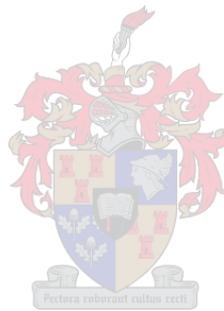


# **Township families' domestic support practices of their children's schooling**

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*Thesis submitted for the degree of Masters of Education half thesis in the Faculty of  
Education at Stellenbosch University*

Supervisor: Professor Aslam Fataar

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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 owner of the copyright thereof (unless explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Signature:

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## **Abstract**

This thesis provides an analysis and discussion of how the domestic practices of township families build forms of capitals that support their children's schooling. The thesis discussion responds to the question: How do families' domestic practices in improvised township families provide support for their children's schooling? Drawing on Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth model and Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital, this study challenges the deficit view of how township families support their children's schooling and shows how the domestic support practices of impoverished families, as forms of assets, build cultural capital that enable their children to achieve at school. The findings of this study show that parents in impoverished circumstances draw on alternative forms of capitals, namely; aspirational, linguistic, familial and social capital as networks, resources, skills and abilities to build the cultural capital that positions their children successfully at school.

This qualitative research study is situated in the interpretive paradigm. Through purposeful sampling, four families in a township community in the Western Cape were selected. I conducted in depth semi-structured interviews with the parents, family members and other adults who play a significant role in supporting their children's schooling. This study provided an alternative view of township living and families' domestic practices to show that impoverished families possess and utilise an array of knowledge, skills and abilities and social networks that build cultural capital which positions their children as average performers at school.

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## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my late grandmother, Nowayilesi Ncetelo who took me to school and supported my entire schooling.

And to my late father, Kolobhile Sonamzi, who believed in me.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1. Background to the research problem**

The impetus for this research study is the result of my involvement in a township school. Over the past eight years I have been the principal of a primary school in a township which has positioned me at the forefront of the debate around how parents in impoverished circumstances are seen to be failing to support their children's education. This debate is linked to the poor results of township schools. While most research acknowledges that the low results emanating from township schools is greatly influenced by the social context in which the schools are situated, the schools still receive huge pressure to improve their results. Coupled with the pressure to perform is the complex relationship between the parents and the school. Parents in impoverished circumstances are often perceived to be unsupportive or uncaring with regard to their children's education. This is evidenced, for example, in parents not arriving for school meetings, lack of parental supervision for their children's homework or parents not providing the necessary stationery for their children's school work.

As a principal of a township school it is my contention that parents and extended family members do indeed support their children as best they can. For many parents just getting their child to school every day is the best that they can do given their economic and social circumstances. My interest in this research project lies in investigating the domestic support practices of township families that support their children's schooling. I argue that what is missing in our consideration of learners and their learning practices in township schools is an understanding of how the domestic practices of their families build forms of cultural capital which support learners' schooling.

Most of the research on schooling in impoverished circumstances considers the relationship between the home environment and the lack of parental involvement in the school. This research mostly argues for ways in which low income parents can better support their children in order to improve the academic performance of learners in school. In contrast, this research study is an attempt to highlight the

domestic practices of township families that support their children's schooling. This research is based on the view that parents in impoverished circumstances do support their children's schooling and that this goes unnoticed or unacknowledged by schools. Drawing on Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth (CCW) model and Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital, this research aims to show how the domestic practices of working class families, as forms of assets or cultural capital, have the potential to support working class children's education. At the academic level this research will enable an understanding of the complex ecologies (Lee, 2010) by which learning takes place in impoverished circumstances. The study employs the following variables: family life circumstances (parental-structure), socioeconomic impact (parent-occupational status) and the accumulation of cultural capital that supports children's successful learning in an impoverished township context.

My focus in this study is on how children from township families, who are achieving average results in their school learning, have been supported by the domestic practices in their home. In other words, I want to understand how domestic practices of these families accumulate capitals that support their children's schooling. This study attempts to challenge a deficit way of viewing township families and their children by offering an alternative understanding of the domestic support practices that these families engage in and the resources they draw on, to support their children's schooling. This research, therefore, aims to show how families in a township context build capitals that position their children as average performers in their schooling.

## **1.2. Research question**

The research question that guides my study is:

How do families' domestic practices in improvised township families provide support for their children's schooling?

## **1.3. Research sub-questions**

1. What are the living circumstances of impoverished township families?
2. How do impoverished township families' domestic practices support the accumulation of capitals that position their children successfully in their schooling?

#### **1.4. Research aims**

This study aims to provide an understanding of how learners' education is supported in their homes and families. My intention is to bring the domestic practices of township families, which support their children's education, into view. This focus will allow me to highlight the forms of capital that families in impoverished environments provide for their children, and which support their children's schooling.

Specifically the aim is to explore, understand and bring into view the domestic practices of township families in supporting their children's schooling and to present an analysis of how the domestic practices of township families build cultural capital that support their children's learning experiences.

#### **1.5. Research objectives**

To understand how families navigate the space of their domestic environment in order to support their children's schooling.

To understand how the complex family dynamics of impoverished township families support the ability of the children to attend and stay in school.

To investigate how families use resources available to them in their impoverished living circumstances to support their children's schooling.

To understand how domestic support practices of township families build cultural capital that enable their children to be successful in their school learning.

#### **1.6. Significance of this research**

The significance of this study is to investigate and discuss the resources that township families draw on in order to build capitals that support their children's schooling. Using Yosso's (2005) CCW model allows me to challenge the dominant discourse that assumes that working class children come to school with cultural deficiencies. This builds on Miller, Pinderhughes, Young and Ferguson (2002) who state that much research has focused on the negative issues that affect the academic outcomes of children living in impoverished circumstances, and that little research has focused on what practices make children successful in their school learning. Further, this builds on Epstein (2001) who noted that many parents, despite

their physical contexts and poor socioeconomic situations, support the learning practices of their children either emotionally, or by providing basic care and support and ensuring that their children attend school regularly. Lareau and Goyette (2014) note that few studies have examined the dynamics inside the home and therefore not much is known about how family life supports children's school learning. My study aims to fill this gap in the literature. This study provides an understanding of the domestic support practices that township families engage in, and the resources they draw on, that support their children's schooling. This research aims to show how families in a township build capitals that position their children as average performers in their schooling.

### **1.7. Conceptual framework**

This study draws on Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital and Yosso's (2005) notion of community cultural wealth to understand the domestic practices of township families in supporting their children's education. Yosso (2005) contends that Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital does not provide an understanding of the cultural and social resources that impoverished families draw on to support their children's schooling process. She states that Bourdieu's views on cultural capital are limited to understanding how middle class homes reproduce cultural capital. Her notion of CCW thus challenges traditional deficit approaches that claim that working class families do not provide their children with the necessary cultural capital to engage successfully in their school learning. She argues that families living in impoverished circumstances draw on "multiple forms of cultural wealth" (Yosso, 2005:78) from their communities and families, and that these forms of cultural wealth are used to build the capitals which support their children's education. This conceptual framework is discussed in more detail in chapter 2.

### **1.8. Delimitation of my study**

This study is a Masters half thesis and is therefore limited to focusing on one urban township in the Western Cape. For the purposes of the study, interviews were conducted with four families of Grade 6 learners who were average performers at school. I interviewed each family three times over a period of three months. During this time I also spent time in each home observing family interaction and conversation.

## **1.9. Structure of the thesis**

This study is presented in six chapters. In Chapter 1 I provided an introduction to the thesis and a background to the study. This includes the study's research questions and research aims and objectives and the significance of the study. It introduces the conceptual frameworks used in the study and provides the layout of the thesis. Chapter 2 offers a consideration and synthesis of international and national literature pertinent to my research. Further this chapter presents Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital and Yosso's (2005) notion of community cultural wealth as the conceptual framework of this study. The research methodology is presented in Chapter 3. It provides a rationale for adopting a qualitative methodological paradigm for this study and for choosing semi-structured interviews as the most appropriate research design for answering the research questions. In Chapter 4 I present the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews and home observations with the four selected families. This data focuses on the domestic practices of the four families and provides a descriptive narrative of their domestic practices and includes a discussion on the four families' living circumstances. Chapter 5 provides an analysis and discussion of how the domestic practices of impoverished township families builds cultural capital that supports their children's schooling. My final chapter, chapter 6, provides the analytical findings and a summative conclusion of my study.

## Chapter 2: Literature review and conceptual framework

### 2.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to offer a consideration of international and national literature on families' educational support practices in the home environment. Furthermore, it seeks to provide conceptual tools for understanding how domestic practices support the education of children within the context of township families.

My study is situated in working class family homes in a township. Urban townships are the living environment of the vast majority of South Africa's black urban population (Bak, 2008) and township living is rapidly increasing as more and more people migrate from the poor rural areas to the cities in search of work. Coming to an understanding of the social fabric and everyday life of families living in townships provides us with an understanding of the learning environment of low income learners in their schooling.

By urban township the study refers to an underdeveloped urban living area (Fataar & du Plooy, 2012). Townships are usually built on the periphery of towns and cities and are a living area that was previously (during the Apartheid era) reserved for non-whites<sup>1</sup>, black African, coloureds and Indians and is usually characterised by a mix of working class inhabitants (Fataar & du Plooy, 2012:1).

The intention of the study is to bring into view the domestic learning practices of township families that support their children's school learning. This study includes a focus on the socio-economic positioning of children in their family context, the domestic support practices that these families provide for their children's school learning, and a discussion on how families living in impoverished circumstances value and support their children's education. This chapter first synthesises the literature on domestic living in a township context and considers how the domestic practices impact on children's learning practices. Secondly this chapter introduces the conceptual framework of the study and discusses Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and Yosso's (2005) theory of community cultural wealth (CCW).

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<sup>1</sup> This study uses the apartheid-created racial categories black, coloured, white and Indian in reference to South Africa's four race groups.

The first section, the literature review covers the following sections: the family home circumstances of township families; the socio-economic factors of impoverished living; the home environment and educational practices in the home and a consideration of how home learning impacts on children's schooling practices.

## **2.2. Literature Review**

### **2.2.1. Family home circumstances**

This section synthesises the literature on family circumstances in township homes. It covers family circumstances in relation to the various complex family dynamics the home provides. It will focus on the impact of life circumstances and the educational support practices in the home environment

The family is the child's first place of contact with the world and where initial learning and socialisation takes place. Alika & Edosa (2012) state that the family lay the foundation for the psychological, moral, spiritual and learning development of children. Olivier (2006) notes that children imitate the behaviour of 'significant others' within their immediate environments, thereby suggesting that parents, peers and other community members play a powerful role in motivating children in their learning. Parents' perceptions of their children's abilities and support in their sense of efficacy and aspirations of success therefore play an important motivating role in their children's learning (Olivier, 2006:56).

Families play a role in their homes supporting their children's learning not only through different forms of learning practices, but also in shaping children's social and emotional development (Ngwaru, 2012). Children form constructive relationships with parents and other family members early on in their lives and these form the foundation on which social competency and peer relationships outside the home are based (Ngwaru, 2012). This form of development assists the children to express emotion, desire and needs, consider the feelings of others and express their viewpoint and listen to the viewpoints expressed by others (Ngwaru, 2012).

Miller, *et al* (2002) studied the effects of family and home circumstances and found that poverty and family interactions have an impact on a child's growth and academic success. Their research revealed that poverty can have detrimental effects on

children's school success. They argue that children who grow up in families living in extreme poverty generally do not get adequate care and love. Further, according to Miller *et al* (2002), families living in extreme poverty do not usually provide their children with the necessary health care. For this reason, some children may become chronically ill which may lead to poor performance at school. Moreover, children living in impoverished circumstances are more likely to experience forms of learning disabilities because of the family situation (Miller *et al*, 2002).

Families living in poverty are also more likely to be single-parent families (Miller *et al*, 2002). Parents living in poverty also often suffer from stress as they are either unemployed or very young due to teenage pregnancy. These parents often struggle to provide basic needs, such as proper housing, healthy food, clothes and health care for their children. Coping with the daily stresses of life and providing for their families can cause significant stress factors in these families and parents find it difficult to support their children's education.

Miller *et al* (2002) point out, that while much research has focused on negative issues that affect academic outcomes of the children, little research has focused on what practices make children successful in their learning. Benson (1990, in Miller *et al*, 2002) conducted a nationwide survey of how young people learn and what home practices assist children to become successful teens. He noted eight categories of home support that assist children to make better decisions, choose positive pathways and grow up to be competent caring and responsible citizens. These support practices included parental support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competences and positive identification (Benson, 1990 in Miller *et al*, 2002).

Families living in poverty tend to find it extremely difficult to provide on-going and consistent support structures (Benson, 1990 in Miller *et al*, 2002). Many homes in impoverished circumstances are characterised by instability which can affect the learning practices of children in many ways. Research by Ginther and Pollak (2004) supports this and suggests that the family structure is related to the educational success of the children in different aspects. Children who live in stable family environments tend to have greater academic achievement and educational

attainment because their parents are more involved in their school activities and have higher expectations of their children.

Kim (2008) argues that the solution to improving educational outcomes for children begins at home by strengthening marriage relationships and promoting a stable family composition and parental involvement. According to Kim (2008), research has demonstrated that there is a link between a stable family structure, parental involvement and children's educational outcomes. Living with single parents, step parents or cohabiting mothers may cause emotional issues that can affect the children's academic achievement at school (Kim, 2008).

