

EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF ROLE MODELS ON THE
CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF SCHOOL-GOING
ADOLESCENTS FROM A LOW-INCOME COMMUNITY IN
SOUTH AFRICA

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Arts (Psychology)



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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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ABSTRACT

It is commonly known that role models can exercise a formative influence in the lives of individuals. While adolescents in low-income communities are faced with various career barriers, scholars contend that having a positive role model may influence their career decisions and overall life plans. Therefore, it is important to consider how role models influence personal and career decisions made by young people. This study aimed to describe the manner in which role models influence the career development process of high school learners from a South African township. Following a qualitative research approach, this investigation examined the narratives of nine Grade 11 learners aged between 16 and 20 years, from a low-income predominantly isiXhosa speaking, peri-urban community in the Cape Winelands region of the Western Cape, South Africa. Semi-structured individual interviews and one focus-group interview were conducted to document the stories of these learners. Through thematic analysis, the study sought to identify who the learners chose as role model (s) and why, how the chosen role model (s) has played a significant role in the learners' career and life plans, and how the learners have applied the attractive qualities of their chosen role model(s) to their overall career and life plans. Participants' narratives were contextualised in relation to the tenets of the Social Cognitive Career Theory. Findings of the study suggest that role model influence, along with cultural values play a pivotal role in informing the decisions made by young people on how they choose their future careers, and on how role models influence their overall career and life plans.

OPSOMMING

Dit is alombekend dat rolmodelle 'n formatiewe invloed op die lewe van individue kan uitvoer. Terwyl adolessente in lae-inkomste gemeenskappe gekonfronteer word deur verskeie loopbaanhindernisse, word daar beweer dat die teenwoordigheid van 'n positiewe rolmodel die loopbaankeuses en algehele lewe van hierdie adolessente kan bevorder. Dit is daarom belangrik om te bepaal hoe rolmodelle die persoonlike- en beroepskeuses van jongmense beïnvloed. Die huidige studie poog daarin om die invloed van rolmodelle op die loopbaanontwikkelingsproses van hoërskoolleerders in 'n Suid-Afrikaanse informele nedersetting te beskryf. Hierdie kwalitatiewe studie het die narratiewe geëksamineer van nege Graad 11 leerders tussen die ouderdomme van 16 en 20, van 'n lae-inkomste, grootliks isiXhosa-sprekende, peri-stedelike gemeenskap in die Kaapse Wynland Distrik van die Wes-Kaap, Suid-Afrika. Die narratiewe was toegelig deur die gebruik van semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude en een fokusgroep onderhoud. Deur gebruik te maak van tematiese analise, het hierdie studie gepoog om te identifiseer wie die leerders as hul rolmodel(le) geselekteer het asook hoekom, hoe die gekose rolmodel(le) 'n beduidende rol in die leerders se beroeps- en lewensplanne gespeel het, en hoe die leerders die aanloklike eienskappe van hul gekose rolmodel(le) toegepas het tot hul algehele beroeps- en lewensplanne. Die deelnemers se narratiewe was gekontekstualiseer op grond van die beginsels van die Sosiale-Kognitiewe Loopbaanteorie. Die bevindinge van hierdie studie dui daarop dat die invloed van rolmodelle, tesame met kulturele waardes, 'n deurslaggewende rol speel om jongmense se besluite in te lig oor hoe hulle hul toekomstige beroepe kies en hoe die rolmodelle hul algehele beroeps- en lewensplanne beïnvloed.

ISISHWANKATHELO

Iqhelekile into yokokuba abantu abangumzekelo (*role models*) kubomi babanye abantu bangabanefuthe elimandla ekuphuhliseni ubomi babantu abo bathi babengumzekelo kubo. Njengoko umlisela nomthinjana kwiingingqi zabantu abangathathi ntweni zithi zijongane nemiqobo eliqela ngokunxulumene namakhondo abanokuwalandela malunga nezemisebenzi, iingcali ziyavumelana ngento yokokuba, ukuba nomntu ongumzekelo ophucukileyo yinto engathi ibe nefuthe kwizigqibo zekhondo ngezemisebenzi ezithi zilandelwe kwakunye nezicwangciso zobomi jikelele. Ngoko ke, kubalulekile ukuyithabathela ingqalelo indima ethi idlalwe ngabantu abayimizekelo kwakunye nefuthe abathi babenalo kwizigqibo zobomi kwakunye namakhondo ezemisebenzi athi athatyathwe ngabantu abatsha. Esi sifundo ke sinenjongo zokucacisa indlela abathi babenefuthe ngayo abantu abayimizekelo ekukhulisweni kwamakhondo ezemisebenzi kubantwana abakwizikolo zamabanga aphezulu kwiLokishi zaseMzantsi Afrika. Ngokusebenzisa izixhobo zophando ze-*qualitative research*, olu phando luqwalasele iincoko zabafundi abalithoba abafunda kwisigaba seshumi elinanye (*Grade 11*) nabaphakathi kweminyaka engamashumi amathandathu (16) neminyaka engamshumi amabini (20) abaphuma kumakhaya angathathi ntweni ingakumbi abathetha isiXhosa kwaye besuka kwenye yeLokishi kwiingingqi yeCape Winelands kwiphondo leNtshonakoloni eMzantsi Afrika. Udliwano-ndlebe lomntu-ngomntu kwakunye nodliwano-ndlebe leqela luye lwenziwa ukushicilela amabali waba bafundi. Ngokusebenzisa uhlobo lohlahlutyo oluyi-*thematic analysis*, esi sifundo sijonge ukuqaphela ukuba ingaba abafundi bachonge bani njengomzekelo wabo kwaye kungokuba kutheni bechonge abo bantu babachongileyo, ingaba aba bantu bayimizekelo bachongiweyo badlale ndima ini na kwizincwangciso zabo ngamakhondo ezemisebenzi kwakunye nezobomi babo jikelele, kwaye ingaba abafundi bazisebenzise njani iimpawu ezinomtsalane zabantu abayimizekelo kubo kumakhondo abufuna ukuwalandela kwakunye nobomi babo jikelele. Amabali abantu abathabathe inxaxheba aye abunjwa ngokunxulumene neentsika ze-*Social Cognitive Career Theory*. Iziphumo zophando ziveza ukuba ifuthe labantu abangumzekelo, ndawonye nemigomo yenkcubeko, zinendima ebonakalayo nebalulekileyo kwizigqibo ezithe zathatyathwa ngabantu abatsha ekukhetheni ikhondo lomsebenzi kwixesha elizayo, kwakunye nakwindlela apho abantu abangangumzekelo baye babenefuthe kubizo lwabafundi nakubomi babo jikelele.

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“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring. All of which have the potential to turn a life around” - Leo Buscaglia

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my son, Siphosethu Ali Matshabane, born on 29 April 2014. You are my inspiration. I sincerely hope that, to you, I will be the role model you deserve.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

*“Children have never been very good at listening to their elders,
but they have never failed to imitate them.” – James Baldwin*

1.1. Introduction

Career development and career plans in adolescence are related to the physical and mental health of adolescents and can have long-term future outcomes (Flouri & Buchanan, 2002). Various factors have been reported to relate to career development in adolescents. The process of career development (inclusive of psychological, sociological, educational, physical and economic factors) is complex and diversified throughout an individual's life span. A variety of internal factors may influence this process, for instance, an individual's self-concept, self-esteem and self-efficacy, to name a few. There are also many external facets that may inhibit the career development process, such as peer pressure, limited resources, limited exposure to different careers, as well as a lack of role models whom young people can identify with and aspire to be like. Additionally, there are other internal and external circumstances, for example, the likelihood of succeeding, that also play a role in the career development process of a young individual, particularly coming from a low-income background (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2000; Naidoo & May, 2006). Increasingly, existing literature has stressed the role of positive career role models in the career development of adolescents (Flouri & Buchanan, 2002).

Role models can exercise a formative influence in the life of an individual. In autobiographies and interviews, prominent people often recount how role models have inspired or influenced them positively (Lockwood, 2006; Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002; Lockwood, Sadler, Fryman, & Tuck, 2004). Children and adolescents often idolise acclaimed sportsmen and women or famous media personalities. Some may even acknowledge their own parents as their role models. Generally, role models are depicted as individuals who provide young people with a positive image and a vision of themselves to work towards (Haider, Snead, & Bari, 2016; Lockwood, 2006). In addition, role models are known to provide an example of the kind of success an individual may achieve, while also providing a template of the behaviours needed in order to achieve such success (Haider et al., 2016; Lockwood, 2006). In

this regard, young people's choice in role model may be of particular importance related to their personal and career decisions (Lockwood, 2006; National Youth Affairs Research Scheme, 2003). Burgess, Goulston and Oates (2015) conclude that role models play a pivotal role in influencing students' motivation and the behaviours students engage in.

As adolescents are expected to make specific career decisions and choices at such a sensitive time in their lives, it is common for young people to seek role models who are similar to themselves in terms of gender or race (Bandura, 1989; Gibson, 2004; Karunanayake & Nauta, 2004; Lockwood, 2006). Additionally, other factors central to the selection of role models include social organisation and cultural values (Bhana, 2012; Karunanayake & Nauta, 2004). Exploring students' perceptions regarding role models in a South African medical school Mclean (2004a) reported that students chose role models who had struggled and succeeded within a family, local or national context, hereby accentuating that cultural background influences students' choice of role models. McLean (2004a) further emphasised that relating to role models from a similar background is important for students in reaffirming their culture. Therefore, a lack or absence of role models for a particular group of individuals may potentially inflict implications, particularly for individuals from low-income or marginalised communities, who may be affected by contextual factors of poverty, unemployment and adverse social conditions on a daily basis (Buthelezi, Alexander, & Seabi, 2009). Furthermore, an absence or lack of role models for women and/or disadvantaged groups in particular, may serve as demotivation as it may pose a constant reminder of the difficulties they face in terms of progressing in a particular career or vocation (Lockwood, 2006). Hence, affirmative action programmes in South Africa promote the advancement of women and individuals in previously disadvantaged groups to executive positions, while also serving to provide role models for other members in their respective groups (Lockwood, 2006).

Gibson (2004) puts forward that the identification of a role model is considered vital in the process of career decision-making. Quimby and DeSantis (2006) point to a relationship between role model influence and career-related outcomes such as career maturity, career aspirations, career indecision, career salience, attitudes towards non-traditional careers, as well as career choice. This is affirmed by Dass-Brailsford (2005) who is of the opinion that role models play a significant role in resiliency among youth from South African townships.

The current study examined the career development process of high school-going adolescents in the Kayamandi community in the Cape Winelands region of the Western Cape, South Africa. The research focused specifically on the impact that role models have on the career development process, aspirations and life plans of these young individuals.

1.2. Key definitions of concepts in this thesis

Several core career constructs inform this study. These include adolescence, career, career adaptability, career choice, career counselling, career education, career guidance, career maturity, community, cultural values, disadvantaged/low-income community, identity, interests, Life Orientation, resilience, role model, role modelling, self-concept, self-efficacy, township and work values, which will be operationally defined below. In addition, the Career Life Project where the study derived from will also be briefly described.

Adolescence as used in this study is defined as a developmental period in the human lifespan where rapid physiological, psychological and social development occur as the individual prepares for the roles and tasks of adulthood (Dube, 2016; Ernst, Pine, & Hardin, 2005). Psychologically this is the phase where individuals explore and discover their values, beliefs and gain a greater sense of self-awareness, while also taking the time to start making their future career plans (Dube, 2016). The term will be used interchangeably with the phrases “young individuals”, “learners” and in some instances when referring to the youth.

Career is construed as a series of lifelong work-related experiences associated with an individual’s life roles across his or her lifespan (Stead & Watson, 2006).

Career adaptability is defined as “the readiness to cope with the predictable tasks of preparing for and participating in the work role and with the unpredictable adjustments prompted by changes in work and working conditions” (Savickas, 1997, p. 254). In the context of the present study, career adaptability will refer to the adolescents’ ability to negotiate alternative career paths in light of the changes in their contextual environment.

Career choice refers to “the totality of work one does in a lifetime” (Sadock & Sadock, 2003, p.104). Choice relates to the action of choosing, preferring or preference. From a career

guidance perspective, a career choice is implied when a young person takes a stand and orientates him or herself with regard to possible work in the future.

Career counselling is defined as “a series of general and specific interventions...dealing with concerns such as self-understanding, broadening one’s horizons, work selection, challenges, satisfaction and other interpersonal matters, work site behaviours, communication and other interpersonal phenomena and lifestyle issues, such as balancing work, family and leisure, discrimination, stress, sexual harassment, bias, stereotyping, pay inequalities and tokenism” (Engels, Minor, Sampson, & Splete, 1995, p.134).

Career education as used in this study is defined as “...those planned-for educational experiences that facilitate a person’s career development and preparation for the world-of-work. The totality of experiences through which one learns about and prepares for engaging in work as part of a way of living. A primary responsibility of the school with an emphasis on learning about, planning for, and preparing to enter a career” (Gibson & Mitchell, 1999, p. 312).

Career guidance refers to the mentoring process provided to learners in terms of exploring study options, occupational choice and career planning. It includes developing self-knowledge, educational knowledge and occupational knowledge with a view to making meaningful occupational choices (Crites, 1971). Three important elements encompass the concept of career choice: i) self-knowledge and self-awareness; ii) knowledge of the world-of-work and iii) the congruence between the individual’s personal traits and the world-of-work (Foxcroft & Roodt, as cited in Albien, 2013). It is important that these elements are addressed in career education as a means to allow access to career role models whom learners can identify with in order to allow for the transference of knowledge of the world-of-work (Albien, 2013).

Career maturity can be interpreted as implying an individual’s sense of readiness in terms of self-concept development in his/her career behaviour (Stead & Watson, 2006). As used in this study, career maturity refers to adolescents’ degree of readiness to engage in career and educational development tasks. These tasks include: i) gaining an appropriate knowledge of self; ii) demonstrating effective career decision making; iii) gaining an appropriate knowledge of careers; iv) the ability to link their knowledge of careers to their knowledge of personal traits and v) the ability to make effective career plans (Stead & Watson, 2006).

Community will be considered as a specific socio-economic environment which provides a set of risk factors as well as protective factors that influence the well-being of community members.

Cultural values speak to the complete or definite shared ideas about what is good, right and desirable in a community (Williams, 1970).

Disadvantaged/low-income community is described as an informal township community that is characterised by low-income families, mostly with unemployed parents in households, inadequate educational resources, lack of career centers and lack of career counselling in the majority of the schools (Bernhardt as cited in Maite, 2005). Notably, these are some of the prevailing conditions in which adolescents in low-income communities in the Western Cape grow-up under (Albien, 2013).

Identity can be understood as a gaining a sense of who an individual perceives him or herself to be in relation to others around them (Erikson, as cited in Dube, 2016).

Interests include things or activities in life that catch one's attention and that one would like to be involved in. It is important for adolescents to choose a field which interests them as a career and not just as a hobby (Stead & Watson, 2006).

Life Orientation is a subject or learning area introduced as part of curriculum transformation in the South African school context. This subject aims to educate learners with life skills, career information, and knowledge on sexual orientation, values and attitudes for a successful life (Rooth, 2005).

Resilience refers to an individual's ability to overcome adversity and serious threats to adaptation or development (Masten, 2001). It is also seen as a preventative strategy that allows individuals to avoid poor outcomes by developing coping strategies that lead to a positive outcome (Chaskin, 2007).

Role model refers to an individual whom people can identify with as he or she may have qualities which other individuals may aspire to have, or they may be in a position which others

may want to reach (Mileder, Schmidt, & Dimai, 2014). Moreover, a role model is also an individual whose life and activities influence another person in one way or another (Basoc & Howe, as cited in Quimby & DeSantis, 2006).

Role modelling or teaching by example, has been identified as an important educational method for adolescents. Role modelling is relational and links people together, especially individuals from different generations, in important ways (Mileder et al., 2014).

The Career Life Project is the broad community project in which this study was located. It is a community engagement project of the Psychology Department of Stellenbosch University focused on providing career development and life planning interventions to the youth of low-income communities in the Cape Winelands District Municipality region. Under the supervision and leadership of Professor Anthony Naidoo, the Career Life Project is composed of several service learning programmes, where involved members are postgraduate students at different levels (honours, masters and doctoral levels) who render career interventions and are involved in research projects occurring within the region.

Self-concept is described as “one’s view of who one is and who one is not...” (Gottfredson, 1981, p. 547). It is also related to who one would like to be.

Self-efficacy maintains that individuals who have similar abilities do not necessarily produce the same achievements, considering that the circumstances of individuals are not the same. In this regard, the concept refers to the individual’s capacity to be able to perform tasks or roles effectively.

Township refers to urban residential areas that are typically underdeveloped and were historically reserved for African, Coloured and Indian people in South Africa (Theron, 2007).

Work values are beliefs and ideas that an individual has about what s/he wants to attain or get out of a job. It is crucial that individuals choose a career that suits their values in order to feel emotionally comfortable in their job choices (Stead & Watson, 2006).

1.3. Research Problem Statement

This study explored the influence of role models on the career development process of adolescents in a low-income community by using the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) as a theoretical framework underpinning of this study. SCCT was considered a suitable approach in an attempt to understand the career development process of adolescents in a low-income community context because it provides a framework for potentially creating and/or increasing learners' interests in career development through the acknowledgement and discussions of the concept of role model. It is pertinent to highlight that SCCT makes provision for psychological and contextual factors (which often cannot go unacknowledged when investigating low-income communities) influencing individuals' pursuit of career identity (Buthelezi et al., 2009). The various psychological and contextual factors faced by young people in low-income communities in South Africa are assumed to be direct consequences of historical enforced government policies (Buthelezi et al., 2009). Further motivation on the application of the SCCT in the context of the study will be elaborated in Chapter 4.

The research focus of this thesis is in line with the call for greater investigation and exploration of the career development context and process of under-researched groups, such as adolescents from low-income communities (Albien, 2013; Bester, 2011; Gibson, 2004; Watson & McMahon, 2005). The study focused on Grade 11 learners, as they are typically at a stage in their academic life where they are expected to make realistic career decisions. In particular, many higher education institutions rely on Grade 11 marks as part of the entrance requirements. Furthermore, during Grade 11, learners have time to clarify any pertinent questions they may have about their career choices through correspondence with individuals who have played a significant role in influencing their career decisions.

With this frame of reference, I recruited a sample of nine Grade 11 learners (four males and five females) from two high schools in the Kayamandi community. Going forward, the aforementioned high schools will be referred to as High School A and High School B, in order to protect the identities of the schools. With the voluntary participation of the nine school-going adolescents, this study aimed to explore; 1) who are the role models of these learners, 2) why these individuals can be considered as role models, 3) to what extent do these individuals exert an influence on the learners' career plans and 4) what the learners have gained from their

identified role models as well as how that knowledge has impacted on their career decision-making process.

1.4. Rationale

It is pivotal to recognise the impact of poverty as a prominent influence on the career development of many young individuals in society. Socio-economic contextual factors exert a significant circumscribing effect on the career choice and development of individuals in marginalised communities (Gottfredson & Lapan, 1997; Naidoo, Pretorius, & Nicholas, in press). Lockwood (2006) also sees a paucity of role models for disadvantaged groups as a challenge for motivating young individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to aspire towards achieving success. Moreover, present-day South African society does not see many township residents occupying senior positions in the workforce. As a consequence, this visible lack of success may lead to young people being faced with complexities in identifying with successful role models in their own communities (Chaskin, 2007; Lockwood, 2006). Hence, research is needed to investigate the complexities of career development among individuals in low-income communities. As a native isiXhosa-speaking psychology student and a career counsellor, I felt the need to undertake a study which focused on creating a platform for narrative sharing in an under-researched population group. Therefore, in an attempt to do so, this endeavour provided learners with the opportunity to reflect and gain self-knowledge or self-awareness through sharing stories and thoughts on their career development. Moreover, this study may contribute to the development of suitable career interventions that enable disadvantaged adolescents to recognise the importance of carefully selecting a role model who may potentially have the most positive impact on their career development. Fundamentally, the findings of this investigation may play a supportive function by adding value to the existing scholarship on the career development process among adolescents in low-income communities.

1.5. Overview of chapters

Chapter 1 serves as an introductory orientation to provide a contextual background to the research question. This section also presents operational definitions of key concepts in the study as well as the context in which the study evolved. The chapter concludes by describing the research problem and the rationale of this study. *Chapter 2* expands on the broader context of the study by elucidating the context of life in a township including the risk, as well as the

protective factors in low-income communities. *Chapter 3* documents an extensive review of the preliminary literature pertaining to role models and the career development process of adolescents. *Chapter 4* presents the theoretical framework undergirding the research focus while *Chapter 5* describes the research methodology employed in this investigation. It contains an overview of the description of the participants, data collection methods, as well as a discussion on the data analysis procedure adopted in the research project. *Chapter 6* contains the thematic analysis derived from the qualitative data (including individual interviews and the focus-group interview) of this study. *Chapter 7* provides a detailed discussion of the findings and conclusion of the research pertaining to the literature and concludes with an outline of the limitations of the study, as well as presenting the implications to theory, application and suggestions for future research emanating from the study's findings.

CHAPTER TWO

CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

*“It’s not what you achieve, it’s what you overcome
That’s what defines your career.”- Carlton Fisk*

2.1. Introduction

Career development theories report that adolescents’ occupational aspirations may be significantly influenced by their environmental context (Buthelezi et al., 2009; Patton & McMahon, 2006; Stead & Watson, 2006; Watson & McMahon, 2005). Children raised in disadvantaged communities are often faced with occupational deprivation that results in inadequate exposure to a wide range of career options (Buthelezi et al., 2009; Dodge & Welderufael, 2014). According to Watson and McMahon (2006), this limited knowledge may lead to foreclosed career choices or unrealistic goals in future career aspirations. Furthermore, the contextual environment of adolescents in low-income communities in South Africa has been suggested to negatively impact on academic achievement, thereby limiting career aspirations (Dass-Brailsford, 2005; Dodge & Welderufael, 2014).

This chapter commences by briefly presenting a contextual description of the notion of a township, followed by a description of two isiXhosa-speaking peri-urban low-communities in the Cape Winelands District Municipality region. I proceed by exploring how the structural conditions and contextual influences of peri-urban townships, create an interplay for particular risk and protective factors which influence the career development and overall wellness of the youth in low-income communities. This appraisal will inform the backdrop of the study’s research problem and its context.

2.2. Development of townships

Ngqela and Lewis (2012) assert that South African cities and towns were historically designed according to discriminatory practices which aimed to segregate individuals based on race. Kayamandi, which is the township forming the context of this study is a prime example of the apartheid social engineering that was initially established outside the residential areas of Stellenbosch, in the Cape Winelands District Municipal region, created specifically to locate

housing for manual labourers (Rock, 2011). Statutes like the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 and the Group Areas Act of 1950 separated cities and towns, residential and business areas based on race (Khosa & Zwane, 1995). Residential areas reserved for white people were located close to business hubs and were well-maintained with good infrastructure, services and facilities. Racially segregated townships were located on the periphery of white urban settlements and rural areas were designated for African, coloured and Indian groups. Salo (2003) claims that racial categories in South Africa were further enforced by the implementation of welfare and housing in African communities which located African South Africans in a unique relation to their white counterparts. Khosa and Zwane (1995) speak to these by observing that the main goal of townships was to segregate South African communities based on race, and although they had self-sustaining infrastructure, African communities would still be economically dependent on white communities. As a result of such historical social engineering practices, these townships are still prevalent today and reflect the context of the Kayamandi.

2.3. Contextual description of a township

In order to obtain an intuitive and comprehensive understanding of the career development of school-going adolescents in this study, it is necessary to contextualise the emergence and formation of townships or low-income communities (Naidoo et al., in press). As mentioned prior, townships are a legacy of the apartheid system that provided differential housing and service conditions for people based on racial categories. Even after the fundamental political transition to democracy in 1994, there remains a great divide in residential areas. Townships are still typically populated mostly by African, coloured and Indian citizens (Seekings, 2008; Theron, 2007). Infrastructure, housing and basic services in townships are often underdeveloped, thus leaving local residents with inadequate resources. Furthermore, Salo (2003) posits that the physical and social density of townships have a direct influence on residents' perceptions of community, hereby distinctively shaping their social interaction with others within their environment. Due to physical and social density, residents are in constant social contact with each other which in turn plays a pivotal role in identity formation for adolescents. This phenomenon will be explored later in the chapter.

Young people in townships are often vulnerable to multiple risks such as poor health, malnourishment, an absence or erratic supply of electricity, education backlogs, disrupted

schooling, an unsupportive home environment, limited social status, language barriers, violence, technological delays (e.g. limited or no access to computers and the internet), overcrowding, substance abuse and a dim view of the future (Dodge & Welderufael, 2014; Theron, 2007). Many of these risks are related to poverty which generally means limited access to food and shelter, which subsequently lead to poorer scholastic functioning and psychological frailty (Theron, 2007). Also, the majority of African South Africans experience poverty on a daily basis (Alberts, Mbalo, & Ackermann, 2002). Moreover, poverty limits the amount of resources children have access to in order to be successful in school, creating occupational deprivation which may decrease youth opportunities to further their education and training (Alberts et al., 2002; Dodge & Welderufael, 2014). This is affirmed by Dodge and Welderufael (2014) who postulate that the marginalisation of adolescents in townships is responsible for creating barriers that influence career choice.

When considering career development in the South African context, it is pertinent to consider the legacy of apartheid and its associated risks (Dass-Brailsford, 2005; Dodge & Welderufael, 2014; Seekings, 2008; Theron, 2007; Toms, 2015). Children growing up in townships are exposed to many adverse social influences which can be considered as a direct inheritance of the apartheid system (Dass-Brailsford, 2005). Ramphele (as cited in Theron, 2007) laments that present-day families are in a state of crisis, schools are in crisis and communities are in crisis due to the ripple effect of the apartheid system. Buthelezi et al. (2009) observe that affected areas include education, personal and career development. This suggests that today's youth are confronted with complexities which have proved to be detrimental for their communities and society at large. In particular, township youths are more likely to be vulnerable to having their development buffered by these effects as the resources which should serve as protective factors, are somewhat fragmented (Dass-Brailsford, 2005; Dodge & Welderufael, 2014).

Two specific tenets which should serve as protective resources are the home environment and the school environment. However, the literature suggests that in townships, these two domains are often grossly undermined, consequently, adding to the risk impact on many young individuals (Dass-Brailsford, 2005; Dodge & Welderufael, 2014; Theron, 2007). In the context of Kayamandi, in particular, the situations which young people face include being orphaned, abandoned, living with foster care givers, child-headed households, high risk of teenage pregnancy, and/or being rape victims with HIV, alcohol and drug usage, as well as the presence

of gang activities (Dodge & Welderufael, 2014; Winslade, as cited in Albien, 2013). In contribution, Govender and Killian (2001) found that these adverse social circumstances may enhance resiliency among adolescents, or place young people at a greater risk for the development of psychopathology.

Furthermore, while education has been transformed under a new demographic dispensation and is accessible to all, low-income communities in South Africa are still subjected to poor resources in the school system (Alberts et al., 2002; Dodge & Welderufael, 2014). Secondary schools attended by learners in townships are often poorly equipped (Alberts et al., 2002). The South African Department of Education (SADE) acknowledges that there are inequalities in the South African education system. Hence, there are attempts to improve the quality of education, particularly in low-income communities (Buthelezi et al., 2009).

2.4. Descriptions of predominantly isiXhosa speaking low-income communities in the Cape Winelands District Municipality regions

2.4.1. A description of the Cape Winelands District Municipality

The Cape Winelands District Municipality is situated in the Western Cape Province of South Africa (Cape Winelands District Municipality, 2014; Drakenstein Municipality, 2013). This region covers a geographic area of 129 370 km², constituting 10.6% of the overall land area in South Africa (Cape Winelands District Municipality, 2014). Within the Cape Winelands District Municipality region there are five local municipalities, namely; Breede Valley, Drakenstein, Langeberg, Witzenberg and Stellenbosch municipalities. Across these local municipal areas there are two low-income peri-urban communities which have inhabitants which are predominantly isiXhosa speaking; one in the Stellenbosch municipality area (Kayamandi) and the other in the Drakenstein municipal region (Mbekweni). A brief description of the development and histories of these two predominantly isiXhosa-speaking communities follows, which contributes to the contextualisation of an African township.

2.4.1.2 Description of a predominantly isiXhosa-speaking low-income community in the Stellenbosch municipality region

Kayamandi is a predominantly isiXhosa-speaking township of approximately one square kilometre in size is situated on the northern outskirts of Stellenbosch, which is arguably one of the wealthiest towns in the Western Cape region of South Africa. According to Rock (2011), the development of this community can be documented over four historical phases. Stage 1 (origin, 1900-1941) depicts the space as a rural farm area which became designated as living courtyards for African labourers circa 1918, when it became the first black area in Stellenbosch. Due to industrialisation, the population Kayamandi expanded extensively throughout the 1940's (Stage 2: establish and expand, 1941-1953). This peri-urban low-income community developed as a community comprising social structures and organisations such as family homes, churches, schools and a sports field. This location was officially established in 1941 (Rock, 2011). The third phase in the history of the township refers to the restrictions period (Stage 3: 1953-1980) where there were increased laws prohibiting the presence of families (wives and children) in the community. This led to the 1960 pass law riot of the single quarters (Rock, 2011). Historically, accommodation in this community was often rudimentary with the hostels developed for single African male labourers; African families were expected to remain in the homelands set up by the apartheid government (Theron, 2007). Currently, (Stage 4: township life, 1980-present) there are more than 30 000 individuals residing in the community, most of them being isiXhosa-speakers (Rock, 2011). Even though isiXhosa is the primary language spoken in the community, there are a number of individuals who speak English, isiZulu and seSotho residing in this community (Albien, 2013).

Due to shared, common culture and traditions of most individuals in Kayamandi, it was historically known for being a relatively quiet community with low levels of crime. However, during the 1990s, there was a rapid influx of people with informal settlements emerging in various open spaces in the community, thus exerting strain on resource provision. According to Erhard (as cited in Albien, 2013), this created conflict in the community. With the sudden increase in population, the community itself now has witnessed a rapid surge in informal dwellings. Recent developments in Kayamandi have witnessed the emergence of Enkanini, which is a new informal development consisting of a large area populated with informal structures.

Many of the inhabitants of these informal settlements are young people, with some of them being child-headed households. This area has no access to electricity and is challenged by poor water and sanitation services (Enkanini Household Enumeration Report, 2012).

Inhabitants in the area use communal taps and there are frequent water interruptions that often take approximately one day to resolve. The residents are burdened with the task of having to travel a specific distance to collect water with a bucket or any other container and then carrying the water back home (Enkanini Household Enumeration Report, 2012). Essentially, certain sections of Enkanini are grossly underserved which leave adolescents in the community with significant barriers to a positive physical, educational and psychological well-being (Enkanini Household Enumeration Report, 2012).

2.4.1.3. Secondary school education in the community

In the Kayamandi community there are two high schools that admit learners from Grade 8 to Grade 12, one high school has a strong focus on social science subjects (such as History, Geography, Tourism etc.) which is referred to as High School A throughout the study, while the other high school is characterised for having a strong focus on business-related subject areas (i.e., Economics and Accounting) and this school is referred to as High School B in the thesis. The latter mentioned school is the original high school in the community. Due to its incapacity to accommodate the large, increasing number of high school learners in the community, an additional school was built in 2008, which allowed for the division of focus (as the new high school centers on social science subjects).

2.4.1.4. Other resources in the community

Apart from the residential infrastructure in Kayamandi, the community also has a health clinic, a police station, a library, various non-governmental organisations (NGOs), a few churches, two high schools, three primary schools, along with a non-functioning business centre (Du Plessis et al., 2012). Community dissent about the purpose and use of the centre has led to the facility not being fully utilized. Sport and recreational areas include a BMX track, a sports stadium and a children's park. There is also a strong presence of small businesses in the community such as mobile or spaza shops, butchers, shebeens (informal drinking bars), a cultural restaurant, homestays and braai points commonly known as *tshisa nyamas* (Albien, 2013). Many families rely on the informal or microeconomic sector, such as the small businesses mentioned above to satisfy their basic needs for essential goods and services (Barbarin & Khomo, 1997). There is also a myriad of NGOs running projects in the community

(Toms, 2015). These projects and attractions are warm characteristics which have drawn many national and international tourists to this community (Toms, 2015).

