed the one test in class. And I mean like, it's not because I'm dumb. I KNOW I'm smart, but I had a panic attack at school because I was SO scared to tell my parents. Luckily, my teacher at the time knew my parents and understood my dilemma, so she never mentioned it to them at Parents' Day. I guess she knew that I was a hard worker even, and so me failing wasn't

because I was like... lazy or anything, you know? So, I hid that test mark from them and lucky it didn't count too much towards my overall mark and I still ended up passing pretty decently; but Yoh – they would've KILLED me if they knew!

Appendix E: Theme Development

Initial analysis:

1. Intergenerational trauma

a. Impact of parenting style on daughters' lived experiences (herein to discuss the emotional mis attunement to daughter's needs)

b. Inter-generational dreams of educational success rigidly passed on to children

2. South African Indian history

a. Rigid mindsets (mistrust, defensiveness & loss of empathy)

b. Fear and a 'survival mindset'

c. The trauma of displacement/racialization

3. Culture

a. The role of women in society

b. Status

4. Identity

a. Struggles with one's identity

b. Shame and guilt

c. Perfectionism

Final analysis:

1. South African Indian history

a. Rigid mindsets (mistrust, defensiveness & loss of empathy)

b. Fear and a 'survival mindset'

c. The trauma of displacement

2. Intergenerational trauma

a. Impact of parenting style on daughters' lived experiences (herein to discuss the emotional mis attunement to daughter's needs)

b. Inter-generational dreams of educational success rigidly passed on to children

3. Culture

a. The role of women in society

b. Status

c. Disconnect from living authentically to uphold cultural expectations

4. Identity

a. The struggle between the 'individual self,' versus the 'collective self' (herein to discuss struggles with one's identity; struggles with being free to be oneself and a lack of a coherent self)
b. Shame and guilt
c. Perfectionism

5. Breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma

a. Integrating collectivism with individualism (herein to discuss the following):

- Choosing one's own partners + racial integration
- Actively engaging in conversations which break such cycles (such as the support group)
- Critically questioning cultural identity (giving a voice to struggles through sharing on social media, discussing experiences with friends, etc.)

Appendix F: Ethics approval

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
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YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Lefapha la Bomotho

Humanities 100
Since 1919

15 November 2021

Dear Mrs Z Surtee

Project Title:	Historical Trauma Theory: An exploration of young South African Indian women's lived experiences of the inter-generational transmission of trauma in the post-Apartheid context
Researcher:	Mrs Z Surtee
Supervisor(s):	Miss SB Sibanda
Department:	Psychology
Reference number:	15276458 (HUM040/0721)
Degree:	Masters

I have pleasure in informing you that the above application was **approved** by the Research Ethics Committee on 15 November 2021. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should the actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely,

Prof Karen Harris
Chair: Research Ethics Committee
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