Many researchers have studied the influence of parent's education on parental involvement in schooling. In both quantitative and qualitative studies, parental involvement has been found to positively affect children's school experience (Lareau, 2000; Epstein, 2001). According to Lareau and Goyette (2014), extensive research has been done on the amount of time parents spend with their children and the impact on the children's schooling. There are assumptions that it is best if parents spend more time with their children. However, Milkie, Nomaguchi and Denny (2015) argue that the amount of time spent with children has virtually no relationship to how children perform at school. For instance, time spent with stressed mothers can actually hurt children, or a child who spends time with an anxious or abusive parent is likely to underperform and have behavioural problems. Most studies conclude that it is the quality of time that parents spend with their children that will be the most beneficial in supporting their children's school learning.

Roksa & Potter (2011) studied how parenting practices influence children's educational success. They examined how the cultural capital of parents influences their children's education. The data was elicited from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) which is a longitudinal study conducted in the United States which followed families and their children from 1968 to 2008. The study enabled the researchers to construct data from three-generations of family history, including children, their parents and their grandparents. The findings were that academic achievement varies across students from different backgrounds; however children from stable middle class families perform better than their counterparts from working class families. The findings also revealed that the mothers' social background and

level of education is related to the children's educational success (Roksa & Potter, 2011).

Other research findings have demonstrated that there is an overwhelming connection between literary resources in homes and children's reading skills (Sanders, Steven & Sheldon, 2009). Children who come from reading-oriented homes, where books are readily available to them and whose parents are passionate readers, have a tendency to score higher on reading achievement tests than children from less reading-oriented homes. Also noted is that parents reading to their children positively influences children's' literacy skills.

In a study conducted by Peters (2014) on the ways in which some Somali parents offered support to their primary school children, it was revealed that the Somali parents offered their children significant physiological support such as care, love, food and shelter but were unable to support their children's school work as they were mostly illiterate. Regardless however of their level of education, the Somali parents still advised and guided their children in their school learning. This form of parental learning support included amongst others, giving advice and guidance, talking to children about their daily school activities and showing interest in their academic development. The study revealed that this form of support is equally important and that for these families, this support was instrumental in their children achieving success in their school learning. This study is an example of ways in which parents from poor socio-economic conditions, with very little formal education themselves, can successfully be involved in supporting their children's learning.

Epstein (2001) notes that while there are six fundamental types of parental involvement, namely parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, and decision making and collaborating with the community. She states that no form of support is more important than the other. Many parents, despite their physical contexts and socio-economic situations, support the learning practices of their children either emotionally, by providing basic care, or by ensuring that their children attend school regularly.

The next section discusses the socio-economic living conditions of families and how these conditions impact on how the families support of the learning practices of their children.

### **2.2.2. Socio-economic impact**

Countless research has been conducted on the impact of the socio-economic status of families on their children's education. There appears to be an on-going dispute about how to measure and define the 'socio-economic' impact concept. However, despite this dispute there seems to be relative agreement on Duncan, Featherman and Duncan's definition which is as follows: "socio-economic impact incorporates the tripartite nature of socioeconomic status, that is, parental income, parental education, and occupation as a definition of a family's socioeconomic status" (1992, in Sirin, 2005).

Extensive research has been carried out in order to study the relationship between the socio-economic status of the family and students' academic achievement (Caro, McDonald & Willms, 2009). The findings of the research on the impact of socio-economic factors on the children's education conclude that there is a positive relationship between the socio-economic status of the family and the academic achievement of students (Caro, McDonald & Willms, 2009). There is general agreement that children who tend to drop out of school early and whose performance is low in literacy and numeracy come from a low socio-economic backgrounds (Caro, McDonald & Willms, 2009). Alike and Edosa (2012) report that socio-economic factors such as the parents' educational attainment, occupation and levels of income and social class impacted significantly on the academic performance of the children in their study.

In South Africa learners, especially those from low-socio-economic areas, bring many complex dynamics into learning situations. The term environmental deprivation is a term that is often linked with children living in poverty and implies unfavourable living conditions that include unemployment or low wages and limited potential for upward mobility. Environmental deprivation denotes conditions in the home that make it difficult for learners to fully reach their potential in formal education (Olivier 2006). Pretorius and Machet (2004, in Olivier, 2006) state that a child's living circumstances has an adverse effect on their development and learning that takes place in that context. Therefore, children from deprived communities and families may experience developmental and learning delays and problems communicating due to language barriers.

Singh, Mbokodi and Msila's (2004) study on the socio-economic status of black families in South Africa reports that many homes of children living in poverty are not supportive learning environments. In the homes visited, Singh *et al* (2004) noted that many children were expected to do many chores in and around the home and these distracted the children from completing homework tasks. These chores included cooking, cleaning and caring for younger siblings or elderly grandparents or assisting with family responsibilities until late in the evening that left them often too tired to complete any homework or studying required by the school (Singh *et al*, 2004; Miller *et al*, 2002). Moreover, children are also expected to participate in family businesses, for instance assisting in the local spaza<sup>2</sup> shop owned by the family. This study reports that many parents did not see their role as engaging in learning practices with their children and the parents believed that this was the role of the school and that the school was competent to deal with their children's learning (Singh *et al*, 2004). Parents also discussed different domestic problems such as unemployment, divorce, family disputes and general poverty which impacted on the children's school learning (Singh *et al*, 2004).

Davis-Kean (2005) researched the impact of parents' socio-economic status and level education on their children's academic achievement. Data for this study came from a 1997 Child Development Supplement of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID-CDS) which is a national cross-sectional study of children that provided a survey of American families. In this study Davis-Kean (2005) used three variables to characterise the family's socio-economic status and structure, namely parent education, income and family size. The study found that the parent's education influences the child achievements indirectly through its impact of the parent's beliefs in their children's achievement potential and through stimulating home behaviours provided by the parents (Davis-Kean, 2005). This study suggested that the level of the parent's education influences how they structure their home environment and how they interact with their children in promoting academic achievement. Davis-Kean (2005) argues that economic difficulties do not necessary constrain academic development of children.

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<sup>2</sup> A spaza shop is an informal convenience shop or business that is usually run from the home and is found predominantly in South African townships or informal settlements.

On the other hand, according to Hartas (2011:893), there is a link between parents' socio-economic status and their children's cognitive abilities and social-emotional competence. Hartas (2011) states that both family income and parent educational qualifications have a strong effect on children's learning experiences and emotional competence and suggests that the parent's level of education, occupational status and financial status influences the manner in which parents interact with their children and affects their children's commitment to learning. Moreover, Hartas (2011) argues that access to financial resources and services and the human capital accumulated through educational qualifications influence the type of activities that parents support and promote and the attitudes, beliefs and values they express towards learning, as well as the capabilities they wish to develop in their children. Regardless of the socio-economic conditions, however, Williams (1996) states that children from all backgrounds will benefit if their parents become involved in their learning. Malecki and Demaray (2006) concluded from their study that, children from a low socio-economic backgrounds, achieved more academically if their parents were involved in their school.

The following section discusses the domestic environment and educational practices in family homes.

### **2.2.3. The home environment and educational practices**

The focus in this section is on how the complex family dynamics work in low income families or families living in townships and considers the impact of the home environment on children's academic success. The studies by Lareau (1987), Alika and Edosa (2012) examined the impact of the home environment on children's academic success. The aim of these studies was to explain the link between parental structure, involvement, occupation and children's academic achievement. The findings revealed that there is a consistent relationship between home environment and children's academic achievement.

Alika and Edosa (2012:258) note that the home environment is significant in determining the learning practices of children which ultimately will affect their academic performance in school. The home is identified as an overwhelming factor affecting children's school performance and the family plays an important role in a child's education by supporting the child's physical, emotional and educational needs

(Alika & Edosa, 2012:258). Many parents acknowledge that they have no resources in their homes to enrich their children's educational learning, but feel that providing for their children's physical needs is an important way in which they support their children's learning.

Reporting on homes in informal settlements, Singh *et al* (2004) states that many of these family homes did not have enough space for the children to do homework or study and that a family unit could comprise of various extended family members living in the home. These communities often do not have public libraries or other support structures where the children can access learning materials or that provided a quiet space for children to complete homework or study (Singh *et al*, 2004). In investigating the role of homework support for children from low-income homes, the research revealed that the inability to adequately complete homework due to chaotic home environments was a main contributor to students dropping out of schools early (Singh *et al*, 2004).

According to Jubber (1994) a family's wealth affords many educationally relevant advantages, and thus the converse means that children living in poverty are often deprived of the advantages that wealth can bring to their children's education. Examples of these advantages are choice of school, extra educational resources in the home such as books, technology, and extra assistance afterhours with tutoring of students who are struggling or failing. Wealth also provides home circumstances that can be seen as conducive to optimal learning environments such as space to work, access to technology, quiet studying environment and time to complete their homework or studying without other competing needs such as assisting with siblings, cooking, household chores and so forth (Jubber, 1994).

A study from Brazil (Fuller, Dellagnelo, Strath, Bastos, Maia, de Matos, Portela and Vieira, 1999) found that there are significant correlations between various factors in the home and children's learning achievements at school. This study indicated that illiterate parents can make a significant difference to their children's learning and school achievements, especially when active measures were put in place to involve parents in their children's schooling and learning (Fuller *et al*, 1999). Lareau (1987) argues that the living experiences in the home facilitate children's adjustment to their school education and academic achievement. Dale, Pintrich and Meece (2008) state

that children are motivated to work on activities and learn new information and skills when their environments contain interesting activities and resources.

#### **2.2.4. Home learning and school learning**

Cairney (2000) notes that deficit explanations of differential school achievement fail to recognise the discrepancies that exist between cultural home resources and learning practices in the home and the school expectations and instructional methods. School learning expectations often do not align with students from low-income homes or community learning, which therefore positions the child as a deficit learner without recognising the rich cultural resources that these children do bring from their homes and communities. Cairney describes families as cultures in which family members “construct particular ways of acting, believing and valuing through the interactions among family members” (2000:167). These family literacy practices can shape children’s literacy development despite them not being recognised by schools as school knowledge.

Supporting Cairney (2000), McCarthy (1997) states that a deficit model of conceptualising learning in low-income homes may view these homes or families as providing limited language-learning environments, having faulty patterns of socialisation, or placing little value on education. This view in schools, that serve low-income students, can lead to educational practices that include a reduced transmission of knowledge with a focus on memorisation and repetition of information (McCarthy, 1997). McCarthy notes that this form of educational practice often takes place in schools that service working class populations, whereas schools with more affluent populations more often provide students with opportunities to make decisions, express ideas and apply concepts in their learning (1997).

Ngwaru (2012), reporting on low-income or low-resourced communities, states that despite these communities not having what is perceived by western society as a literacy-rich environments such as an abundance of books or parents reading to their children, these cultures have rich oral language-based experiences, resources and artefacts available in the homes. The oral telling of folk tales and myths promotes a culture of learning in the home as these practices stimulate an interest in learning and a positive attitude to knowledge (Ngwaru, 2012). Ngwaru notes that the values relating to pride in one’s cultural heritage which are reinforced through story-telling in

a child's home language has a positive influence on academic achievement (2012). Parents in impoverished circumstances often do not realise that these rich forms of literacy are able to significantly support their children's learning.

Ngwaru (2012) suggests that parents of children in these communities should be made aware of the rich resources available within their homes and communities and be encouraged to use these to support and nurture their children's literacy practices and social and emotional development. Ngwaru (2012) further states that low income households contain ample cultural and cognitive resources or 'funds of knowledge' (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992) that have great potential and utility value for classroom learning. This positive view of learning practices in low-income households contrasts with prevailing perceptions that views working class and rural families as intellectually deficit and socially disorganised. Parents in low-income homes themselves are not always aware that their homes and communities hold an abundance of socio-cultural 'funds of knowledge' that, if effectively utilised by schools, can enrich their children's learning opportunities. McCarthy supported this view and noted that many schools do not consider that working class homes provide sources of rich experiences or have literacy practices embedded in the socialising fabric of family life (1997). He stated that it is important for schools to recognise that how families assist their children make sense of their life experiences or literacy practices and link them to school learning, is an important factor in their children's learning practices. McCarthy further notes that the level of the parent's literacy practices, the motivation provided by the parents to read and write and the connections that the parents make between the home and school plays a significant role in linking children's home learning into successful school learning (1997). Thus, researchers and teachers, building on Moll *et al* (1992) 'funds of knowledge' framework, can successfully find ways to connect classroom learning to community resources (McCarthy 1997). This approach utilises the activities of households and knowledge learned by children from social networks that facilitate economic assistance and labour cooperation and use this information to connect home and community learning to school learning.

The next section presents the conceptual lenses that I will use to focus the study on domestic practices of township families in supporting their children's schooling.

## **2.3. Conceptual Framework**

This section presents the conceptual framework of this study. The focus of my study draws on Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and Yosso's (2005) notion of community cultural wealth to explore and analyse the way in which the domestic practices of township families support their children's education.

In this section I first briefly explain Bourdieu's research focus and discuss his key concepts of habitus and field. I then introduce capital and the various forms of capital with a focus on cultural capital. Furthermore, I explain Yosso's (2005) notion of community cultural wealth (CCW) in order to extend Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital. This allows me to understand the domestic practices of township families and the role these practices play in supporting their children's schooling.

### **2.3.1. Bourdieu's research focus and key concepts**

Pierre Bourdieu's main research interest was on the relationship between historical structures and subjective agents and how these connect to power. He was interested in the ways in which society is reproduced, and how the dominant classes retain their position. He adopted the key concepts of field, habitus and capital to explain social life and the logic of practice. Bourdieu used these concepts to emphasize how social classes preserve social privileges across generations.