2.5.1. Description of an isiXhosa-speaking low-income community in the Drakenstein municipality

An isiXhosa-speaking low-income community falling under the Drakenstein Municipality is nestled between the towns of Paarl and Wellington in the Western Cape, South Africa. Most of the inhabitants of this community are isiXhosa speaking (Drakenstein Municipality, 2013). Since this area is located within a rich agricultural region, many of the residents are first-generation urban-dwellers who migrated from their rural communities in Eastern Cape Province in search of jobs in the agriculture industry and education around the city of Cape Town (Drakenstein Municipality, 2013). This community is also known for providing accommodation for single men in search of jobs in the agriculture sector (Grundlingh, 2011). The wine and grape industry in particular is the largest source of informal job creation for residents in the community. Hence, 80% of the vines in South Africa are situated in the Wellington region (Drakenstein Municipality, 2011).

Currently a large number of people in Mbekweni live in informal settlements, many of them no bigger than 10 square meters (Drakenstein Municipality, 2013; Grundlingh, 2011). Similar to Kayamandi in Stellenbosch, this community has a growing informal sector, highly reliant on mobile or spaza shops as small businesses which sustain the residents in the community. Notably, about 405 informal traders were counted in this community during an informal street count in Paarl, in the year 2004 (Drakenstein Municipality, 2013).

2.5.2. Secondary school education in the community

There are two high schools in Mbekweni. Until the year 2011, only one of these high schools allowed for learners to complete matric. In the year 2011, the other secondary school in the community introduced Grades 11 and 12. Grundlingh (2011) reports on the past Grade 12 pass rate in the community. According to Grundlingh (2011), the Department of Education outlined that 52% of school-going adolescents in Grades 10-12 dropout of the school system; a higher proportion of them being female learners. Furthermore, in the year 2009 there was a 34% matric pass rate in the then only available high school which had Grade 12. In 2010 the matric pass rate increased to 56.6% (Grundlingh, 2011). The reported main reason for the

aforementioned high dropout and failure rate is teenage pregnancy, which is a common trend in many schools in South African townships. Other reasons for a high dropout rate in low-income communities which have been reported are economic barriers (due to high levels of unemployment) and poor school performance (Grundlingh, 2011).

2.6. Unemployment in South Africa

Murry (as cited in Dass-Brailsfrod, 2005) postulates that it is imperative to recognise that the country's wealth allocation is seriously skewed with white South Africans making up 10% of the population, yet this minority group controls 80% of the economy. Unemployment among the youth in particular, is a growing concern in South African society at large. Some evidence can be seen from the results of South Africa's Labour Force Survey conducted in 2013, which revealed that unemployment in the 15-34 age range has grown to 36% (Statistics South Africa, 2013). This suggests that roughly 3.2 million young South Africans between these ages were not employed nor did they engage in education or job training. Secondly, only 37 percent of the youth labour force had graduated from high school. Thirdly, of those who did not pass Grade 12, the unemployment rate was at 47 percent (Statistics South Africa, 2013). An earlier report by Statistics South Africa (2012) revealed that black South Africans make up 80 percent of South Africa's population. Most notably, of this 80 percent only 26 percent of black South Africans, age 20 and older, reported completing high school. Research suggests that estimates of unemployment among the black community are extraordinary high (World Bank, 2000). Hence, the majority of blacks continue to experience poverty, homelessness and unemployment (Statistics South Africa, 2013). In addition, the high school dropout rate in low-income communities is of great concern since it was reported a decade ago that an individual who had started but did not complete high school had about a 50 percent chance of getting a job. Today, the situation is even bleaker since this percentage has decreased to 30 percent (Statistics South Africa, 2013).

2.7. Unemployment in low-income communities

South African townships in general are burdened with high rates of unemployment and underemployment. Many of the working residents engage in low-paying employment such as domestic work, gardening and other manual labour tasks (Darkwa, as cited in Toms, 2015). Usually, residents are either unemployed or do not generate an adequate income to support

their families. This accounts for the significant number of social grants recipients (including child grants, pension and disability grants) in these areas. These social grants are generally insufficient to sustain an individual or a family. Current values for 2016 indicate that a social grant for a child in the household is R350.00 a month. Where parents are unemployed, this is not enough to sustain the family (South African Child Gauge, 2010/2011). However, the social assistance received from the Department of Social Development is seen to play an important role in alleviating extreme poverty in low-income communities (South African Child Gauge, 2010/2011).

2.8. Enabling resources in low-income communities

A recent study by Toms (2015) has highlighted the number of NGOs, churches and community groups providing services and resources to address the manifold needs in low-income communities. Authors such as Mercer (2002) and Naidoo et al. (in press) observe the importance of NGOs and the positive role they occupy in addressing a range of needs in low-income communities. Bratton (1989) has emphasised the significance of NGOs in promoting participation in civil society. Naidoo et al. (in press) further elaborate on the important role of NGOs in South Africa, more so in marginalised communities. Observations such as the above, account for the proliferation of NGOs between 1970 and the 1990s in the height of the repressive apartheid period.

According to Naidoo et al. (in press), there is an increased number of NGOs providing broadly defined educational and vocational guidance to low-income communities in an attempt to support educators and the schooling system. Among these NGOs in Kayamandi, one particular NGO provides young individuals access to computers, the internet and various other training and developmental interventions (Albien, 2013). Another very prominent NGO in the community also provides Grade 9 till Grade 12 learners with academic support and vocational guidance. Since 2001, another active NGO has been providing programmes, initially focusing primarily on HIV positive individuals. However, their initial focus has since expanded to include programmes and activities aimed at youth development in the general population. Other programmes include a Crafts programme, which is an afterschool initiative directed to encourage creative arts development among the youth. Furthermore, there is the senior programme and the pre-and postnatal programmes. Learners in the community are actively

involved in this centre, while two of the participants in this study are mentors for primary school learners attending this community centre.

The premises of this NGO are located in the heart of the community and served as a basis to conduct the individual interviews and focus-group interview in this study. Additionally, a permanent isiXhosa-speaking staff member who resides in the community and who has worked with the youth for many years at the centre, served as the co-facilitator of the focus-group interview in the present study. This encounter is explored in Chapter 5.

Other attempts directed at providing career education in the community include, annual career exhibitions organised by Stellenbosch Municipality. Furthermore, career services, including career counselling aimed at providing career guidance to the youth are presented annually since the inception of Stellenbosch University's Career Life Project in 2010, as well as at the two high schools (Albien, 2013; Career Life Project Newsletter 2014, 2015). So, through the above-mentioned resources, the school attending youth in the community are exposed to opportunities with a strong aim to assist and support them in building their personal and career development.

2.9. Family environments in townships

The research indicates that the role of parents within the context of the family occupies a pivotal part in the career development of adolescents (Dass-Brailsford, 2005; Turner & Lapan, 2002). There are indications that many adolescents in low-income communities, however, do not live with their parents but board with guardians or extended family members. It is also in the domain of the home environment that township youths are more likely to be exposed to domestic violence, parental substance abuse, as well as absent parents and other stressors stemming from economic hardship (Albien, 2013; Albien & Naidoo, 2016; Buckner, Mezzacappa, & Beardslee, 2003; Dodge & Welderufael, 2014). Geldenhuys and De Lange (2007) put forward that a large number of adolescents in South Africa face parental absence in the home, more specific, an absence of fathers in the household. Recent reports indicate that 80 percent of mothers in South Africa reside in the home, as opposed to 48 percent of fathers residing in the homestead (Chuong & Operario, 2012). This is noticeably alarming considering that school success is positively impacted by the presence of both mother and father figures in the household (Chuong & Operario, 2012; Dodge & Welderufael, 2014). Chuong and Operario

(2012) also assert that children who live with parents have an increased chance of having positive academic and career outcomes, as opposed to orphaned adolescents who may be vulnerable to academic delays, being enrolled late in school and low levels of school attendance. Moreover, these authors argue that having a parent in the home is pivotal for adolescents' school success.

Chuong and Operario's (2012) study also highlighted that orphaned adolescents, or adolescents in homes with absent parents are often faced with stressors of safety, hunger, or worries of where they will be living in the future, to name a few. These are just some of the stressors, challenges or barriers which young people in townships are prone to. Whether discrete, episodic or constant, these stressors may exact a toll on the emotional wellbeing of adolescents which may impede on their approach to self and career development.

2.10. School environment in townships

Positive psychology suggests that it is important to think critically about the extent to which schools provide an environment for young individuals to plan and adjust optimally to the world-of-work. Baker, Dilly, Aupperlee, and Patil (2003) argue that a school can contribute significantly to a student's positive adjustment when it successfully functions as a psychologically healthy environment for development. For this reason, it is important to develop a conceptual understanding of the environment of township schools, because the contexts in which these young individuals develop, play an influential role in promoting their adaptation and adjustment (Masten & Coatsworth, as cited in Baker et al., 2003). Above all, it is crucial to explore the context of schools because they are a social environment where young individuals spend a significant amount of time. Hence, to a certain degree, it can be expected that the school milieu can influence a child's experience and self-perception whilst having the potential to affect their future life course (Baker et al., 2003).

2.11. Violence as a challenge in township schools

Bhana (2012) contends that schools are integrally related to social and cultural contexts. Therefore, it is important to highlight the fact that adolescents in township schools are increasingly vulnerable towards physical and sexual violence (Bhana, 2012). Issues of violence have raised increasing concerns in South African schools (Ngqela & Lewis, 2012).

Particularly, this phenomenon has gained much momentum in township schools in and around the Western Cape, resulting in negative effects for learning in these schools (Morrell, 2001). Given the significance of this problem, it can be expected that learners' education will be severely affected (Morrell, 2001; Ngqela & Lewis, 2012). Hence, it is vital that schools offer an environment in which a child can safely learn and develop. Adolescents in townships are often exposed to and take part in acts of violence which can have detrimental effects on their identity formation and personal development, while impacting negatively on their mental wellness and their interest in career development (Ngqela & Lewis, 2012). Since schools play a pivotal role in adolescents' development of life skills and socialisation, it is important to highlight the environment which learners are exposed to in township schools.

The question arises on how violent behaviour is related to psychological and career development or how the learner's psychological and career development is affected by violence. Buthelezi et al. (2009) highlight that adolescents in townships report being ostracised and bullied by their peers because of their aspirations to succeed. Moreover, young people in townships who indulge in negative social behaviour such as substance abuse may have an adverse influence on their peers who may have ambitions to achieve success. Consequently, this may contribute to the vulnerability of learners to reach a negative outcome due to being exposed to various risk factors (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). In this regard, they may vicariously portray examples of negative role modelling. In contrast, having a strong sense of self-efficacy is suggested to be an asset which may protect youth from realising a negative outcome (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). Collectively, it is suggested that young people residing in townships are prone to being exposed to an array of risk factors within their family, school and community that make them vulnerable towards negative outcomes, including poor academic achievement and violent behaviour (Buckner et al., 2003; Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). Many of these experiences are not unique to youths living in low-income communities. However, in these environments young individuals are more likely to be exposed to these challenges compared to those in middle and upper class communities which may account for various reasons, such as limited community resources or a lack of thorough parental monitoring (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005).

2.12. Lack of visible successful individuals in townships

Individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who achieve success are often seen as role models for other members in their community (Lockwood, 2006). For example, a doctor from a small community may inspire other youths in the community to believe that they can also achieve professional success. Adolescents in townships report feeling demotivated by not having suitable role models to emulate. Buthelezi et al. (2009) contend that this may lead to a lack of confidence, lack of motivation, low self-efficacy and a sense of hopelessness, which in turn may lead to avoidance of career decisions. Patton, Creed and Watson (2003) consider self-efficacy to occupy a fundamental position in the career development process of adolescents. Self-efficacy has also been linked to perceived career barriers, career exploratory behaviour as well as career indecision. Examples of perceived career barriers may include job availability, access to training, no financial resources for registration fees and negative attitudes among family, educators and community members. On the other hand, role models from disadvantaged communities may assist adolescents to overcome perceived barriers from the community to improve their self-efficacy (Dodge & Welderufael, 2014).

Causative factors which put young people at risk are numerous. But, the lack of visible positive role models in low-income communities may be a significant contribution to the problem. In these communities, factors such as disengaged families, single-parent, teenage-parent and child-headed households cause more stress and strain on the development of adolescents (Prinsloo, 2007). Due to the lack of authority in these social structures, children often never learn the value of self-discipline, hereby lacking the support in realising their dreams. Addressing these challenges through mobilising of positive role models may counter impede on this disturbing cycle, the absence of positive role models may contribute or impede adolescents from developing viable post school career options as it further escalates high rates of poverty in these communities.

2.13. Resiliency

An important requirement of resilience is the presence of both risks and promotive factors that either assist in introducing a positive outcome or reduce or avoid a negative result (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). Therefore, it is pertinent to recognise the effects of socio-economic stress and poor living conditions in low-income communities which may impede children's growth and development (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). While the damaging loss of a sense of safety, trust and security may influence their career and life plans, it is critical to

acknowledge that there are a number of young individuals from low-income backgrounds who demonstrate resilience, as they have successfully overcome the challenges and barriers which may have influenced them to reach negative outcomes (Dass-Brailsford, 2005; Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). Although resiliency is a subjective term, it has increasingly become a significant concept in career psychology (Dass-Brailsford, 2005; Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). Dass-Brailsford (2005) is of the opinion that it is important for adolescents to recognise and highlight the resources and competences (protective factors) that individuals who demonstrate resilience have drawn on in order to facilitate their career development process. Fergus and Zimmerman (2005) further stress that the indications are that career role models may have a salient influence on the career aspirations of adolescents in the community. Therefore, having a role model from one's community who demonstrates having achieved a degree of success (resilience) in their career development and life plans may exert a positive impact on the youth's self-development (Dass-Brailsford, 2005; Gibson, 2004).

As described in this chapter, young individuals in low-income communities are faced with an array of experiences, and it is necessary to consider the strains which these experiences may have on their future and career plans (Buckner et al., 2003). These learners' life histories and narratives are undoubtedly influenced by their immediate and environmental circumstances which may have implications on their career development process. This study, hence, sought to understand and explicate the impact that role models may exert in the career development process of adolescents in an economically constrained township context.

2.14. Chapter summary

This chapter presented a description of the broad structural and social conditions existent in isiXhosa-speaking low-income communities in the Cape Winelands District Municipal region of the Western Cape that locates the context for the current study. In this section I have accentuated some of the risk and protective factors impinging on the lives of the young learners that could exert an influence on their education and career development. Following Dass-Brailsford (2005), it is important to explore the contextual factors in which adolescents in low-income communities grow up, as these may be intrinsically linked to their psychological development. In the next chapter, I explore relevant literature on the history of career education in South Africa, as well as the implications of career education on the career development of adolescents in low-income communities. This section also focuses on role modelling and its

impact on the career development of adolescents. The chapter concludes with a detailed discussion on the influence of culture on career decision-making of African adolescent learners.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

“Analyzing what you haven’t got as well as what you have is a necessary ingredient of a career.” - Orison Swett Marden

3.1. Introduction

In their writings, career psychology authors and theorists like Naidoo et al. (in press), Lent et al. (2000), Stead and Watson (2006) and Watson and McMahon (2005), unanimously point out the need for examining background factors relative to the adolescent’s career development. Concurring, to this, Buthelezi et al. (2009) note that many of the social conditions experienced by adolescents in low-income communities are direct legacies of the segregationist apartheid government policies. Against this backdrop, it is of cardinal relevance to scrutinise the history, including the dominant influences currently imposed on township adolescents. Hence, this chapter provides an explication of the core influences contributing to this context. By departing with an overview of the history and current situation of career education in South Africa, the focus will be on government initiatives directed at providing career planning support to adolescents in our society. This discussion serves as an anchor for the discourse on career barriers experienced by adolescents in low-income communities. The chapter concludes by examining the relevance and importance of role models in adolescent career development.

3.2. History of career education in South Africa

Krumboltz and Worthington (1999) contend that career education has always occupied an influential role in adolescent development. Despite its importance and relevance, various challenges have been imposed on career education in South African society and its implementation has not entirely been without difficulty. Naidoo et al. (in press) argue that a melange of factors such as politics, economics and social conditions are responsible for influencing the nature, form and direction of career psychology in South Africa. As of result of racial segregation in apartheid-South Africa, certain groups were assigned privileges while other were marginalised, accounting for why the career education was set aside for the privileged white population (Naidoo et al., in press). The end-product of social engineering strategies such as these, can be witnessed in the well-established foundation among the white population in

present-day South African society. As a result of this form of differentiated education system, African students had limited access to career education or career counselling (Leach, Akhurst, & Basson, 2003). The implementation of School Guidance (covering career education) was first made compulsory in white schools through government legislation, which was passed in 1967 (Dovey, as cited in Stead & Watson, 2006). In contrast to this, career guidance or counselling opportunities for both primary and secondary African schools, was only implemented in 1981 (Leach et al., 2003). However, the implementation of these policies had minimal effect on the improvement of African students' education because the standard of career education was of a much poorer in comparison to that quality as opposed to those provided to white learners, consequently resulting in major inequalities in education and access to tertiary education at large (Leach et al., 2003; Stead & Watson, 2006).

Naidoo et al. (in press) express that the long-standing policy of restricted access to career counselling, allowed for a major gap in knowledge of vocations among African youth. This system purposefully aimed to prepare African students for subordinate positions in a white controlled society (Leach et al., 2003). For example, learners in predominantly African schools were denied the option of selecting commerce and science as subjects at secondary level, which immediately prevented access to various career directions in those fields. In addition, predominantly African schools often had unqualified teachers which also exerted severe challenges on the education and career development process (Stead & Watson, 2006). Guidance provided in these schools was subjected to the specifications of career choices available to different racial groups (Naidoo et al., in press; Stead & Watson, 2010). Hence, the majority of South African learners were marginalised and had limited career options, partially due to a lack of information and limited access to opportunities, and to a certain extent as a result of the low number of career professionals (role models) in low-income communities (Bonner & Segal, as cited in Buthelezi et al., 2009; Stead & Watson, 2006).

3.3. Factors influencing the career choices of adolescents in low-income communities

As mentioned earlier in the paper, Bojuwoye and Mbanjwa (2006) believe that it is pertinent to acknowledge that a range of factors influencing career choices of adolescents in townships such as, financial constraints, poor academic performance, lack of career counselling services, lack of role models and so forth, are a direct endowment of historic apartheid policies. This is also why Savickas et al. (2009) argue that the resultant effect of social norms and

expectations circumscribed to occupational careers in the 20th century, is responsible for increased difficulties and challenges faced by individuals from low-income communities who have to renegotiate stereotypical careers which they were exposed to. According to Savickas et al. (2009), residents in these communities were often manual workers (e.g., labourers, domestic workers, gardeners, kitchen staff and cleaners, etc.). Instead of having access to professional positions, labour performed by African people was often conceptualised as being instrumental to the country's economy, or for direct service in their own communities (Naidoo et al., in press). In a recent investigation, Albien (2013) reveals that the majority of the manual jobs mentioned above, are still the dominant vocations of the parents in low-income communities in Stellenbosch.

Moreover, it is critical to acknowledge that populations in low-income areas in South Africa often have higher levels of unemployment and lower incomes than others. This supports Bojuwoye and Mbanjwa's (2006) observation that certain ethnic groups are over-represented in certain occupational environments and under-represented in others. For reasons such as the aforementioned, it is absolutely vital to have a holistic and comprehensive understanding of the political and historical factors which influence career psychology in present-day South African society (Dass-Brailsford, 2005; Naidoo et al., in press).

3.4. Amendment of the education curriculum

The birth of democracy saw the amendment of the National Curriculum Statement (NSC) by the Department of Basic Education in January 2011 (Department: Basic Education Republic of South Africa, 2012; Prinsloo, 2007; van Deventer, 2009). Changes in the policy included the introduction of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) as a means of outlining material to be covered by educators on a weekly basis (Dodge & Welderufael, 2014; Miles, 2015). As informed by the amended NSC, Grade 9 learners are expected to receive career education for eleven hours over a forty week period (Miles, 2015). These hours form part of the Life Orientation (LO) subject curriculum which is compulsory for every grade. During the set time allocation, teachers are expected to cover aspects such as career planning, information about the world-of-work, as well as career and subject choices (Dodge & Welderufael, 2014; Prinsloo, 2007). However, a concern raised by Prinsloo (2007) and van Deventer (2009) was that LO teachers needed thorough training before assuming the task of providing career education. A decision was made based on the assumption that LO educators

may feel resentful to teach the subject if they are not adequately informed or knowledgeable about the different topics covered in the subject curriculum. Presently, and amidst frequent time constraints experienced by educators, it is expected that LO teachers cover the following topics during the assigned period: Development of the self in society; Social and environmental responsibility; Democracy and human rights; Study skills and Physical Education (Miles, 2015). On the other hand, Prinsloo (2007) argues that the limited training provided to LO teachers appears to be inadequate rising from the expectation that they are required to provide quality teaching on all these learning topics. This has led to the deployment of professionals specialising in career development and career guidance to assist the Department of Basic Education in developing relevant curricula for career guidance and counselling at school level (SAQA as cited in Miles, 2015; Naidoo et al., in press). Furthermore, Naidoo et al. (in press) suggest that the Department of Education deploy trained career counsellors in possession of the relevant career counselling and education qualifications and skills to perform the task of providing career education to learners.

3.5. Implications of the impaired teachings of the curriculum

Research findings indicate that the vulnerable environment of township schools is often to blame for the disregarding and neglect of career counselling and career education (Miles, 2015). As a subject, LO is often dismissed in township schools, leading to learners missing out on valuable life skills, including personal and career development teachings (Miles, 2015; Naidoo et al., in press). In this context, adolescents fail to acknowledge the importance of LO which may also be partially contributed to the school's dismissive approach to this particular subject. This may shine some light on learners' attitude and their failure to recognise the value of the subject in their career development (Rooth, 2005; van Denventer, 2009).

But, Miles (2015) and Naidoo et al. (in press) also contend that the curriculum for the learning area of world-of-work does not succeed in adequately introducing career education among African South African youth. This may be one of the reasons why young individuals from these communities often struggle to make informed career decisions. And, as mentioned previously, inexperienced LO teachers in township schools may also exacerbate the situation due to their lack of knowledge pertaining to career options available to young learners. This is emphasised by Miles (2015) who believes that these teachers are often not sure on how to access career and study opportunities for their learners. This may be partly due to the guidelines

outlined in the curriculum as they are often not clear about the objectives and goals of the material, hereby making it much more challenging for educators to adequately teach the material (Buthelezi et al., 2009). Despite the fact that LO may serve as a source of enlightenment for some learners, many of them are highly critical of the capacity of LO teachers and the content they provide (Gounden, as cited in Naidoo et al., in press). Overall, it is important to recognise the significance of the goals of the LO learning area, specifically, because they aim to equip learners with a meaningful and successful life in an ever changing society (van Deventer, 2009).

3.6. Challenges faced by learners in townships

Chaskin (2007) puts forward that South African youth in disadvantaged communities are a fast-growing population. The author explains that these communities differ vastly from those in affluent suburbs where opportunities are rife for young people to engage in positive youth development, career development or recreation-related activities. van Deventer (2009) speaks to this by observing that adolescents in today's society are faced with needs and challenges that offer both problems and possibilities. Thus, challenges linked to career development cannot be ignored. Social factors posing challenges on career development include aspects such as, limited exposure to the world-of-work due to minimal or no access to career education services and opportunities. These also include, limited access or the absence of fieldtrips aimed at providing career guidance, opportunities to be addressed by guest speakers on different careers, job-shadowing opportunities, computer-based and career assessment and career role models and so forth (Miles, 2015). Hence, as a result of social immobility, challenges such as these account for the fact that many of these learners often end their schooling phase with no or limited knowledge of tertiary institutions or social contacts (possible role models) whom they can consult for guidance (Stead & Watson, 2006). On the other hand, Krombultz and Worthington (1999) note that there has been an increase in the shifting of career education provision from the schools, where other resources such as parents, role models, government initiatives, NGO initiatives and private stakeholders are taking on a more influential role.

3.7. Other initiatives aimed at career guidance

3.7.1. National Youth Development Agency

Buthelezi et al. (2009) maintain that low-income communities are still characterised by various socioeconomic career challenges. However, Naidoo et al. (in press) observe that South African society has witnessed an increase in recent attempts to provide career guidance to the growing youth population through government agencies such as the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), for instance. The NYDA is a national agency initiated by the post-apartheid government to provide services focused on addressing education and skills development as a vehicle towards reducing the high unemployment rate among South Africa's youth (NYDA, 2016). One of the NYDA initiatives is the Start Here Campaign, which is a comprehensive career guidance programme targeted at enabling South African youth to have access to up-to-date career information. The campaign takes place annually over a three-week period and focuses on providing career counselling and career education to learners in rural areas of the country. Other services offered by the NYDA include, grant opportunities, bursaries, mentorships and skills development.

In support of the school system, the NYDA strives to engage and inform youth about career and skills development opportunities. The career counselling and guidance opportunities employed by the NYDA are encouraging and connect with a lifelong approach to career development (Naidoo et al., in press). A quote from the NYDA Executive Chairperson, Yershen Pillay, gives insight into the grave need of career guidance in fostering the career development process of young people in South Africa:

“We cannot adequately stress the importance of comprehensive career guidance in shaping a young person's career. Without adequate information and direction, young people often make the wrong subject or qualification choices which lead to inevitable failures later on in life” (NYDA, 2016).

Bearing this in mind, Naidoo et al. (in press) stress that attempts to provide career education and career counselling during LO periods, combined with the initiatives of the NYDA, as well as those by other organisations or institutions, are grossly inadequate based on their content. Due to the measure of inadequacy, attempts to improve these endeavours and strategies need significant attention and other alternative methods to provide career information should be considered, such as the role of role models. Hence, it is pertinent to investigate the impact which role models have in the career development of young people.

3.8. Role models

3.8.1. Introduction on role models

Existing literature suggests that teaching through role modelling is increasingly necessary, particularly for adolescents around the world (Bandura, 1989; Bryant & Zimmerman, 2003; Gibson, 2004; Lockwood, 2006; Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002; Lockwood, Sadler, Fryman, & Tuck, 2004; McLean, 2004a; Wright, Wong, & Newill, 1997). Given the significance of the influence of role models on the general adolescent population, it is essential to be mindful that adolescence is a period when individuals develop a sense of career identity (Hackett & Betz, 1981). For this reason, Ackerman (1997) highlight that the process of developing a career identity is especially challenging and complex in nature. Blustein, Devenis and Kidney (1989) perceive it as a process where adolescents consider, explore, decide and specify their career goals and aspirations.

The concept of role model is diverse and its meaning varies greatly from society to society. This study views role model as an individual whom people can identify with as s/he may have qualities which other individuals may aspire to have. Or, as Milder et al. (2014) suggest, they may be in a career position which others may want to reach. Moreover, Buunk, Peiro and Griffioen (2007) emphasise that adolescents may consider the achievements of role models as potential acquisitions which they may possibly pursue in future prospects. Furthermore, Lockwood and Kunda (1997) argue that role models may possibly represent prospective goals for adolescents, while also detailing possible avenues for these youngsters in pursuit of their ambitions. Also, Buunk et al. (2007) note that although role model identification may be an automatic process and may occur with individuals who are not similar, it is highly likely that young people tend to choose role models that are similar to themselves and with whom they can identify with or share certain commonalities.

Buunk et al. (2007) continue by contending that exposure to a positive role model may lead to a higher inclination for learners to engage in proactive career behaviours such as career planning (e.g. setting goals and exploring options) and proactive skills development, for instance, attending extra classes or practising sessions aimed at enhancing a particular skill and proactive networking, such as engaging with individuals who can advise and guide one towards

a particular career. On the other hand, a lack of role models may lead to negative outcomes among the youth (Bryant & Zimmerman, 2003).

According to Akhurst and Mkhize (2006), there are various channels through which young individuals can readily access career information, for example, through direct and immediate conversations or mentorships from role models in their environment, career services, parents as career role models, role models in their extended families or communities, as well as through the use of television and the internet. However, in many low-income communities across South Africa, the reality is grim as this is not always an easy exercise or hardly an option amidst issues of poverty and limited access to resources. Locally, the reality of financial constraints in a country shaped by heavily poverty stricken areas, has a severe and adverse impact on the patterns of occupations in different socioeconomic groups. This is instrumental in hindering the provision of career education (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006).

To date, a significant bulk of the literature on role models directs its attention to its position in aspiring professionals in health science disciplines, such as doctors and physicians (Lankford et al., 2003; McLean, 2004a; 2004b; 2006; Paice, Heard, & Moss, 2002; Wright, Wong, & Newill, 1997). Another study conducted by Horn (2011) focused on women's interests to pursue a career in the areas of maths and science. Additionally, much of the preliminary literature in career psychology also tend to focus on the importance of role modelling in information sharing on behaviour and on role models as sources of support through mentorship (Bandura, 1989). Despite the importance assigned to information sharing and mentorship, even at a distance, role models who may not necessarily engage with adolescents' directly and personally, are considered to be a significant career resource in the lives of young people as they create opportunities for adolescents to visualise their dreams. Thus, in an attempt to bridge a gap in the scholarship on role models and guided by a SCCT theoretical framework, this study is unique and strives to contribute to the existing literature as it sets out to explore the extent to which role models influence the career decision-making process of adolescents from a township community in South Africa.

3.8.2. Parents as role models for adolescents

Although adolescents are surrounded by several potential role models, usually, parents are perceived to be the most influential (Brown & Trivino, 2014; McLean, 2004a). It has been

suggested that African parents in particular, are more likely to view themselves as life or moral role models and sources of motivation and wisdom for their children (Karunanayake & Nauta, 2004). Hence, adolescents do not only listen to what their parent(s) say but they also observe the behaviour or actions of the parent(s), and they may often model that behaviour as they grow older. This is why Bandura (as cited in Brown and Trivino, 2014) is of the opinion that modelling through parents and other adults is a significant source of learning for young individuals.

However, it is essential to note that having a parent as a career role model may be problematic for adolescents in contexts such as the low-income community where the sample of this study is drawn from because many learners either live with relatives or find themselves living in child-headed or single-parent households or in homes where the parent(s) are unemployed (Albien, 2013; Chuong & Operario, 2012). In instances where parents are employed, Albien (2013) found that they usually hold blue collar occupations. This may complicate the process of identifying a parent as a career role model.

Speaking to the aforementioned, Weinger (1998) asserts that children living in poverty have restricted career aspirations as they gain limited knowledge about available careers from their immediate environment (i.e., their home and neighbourhood). On the other hand, Jordan (1976) reveals that children from higher socio-economic backgrounds had an increased knowledge of a variety of career options, which may be as a result of their parents' knowledge of available careers and/ or living in environments where there are visible professionals in various careers to look up to.

3.8.3. Media Role models

According to Giles and Maltby (2004), history asserts that the range of people who could exert influence on adolescents' socialisation were restricted to family, teachers and other people in the community. Over the years however, the dynamics and scope for identifying role models have changed significantly, particularly after the 1930s with the inception of television (Gomillion & Giuliano, 2011; McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2001). The exposure of celebrity role models to millions of viewers made it possible for individuals to choose media figures as role models even though they do not personally engage with these individuals (Giles & Maltby, 2004; Milder et al., 2014). Additionally, popular culture, radio and print media played an

instrumental part, further reinforcing the colossal number of individuals available to exert an influence on young people. Surprisingly, there appears to be a significant gap in the literature on the influence of media such as television, on children's career development (Giles & Maltby, 2004; Watson & McMahon, 2005). This is also noted by authors like Hence, Patton and McMahon (1999, 2006) who agree that the influence of media on career development has received minimal attention in career research.

However, it has become increasingly apparent that a large proportion of the youth tend to look up to media or media figures who are publically depicted as role models, rather than individuals from their own communities. As suggested by Prinsloo (2007), the high reporting of media figures as role models for adolescents, serves as indication that more attention in literature ought to be placed on the influence of media, with specific attention given to certain television programmes on the career development of adolescents. In particular, Buthelezi et al. (2009) caution that having a role model who is a celebrity may encourage and promote unrealistic career goals among adolescents. This phenomenon may need to be explored further.

Although various scholars recognise the influence of media on adolescents' career aspirations, Giles and Maltby (2004) specifically, elaborate on the role of media figures in adolescents' development of identity. In the United Kingdom and in the United States of America, young people are reported to be increasingly spending a vast amount of time watching television. In the above mentioned areas, it is estimated that young people on average spend 2.8 hours watching television daily (Larson & Verma, as cited in Giles & Maltby, 2004). In addition, playing video games, listening to music, reading magazines and surfing the World Wide Web further increase the exposure of young people to various influential figures (Giles & Maltby, 2004).

3.8.4. The impact of providing career information through role models

In a country such as South Africa characterised by its distinct history of inequality, young people have many potential role models who have embodied resilience, including significant political figures such as Nelson Mandela who persevered and excelled in the most difficult circumstances (Theron, 2007). South Africa also has various other role models whose resilience and triumphs during adverse circumstances serve to inspire young people in our society today.

Providing career information through visibly positive role models may facilitate change in the stereotypical career beliefs of adolescents. As Stead and Watson (2006) contend, adolescents may choose careers based on occupational stereotypes. For example, society's prescription of gender roles is a significant mediating factor in influencing an individual's career choice (Stead & Watson, 2006; Watson & McMahon, 2005). In a culturally-orientated low-income community, it is not rare to find individuals who adhere to gender stereotypical occupational career beliefs, for example, that men should work in construction and women should be nurses or teachers (Savenye, 1990; Watson & McMahon, 2005). Despite challenges in the face of changing these stereotypes, it is notable that they may limit individuals' career choices and in the process limit society's productivity (Watson & McMahon, 2005). However, it is arguable that societal beliefs may influence adolescents' occupational aspirations. In a 2001 study conducted by Liben, Bigler and Krogh, occupations perceived as culturally masculine were regarded as having higher status as age increased, while several authors found that girls may have a greater range of occupations and more non-traditional careers (Helwig, as cited in Watson & McMahon, 2005). On the same note, Bailey and Nihlen (1990) observe that exposure to non-traditional career role models can lead to less gender stereotypical career beliefs.

3.9. Cultural influence on career development

Cultural influences cannot be ignored when considering the career development process of African adolescents. The phenomena of culture, which Dass-Brailsford (2005) calls 'kinship bonds', closely ties African communities, hereby creating a unique cultural identity. Cultural identity has been reported in the literature as a relevant mechanism to consider in the development of a career identity (Byars-Winston, 2010). Furthermore, because each individual belongs to a particular cultural group, decisions around career identity are often informed by one's cultural values, through social construction which takes place in one's social context (Geldenhuys & De Lange, 2007). This is why Myburgh, Grobler and Niehaus (1999) highlight the importance of culture and affirm that an adolescent's culture should not be underestimated or ignored in the process of career decision making. On the other hand, Myburgh and Anders (1989) explain that every individual is born into a specific culture and that identification with the parents (or guardians) of the individual lead to a positive identification with the cultural values adhered to by the parents' cultural group. Therefore, parents are indispensable in the

formation of a career identity (Geldenhuys & de Lange, 2007). Moreover, when considering the process of career development in African communities, it is important to recognise the role of culture in the negotiation of career decisions and in choosing a role model.

The low-income community which forms the backdrop of this study is a strong African culture-orientated community. Therefore, it is important to discuss the African cultural belief of *Ubuntu* and its influence on career decisions. Theron (2007) views *Ubuntu* as a cultural paradigm which can be described as having respect for others and the acceptance of connectedness between human beings (Theron, 2007). Related to this concept is the isiXhosa phrase which informs the African culture, ‘*umntu ngumntu ngabantu*’, and meaning ‘a person is a person through other persons’ (Theron, 2007, p.371). This concept is of particular relevance because African culture does not consider the individual in isolation, but in the context of a greater collective. From this perspective, an individuals’ career decisions cannot be made without regarding the home, family and culture (Albien & Naidoo, 2016; Stead & Watson, 2006). In essence, when considering the diverse opinions of the family and home environment, individuals may be promoted to pursue a career which does not necessarily relate to their vocational interests, but rather one that may be of benefit to the family or the community (Albien, 2013; Albien & Naidoo, 2016). Contributing to the literature on role models, McLean (2004a; 2004b; 2006) investigated the choice of role models of students at a culturally diverse South African medical school. His work documents the importance of culture in the process of choosing a role model, as he considers culture to be an important aspect of role model identification. Therefore, this study calls for a comprehensive understanding of African culture and *Ubuntu* and as a researcher; moreover, Albien (2013) asserts that it was critical to be cognisant of its influence in the career choices of school-going adolescents in low-income communities (Albien, 2013).

3.10. Chapter summary

This chapter documents an extensive review of the literature on the emergence of career education in South Africa. In relation to these factors, influences on the career decisions of youth in township communities were explored. Moreover, developments in the education system and various initiatives aimed at providing career guidance and education were unpacked, while also acknowledging the challenges hindering the effectiveness of career education. Additionally, this section also introduced the concept of role modelling as guided

by the literature, while highlighting its role in providing career information. The chapter concluded with a discussion on the importance of culturally sensitive career interventions which incorporate the values of the *Ubuntu* paradigm as a basis for underpinning research conducted in predominantly African communities. The following chapter describes relevant theoretical approaches which inform this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

“Theories are there. Heroes are here”-Robert J. Braathe

4.1. Introduction

Over the years, many theories have been developed and advanced to explain why people behave the way they do. One dominant explanation is based on modelling the behavior of others. As explained by Bandura (1969), there is general consensus that the identification process reflects how an individual will emulate someone else’s thoughts, feelings or actions. This chapter presents a comprehensive discussion on the relevant theoretical frameworks utilised in this study and commences by focusing on the Social Learning Theory (SLT) and the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT). The aforementioned philosophies are rooted within the tenets of constructivism, which is the overarching epistemological approach informing this study. Due to its suitability and functionality for addressing a vast spectrum of topics concerning human behaviour, the Systems Theory Framework (STF) will guide the backdrop of this study (Patton & McMahon, 2006).

4.2. Constructivist approaches to career psychology

Neimeyer and Neimeyer (1993) contend that the concept of constructivism entails active meaning-making by the individual. This is affirmed by Peavy (as cited in Patton, 2005) who puts forward that constructivist approaches are based on personal meaning-making, as well as the promotion of reflection on the implications of both old and new self-knowledge. From this perspective, constructivism indicates that individuals are encouraged to define themselves and their environment by referring to subjective sources of their knowledge. According to Patton and McMahon (1999), constructivism highlights the formation of connections and the interconnectedness between individuals’ experiences and various elements from their system of influences. Authors such as Neimeyer and Neimeyer (1993), Savickas (1993) and Patton and McMahon (1999) describe this as “holism”, which refers to the creation of meaning based on the totality of experiences and influences undergone by the individual. This differs from the trait and factor theory which focuses on the individual’s ability, values or beliefs. In essence, constructivism centres on the meanings that clients ascribe to constructs due to their

connection with other elements in their system of influences (Patton, 2005). Thus, meaning our learning is generated from within the individual in relation to his or her experiences of the world (Patton, 2005). In this regard, constructivist learning approaches present opportunities for learners to explore their subjective career narratives, to draw crucial connections between past and present experiences and to devise future prospects. When considering the aforementioned, it is evident why the constructivist approach is often used in narrative inquiry.

4.3. Social Learning Theory (SLT)

Rooted in the constructivist approach, SLT views role models as the facilitators of acquisition of moral and other types of behaviour (Brown & Trevino, 2014). This implies that individual behaviour is learnt through emulation (Brown & Trevino, 2014). Through observation and by emulating the role model, the individual enhances certain similarities. This is why Bandura (1969) considers the provision of social role models to be a significant method for transmitting and modifying behaviour. The author explains that “people are often spared exceedingly tedious and often haphazard trial-and-error experimentation by emulating the behaviour of socially competent models” (Bandura, 1969, p. 213). Given the significance of role models, it is almost incomprehensible to conceive a socialisation process whereby people are not guided by individuals who may embody accumulated cultural repertoires in their own behaviour. Stead and Watson (2006) provide an outline of career development in term of SLT which is based on four factors: i) genetic endowment and special abilities; ii) environmental conditions and events; iii) learning experiences, and iv) task approach skills.

- 1) Genetic endowment and special abilities describe specific qualities an individual is born with. According to Krumboltz, Mitchell and Jones (1976), these innate qualities play a pivotal role in learning activities which may lead to career choice. Therefore, these characteristics set limits to an individual’s career development. Although this theory has been criticised for its failure to explain exactly how genetic qualities influence career decision-making, it does in fact acknowledge that these qualities may have somewhat of an influence (Stead & Watson, 2006).
- 2) Stead and Watson (2006) further propose that environmental conditions and events also impact on the career development process. It is imperative to point out that although certain environmental factors can be controlled, others are beyond the control

of the individual. This suggests that the skills developed by individuals to cope with their environment may impact on their career choices.

- 3) Krumboltz et al. (1976) assert that the nature of learning experiences affecting the career decision-making process of an individual is instrumental or associative (as cited Stead & Watson, 2006). Instrumental in this sense, refers to an individual's reaction to events based on another's reaction or by seeing results of particular actions (Stead & Watson, 2006). These learning experiences may influence the individual on different levels. However, it considers their genetic endowment and special qualities, as well as the individual tasks at hand. Associate learning is an example of classical conditioning and takes into account that individuals may have either a negative or positive reaction to paired or associated situations which they may previously have had a neutral approach to (Stead & Watson, 2006).
- 4) Stead and Watson (2006) perceive task approach skills as competencies which an individual has learnt and which may incidentally be used in the career decision-making process. These competencies may include problem-solving skills, as well as emotional and cognitive responses to activities. These developmental skills are dynamic, flexible and may change over time in terms of their relevance to problem solving and performing activities (Krumboltz & Worthington, 1999; Stead & Watson, 2006).

Krumboltz and Worthington (1999) maintain that learning forms an integral part of a student's development in preparation for employment. It is argued that learning outlines the skills needed to transition from school-to-work, as well as the development of skills, work habits, beliefs, interests, qualities and values (Krumboltz & Worthington, 1999; Stead & Watson, 2006). Krumboltz and Worthington (1999) view provision of learning experiences as a vehicle for solving problems related to the school-to-work transition. The authors expand their viewpoints by proposing that career choice becomes evident through self-observation generalisations (SOGs), task approach skills (TAS) and actions which are informed by the behaviours initiated by individuals who are preparing to enter a career (as cited in Stead & Watson, 2006). Notably, learned experiences are ever-changing and not static. Therefore, the traits of an individual are constantly changing; it is fluid, dynamic and cannot necessarily be matched to an environment based on their current state (Krumboltz & Worthington, 1999).

SLT provides counsellors with a model for guiding young individuals in choosing careers based on their qualities. Although career counsellors cannot guarantee success in career decisions made based on qualities, they can assist individuals in producing the necessary self-observation skills, tasks approach skills and worldview generalisations and actions that will lead to a satisfying and productive career path (Krumboltz & Worthington, 1999). Also, exploring career development learning through a constructivist perspective challenges the traditional positivist views of knowledge and learning, as well as the approaches to facilitate learning. Patton (2005) explains that there is a shift from emphasis on information provision to one of construction of knowledge by using learning processes. In this scenario, the role of the learner changes from a passive recipient to an active participant and constructor of his/her own learning. In addition, the learning objectives of the learner are not predetermined, but rather generated by each individual in relation to their environment and their specific individual goals and outcomes (Patton, 2005).

Building on the aforementioned, Mitchell and Krumboltz (1996) extend SLT to a more holistic synthesis referred to as, the Learning Theory of Career Counselling (LTCC). According to Krumboltz and Worthington (1999), the principles of LTCC encapsulate a diverse set of approaches which inform school-to-work objectives. LTCC is based on the assumption that: i) Young workers need to expand their capabilities and interests, rather than base decisions only on existing characteristics; ii) Students should prepare for changing work tasks, not assume that occupations will remain stable; iii) Students should be empowered to take action and not merely decide on a future occupation, and iv) Career counsellors should play a major role in dealing with all career problems, not just occupational selection (Krumboltz & Worthington, 1999). Overall, it is suggested that career counsellors should be seen as coaches, educators and mentors. Although limited research has been conducted on LCCT's broader theoretical framework, Krumboltz (1996) defines the conceptual framework behind this theory in more detail.

4.4. Social Cognitive Career Theory

4.4.1. Background

Lent, Brown and Hackett (2000) point out that people construct their own career outcomes. Based on this, individuals may experience constraints and barriers in their environmental contexts, yet they can exercise agency in their career aspirations. The Social

Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) proposed by Lent et al. (2000) focuses on cognitive variables and the processes that influence career behaviour, including support gained from role models. SCCT has been adapted to elaborate and extend the aspects of Bandura's social cognitive theory that are most related to processes of interest formation, career selection and performance (Lent et al., 2000). In essence, SCCT draws on the empirical foundations of the constructivist approach about an individual's capacity to influence his/her own development and surroundings.

SCCT views people as active agents in the process of career development. In this instance, personal beliefs, environmental surroundings and possible career paths have a significant impact on this process (Lent et al., 2000; Stead & Watson, 2006). On the other hand, researchers and career counsellors acknowledge that the career development process is not solely a cognitive enterprise, as there may be potent (both external and internal) barriers to choice, change and growth (Lent et al., 2000). For example, Gottfredson (2002) contends that gender and socioeconomic position exert a significant circumscribing and compromising influence on career options an individual is likely to consider. Additionally, it is crucial to take into account that individuals differ in terms of their abilities, interests and achievement histories and therefore, it is of the utmost necessity to take this into consideration in terms of the career development process of adolescents.

Researchers such as Turner and Lapan (2002) have deployed the SCCT framework to examine relationships among perceived parental support, career self-efficacy, career planning/exploration, gender and career gender-typing, as well as career interests of middle school adolescents. Consistent with SCCT, their findings suggest that career self-efficacy, career planning/exploration efficacy and perceived parental support, interactively predicted young adolescents' career interests.

4.4.2. Basic tenets of Social Cognitive Career Theory

SCCT proposes several core concepts, namely the triadic-reciprocal model that consists of three interlocking components: i) Vocational Interest Model; ii) Choice Model and iii) Performance model (Lent et al., 2000; Stead & Watson, 2006). In addition, Lent et al. (2000) identify three mechanisms in the framework: i) personal attributes, such as internal cognitive and affective states as well as physical characters; ii) external environmental factors, and iii)

overt behaviour (distinct from internal and physical qualities of another person) (Lent et al., 2000). Furthermore, within the personal attributes mechanism exist three key constructs labelled as the “building blocks” of career development. These are defined by Stead and Watson (2006) as self-efficacy (e.g., self-concept), outcome expectations (e.g., satisfaction, stability) and personal goals (based on interests, abilities, and needs).

Fundamentally, it is pivotal to point out that SCCT highlights the avenues in which individuals exercise personal agency in their career development. Moreover, Lent et al. (2000) emphasise the position of SCCT in terms of the manner and diverse ways in which variables such as interests, abilities and values interrelate with the influence of personal and contextual factors in the process of career development. The authors conclude that SCCT has been developed to aid understanding of career development among individuals from diverse backgrounds in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, socioeconomic status, age and disability status (Lent et al., 2000).

4.4.3. South African application

In relation to career psychology within the South African context, SCCT significantly recognises the critical role that contextual and environmental factors play in individual career development (Miles & Naidoo, 2016; Stead & Watson, 2006). De Bruin (1999) introduces the notion of barriers which he sees as an instrumental concept in the career development of South African youths, more specifically African South Africans and individuals from low socioeconomic backgrounds. He asserts that SCCT is of particular relevance to the South African context as opposed to the traditional theories of career development, because it specifically focuses on the social and environmental context of the individual.

SCCT has previously been applied in South African career psychology research literature (Bester, 2011; Buthelezi et al., 2009; Miles, 2015). Specifically, Buthelezi et al. (2009) sought to understand the perceived career challenges and needs of Grade 9 and 10 learners from a disadvantaged background by deploying SCCT. Bester (2011) explored the diverse perceptions of career barriers among South African university students and examined the extent to which internal and external barriers affect individuals' career barriers. Her findings suggest that career barriers varied significantly by gender, race/ ethnicity and academic year of study. More recently, Miles and Naidoo (2016) utilised SCCT to assess socioeconomic differences in self-

efficacy beliefs of Grade 11 learners. In this instance, SCCT was deemed a suitable theoretical framework as a base for this study given its emphasis on understanding the individual within his or her context.

4.5. Systems Theory Framework

4.5.1. Background

By drawing on the Developmental Systems Theory and the Motivational Systems Theory (Ford, 1992), scholars Patton and McMahon (1999; 2006) expanded the use of the Systems Theory (ST) to fit the career counselling process. As noted by career theorists, the area of career psychology is clouded by complex theoretical components. According to Patton and McMahon (2006), experts in the field recognise the relevance of the Systems Theory Framework (STF) in understanding the complexities of career human development. Although STF is not specifically designed as a configuration on career development, it presents a useful overarching meta-theoretical framework which incorporates the concepts of the overabundance of career theories (Patton & McMahon, 2006).

4.5.2. The basic tenets of the Systems Theory Framework

STF provides a spatial arrangement for understanding current complexities faced by career counselling practice which is the foundation of the career and counselling theories (Patton & McMahon, 2006). STF focuses on two categories of construct, namely, content influences and process influences (Stead & Watson, 2006). Content influences include the individual system which represents the core of STF. In turn, individual influences serve as an anchor for intrapersonal influences of career development, such as personality, ability, sexual orientation and gender. Moreover, since individuals do not live in isolation, external influences such as the broader environmental/societal systems (e.g., family, peers, community and political influences) should also be appraised. According to sources such as Patton and McMahon (2006) and Stead and Watson (2006), the aforementioned is also located under content influences.

Secondly, process influences are depicted through processes of influence, recursiveness, periodic change and chance encounters. And, to develop a conceptual understanding of STF it is important to surmise that each system is open to influence by other systems. This

phenomenon is described as recursiveness (Patton & McMahon, 2006; Stead & Watson, 2006). Because change in one system is likely to influence change in other systems, it is deduced that an individual's influences may in fact change over time. In conclusion, Patton and McMahon (2006) point out that the final process influence over chance encounters, emphasises the influence of happenstance in career development.

4.5.3. Depictions of the Systems Theory Framework

Figure 8 shows a graphic representation of the Systems Theory Framework of Career Development as proposed by Patton and McMahon (2006). The diagram illustrates recursiveness as depicted by the dashed line, while chance encounters are conveyed through the display of lightning flashes. In this example, all the systems of influence are structured in the context of time, namely, past, present and future. As demonstrated in this diagram, it is necessary to point out the interconnectedness of these influences, as they are all linked (i.e., past influences the present, while past and present influence the future).

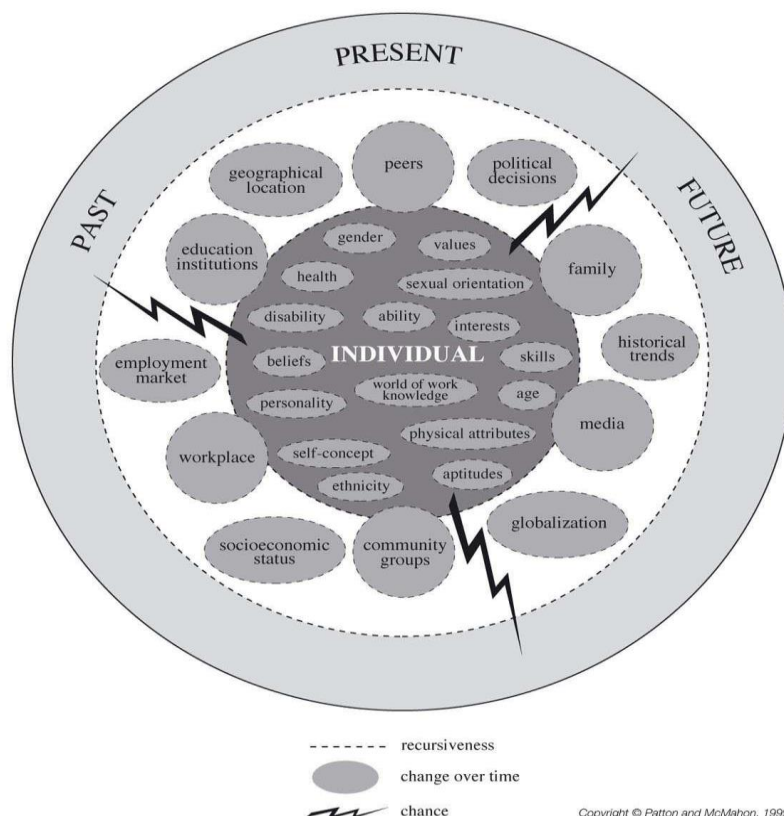


Figure 8. The Systems Theory Framework of Career Development. *Note.* Adapted from “*Career Development and Systems Theory: A New Relationship*” by W. Patton & M. McMahon, 1999, Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole. Copyright 1999 by Brooks/Cole.

4.5.4. Multicultural application of the System Theory Framework

It is generally accepted that different societies around the world have different world views. For instance, whereas Western culture values individualism, collectivism is valued in the African context. This explains the manifestation of existent primary assumptions of career development based on the perceptions of dominant Western societies, who in fact have different worldviews compared to their African counterparts (Naidoo & May, 2006). Since low-income communities are mostly populated by African South Africans, the unique culture of these communities also leaves a footprint on career decisions and future life plans made by young people in these areas. Basically, young people acquire cultural knowledge through the behaviours, attitudes, positions and lifestyles held by adults in their communities (Zirkel, 2002).

As mentioned prior, STF suggests that change in one system will influence change in other systems. Unlike traditional one-on-one approaches to career counselling, it is important to acknowledge the strength of STF operating within a multicultural context, which includes both individualistic and collectivist communities (e.g., African communities guided by *Ubuntu*) (Albien & Naidoo, 2016; Stead & Watson, 2006). This is particularly important in practice and in gaining a holistic understanding of South Africa's unique population groups. Arthur and McMahon (2005) contend that interventions guided by STF can be underpinned by the different systems of influence of the theory, hence STF clearly demonstrates the levels in which counsellors can intervene. The authors particularly emphasise the relevance of the theory in multicultural approaches. Moreover, it is encouraged that career counsellors work in multidisciplinary ways to enhance influences in various systems. For example, in the case of adolescents, it may be realised through parents, teachers and community members. Essentially, this systemic approach to an intervention may enhance more positive desired outcomes in learners' career development.

Thus, the role of STF in this investigation is to serve as an overarching theoretical framework in an attempt to gain a holistic understanding of the learners' overall levels of influences (e.g., individual, social and environmental) on their career development process. Previous research conducted by Albien (2013) has deployed this approach in the context of a low-income community of Stellenbosch. However, Albien (2013) applied a qualitative assessment tool, namely the *My System of Career Influences* that is underpinned by STF to

explore career narratives of Grade 12 adolescents in a low-income community in Stellenbosch, South Africa. So, given the significance of previous work, it proved necessary and integral to utilise a theory which accommodates unique contextual and cultural aspects influencing the decisions of adolescents in low-income communities.

4.6. Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have discussed two career theories which are rooted in the constructivist approach, namely Social Learning Theory and Social Cognitive Career Theory. Furthermore, I have explored the theories application in the South African context. The section concluded with a detailed description of the Systems Theory Framework, which is the meta-theoretical framework guiding the backdrop of this study (Patton & McMahon, 2006). The next chapter describes the methodology employed in this study, the origins of the investigation, sampling strategies used, data collection methods and procedures, my role as a researcher and the ethical considerations in the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

METHODOLOGY

“Modernity is a qualitative, not chronological, category.”- Theodor Adorno

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a description of the methodology used in this research endeavour. Given the functionality of a qualitative research design to extract a rich understanding of the career development process of adolescents, specifically pertaining to the influence of role models in this process, a qualitative narrative research design was deemed more appropriate for the current study. This section firstly outlines the origins of the study. This is followed with a description of participants who comprise the sample of the study. The data collection and data analysis methods used in the study are then described. With a strong focus on the aspect of quality assurance pursued in this study, I also reflect on my own position as researcher in the study. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the ethical considerations employed in this study.

As adolescents approach the end of their high school education, one of the significant developmental tasks for them is to contemplate and make decisions about their career direction (Super, 1997). In this regard, Buunk et al. (2007) list a range of common concerns that may plague learners as they embark on their future. The authors highlight aspects such as the type of career sought, the measurement of success in the field, future prospects of the specific occupation, as well as the possibility of knowing someone who succeeded in this specific career. It is against this backdrop of insecurity and uncertainty that adolescents (as in this study, Grade 11 learners) enter a new and predominantly stressful phase in their lives. Under these circumstances it is also common occurrence for young people to search for individuals whom they can compare themselves to. In this regard, social comparison becomes a mechanism for reducing uncertainty based on the premise that an individual from a similar background who achieved success, may render assurance to adolescents exploring the field that they may possibly have a similar successful experience.

5.2. Research Design

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, given the paucity of research on the topic, an

explorative qualitative study was deemed more appropriate to investigate the phenomenon of the influence of role models on the career development process of Grade 11 learners in a low-income, under-resourced peri-urban community in the Cape Winelands district area. A qualitative explorative approach enables the researcher to investigate pertinent attitudes, feelings and beliefs around the topic of study by aspiring to obtain a thick and rich description of the interview data (Bryman, 2012; Harrison, MacGibbon, & Mouton, 2001). Following a case study design, which Bryman (2012) views as a designated approach focusing on a specific community or organisation, the concerned study directs its focus on the role models identified by adolescents from the aforementioned community. It is important to emphasise that the community itself is not the focus of the study as its role is restricted to providing a vital and necessary social context for the study, i.e., a low-income, under-resourced peri-urban community. More pertinently, the sample of Grade 11 learners from this community pose to be the focus of the analysis.

5.3. Origins of the study

As proposed by Bryman (2012), qualitative research has a tendency to lean towards contextual factors and as a result, the context and our relation to the context often inform the uniqueness of the social world. In 2014, I become involved in Stellenbosch University's Career Life Project as a career counsellor in a service learning module in the honours' programme. The following year I became the coordinator of the Career Life Project, which meant that I headed the career counselling interventions at the high schools in the Cape Winelands region, including the two schools where this research was conducted. Additionally, I also have personal ties to the above mentioned community, as a result of my father being a resident of the community and the fact that my half-brother attended one of the high schools community. My involvement in career counselling at the high schools in the region, including shared perceptions on career development in the community, sparked an interest in a project based on the career development of youth in the community. I approached my supervisor, Prof. Naidoo and together we conceptualised the idea and generated a unique topic which explored the influence of role models in the career decision-making process of learners in the community.

During this time, I also noticed that most learners in the community seem to lack access to crucial information to make informed career choices. Educators of the high schools in the community pointed out that many young people in the community have made career choices that

were either ill-informed or not informed at all. In this instance, it was speculated that learners may have admired somebody (usually a celebrity) in a particular career or because they were not informed about available career counselling services. The teachers emphasised that this was a growing concern in the community, as learners seem unaware of career role models in their own community. As posited by one of the teachers, *“They tend to look up to celebrities in soapies such as Generations and Isidingo.”* (Personal communication, 2 May 2016). She also stressed that this was a concern because these celebrities are actors or actresses and they do not portray the full picture of their embodied careers. Following further discussions with community members, I discovered that there was indeed a dire need to do an in-depth study to understand the nature of the complexities of role model identification among adolescents in this community.

5.4. Gaining access

As mentioned earlier in the investigation, I am familiar with the community in which the research was conducted, as a result of paternal relations. My father and half-brother reside in the community, furthermore I have many friends who are residents in this community. Moreover, I have worked closely with the principals and Life Orientation (LO) teachers and learners at both of the high schools involved in this study. These individuals enabled me to gain access to the sample of Grade 11 learners recruited in the study.

5.5. Aims and objectives of the present study

The study explored the following objectives:

- To ascertain who are or have been influential role models in the learners' lives.
- To examine why the learners consider the identified person(s) to be a role model.
- To establish to what degree the identified individual(s) exerts an influence on the career choices and the career decision-making process of the learners.
- To determine what the learners may have gained from his/her identified role models and how that knowledge may have impacted on his/her career decision-making and life planning process.

5.6. Sampling strategy

This study drew a sample of nine Grade 11 learners from two high schools in the Cape Winelands region of South Africa. Because Grade 11 learners are typically at a stage in their academic life where they have to make realistic career decisions, they form the core sample for this research. Purposive sampling was used as the preferred sampling technique. Also known as selective or subjective sampling, this approach usually involves recruiting a relatively small sample (Bryman, 2012) who meet certain selection criteria. The main selection criteria was as follows:

- Learners had to be residents of the community
- Learners had to be in Grade 11
- Learners had to be between the ages of 15 and 20 (the average age of Grade 11 learners in South Africa)
- Learners could be male or female. I had hoped to get a fairly equal gender representation.

Purposive sampling was done as follows: Once ethical clearance was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities) at Stellenbosch University, South Africa and institutional permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Western Cape Education Department and the school principals of the two schools involved in this study, the principals and the LO teachers at both high schools were approached and asked to facilitate access to Grade 11 learners to inform them about the study. At this point, seventeen Grade 11 learners from the area displayed an interest to participate in the study. Nine of the learners were randomly selected and provided with an information sheet, an assent form and a consent form to be signed by their parents or guardians. The remaining eight learners were inform that they could participate in a career intervention which aimed to create a space for discussing future career plans. This intervention which focused on exploring career choices, occurred after data collection and was not recorded as part of the results of this research project.

5.7. Data collection method

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee: Human Research

(Humanities) at Stellenbosch University (see Appendix A), and permission sought from the Western Cape Education Department (see Appendix B), as well as the two principals from high schools in the community (see Appendix C and D). Secondly, the school teachers at the respective schools were approached to request assistance in arranging a session where I could directly liaise with the Grade 11 learners about the project, and identify suitable individuals who were willing to volunteer as participants.

The data collection process occurred in three phases:

- 1) **Recruitment phase:** The LO teachers approximately allocated the last ten minutes of the school day on two consecutive Fridays, hereby allowing me to address two classes of Grade 11 learners about my research project. I conversed with the two Grade 11 A and B classes at both schools and invited eligible and interested parties to enrol for the study. Seventeen learners expressed an interest in participating. Nine learners were then randomly selected, bearing in mind age and gender representativeness. Five learners from High School A and four learner from High School B were randomly selected. The remaining eight learners were then invited to a session which served as an intervention to explore their career choices in career development, as an attempt to satisfy their initial interest in the study. Prior to data collection in the individual interview and focus-group interview phase, for participants under the age of 18 years, parental consent or consent from legal guardians was obtained. Learners were provided with consent forms (in both English and isiXhosa) to take home to their parents or legal guardians to read over and sign if agreeing that their child may voluntarily participate in the study. For participants above 18 years, consent to participate was sought and obtained, through me handing out consent forms (in both English and isiXhosa) and reading and explaining each section on the forms, while also answering questions, prior to them signing the form.

- 2) **Individual interview phase:** Following the completion of the signed consent of the parents (for those younger than 18) and the assent of the learners (see assent form on Appendix E and informed consent form on Appendix F), I conducted two pilot interviews with Grade 11 learners from each school. This was necessary to assess my research tool, which in this case was the interview schedule. As a researcher, the pilot process allowed me to reflect on the greater depth and nature

of the topic from the perspective of the interviewees. Furthermore, feedback from the pilot interviews contributed to the amendment of the interview schedule. For example, the fact that learners failed to comprehend a certain concept, served as an indication that rewording was necessary to facilitate easier responses. After careful consideration, I reworded the term to 'qualities', which proved to be a more conceptual definition. The pilot interviews also revealed that some learners preferred to be interviewed in isiXhosa, while others showed a preference for English. For this reason, the interview schedule was amended to include both languages, hereby giving learners an option. Holistically, the pilot process served as a means of reflection, thus allowing me to plan the research design for data collection. Important feedback from the learners provided me with the opportunity to implement necessary changes. After the consenting and pilot process, I scheduled individual semi-structured interviews with learners in the community at a community centre outside of school hours. Data was collected through the use of nine individual semi-structured interviews with Grade 11 learners from the two high schools.