#### **2.3.1.1. Habitus**

Habitus can be defined as a system of socially constructed durable, transposable patterns of socio-cultural practices gained from our cultural history which stay with us across various contexts (Webb, Schirato & Danaher, 2002:36). These values and dispositions are primarily conditioned during early childhood and operate largely unconsciously and allow us to respond to cultural rules and contexts in a variety of different ways. Families pass on socialised perceptions, belief systems and conditioned behaviour which become internalised as unspoken rules and reproduced through conscious and/or unconscious conforming (Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2005).

Habitus acts as a strong and durable mechanism that internalises the external social world and shapes an individual's sense of their place in the world, what they are capable of achieving and what 'is not for them' based on their embodied history and

how they bring this history into their present circumstances (Grenfell, 2008:52). Habitus is a composite of an individual's lifestyle, values, dispositions and expectations and is usually associated with a particular social group.

Habitus can be understood as individual systems of internalised dispositions, in other words, specific ways of thinking and acting, which is characteristic of all members of the same class and class sector (Bourdieu 1977:86). The habitus is formed in the context of individuals' social locations and inculcates a set of tastes "schemes of perception, thought and action" and a "world view" that is based on particular social or class positions (Bourdieu, 1990:54). Habitus does not act alone but functions within physical and social spaces which Bourdieu defines as a field.

### **2.3.1.2. Field**

A field can be defined as a structured space of social positions and relations within which interactions, transactions and events occur at a specific time and location (Thomson, 2008). Bourdieu states that the social world is divided into fields of practice, such as the field of art, education, religion, law and so forth. Bourdieu sees each field as relatively autonomous from other fields as each field has its own positions and practices as well as struggles for position as people mobilise their capital to stake claims within a particular social domain.

In Bourdieu's words:

A field is a structural social space, a field of forces, a force field. It contains people who dominate and people who are dominated. Constant, permanent relationships on inequality operate inside this space, which at the same time becomes a space in which the various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the field. All the individuals in this universe bring to the competition all the (relative) power at their disposal. It is that power that defines their position in the field and, as a result, their strategies (1998, 40-41).

A field, as a structured social space has its own unique set of rules, knowledge and forms of capital and as a social and institutional arena it is where people express and reproduce their dispositions, and where they compete for the distribution of different kinds of capital (Thomson, 2008).

A field is not a static entity but fluid and dynamic and can include institutional discourses, values, rules and regulations (Webb *et al*, 2002:21). For Bourdieu it is the interaction between habitus and field that generates the logic of practice as it is the concept of field that gives habitus its dynamic quality (Bourdieu, 1990b). Cultural fields have both the ability to produce and transform the attitudes and behaviors of individuals. Each field has its own logic and taken-for-granted structure “which is both the product and producer of the habitus which is specific and appropriate to the field” (Jenkins, 1992:52).

Each field is relatively autonomous from other fields and operates according to its own internal structure or ‘rules of the game’ (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:98). Specifically a social field operates by a set of organising forces and principles, ‘rules’ that are imposed on those entering its parameters. Practices within a field “cannot be accounted for without considering the structure of the power relations among the members” (Bourdieu, 1998:70) and within each field context a form of capital exists and functions because it is valued by these rules. Therefore the amount of power that a person has within a field depends on that person’s position within the field, and the amount of capital that they possess (Webb *et al*, 2002:23)

### **2.3.1.3. Capital**

A third key concept that plays an important role in the relationship between habitus and field is capital. Capital according to Grenfell (2008) is basically a synonym for status or position and refers to the resources that one brings to the field or that one has access to in the field. Capital is the currency with which we buy social recognition. Bourdieu states that “capital is a social relation, which only exists and only produces its effects in the field in which it is produced and reproduced” (1998:133).

Bourdieu distinguishes between three different forms of capital: economic, social and cultural (1986). Economic capital exists in an objectified form such as income and property and refers to command over money and financial assets, for example an understanding of how the stock market works or how to access funding for a business venture. Social capital refers to social relationships, interactions, networks and relationships such as alumni networks and political or religious affiliations. And

the third is cultural capital which is based on the accumulation of knowledge and learning, know-how that sets an individual apart from another.

Cultural capital as a form of symbolic capital exists in three forms: in the embodied state refers to the “long lasting dispositions of the mind and the body” such as style and taste, aptitude and familiarity with highbrow culture and use of formal language; in the objectified state it refers to material possessions such as the choice of artwork displayed on a wall; and in the institutionalised state it refers to credentials, qualifications, education and knowledge (Bourdieu, 1986:242). These forms of capital are closely and “inextricably interlinked” (Bourdieu, 1977:180) and therefore cannot be seen as functioning independently of each other. Common to each form of capital is that it is representative of some kind of investment, and is capable of securing a return on that investment (Moore, 2004).

Capital is a social resource that has value within a particular social space or field. Bourdieu uses the term ‘symbolic capital’ to refer to a particular capital that offers additional power of importance due to its high worth in the social field. In this way an individual’s power within a field is determined by the person’s position in the field and by the amount of capital they possess. In addition, individuals within a particular field work to safeguard and/or maximise their positions and command of the capital that is valued within the field they are operating in, as this increases their power within the field. Those with more power occupy dominant positions, and those with less power (or capital) occupy subordinate positions within the field (Reay, Crozier & Clayton, 2009). Understanding the relationship between field, habitus, and capital, argues Bourdieu, allows us to grasp the way in which our subjective experiences are both shaped by, and shape, objective social structures, and it is the doxic interrelationship between field, habitus and capital that gives rise to social action. This can be best summarized through the formula

$$[(\text{habitus})(\text{capital})]+\text{field}=\text{practice}$$

### **2.3.2. Cultural capital**

The concept ‘cultural capital’ is central to the research and analysis presented in this thesis. Cultural capital refers to the accumulation of knowledge, skills and learning, the know-how that advantages an individual and gives them a higher status in society (Bourdieu 1990a:138). Cultural capital is acquired over time from the social

origin of parents and families who pass on cultural values, class-based practices and their social positions. Parents provide their children with cultural capital by transmitting the attitudes and knowledge needed to succeed. Cultural capital includes cultural background, linguistic competence, i.e. the ability to use appropriate language in a variety of situations, taste and dispositions. For instance, within education an academic degree constitutes cultural capital.

Cultural capital refers to the collection of symbolic elements such as skills, tastes, posture, clothing, mannerisms, material belongings, credentials etc. that one acquires through being part of a particular social class. Cultural capital can therefore be considered as all the things that help individuals to gain access to, and position themselves strategically within a field. Bourdieu points out therefore, that cultural capital is a major source of social inequality. For instance, certain forms of cultural capital are valued over others.

It is important to note that while access to valued forms of capital can improve one's position and status in a field, it is one's privilege, one's position and status in a field that determine an individual's access to capital. In other words, it is capital that ensures the protection and reproduction of the existing power relations and social class distinctions. Bourdieu (1986:47) differentiates between three forms of cultural capital: embodied, objectified and institutionalised which I will now discuss.

Embodied cultural capital consists of both the consciously acquired and the passively 'inherited' properties of one's self. By using the term 'inherited' here, I refer to it not in the genetic sense but in the sense of something which is received over time, usually from the family through socialisation of culture and traditions. Embodied cultural capital cannot be transmitted instantaneously like a gift or bequest (Bourdieu, 1986:48); rather, it is acquired over time as it is inculcated into one's habitus as a character and way of thinking. An example of embodied cultural capital is linguistic capital. Linguistic capital can be defined as the mastery of language and communication (Bourdieu, 1990b:114). It is a representation of communication and self-presentation that is acquired from one's surrounding culture.

Objectified cultural capital consists of physical or material objects that are owned, such as scientific instruments or works of art. These cultural goods can be transferred for economic profit, as in the buying and selling of a painting or sculpture,

(Bourdieu 1986: 50). However, Bourdieu (1986) argues that while one can possess objectified cultural capital, for example, by owning a painting, one can only 'consume' the painting, i.e. understand its cultural meaning, if one has the proper foundation of conceptually and/or historically prior cultural capital, as this form of cultural capital is not transmitted with the sale of the painting. Institutionalised cultural capital consists of institutional recognition, most often in the form of academic credentials or qualifications.

### **2.3.2.1. Use of the concept**

Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital is mostly used in relation to the education system to explain inequalities in society and the education system. Used by individuals or groups positioned at different levels in social hierarchies, cultural capital is a means of either promoting relative social advantage or as a generalised currency which can be exchanged for other economic or social assets. Consequently, cultural capital enables individuals and families with knowledge of institutionalised high-status cultural signals (attitudes, preferences, formal knowledge, behaviours, goods and credentials) to exclude others from advantaged social positions or high-status groups (Lamont & Lareau, 1988:156).

In this study, Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital will be used to explain how the domestic practices of families support the schooling of their children and how different types of capitals are formed that support children's education. In this manner, Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital assists us to examine how cultural experiences and cultural resources in the homes of working class parents facilitate their children's adjustment to school and school achievement. Bourdieu argues that individuals and families' cultural resources comprise a form of 'capital' which should be regarded on equal terms as economic resources (what Bourdieu calls 'economic capital') and social networks and connections (called 'social capital') (Bourdieu, 1986; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

Cultural capital theory argues that schools and educational systems do not enhance students' productive capacities, but reproduce social stratification by maintaining

the pre-existing order, that is, the gap between pupils endowed with unequal amounts of cultural capital ... by a series of selection operations, the system

separates the holders on inherited cultural capital from those who lack it. Differences in aptitude being inseparable from social differences according to inherited capital, the system thus tends to maintain pre-existing social differences (Bourdieu, 1998:20)

In this manner the more academically successful students possess an array of social and interpersonal dispositions that educational institutions value, while at the same time cultural capital theory claims that the culture of certain individuals and households is not valued because what prevails as valid is what the 'dominant' culture dictates as 'valuable' or 'worthy' (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

An understanding of the unequal distribution of cultural capital among learners in schools therefore, allows us a better understanding of how the reproduction of inequality occurs in educational institutions. Lareau (2003) argues that this important class difference, as seen in their cultural capital, in parents' and students' attitudes or behaviours towards schools, affect children's educational progress in schools. Most of the empirical work on cultural capital has suggested that racial, ethnic, or linguistic minority students and their families may lack cultural capital or knowledge of how certain educational processes occur (Lareau, 2000). Actually this is a deficit approach to understanding educational attainment of working class and impoverished children.

In the following section I draw on Yosso's (2005) concept of community cultural wealth (CCW) which extends Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, and allows me to come to understand and analyse the cultural capital found in the domestic practices of working class families that support the learning of their children. Yosso (2005) argues that cultural capital is not just inherited or possessed by the middle class, but, as an accumulation of specific forms of knowledge, skills and abilities that are valued by all groups in society, cultural capital is evident in poor and marginalised communities in different forms.

The CCW model as an alternative framework provides a critique of the dominant discourse that assumes that working class children come to the classroom with cultural deficiencies and this framework therefore allows me to analyse and discuss the domestic practice of township families to present forms of capital that support their children's education.

### **2.3.3. Community cultural wealth**

Yosso (2005) outlines at least six forms of capital that encompass community cultural wealth and most often go unacknowledged or unrecognised. In examining some of the under-utilised assets working class students bring with them from their homes and communities into the classroom, my study intends to bring into view the potential of CCW to transform and improve the academic support of working class children.

Yosso defines CCW as the “accumulated assets and resources found in the lives and histories of disadvantaged students” (2005:77). She suggests that forms of capital from impoverished communities, namely; aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational and resistant capital go unrecognised or unacknowledged. I therefore argue that bringing these forms of capital into view through an investigation and analysis of the domestic practices of working class families, will offer an opportunity to understand how these students access and engage in their education.

The conceptualisation of CCW challenges the traditional interpretations of cultural capital as it offers suggestions on how forms of CCW can support the process of schooling (Yosso, 2005:70). This model assists us to recognise that working class communities have strength, cultural assets and cultural wealth. Hence this theory posits, in contrast to an educational system that sees working class learners as being deficient and lacking critical knowledge, that working class families and communities too are holders and creators of knowledge.

Yosso (2005) refers to Bourdieu who states that children from middle class homes are exposed to cultural capital that is in alignment with formal schooling requirements, but does not provide an understanding of how cultural and social capital and networks of working class families, what I refer to as domestic practices, are able to support the educational processes of their children. In challenging the traditional deficit approaches that working class families do not provide cultural capital for their children to engage successfully in their education, Yosso argues that “poor families draw on their CCW in order to establish social and racial justice (2005:82).

### 2.3.3.1. Forms of capital

Yosso (2005) outlines six forms of capital that are encompassed within the CCW theory, which she suggests most often go unacknowledged or unrecognised. By examining the cultural assets of working class students that they bring with them from their homes and communities into the classroom, my study will bring into view the abilities, skills, resources and knowledge found in the domestic practices of families built up over time, that allow them to navigate their home and school contexts.

Yosso argues that the forms of capital found in CCW theory are made up of a dynamic process that develops, intersects with and corresponds to forms of resources that working class students rely on in their everyday lives. The CCW framework therefore provides one with the ability to both recognise and understand the “multiple forms of cultural wealth” as well as the “various types of capital” that are located in communities and families and mobilised by working class learners in their educational endeavours (Yosso, 2005:78).

Informed by the CCW framework, I now turn to a discussion on the forms of capital suggested by Yosso as those that are found in working class families and communities. Yosso (2005) lists six forms of capital: aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial and resistant capital.

Yosso defines **aspirational capital** as the ability of students to maintain hopes and dreams for the future even in the face of real and perceived barriers. This resiliency is evidenced in those who allow themselves and their children to dream of possibilities beyond their present circumstances, often without the objective means to attain those goals (2005:77). Here she draws on the work of Patricia Gandara (1982, 1995 in Yosso, 2005) who shows through research that Chicano’s communities, who experience the lowest educational outcomes in the United States, have consistently maintained high aspirations for their children’s future.