- 3) Focus-group phase:** After the completion of the individual interviews, the nine participants were invited to a focus-group discussion. Five of these learners arrived on the specified date and time at the same community centre, where snacks and drinks as a source of energy and a token of gratitude for their time offered, were provided. This session took place three weeks after the individual interviews. During the focus-group discussion, the learners were asked to answer ten key questions which were drawn from the original individual interview schedule. These questions stemmed from the need to establish a deeper understanding of issues that emerged from the individual interviews. Upon concluding the discussions, I presented the themes which had initially emerged in the interviews to verify the accuracy of the conclusions drawn. In the focus-group, learners engaged easily and were keen to share opinions and thoughts. Although the questions may have appeared to be a repetition of those posed to them in the individual interviews, the learners enthusiastically shared their views. Despite the fact that some perspectives and answers were the same or similar to their initial responses, some had changed their perceptions completely (see Chapter 6 for detailed data presentation and elaboration). The focus-group interview reinforced and further supported the

themes that emerged during the individual interviews, while an additional theme surfaced and enriched the data set with new information that was not shared previously in the individual interviews.

As the researcher, I facilitated the focus-group discussion in a manner which encouraged participation. I was also assisted by a co-facilitator who is a staff member at the community centre. Her familiarity with the learners, the environment and the context ensured for a relaxed atmosphere. The presence of the co-facilitator contributed to building rapport and assured for a safe space where learners could feel comfortable sharing their perceptions. The learners were graceful in their display of respect for me as a researcher, including the co-facilitator and also towards one another. All interviews were recorded with a digital audio recorder and I also took written notes of any key observations which took place. During the focus-group session, the co-facilitator assisted in noting down any non-verbal communication and observations. By following an inductive approach, I extracted an in-depth elucidation of data (Bryman, 2012). A series of topics (see individual interview schedule, Appendix G and focus-group discussion, Appendix H) were covered during these sessions, which generated a wealth of information about the topic at hand. Interviews were conducted in both English and isiXhosa, depending on the language preference of the participants. The data were transcribed (verbatim) and translated into English by myself with the assistance of an isiXhosa-speaking translator and transcriptionist for analysis. For the purpose of the interviews, I used an interview schedule that was semi-structured with open-ended questions. During the focus-group discussions a set of key questions were used to guide or probe the participants to elaborate on their perceptions.

5.8. Demographics of the sample

The sample consisted of nine participants who were interviewed individually. Five of these participants were interviewed in the focus-group interview. The sample consisted of five females and four males. Five of the participants attended High School A and four were from High School B. The participants' ages ranged from 16 to 20 years. Table 1 provides a brief description of the participants' biographical information in order to produce a summary of their personal characteristics and circumstances. Notably, pseudonym names for participants are used in order to protect the identities of participants.

Table 1: Participants' biographical information

Pseudonym	School	Sex	Age	Parents' Occupation	Chosen Future Career	Role Model
Khanyisa	HS A	F	17	M: Cash office clerk F: Identity unknown	Fashion designer / Tour guide	Mother
Zandisa	HS A	F	17	M: Unemployed F: Identity unknown	Lawyer	Steve Harvey (media personality)
Lelethu	HS B	F	17	M: Unemployed F: Deceased	Economist	Karabo (media personality)
Themba	HS B	M	18	M: Community development worker F: Identity unknown	Community development worker	Mother
Olona	HS B	F	19	M: Unemployed F: Identity unknown	Social worker	Aunt (guardian)
Thandi	HS B	F	20	M: Unemployed F: Identity unknown	Social worker	Teacher
Khaya	HS A	M	16	M: Unemployed F: Transport industry	Scientist	Mother
Ludwe	HS A	M	16	M: Domestic worker F: Occupation unknown	Computer scientist	Casper Nyovest (singer)
Anele	HS A	M	16	M: Unemployed F: Identity unknown	Chemical engineer	James (mentor)

(Sex: M=Male / F=Female; Parents' occupation: M = Mother / F=Father; School: HS A= High School A / HS B= High school B)

5.9. Data Analysis

The primary aim of this study was to investigate the influences which role models have on the career development process of high school-going adolescents in Kayamandi, which is a predominantly isiXhosa speaking low-income community in the Cape Winelands district municipal area. Thematic analysis was used to interpret the interview data acquired during data collection. Due to the underexplored qualities of this specific topic, it was important to engage with the nature of the subjective experiences of the participants in the study and to report on the main patterns located in this research. Following Durrheim et al. (2011, p. 94), I questioned

myself during data analysis: *Why am I understanding this as I do and what is it about the text that leads me to these conclusions?*

Thematic analysis as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within the data” informs the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). The literature suggests that although thematic analysis is not an approach which has been outlined by a heritage in terms of a distinctive cluster of techniques, it is considered to be a widely-used analytical method in the discipline of psychology (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Bryman, 2012). Phases of thematic analysis adopted in the study are as follows:

- 1) Familiarising myself with the data
- 2) Generating initial themes page by page of the transcripts basis
- 3) Conglomerating themes
- 4) Reviewing themes with my supervisor
- 5) Defining and naming themes
- 6) Writing up the findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

The detailed analysis procedure involved transcribing the interviews verbatim. Thereafter, the transcripts were imported to NVivo, a popular software that specifically helps the researcher to organise, manage and analyse qualitative data informed by a qualitative research design, in search of emerging themes. NVivo was effective in helping me manage the voluminous amount of data generated from the study. Within the programme transcripts were read line by line, subsequently then coding each line into a preliminary theme. The second stage involved grouping the recurrent themes and also any sub-themes which emerged. This approach aided in recognising any similar themes which could be conglomerated to form a large thematic category that would represent overall segments of the data. Following Ryan and Bernard (as cited in Bryman, 2012), respective themes in the data were identified by searching for repetitions, indigenous categories, metaphors, transitions, similarities and differences, linguistic connectors, missing data, as well as theory-related material. The emerging themes were discussed with my supervisor, who assisted me in reflecting on and recognising gaps, as well as any missing or conflicting information in the data. The findings are reported in the next chapter and discussed in relation to the literature documented earlier in the research paper.

5.10. Role of the researcher

Reflexivity on methodology: Interview texts do not necessarily grant access to lived experiences. As Silverman (2004) points out, shared narratives by the subject are shaped by our prior understandings of the world. This calls for a reflexive analysis accompanied by the acknowledgement of personal ‘taken-for-granted’ assumptions and expectations (Bryman, 2012; Wetherell & Potter, 1992).

Therefore, it was necessary in my analysis approach to consider the discourses surrounding African culture and the daily lives and values of learners in African communities. It was more important to recognise that the process of career development in South African townships is driven by cultural influences under the negotiation of career decisions and career role models. Thus, the selection of role models for learners in townships may be qualitatively different from their peers in other communities. This assumption of course does require further inquiry.

Researcher’s background: I am a 23 year old African female Masters Psychology student at Stellenbosch University. My mother tongue is isiXhosa and I was born in a rural village called Alice, in the Eastern Cape. Despite the fact that I was born in 1992 and under the previous apartheid regime, I was fortunate to experience a different life than many other African children. After completing my pre-primary school education in Alice, my parents and I moved to the Western Cape when I was five years old. As a result, I attended previously white (commonly known as Model C) schools. Throughout primary and high school, I was mostly the only (or one of a few) African learners in my class. This came with certain benefits but also some disadvantages. Attending these schools proved beneficial because it afforded me a high level of education in institutions where there were greater access to resources. However, I struggled to relate to peers and teachers from a different cultural (Western) background. Fortunately, my parents ensured that I persevered and grew up informed and educated about my African cultural roots. After completing high school, I enrolled at the University of the Western Cape to complete my Bachelors degree, majoring in Psychology. After obtaining my degree, I pursued postgraduate studies at Stellenbosch University (SU) where I completed my Honours degree in 2014. The following year, I enrolled for my Masters degree in Psychology.

Although I was not personally raised in a township, many of my family members reside in townships all over the Western Cape, including my father and half-brother who live in Kayamandi. I often visit these family members and therefore, I am familiar with the nature of South African townships. Having attended previously white schools and being in the process of completing a degree at SU, I understand the difference in the nature of my relation to African youth in township communities. Although I do not consider this to be a negative attribute, I do think that my position and qualifications may put me in a stance position of power during engagement with youth in the township community. This may or may not influence the way in which adolescents communicate with me.

Since my research involves role models, I walked away from this study feeling as though I may have become a role model to some of the young learners involved in the project. This realisation dawned on me by the questions asked by learners and the expressions of awe when I informed them that I am pursuing my Masters studies. They expressed how rare it was for them to see a young African female in my position. Since then, two of the participants have expressed their admiration and consider me to be an inspiration to them. This reveals that as a researcher, my own attributes may inadvertently impact on the research process.

Reflection on the interviews: During the individual interviews, I experienced a sense of trust from the participants and that they felt comfortable sharing their own experiences. The engagements were successful; some better than others. Some of the learners were willing to share more than others. Due to my personal sensitivity to the reported lack of knowledge and the ability to communicate in English among township youth, I considered it crucial to allow participants to engage in their language of preference (isiXhosa or English). This explains why much of these engagements were dominated by their mother tongue, isiXhosa. From the beginning, it was clear that some of the learners were nervous about speaking and expressing themselves fully in English.

Essentially, the interviews afforded me the opportunity to identify and grasp the perspectives of learners within the community. Although I am familiar with the community and identify with the isiXhosa language and cultural background, I felt it necessary to encourage the respondents to report their opinions. During the individual interviews, as well as the focusgroup session, learners often opted not to explain what they meant in an in-depth fashion. This brought me to the conclusion that they may have assumed that I would understand

what they meant since we share potentially similar backgrounds. This was depicted in statements such as “*you know*”, “*in our culture*”, “*for us*” and many other phrases which were frequently mentioned in the interviews. In addition, learners often made facial and hand gestures, hereby suggesting that I would understand what they meant. In this instance, I encouraged them to fully explain themselves by emphasising my role as researcher to fully comprehend and make sense of their views to ensure an accurate interpretation of the data.

On a personal note: During the interviews, I detected a sense of hardship and the heavy burdens imposed on some of these young learners. One participant reported that she lived in a child-headed household and that her mother was an alcoholic, which made me feel empathetic (see Zandisa in Chapter 6). However, I admired her strength and determination to fulfil her dreams. Her desire to help her community/others is admirable, much like the other learners who displayed great maturity in their career development. After a debriefing session however, I learned to abandon my personal attachment to the data and to the participants. Overall, I believe that the research had a positive effect on everyone involved and that it collectively impacted on the lives of many, including the learners, the co-facilitator of the focus-group and myself.

5.11. Criteria for quality assurance

Despite the reluctance of many critics to embrace the trustworthiness of qualitative research, there are several frameworks which have been developed to ensure rigour in qualitative work (Shenton, 2004). This study employs Guba’s criteria for quality assurance which relate to the criteria of reliability and validity used by positivist researchers. In order to ensure trustworthiness of the research, Lincoln and Guba (1989) propose the following points: i) credibility which parallels internal validity; ii) transferability which parallels external validity; iii) dependability which parallels reliability, and iv) confirmability which parallels objectivity (Bryman, 2012; Shenton, 2004).

5.11.1. Credibility deals with the question, “How congruent are the findings with reality?” (Shenton, 2004). In this study, provisions were made in an attempt to address credibility through: 1) Use of appropriate and well-recognised qualitative research methods, namely individual interviews and a focus-group discussion; 2) Familiarising myself with the cultural context of the community. As mentioned prior, I am familiar with the community and

regularly visit family and friends in the community. Due to my association with the Career Life Project, I have been involved in career counselling at the schools for the past three years. 3) Throughout the study and particularly during the consent process, it was stressed that participation was voluntary and that their withdrawal (should they wish to) at any stage of the research, would be gracefully understood and respected. 4) Frequent supervision sessions with my supervisor, Prof. Naidoo, were instrumental in increasing my personal awareness on any assumptions (my own subjectivity) that I may have encountered throughout the study. 5) I do engage with my potential bias and reflect on my personal perspectives later in the chapter.

I believe that my ability to identify with the community, language and culture had a constructive function with regards to any potential assumptions I may have had in the study. This provided me with a form of social capital since I could collect the data in the mother tongue (isiXhosa) of the participants, simultaneously having the capacity to verify translated and transcribed data continuously throughout the study. The aforementioned speaks to Watson, Duarte and Glavin (2015) who highlight that culture-specific career interventions minimise issues of bias and unfairness while enhancing validity and reliability.

5.11.2. Transferability was encouraged through the extensive literature review on the scholarship on role models and career psychology, in order to gain an understanding of the phenomenon in this study. A thorough and conceptual understanding of the context was sought to ensure that any possible future replications of the research could rely and utilise its methodology and findings as a basis for comparison (Shenton, 2004). Incidentally, the findings of this study may provide valuable information and knowledge to inform future research in low-income communities.

5.11.3. Dependability is realised through in-depth methodological descriptions which allow the study to be repeated. In recording and transcribing of data, a computerised data analysis package (viz., NVivo10) was used to enhance dependability. Quotations and responses from each participant were entered verbatim into NVivo10 for storing, coding and searching qualitative data. With the ease of using the NVivo10 software, thematic content analysis was employed to elicit codes through the data. Thematic synthesis employed was threefold because within the programme, transcripts were read line by line and coded with relevant themes. This assisted in the development of descriptive themes, as well as analytical themes (Morton, Tong, Howard, Snelling, & Webster. 2010). Transcripts were read multiple times to ensure that all

the data had been coded. These codes were then grouped under categories which informed the themes in this study. This data management programme also proved to be instrumental in the engagement with the data. Finally, the ability to transfer documented literature sources into the programme further assisted in strengthening dependability, through the allowance to build links between verbatim data responses of the participants, as well as the theoretical context provided in the literature.

5.11.4. Confirmability which Shenton (2004) describes as a qualitative researcher's concern of objectivity, was addressed through various methods. Firstly, regular engagements with my supervisor and my co-facilitator regarding my own beliefs, assumptions, and background ensured for an objective interpretation of the data. Secondly, I kept notes of my internal and external observations during the research process. Thirdly, the focus-group discussion assisted in confirming and authenticated the themes that were produced from the analyses. Limitations of the study are discussed in Chapter 6, while brief explanations are also recorded to demonstrate how certain challenges were managed.

5.11.5. Triangulation was used to address my bias as a researcher. This points to the different methods of data collection employed, for instance, in-depth individual interviews, as well as a focus-group discussion. The individual interviews were used as an information gathering tool to elucidate learners' perspectives on role modelling and career development. The focus-group discussion was used as a space to verify the emerging themes identified during the preliminary data analysis phase of the individual interviews. This approach of verification was a method of avoiding research bias (Bryman, 2012; Dass-Brailsford, 2005). The data were also discussed with my supervisor and he provided valuable insights into any assumptions and gaps that may have surfaced. Furthermore, the identified themes were discussed with the co-facilitator of the focus-group discussion. In this regard, her notes taken in the interview, along with her background knowledge as a resident in the community, were very valuable in understanding the nuances which emerged in the data. Therefore, multiple observers, sources of data and theoretical perspectives were employed as an attempt to ensure rigour in the research process (Bryman, 2012).

5.12. Ethical considerations

Approval for the study was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities) at Stellenbosch University (see Appendix A). Additionally, permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Western Cape Education Department (see Appendix B) to conduct research with the Grade 11 learners from the two high schools. Lastly, permission was sought from the principals of the two high schools involved in this study (see Appendix C & D). During recruitment, each potential participant, including their parent/s were informed of the overall focus and objectives of the study by means of the assent and consent documents. All participants were assured that confidentiality would be maintained throughout this study. No adverse reactions were anticipated in this low risk study, however arrangements were made to refer participants to the psychological counselling unit (Welgevallen House) at Stellenbosch University should the need arise. There was no need for any referrals.

Before the interview commenced, participants were required to sign an informed assent form (see Appendix E) while parents or guardians were requested to sign a consent form for the learners who were under the age of 18 years (see Appendix F), hereby indicating their voluntary participation in the study. Learners living with no parent or legal guardian were considered for the study as per guidelines in section 3.2.2 of the *'Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures'* (Department of Health, 2015). For the duration of the study, it was emphasised that although participants had signed the assent or consent form, they (or their child) could withdraw from the study whenever they wished to do so. Likewise, learners had the freedom to answer or avoid certain questions at their own discretion. The identity of participants and all individuals mentioned in this study was protected by using pseudonyms in all written accounts. Information provided is treated with the utmost confidentiality, with the data stored in password protected files on a password-protected memory stick in the supervisor's office. The data will be deleted one year after the study has been concluded.

All participants were informed that there would be no direct benefit to participation in this study; their perceptions may make a valuable contribution to this area of enquiry. It was communicated to participants that the final report generated from this research would be available to the academic community and that a copy will be available at the Stellenbosch University library. The Western Cape Education Department will also receive a copy of the

complete thesis and a summary will be sent to interested participants and teachers at the respective schools.

5.13. Chapter summary

This chapter presented a conceptual description of the process of the qualitative methodological approach informing the study. Qualitative research often underpins experiences encountered by researchers and therefore, it was necessary to commence with a discussion on the origins of the study. Secondly, the process of sample selection was addressed and followed by a discussion on data collection and data analysis methods deployed in the study. In an attempt to explain the rigor employed in establishing trustworthiness of the research data, an outline of the quality assurance steps is also detailed. By reflecting on my subjective position as researcher, I concluded the chapter with an overview of ethical considerations employed in this study. The next chapter examines the thirteen emerging themes and their relation to the research questions which informed the underpinnings of this study.

CHAPTER SIX

FINDINGS

“What we find changes who we become.” - Peter Morville

6.1. Introduction

The following chapter details an in-depth interpretation of the thematic categories derived from the data presented in the preceding chapters. Themes were identified according to the thematic analysis process proposed by Braun and Clark (2006). Individual interview transcripts of the nine Grade 11 participants, including the group interview transcript, collectively contribute to the pool of data utilised to identify thematic patterns that surfaced in the investigation. Data content were analysed through the NVivo10 software programme. Thematic analysis was used to synthesise the data by rigorously examining the common elements. The main thematic categories that emerged, are presented below.

The respective themes are presented against the background of both the Systems Theory Framework's (STF) levels of analysis, namely the individual, social and environmental-societal levels, and the study's research questions. The first research question is: Whom do the learners choose as a role model(s) and why? The second question is: How have the chosen role model(s) played a significant role in the learners' lives? The third question is: How have the learners applied the attractive attributes or qualities of their chosen role model(s) to their overall career and life plans?

6.2. Presentation of data

The data presented in this chapter were derived from both the individual semi-structured interviews and the focus-group interview. Guided by the STF, recurrent themes highlighted in the data were related to the individual, social and the environmental/societal systems of influences. Table 2 first tabulates the themes as they each relate to the research questions. Tables 3 to 10 present verbatim examples from the interviews with the participants. The tables includes the participant pseudonym name and a verbatim extract relevant for each theme. This is followed by graphs presenting the percentage of coverage each theme received during the engagement with the participants. These graphs were formulated with the aid of the qualitative

data analysis tool, NVivo10. In an effort to clearly illustrate the themes, they are each supplemented by additional brief verbatim extracts from the interview transcripts. The participants in this study were given pseudonyms (as a means to protect their identities by keeping them anonymous) while still presenting the data in a personalised manner (i.e., given name, gender and social context of the participants are congruent).

6.3. Generating meaning

In terms of generating meaning, I immersed myself in the data on beginning the process of identifying themes and the relationships between themes (as a means to identify subthemes). As suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), I used thematic analysis to allow me to identify, analyse and report the emerging themes and patterns in this study.

Overarching themes	<i>Theme 1: Career choices (Individual)</i>
	<i>Theme 2: Definitions of what a role model is</i>
Research question 1: Whom do the learners choose as role models and why?	
	<i>Theme 3: Mother as role model (Social)</i>
	<i>Theme 4: Other family members as role models</i>
	<i>Theme 5: Teacher as role model</i>
	<i>Theme 6: Media figure/influence on career decisions</i>
	<i>Theme 7: Role models in the community (Socio-environmental)</i>
	<i>Theme 8: Motivation for identifying role models</i>
Research question 2: How have the chosen role model(s) played a significant role in the learners' lives?	
	<i>Theme 9: Role model as resource for career information</i>
	<i>Theme 10: "What I learnt from her is that life is tough"</i>
	<i>Theme 11: (The Role model) Challenges the learner</i>
Research question 3: How have the learners applied the attractive attributes or qualities of their chosen role model(s) to their overall career and life plans?	
	<i>Theme 12: Working Hard</i>

	<i>Theme 13: Importance of role models</i>
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Table 2: Identified themes guided by the research questions

6.4. Overarching Themes

6.4.1. Theme 1: *Career Choices (Individual)*

Although presented briefly in the participants' biographical summaries in the Methodology Chapter, I find it important to report on the participants' chosen careers, prior to discussing who their role models are. Some participants were clear about what career they want to follow, while others were uncertain about what career to choose and reported many different alternatives. During his individual interview, one participant, Khaya from High School A expressed that he had not yet thought about what career he would like to pursue, however, he was aware of his field of interest. The descriptions of the careers reported by the participants provides an understanding of where they are in terms of their individual career exploration process. In the ensuing paragraph I provide verbatim extracts on all the participants' chosen careers as well as their reasoning for making those decisions.

One participant who seemed to be confused/ uncertain about her career plans explained her career choice as follows:

There is a lot of things I want to do actually. Even the subjects I am doing I can choose many different things. I am doing tourism, in tourism I can be a tour guide and it's one of the things I like. In geography I can be a climatologist because I'm very good in geography. Generally, I love fashion designing and I am also good in drawings sometimes. I do not know which one I can say it is, I am not currently sure.
(Khanyisa, High School A, individual interview)

Another participant struggled to label the career he wants to pursue, however he knew that he wants to help his community. He said: *"It's... what do they call this thing? Community developer...it's community development. I want to help my community."*

(Themba, High School B, individual interview)

One participant (Lelethu, High School B, individual interview) said she wants to be an *economist*. She went on to explain that it is because: *"I love to know what is happening around*

our country. And I like to know about the South African economy”.

In her individual interview Zandisa (High School A) said she would like to be a lawyer. When asked why she wants to be a lawyer, she elaborated that:

Well, I think as far as I live in [name of the community], there is too much crime, and I mean the police here do not seem to be doing much about the crime. They can get bribed. If for example a person asks to be paid, they can easily get paid off and if maybe it's a relative who has committed a crime, they will not be harshly punished or arrested.

When probed to elaborate during the focus-group discussion, Zandisa related the above comment to a personal experience, she said:

It all about my family that is why I want to be a lawyer. I was living with my grandmother and her son. I did my research... My uncle has always been in jail. So every time my grandmother went to court she always took me with. Sometimes when a lawyer was defending my uncle I would always feel like he is not saying what I want and know. I would always want to defend him myself...[Therefore] I want to be a lawyer, I want to change these conditions in our community.

This comment puts forth that Zandisa's lived experience of an 'unjust' society as a young child made her feel the need to pursue a career which will allow her to tackle this phenomena directly.

During her individual interview, Olona, from High School B, said she wants to be a social worker because she wants to help people *“Like people who are being ill-treated at home, so I can give them advice”.*

Thandi from the same school said in her individual interview that she wants to become an auditor. Interestingly, towards the end of her interview after reflecting on her personal qualities through the questions she answered during the interview, Thandi changed her career choice and now strongly suggested that she is also interested in social work. It was during the focus-group interview where she emphasised this that she believes that her qualities uniquely position her to pursue a career in social work. This being said, after her peer Olona had shared the same sentiment about herself.

Anele from High School A said in his individual interview, *“I want to be a chemical engineer and also I want to be a quantity surveyor. Reason being, I like chemistry and mathematics, and I also like working in the lab using chemistry and using all sorts of experiments to discover new things and also to develop my country.”*

Khaya from High School A admitted in his individual interview that he is not sure what career he would like to follow. He said: *“I am not quite sure, but my career path is science. Why I chose this path is because I like science and making things simpler.”* During the focus-group discussion he further went on to elaborate on this point by stating that: *“For me people of [name of community] pollute a lot. Most of them love cars especially taxi drivers. The gas of those vehicles affects the environment. I want to take something they use every day and switch it to something that is eco-friendly. I would like to change the volume of air pollution in our community.”* This view comes with his lived experience of having his very own father being in the transport industry.

Ludwe from High School A said in his individual interview, he wants to be a computer scientist, because of his love for computers. During the focus-group discussion he shared: *“I am doing it for myself, no one else. I chose this career for myself. There are few computers in our community. While there’s a lot of people who need to be taught about computers... So if you have or you know someone with a computer you must be grateful.”* Although expressing that his career choice is based on his own interests, he eludes to the fact that not many people in his community are trained in using computers and having him being trained may assist since he would have the capacity to help people who are interested in learning about computers.

The school-going adolescents in this sample all expressed their desire to pursue particular career choices, many of which are not commonly held by residents in their community (for example computer scientist, chemical engineer, quantity surveyor, economist, etc.). The discussions around which career they would like to pursue provided the learners an opportunity for reflection and career plan construction, as learners used their self-knowledge and self-awareness to discuss how their career choices are in line with their unique attributions. It is worth mentioning that all of the learners specifically chose careers which they felt would allow them to give back to their community or country (such as being a social worker, lawyer or

community development worker for example). Having looked at the contextual landscape of low-income communities in Chapter 2 of this thesis, it can be considered amicable, yet expected that these adolescents choose careers which would change the lives of individuals in their families and general members of their community. The careers selected by these learners and the reasoning behind their career choices pointed towards them taking an overwhelming sense of responsibility to bring about this change amongst the lives of individuals in their community.

6.4.2. Theme 2: *Definitions of a role model*

Each of the participants in the study, was asked to share what they think the term role model means to ascertain their own interpretation of the term before engaging in discussions on their chosen role models. A few of the recurring descriptions which were shared during the individual interviews are presented below:

Lelethu: *“Role model is someone who gives a good influence so you can learn from the other things you would like to do”.*

Olona: *“It’s someone you look up to”.*

Themba: *“Role model is someone whom you look up to, I do not know how to put it. It’s someone who inspires you with good things that they do. If they do bad things, then you will not be impressed because you do not want to look bad. The more they do good things the more you are inspired.”*

Interestingly, during the focus-group discussion two learners (Khanyisa and Zandisa) indicated that a role model is not necessarily someone who is perfect. Rather they expressed that a role model should be able to acknowledge their mistakes:

Khanyisa: *“A role model is someone whom you can look up to. Even if it is someone you know, you learn from their mistakes. Someone who inspires you to do great things.”*

Zandisa: *“Uhm a role model is someone that’s uhm..It’s a person who leads by example. Someone who learns from their mistakes and admits his/her mistakes. And admits that they will still continue to make mistakes as they grow.”*

While Thandi said in her individual interview: *“A role model is...a role model, uhm like I would say it is someone for an example is how you handle yourself in presence of others, where you work and the respect you show to people.”*

Notably, Anele said during his individual interview: *“For me, it’s someone who just inspires you, not just by what he says, but his actions. Like it’s easy to look up to a person whom you are inspired by his or her actions.”*

The definitions provided by the participants were in line with the definition applied in this study, which is that a role model is ‘someone whom people can identify with as he or she may have qualities which other individuals may aspire to have, or they may be in a position which others may want to reach’ (Miledler et al., 2014).

6.5. Research question 1: Who do the learners choose as role models and why?

The themes presented below deal with the role models which the sample in this study selected. These role models should be considered against the backdrop of the biographical backgrounds of the learners as presented in the table of participant demographics on page 55.

6.5.1. Theme 3: Mother as role model (Social)

Mother as a role model was one of the themes which were unearthed in the interviews with the school-going adolescents in this study. Five of the nine participants identified their mothers as their role models. Their reasons offered included that their mothers have supported them, sacrificed for them, and motivating them with their personal and career development. This finding is not surprising, considering the common trend (discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis) of absteesim of father figures among the adolescents enrolled in this study (Chuong & Operario, 2012).

Examples verbatim extract which express why the learners chose their mothers’ or mother figure is presented in Table 3 below:

Participant pseudonym names	Verbatim extracts
Khanyisa	<i>“It has always been my mother. She has been with me as a single mother. She got pregnant with me when she was doing grade 12. She had to re-do her grade 12 but she did not give up, she passed her matric. Since she is the only one who raised me, she never gave up on me, I got everything I wanted I cannot complain”</i> .-IDI
Khaya	<i>“My role model is my mother, she is always there, but sometimes we may not agree on everything I want. Sometimes we disagree when I am wrong, but ja I appreciate everything she does and how much she supports me in all that I do”</i> .- IDI
Lelethu	<i>“In my life? My Mother”</i> . –IDI
Ludwe	<i>“My mother is the one who is pushing me, because my father does not know about my career”</i> . – IDI
Themba	<i>“It is my mom, obviously! ...she did a lot of things for me as a single parent”</i> . – IDI

Table 3: *Mother as role model* verbatim extracts

(IDI= Individual interviews; FGD= Focus-Group Discussion)

The five participants chose their mothers as role models for various reasons. The adolescents highlighted that their mothers provide guidance, motivation, support (both emotional and financial), and are a visible visual image of the traits needed to overcome adversity. To some of the learners, their mothers are a tangible example of a working professional. Two of the learners indicated that their mothers are single parents and their tenacity to raise their children on their own make them good role models for their children. Furthermore, one participant (Ludwe) brought up in his individual interview that his father does not play a meaningful contribution in his career development process, which again is common in the context of low-income communities in South Africa.

During her individual interview, Olona, identified her aunt who works at social development as her role model. She explained that her aunt is her foster guardian and therefore she plays the role of a mother figure in her life, as her parents abandoned her as a baby. Although, not her biological mother, it felt more appropriate for me to categorise her chosen role model under this theme, as her aunt related more to the qualities of a mother figure than in the next theme which speaks to role models who are from the external family. Again, it is worth noting that Olona's situation of being an orphan is not unique in low-income communities, and this social condition can not be ignored when looking at her personal career choice (of being a social worker, which she said is because she would like to provide *'advise to people who are ill-treated at home'*).

6.5.2. Theme 4: *Other family members as role models*

Another prominent theme in the data was learners identifying another family members as a role model. Many participants identified somebody in their family who can be considered a role model. Three participants identified an uncle as a role model in the family. The aforementioned uncles were described as a caring family member who provides financial and an academic support structure as well as a career resource. These uncles were thus considered to be role models assisting with the career development of the learners. Against the backdrop of these participants not having any meaningful contact with their father's, the uncles who are seen as role models could be considered as playing the role of the father figure in these learner's lives. Two participants identified siblings as role models, because of their achievements and personal character traits while one participant also identified a cousin as a role model. Both the siblings and the cousin figure identified were older than the school-going adolescents, therefore their choice of these individuals as role models in their family again depicts the amount of impact which these individuals have had in terms of assisting ther adolescents in their growth and development. See the examples of extracts from individual interviews with participants illustrated in Table 4 below:

Participant pseudonym name	Verbatim extracts
Anele	<i>"Yes, I do, my uncle from my other side, my father's side...He helps me, he asks me maybe if I am sure about my</i>

	<i>chosen career, and any question possible so that I can be sure of what I want. And also if I need a school book. He helps me, or anything to do with my academics, helps me. Sometimes he takes me to the University of Stellenbosch to see the chemical engineering faculty and ask what they do”.</i> – FGD
Lelethu	<i>“My role model in my family is my dad’s brother, Mbalisi...” “Like everything, he knows how to work with people. He knows how to motivate people when they have no direction in life. For an example he encourages us to study further so we can be something in life, since he is the only educated person in our family”.</i> – IDI
Zandisa	<i>“It’s my uncle...Because he always pushes me to read, and study my books.. And focus on my education. If he didn’t push me I wouldn’t be still be at school now. I would have dropped out”.</i> – IDI

Table 4: *Other family member as role model* verbatim extracts

(IDI= Individual interviews; FGD= Focus-Group Discussion)

Noticeably, Lelethu’s description of her father’s brother in the table above comes after she had explained that her father had passed away. Thus, her father’s brother’s assimilation of responsibility both for Leletu and her mother, could be considered a practice of cultural behaviour in African cultures. This pointing to the strong kinship ties in African societies which are further elaborated on in the Discussion chapter (Chapter 7) of this thesis.

During the individual and focus-group interview, Zandisa indicated that her parents have not been involved in her life or her career plans, however she identified her uncle as the family member who encourages her in her career and life plans. She said:

Uhm, not with my parents, not necessarily, but in my extended family I have spoken about my career plans with my uncle. He is the one who told me that whatever happens I should just stick to education, and continue my studies as that will put me somewhere in life.

During the individual interview Zandisa mentioned that the very same uncle had taken her in, raised and schooled her when her parents did not take this responsibility. Her explanation of her strong relationship with her uncle (who resides in Johannesburg, South Africa) unearthed the fact that he is the one who has kept Zandisa motivated throughout her life. He encourages her and is there for her emotionally and financially, thus it is no surprise that she looks up to him as a role model in her family.

Furthermore, during the individual interview Zandisa identified another role model in her family. She explained:

Zandisa: *"I think it's my cousin".*

Olivia: *"Okay, why is she your role model?"*

Zandisa: *"Uhm, through our family, there is no money, and she managed to attend a school {college}, and finish her studies. Now she works, she works at the clinic, and she is paying for her studies because she is still continuing to study. So ja.... She pays for her education and she works for herself."*

Zandisa's reflection of her cousin comes along side the backdrop of her being a school-going adolescent who resides on her own and sees to her own needs. This backdrop coupled with her goal to study for a degree to become a lawyer reflect the relation between where she sees herself now and in the future.

During the individual interview, Themba identified his brother as his role model. See the extract below:

Olivia: *"Ok, so who do you currently look up to? Who is the role model in your family?"*

Themba: *"My Brother."*

Olivia: *"Ok."*

Themba: *"Because he has got his master's degree."*

Olivia: *"What is his career?"*

Themba: *"Bachelor of social science. But I do not know what they do."*

He further went on to elaborate:

Themba: *"My brother has been like a father to me in many ways. And the things he*

does like he still takes care of his children and all of that stuff.”

The above comment by Themba could be understood as though he seems to have a sense of admiration for his brother’s ability to ‘take care’ of his children, despite the fact that he was raised by a single mother, due to having an abstent father. While Themba’s brother could be considered a potential life and career resource, the fact that the participant does not know much about the course which his brother studied, suggests that he does not have meaningful conversations about career planning with him.

During the individual interview, Thandi also identified an older sibling as a role model. She shared:

Olivia: *“Who is your role model in your family?”*

Thandi: *“In my family I would say it is my older sister. My sister is not depending to anyone, she works. She also provides for us and supports us even though we are siblings. She can buy whatever we need.”*

Olivia: *“So what have you learnt from this person?”*

Thandi: *“What I learnt from this person is that just because she has money does not mean she has to look down on us. Although her parents do not have money they are always parents to her. I also learnt that a person with money can respect someone broke.”*

For both Themba and Thandi, the support of an older sibling (which happens to be the same sex as the participant) plays a critical role in there personal development. Overall, eight of the nine participants (including those who identified their mother as a role model) identified an individual in their family who is a role model and or a person whom they can discuss their career plans with. While one of the participants (Ludwe from High School A, FGD) could not identify anybody in his family as a role model, or an individual he could discuss his career plans with. Ludwe expressed that *“No I don’t have anyone I talk to about careers in my family”*. When I asked whether he has a role model is in his family, he replied by saying *“No, I don’t have one.”*

6.5.3. Theme 5: Teacher as role model

Teachers were identified as role models in the school environment by all nine of the

participants. The role which teachers played in the career decision making process of the adolescents in this sample was seen as substantial. See Table 5 below.

Participant pseudonym name	Verbatim extracts
Anele	<i>“Like I would say [name of teacher]. Because he enjoys what he is doing, and he is also patient with us. Even though we are sometimes naughty, he still teaches us what we need to learn and he also does not hold any grudges against people. Ja, that is why I like him.”- FGD</i>
Khanyisa	<i>Khanyisa: “At school I would say my class teacher.” Olivia: “Ok, which one, what is her name?” Khanyisa: “Teacher [name of teacher].” Olivia: “Why? Or what do you like about her?” Khanyisa: “Every time we are about to start the day, she always motivates us to never give up at school. She always tells us not to do such and such at school.” She does not give up; she shows us that I am now a teacher because I never gave up.”- FGD</i>
Khaya	<i>“[name of teacher] although not many people like him, I do because he just adores life, he likes the world of computers and likes to know what happens in life”. – FGD</i>
Lelethu	<i>“Ok, it’s a teacher [name of teacher]...She encourages students to study. For an example if you want to be something, you have to study.”- FGD</i>
Olona	<i>“My teacher...He is a right person; he cares about the pupils. If he sees that you do not like school or you are ignorant about your studies, he will go to your parent. He will say what kind of a person you are at school and ask what he must do. He is a caring person.”- IDI</i>
Thandi	<i>“I have not seen any one doing auditing but my teacher, [name of teacher] she is the one motivating me”. “I like her because she has a good approach to school kids. When its play time she knows how to play with kids. When we</i>

	<i>have to be serious she knows how to be serious in class. She has her own car. She is a church goer. She knows how to respect the young and the old. She does not shout.”</i> <i>“She is my main role model.” –IDI</i>
Themba	<i>“My class teacher...Because he is the one who inspires us to work hard. He is the one who came up with the idea of students who are good in Maths should help others. Things like that, so it’s class spirit.” -IDI</i>
Zandisa	<i>“Uhm my class teacher, [name of teacher]...she likes people, she also respects people. She even respects learners even though they are younger than her. When she looks at a young person, she does not see a useless child. She sees a child with potential and a bright future ahead.”-FGD</i>

Table 5: *Teacher as role models* verbatim extracts

(IDI= Individual interviews; FGD= Focus-Group Discussion)

Reasons why learners chose teachers as role models ranged from teachers’ being a good career example, to being supportive, encouraging, respecting, caring for and motivating the learners. Considering that school-going adolescents spend a significant amount of time in the school environment, it is not unusual for them to have role models in this space (Bingma, 2012). Given that parents in these communities often work long hours, therefore even after school hours, adolescents rarely get time to engage with them, leaves the teachers in the community with the responsibility of acting as ‘substitute parents’. Lee and Breen (as cited in Bingma, 2012) contend that the overall school environment itself becomes a social institution which provides a sense of belonging for the adolescents. This is depicted in the statements below, where learners pointed out that their teacher(s) are the first person they would go to (because they feel that their teacher knows them very well), if they had a career question.

Khanyisa explains in her individual interview that: “[name of teacher] *is like my second mother.*” When asked who has played a significant role in her career decision making. Khanyisa said: *“I think it’s obvious [for me]. In career? I think it’s been my teacher.”*

Zandisa expressed in the focus-group discussion that when she had a career question, she

would go to her teacher.

“I would go to my subject teacher. She teaches history. She knows what I will do after high school in university. She knows me, and that I want to learn more about history.”

In Zandisa’s situation for example, because she lives on her own (in a child-headed household) and does not have face-to-face interactions with her parents, to guide her in making future career plans, she resorts to discussing her career plans with her teacher whom she considers as someone who ‘knows’ her very well. Among all the learners enrolled in this study, teachers were viewed as individuals who tried to instil resilience among the learners (Albien, 2013).

6.5.4. Theme 6: Media figure/influence on career decisions

Participants indicated that careers seen depicted on television or media characters portraying certain careers have played an important role in their career decision making process. More specifically, eight participants indicated that the media had played an influence on their career decisions although one participant said she does not feel the media has influenced her career decision in any way. Four participants identified specific individuals or characters in media whom they look up to. While one participant identified a political figure as a role model in their individual interview, “...tata Nelson Mandela”. The other four participants identified particular television programs which they were influenced by, and not necessarily any specific characters. Responses of participants are displayed in Table 6 below.

Participant pseudonym name	Verbatim examples
Anele	<i>“I think the media affected my career, because there was this movie that I was watching with this guy, he grew up with his father. He always had a dream of becoming a chemical engineer and finally he did achieve his dream. And also he was able to just go to his own lab and he did many things in his lab and I became more interested in the career.” – IDI</i>
Khanyisa	<i>“Yes, there is a lot of them. I know a lot of fashion designers because I love watching T.V.I see your David Tlale’s they do inspire me. If ever I want to focus on David Tlale I check what they do and see how they do things, that inspires me.”- IDI</i>

Khaya	<i>“My role model is Elen Mask, the inventor of spaceX, the environment. I like how he thinks about the environment and develops things that don’t damage the environment.” - FGD</i>
Lelethu	<i>Lelethu: “My role model was Karabo.” Olivia: “Karabo, from?” Lelethu: “Generations” Olivia: “Why was Karabo your role model?” Lelethu: “Its way she dressed herself, like the way she acts, and how she handled her family businesses.”- IDI</i>
Ludwe	<i>Olivia: “So who is your role model now, besides career role model, who do you generally look up to?” Ludwe:” Cassper.”” Olivia: “Cassper Nyovest?” Ludwe: “Yes, yho! That guy never gives up!” Olivia: “Oh Okay, okay, so what does he do?” Ludwe: “He is a rapper.”- FGD</i>
Thandi	<i>“My role model was Lundi the Singer...” “It’s a business man in Generations at Ezweni communications, Sibusiso. I like him because he has guts and he knows how to handle his business.”- IDI</i>
Themba	<i>Olivia: “Ok, would you say that the media has influenced or inspired you to consider your specific career?” Themba: “Yes.” Olivia: “Which career or who is that person? Or which programme?” Themba: “These are our South African heroes. It plays on Etv, during Adverts. They usually help children and communities...”- IDI</i>
Zandisa	<i>“My role model has always been Steve Harvey”.- FGD</i>
Khanyisa	<i>“There’s this guy that I know who is a Radio presenter at MFM, he stays at Stellenbosch. Sometimes I ask him how it's done”.- FGD</i>

Olona	“No. Not in media”.- IDI
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Table 6: *Media figure/influence on career decision* verbatim extracts

(IDI= Individual interviews; FGD= Focus-Group Discussion)

Thandi specifically indicated in her individual interview that she has been inspired by the media towards the business field. See her comments below.

Olivia: “Ok, would you say that the media has influenced you or inspired you to choose a specific career?”

Thandi: “Ja, I would say on Muvhango, there is a business I like there. I like things that are happening on the business, even though I wouldn’t have my own business.”

While another learner Khanyisa said in her individual interview: *“Ja, I would say so. Watching the T.V and seeing that the person is doing what you aspire to be. You see how things are done you get inspired.”* She went on to say: *“Sometimes when I am at home watching weather I actually end up impersonating the person doing weather. Serious, when I see the person doing weather I always wish to read it.”*

Interestingly, Khaya said in the individual interview that his role model was Iron man. He explained that *“He was a strong cartoon character and later a human character in the Iron Man movie. I like how he creates things to stop the crime in his area or where he lived.”*

He went on to say,

Yes, the media has influenced me a lot, watching TV shows like National Geographic and Ad the channel and the Sci-fi movies. I find the things they show interesting and the stories told through documentaries about people who have achieved their dreams through sacrifice, not in terms of wanting to sacrifice but sacrificing anyway.

Supporting the above, Themba acknowledged in his interview that the media has influenced his thinking about his career. He explained that when he watches the programme called *“South African Hero’s”* he realises South African individuals who have achieved success, under difficult circumstances. In particular he described a show, which was about an individual who assisted his community after he became successful. This individual helped to educate young

people in his community about the negative effects of using drugs. This inspired Themba to further see the value of his chosen career, which is a community development worker.

During the focus-group discussion, Ludwe explained why he felt the media had influenced his career decision before he knew what he was interested in doing. He explains:

Uhm, when I grew up I have always wanted to be a journalist. Then I realised that I love computers. I don't know the name of the journalist I liked, but she was a sports journalist. I thought that as a journalist I would see all the soccer players. But I realised that I love computers so I changed that decision.

Zandisa stressed, both in the individual interview as well as in the focus-group, that a particular television programme influenced her to choose Law as her career choice.

Olivia: "Have you seen anybody who has the career that you want to pursue and living the life that you want to live?"

Zandisa: "I have never seen a real lawyer, besides the lawyers on television. I see lawyers in Sokhulu and Partners. Because that drama programme speaks about lawyers, and displays the life of lawyers, including challenges they may face."

Olivia: "Okay, so is that the background, or the information that you know about being a lawyer?"

Zandisa: "Yes, I got all my information on what lawyers do through watching Sokhulu and Partners and through the novels that I read."

Zandisa explained in her individual interview how the media can have both positive and negative overall effects on an adolescents career planning.

I think the media has positive and negative effects. But for me personally, I think the media has more positive effects. Because through watching documentaries for example and news, you learn a lot about what happens in your community, in the country and what's happening around you. Negative impacts come as sometimes the media teaches us negative things, and influences us to do things we are not supposed to do.

When probed to provide an example of the 'negative things' which Zandisa referred to, she mentioned things like; drugs, abusing alcohol and becoming involved in criminal behaviour.

As noted by scholars Watson and McMahon (2005) media or media figures came across as having an influence on the career decisions of adolescents in this study. The media was reported as having provided career information about different careers and different fields (in the reported absence of career role models in their community) to the learners. Overall, eight of the participants highlighted media as an important influence in their career decision. In the focus-group discussion the theme *Media figure/influence on career decisions* emerged more strongly as individuals resurfaced their media role models and others commented or were in agreement. Often the realities of the soap operas and television programmes were taken as reality, even though they were significantly different to the township life which these adolescents were used to. Perhaps these television programmes can be assumed to provide an escape for learners to imagine how their lives ‘could be’ in the future.

Fascinatingly, one participant (Ludwe) recognised himself as an emerging role model. He expressed in the individual interview that “*I am at [says name of community center he attends afterschool classes at], so in Grade 11 I became a captain, which means I help those in younger grades with homework and things*”. He further elaborated on this in the focus-group interview by saying:

For me I think I already am a role model. Since the grade 11 learners assist in the computer lab [as Captains at the centre], so we normally help the young learners. At school when they ask for help in terms of their homework I always try to help in every possible way I can. So young ones love me.

Therefore, highlighting that he already has younger children looking up to him as an example. Similarly, other participants such as Zandisa, mentioned that they are working hard towards becoming positive role models for children in the younger generations. Despite the fact that they reported limited visible role models in the community, they feel the need to take that role and become role models of future generations.

6.5.5. Theme 7: Role models in the community (Socio-environmental)

In support of Zandisa’s point above four other learners’ in this study did not identify a role model in their community while the remaining four participants had no problem identifying specific individuals in the community who can be considered as role models. Reasons for the

identified individuals ranged from their willingness to give back to the community in various ways, such as through providing financial support, teaching young people positive life values (i.e., family values, respect, resilience, sacrifice etc.) These life values relate to the cultural belief system guided by the *Ubuntu* paradigm (Albien, 2013). Examples from participants who emphasised that they do not have a role model in the community are presented in Table 7 below:

Participant pseudonym name	Verbatim examples
Khanyisa	<i>“In my community, no I won’t lie, I would not say there is one. The people from my community seem to have given up in life. So I cannot say there is someone who is encouraging me.”- IDI</i>
Khaya	<i>“I don’t have a role model in the community, I feel there is no one I can look up to around here.” - FGD</i>
Thandi	<i>Olivia: “Who is your role model in your community?” Thandi: “No, I don’t have a role model in my community.” Olivia: “Why do you say that?” Thandi: “I have not seen anyone who is a good example for me. The people in my community are too competitive...for an example if they buy clothes they expect other’s to have the same clothing item not considering their financial status. Some of them do not understand when someone can’t afford something.”-IDI</i>
Olona	<i>Olivia: “Who is your role model in your community? Or do you have a role model in your community?” Olona: “No one.”- IDI</i>

Table 7: *Role model in community* verbatim extracts

(IDI= Individual interviews; FGD= Focus-Group Discussion)

During her individual interview, Olona shared a particular example of why she does not have a role model in her community. See extract below:

Olivia: *“Ok, why do you think that you do not have a role model in your community?”*

Olona: *“I do not have any one who is a good example in my community. I do not see*

any one doing right things.”

Olivia: *“What are they doing?”*

Olona: *“Like bad things. They are not matured I would say. Like yesterday... When you are older we know you drink alcohol. Even though the person is older they act immature.”*

Olivia: *“Okay, so you were making an example like yesterday?”*

Olona: *“Yesterday, coming from school there was this drunk woman. So my friend was showing me that the woman is the mother of one of our friends. She was so embarrassed. I understand her situation but the younger kids will take that as a good example. They do not think that kids might copy the wrong things they do.”*

The above mentioned example can be related to the literature (such as Albien, 2013; Albien & Naidoo, 2016; Buckner, Mezzacappa, & Beardslee, 2003; Dodge & Welderufael, 2014) on high levels of parental substance abuse in low-income communities. Notably, the nineteen year old school-going adolescent (Olona) states that she can ‘understand’ her situation. This points to her ability to observe and take note of the stressful living conditions many people in townships are subjected to, therefore choosing to use substances as an escape to that reality. In the same breath she does not want younger children to observe that kind of behaviour, as they may think it is appropriate.

Interestingly, five learners did identify individuals who may be considered as role models in their community. Some examples included below:

Anele said in his individual interview that his role model in the community is [name of person]. He went on to state his reason for identifying the person as a role model: *“He helps in the community and also he is that kind of a person who does outreaches and just reaches out to people through different things.”*

During the focus-group discussion, another participant, Ludwe also identified his role model in the community as somebody who helps the community, he said; *“My friend’s father, because him along with a friend of his takes care of us in our community when there is any problems or anything short in the community. They always make a plan to assist.”*

Notably, Ludwe reported that even though he does know his father, he does not often have

meaningful conversations with him (such as conversations around his personal and career development), hence he does not live in the same community. Similarly, during his individual interview, Themba, identified an individual in his community who teaches him important values such as respect. Themba also reported that he does not have a father figure in his life (he has been raised by a single-mother) so the community member whom he identified, has often played the role of a father to him. Interestingly, he could not think of any way in which his role model in the community influences his career plans or recall any discussions he has had with the person pertaining to careers. Similarly all the participants who identified individuals who are role models in the community, did not disclose how these role models influence their career decision making process.

The community's influence on the career development of one of the participants (Zandisa) was discussed in a broader sense during her individual interview as follows:

I think my community because, my parents truly speaking they have done nothing. They don't do anything for me. I mean in the community there are various influences, people drink, some take drugs, everything, and even my mother is an alcoholic. So sometimes she does not give herself time to check on me, or on my studies, to check how things are going. But my community, my friends' parents for example support me, as they can see that I am doing something for my life. And nobody pushes me to do so, like for example having a mother who says, Zandisa go to school now. I don't have anyone to wake me up and tell me to get ready for school. I know I have to go to school and my friends have to go to school. So I have to follow what people do.

The above narrative again resurfaces the issue of substance abuse amongst parents in the community. Similar to Olona, Zandisa reported in her individual and during the focus-group discussion that she does not blame her mother for abusing alcohol or neglecting to raise her, instead she tries as often as she can to visit her mother (who stays in the same community where she resides in her own informal dwelling) as a means to checkup and take care of her.

Initially, Lelethu said in her individual interview, "No I do not think I have one." However after probing and her taking some time to think about it she said: "No...Ok, it is [name of person]. She is a girl from our community. She studies; she is still a student. She wants to be a Chartered Accountant..." When asked whether she has spoken to this individual about her

career plans, she replied by saying:

Yes, I do speak with her, she advises me, to study...She does not normally talk about careers [but] she always tells me to make sure that I master the modules I chose. What I do not like about her [though] is that she is lazy, it's hard for her to go to school especially on Mondays. She is not always keen to go to school, but she goes since she has no choice.

Lelethu's encounter with the above mentioned individual has provided a sense of the life of a student enrolled in a tertiary institution. It is worth noting that the individual she identified as a role model in the community is in the may have been a good source to ask and get answers to questions like 'What courses are available at her institution? When does one apply? What are the requirements for the course she would like to pursue etc?'. Furthermore, this student may have been also assisted her in providing some information about the course she is pursuing and how it will assist her in reaching her overall career plan to become a Chartered Accountant. Engaging in conversations like the ones mentioned above may have provided insight into the process of transition to higher education, but these opportunities were lost.

6.5.6. Theme 8: *Motivation for identifying role models*

Through reading some of the comments above, as well as others to follow, it is clear that many of the participants identified role models as individuals who give back to their family or community, which are characteristics of *Ubuntu*. The chosen individuals represent the character in which young adolescents would like to portray in their future selves. For example, Anele, in his individual interview, explained what he admired about his role model.

Anele: My role model is [name of individual], yes, [says individual's name] is another guy from the States, but he also comes here in South Africa sometimes. He is also the one who builds [names an NGO in the community], which is an organisation in [names the community] that helps youth with their homework and sports and also once a year there is also something that we call [provides a short name of the project]. Which is a group of young children who are dancing, that are sent every year to perform in the States. Ya, so he is the one who started that and he is the one who is supporting many people, in many things such as giving food parcels to those who cannot afford food.

Olivia: Okay, so what do you like about him?

Anele: I like the fact that he is not the kind of person who is selfish, if he was selfish he would have taken his money and then just support his family, but he just chose to come here in South Africa, one of the developing countries, because he thought that there may be progress one day in this country. So now I also want to do something that will help me to bring back to the community. So that I can provide for those who cannot provide for themselves, you know.

Lelethu explained in the focus-group discussion why her uncle is her role model:

Like everything, he knows how to work with people. He knows how to motivate people when they have no direction in life. For an example he encourages us to study further so we can be something in life since he is the only educated person in our family.

Themba explained in his individual interview that his mother is his role model because although she is a single parent,

She has always been there for me since day one. Everything I need she gets it for me basically. She always makes a plan for me even if she has nothing. If she can't get it, I will understand. For an example if I have problem with the teachers she is always there.

The role models selected by the school-going adolescents in this study leaned towards the cultural values of traditional African families, where kinship bonds are strongly valued. Participants emphasised the importance of 'giving back' to their family and community through community outreach and supporting their family, particularly parents and younger siblings. The value placed on these values suggests that these adolescents come from a closely knit community, with strong kinship ties (which are observed in the over emphasis of extended family, uncles and aunts, showing support to the adolescents and their immediate families).

6.6. Research question 2: How have the chosen role model(s) played a significant role in the learners' lives?

6.6.1. Theme 9: Role model as resource for career information

Although not many of the role models identified by the learners had a direct influence on their career decisions, teachers were strongly endorsed as a career resource, or an individual learners would go to if they had a career question. For example, Khanyisa said: *"I would go to my*

teachers, because they know how I passed". In addition to teachers, some learners highlighted reasons why they would go to their chosen role models for career guidance. See examples below:

Participant pseudonym name	Verbatim examples
Anele	<i>"I chose my career before he became my mentor. So it was easy for me to find out new information about my career because I have someone who is mentoring me, and who also understands my career better than me."</i> - IDI
Lelethu	<i>"For an example he encourages us to study further so we can be something in life, since he is the only educated person in our family."</i> - IDI
Ludwe	<i>"I found out through my CAT teacher as he showed me everything about computers."</i> - FGD
Olona	<i>"She is a social worker... In my thoughts am always like I want to be like you some day...I have not spoken to her, I am still afraid of her."</i> - IDI
Themba	<i>"Now that I'm in high school, she is the one who helps me with my homework. She is the one who advised me to take this career."</i> - IDI
Zandisa	<i>"Ja a lot, coz I mean, he is not a lawyer, he is a chartered accountant, but he has insight and he knows how it feels like to want something very bad, so he always tells me that at the end, even your friends won't necessarily understand or do what you want to do. And your family may not understand what you want to do. But you should just stick to it and at the end you will be an example to others."</i> - IDI

Table 8: *Role model as resources for career information* verbatim extracts

(IDI= Individual interviews; FGD= Focus-Group Discussion)

Thandi emphasised in her individual interview, the importance of a role model in the provision of career information:

It is important because if you want to be something in life. For an example I also want to be a social worker, your role model can talk to you and tell you that you are not doing right in this.

Interestingly, Khaya said that he does not trust his role models to provide him with accurate career information. Therefore, if he had a career question, he would much rather consult the internet than an individual. This is something he emphasised in the individual interview, as well as the focus-group interview. This sparked much debate during the focus-group session, as many of the learners did not agree. Instead they felt that role models, or individuals who have been down a particular path which one would like to go into, their personal opinions and reflections about their journey and how they overcame certain obstacles would be more valuable than an internet source. See verbatim extracts from the focus-group discussion below:

Olivia: *“So you have no one in your community?”*

Khaya: *“No nobody. I would just consult the internet for a career question.”*

Olivia: *“You will check with the internet?”*

Khaya: *“Internet always got the answers.”*

Ludwe: *“He is right.”*

Zandisa: *“Internet can mislead you.”*

Khaya: *“If you know how to browse the internet you can get a good answer.”*

Zandisa: *“Even if you know it, sometimes it can mislead you.”*

Khaya and Ludwe seemed to have a sense of mistrust of information received from individuals. There seemed to be limited consideration that information which is posted on the internet may be false at times. Against the struggle of identifying role models in the community for these adolescents, it is not unexpected that they look to other sources for required career information.

6.6.2. Theme 10: *“What I learnt from her is that life is tough”*

Eight out of the nine participants emphasised that role models have played a significant role in their lives in the sense that they have taught them valuable life lessons. The main lesson they reported to have learnt from their chosen role models, is that *‘life is tough’* as stated by Olona. It is important to recognise the challenges which one is ought/may face along the way and come

up with strategies on how to overcome those challenges.

One learner (Khanyisa) spoke of a potential barrier she has observed (finances) to her overall study and life plans. She shared: *“Ok, as we live we see different things, you see that ok if ever I want to be a fashion designer, you notice that this might be hard and my parent(s) may not be able to pay for my course”*.

As discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis, the standard of living in low-income communities is often on a poor level. Many of the participants highlighted that their parents struggle financially in some way or another, yet due to their perseverance and some support from other resources (i.e., extended family) they are able to provide the basic needs of the adolescents.

The financial struggles mentioned above tied into another subtheme of narratives of overcoming struggle and resiliency. Adolescents in the study shared their admiration of role models or people who had overcome some degree of struggle in their lives. For example Khanyisa shared in her individual interview:

Khanyisa: “What I like about my mother she never gives up. Even though sometimes you can see she is having a tough time at work but she does not give up on us. She goes to work to support us.”

Olivia: “Ok, what would you say you have learnt from that person?”

Khanyisa: I have learnt a lot of things. Every time I do not know what to do, she always tells me what to do. It’s always a great thing to have a great relationship with your mother so you can share your views and everything...she shows me when I become a parent one day how to treat and love your kids. She shows me a good example of parenting. That you have to sacrifice for your children. Besides her mistakes as a mother.

Further examples of how role models have overcome perceived adversity are expressed in Table 9 below.

Participant pseudonym name	Verbatim extracts
Anele	<i>“...like for those people that I am able to communicate with, I just ask them what are the struggles that they encountered in life. And some of those struggles I am encountering right now, so I just learn a lot from them.” – IDI</i>
Khaya	<i>“Like, my role model, since it is Elen Mask. He grew up in South Africa and studied at a boarding school. But he managed to stay in school until he finished Grade 12. Then after Grade 12 he managed to study. I admire that, like although there are challenges in school. There are many challenges in school, but I believe in me, that I can do it and I will overcome the challenges.” – FGD</i>
Ludwe	<i>“Yes, yho that guy never gives up!” – FGD</i>
Olona	<i>“What I learnt from her is that life is tough. In life you need not to take short cuts, when you do you will experience difficulties. You must take the tough routes so you will learn from the hardships and be able to pick yourself up.” – IDI</i>
Zandisa	<i>“I think Steve Harvey lives by his situation. He doesn’t let his situation control him. He gets up and tells himself, okay today I will do this and that and I will achieve my end goal despite the obstacles.” – IDI</i>

Table 9: ‘What I learnt from her is that life is tough’ verbatim extracts

(IDI= Individual interviews; FGD= Focus-Group Discussion)

Overall, the findings represent a common trend acknowledged by the participants which is, that hard work pays off and certainly helps in overcoming adversity. As Olona said, it’s important to “*learn from the hardships and be able to pick yourself up*”. This comment suggests a sense of resiliency. Many of the learners attached value to narratives of struggle either experienced by their role models or struggles that they have heard other people encountering. These were tied to their anticipated future struggles, due to the life and experience of growing up in a low-income community.

6.7. Research question 3: How have the learners applied the attractive attributes or qualities of their chosen role model(s) to their overall career and life plans?

6.7.1. Theme 11: (*The Role model*) *Challenges the learner*

Learners in this study reported feeling challenged by their role models to boost their self-confidence, self-esteem and perception of their abilities among others. Below is a table which visually displays how much this subtheme was endorsed within the data.

Participant pseudonym name	Verbatim extract
Anele	<i>“But when I saw/identified these role models that’s when I started to develop self-confidence.” – IDI</i>
Khanyisa	<i>“She pushed me to go and try. She knows the type of person I am.”</i>
Lelethu	<i>“My parents influenced me in a way that, they want me to be an educated child from the family...” - IDI</i> <i>“For an example he encourages us to study further so we can be something in life since he is the only educated person in our family.” – IDI</i>
Themba	<i>“The more they do good things the more you are inspired.” - IDI</i>
Zandisa	<i>“Uhm...liking books. Because he always pushes me to read, and study my books..And focus on my education. If he didn’t push me I wouldn’t be still be at school now. I would have dropped out.” – IDI</i>

Table 10: (*The Role Model*) *challenges the learner* verbatim extracts

(IDI= Individual interview; FGD= Focus-Group Discussion)

Other verbatim comments tapping into this theme which were shared by the learners are presented below:

Khanyisa explained in the focus-group how her role model challenged her to attend an event she was not sure would be worthwhile attending. She said:

I was not interested in going, thinking that I do not want to talk on radio and I thought I won’t be able to. She was the one who told me to go. I went, and I noticed that I love

this.

Ludwe explained in his individual interview, how his role model(s) have played a role in his life:

You know in life, there are people who just want to succeed. Lots of things have happened to my life, I never thought that I would be in Grade 11 now. Many people said, Ja, Ludwe is a failure. And I took those things personally, but when I look at my role model. I told myself that I am going to make it and I never gave up.

Interestingly, three learners suggested that, although their role models support them, they are not involved in the process of them making career choices. Thus suggesting that their role models challenge the learners to make their own career decisions. A verbatim example is presented below:

The role models shared by the adolescents in this study seem to serve as informal mentors, which push these young people to pursue their goals.

Khanyisa also said in her individual interview:

My mother always told me to choose what I really want. She always tells me that whatever I choose, I must know it will be my life choice. That is why I have a lot of choices, I am still figuring out what I really want and have a passion for.

While Anele expressed in his interview:

I am the kind of person who just decides for myself. Mainly because my mother is not that much involved in my academics so even if I did something good, like obtain good marks, she just congratulates me. But she is not someone involved in my career decisions, I decide for myself.

Through the above extracts Khanyisa and Anele suggest that their mothers have minimal involvement in their career decisions. The inability of parents of adolescents in low-income communities, to contribute constructively to the adolescents career decisions, as their level of education and knowledge of current career opportunities are often limited.

6.7.2. Theme 12: *Working Hard*

Working hard came across as a quality which most of the identified role models possess. All the participants highlighted the importance of hard work and where it can get you in life. To highlight the strong prevalence of this theme, verbatim extracts (relating to *Working Hard* as a theme) from the interview texts are presented below. Khanyisa shared in her individual interview how she has applied the attribute of hard work to her academic life:

I would say working hard. I am working. I started to be serious about things last year in grade 10. I noticed that things are serious here. I started being serious, then I noticed that seriousness pays off. I studied and I passed geography, I got the first position in geography.

She went on to discuss what she learnt from her teacher (who is also her role model):

“I learnt that if you work hard you will be what you want to be, she is the living testimony.”

While Themba emphasised in his interview that *“Hard work, hard work pays...”*

Similarly, Lelethu said in her interview expressed that her role model encourages her to work hard on her education. She said: *“He has taught me to work harder more than I do. For example, I must not give up.”*

Anele shared in his individual interview, what would happen to him and his career development if he does not work hard, he said: *“If maybe I decided to stay at home and not study I would never get where they are, where I want to be in life.”* Moreover, he elaborated that he is going to work hard *“so that [his family] can get everything [he] could not get during [his] childhood.”* While noting *“as much as I am not interested in being rich, I am interested in earning more money so that I can support my family.”*

Zandisa explained in her interview, that her role model (uncle) advised her that *“whatever happens [she] should just stick to education, and continue [her] studies as that will put [her] somewhere in life”.*

Moreover, Zandisa spoke about the way in which her chosen role model promoted the idea of her continuing with her education and his emphasises on the ability of ‘black people’ to

overcome their struggles.