Yosso (2005) further explains that children of the working class and their families continue to have high education expectations regardless of their circumstances. I will use this form of capital to understand how families are supporting their children’s aspirations regardless of the poor socio-economic situations in which they are

currently living. This lens will help me answer one of the sub questions in my study that considers how the socio-economic factors of township families impact on their support in maintaining their children's educational aspirations.

According to Yosso (2005:80) **navigational capital** refers to skills that enable students to develop individual agency in response to the constraints that they face in their endeavours to be successful in their community and schooling contexts. Navigational capital refers to the students' ability to find ways to "sustain high levels of achievements, despite the presence of stressful events and conditions that place them at risk of doing poorly at school and, ultimately, dropping out of school" (Yosso 2005:80).

According to Yosso (2005:79) **familial capital** refers to the cultural knowledge developed among families – siblings, aunts, uncles, friends and grandparents etc.- that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition. Moreover, she states that familial capital is nurtured by our 'extended family'. This form of capital will help me analyse how healthy connections are maintained and available resources utilised within the impoverished families.

**Social capital** can be understood as networks of people and community resources (Yosso, 2005:79). These peer and community contacts can provide both significant and emotional support to families to navigate through the complex dynamics of living in impoverished communities. For example, drawing on social contacts and community resources may help a student to engage with individuals and community based organisations about admissions and selection processes at a high school or a tertiary institution. These networks may help a student in preparing a scholarship application, while also reassuring the student emotionally that they are not alone in the process of pursuing quality education.

Scholars note that historically, 'people of colour' have utilised their social capital to attain education, legal justice, employment and health care. In turn, these 'communities of colour' gave the information and resources they gained through these institutions back to their social networks.

Yosso defines **resistant capital** as those knowledge and skills that are fostered through oppositional behaviour that challenge inequality (2005:80). This form of

cultural wealth is grounded in the legacy of resistance to subordination exhibited by communities of colour.

**Linguistic capital** includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style (Yosso, 2005:78). Linguistic capital reveals the idea that working class children arrive at school with multiple language and communication skills. In addition, these children have often been in the tradition of oral storytelling that includes listening to and recounting oral histories, parables, stories and proverbs.

In order to understand how families navigate the space of their domestic environment in order to support their children's education, I will use both Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital theory and combine it with Yosso's (2005) notion of CCW that proffers alternative forms of capital. For the purposes of this study I will however, only be focusing on four of Yosso's forms of CCW capital, namely; aspirational, familial, social and linguistic capital, as these are most relevant to my study.

This framework will offer a perspective on the socio-economic positioning of the children in their family context, the educational support these families provide and how the children mobilise social networks and other forms of capital to maximise their chances of attending and staying at school. This thesis uses Yosso's (2005) CCW model because it shifts the view of the domestic practices of township families from a deficit perspective to highlighting these practices as assets that working class families acquire, and which hold the potential of supporting their children's education. It further provides a helpful guiding lens that can inform my study.

To sum up, this section has provided the conceptual framework of this study. The study will employ Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital and will extend it to include Yosso's (2005) notion of CCW. The focus of this study is to examine and bring into view the domestic practices of township families that support their children's education.

## **Chapter 3: Research methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the methodological aspects that relate to my study. It offers a rationale for adopting a qualitative method and the use of observations and semi-structured interviews as the most appropriate research design for answering the research question. I introduce the chapter with a brief overview of the methodological paradigm underpinning my study and provide an explanation of the research design, methods and sampling procedure used in the study. The processes of data analysis, presentation and data interpretation are also discussed. Finally, the chapter deals with aspects of ethical considerations pertaining to the study.

### **3.2. Methodological paradigm**

My study is situated in a qualitative interpretive methodological paradigm. Adopting an interpretive qualitative approach, and using a sociological and narrative lens, allowed me to construct data, regarding the dynamics of township families' domestic practices, in supporting their children's schooling. Qualitative research "uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings" (Golafshani, 2003:601). Denzin and Lincoln (2003) note that it is the context-specific nature of qualitative research that lends itself to an understanding of the subject matter at hand. Newby (2010:46) argues that in the qualitative paradigm relationships, character, emotions and all the other ways that we live our lives and express ourselves are all legitimate sources of information that can be used to make sense of the world. This approach therefore enabled me to explore and understand the experiences and perceptions of the four families from their own perspectives, and to avoid normative assumptions and value judgements during the course of the research interviews.

The strength of qualitative research derives primarily from its inductive approach, its focus on specific situations or people and its emphasis on words rather than numbers (Maxwell, 1992). It should however be noted that studies based on perspectives, such as studies situated in the qualitative research paradigm, are, by their very nature, highly subjective, and thus all forms of generalisability should be approached with caution when considering issues pertaining to the validity of the study (Maxwell, 1992).

### **3.3. Research design**

The purpose of education research is to answer questions about educational issues. Some even argue that the aim of research is to inform or improve either policy or practice (Newby, 2010: 28). In essence, the reasons for doing research in education are often summarized in three categories.

Firstly, educational research aims to explore issues. This means exploring a situation in response to a particular question posed. For example, my study seeks to understand how the domestic practices of township families accumulate capitals that provide support for their children's schooling. Thus, I seek to examine how domestic practises of township families support children's schooling. Secondly, educational research attempts to shape policy. It is often argued that the data collected during research can play a useful role in helping with the construction of policy and the provision of evidence that can inform policy decisions, directions, and 'judgements'. Thirdly, educational research aims to improve practice. It is suggested that research, when conducted properly, can help improve practice which in turn holds the potential to improve the educational lives of people and their communities (Newby, 2010: 28). The next section discusses the methods that I used to collect data.

### **3.4. Methods**

#### **3.4.1. Semi-structured interviews**

Interviews are the dominant method of data collection in qualitative research. It enables the researcher to gather information and understanding through direct interchange with an individual that has been identified as possessing the knowledge the researcher is seeking (Greeff 2011:342). This can also be regarded as a social relationship designed to exchange information between participant and the researcher. Greeff defines the qualitative interview as "attempt to understand the world from the participants' point of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations" (2011:342).

There are different types of one-on-one interviews, such as unstructured, semi-structured and ethnographic interviews. In response to my research question, I made use of semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are defined as an organised method of obtaining information of a particular interest, while allowing

considerable flexibility in scope and depth (Greeff, 2011:348). Semi-structured interviews are a useful qualitative research tool for two reasons. The first is that this form of interviewing allows for the interviewer to use a set of interview questions to obtain the information from the participants, while at the same time being able to deviate from the interview schedule and explore in depth new information that arises during the course of the interview (Partington, 2001). This interview format enables one to obtain rich and descriptive life world experiences and practices of the research participants (Kvale 1996; Silverman, 2010). The advantages of this type of interview is that it is adaptable and flexible, allowing the interviewer freedom to change or adapt the wording of questions, to leave out inappropriate questions or include additional exploratory questions based on the “interviewer’s perception of what is most appropriate” (Robson, 2002:270). The semi-structured design allows the interviewer to create an interactive conversation and lets interviewees feel safe and secure in sharing their feelings and experiences, giving the interviewer “privileged access to the subject’s lived world” Kvale (1996:125). In addition an interview schedule provides guidance for the conversation and allows the data collection to occur systematically allowing greater comparability during data analysis Robson (2002).

The questions, as a series of carefully formulated open-ended questions, are designed as a guide to facilitate discussion around the interview topic. For the purpose of the interviews for this research, the interview schedule was based on a series of probing questions that were arranged in different categories that allowed me to explore the domestic practices of the families interviewed. As each family’s narrative was different, the range of questions in the interview schedule enabled me to explore different aspects of the family’s domestic practices while staying within specific categories in order that I could later categorise the data in themes for my data presentation and analysis chapters.

My interview schedule comprised of two parts: firstly, a set of probing questions requesting basic demographic information such as family living circumstances, family structure, employment and educational attainment; followed by a range of open-ended questions informed by Bourdieu’s theoretical concepts of cultural capital and Yosso’s forms of capital designed to elicit rich responses regarding the domestic

practices of the families (Young & McLeod, 2001). My questions explored four broad categories: familial, social, linguistic and aspirational capitals.

The interviews were conducted in the families' language of preference and at a time that was convenient for each of them. Audio tape recording (and their transcriptions) was used to construct data. The interviews were transcribed by myself immediately after each interview which gave me familiarity with the stories that emerged.

Semi-structured interviews generally take place in a setting that allows the interviewee the opportunity to observe the participant and in this way the process enables the researcher to gain insight into what the interviewees say and what they do not say (Black 1994). This allows the researcher to contextualise the responses of the interviewees to the questions as well as the 'considered reflections' (Addison, 2007:90). This process was particularly apt for the interviews that I conducted as these took place in the homes of the families and during the time I spent with the participants I was able to observe how everyday life played out in their homes within the township context.

### **3.4.2. Observations**

In order to understand the domestic support practices of township families I used observation and interview methods. Maree (2010:84) states that observation helps the researcher to gain insight into the practical process and understanding the phenomenon, as well as become part of the daily routine of respondents. I used this method to gain understanding about, and insight into, the behaviour and experience of the participants, which assisted me to understand how domestic practices of township families build cultural capital.

Participant observation provided me with an understanding of how the families selected for this study live their lives and support their children's education. This approach afforded me a type of close-up access to the families in order to observe their family-based practices in support of their children's education. According to Thomas (2003:60) gathering information by means of observation involves watching and listening to events and then recording what occurred. One key advantage of the method of observations is that it provides access to the naturalistic practices and dynamics as they occur. During the research process, which took place over a three

month period, I wrote summative and reflective notes about my observations immediately after I completed my interview and observation sessions in each family's home..

### **3.5. Sampling procedure**

In this section I discuss the sampling methods that I used to gain access to the families and to select participants for the purpose of this study. Strydom and Delport (2011:392) propose seven types of sampling procedures found in qualitative research. They include the following: purposeful, theoretical, snowball, sequential, deviant case, key informant and volunteer sampling.

I chose purposeful sampling as I specifically wanted to interview the families of Grade 6 children who were achieving average results at a school in a township community in the Western Cape. I chose a school which was within a similar community and proximity to the school where I am currently a school principal, as this not only afforded me ease of access, but also an understanding of the area in which the school and the families lived. The participants for the study were chosen by the principal of the school after I contacted him and explained the parameters of my research study.

### **3.6. Data analysis**

As Graziano and Raulin (2010:38) explain, data analysis is a process of analysing and interpreting data to make meaning of it. For the analysis of the interview data I used descriptive and explanation building methods to describe the cultural capital the families in impoverished circumstances draw on to support their children's schooling. Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, supported by the themes provided by Yosso's (2005) notion of CCW, were used as the themes to describe the forms of capitals that are nurtured in impoverished families and that provide support for their children's education. Using these themes, I then used a narrative approach to present the data from my interviews and observations with the families.

The narrative approach is not only an accepted mode of presenting qualitative research, it is also the most appropriate for this research study as it relays the lived experiences and practices of the four families in their support of their children's schooling. Connelly and Clandinin describe the narrative approach as

... the study of how humans make meaning of experience by endlessly telling and retelling stories about themselves that both refigure the past and create purpose in future. Deliberating storying and restorying one's life or a group or a cultural story is therefore a fundamental method of personal growth and social growth: it is a fundamental quality of education (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990:24).

Narrative inquiry as conceptualised by Connelly and Clandinin, is a process of data collection, narrative interpretation by the researcher, combined with more data collection and further narrative reconstruction. In order therefore to construct the rich narratives of my four families over three month period on four separate occasions. Thus the construction of the four narratives in the thesis is based on my observations, informal discussions, and semi-structured interviews with the four families.

### **3.7. Ethical considerations**

The issue of protecting the rights of participants in a study is very sensitive and special efforts have to be made to protect the rights of those who are vulnerable. I obtained consent and approval from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) to allow me access to the school where the four children are currently studying. The principal of the school identified four suitable students for the study and provided me with permission to contact the four families from the school. I then approach the four children's families who would take part in my study and obtained their permission to be part of the research process. I did not need permission from the children themselves as they did not form part of the research study. Once the families had agreed to be part of my research study I completed the necessary ethical clearance documents from the university and applied for ethical consent by the university to carry out my research study.

Audio tape recordings were used in all interviews with permission of the participants and the audio recordings were stored in a secure storage facility that was accessible only by the researcher and will be destroyed after successful completion of the thesis. Participants were assured that if they express discomfort with the audio recording, even after consenting, and the researcher would refrain from such recordings. The participants were also informed that they could withdraw from the

study at any time without giving an explanation. Pseudonyms were used throughout the data presentation in order that the privacy and anonymity of the participants was ensured. Participants in this research are informed that copies of the final thesis will be made available to them upon request after it has been assessed.

### **3.8. Conclusion**

In this chapter the research methodology, data collection processes and data analysis strategies used in the study were addressed. The reasons for the choice of sampling were given, and the advantages and disadvantages of the different research methods were discussed. The chapter concluded with the outlining of the ethical considerations and measures taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the research. The next chapter presents the data obtained through the study.

## **Chapter 4: Data presentation**

### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the data collected from the four selected township families. This data provides an overview of the domestic practices of the four families from impoverished home circumstances within Duduza Extension (pseudonym) township. What the data aims to illuminate are the learning support practices as a form of cultural capital that these families provide for Lizo, Duma, Phelo and Lizel (pseudonyms) that enables them to be average performers in their school learning. The data was obtained from semi-structured interviews and home observations. In the first section I provide an overview of the history and living circumstances of Duduza Extension, followed by a descriptive narrative of the four families and their home circumstances.