I think my role model, which is Steve Harvey, plays a big role in my life, but it seems like it's not enough when it comes to black people, because they don't understand that your situation should not motivate you. Because a lot of young people when they see their situation is bad, they decide, okay let me go and look for a job. But for us black people mostly, we get government education like the free education we get at government schools. But still many young people feel as though going to school is a waste. So what I would like is that Steve Harvey encourages them to see that just because you are poor and are struggling to get by, does not mean that you should go and look for a job, rather focus on your education. Go on with your education. School won't end, but life is moving. There will always be jobs, no matter what you do. Education comes first. So that's what I would like to see Steve Harvey encouraging people to do.

All of these examples point to the fact that, even though these learners struggled to identify role models in their community (or people who can be considered 'successful'), they still had the belief that they have the potential to excel, as long as they persevere through their current living conditions and work hard in their academics. Therefore, great value was placed on the idea of having a good education, as a means to have an occupation (with an attractive financial component) which would allow these adolescents to support their families and community.

6.7.3. Theme 13: Importance of role models

Below I shared and extract of Khanyisa's point in the focus-group discussion, stating the importance of having a role model as a young person, not necessarily referring just to the influence role models have on career development, but also to the adolescent's overall life.

I would say it plays a big part. Some people do not even have role models in their lives and they do not even care, they do whatever. When you have a role model at least you know what you must do or which steps you must follow to be like them. Sometimes you want to be more than them, you should do this.

Ludwe also explained why he feels it is important to have a role model as a young person.

Okay, it would be important to have a role model in life because that person that you

say is your role model is the one that influences you to do good things in your life, to achieve more and never give up. That's what I can say.

In a similar vein, Anele shared in his interview, how his role model has helped him to develop a dream:

"I never had a dream of achieving anything in life. I was the kind of person who looked down on myself. But when I saw these role models, that's when I started to develop self-confidence. Because I developed a dream, if maybe I decided to stay at home and not study I would never get where they are, where I want to be in life".

6.8. Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the key findings of this study. The findings have been organised around the study's research questions through thematic categorisation. The findings to the present study in relation to the study's research questions can be summarised as such: First question: *Whom do the learners choose as role models and why?* Participants identified a range of individuals as role models (i.e., mothers, extended family members, teachers, media figures and individuals from their community). Reasons why they chose those individuals included: their desire to emulate the role models' characteristics (e.g., respect, determination, tenacity, and perseverance), desire to give back to their communities, their work ethic, their compassion for others, as well as the motivation and support they provide for the adolescents.

Second question: *How have the chosen role model(s) played a significant role in the learners' lives?* The participants expressed that they have learnt various things from their identified role models such as the need to understand that challenges and barriers should be taken as obstacles which one can overcome, and that the learners need to challenge themselves to find solutions to allow them to overcome those challenges. Participants also acknowledged that they understand that they may have struggles along the way, but having an individual to look up to allows them to see that it is possible to overcome those challenges and reach their goals.

Third question: *How have the learners applied the attractive attributes or qualities of their chosen role model(s) to their overall career and life plans?* Many of the learners reported that they have already begun to implement the lessons they have learnt from their role models.

Both in terms of practical application in their daily lives, in addition to their career planning process.

In the next chapter, I will build a discussion on the obtained findings, while drawing on related literature to compare, support and explicate the findings. I will also outline the conclusion, implications to theory, and practice and any recommendations for future research studies. I end of the thesis by engaging with the limitations of the research.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“Find a model and try your best to study the model’s everything; if you work hard enough you will succeed and that is going to influence your entire life.”

- Yang Yuanqing

7.1. Introduction

Miles (2015) sees a person’s identity as a critical component of their lives and regards career development as one of the most significant aspects for influencing an individual’s identity. Social scientists such as Bandura (1989), Gibson (2004), Lockwood, Jordan and Kunda (2002), Lockwood and Kunda (1997), Quimby (2006) and Zirkel (2002) have repeatedly highlighted the value of role models in the psychological development of identity and the development of young people’s goals and aspirations. This is supported by the presence of role models in affluent societies where these individuals inspire and foster positive attitudes among the masses. However, little is known about the role models of adolescents in low-income and under-resourced communities in South Africa.

Although most of the findings in Chapter 6 represent the participants’ own narratives in a lucid and coherent fashion, this chapter contextualises some of the participants’ views in light of the dominant themes. These themes are categorically presented with the STF levels, more specifically, within the individual, social and environmental-societal levels, in conflation within relevant literature on career development and role modelling. Therefore, this chapter provides a detailed and comprehensive discussion on the interaction of systems and unpacks the scope of role model influences on the adolescents in the study.

Identified themes are based on the interpretation of data derived from the nine individual semi-structured interviews and one focus-group discussion with Grade 11 learners from two high schools in a peri-urban community, in the Cape Winelands district of the Western Cape, South Africa. The discussion commences with a brief overview of the demographic

backgrounds of the participating adolescents (see demographic information of participants in Chapter 5, p.55). It is critical to engage with the biographical background of learners as it is believed to inform the backdrop of their reasoning on career planning. Following this, the emerging themes are discussed with relevance to the three main research questions undergirding this study. The first question explored who the learners chose as a role model(s) and why. The second question examined how the chosen role model(s) played a significant role in the learners' lives. The third question ascertained how the learners applied the attractive attributes or qualities of their chosen role model(s) to their overall career and life plans. Following the interpretation of findings, the implications of the outcomes are presented relative to theory, practical application and recommendations for further research. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study.

7.2. Demographic background of the participants

The ages of the nine individuals in this study ranged between 16 and 20 years. The average age was 17.33 years. It is noteworthy that this was a higher age than the expected average age for learners in Grade 11 in South Africa, which is 16 years. Scholars (such as Heaton, Amoateng, & Dufur, 2014) have reported that this finding may be accounted for by the low levels of pass rates for school-going learners in predominantly African schools. Agreeingly, van der Berg (as cited in Heaton et al., 2014) found that predominantly African schools demonstrated an average pass rate of 43%, while predominantly white schools presented a pass rate of 97%. Some reasons which have been put forth by scholars to explain the lower pass rates in African schools include; schools in marginalised low-income African communities often having unqualified or teachers with lower qualifications than those in privileged schools; absenteeism of teachers from schools, less teaching time available for teacher learner contact in predominantly African low-income schools (i.e., 3.5 hours a day, compared to the 6.5 hours a day in previously white schools), poor infrastructure (i.e. poor ventilation, temperature control and lighting) among others (Heaton et al., 2014). The lack of these social resources has proved to have an impact on learners' outcomes, academic achievement and pass rates in primary and secondary schools, which further accounts for the higher age range of learners in high schools.

Taking a closer look at the sex of the participants in this study: five of the learners were female and four were male and they all attended either High School A or High School B. Five

of them reported to have no knowledge or relationship with their fathers, one reported that her father was deceased and one had no knowledge of his fathers occupation, which points to the idea that this learner may have virtually no meaningful communication with their father. This notion leans towards observations by Geldenhuys and De Lange (2007) who reported that fathers were often absent from the family environment of adolescents in townships. Further discussion on this pattern is discussed on pg.107 of this thesis.

7.3. Individual level influences

Career maturity emerged as an underlying theme underpinning the career choices of the participants in this study. These learners were able to display a level of self-insight by choosing careers based on their interests, values and personality while communicating their understanding of a role model. However, participants displayed limited knowledge of career categorisation as only a minimum number of careers could be identified. Many of them also chose careers which were considered as traditionally more acceptable in low-income communities, which speaks to Albien (2013) who also found that females in low-income communities often choose social work, law or tourism as a career choice, while males in this study chose chemical engineering, scientist and community development worker as career choices. In addition, some of the participants were quick to point out that they were not familiar with any known or visible role models in their chosen careers. Despite the reported absence of role models in these fields, participants demonstrated career resiliency in their determination to reach their career aspirations. As supported by Stead (1996) an understanding of individual level influences of these learners is necessary for gaining insight into their initial career aspirations, and for linking those to their ability to grasp the value of a role model in facilitating the career development process.

The two dominant themes that initially emerged under the individual level influences, form overarching themes for the multifaceted, thirteen thematic disquisitions in this study and have been discussed under the following headlines below: i) *Career choices* and ii) *Definition of a role model*. A full understanding of the two principal themes is necessary, in order to grasp and make sense of the reasoning of participants in terms of their chosen role model and so, they are discussed first.

7.3.1. Theme 1: *Career choices*

As reported in Chapter 6, an examination of the career paths selected by the participating learners is absolutely necessary as these career choices may have informed their individual level influences and may elucidate whom these learners chose as role models. Although some of the learners were confident and determined about the career direction they wanted to pursue, some of them appeared uncertain of their career choice and/or had many career options in mind. Participants like Zandisa, Ludwe, Olona and Lelethu were specific about the careers they intended to pursue and were able to explicitly articulate their reasons for their respective career choices, simultaneously linking them to their own personal attributes.

Contrastingly, taking a closer look at the careers selected by these learners (which are lawyer, computer scientist, social worker, and economist) a few things can be noted. Firstly, having chosen these careers may suggest that the adolescents selected these careers based on their attractive titles, the data suggests that there are not many visible individuals who hold these career profiles in their community. The knowledge of being in a profession which is 'scarce' in the community may be an attractive reason to pursue that profession. Secondly, the careers selected by these adolescents may be done with the consideration of the remuneration received when being the above mentioned professionals. It is not surprising that the money-aspect of these professions would be attractive to individuals who have grown-up in a low-income community, and have narratives of struggling in their lives. These careers may provide financial freedom which can become an enabling factor that allows them to lead a different lifestyle while having better capacity to fulfil their desire to 'give-back' to their families and community.

Contrastingly, the level of knowledge about their chosen careers as displayed by the participants, along with a deeper level of self-knowledge or awareness, revealed an intense level of self-reflection. This form of self-reflection was reinforced in both the individual and the focus-group interviews as the learners became increasingly comfortable to delve within themselves in order to answer career-related and role model questions which related to how their decisions can be associated with their own personal attributes. It is critical to consider these career choices as they have a salient influence on the level of self-efficacy exhibited by these learners in motivating why they chose these respective careers, and emphasised their beliefs in their abilities, personal agency and capacity to reach their desired career aspirations.

It was reported that they had strong beliefs in their abilities to persevere and to achieve certain goals and dreams which stem from personal challenges they had encountered early on in life and had successfully overcome in the past. A verbatim quote from Ludwe's individual interview perfectly describes the determination and strong positive attitudes echoed by these learners: "*I told myself that I am going to make it and I never gave up*".

Learners like Thandi, Themba, Anele, Khanyisa and Khaya were either vague about their career choices or reported to have more than one option (i.e. career indecisiveness). These individuals displayed a sense of career uncertainty which James Marcia views as a 'crisis' imposed on adolescents (as cited in Geldenhuys & De Lange, 2007). This career uncertainty and indecisiveness may result in career anxiety, which is characterized by an adolescent experiencing anxiety around career decision making. This may inhibit the career development process by limiting career exploration (Janeiro, 2010). Notably, Janeiro (2010) further contends that career exploration is believed to be important for career planning among adolescents. As mentioned in the preceding chapters, the participants in this study were in their eleventh grade and were specifically chosen because this was the year before completion of NSC and for exiting high school. Guided by their ages, which range from 16 to 20 years, these learners should typically be at a stage where they have a clearer sense of direction in terms of their prospective career plans. In this regard, having a career role model to guide them may be beneficial. Conversely, the findings pointing to career uncertainty are hardly unforeseen, as the literature suggests that the majority of adolescents in townships require adequate career guidance to help them decide on careers that will allow them to flourish professionally. Since these youngsters are confronted with unique career barriers and challenges, it is important that they identify with other individuals who have achieved a degree of success. The challenge which they report is in the very process of identifying these individuals in their community or through individuals in their social context.

The participants in this study were at various stages of making career choices. Some of them were in the process of self-exploration, while some were more certain about their career decisions; others to a lesser extent. Khaya reported that he had not given future career plans much thought. Still, discussions with him revealed that he was certain about the specific field (science) he wanted to pursue. Furthermore, he had an idea of his purpose and the services he wanted to render in the process (e.g., to invent efficient tools that will create a cleaner, safer living environment in his community). This alluded to a great sense of maturity. Like Khaya,

most of the learners shared a sense of desire to ‘help, serve or influence’ their community in a positive manner. Generally, the findings revealed that there was considerable variation among individuals in the process of career development and therefore, more research is required to explore the different levels of career development within this specific population group (Blustein et al., 1989).

7.3.2. Theme 2: *Definition of a role model*

In order to scrutinise and make sense of the adolescents’ understanding of the term ‘role model’, each of the participants was asked to define and share their personal interpretation of the concept. Definitions shared in both the individual interviews and the focus-group discussion ranged from; ‘someone you look up to’, ‘someone who inspires you’, ‘someone who is an example’ and ‘someone who recognises and acknowledges their mistakes’. These examples are in line with Mileder et al. (2014, p. 1) who considers a role model to be “someone whom people can identify with as he or she may have qualities which other individuals may aspire to have, or they may be in a position which others may want to reach”. Based on the congruent understanding of the concept as demonstrated in this study, the process of identifying the capacity of role models in the lives of these individuals was simplified.

7.3.3. Social influences

Social interaction is vital to adolescents in low-income communities, as these relations influence their identity development. Literature in career psychology reveals that career decisions were informed by individual and social characteristics (Albien, 2013; Patton & McMahon, 2006). The themes listed below reflect the social influences on the adolescents’ career decisions and how these interactions relate to whom they choose as role models and why. The descriptions of influences described by the participants on the social level eluded to answering the first research question of this study. The themes which emerged are as follows: i) *Mother as role model*; ii) *Other family members as role models* iii) *Teacher as role model* and iv) *Media figure/influence on career decisions*.

7.4. Question 1: *Whom do the learners choose as a role model(s) and why?*

Adolescents may choose a variety of role models within their frame of reference. The constellation of these role models provides a variety of attitudes and attributes that individuals

can draw on as part of their career development (Gibson, 2004). The role models identified by the adolescents in this study were diverse in nature, ranging from parents, family members, politicians, teachers, community members and media figures. Interestingly, many of the participants had difficulty identifying specific career role models or individuals that could inspire them in their chosen career fields (supported by Zandisa's narrative stating: *'I do not have anyone I know who is a lawyer but watching political and law based drama on T.V encourages me'*). As anticipated, adolescents demonstrated a penchant for selecting role models who had encountered adversity or struggles in their lives and who were able to defeat the odds (e.g., Nelson Mandela). Instead of drawing on the individual's career or work success, they often identified with that person's tenacity and ability to persevere in the face of difficulty. This informed their displayed determination not to give up. This is consistent with the works of Lockwood (2006) whose findings suggest that participants chose role models who had struggled and succeeded within the family, or local context. This observation is supported by Dass-Brailsford (2005) and Albien and Naidoo (2016) who also found that most of the participants in their studies identified role models from within their families, in particular, mothers or maternal figures, and also in their immediate school environment, with the exception of occasional community members who embodied resiliency. Furthermore, Dass-Brailsford (2005) concludes that black youths in South Africa tend to look up to individuals who demonstrate acts of resilience, as their ability to achieve success amidst challenges or barriers, creates a sense of motivation for young people. Therefore, they serve as protection given the complexities experienced by young people in low-income communities.

Nauta and Kokaly (2001) explain that role modelling is distinctly related to career identity. Speaking to the aforementioned, Savickas (2002) attests that the concept of career identity originates in the childhood home since children learn to view themselves and the world around them through the eyes of their parents. As revealed in this study, young people tend to look to their parents as role models in order to gain a sense of guidance in their personal development (Savickas, 2002). In this investigation, many of the learners identified their mothers who in most of these circumstances appeared to be the primary or sole parent, as their role models. One participant (Themba) shared that his mother is a community development worker working at a rehabilitation center. Being exposed to his mother's work environment encouraged him to choose the field of community development as his career path. In his narrative, his mother is a role model both in terms of her tenacity to raise him as a single parent in the home and her amicable career profession. Generally, mothers were said to have the most

significant influence on learners' lives, as a result of being the primary source of guidance and support for most of their lives. The identified mothers in the study appeared to have had a vicarious influence on learners by fostering a sense of responsibility, perseverance, strength, tenacity and respect for hard work. Although these individuals occupied low-income positions, their work ethic proved to be exemplary, hereby setting a positive example for learners (Albien & Naidoo, 2016). Leading by example, they also exercised a positive influence on adolescents' self-efficacy levels when assessing what it involved to maintain a job in current South African society (Watson & Stead, 2006).

7.4.1. Theme 3: *Mothers as role model*

Of the nine participants, five identified their mothers as role models (see Khanyisa, Themba, Lelethu and Khaya's comments in Chapter 6). The learners explained that they saw their mothers as role models by quoting phrases such as, "*she has always been there for me*" and "*has always supported me*", among other things. In Chapter 6, Olona identified her aunt as her role model. Due to the absence of a biological mother, her aunt is her foster parent and has therefore, fulfilled the role of a mother to her. Elaborating on the propensity of adolescents to choose mothers as role models, McLean (2004b) observes that the parent-child relationship shaped during early childhood, including the years of schooling, as well as adolescence, has a profound impact on the psychological development of children. It is during these critical formative years that children generally rely on parents as role models, mostly their mothers, to lean on and guide them through processes of identity formation, behaviour patterns and future plans. It is also necessary to point out that in the event of an adolescent failing to identify an external individual as a role model, the parent remains the individual whose behaviour is most likely to be emulated. This visible shifting from parent to an external individual as role model, is evident in the findings of this study. Bucker et al. (2003) affirm that children, specifically those in disadvantaged communities, rely on the vitality of the mother-child relationship, as well as the quality of maternal involvement in their lives, to assist in identity and career identity development.

Contrary to the fact that learners identified their mothers as role models, when questioned about maternal involvement and assistance in career planning and decision-making, the majority of them confessed that parent(s) were not involved in their academic and career planning. Also, in instances where learners did in fact share future career plans with parents, it

was reported as one-directional. This is supported by Khaya's statement saying, "*My mother supports me, as long as I like what I choose*". The same statement was echoed by Khanyisa and a few others participants. So, although they were supportive of their children, the parent(s) had minimal contribution towards the learners' overall career decision. Albien (2013) thinks that this may be as a result of parents' lack of education, hence it is difficult to provide meaningful information and advice to their children. This is affirmed in this study as participants such as Anele, Lelethu, Olona, Thandi, and Zandisa report that their mothers are unemployed. As elaborated in Chapter 2, many of the members of the community are unemployed or employed in low paying positions, such as domestic work (such as Ludwe's mother), gardening or manual labour industries (Toms, 2015). As a result, adolescents are responsible for negotiating their own career exploration, planning and career decision-making based on the variety of available careers.

Moreover, participants in the study identified prestigious occupations that are scarce in their community, hereby displaying a strong sense of ambition in great contrast with their parents' current positions. Unlike their parents, they showed a preference for occupations such as, computer scientist, social worker, economist, fashion designer, tour guide, lawyer, scientist and chemical engineering. They were of the opinion that employment in these careers would end financial challenges and ultimately, improve self-worth. The majority of the learners mentioned that their mothers or guardians were struggling financially, and had always struggled to sustain their families. Thus, career choices made by the sample in this study are unique, as the literature informs that adolescents from disadvantaged contexts are often deprived of opportunities to discover themselves and explore careers not commonly visible in their communities (Maree, 2012). The learners expressed their hopes to reach their career aspirations with the intention to have the ability to financially support their families.

Research indicates that parental support for pursuing a career path is positively associated with an adolescent's self-efficacy. This is supported by Turner and Lapan (2002) whose study revealed that there was a strong association between young adolescents' perceptions of parental support for pursuing particular types of careers and the confidence young people display to perform tasks related to those careers. Their theories suggest that parental support may be more influential for adolescents than their dependence on other external forms of career support (e.g., peer, educator or role model support). Similar observations were made in the present study, as participants also reported on a strong association between maternal support and their current

position, including any future endeavours they intended to pursue. On the other hand, this also raises concern about how adolescents without any parental guidance and support may experience the process of engaging confidently in their career planning, as in the case of Zandisa who has neither parent nor guardian fulfilling this role.

Although adolescents may identify and admire attributes of resilience and perseverance in their parents and possibly other family members, as evident in this study it is necessary to turn to outsiders for career guidance. As Lockwood and Kunda (1997) assert, the process of transforming a career idea into an occupation relies largely on identifying suitable role models who can direct the way. In the study, Themba stressed that his mother assisted him in his academic and career planning, furthermore it was her profession which sparked his interest in his identified career choice (to become a community development worker). This example illustrates the manner in which the roles of parent and professional can be negotiated so that both serve as an influence in the adolescents' life plans (Nauta & Kokaly, 2001).

Basically, there were three recurrent and principal reasons why participants chose their mothers as role model. Firstly, their mothers' tenacity to persevere though adversity was identified as a key factor. Secondly, the participants admired their mothers' work ethic in support of their children. Lastly, learners were able to establish that maternal encouragement and motivation were influential characteristics. These results concur with recent findings from a similar study conducted by Albien and Naidoo (2016) who addressed Grade 12 learners in the same community. Here, learners mimicked the critical influence exercised by their parents because of motivational and supportive characteristics. Furthermore, as in this study the authors specifically pointed out that parents were not reported as being particularly helpful in providing tacit assistance with career choices. Yet, similar to the current findings, they were identified as role models who were seen as inspirational figures due to their sacrifices and positive work ethic in support of their families.

Although not extensively addressed in this study, the positive impact of parental support in career decision-making is widely documented in literature (Turner & Lapan, 2002). It is arguable that mothers are seen as being more influential in the life planning of adolescents in townships as a result of paternal absence (see demographic information of participants in Chapter 5, p.55 and discussion on p.99).

Gates (2000) draws attention to the positive influence of fathers on adolescents' career choices and self-efficacy. Elaborating on this, Geldenhuys and de Lange (2007) see fathers as being potentially positive role models for adolescents. However, reality paints a different picture for many adolescents in low-income communities who function without any paternal support due to the pervasive absence of fathers in these areas. This finding is also discussed at length by Heaton et al. (2014) who highlights this observation as having an impact on the overwhelming results of maternal figures being reported as role models by the school-going adolescents in this study. This is important to highlight, as Chuong and Operario (2012) document that fathers could be perceived to play a crucial role in an adolescents' personal and school success. Which also speaks to Bryant and Zimmerman (2003) who agree that fathers are known to be influential role models for adolescents. These authors also extended their observations by reporting that adolescents with male role models had the most positive school outcomes, while individuals with female role models (e.g., mothers) demonstrated psychological well-being and low levels of distress. This is especially noteworthy, considering that in the current study, seven of the nine learners reported having absent fathers, or a lack of paternal-involvement in their academic or career development, resultingly many of the Grade 11 participants in the study had a maternal figure as a role model. Here, it was reported that these mother figures provided guidance, motivation and support in academic and personal development which contributed to their psychological wellbeing. Their decisions around choosing their mothers' as role models may be understood in the context of them growing up with an absent father figure in their lives. A review of the demographic backgrounds of the participants stemmed from the need to elucidate other external factors which may possibly have an effect on the learners' career decisions and their choice of role model. The aforementioned observation accentuates the impact of absent fathers on school-going adolescents' career development and requires further investigation in future research.

Fundamentally, parents can be perceived as close, accessible (moral) role models which Gibson (2004) describes as an individual with whom a school-going adolescent engages constantly. Because the bulk of the participants who identified mothers or family members as role models reported that they regularly engage with these individuals, it is plausible that they are most likely to benefit in terms of personal development from their interactions with these individuals. However, because most of the learners mentioned that they do not engage with their parents on career decisions, their influence on the adolescents' career development is somewhat limited (Seabi et al., 2010).

7.4.2. Theme 4: *Other family members as role models*

In the present study, most participants identified a role model in their extended families. These relatives frequently included a male figure, usually an uncle, which indicates the importance of male social influences in an adolescents' life. The participants most commonly reported that desirable personal characteristics (such as caring, supportive, humble, compassionate, self-sacrificing, unselfishness for example) were instrumental in their respective choices and that the relevant family member(s) most commonly demonstrated these qualities. These characteristics are highly valued and relate to the very essence of *Ubuntu* in the African culture (Albien & Naidoo, 2016).

In traditional African communities, *Ubuntu* influences the attitudes and behaviour influencing one's actions. From this perspective, human interaction and relationships are honoured as the core elements in the functioning of the community (Nussbaum, 2003). Under the banner of the *Ubuntu* paradigm is interconnectedness and interdependence, which many of the participants in this study leaned towards as an important value in their lives (Nobles, 1974). This was evident in the fact that members of their extended families were reported to have had a strong influence in their personal development. Many of the participants' families were reported to following African ethos of unity, cooperative effort and mutual responsibility (Nobles, 1974). Therefore, pointing to the fact that the families of the participants in this study have strong kinship ties. Hence, some of the adolescents mentioned that they do not only grow up in a home with a mother and father, but have other family members from their extended family living in the same home or in close proximity (Nobles, 1974).

Hunter (1997) reported that parents in African communities often have strong kinship ties. Following which, extended family members demonstrate a sense of closeness towards their family. Closeness is maintained in the form of contact which builds on the emotional closeness of individuals. This is supported by Jayakody et al. (as cited in Hunter, 1997) who found that mothers who felt a sense of closeness to their families were more likely to rely on them for financial and emotional assistance, particularly in terms of parenting responsibilities.

Therefore, extended family members in these communities may have a direct influence on the adolescent's lives. For example, Zandisa explained that before moving to the community the year before, she lived with her uncle in Johannesburg, Gauteng. He supported her

financially, academically and emotionally. Currently, he continues to provide and support her as her unemployed mother is unable to do so. This phenomenon is fairly common among African families where an extended family member often intervenes to assume responsibility for a child in this regard. Similarly, Lelethu shared that her paternal uncle was her role model and although she resided with her mother in the community, her uncle who lives in Umtata in the Eastern Cape, assumed financial responsibility and also supported her academically after her father passed away in 2013. These examples further lean towards the argument that cultural values influence the lives of adolescents in African communities. The participants' decisions of extended family members as role models can be understood based on the knowledge that traditional African families are often bound by strong kinship ties.

It is therefore not surprising that young individuals in this study reported that they easily relate with members of the extended family (because of the closeness), and as a consequence the identified individuals serve as role models. This suggests that African values also have an important role in role model identification.

As revealed in the study, the participating adolescents' career aspirations involved an underlying desire to help others in their family and in their community at large. In this regard, they also acknowledged individuals who had already exercised that trait in their lives. For example, Themba reported that he idolised his older brother because he supported his children, which as presented in the findings highlighted in Chapter 6, is not a common occurrence among fathers in the community. Another example of this, is Thandi's acknowledgement of her sister's attempts to support her family financially. Savickas (2002) maintains that acknowledgement of such cultural influences usually become stronger as adolescents increasingly interact with their environment, which includes their school and community context.

In addition, McLean (2004b) and Savickas (2002) put forward that when entering high school, children often identify individuals whom they might perceive as role models and who may potentially serve as a replacement of the family member in that capacity. Through engagement with these individuals in their respective domains, these persons may potentially become influential in the adolescent's personal and career development process. In this study, the participants stressed the fundamental influence of teachers, community members and media figures on their career development. As a result of this type of exposure, learners have a wider selection of role models in their domains.

The notion of African values having an impact on the identification of role models for the adolescents became an underlying subtheme that emerged within the study. Although not explicitly expressed by participants, the visible emphasis placed on their relationships with individuals around them (e.g. parents, family, teachers and community members), as well as the desire to give back to their community and their aspirations of becoming role models themselves in the area, affirm their identification with the values of *Ubuntu*. Throughout the study, there is also the pervasive and recurring notion of *umntu ngumntu ngabantu* (in isiXhosa), which is translated into English by Theron (2007, p. 371) as “a person is a person through others”, along with the fact that there is an existent collective responsibility that rests on the group as a whole to guide, rear and support one another. In this regard, a future study targeted at exploring the influence of *Ubuntu* on the career decision-making processes of adolescents in these communities, may be a useful avenue to explore to develop a comprehensive understanding of its influence on career decision-making among adolescents in low-income communities in South Africa.

7.4.3. Theme 5: *Teachers as role models*

It is impossible to ignore the role of teachers in the career identity formation of school-going adolescents. As quoted by a participant in a study conducted by Geldenhuys and de Lange (2007): “...my class teacher at school...she motivates me a lot...” This sentiment was echoed by all twelve participants in Albien and Naidoo’s (2016) research. Much like them, the nine participants in the present study also communicated that their teachers had an important function in their lives and served as significant positive role models in their career development. In this regard, some of them referred to educators they had encountered in their current eleventh grade, while others identified teachers who may have taught them a particular subject in the previous years. Participants offered the following reasons for viewing these teachers as role models: i) their respect for learners; ii) their attitude to their careers (teaching) and the subject matter that they instructed and iii) their motivation and care for learners. These reasons are grounded in teachers’ efforts amidst challenging issues such as time constraints, to instill resilience and an ability to overcome adversity in the youth of South Africa (Prinsloo, 2007). This study also confirms Mampane and Bower’s (2011) report that adolescents in townships often rely on the school environment to assist them with career planning. However, in reality, township schools are often challenged by large numbers of learners in the class rooms with limited resources and equipment to facilitate an adequate learning environment. Still, as

described by the participants, these teachers would often persevere and persist in assisting their learners to the best of their ability (Prinsloo, 2007).

In Chapter 6, Khanyisa mentions that her teacher's personal life story serves as motivation to overcome challenges she may encounter. Based on this, it is plausible that similarities in background may act as a catalyst to inspire learners and to introduce them to a world of possibilities. The ability to visualise reaching one's dream or achieving certain goals has been documented as an important sense of motivation and an enactment of role modelling in other studies (Karunanayake & Nauta, 2004; Zirkel, 2002).

Voster and Sutcliffe (2000) confirm the increasing value of educators' relationships with learners in identity formation, particularly in the context of disruptions in parental units in low-income communities. As noted by Myburgh and Anders (1989) black high school learners in particular, placed a very high value on the opinion of teachers in their career decisions. This is affirmed by Zandisa and Lukhanyo, in this study, who shared that their teachers were aware of their strengths and abilities, and therefore they were best suited to advise them on their career choices. In a similar vein, van der Reis (as cited in Geldenhuys & de Lange, 2007) found that black adolescents aspired to be like their educators, as they were reported to be "successful, prosperous, and had a good family work balance". These views were shared by Thandi in Chapter 6, who idolises her teacher and expressed that she aspires to be like her because of her values, beliefs and her way of life.

Despite inequalities in township schools, it is rewarding to reveal that teachers exert an undeniable influence on the positive career decisions of learners in township communities. Therefore, the findings of this study add credence to the importance of teachers as role models in South African township schools. Too often, learners in these schools grow up in unstable family environments and live in obscure poverty, emphasising the need for having a positive teacher (role model) at school, where they spend most of their time.

7.4.4. Theme 6: *Media figure/influence on career decisions*

Due to the absence of visible career role models in the community, eight of the learners mentioned the importance of mass media in their career plans and aspirations. These findings were consistent with Albien (2013) whose research in a low-income community in

Stellenbosch reported that eight of the Grade 12 learners had role models in the media, for example, local actors in popular television shows like *Generations*, *Muvhango*, *Scandal*, for instance. A few of the learners also indicated that various television programs had a significant influence on their career decisions. Although Zirkel (2002) contends that there is an undeniable power in visualising one's dreams, the depiction of careers through the media may not necessarily be enough for someone to base a career decision on it. However, it may serve as an adequate departing point, as adolescents are known to pursue only that which they can imagine (Zirkel, 2002). However, the strong reliance on media sources as career role models suggests that career stereotypes and career decisions of adolescents in low-income communities may be based on romanticised and unrealistic career ideals (Albien & Naidoo, 2016; Buthelezi et al., 2009). This is the case with Zandisa who failed to distinguish between fantasy and reality in the television drama *Sokhulu and Partners*, as she was convinced that it was a depiction of real life representation experienced by a group of legal practitioners. This idea may be interpreted as highly unrealistic because the aforementioned television programme is broadcast only once a week and lasts thirty minutes. Although Zandisa acknowledges that it may be far-fetched at times, she also feels that the show is a good reflection of the job and tasks of a lawyer. This issue gained large support from the other participants in the focus-group discussion, which suggests that many of them relate to this perception and reasoning. Similar to this, a participant in Horn's (2011) study felt that the television show *CSI* was an excellent depiction of the career of a forensic scientist. Other participants in this study identified soap operas such as *Generations* and *Muvhango* as suitable depictions of career realities.

Many of the learners in the study strongly implied that the specified television programmes provided a glimpse into occupational possibilities that were unknown to their community. Similar to those of participants in Horn's (2011) study, a few of the learners reported that the media provided some information on what certain careers entail. Although it was not explicitly addressed in this study, the clarity of learners' ideas about what their identified careers involve is somewhat questionable and needs further investigation. Many of the learners highlighted that specific television programs and television channels were significant career influences, for example, programmes on international channels such as *National Geographic* and the *Sci-Fi channel* and locally *South African hero's documentaries* and *Sokhulu and Partners* proved to be influential. Interestingly, Khanyisa and Lelethu reported that watching regular features such as the *National News* and *Weather Report* has inspired and informed them about their chosen careers, (i.e., economics and geography). Also,

broadcast media as a source of inspiration towards a particular career was cited by a participant in Horn's (2011) study on the effect role models have on girls' interest in the field of science. Moreover, as reported by Khanyisa in the study, she watches the weather report and emulates the weather reporter doing so. In this regard, this form of entertainment provided for an opportunity where she could practice to speak confidently. Savickas (2002) views this as a positive act as it allows an individual to realistically test and strengthen their self-efficacy beliefs.

Much like some of the participants in the present study, Boon and Lomore (2001) found that 75% of adolescents reported a strong attraction to a celebrity influence at some point in their lives, particularly movie stars, musicians and other influential public figures. Erikson (as cited in Giles & Maltby, 2004) refers to the attachments of adolescents to distant figures such as celebrities, as secondary attachments which play a transitional role during adolescence. Furthermore, attachments to media figures are seen as parasocial relationships (Giles as cited in Giles & Maltby, 2004). While the interaction in these relationships is one-directional, the adolescent often feel as though they know the media figure personally. In this instance, media figures may act as positive role models in young peoples' lives (Giles & Maltby, 2007).

Amidst the support of other learners during the focus-group session, Zandisa expressed explicitly that when she watches *Steve Harvey* and *Dr Phil* television shows she has often felt as though the media personalities were personally speaking to her. This perception may be considered as unrealistic since the programmes are American talk shows that cover current and everyday topics such as divorce, marriage, parenting, crime, as well as various other topics. Pleiss and Feldhusen (1995) argue that the increase in identifying celebrities as role models, in lieu of more valued and influential figures points to a 'hero crisis' in South African communities. This point is deeply rooted in the findings of this study as most of the participants struggled to, or could not identify a career role model in their own community. Some had outwardly expressed that they did not have role models in the community.

Additionally, the media has the ability to exert both a positive or negative influence on the career development of adolescents. This realisation was discussed by Zandisa and Themba who highlighted both positive and negative effects of media. Zandisa is of the opinion that various media platforms (e.g. television, print media, radio, social media, etc.) are responsible for introducing youth to new information as she quotes that, "*sometimes the media teaches us*

negative things, and influences us to do things we are not supposed to do". By echoing these sentiments, Themba supports the notion that media can have both a positive and negative influence on adolescents' behaviour. He explained that issues such as alcohol abuse among celebrities, may be influential and risk encouraging similar behaviour from adolescents. On the other hand, Boon and Lomore (2001) reported that 59% of participants in their study indicated that having a celebrity role model had influenced their attitudes and beliefs about careers positively (as cited by Giles & Maltby, 2007).

7.4.5. Environmental-societal influences

As discussed in Chapter 2, the environmental-societal context in which township school-going adolescents grow up is known to have an influence on their career development. In the area of developmental psychology, Bronfenbrenner (1989) regards community influence as the microsystem environment that influences the development of adolescents. The interrelation of the neighbourhood and community is discussed below. These nested environments inform the STF, which infers that an individual's career development is influenced by an interplay of systems, including the individual, social and environmental-societal systems through which individuals construct their careers (Patton, McMahon, & Watson, 2006). This suggests that career decisions of school-going adolescents in townships are often informed by their contextual circumstances, including their financial circumstances and resources in the community. According to Albien (2013), socio-economic status (SES) is known to have an influence on the financial situation and resources in the community (i.e., schools, libraries, recreational structures, etc.) and hence the quality of life in the community. The themes discussed below are informed by the respondents' descriptions of surrounding environmental resources which have an impact on their career development.

7.4.6. Theme 7: *Role models in the community*

By focusing on community influence, it is interesting to note that the participants in this study differed in terms of their perception of community influence on their career development. Some participants reported to experience their community as a supportive community and as an environment that embodies the characteristics of *Ubuntu*. Although these learners in particular, were able to identify a community role model, others viewed their community as a discouraging environment characterised by envy, jealousy and unhealthy competition among the residents (Dass-Brailsford, 2005). This is sentiment to a statement by Lelethu in the group

interview, saying “*as Zandisa mentioned there are no people who encourages us except for few people. It's mostly those who are close to us for an example my mom*”. The visible lack of role models in the community might be as a result of challenges facing individuals in the community informed by their low SES (e.g., financial and personal challenges). As a consequence, these stressors may result in adults in the community experiencing negative psychological effects which may lead to drug and alcohol abuse due to limited resources for coping with psychological stress. Examples of these were illustrated in Chapter 6 through personal narratives shared by Olona and Zandisa who recounted their experiences with parents who abuse alcohol.

The question arises whether the dynamics and conditions of the environment, such as, high levels of unemployment, underemployment, poverty, substance abuse and the prevalence of manual labour employment for instance, are responsible for causing adolescents difficulty in identifying appropriate positive career role models within their community. The fact that many of the learners struggled to identify individuals from their community as career role models, with the exception of their teachers, was highly visible.

7.4.7. Theme 8: *Motivation for identifying role models*

Some of the role models described in the study, were portrayed in a positive light as learners highlighted positive qualities that they wished to emulate. Others in the study were not nearly described in the same light as some participants pointed to their less than desirable traits. Role models identified, were either distant, for instance, celebrities or media personalities. Close figures included individuals such as parents, teachers and community role models. According to Gibson (2004), these role models all have one thing in common: they serve as motivation towards a possible self for these young adolescents. Therefore, it is crucial for school-going adolescents to identify positive role models, as they may assist in influencing their career decisions. Speaking to these observations, Lockwood et al. (2002) reveal that individuals who engage in potentially beneficial activities are likely to be positively influenced by positive role models. Individuals who set out to avoid potentially negative influences, may view negative role models as effective motivators. This suggests that the positive and negative examples set by role models can have a significant impact on motivating young people who observe them. Additionally, individuals who achieve success after encountering adversity,

serve as realistic motivators who inform the self-efficacy of young people in these communities (Albien, 2013).

In this study, Lelethu points out a role model in the community who has exercised a positive influence because of her enrolment at a tertiary institution. Although Lelethu indicated that this individual is not involved in her prospective plans, nor does she communicate with her in terms of her career plans, she does regard her as an influential force for inspiring her to complete her high school education with the intention of pursuing a tertiary qualification. Similarly, all the learners had a desire to pursue further education, as they maintained that it would increase their vocational opportunities. Thus, suggesting that young people who pursue further education and tertiary qualifications, serve as role models for younger generations.

Contrary to the previous example, Khanyisa discloses information about her unemployed cousin who seemingly has no future career prospects as she has no employment opportunities and is also not interested in furthering her education. According to Khanyisa, her cousin's current seemingly hopeless situation serves as motivation and inspires her to make better choices pertaining to her career plans. As illustrated in this example, as a negative role model, her cousin is responsible for motivating her in a positive way in order to achieve future successes. This implies that the effectiveness of such positive and negative role models may be influenced by the congruence between the desired outcome and the strategy emphasised by the role model (Lockwood et al., 2002). Therefore, at different times people may differ in receptiveness to motivation from positive and negative role models.

7.4.8. Gender role models

Gender role models emerged as a subtheme. A considerable chunk of the literature suggests that people are more likely to emulate and model similar others as a source of information about their present and possible future selves (Lockwood, 2006). This draws attention to Hacket and Betz (1981) who suggest that there are gender differences in the career development of females and males. This is further elaborated by Rabie (2016) who maintains that future research should explore the gender differences of career development of adolescents. In the study, two male learners, Themba and Khaya, identified their mothers as role models. It is assumed that this is related to attachment. On the other hand, neither of the remaining two males identified any female role models (e.g., family, school, community and

general environment, including media). Four of the females in the study identified male role models who had exerted an influence in their lives (mainly uncles and male celebrities) at a given point. This is of particular interest, as this point differs from Buunk and Van der Laan (2002) whose study suggest that women are more likely to be influenced by females, than male career role models.

Conversely, in Chapter 6, Zandisa reported that she often experiences feelings of disconnection with her identified role model Steve Harvey, because of gender differences. She quotes: *“So the things that Steve Harvey does. I can sometimes do them, but sometimes I can’t because I am a female. And other things are only appropriate for males to do, so I can’t do them. But I wish I could do them”*. When asked to provide an example, she shared a statement that Steve Harvey often makes which is, *“Think like a man, and act like a lady”*. She continues: *“So I don’t know how to think like a man, but I know how to act like a lady.”* This suggests that even though females may select male role models, based on Zandisa’s response, they are cognisant of the fact that there are certain elements of their behaviour or attitudes that are not possible or socially acceptable for them to emulate.

Authors like Hackett and Betz (1981) and Horn (2011) observe that women continue to be underrepresented in many disciplines, such as science, medicine, law and especially, in managerial positions in the corporate world. This also explains why adolescents in townships are not familiar with female representation in certain occupations and may not easily identify women as role models in these positions. These complexities suggest that there is greater need for research that focuses on understanding women’s career development (Hackett & Betz, 1981).

7.4.9. Theme 9: *Role models as a source of career information*

In the present study, Anele and Ludwe identified their respective mentors, two male Stellenbosch University students, as role models. In these instances, mentors were viewed as an easy link to career information. Having a role model who is a mentor may further assist these learners to gain self-efficacy in tasks that they themselves do not have personal experience in. For example, enrolling for a course once they realise the possibility of passing the course because of previous experiences demonstrated by their role models (Hackett & Betz, 1981). The position of the role model in providing career information was best expressed by

Anele, who quoted, *“I chose my career before he became my mentor. So it was easy for me to find out new information about my career because I have someone mentoring me, and who also understands my career better than me.”* The power in the previous statement resides in the fact that Anele and Ludwe have role models whom they can reach out to and most importantly, a close career role model that they can engage with to exert a direct influence on their career development. This is not something which can be said for some of the role models identified by the other participants in the study. In addition to this, a particular important factor to consider, is the role of gender in the process of role modelling. Anele and Ludwe’s mentors were both males, and therefore we cannot be sure that they would have had the same eagerness to approach them for career advice if they were females. In this instance, even the teacher role models selected by these two participants, were both male educators.

7.5. Question 2: How have the chosen role model(s) played a significant role in the learners’ lives?

7.5.1. Theme 10: “What I learnt from her is that life is tough”

Participants in this study emphasise the lessons (of overcoming adversity) that they had learnt from their respective role models. Khanyisa, who identified her mother as a role model, shared that her mother gave birth to her during matric and that an unplanned teenage pregnancy did not deter her from completing her high school education to support herself and her child. Another participant, Themba, who also chose his mother, reported that he acknowledged the challenges of life and that it was necessary for him to choose a career that will allow access to a variety of employment opportunities in order to support and sustain his family. Other participants who chose extended family members, teachers and media figures as role models, shared that these individuals had encountered challenges in their lives, but still managed to succeed. These findings are supported by Albien (2013) who maintains that stories of past suffering and triumphs of role models instill perseverance and an increased self-efficacy among adolescents.

7.6. Question 3: How have the learners applied the attractive attributes or qualities of their chosen role model(s) to their overall career and life plans?

7.6.1. Theme 11: *Working hard*

Many of the participants in this study expressed the desire to pursue further education and emphasised the importance of working hard, particularly academically, in order to advance and explore further education opportunities. One learner, Khanyisa, expressed how hard she had been working academically, while emphasising that she had even surprised herself by obtaining a high test score as a result of her efforts. In this regard, the experience has informed her self-efficacy. Another learner, Zandisa, expressed that she was aware of the amount of hard work needed to pursue a law degree. She reported that pursuing a law degree involved commitment and dedication and that she was aware of the duration of study that the degree entails. She made a comment in the focus-group stating that the degree she chose (which is a law degree) is not to be underestimated, it requires someone who is willing to work hard for the duration of the course. Knowledge of this degree and her chosen career demonstrated that she had done previous research and seriously considered it as a career option. This suggests that adolescents in low-income communities are cognisant of the amount of hard work required for them to pursue success in their chosen career paths (Geldenhuys & de Lange, 2007). Evidently, school work plays a crucial role in the career development of an adolescent. In essence, many of the participants in the study acknowledged the amount of hard work that their role models invested in their personal growth.

7.6.2. Theme 12: *The importance of role models*

The participants in the study unanimously emphasised the importance of having a role model as an adolescent and highlighted how their chosen role models have played a significant role in their lives. The findings of this study support the literature which suggests that adolescents imitate the desirable qualities of role models in order to self-construct their values, attitudes, activities and actions, while testing their abilities, skills and personal agency (Savickas, 2002). As proposed by Savickas (2002), modelling selective roles with increased attention to results, facilitates reality testing which strengthens or modifies one's self-efficacy and career identity. Thus, it is widely known that role models play an important role in highlighting 'possible selves' that young people might wish to model. Giles and Maltby (2004) explain that these individuals are often clear examples of 'how to achieve success.' In other words, role models provide a template of the kinds of behaviours needed to achieve success (Lockwood, 2006). As demonstrated in this investigation, participants highlighted factors such

as self-respect, determination, hard work and perseverance.

The study revealed that very few learners were able to identify individuals who were career role models in their community. This was a particular concern and raised several questions. For instance, are there any individuals in professional careers that young people can look up to in the community? And if so, are these role models visible enough? Concerns such as these, relate to Hickson and White (1989) who report that the average black individual may lack positive work/career role models. This is a concern, because it is critical for adolescents to be aware of the fact that individuals in similar positions had been able to rise above adversity and were able to achieve success (Lockwood, 2006). This should serve as encouragement to adolescents in aspiration of future goals. Moreover, Buthelezi et al. (2009) put forward that adolescents, in particular those in township communities, are confronted with various career challenges which often require them to make serious life decisions at an early age. Faced with uncertainty and insecurities, young individuals are plagued by questions such as, what career will I pursue? How will I pay for my studies and/ livelihood if I want to pursue that career? During this formative time, it is fundamental that they receive useful guidance and support in their career development plans, as the decisions they make will inevitably impact on their future outcomes.

Yancey, Siegel, and McDaniel (2002) maintain that a lack of ability to identify a career role model may result in inadequate exposure to career information, subsequently leading to career choice uncertainty. In this study, learners experienced career uncertainty for several reasons, for instance, lack of career information or a lack of career role models. Only a few of the learners demonstrated a sense of certainty and commitment to a specific career they intended to pursue. In this instance, commitment refers to making a decision and taking active steps to implement that decision. Geldenhuys and De Lange (2007) assert that the extent to which adolescents experience crises in their choice of a career and the extent to which they commit themselves to their decided careers, determine their level of career development and the development of a career identity.

While making a career decision is a very important choice, Savickas (2002) points out that adolescents choose role models who portray solutions to the problems they encountered while growing up. For example, some of the participants in this study mentioned that they or their parents struggled financially while they grew up. Similarly, the role models chosen by the

learners were reported as those who had struggled and succeeded - either individuals in their family or individuals in their wider context, such as teachers, community figures, politicians or media role models (Dass-Brailsford, 2005). These individuals were seen to live lives contrary to those of township inhabitants. They have both material and personal qualities that the learners admire, such as money, a business or good job, a car, a family, respect, etc. Similar to Buunk et al. (2007), this study suggests that adolescents who see other individuals from similar disadvantaged backgrounds become successful (in the broader context), may gain hope and inspiration that they too might succeed. As reported by some of the participants in the investigation, although the effects of having a positive role model can be far-reaching, it does in fact offer the capacity to influence their hopes and dreams for the future (Dass-Brailsford, 2005).

The findings of this study suggest that accessing meaningful guidance by means of direct or vicarious role modelling can be a powerful way of learning. It can facilitate and fertilise the career aspirations of young individuals. In this study all the participants reported a number of role models who have influenced their personal and career plans, which suggests that an individual may be influenced by various different role models for different aspects of their lives (Gibson, 2004). Additionally, adolescents presented a range of protective influences on their career development. Individually, they revealed their chosen careers and their tenacity and determination to reach their career dreams, while striving to become role models in their own right. Socially, they revealed the influence of media, strong female support, teachers and community support on an emotional and practical level, as well as the support from extended family members which relate to the paradigm of *Ubuntu*. In the environmental-societal system, they revealed the influence of community role models, and in particular gender specific role models. All the identified role models demonstrated an influence in the learners' personal development.

7.7. Applicability of theoretical framework on findings

SCCT which forms the theoretical framework of this study as discussed in Chapter 4, was considered a suitable theory for investigating perceptions of individuals from disadvantaged contexts (Buthelezi et al., 2009). The current study strived to contribute to the literature on SCCT by exploring the influence of role models in a low-income community with an under-researched population of African school-going adolescents. The findings of this study

are mostly consistent with previous SCCT research conducted on other populations (e.g. college students, primary and high school learners). The theory maintains that effects of SCCT as a framework provide input regarding the self-efficacy, interests and expected future outcomes of individuals. In support, the present study found that accessibility to career role models provides adolescents with an increase in direct and indirect access to information about the world-of-work (Byars-Winston, 2009). This is depicted by Anele and Ludwe who identified their respective mentors, two male Stellenbosch University students, as role models who provide tacit career information. Their mentors' ability to share their experiences of their chosen courses allows the adolescents to enhance their knowledge while fostering their interests in the chosen careers. Progress of the mentors in the courses further allows for increased self-efficacy beliefs.

Furthermore, they are more likely to exert an effort to achieve their career goals through hard work and by keeping motivated despite encountering career barriers and by believing that their goals are attainable (Buthelezi et al., 2009). As such, the current study highlights the valuable influence of role models on self-efficacy, interests and expected future outcomes of school-going adolescents in townships. In this regard, this study is unique and adds to the disproportionate number of studies investigating the developmental processes of under-researched groups (Kenny, Blustein, Chaves, Grossman, & Gallagher, 2003). Interestingly, international literature reveals that the research on supports and barriers (which are most often the topics explored by means of the SCCT) demonstrate a negative relationship between both academic performance and career goals, as well as perceived barriers, and a positive relationship between perceived supports and barriers (e.g., Kenny et al., 2003).

The findings of this study are in line with SCCT, which emphasises that people are products of a constellation of systems, which includes their individual influences, social influences and their environmental-societal influences. The data obtained in this study further contributes to the body of knowledge on the interaction between various elements in under-researched and low-income communities. The triadic reciprocal causality, as explained by Lent et al. (2002), highlights the importance of personal attributes, including feelings, attitudes and aptitude, along with the social environment, on career development (Stead & Watson, 2006). A clear example of the applicability of this model to a participant in the study is Ludwe's narrative, as he draws on his personal attribute to *never give up* on his dreams while recognizing the importance of following this career path, due to the absence of specialists in his chosen

career (i.e., computer scientists) in his environment. While Khaya also describes how his observations in the community tie into to his desired career aspiration (i.e., to be a scientist), he shared “*for me people of [name of community] often pollute in the community. Most of them love cars especially taxi drivers. Not acknowledging that the gas released affects the environment... I want to take something they use every day and switch it to something that is eco-friendly. I would like to change the volume of air pollution in our community*” hence this learner is interested in pursuing a career in science and or technology. His interest is further enhanced by practical assignments based on scientific interventions in his science classes.

Lockwood (2006) posits that the successful identification of a role model may assist adolescents such as those mentioned above, as well as the others in this study to answer the critical question of ‘*Can I do this career?*’ which builds on their self-efficacy, career resiliency, career maturity and adaptability. This is an important question that adolescents are challenged with that can be answered based on their self-efficacy beliefs, which are often informed by the identification of another individual who has achieved the relevant goal and level of success (Buthelezi et al., 2009).

7.8. Implications for theory, research and practice

As a result of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made in the areas of theory development, intervention application, and further research.

7.8.1 Implications for theory

In response to the call for clear, reliable and affordable career interventions with an empirical framework, the present study sought to add to the literature on SCCT as a practical example of the application of the theory to a South African context. While there is some SCCT literature focusing on perceived barriers experienced by individuals in low-income communities (Bester, 2011; Buthelezi et al., 2009), the findings of this study suggest that it is important to conduct research focusing on exploring the influence of role models in the lives of young people in low-income communities. This is supported by the finding that role models who exert a positive influence on adolescents allow them to negotiate their perceived barriers, so that they can persevere in order to reach a positive future outcome. With the limited number of applicable career role models reported by adolescents in this study, it is suggested that

modern theorists should place more attention on structuring frameworks focusing on the value of having a career role model. Resultantly, further efforts should be made to ensure special guidelines focussing on helping adolescents identify viable role models who can help them with their career explorations. Hence, this study points to a holistic and integrated approach to investigating the career development of adolescents.

7.8.2 Implications for research

The aforementioned approach will assist career researchers to implement suitable and effective career interventions which will guide adolescents to choosing effective career role models. The findings of the study also suggest that it is important for researchers to understand the individual, social and socio-environmental influences on adolescents' career development process. These influences are suggested to play a salient role on who the young people choose as role models and to what extent they emulate these role models. In this study for example many learners reported that they do not have career role models, and those who did often had career role models who were distant, meaning that they had a minimal influence on the learners' lives. The degree of influence which career role models have on the lives of adolescents in low-income communities should therefore be further explored in research.

Additionally, Byars-Aniston (2010) contends that it is important for researchers to pay attention to the unique nature of African youth, in order to fully understand and assess the impact of family and community beliefs on a young person's career development. As explained by Albien (2013), cultural identity plays a significant under-the surface role in career development of adolescents in in low-income communities. In this instance, South African researchers in particular are encouraged to broaden their exploration of the contextual factors of individuals as they may potentially influence career decisions.

Based on views such as these, the study recommends future research on understanding the influence of culture by exploring the following research questions: Are real and media depicted career role models useful exemplars for African school-going adolescents' career choices? Can identified career role models help to increase the interest in particular career choices of African school-going adolescents despite their environmental-societal difficulties? These questions need further investigation as they are as complex as the process of career development. It is necessary to explore these aspects while being mindful that role models are

not the only aspects influencing adolescents' career choices.

7.8.3 Implications for practice

Turning to parents, teachers, NGO partners and role models as sources for career education may also help to address the current lack of career resources in low-income communities. Furthermore, educating role models in low-income communities may be useful for adolescents who are in the process of career exploration. Moreover, empowering and educating adolescents on how to become effective role models may further strengthen their capacity and enhance their guidance skills when they guide younger children in their schools, home and community. Hence, as proposed by Miles (2015) children in low-income communities still face significant inequalities with regard to their career education and access to career resources.

Fundamentally, parents, teachers, NGO partners, community members and media figures who are role models to young people, may serve as enablers for young people's career development while addressing the gap in low-income communities. These individuals can undoubtedly improve their skills and effectiveness as role models through education, provided they know what is expected of them. Inviting past matriculants to speak at school career fairs and exhibitions or to LO classes may be one strategy to enhance the identification of potential local role models, therefore making it easier to engage with them on their career planning. Indications from this study are that role models constitute a significant career resource in this context. Hence efforts in cultivating local role models need to be re-doubled.

The onus is on career counsellors and career professionals from tertiary institutions in particular, to invest in the development of interventions aimed at training particular individuals on how to be effective role models for adolescents in these communities. Currently, young people are provided with a milieu of financial opportunities in pursuit of their dreams through bursaries, scholarships and more. Yet, the majority of them are not aware of or do not have access to these opportunities. This results in a missed opportunity to become professionals in their chosen fields, and in turn a missed opportunity to be a career role model for the younger generation in their community, which over time has a dire impact on the economy of the country as a whole. Paradoxically, if individuals who do persist and realise their dream careers are mobilised more frequently, young people can easily identify these individuals in their

communities. Thus, an increase in visible career role models in township communities, may incidentally exercise a positive influence on the lives of adolescents in these environments.

In the school context, the curriculum for the learning area of LO as prescribed by the Department of Education, should be adjusted to pay greater attention to the impact of role models on learners' career development (Naidoo et al., in press; Prinsloo, 2007). Teachers, especially those instructing LO, need to set a good example for learners. In this regard, it is also crucial that they are knowledgeable and up-to-date with relevant career information and resources available. Prinsloo (2007) reports that teachers in low-income communities have great difficulty finding career information as a means of illustrating aspects of careers and career choices. This issue needs to be addressed because if educators do not have access to the latest trends and knowledge about the demands of the job market, they may possibly fail in assisting learners who turn to them for assistance with their career decisions. The findings of this study suggest that it is important for LO teachers to be trained extensively on methods to retrieve career information as a means of providing current and up-to-date career information to learners, since most of the participants reportedly relied heavily on educators as sources of career education.

7.9. Limitations

Certain limitations were evident in implementing this qualitative study and should be taken into consideration when viewing the findings of this study. Firstly, there were significant language considerations that may have affected the findings of the study. Participants were given the prerogative to do the interview in isiXhosa, or English. In several cases, participants choose a combination of isiXhosa and English. As the researcher, I conducted the interviews predominantly in isiXhosa as I am conversant in isiXhosa and English. I then (with the assistance of an isiXhosa transcriptionist and translator) cautiously translated the data to English for analysis. Due to the difficulty of finding culturally equivalent terminology, some nuances may have been lost in translation. Time and budget constraints prevented a backward translation to verify the accuracy of the translations.

The findings suggest that this topic requires further investigation to facilitate a better understanding of the influence of role models on adolescents in different South African township contexts. While also considering that perceptions vary across different contexts, it

may be useful to conduct a similar study in other low-income communities in South Africa. Quantitative data that evaluate the impact that role models play in the lives of Grade 11 learners in a community, may provide valuable information about which role models adolescents look up to and may help to measure their degree of role model influence in the overall career and life plans of adolescents.

7.10. Conclusion

The available body of literature focusing on South African townships, as well as the findings of this thesis, confirm that adolescents in township communities are exposed to compromising social circumstances that can be a great risk to their personal and career development. Therefore, it is pertinent that these individuals have positive role models who may serve as a protective mechanism against unhealthy future outcomes. With the indications of uncertainty among the African school-going adolescents in this study, it can be assumed that young people need effective guidance towards developing a career identity, particularly adolescents in low-income communities (Buthelezi et al., 2009; Prinsloo, 2007). Therefore, it is critical that we develop an in-depth understanding of the nature and impact of role models among adolescents in these communities (Zirkel, 2002).

The key research objective of the present study was to explore the influence that role models have on the career development process of school-going adolescents in a predominantly isiXhosa-speaking low-income community in the Cape Winelands region of the Western Cape, South Africa. The findings of this study are pioneering and suggest that role models do in fact play a direct and indirect role in motivating and inspiring the career and life decisions of adolescents. Comments shared by participants in this study, such as “*having a role model assists one to develop a dream*” create an understanding of the magnitude of power which role models can have over school-going adolescents. The findings presented are unique in the South African literature, as research focusing on the influence of role models on adolescents’ career development is noticeably sparse, especially in low-income communities. An important finding derived from this study is that school-going adolescents in low-income communities struggle to identify effective career role models who can exert a positive influence in their career development process (Gelderhuys & Maltby, 2004). Although many of the role models identified in the study provided learners with a modestly protective role, they were not as effective in providing pertinent career information and guidance to these young people. Thus

it is important for research and practice in career psychology to find ways to bridge the gap experienced by these young people.

In conclusion, by building on recent studies exploring the career development process of adolescents in township communities such as Albien and Naidoo (2016), Dube (2016) and Rabie (2016), this study provides interesting findings on the variety of qualitatively unique identified role models among the adolescents in these communities.

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Approval Notice New Application

21-Apr-2016
Matshabane, Olivia O

Proposal #: SU-HSD-002433

Title: **Exploring the influence of role models on the career development process of adolescents from a low income community in South Africa**

Dear Ms Olivia Matshabane,

Your New Application received on 11-Apr-2016, was reviewed
Please note the following information about your approved research proposal:

Proposal Approval Period: 21-Apr-2016 -20-Apr-2017

Please take note of the general Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

Please remember to use your **proposal number** (SU-HSD-002433) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your research proposal.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

Also note that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee before the approval period has expired if a continuation is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

This committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the Declaration of Helsinki and the Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes 2004 (Department of Health). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number REC-050411-032.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research.

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at 218089183.

Included Documents:

DESC Report

REC: Humanities New Application

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator

Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

**REFERENCE:** 20160303-8376**ENQUIRIES:** Dr A T Wyngaard

Ms Olivia Matshabane
 17 Meaker Road
 Paarl
 7646

Dear Ms Olivia Matshabane

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF ROLE MODELS ON THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF ADOLESCENTS FROM A LOW INCOME COMMUNITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **01 April 2016 till 30 June 2016**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

**The Director: Research Services
 Western Cape Education Department
 Private Bag X9114
 CAPE TOWN
 8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard

Directorate: Research

DATE: 03 March 2016

APPENDIX C



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22 February 2016

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr [REDACTED]

RE: Research study exploring the influence of role models on the career development of Grade 11 learners in Kayamandi

I am a Master's Psychology student at Stellenbosch University who has been involved in the [REDACTED] Career Life Project since 2014. In the year 2015 I coordinated the project, and in our various meetings it has been continuously brought up that role model identification has a significant influence on the career development process of adolescents in [REDACTED]

Herein lies the essence of my research study. My research aims to identify and explore the chosen role models by learners in [REDACTED] in order to investigate the influence which role models may have on the career development process of adolescents.

The study will explore the following objectives;

- ascertain who are or has been influential individuals (role models) in the learners' lives.
- examine why the learners consider the person(s) a role model
- establish to what degree do the identified individual(s) exerts an influence on the career choices and the career decision-making process of the learners'.
- determine what the learners' gain from his/her identified role models and how that knowledge impacts on his/her career decision-making and life planning process.

In order to do this study, I am asking you for your permission for the following:

- To gain access into a Life Orientation period of Grade 11 learners, to explain to the learners what the purpose of my study is and to recruit those who may be interested to participate.
- Six to eight learners in total will be selected for inclusion upon return of a consent form signed by their parents.



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- The selected learners will be requested to sign an assent form which will indicate their voluntary participation. Following which they will be individually interviewed over a period of about an hour at a private safe location, after school hours.
- One focus group session will be conducted at the end of the study.
- Interviews are expected to be between March and May 2016.

Attached please find the cover letter, consent form for parents, assent form for learners and a copy of my research proposal.

I have applied to the Western Cape Education Department to conduct research with learners at [REDACTED] High School and the ethical clearance has been applied for at Stellenbosch University's Review Board. Prof Naidoo is my supervising my research.

Please sign the area below to indicate your permission for this research to proceed.

Kind Regards,
Olivia Matshabane

MA Psychology Student
University of Stellenbosch
18847145@sun.ac.za
084 293 [REDACTED]

Permission of the Principal of [REDACTED] High School for Grade 11 learners to participate in the research study titled: *Exploring the influence of role models on the career development process of adolescents from a low income community in South Africa.*

[REDACTED]

Signature

23/02/2016

Date

**APPENDIX D**

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Jou kennisvenoot • your knowledge partner

22 February 2016

The Principal

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr [REDACTED]

RE: Research study exploring the influence of role models on the career development of Grade 11 learners in Kayamandi

I am a Master's Psychology student at Stellenbosch University who has been involved in the [REDACTED] Career Life Project since 2014. In the year 2015 I coordinated the project, and in our various meetings it has been continuously brought up that role model identification has a significant influence on the career development process of adolescents in [REDACTED]

Herein lies the essence of my research study. My research aims to identify and explore the chosen role models by learners in [REDACTED] in order to investigate the influence which role models may have on the career development process of adolescents.

The study will explore the following objectives;

- ascertain who are or has been influential individuals (role models) in the learners' lives.
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- establish to what degree do the identified individual(s) exerts an influence on the career choices and the career decision-making process of the learners'.
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Attached please find the cover letter, consent form for parents, assent form for learners and a copy of my research proposal.