### **4.2. Duduza Township**

#### **4.2.1. Township context**

My study is situated in working class family homes in the township of Duduza Extension (pseudonym). Duduza Extension is one of six sections which form the township of Duduza. According to the 2011 census, Duduza has a population of 45 000 with 10 520 households (Statistics South Africa, 2011). A household is defined by Statistics South Africa as “a group of persons who live together, and provide for themselves jointly with food or other essentials for living, or a single person who lives alone.” (2011)

Duduza Extension was established in 2004 as part of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) in housing to accommodate families from nearby informal settlements. The beneficiaries of the houses in Duduza Extension were coloured and black African families who were either unemployed or earning less than R3 500 per month. These families were moved from an informal settlement approximately 20 km away, into this township as part of an integrated housing relocation process by the Western Cape Housing Department. The RDP houses that they were given have basic facilities such as electricity, sanitation and water. Duduza Extension is central to the main area of Duduza and is one of six other areas, each of which has approximately 3 000 houses, which make up Duduza Township.

The suburb of Duduza is part of the Integrated Housing Project (IHP) that was established with the aim of integrating coloured and black families from the surrounding informal settlements into a more formal sub-urban settlement. The demographic profile of the area according to the 2011 census comprises of a population that is 25.9% black Africans, 72.4% coloured and 1.4% which is Asian, white and other. The main aim of Duduza Extension and the IHP was to integrate the living together of black and coloured families in order to realise the dream of the 'rainbow nation'. Although this has taken place physically, it has not necessarily taken place socially.

Duduza Extension started with approximately 2 400 households in 2004 but over the past ten years has grown to approximately 10 000 households. According to the planning commission, each household has an average of two children and the settlement therefore provided schooling to accommodate 4 800 learners in 2004. In reality, however, each household includes extended family members who either stay temporarily or permanently, and realistically each household accommodates four to seven children. This has led to overcrowding in the schools provided for the area. Some learners have had to travel extended distances to attend school or have not been able to enrol in schools as the local school is full and the families do not have the funds to pay for transport for the children to attend schools elsewhere.

The initial schooling infra-structure to support Duduza Extension consisted of three primary schools and two high schools each of which was built to accommodate 1200 learners. Ten years later no further schools have been built and the schools have been forced to accommodate over 1 500 learners. This has led to serious overcrowding in all the schools. A primary and high school was built in the adjacent area in 2012 to accommodate the overflow from Duduza Extension, however this adjacent area has grown to a population of approximately 3 000 families and is unable to accommodate the additional learners from Duduza Extension.

The initial facilities for the suburb of Duduza central were expected to service all six extensions of Duduza. Included in this is also an informal settlement which has grown within Duduza and which consists of approximately 1 000 temporary houses. What has transpired is that this land, where the informal settlement has now been established, was demarcated for a new school building to service the growth in this

area. However, this land is now being used as temporary informal housing until additional RDP houses can be provided for these inhabitants. The government is therefore unable to build the much needed new school for the area.

The population of this township comprises of a population of black Africans, coloured and foreign nationals. This has resulted in a combination of isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English being spoken. The dominant language however has become English as most of the spaza shops are run by foreign nationals who use English as the medium of communication. This has tended to force the use of English amongst the population of the township. Foreign nationals are also not able to own RDP houses and therefore mostly rent backyard dwellings from black African and coloured families in the communities, which also forces the use of English as the medium of communication between the local home owners and the foreign nationals renting from them.

Many of the families in this township consist of large extended families living together. Most of the houses in this area are RDP houses which comprise of 25 square meters of living space. These small homes consist of two bedrooms, an open plan lounge and kitchen area and a bathroom which includes a toilet. Those who can afford it extend their house by adding on extra rooms to the existing brick building, or by adding a 'wendy house' (a small wooden structure) or shack dwelling at the back of the house which they then rent out for extra income.

Some of the home owners and families choose not to stay in their houses but to live in the informal dwelling at the back of the house and rent out the main house to bring in additional income for the family. Families might also choose to combine living conditions with another family member in order to rent out one of their homes for additional income. Some families also choose to sell their houses in order to receive a cash payment from the sale of the house.

The area in which these families live can be described as an impoverished township environment with a myriad of social issues which impact directly on the children and youth of the area. These social dynamics which can be attributed in part to the overpopulation and unemployment in this township, can be described as unstable and include a high crime rate, extensive poverty, the lure of drugs, violence, gangs and school drop-out, to name but a few. Many families do not enjoy formal

employment and the unemployment rate in this area in 2011 was 37.9% (Statistics South Africa, 2011). Many families survive through informal small businesses like spaza shops, braaing (barbequing) and selling meat on the pavements, as well as the informal hawking of fruit and vegetables, sweets and chips. Others survive through illegal activities that include selling drugs, the running of shebeens<sup>3</sup> and house breaking.

To some extent Duduza is cut-off from the surrounding areas. Transport in this area is difficult as there are no trains which are the cheapest form of transport. Families who were relocated here find this problematic as the area which they were previously living in was on a main train line. The population of Duduza and Duduza Extension have to therefore rely on buses and taxis which are more expensive. This has been an on-going issue which is constantly raised by the community who are already struggling to afford basic living expenses. These families now find themselves having to spend significantly more money on transport if they work in areas outside of the township. This area also does not have a shopping mall or any small clustering of shops. This means that the entire population of Duduza needs to travel outside of the area in order to access banks, larger shops and other facilities, which in turn costs money. Families are therefore constrained by what is available to them within the township and most children attend their closest school as they have to walk daily to and from school. The average distance that children walk to school can be between 2-6 km.

I now turn to a discussion on the domestic practices of the four families which are the focus of my study. In this section I bring to view the complex ways in which the domestic practices of these four families, living within the constraints of the social conditions described above, support their children's education. Using Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and Yosso's extended forms of capitals found in low-income families I discuss the domestic practices that support the four children's educational practices.

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<sup>3</sup> Shebeens are places where alcohol is informally and usually illegally sold

### **4.3. Lizo's Family**

#### **4.3.1. Family information**

Lizo's family is originally from the Eastern Cape. They have lived in Duduza Extension for 3 years. I would describe Lizo's family as a stable family due to the fact that his parents are married and living together. There are four children in the family. Lizo, who is 13 years old, is the third child in the family, and is in Grade 7 at one of the local township schools.

Lizo's mother is unemployed and stays home. Her highest qualification is grade 11. After leaving school in 1994 she worked at Tygerberg restaurant before getting married a year later in 1995. Lizo's father studied in the Eastern Cape but dropped out of school at the end of grade 11. He then left the Eastern Cape and went to work in Johannesburg for two years and then moved to Cape Town in 1994 where he went back to school in order to complete grade 12. He was unable to study further as his family needed him to provide an income to support the rest of the family. He was able to obtain part time work as a laborer and casual worker. He currently works for a construction company on a contract basis earning R2 500 per month and is the sole breadwinner in the family. His contract will end at the end of 2016 and he is worried about what he will do next to provide an income for the family.

The family is dependent on child social grants which they receive for all four of their children and which provides an additional income of R1 200 per month. Lizo's mother is a member of a woman's savings society and saves R600 each month. In December the total savings for the year are paid out to each member by the society's executive and the family generally uses this money to pay for them to travel to the Eastern Cape to visit their family.

#### **4.3.2. Cultural capital**

Lizo's family reflects that, notwithstanding the challenges they face, they are making financial ends meet. Despite their current lack of economic capital, they draw on their resources from their own limited education, social networks within the township and extended family members to provide a form of cultural capital to support their children's learning in school.

The family has a television which is used to watch programmes that the father deems educational. The father has identified a particular television programme which Lizo and his father watch together and then discuss afterwards. This is a medical programme and has been instrumental in encouraging Lizo's interest in becoming a medical doctor. The parents have also bought the children English educational DVDs to support their learning.

Lizo's father helps his children occasionally with their homework. Lizo and his friends have also established a support homework group. His mother supports Lizo's school study group by creating space in their small home where the boys can meet together to discuss their studies and complete their homework. She notes:

*They don't want me to help them, they will prefer their father over me, I know it's because I'm not good at maths. But I don't worry about that; I support the group and just laugh at them. I decided to attend maths Saturday classes with him (Lizo), so that I can be capacitated to help him.*

Here Lizo's mother is referring to maths classes that are offered at Lizo's school by a tutor from the Leap (Langa Education Assistance Program) Science and Maths School who offers extra maths classes to the grade 7 learners at the school. The invitation was extended to the parents of the learners to join the classes in order that the parents can support their children's maths learning. The family pays R100 per month for these maths lessons. She states that she decided to attend the classes in order to capacitate herself to assist her children with their maths work. She notes that she found the classes very interesting as the way in which the lessons are conducted are very different to how she was taught in school and this has enabled her to begin to understand school maths work.

The support that this family provides for their children's school learning includes an emphasis on the importance of education.

*Myself and my wife we sit down with our children and tell them about how we struggled in our times and encourage them to attend and stay at school no matter what. I'm inspired by Lizo who seems to be understanding more than the others and he likes to lead the conversations, he reports everything, I think he listens and learns from us, one day he said: 'don't worry dad when*

*I'm old and done with my school I will come with my car and fetch this one to live with me in my big house', pointing to his little sister, 'I will just have to buy lot of food because she eats too much' (father).*

Lizo's parents also discussed what they feel is the importance of providing their children with a structured home life in order to assist them to become self-disciplined. They feel that this has supported Lizo to be successful in his school work:

*We have house rules here, we teach our children to obey them. For instance at 7 o' clock they know that everyone must be inside the house. Times to watch TV and going to bed are known by everyone. We are strict but fair, we love them and would like to see them successful in life (father).*

This practice is also regarded as important in ensuring that the children spend time with the family at home and go to bed at a reasonable time in order to be alert for school the following day. Lizo's parents say that they have put these rules in place because they want their children to focus on their school work and stay at home to avoid the bad influences and dangers associated with other young people in the township, in order that they might one day achieve the high hopes and dreams that they have for their children.

Lizo's parents feel that the home is the best place to transfer a cultural disposition of learning to their children. Understanding and valuing learning is important to the family and the parents assist Lizo to stay focused on his school work and recognise when he is in danger of being side-tracked. His parents believe in instilling the core values of trust and responsibility as attributes that they feel their children need to uphold. Examples of these values and attributes are the level of trust the parents have with their children regarding money. They describe how they feel comfortable to leave money at home for the children to buy groceries when needed. They state that the children will always keep the till slips and report on the amount of money spent. The parents also say that they never have to remind their children to do their homework or to be home from visiting friends at a particular time. The family rules also include specific chores for each child, the expectation that they keep their room clean and that they assist with general household chores such as dishes, ironing and

cleaning. The older children are also expected to assist the younger children by looking after them and helping them get ready for school.

Lizo's parents have also bought a computer to assist with their children's school work. They do not have internet connectivity at home, but Lizo does his research at school and then uses the computer to complete his work at home. The parents feel that the sacrifice they have made financially to provide a computer in the home has inspired Lizo to work hard at school. Regarding the literacy practices in the home, Lizo's parents describe him as a child who likes to write in English. I observed that there were books in the home for the children's use.

A continual worry for the parents is paying next year's school fees as Lizo is going to high school. He currently attends a no-fee school, however the high school which they would like him to attend due to his good results, is in Cape Town. The school is a fee-paying school and they are concerned regarding these costs. They will also have to budget for transport as the school is 30 km away from where they are living:

*I'm saving some of my little money for him, I am very worried because I wouldn't want him to stop due to not having money, I asked a friend of mine to get me forms for school in town that they say is good. This boy really needs a good school. But I and my wife are trying, given our limited resources. We must also save money to go to Eastern Cape. My mother is there and we go every December.*

#### **4.3.3. Aspirational capital**

The data from the interview with the family suggests that Lizo's parents have aspirations for his future career. In my discussion with them they described how they inspire their children by making reference to their family members who are successful. Lizo's father notes:

*I always tell my children that without education you won't get a nice job. Education is very important today (father).*

He also motivates his children by telling a story of his late brother who completed his studies at the University of the Western Cape and became a lawyer. His father also says that he constantly discusses his cousins with his children and describes how

their education enabled them to become successful and have well-paid jobs. What transpires in this family through these discussions is that the parents create a space for a discussion around the possibility of the children's successful future careers, providing them with aspirational pathways for their future achievement. As part of aspirational capital, Lizo's parents always point out role models to their children who are successful. Lizo has taken his father's constant reminders to work hard seriously and has decided that he wants to become a doctor. Lizo also notes that when he becomes a doctor one day he will use his money to buy his parents a car and provide everyone in the family with free medical care.

Lizo's father also uses his own life story to motivate his children in his struggle to attain a grade 12 certificate. He explains to his children that due to complex conditions in his upbringing he couldn't further his studies. He uses his current unpredictable work circumstances as an example to encourage them to value their education and study further after school in order to have a more stable career. "*I show them that life is easy with education*". (father) Here he makes reference to his late brother who was at University of the Western Cape (UWC) and studied law and was able to buy himself a Mercedes Benz as he had a well-paid job. Lizo's uncle also strongly motivates him and promises to buy him a cell phone when he passes. His uncle works as a security guard at Cape Town International airport. His uncle and father also place an emphasis on the importance of having good marks at school in order to get a bursary to pay for further studies, as Lizo's parents have told him that they are unable to financially afford to pay for his tertiary education.

#### **4.3.4. Familial capital**

Both of Lizo's parents take responsibility for supporting their children emotionally. They do this by spending time with the children in the home and doing things together as a family. They believe in constantly encouraging their children to do their best and congratulating them when they have achieved their goals. Lizo's father in particular likes to spend time with Lizo reminding him about the importance of his education and studying hard. They feel that this has been instrumental for Lizo staying on track in his school work as he does not want to let his father down.

Lizo's grandmother visits regularly from the Eastern Cape and spends time with the children telling them stories about the family. This form of oral storytelling, as a form

of familial support, provides the children with an oral history of the family and an understanding of the grandmother's own struggles to look after, educate and support her children (Lizo's father). She uses these stories to encourage the children to study hard at school to get a good education in order that they may have better job prospects in the future. The grandmother also plays a role in encouraging a form of intrinsic motivation in the children by complimenting them on their school success and the manner in which they support their parents by performing their house chores in the home. The parents say that when the grandmother visits the children all compete to make coffee for her and take it to her in the morning in order to receive her blessing.

#### **4.3.5. Social capital**

Lizo and his mother attend and are involved in the local church. They both sing in the church choir. Lizo is also involved in the local soccer club and has won trophies. His father always makes time to watch his games and encourages his involvement in the club. The parents make a point of saving money to buy him the necessary soccer equipment that he needs.

Lizo also has a maths tutor on a Sunday who assists him with his maths work. The tutor is a friend of Lizo's mother who is studying at the Cape Technikon. This tutor can be regarded as a form of social capital as his mother has been able to use her social network to provide extra maths support for Lizo.

Lizo has two close friends, one who is foreign national who he speaks English to, and one who is a coloured boy who speaks Afrikaans. As all three boys are friends they communicate in English to each other. This social network also links to linguistic capital as Lizo has become tri-lingual as a result of his friends. This use of English as a social communication tool has also strongly supported his learning in English at the school.

#### **4.3.6. Linguistic capital**

Lizo's parents make every effort to support the use of English as a means to communicate and support Lizo's school work. They have encouraged his diverse friendships as they have positively supported his acquisition of English and Afrikaans. Furthermore his parents feel that these peer networks have provided Lizo

with positive friendships that have contributed to his overall strong academic performance at school. His mother has supported Lizo's peer group by providing space in their home where the boys are able to complete their homework together in the afternoons. One of Lizo's friends is unable to speak isiXhosa or Afrikaans and the homework and friend discussions therefore all take place in English which has supported Lizo's speaking and learning in English.

Lizo's parents also encourage their children to watch English programmes on TV and follow up the programme by debating what they have watched. If they are unable to agree when they are debating Lizo offers to do research on what they were discussing at school the next day and then returns home with the information for further discussion with the family. His father states that these family discussions provide the children with an understanding as to how to take part productively in school discussions and debates: *"These debates give the children the foundation to use to help them when they have an argument at school"* (father).

#### **4.4. Duma's Family**

##### **4.4.1. Family information**

Duma's family is originally from Guguletu in the Cape Flats. His parents were born and raised in Guguletu. Guguletu is considered a formal housing settlement, in that it was a planned housing development. The formal housing within Guguletu, however, also contains informal backyard dwelling structures which individuals or families rent from the owners of the formal houses. It was in one of these backyard informal dwelling structures that Duma's family lived before moving to Duduza extension seven years ago. At that stage Duma's father was unemployed and therefore was eligible to register with the city of Cape Town's Department of Housing to apply for a RDP house in Duduza Extension.

Duma's parents divorced five years ago and Duma remained living with his father in the RDP house in Duduza Extension that the family was allocated. His mother stays with her relatives in the same area which enables Duma to visit his mother regularly. Duma's father later re-married and his step-mother and their five year son live together with Duma and Duma's cousin who is 17 years old and completing Grade 11 at one of the local schools in the area. His cousin assists him with his homework.

Duma's father currently works at a newspaper company in Cape Town (which is approximately 30 km from Duduza Extension) as a packer and distributor. Duma's father needs to take two taxis in order to get from Duduza Extension to his place of work in Cape Town. This is both a costly and time-consuming arrangement and he leaves the house at approximately five o'clock in the morning to arrive at work on time. Duma's father does own an old car, which he at times uses to go to work, however the car is unreliable and is currently not working.

During his spare time and over weekends Duma's father runs a small business to supplement his wages from his job at the newspaper company. He owns an industrial cutting machine (such as is found in butcher shops) which he uses to cut up sheep that have been slaughtered for events in the township. Duma's step-mother works as a cashier at a local supermarket chain store in an area approximately 15 km from where the family stays. She works a full day leaving early in the morning and arriving home late, taking a taxi to and from her place of work.

This family's source of income is from both parent's minimum wages and the small business that the father runs from their home in the evenings and over the weekends. Compared to the other families in this study, this family is the most economically stable. Duma's family is also part of a joint informal savings group that saves a portion of money each month in order to have a lump sum amount paid out at the end of the year. During my time in the home interviewing the parents, I also observed that the father lends money to local people. I didn't formally discuss this with the parents but observed a transaction taking place. During my visit with the family a woman came to the house requesting to borrow money. The father took a black book which was lying to one side where we were sitting and recorded her name, the amount she was borrowing and the amount that would be repaid as well as the date of repayment. This form of informal money lending in township contexts is a regular occurrence as many people do not qualify to borrow money from the bank due them having temporary jobs, or because they do not have pay slips which would allow them to borrow money from the bank.

#### **4.4.2. Cultural capital**

Duma's father's educational level, current occupation and small business provides him with an array of cultural capital which assists to support his family and children's

education in various ways. After completing his matric he enrolled at a college in Cape Town to complete a journalism diploma. He did not, however, complete the diploma, dropping out in his second year of studying. For a year he then ran his own business selling shoes and clothes from home, before starting to work at a newspaper where he has been working for the past ten years.

Duma's father had made an effort to build a relationship with his son and sees this as a way in which he supports Duma's schooling. He also uses this relationship to ensure that Duma is not involved in possible negative influences from the community in which they live.

*I help him with homework, I ask him about his school work every day. We often sit here and talk about the importance of attending school, he is my friend too. We talk about everything and anything. (Duma's father)*

Financially, Duma's father is able to provide for most of Duma's educational needs as well as his physical needs such as clothes, food and shelter. Although the family lives in a basic RDP three-roomed house, the family has been able to afford to extend the house and have built on a garage and two extra rooms. This has enabled Duma to have his own bedroom that provides him with personal space as well space to complete his school work away from the busyness of the rest of the family. His father has also bought him educational DVDs and he has his own desktop computer and a range of educational games. The family does not have internet in the home but the parents purchase data for their cell phones so that he can have internet access for school research. Duma's father also believes in using rewards to motivate Duma in his school work. He has given Duma his own music system as motivation to do well in his school work and notes that *"last year I bought him a bicycle as a reward for passing at school"* (father).

Duma is also a keen cricket player and his father has bought him his own cricket set so that he can play with his friends on the nearby open field. Duma's father describes himself as very supportive of his son's education. He makes an effort to encourage his son to value his schooling and do well in his studies. He ensures that Duma has everything he needs for school stating that:

*Every day I give him money to carry at school though he has lunch, I don't want my child to steal from other children. He knows since lower grades I give money according to the grade he is. For instance what I mean by this is that when he was in grade 5 he got R5 to carry and in grade 6 I increased it to R6 daily. I also pay for his school needs every year, buy him school uniform early. I don't want my child to feel inferior at school. I want him to achieve in school. I also pay for all the school educational excursions so that he doesn't miss out any opportunity (father).*

Duma's father also ensures that he attends all school parents meetings, and if he can't attend Duma's step-mother goes to the meetings. Duma's step-mother has a matric and is supportive of Duma's studies. The father says that Duma's step-mother's level of education (a grade 12 certificate) has been helpful in assisting Duma with his schoolwork when needed. Duma's father describes the relationship between Duma and his step-mother as very good.

The family also has DSTV (satellite television). The father states that he watches TV together with Duma and guides his son as to which programmes he is allowed to watch. They often spend time discussing what they have watched together. Duma's father also noted that Duma and him watch a lot of sport together on DSTV. The father says that they sometimes watch TV together until late, but he does not allow his son to watch any TV programmes with PG ratings higher than his age level.

#### **4.4.3. Aspirational capital**

The data from the interviews with the parents suggest that Duma is inspired by his father's constant motivation. He tells Duma that he enjoyed academic competition whilst he was at school and encourages Duma to be academically competitive amongst his peers. Duma's father was also involved in sport at school and describes himself as competitive in his sporting activities. He even noted that he was competitive in the way he dressed stating that it is important not only what one does, but also in how one presents oneself.

Duma's father's parents passed away whilst he was still young and his father's elder sister took on the role of parenting Duma's father as a young boy. Duma's father's sister now acts as a grandparent to Duma.

Duma's father also regularly shares the story of his own survival under very trying financial and family circumstances with Duma as a way of motivating him. He tells him how hard he had to work to get through school and enrol in tertiary studies. He uses his own life story as a way of encouraging Duma to keep going when it is difficult saying, *"I don't want my child to grow up suffering; I do everything in my power to provide for him. I would like to see him finishing school and becoming something in future"* (father).

Both Duma's father and step-mother have high expectations for Duma and have hopes and dreams about his success in life. They describe Duma as *"an intelligent and humble boy. We all get along with him, and we share things together"* (father). This level of expectation and belief in his ability to achieve motivates him to work hard as he doesn't want to disappoint his parents.

Duma's father has made an effort to expose the family to experiences that have broadened their view of the world beyond the community in which they live. This has involved them going on family outing and vacations, going to museums with his father and eating out in restaurants.

*Every holiday I take them out for a lunch or dinner at a Spur, or any restaurant of their choice ... sometimes we go to Sea Point or the Waterfront ... I spend a lot of my time reading with him when I'm not busy with my other business. Yes I make time* (father).

#### **4.4.4. Familial capital**

Throughout the interview with Duma's father and step-mother it was apparent that Duma receives significant support from both parents. Duma's family could be described as a fairly close-knit family. They spend recreational time together and his parents say that they often go to movies together as a family. His step-mother takes pride in providing an emotionally supportive and warm environment within the home for the children and treats her step-children as her own. She mentioned during the interview that she always ensures that the children are neat, well-dressed and well-fed.

Duma's father plays a fatherhood role by teaching him manners and values.

*I stopped hanging out with friends and I don't drink nor smoke, I try to be an example to him ... I used to be a party animal though I didn't drink but I realised that won't be good for my son, so I stopped. Before his step mother came to live with us I bathed him, slept with him, and did everything for him. I didn't want him to feel the absence of his mother. I even took him to school. The challenge was that I had to leave very early for work and after school I was not there (father).*

Duma father and step-mother encourage him to stay in contact and visit his biological mother. His biological mother enjoys a good relationship with Duma and Duma's father says that when Duma visits his mother she always has small gifts for him which makes him feel special. Duma's biological mother has also ensured that he has stayed in contact with her family members so that he remains connected to his cousins, aunts and uncles from his biological mother's family. Duma's father states that he feels that it is important that his son knows and spends time with his biological mother and he therefore makes a point of ensuring that Duma visits her regularly. He also gives her the social grant money that he receives for Duma so that she is able to provide some financial support for him by buying him clothes, treats or things that he might want.

*I let him go to his mother because I don't want my son not to know his mother when I am no more. I even ask his mother to keep the social grant that my child is receiving so that when he visits she has got something that she can give to her child (father).*

Duma's cousin, who lives with the family, also plays a role in encouraging him and assisting him with his homework. She also encourages him to be competitive in his school work by always doing his homework and studying hard for his tests and exams. Duma has another cousin who is a successful lawyer. In the interview Duma's father described how he was a strong role model for this cousin and now in return Duma's cousin has become a role model for Duma. This cousin calls Duma regularly to check on his school progress and asks him every term to show him his school report. Duma doesn't like to disappoint his cousin, so he works hard at school. Duma's father notes that:

*I think my nephew wants to contribute to my son's education as a token of appreciation to me as I have played a strong role in his life. When he was naughty my sister will call me to talk to him. I even went to school meetings on his parent's behalf (father).*

Duma also visits his aunt who has a son who is a lawyer. His cousin speaks to Duma about becoming a lawyer one day. Duma is encouraged by his cousin's belief in his ability to become a lawyer and his father says that this has encouraged Duma to take his school work seriously. This cousin is a role model whom Duma looks up to.

#### **4.4.5. Social capital**

Duma's family encourages him to socialise with friends from the community. Duma enjoys playing with his friends in the neighbourhood and often invites his friends over to his house to play games with him. His father says that he also enjoys riding his bicycle or playing cricket with his friends. Duma plays sport at the local soccer club and attends the local Afrikaans church with the step mother. He is an active participant in children's activities at the church and spends most of the time at church on Sundays socialising with friends.

Duma also attends the school's Saturday maths classes offered by the LEAP school tutor. His father notes *"I don't push him to attend these maths classes, he's just interested. All I do is I wake him up for the maths classes on a Saturday"* (father).

Duma also at one stage played soccer for the local soccer club and went to the trials at the for Ajax Cape Town soccer club. He however no longer plays soccer as he is now interested in playing cricket. Duma's father says that he is willing to support his son's interests whatever they may be especially when he is involved in good healthy relationships with other boys in the neighbourhood.

#### **4.4.6. Linguistic capital**

Duma's father is tri-lingual and speaks English, IsiXhosa and Afrikaans. As a result he has encouraged Duma to become proficient in all three languages as well. The family speak both IsiXhosa and English at home and attending an Afrikaans church with his step mother has assisted him to become fluent in speaking Afrikaans as well.