I have applied to the Western Cape Education Department to conduct research with learners at [REDACTED] High School and the ethical clearance has been applied for at Stellenbosch University's Review Board. Prof Naidoo is my supervising my research.

Please sign the area below to indicate your permission for this research to proceed.

Kind Regards,

Oliyia Matshabane

Handwritten signature of Oliyia Matshabane in black ink.

MA Psychology Student

University of Stellenbosch

18847145@sun.ac.za

084 293 [REDACTED]

Permission of the Principal of Kayamandi High School for Grade 11 learners to participate in the research study titled: *Exploring the influence of role models on the career development process of adolescents from a low income community in South Africa.*

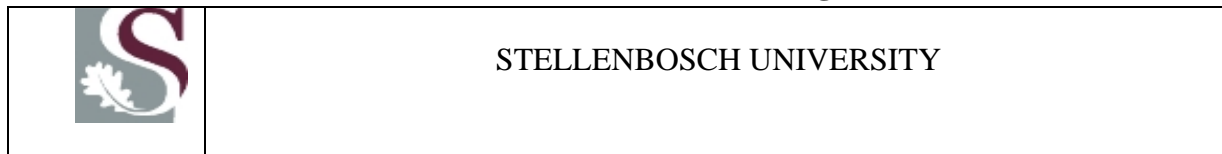
[REDACTED SIGNATURE]

Signature

[REDACTED DATE]

Date

24/2/16

APPENDIX E: Assent form (English)**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND ASSENT FORM****TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:**

Exploring the influence of role models on the career development process of school-going adolescents from a low-income community in South Africa

RESEARCHER'S NAME(S):

Olivia Matshabane

ADDRESS:

17 Meaker Road
Paarl
7646

CONTACT NUMBER:

084 293 6376

What is RESEARCH?

Research is something we do to find **NEW KNOWLEDGE** about the way things (and people) work. We use research projects or studies to help us find out more about children and teenagers and the things that affect their lives, their schools, their families and their health. We do this to try and make the world a better place!

What is this research project all about?

This research project will explore the influence which role models have on the career planning process of Grade 11 learners in a low-income community.

Why have I been invited to take part in this research project?

You have been invited to participate in this research project because you are a Grade 11 learner attending a high school in a low-income community in the Cape Winelands District Municipality region.

Who is doing the research?

Olivia Matshabane, a MA Psychology student at Stellenbosch University, will be doing the research.

What will happen to me in this study?

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be invited for an individual interview and a focus-group interview. In the interviews the researcher will ask you to share your experiences of having a role model and how that experience has impacted on your career plans. With your consent, the interviews will be audio recorded.

Can anything bad happen to me?

There is no risk associated with this study and nothing bad will happen to you.

Can anything good happen to me?

You can gain knowledge about how your role model can positively influence your career development.

Will anyone know I am in the study?

All information related to this study will be confidential and anonymous. Only the primary researcher, Olivia Matshabane, will have access to this information.

Who can I talk to about the study?

If you have any questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact:

Olivia Matshabane 084 293 6376

Prof. Anthony Naidoo 021 808 3461

What if I do not want to do this?

You have the right to withdraw your participation any time during the course of this study. If you do not want to participate, there will be no consequences and you will not be in trouble.

Do you understand this study and are you willing to take part in it?

 YES NO

Has the researcher answered all your questions?

 YES NO

Do you understand that you can STOP being in the study at any time?

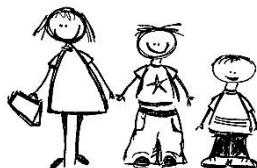
 YES NO

Signature of Child

Date

IPHEPHA E: Ifomu yemvume yomntwana (Xhosa)

**IPHETSHANA ELINEENKCUKACHA ZALOWO UTHABATHA INXAXHEBA
NEFOMU YESIVUMELWANO**



ISIHLOKO SENKQUBO SOPHANDO: Exploring the influence of role models on the career development process of school-going adolescents from a low-income community in South Africa

AMAGAMA OM(ABA)PHANDI: Olivia Matshabane

IDILESI: 17 Meaker Road
Paarl
7646

INOMBOLO YOMNXEBA: 084 293 6376

Yintoni UPHANDO?

Uphando yinto esiyenzayo ukufumana **ULWAZI OLUTSHA** ngendlela izinto (nabantu) ezisebenza ngayo. Sisebenzisa uphando okanye izifundo ukusinceda sazi banzi ngabantwana nolutsha nezinto ezichaphazela ubomi babo, izikolo zabo, iintsapho zabo nempilo yabo. Senza oku ukuzama nokwenza ilizwe ibe yindawo engcono!

Imalunga nantoni na le projekthi yophando?

Esi sifundo sizakuphanda ukuba umntu ongumzekelo kuwe mfundi webanga le11, unagalelo linin a kwizigqibo zakho malunga nekhondo onqwenela ukulilandela.

Kutheni ndimenyiwe ukuba ndithathe inxaxheba koluphando?

Umenywa ukuba uthabathe inxaxheba koluphando ngokuba ungumfundi webanga le11 kwesinye sezikolo zasezilokishini zeli loMzantsi Africa.

Ngubani owenza uphando?

Igama lomphandi nguOlivia Matshabane, ofunda iMasters kwiPsychology kwidyuniversity yaseStellenbosch.

Kuza kwenzeka ntoni kum kwesi sifundo?

Ukuba uyavuma ukubayinxalenye yesi sifundo, uza kumenyelwa kudliwano-ndlebe lomntu-ngomntu kwakunye nodliwano-ndlebe leqela labantu. Kudliwano-ndlebe umbhexeshi wophando uzakucela ukuba uncokole ngamava akho wokuba nomntu ongumzekelo ebomini bakho kwaye uchaze ukuba ingaba loo mava azichaphazela njani izicwangciso zakho kubizo lwakho okanye ikhondo lezemisebenzi. Ngemvume yakho, udliwano-ndlebe luzakushicilelwa ngesishicileli-mazwi.

Ingaba ikhona into embi enokwenzeka kum?

Akukho nto imbi enokuthi yenzeke kuwe ngokuthabatha inxaxheba koluphando.

Ingaba ikhona into entle enokwenzeka kum?

Uyakufumana ulwazi olubanzi ngendlela umntu ongumzekelo kuwe nagathi abe negalelo ekukhuliseni kwezekhondo.

Ukhona na umntu oza kundazi ukuba ndikwesi sifundo?

Ingombolo neenkukacha ezikoluphando ziyimfihlo ngokugqibeleleyo. Iyakuba ngumphandi uOlivia Matshabane kunye nomphathi wakhe uProf Anthony Naidoo kuphela abayakubona ezinkukacha. Yonke lengcombolo iyakukhuselwa kwigumbi elitshixiweyo ekungenwa kulo ngamanani ayimfihlo ekumpyutha.

Ngubani endinokuthetha naye ngesi sifundo?

Ukuba unayo imibuzo malunga noluphando, ungaqhakamishelana nomphandi uOlivia ku 084 293 6376 okanye nomphathi wakhe uProf. Anthony Naidoo ku021 808 3461

Kuza kwenzeka ntoni ukuba andisafuni ukukwenza oku?

Unalo ilungelo lokwala ukuthabatha inxaxheba koluphando okanye uyeke phakathi xa ungasanqweneli. Ukuba awusanqweneli kuthabatha nxaxheba koluphando, awuyi kubasengxakini okanye kubekho ngxaki.

Uyasiqonda na esi sifundo sophando kwaye unomdla na wokuthabatha inxaxheba kuso?

EWE

HAYI

Ingaba umphandi uyiphendule yonke imibuzo yakho?

EWE

HAYI

Uyasiqonda na into yokuba UNGAYEKA ukuthabatha inxaxheba kwesi sifundo nanini na?

EWE

HAYI

Utyikityo loMntwana

Umhla

APPENDIX F: Informed consent form (English)



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STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Topic: Exploring the influence of role models on the career development process of school-going adolescents from a low-income community in South Africa

Dear Parent or Guardian,

You are asked to allow your child to participate in research conducted by Olivia Matshabane who is a registered Masters in Psychology student at Stellenbosch University. Results of the study will be used to contribute to a research thesis for the requirements of a MA degree. Your child was selected as a possible participant in this study because he or she is a Grade 11 learner at a high school in a low-income peri-urban community in the Cape Winelands District Municipality region.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of role models on the career development process of school-going adolescents in a low-income community in South Africa.

2. PROCEDURES

If you voluntarily agree to let your child participate in this study, your child will be expected to do the following things:

Complete a short demographic questionnaire, which will give the researcher a better idea of his or her background. Following which he/she will be expected to take part in an individual interview of approximately 1 hour. Additionally, the learner will also be expected to take part in a group interview. The interviews will take place at a safe suitable venue and time (outside of school hours, as per arrangement with the school). The interview will be audio-recorded. As a follow up the researcher may contact you or your child through the school to verify or clarify any aspects discussed in the interview.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Although there are no significant psychological risks to participation in this study, the researcher will ascertain the necessary referral process to accessing psychological consultation through the Psychology Department's counselling Centre, should it be deemed necessary.

Details of the Counselling unit at Stellenbosch University are as follows:

Welgevallen House,

Suidwal Street

Stellenbosch

e-mail or call Ms. Ursula Harzenberg at uhartzen@sun.ac.za or 021-808 2944

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no direct benefits to participating in this study. However your child's shared experiences may make a valuable contribution to helping us find out more about children and teenagers and the things that affect their lives, their schools, their families and their health. In order to try and make society a better place.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

The participants will not be receiving payment for their participation in this study.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with the learner will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with his or her as well as your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of a code name which will replace your child's name in reporting.

Data will be stored on a password protected file on the researcher's personal computer. The data will be stored in a safe place and after 5 years, all data pertaining to the study will be deleted. The researcher is committed to nullifying any potential complications that may arise as a result of this research, even if it means omitting certain findings from the final report to protect confidentiality. The report generated out of this research will be available to the academic community and a copy that will be available at the Stellenbosch University library. Participants may request that a copy be emailed to them.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to allow your child to be involved in this study or not. If you do grant him or her permission to be in this study, you they withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. He or she may also refuse to answer any questions they don't want to answer and

still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw your child from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Olivia Matshabane on 084 293 6376/ 18847145@sun.ac.za or my Supervisor Prof Naidoo at 021 8083461/ avnaidoo@sun.ac.za.

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and your child may discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of allowing your child to participate in this study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to [me/the subject/the participant] by Olivia Matshabane in [Afrikaans/English/isiXhosa/other] and I am in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to me. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Subject/Participant

Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date

SIGNATURE OF THE INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ [name of the subject/participant] and/or [his/her] representative _____ [name of the representative]. [He/she] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English / isiXhosa and no translator was used.

Signature of Investigator

Date

IPHEPHA F: Ifomu yemvume (Xhosa)

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**STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

Topic: Exploring the influence of role models on the career development process of school-going adolescents from a low-income community in South Africa

Mzali obekekileyo,

NdinguOlivia Matshabane, umfundi weMasters kwizifundo zengqondo kwidyunivesithi yase Stellenbosch. Umntwana wakho uyamenywa ukuba athabathe inxaxheba koluphando kuba efunda ibanga le-11 kwesinye sezikolo zeLokishi zaseMzantsi Afrika. Ndicela imvume yokuba umntwana wakho athabathe inxaxheba kwesisifundo. Esisifundo siyakunceda ukuba kufumaneke isidanga semfundo yeMasters zomntu ongumphandi. Kwaye siyakumnceda nomntwana wakho ekuthabatheni isigqibo malunga nekhondo anqwenela ukulilandela (career).

1. ISIZATHU SOLUPHANDO

Esisifundo sizakuphanda ukuba umntu ambona njengomzekelo omhle kwezekhondo umfundi webanga le-11, unagalelo lini kwizigqibo zakhe malunga nekhondo elo anqwenela ukulilandela.

2. INKQUBO

Ukuba uyavuma ukuba umntwana wakho athabathe inxaxheba koluphando, siyakumncela ukuba enze oku kulandelayo:

Ukugcwaliswa koxwebhu olufutshane lwemibuzo olumalunga neenkukacha-manani, ukuze umphandi wesisifundo abenofifi malunga nemvelaphi yomntu oyinxalenye yophando. Okulandelayo, umntu oyinxalenye yophando uza kulindeleka ukuba athabathe inxaxheba

kudliwano-ndlebe lomntu-ngomntu oluthabatha ixesha elimalunga neyure. Ngaphezulu koko, umfundi uza kulindeleka ukuba athabathe inkxaxheba kudliwano-ndlebe leqela. Udliwano-ndlebe luzakuqhutyelwa kwindawo ekhuselekileyo kwaye efanelekileyo (emva kwexesha lesikolo, ngokwezicwangciso nesikolo). Kudliwano-ndlebe kuzakusetyenziswa isishicilelimazwi. Ngenjongo yokwenza ulandelelo, umphandi angaqhagamshelana nawe okanye umntwana wakho ukuze kuqinisekiswa imiba ethile exoxwe kudliwano-ndlebe. Koluqhagamshelwano kuza kusetyenziswa isikolo.

3. IZINTO EZINGABUBUNGOZI OKANYE ZINGATHANDEKI

Nangona ukuthabatha inkxaxheba kwesi sifundo kungenazichenge ngokwasengqondweni, umbhexeshi wophando uzakuqinisekisa ukuba likho ikroba elivulekayo ukuze abathabathi nkxaxheba bakwazi ukufumana iingcebiso ngokwasengqondweni xa kuthe kwayimfuneko oko. Ezi ngecebiso ngokwasengqondweni ziyakuthi zenziwe kwiziko leengecebiso kwisebe lezifundo ngengqondo yomntu (Psychology Department's Counselling Centre) xa kuthe kwakho imfuneko yoko. Idilesi yakwi Psychology Department: Welgevallen House, Suidwal Street, Stellenbosch, e-mail or call Ms. Ursula Harzenberg at uhartzen@sun.ac.za or 021-808 2944.

4. IGALELO ELINALO KUBAFUNDI NASEKUHLALENI

Oluphando alunagalelo lininzi elinalo kwabafundi kwakunye nasekuhlaleni kodwa lunganceda ukufumana ulwazi banzi ngabantwana nolutsha nezinto ezichaphazela ubomi babo, izikolo zabo, iintsapho zabo nempilo yabo. Olulwazi lungazama ukunceda ukwenza ilizwe libe yindawo engcono.

5. INTLAWULO YABATHABATHI NXAXHEBA

Abathabathi nxaxheba bathabatha inxaxheba mahala nangokuthanda kwabo kwaye abayi kuhlawulwa ngexaxheba yabo.

6. IMFIHLELO

Yonke ingcombolo nenkcukacha efumaneka koluphando nemalunga nawe iyakuba yimfihlo kwaye iyakubhentsiswa xa uthe wanika imvume okanye umthetho wavuma ukuba ibhentsiswe. Naluphi na ulwazi olufumaneka ngokunxulumene nesi sifundo kwaye olunento yokwenza nomfundi luzakugcinwa lufihlakele ze luvezwe kuphela ngokwemvume yomfundi kwakunye nemvume yomzali okanye ngokugunyaziswa ngumthetho. Ukufihlakala kuzakuqinisekiswa

ngokuba endaweni yegama lomntwana kusetyenziswe usinga-gama xa kubhalwa ingxelo yophando.

I-data) iyakugcinwa ifihlakele kwikhasi lomchwethezo eliyakuvulwa ngumbhexeshi wophando kuphela. *I-data* iyakugcinwa kwindawo ekhuselekileyo ze emva kweminyaka emihlanu yonke *i-data* enento yokwenza nesifundo esi itshatyalaliswe. Umbhexeshi wophando uzinikele ekutshitshiseni nabuphi na ubunzima obunokuzalwa lolu phando, nokuba lo nto ithetha ukuthi iziphumo ezithile zophando mazikhutshelwe ecaleni kwingxelo ukuze kukhuselwe imfihlakalo yabathabathi nkxaxheba. Ingxelo ekhutshwe kolu phando iyakufunyanwa luluntu lwamaziko emfundo kwaye ikho nencwadi yale ngxelo eyakufumaneka kwithala leencwadi kwiDyunivesithi yaseStellenbosch. Abathabathi nkxaxheba bangacela ukuba ibekho incwadi yengxelo yophando ethunyelwa kubo.

7. UKUTHABATHA INXAXHEBA NOKUYEKA

Ukuba uyavuma umntwana wakho athabathe inxaxheba koluphando, naye uzakukhetha ukuba uyavuma okanye akavumi ukuthabatha inxaxheba kwesisifundo. Ukuba wena mzali uyavuma ukuba athabathe inxaxheba, angangavumi yena okanye ayeke nanini na efuna kungekho sinyanzeliso. Umntwana uvumelekile ukungavumi ukuphendula imibuzo anganqweneli kuyiphendula ngethuba eqhuba nophando. Umphandi naye angamnqumamisa umntwana koluphando xa efumanisa kunyanzelekile ukuba enze njalo.

8. IINKCUKACHA ZABAPHANDI

Ukuba unemibuzo onayo malunga noluphando unganxibelelana nomphandi uOlivia ku 084 293 6376 / 18847145@sun.ac.za, okanye umphathi womphandi (umntu oqinisekisa ukuba uphando lwenziwa ngendlela eyiyo) uProfessor Anthony Naidoo, ku (021) 808 3461 / avnaidoo@sun.ac.za

9. AMALUNGELO ABATHABATHI NXAXHEBA

Umntwana naye unalo ilungelo lokuyeka nanini na ukuthabatha inxaxheba kwaye akukho sohlwayo. Umntwana wakho akaphulukani namalungelo akhe ngokuthabatha inxaxheba koluphando. Ukuba unemibuzo onayo malunga namalungelo nomntwana wakho ngokuthabatha inxaxheba kuphando unganxibelelana noMs Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] kwi Division ye Research Development.

Umtyikityo womthathi nxaxheba okanye ummeli womthetho.

Ndonelisekile, nma mzali, nge ngecukacha endizinikiweyo nguOlivia Matshabane ngolwimi lwam isiXhosa. Kwaye ndiliniqiwe ithuba lokubuza imibuzo kwaye ndonelisekile ziimpendulo endizifumeneyo kweliphepha ngaso isiNgesi nesiXhosa kwaye ithe yatolikwa kakuhle.

Ndiyavuma ukuba umntwana wam athabathe inxaxheba koluphando kwaye ndiliniqiwe eliphepha mvume.

Igama lomthabathi nxaxheba

Igama lommeli mthetho

Umtyikityo wommeli

Umhla

Umtyikityo womphandi

Ndiyavuma ukuba ezincukacha zicaciswe kakuhle kum _____ [Igama lomthathi nxaxheba] kwakunye/okanye no-mmeli wakhe _____ [igama lommeli]. Uyewakhuthazwa kwaye wanikwa ixesha elaneleyo lokundibuza iimibuzo. Lengxoxo ibingolwimi lesiXhosa kwaye akukho mtoliki obesetyenzisiwe.

Umtyikityo womphandi

Umhla

APPENDIX G: Individual Interviews Guide

1. What are your current career aspirations?
2. Who motivates you and/or inspires you to be attracted to your chosen career?
3. Can you tell me what do you think a role model is?
4. Who was your role model or hero when you were growing up? Why was that person or character your role model?
5. How have your parents influenced your career aspirations?
 - Through discussing your career aspirations with your parent(s) or guardian have their opinions affected your career choice, if so, how?
 - Who do you currently look up to/ who is your role model in your family?
 - What do you like about that person's life?
 - What would you say you have learnt from that person?
6. Who is your role model at school?
 - What do you like about that person's life?
 - What would you say you have learnt from that person?
7. Who is your role model in the community?
 - What do you like about that person's life?
 - What would you say you have learnt from that person?
8. Who is your favourite hero/role model in general?
 - What do you like about that person's life?
9. Is there anything you don't like about that person? If so, what is it? Who in your life has played a significant role in influencing your career decisions?
10. Would you say that the media influenced or inspired you to consider any specific careers? If so, please share with me where you have seen individuals in those specific careers and what the careers are/were?
11. Can you tell me how you have applied the attractive attributes or qualities of your current role model to your overall life?
 - Who has played a supporting role in your life?
 - Can you tell me how they have supported you?
12. If you had a career or study question whom of the people that you have previously mentioned are you likely to consult, and why?
13. What role would you say a role model plays in a young person's life?

14. Is there anything else we have not covered but you would like to share about how having a role model has influenced your life?

IPHEPHA G: Isilathisi sodliwano-ndlebe lomntu-ngomntu

1. Ingaba leliphi ikhondo onqwenela ukulilandela ebomini bakho?
2. Ingaba ngubani okukhuthazayo okanye okwenze utsaleke kweli khondo ulikhethileyo?
3. Ungandichazela ukuba ucinga ukuba yintoni umntu ongumzekelo omhle?
4. Ngubani oweyengumzekelo omhle kuwe okanye iqhawe ngelixa usakhula? Kungokuba kutheni lento lomntu waba ngumzekelo omhle kuwe?
5. Ingaba abazali bakho babe nagalelo lini na kwikhondo olikhethileyo?
 - Ngethuba ubuncokola nabazali bakho ngekhondo elikumaphupha akho ingaba izimvo zabo zibenegalelo na kweli khondo? Ukuba kunjalo njani?
 - Ngubani umntu ongaba ujonge kuye njengomzekelo ngalomzuzu okanye ongumzekelo kusapho lwakho?
 - Ingaba uthanda ntoni ngobomi balomntu?
 - Ungathi ufunde ntoni kuye lomntu?
6. Ngubani umntu ongumzekelo omhle kuwe esikolweni?
 - Ingaba uthanda ntoni ngobomi balomntu?
 - Ungathi ufunde ntoni kuye lomntu?
7. Ngubani umntu ongumzekelo omhle kuwe ekuhlaleni?
 - Ingaba uthanda ntoni ngobomi balomntu?
 - Ungathi ufunde ntoni kuye lomntu?
8. Ingaba ngubani elona qhawe okanye umzekelo omhle kuwe ebomini jikelele?
 - Ingaba uthanda ntoni ngobomi bakhe lomntu?
9. Ingaba ikhona into ongayithandiyo ngaye lomntu? Ukuba kunjalo yintoni ongayithandiyo? Ingaba ngubani ebomini bakho odlale indima enkulu nebonakalayo kwizigqibo zakho zokukhetha ikhondo?
10. Ungathi usasazo lube nalo na igalelo okanye lwakukhuthaza ukuba ukhethe amakhondo athile? Ukuba kunjalo khawuke wabelane nam ukuba ukhe wababona phi na abantu abalandele lamakhondo kwaye ingaba ngawaphi okanye yayingawaphi?
11. Ungandichazela na ukuba ingaba ukhe wazisebenzisa njani na izinto okanye izinwe zomntu ongumzekelo wakho kobakho ubomi jikelele?
 - Ingaba ngubani odlale indima yokukuxhasa ebomini bakho?
 - Ungandichazela ukuba bakuxhase njani?

12. Ukuba ubunemibuzo ngekhondo okanye ngezifundo ingaba ngowuphi kwababantu bangasentla obunokuthi uye kuye? Ngokuba kutheni?
13. Ungathi umntu ongumzekelo omhle udlala ndima ni ebomini bomntu omtsha?
14. Ingaba ikhona into esingayichaphazelanga obunganqwenela ukusabela yona malunga nokuba ukuba nomntu ongumzekelo ebomini kubuchaphazele njani ubomi bakho?

APPENDIX H: Focus-group Guide (English)

Let's do a quick round of introductions. Can each of you tell the group your name and the school you attend, and what you would like to be one day or what career you would like to pursue.

Great, so to start off we would like to know;

1. Who is your role model?
 - a. Is it somebody in your family, in your community or is it a celebrity?
2. Specifically, let's discuss the reasons why you have chosen that person as your role model.
 - a. What qualities about that person's life/career are you attracted to?
 - b. How do you relate those qualities to yourself currently?
 - c. How do you relate those qualities to your future self?
3. Now let's focus on how that person has influenced your career decisions.
 - a. When are you/or have you been around or exposed to that person?
 - b. In what way has that person inspired or motivated you to choose a particular career?
4. Let's talk move on to parents or guardians.
 - a. How have your parents or guardians influenced your career plans?
 - b. Have they supported you, are they against your career choice, did they initiated the choice?
5. Let's talk about the school
 - a. Have you had any discussions or career guidance at school?
 - b. Have those discussions impacted on the way you go about thinking about your career?
 - c. Overall how have your educators influenced your career decisions?
6. Let's talk about role models in your community
 - a. Do you have a role model in the community?
 - b. How has that person influenced your career aspirations?
7. If you had a career or study question whom of the people that you have previously mentioned are you likely to consult, and why?
8. Then in your opinion what role would you say a role model plays in a young person's life?

Lastly, is there anything else we have not discussed yet that you think is important for young people to consider when choosing a role model?

Thank you so much for your time!

IPHEPHA H: Isalathisi sodliwano-ndlebe leqela labantu (Xhosa)

Isalathisi sequmru elilungiselelwe ukuncedisana nengxoxo zeli qumru. Masenze izaziso ezikhawulezileyo. Ndicela umntu ngamnye achazele iqumru igama lakhe, kwakunye nesikolo afunda kuso asichazele nokuba ingaba unqwenela ukuba yintoni na ngenye imini okanye kungenjalo ikhondo anqwenela ukulilandela.

Kulungile ke ngoku siza kuqala ngokuthi sazi ukuba:

1. Ingaba ngubani umntu ongumzekelo ebomini bakho.
 - a. Ingaba lomntu ulilungu losapho lwakho, okanye kwindawo ohlala kuyo okanye ngomnye wabantu abadumileyo?
2. Ngamafutshane masikhe sithethe okanye uthethe ngalomntu njengomntu ongumzekelo ebomini bakho?
 - a. Zeziphi impawu ngalomntu okanye ngobomi balomntu okanye ikhondo lakhe ozithandayo?
 - b. Ingaba uzinxulumanisa njani ezimpawu kunye nawe ngolomzuzu?
 - c. Uzibona zinxulumana njani ezimpawu nobomi bakho kwixa elizayo?
3. Masikhe siqwalasele kengoku ukuba lomntu unafuthe linina kwizigqibo zakho zokukhetha ikhondo.
 - a. Ingaba ukhe wachitha ixesha na okanye waba kwindawo akuyo lomntu?
 - b. Ingaba ube nagalelo lini okanye lingakanani na lomntu ekukhetheni elikhondo?
4. Masikhe siye kubazali okanye abameli bakho.
 - a. Ingaba abazali okanye abantu ohlala nabo babe nagelelo linina kwikhondo olikhethileyo?
 - b. Ingaba bayakuxhasa okanye bayalichasa elikhondo okanye mhlawumbi ngabo abakukhokhele kweli khondo?
5. Makhe sithethe ngesikolo.
 - a. Ingaba ukhe ube nazo na ingxoxo ngekhondo esikolweni okanye iimfundiso ngamakhondo?
 - b. Ingaba ezingxoxo zibe negalelo na kwindlela othi ucinge ngayo ngekhondo onokuthi ulilandele?
 - c. Jikelele ingaba abafundisintsapho bathe banegalelo kwizigqibo zakho zekhondo?
6. Makhe sithethe ngabantu abayimizekelo ekuhlaleni.
 - a. Ingaba ukhona umntu ongumzekelo kuwe ekuhlaleni?

- b. Ingaba lomntu ube nagelelo lini kwikhondo onqwenela ukulilandela?
7. Ukuba bekungenzeka ukuba ube nemibuzo okanye ufuno isalthiso malunga nekhondo okanye izifundo ingaba ngowuphi umntu ongathi uye kuye kwababantu ubusele ubakhankanyile ngasentla, kwaye usichazele ukuba kungokuba kutheni?
 8. Ngokwembono zakho khawuchaze ukuba yeyiphi indima ethi idlalwe ngumntu ongumzekelo ebomini bomntu omtsha?

Okokugqibela, ingaba ikhona into engathanga ixoxwe ocinga ukuba ibalulekile nekufanele ukuba abantu abatsha bayiqwalasele xa bekhetha umntu othi abengumzekelo ebomini babo?

Siyabulela ngexesha lakho!

APPENDIX I: Biographical Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions in the space provided or mark the correct option where needed.

1. Name:.....

2. Gender:

Male	Female
------	--------

3. Age:.....

4. Home language:

English	isiXhosa	Afrikaans
---------	----------	-----------

Other.....

5. Religion:

Christian	Muslim	Hindu
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Other.....

6. School:.....

7. Home town:.....

8. Where do you currently live?.....

9. Father's (or male guardian's) highest level of education:

No schooling

Primary School

High School

Completed Grade 12

Some tertiary education

Completed tertiary education

10. Father's (or male guardian's)

occupation:.....

11. Mother's (or female guardian's) highest level of education:

No schooling

Primary School

High School

Completed Grade 12

Some tertiary education

Completed tertiary education

12. Mother's (or Female guardian's)

occupation:.....

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. Your personal information will be treated with confidentiality.

IPHEPHA I:

Ndicela uphendule lemibuzo ilandelayo kwizithuba ozinikiweyo okanye (ukhethe) impendulo eyiyo apho uzinikiweyo iimpindulo.

1. Igama:.....

2. Isini:

Indoda	Umfazi
--------	--------

3.Iminyaka yakho:

4. Ulwimi:

Isingesi	IsiXhosa	Isibhulu
----------	----------	----------

Ezinye.....

5. Religion:

Umkrestu	Isilamusi	umHindu
----------	-----------	---------

Ezinye.....

6. Isikolo:.....

7. Ikhaya lakho liphi.....

8. Uhlala phi ngoku?.....

9. Imfundo katata (okanye ummeli ongutata):

Akanasikolo

Unamabanga aphantsi

Unamabanga aphezulu

Ibanga leshumi

Unentwana yemfundo enomsila engagqitywanga

Unemfundo enomsila ayiphumeleleyo

10. Utata (okanye ummeli ongutata) yintoni umsebenzi

wakhe.....

11. Imfundo kamama (okanye ummeli ongumama):

Akanasikolo

Unamabanga aphantsi

Unamabanga aphezulu

Uphumelele ibanga leshumi

Unentwana yemfundo enomsila engagqitywanga

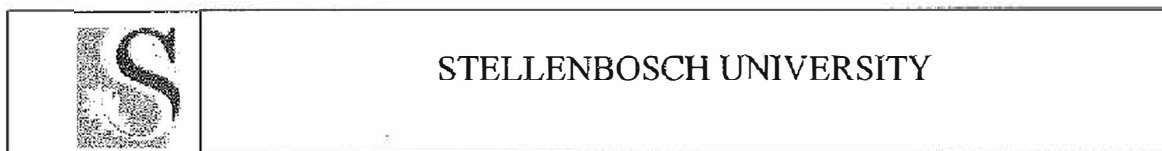
Unemfundo enomsila ayiphumeleleyo

12. Umsebenzi kamama (okanye ummeli

ongumama):.....

Siyabulela ngokuba uthe wathabathe ithuba ukuphendula lemibuzo. Ulwazi othe wasinika lona ngawe siyakuqinisekisa ukuba aluyi kuze lunikwe mntu.

APPENDIX J



CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Transcription Services

Exploring the influence of role models on the career development process of adolescents from a low income community in South Africa

I, [REDACTED], transcriptionist, agree to maintain full confidentiality in regards to any and all audiotapes and documentation received from Olivia Matshabane related to her masters study on *Exploring the influence of role models on the career development process of adolescents from a low income community in South Africa*. Furthermore, I agree:

1. To hold in strictest confidence the identification of any individual that may be inadvertently revealed during the transcription of audio-taped interviews, or in any associated documents.
2. To not make copies of any audiotapes or computerized files of the transcribed interview texts, unless specifically requested to do so by Olivia Matshabane.
3. To store all study-related audiotapes and materials in a safe, secure location as long as they are in my possession.
4. To return all audiotapes and study-related documents to Olivia Matshabane in a complete and timely manner.
5. To delete all electronic files containing study-related documents from my computer hard drive and any backup devices.

I am aware that I can be held legally liable for any breach of this confidentiality agreement, and for any harm incurred by individuals if I disclose identifiable information contained in the audiotapes and/or files to which I will have access.

Transcriber's name (printed)

[REDACTED]

Transcriber's highest qualification

B.A Honours

Transcriber's signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a final flourish.

Date

15 - May - 2016