Duma's father has aspirations for him to be a doctor and believes that proficiency in languages is necessary to be successful as a doctor. Duma's father has brought him TV games that support and enhance his competency in English. Duma's father also states that he believes strongly in the fact that you must read to your child and listen to them read in English if you want them to be strong in a language. He has done this since Duma was young and now Duma reads on his own without any supervision. His step mother also supports his English language proficiency by involving him in practical reading and writing opportunities such as writing the grocery list and writing regular letters to family members. According to Duma's father the family has a rich history of oral story-telling and the family spend time talking together and sharing oral history stories from the parent's childhoods or stories about extended family members:

*we talk about everything, my likes, role models and about adopting my life style ... I explain each and everything to him. We also discuss his school day and current events in his life and during these conversations he gets to tell us about his school activities, training and church (father).*

#### **4.5. Phelo's Family**

##### **4.5.1. Family information**

Phelo lives with his parents who are married with three children. They live in an RDP house in Duduza Extension. Unlike the other families discussed, this family has not extended their small house in any way. They mentioned that they would have liked to create additional living space but have not been able to afford building extensions or additional informal structures added on to the basic 3-roomed house. Phelo is the second eldest and is 13 years old. He has a brother in high school who is 16 and a younger sister who is 5 years old. His sister should be in pre-school but the family does not have enough money to send her to school and so she stays at home with her mother during the day.

This family can be described as a stable family structure as the parents are married and live together with the children. This family does not have any extended family members staying with them. The family is originally from the Eastern Cape. They moved from the Eastern Cape to Nyanga East on the Cape Flats and then relocated to Duduza Extension six years ago.

Phelo's father is the bread winner in the family. He works for a company as a security guard and is sent to different locations working the night shift. He earns approximately R3 000 per month. Phelo's mother stays at home and sews clothes which she sells to earn a small income to supplement her husband's salary. The parents describe the mother's business as seasonal saying that she sells most of her clothes only at the end of the year when people from the township have extra money to buy additional clothing. The family relies on the children's social grants to support the financial needs of the family.

Neither of the parents completed primary school and according to the mother (Phelo's father was not present for the first interview) both parents are illiterate and therefore unable to help Phelo with his school work. During my second interview the father indicated that although he attempts at times to assist Phelo with his homework, as Phelo is now in Grade 7, he is unable to assist him with any of his school work. He says that he cannot read or write English, and can only speak English. He also notes that he does not understand how the current school curriculum works and this means that he cannot support Phelo's school work. He does however make a point, as his way of supporting his son's schooling, to check each day if Phelo has homework and always encourages him to complete his homework before going out to socialize with his friends. Phelo's father says that Phelo is very self-motivated and will go to his room and complete his homework on his own without being reminded.

#### **4.5.2. Cultural capital**

The data collected during my interview with this family suggests that the family struggles financially and find it difficult to provide for all their children's needs. Phelo's father says that Phelo will at times refuse to go on school excursions as he knows that the family cannot afford the extra funds for the excursions. However, despite the family's impoverished circumstances, Phelo is performing academically well at school. His parents state that Phelo has developed a sense of responsibility for his school work and feel that the family conversations, which include discussions on how education can assist one to get out of poverty, have supported Phelo's motivation to achieve at school in order to provide financially for his family's future.

Despite the family's poor financial conditions, Phelo's parents have enrolled him for an English programme that is called The A+ English achiever that they heard about on the radio. Phelo's father enrolled him in the programme because he wanted to assist Phelo to improve his English in order to support his school work. The cost of the programme is R120 per month which Phelo's father paid via debit order over twelve months. The programme included a file of activities, a CD and a DVD with educational programmes as well as assignments for completion each month which were supposed to be collected from the child monthly by the organisation. This did not however take place and after following up on the company they discovered they were no longer operational although the debit order was still being taken out of their account. The father had to go to the bank to cancel the debit order and was disappointed that the programme did not work out as it had been expensive for him to pay.

Both parents feel that they are doing their best to provide every educational opportunity and advantage for their children. The father regularly monitors Phelo's schoolwork and emphasises that Phelo may not play video games or go to soccer practice until his homework is complete. As the father works night shifts he is able to meet with the principal and class teachers and attends school events and meetings which are held during the day. Phelo's father describes himself as an interested parent who makes a point to have a visible presence at his children's school. He also attends Phelo's soccer games and has built a relationship with Phelo by watching soccer on TV with him at home. Phelo's father also states that he prioritises time spent discussing his children's school work and activities with them. This practice sends a strong message about how much both parents value their children's education and choose to be involved as much as possible in their children's schooling.

#### **4.5.3. Aspirational capital**

According to Phelo's parents Phelo is inspired to work hard as he doesn't want to see his family suffering in poverty. He has vowed to attend and stay at school until he finishes and gets a good job that will pay him well so that he can take his family out of poverty. Both parents encourage his high expectations by supporting him in

his endeavours to attend school and work hard. They regularly discuss education, careers and interests with him to keep his aspirations alive. Phelo's father notes:

*We motivate him all the time, he understands we don't have money. I talk to him about how staying in school will help him get a good job and get more money. I ask him about his studies and motivate him. His September report was no good. I check the report and discuss it with him.*

His parents believe that this constant motivation and interest in Phelo's schooling by his parents provides him with the inspiration to study hard and not disappoint his parents. This has helped him to work hard and perform well at school. According to his parents Phelo would like to become an engineer and dreams of buying a big house and a nice car. His parents state that they would like him to be a doctor.

#### **4.5.4. Familial capital**

Phelo's family presents as a stable but fairly impoverished family unit. As Phelo's father is the sole provider for the family of five, Phelo's parents struggle to provide for any additional costs involved in Phelo's schooling. An example of this would be the cost of school outings and camps. It is here where Phelo's uncle and aunt who are not married, Phelo's mothers' brother and sister, have involved themselves, by assisting the family to pay for these additional educational excursions. Phelo's uncle and aunt receive the minimum wage as farm workers, but have managed to support the family by paying for Phelo to attend the school camp at a cost of R600. Phelo originally said that he didn't want to go on the camp as he knew that his parents could not afford the cost of the camp. His aunt and uncle chose to pay the camp fee in order that Phelo could attend the school camp with his friends.

Besides this aunt and uncle there are no other family members who support this family. Phelo's grandmother lives in the Eastern Cape and they see her during the December holidays when the family visits her. This family, unlike the previous two families discussed, are unable to make reference to a successful family member, to support their son's aspirations.

#### 4.5.5. Social capital

Phelo's parents have made an effort to expose him to cultural activities such as visiting the local library. Phelo's father assisted him to register and acquire a library card. Phelo goes on his own to the library which is approximately 3-4 km from where they live. As a result of the distance from their home to the library Phelo does not go often to the library but his parents say that having access to this resource is very useful when he is given a school task that requires him to access extra information.

The family does not have a computer or access to internet. The parents do have cell phones which they allow him to use to access the internet. However the parents say that Phelo tends to use the cell phone to download music which he really likes.

Phelo plays soccer at the local club after school. He also attends the local community church. None of the other family members attend the church and Phelo goes to church on his own. His father states that: *"we allow him to go alone to these programmes because I think they keep him busy so that he cannot be involved in criminal activities. The church is teaching them good values"* (father).

As a form of social capital Phelo's father has taken the time to invest in building a relationship between himself, the school principal and the chairman of the school board of governors (SGB) and the teachers at the school. As he works night shifts he uses time which he has during the day to visit and talk to these key educational role players. Phelo's father told me about a situation where Phelo was being recruited by other boys at the school to join an emerging young group of gangsters<sup>4</sup>. Due to his father's cultivated friendship with the school principal and SGB chairman, Phelo was scared to join the gang as he knew that if the principal or SGB chairman found out that he had joined the gang, they would tell his father. Phelo's father explains his relationship with the school principal and what happened:

*I went to the school and told the principal and teachers that if my son is involved in these groups they must let me know. When I heard that they were starting a group of 'gorants' I also went to the families of other boys who were*

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<sup>4</sup> The young boys in township schools are recruited as 'gorants' (young emerging gang members) by the older townships boys who are part of township gangs. These older boys recruit the younger boys and begin to train them up as gang members in order that they can later join the township gangs.

*starting the 'gorants' and told them that my son could not be part of that (father).*

In this way Phelo's father was able to use social capital that he had nurtured to protect his child from involvement in an emerging gang situation. Phelo's father said that after he had met with the principal and visited the other boys' families, Phelo was able to avoid being drawn into bad influences and dangers associated with these gang and illegal activities in the township context.

#### **4.5.6. Linguistic capital**

Phelo's parents do not feel that they are able to assist Phelo with acquiring or improving his English reading and speaking skills. They therefore encourage him to listen to English radio programmes or watch English television programmes. The family also has English music CDs and DVDs that they use to support the development of Phelo's language skills. Phelo's father notes: "*We speak IsiXhosa most of the time here at home but we encourage them to practice English as he must speak and use it for learning at school*". Phelos' parents speak mainly IsiXhosa and are able to understand read and write only very basic English. Phelo however, is bilingual and is able to read, write and speak both English and IsiXhosa.

### **4.6. Lizel's Family**

#### **4.6.1. Family information**

Lizel stays with her mother and younger sister. Lizel's mother was 18 years old when Lizel was born. She had to drop out of school before completing her grade 12 examination but went back the following year to complete her grade 12 certificate. Lizel's father has not been involved in Lizel's life at all as he was arrested shortly after she was born. Lizel's mother became emotional when she discussed her husband and says that he was involved in illegal activities which involved other women when he was arrested. He currently serves a 35 year sentence for armed robbery.

Lizel's mother is currently unemployed. Since leaving school she has had temporary work as a domestic cleaner and also work as a shop cashier. Lizel and her mother and sister have lived in Duduza Extension for the past six years. They moved from a

backyard dwelling attached to their grandmother's house in an area about 5 km away from Duduza Extension, to the RDP house where they currently live.

They survive off the children's social grants and any temporary work that Lizel's mother is able to secure from time to time. A local minister and his wife (discussed below) have also been involved in assisting with the family's financial situation.

Lizel's grandmother lives close to them and Lizel visits and stays with her grandmother often on the weekend. Lizel's father's family also stays close by (approximately 5 km away) and Lizel also visits them. Lizel's mother doesn't like her visiting them as she feels that they are a bad influence on Lizel, so she does not allow her to stay overnight with them.

At the time that I visited the family they had two visitors staying with them. The couple was from a local church that is based in a neighbouring township area approximately 5 km from Duduza Extension. The husband is the founder and local minister of the church and came to know Lizel's mother when they were expanding their ministry to Duduza township in 2004. The husband also involves himself in prison ministries and there he met Lizel's father. During my interview with Lizel's mother the minister explained why he had chosen to support Lizel's mother:

*I intervened in their life because my aim is to provide support to parents. She is a single mum and she needs a lot of support and she is young so she can't go on alone. That is why we advised her to go back to school" (minister).*

The minister and his wife have been involved in supporting this family, as almost extended family members, for over a year. Lizel's mother says that the minister and his wife often stay with them in the house and cook and provide food for the family. The minister has continued to visit the father in prison and encourages Lizel's mother and the children to stay in contact with their father while he is in prison.

#### **4.6.2. Cultural capital**

Lizel's mother completed her grade 12 schooling but did not study further. This level of education has enabled her to assist her children with their school work. The mother is currently studying electrical engineering at a Further Education and Training (FET) college. She was encouraged by the minister and his wife to consider

studying further and has been enrolled in the college since last year. She is currently in her second year of studying. She describes the role that the minister and his wife have played in encouraging her to study further:

*They are like my family, they encouraged me to do this and supported me emotionally, and when I didn't know what to do, they provided counseling and I'm now strong and motivated (mother).*

This family owns a television and has DSTV. Lizel's mother says that she saves her money and prioritises things for the house. I observed that the house was extremely neat and well looked after and it appeared that she must have access to other sources of income although she did not mention them and I did not feel comfortable to explicitly enquire as to how she could afford the items that were evident in the home during my visit.

#### **4.6.3. Aspirational capital**

This young single mother has high educational expectations for her children, particularly in mathematics. She has enrolled her for extra mathematics classes on Saturdays at Lizel's school. The classes cost of R100 per month. She hopes these classes will assist her to support her child in her school maths. She has aspirations for her child to gain admission into the LEAP school of science and mathematics. She notes: *"I encourage my children everyday about the importance of education"* (mother). Lizel's mother also feels that it is important to spend time with her children and says that she makes the effort to spend most of her time with her children when they are at home, *"we talk about stuff, and we do some house chores together"* (mother).

#### **4.6.4. Familial capital**

During my interview with Lizel's mother it was clear that she felt strongly about supporting her children emotionally and educationally to provide opportunities for them that she did not have. She has provided a space for them where they can do their school homework and study for their tests and examinations. She also believes that her own studying has provided a form of inspiration for them in their own school studying:

*I talk to my children about our situation and often tell them my story as a way of encouraging them to take education seriously. I tell her that she must look up to me, like now I'm studying because I struggled a lot and need to change my situation (mother).*

The minister and his wife spend significant time with Lizel's mother and the children and have become in essence part of their extended family. Lizel's mother says that they are strong sources of educational aspiration and provide a focused sense of moral and spiritual guidance for the family. Part of the support that they provide according to Lizel's mother is to encourage the family, provide additional advice in times of difficulty, the telling of stories about family life, praying together, reading the bible and maintaining a connection to the father who is in prison.

Lizel's maternal grandmother also shows a keen interest in Lizel's schooling and always asks about her studies and encourages Lizel to keep working hard in her school work. As she visits her grandmother often over the weekends, this has become a strong form of family support for Lizel.

#### **4.6.5. Social capital**

For Lizel and her family the church and the minister and his wife have provided a network of support. Although not explicitly stated in the interview it appears that the minister and his wife provide the necessary financial support for Lizel's schooling as well as Lizel's mother's tertiary education which she is currently completing. The minister did state during the interview that he buys food and electricity for the family. This couple's financial support also appears to extend to affording the family the means to live fairly comfortably. Of all four families that I visited, the interior and exterior of this house presented as the neatest and most well maintained. Displayed on the walls of the house were all Lizel's school and church certificates, achievements and awards, and the minister referred me to these to show how well Lizel was doing. The house was nicely painted inside and outside and stood out in its difference among the surrounding poverty in which the house is situated.

As a form of network support, Lizel's mother also mentioned the role that the church has played in providing spiritual support to her family. Lizel's mother also mentioned a woman's prayer meeting that meet every Saturday evening that she attends and

noted that this group keeps her focused on her own spiritual growth and away from possible negative influences in the township on a Saturday evening as a young and single mother. Lizel's mother also expressed the important role that she feels the church plays in providing the correct values for Lizel through her involvement in church activities.

As a further form of social network support Lizel's mother states that the mathematics support group that Lizel attends each Saturday at the school has also been instrumental in providing support for her mathematics skills development. Lizel has also formed a study group with friends, where they assist each other with their school homework and learning for tests and exams.

Lizel's mother has also drawn on social contacts from the church that assisted her to find the relevant information regarding the FET colleges and courses, enabling her to enrol for her further studies. Lizel's mother also told me that when she arrived to register at the FET college she was told that the course was full and only those who paid the money up front on the day would be allowed to register. She did not have the money but was able to elicit support from a lecturer who paid the amount of R260 for her to register. She was then able to access the money through her church social network in order to pay the lecturer the money back.

#### **4.6.6. Linguistic capital**

Unlike the other three IsiXhosa black African families that I interviewed for my research, Lizel's family is the only coloured family. Their home language is Afrikaans, although they speak predominantly English in the home. This can be attributed to a number of factors namely; the church services that they attend take place mainly in English, the minister and his wife interact with the family in English, and Lizel's mother's studies take place in English. Thus the mode of communication in this home has provided a domestic practice which has supported Lizel's school learning. Lizel can also speak and understand limited IsiXhosa which she has picked up from school and her younger sister's friends who are IsiXhosa speaking.

#### **4.7. Conclusion**

To sum up this chapter has contextualised Duduza Extension within township living in the Western Cape. By describing the uniqueness of this particular township

environment as it was established to integrate black African and coloured families, I have presented an understanding of the complex ways in which the domestic practices of these families play out. Furthermore, I presented the harsh living conditions of this township and how the nature of family's livelihoods contributes towards the domestic practices that provide capitals that support their children's education.

This chapter has used Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and Yosso's notion of community cultural wealth in order to provide categories for a descriptive narrative of the capitals found in the domestic practices of working class families in a township context that support the learning of their children. What the data suggests is that the domestic practices of the four families interviewed, provide forms of capital that their children draw on in their school learning despite living in an impoverished community. It further brings to view the complex ways in which the domestic practices of the four families living within the limitations of the social conditions of impoverished township life are able to support their children's education.

The data presented in this chapter lays the basis for the next chapter where I draw on my theoretical framework presented in chapter 3 to analyse the narrative data of the four families. The next chapter presents an analysis, discussion and exploration of the interview data which was constructed using semi-structured interviews and observations in four families in the Duduza Township.

## **Chapter 5: Data analysis and discussion**

### **5.1. Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a discussion on the data presented in the previous chapter. This section draws Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital and Yosso's community cultural wealth model (CCW) to examine the data of four families living in impoverished circumstances and provides a discussion on how the domestic practices of impoverished township families builds cultural capital that supports their children's schooling.

I begin by discussing the complex living circumstances of the township families and describe how despite these constrained family living conditions these families provide capitals that position their children successfully in their schooling. I describe how the four families, based on the resources available to them such as social networks, relationships and interactions with diverse groups in the community, enable the families to build cultural capital to support their children's schooling. Following a discussion on the living circumstances of the four families, I use Yosso's (2005) CCW model to describe and explain how the domestic support practices of the four township families build cultural capital. The four categories of Yosso's CCW model that I use are: familial, social, linguistic and aspirational capital. Yosso (2005) argues that cultural capital is not just inherited or possessed by the middle class, but, as an accumulation of specific forms of knowledge, skills and abilities that are valued by all groups in society, cultural capital is evident in poor and marginalised communities in different forms. Yosso's CCW model therefore, allows me to explain the role that the domestic practices of families living in a township play in supporting the schooling of their children.

### **5.2. Cultural capital**

Bourdieu adopts cultural capital as one of his key concepts to explain social life and the logic of practice. He uses this concept to emphasise how social classes preserve social privileges across generations. Cultural capital refers to the accumulation of knowledge, skills and learning, the know-how that advantages an individual and gives them a higher status in society (Bourdieu 1990a:138). Cultural capital is acquired over time from the social origin of parents and families who pass on cultural

values, class-based practices and their social positions. Parents provide their children with cultural capital by transmitting the attitudes and knowledge needed to succeed. Cultural capital also includes cultural background, linguistic competence, taste and dispositions.

### **5.3. Community cultural wealth**

Yosso's (2005) CCW model, as an alternative framework, provides a critique of the dominant discourse that assumes that working class children come to the classroom with cultural deficiencies. This framework provides a lens that allows me to bring to view the domestic support practices of township families to show how community cultural wealth builds cultural capital that supports their children's education.

This framework offers a perspective on the socio-economic positioning of children in their family context, the educational support that these families provide and how the children mobilise social networks and other forms of capital to maximise their chances of attending and staying at school. Yosso's (2005) CCW model therefore allows me to shift the view from a deficit perspective of impoverished family living, to one that shows how the domestic practices of working class families, as forms of assets or cultural capital, have the potential to support working class children's education.

To sum up, in this section I employ Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and Yosso's (2005) model of CCW to assist me to discuss how the cultural experiences and cultural resources in the homes of working class parents facilitate their children's school achievement. Using Yosso's CCW model, Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital is used to explain how the domestic practices of families support the schooling of their children, and how the accumulation of capitals positions children from township families successfully in their schooling.

### **5.4. The complex living circumstances of township life**

As discussed in chapter 4, the impoverished living circumstances of Duduza Township have positioned the four families, which are the focus of this study, in particular ways. Despite the impact by a myriad of social issues such as a high rate of unemployment, extreme poverty, crime, lure of drugs, violence and high rate of school dropout, the four families in this study have found ways in which they can

provide the necessary educational support in order that their children are successful in their school learning. In this section I focus on the complex living conditions of township life and discuss how the families' living circumstances impact on their children's school learning.

Most of the empirical work on cultural capital has suggested that racial, ethnic, or linguistic minority students and their families may lack cultural capital or knowledge of how certain educational processes occur (Lareau, 2000). In contrast, what my data shows is that parents living in impoverished living circumstances possess and utilise an array of knowledge, skills, abilities, and contacts to support their children's successful school learning.

Township family living is often viewed as unstable or dysfunctional because of divorce, single parent or child-headed households, use of drugs and domestic violence (Miller *et al*, 2002). As a result children living in impoverished circumstances are frequently neglected and/or abused and these children often suffer from low self-esteem and may be truant from school as they lack adult supervision (Miller *et al*, 2002). The interview data in my study suggests that the families that participated in this study can be described as stable families due to the fact that the three families have parents who are married and living together. One family is headed by a single young parent who is unemployed. This family unit however, is supported by a minister and his wife who have provided financial, emotional and familial support thus creating a fairly stable family home for the young student in the home.

Miller *et al*'s (2002) study shows that families living in poverty struggle to provide adequate care for their children. While this may be the case of some families, the families in my study show that despite the constraints of their impoverished living circumstances, all four families prioritise their children's school needs within the family, in order to support their children achieving at school. This support includes sacrifices that the parents make to ensure that their children have adequate space in the home to do their homework and study as well as buying them supportive educational material.

Singh *et al* (2004) notes that often children living in poverty are expected to do many family chores such as cooking, cleaning, and caring for younger siblings. These chores, according to Singh, distract children from doing their homework. On the

contrary, my interview data shows that while these families did expect their children to assist with domestic chores, the parents ensured that these chores were not overly onerous or detracted from the children's focus on their school learning. The parents of all four children prioritised space and time for the completion of homework while still expecting that the children supported the family by completing specific chores. It can be argued, that by involving their children in family chores while still enabling their completion of school work, these parents were teaching their children responsibility and the skill of time management as a form of cultural capital.

Financial means for all four families is a constant stress factor. Three of the families are dependent on social grants as even though the fathers are working, their income is not sufficient to support the family needs. Despite their minimum income each family discussed the manner in which they invest some of their income into saving groups during the year in order to receive a lump sum pay out in December. Two of the families use this money to pay for their traveling expenses to the Eastern Cape when they visit their families and the other two families use these savings to pay for the following year's schooling requirements.

My observations provided me with the understanding of how the complex living circumstances of township life impact on the families' domestic practices in supporting their children's' education.

### **5.5. The accumulation of cultural capital that supports children's successful learning in a township context**

This theme responds to the research sub question: How do township families' domestic practices support the accumulation of cultural capital through community cultural wealth (CCW) that positions their children successfully in their schooling? The organising focus question that helps me answer the research question is: How do impoverished families accumulate their children's capitals?

My research highlighted the learning support practices that these families provided for their children that enabled the four children from these families to perform well at school. In this section I present an explanation and discussion of how impoverished township families' CCW builds cultural capital which supports their children's school learning.

According to Yosso (2005:79) familial capital refers to cultural knowledge that is developed among family members - sibling's aunts, uncles, friends and grandparents' etc, that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural consciousness. Familial capital can be seen as a cultural resource that is nurtured by, and within, one's family. This form of cultural capital assists me to discuss the role that the immediate and extended family members play in supporting their children's school learning. The data in my study suggests examples of familial support that include the way in which siblings, parents and extended family members offered their emotional support and encouragement to their children as well as the willingness of the children who aspired to be successful in order to not disappoint their families.

Ngwaru (2012) states that children who form constructive relationships with parents and other family members early on in their lives are more likely to build social competency and good peer relationships outside the home environment. This form of social development assists the children to adequately express emotion, desire and needs, consider the feelings of others and express their viewpoint and listen to the viewpoints expressed by others (Ngwaru, 2012). My data shows that the families in this study have provided emotional support for their children and built constructive family relationships by spending time together in the home and doing things together as a family. Lizo's grandmother spends time with the children telling them stories about the family history. This form of oral storytelling, as a form of familial support, provides the children with an oral history of the family and an understanding of the parent's and grandparents' struggles to provide support for their children. The parents felt that it was these stories about the family history, that encourage the children to study hard at school to get a good education in order that they may have better job prospects in the future.

Familial support includes support from extended family members. These family members provide additional emotional support and encouragement, and have also financially provided for the children by paying for them to go on additional educational excursions offered by the school. Other cousins of the families have made it their mission to follow up on the academic progress of these learners and promise to buy them gifts as a way of motivating them to work hard and pass. This practice keeps the children focused in their school work.

Family support practices were also evident in the way in which the parents and other siblings supported the children with homework. While many of the parents were not actually at home during the day due to long working hours, all of the families discussed how they ensured that their child had an adequate work space where they could complete their homework. All the families lived in small and often cramped living conditions, yet had prioritised space in the home with a desk where their children could complete their homework and study for exams.

The interview data shows that Lizo's mother is very instrumental and supportive of the homework study group as she shows keen interest in it by offering to help and by attending Saturday maths classes at the school in order to capacitate herself. She notes that the maths classes have enabled her to help her children with their school work. Although Lizo and his friends prefer his father with support in maths homework she notes:

*I know it's because I'm not good at maths. But I don't worry about that, I support the group and just laugh at them. I decided to attend Saturday maths classes with him (Lizo), so that I can be capacitated to help him (Lizo's mother).*

Besides directly involving themselves in their children's school learning, the families also discussed how they have attempted to build strong family relationships which encourage their children to stay at home and away from the negative influences of township life. When time allows the families describe how they spend recreational time together. For instance Duma's parents go to movies together as a family and sometimes eat out at restaurants. Duma and his father also spend time together fixing his father's old car or watching sport on TV. Other families described their role as parents in ensuring that their children focus on school work and stay home to avoid bad influences and dangers associated with other young people in the township.

Lizel's mother, who is a single mother, is supported by a minister and his wife, who have involved themselves in the family structure in order to provide a stable living environment for the Lizel and her mother. The minister and his wife have provided financial assistance as well as emotional encouragement and advice in times of difficulty. Their support also includes telling them stories about family life, praying

together and reading the Bible and going to church together. They have also assisted the Lizel and her mother to stay in contact with the father who is in prison.

According to Yosso (2005) social capital refers to the network of people and community resources that provide poor families with the ability to draw on social relationships, interactions and networks. According to Yosso (2005:80) impoverished families transcend the adversity in their daily lives by uniting with supportive social networks. Examples of these discussed in this study include churches and church members and community based organisations and those involved in the organisations. Social capital can be considered as a cultural resource that families in impoverished townships draw on, as well as an asset which supports impoverished families in their daily lives.

Singh *et al* (2004) reports that many parents do not see their role as engaging in the school learning practices of their children as they believe that the school is competent enough to deal with their children. The parents in my study spoke passionately about wanting to be involved in social and school networks that support their children's learning. What my study has highlighted, is that while parents' work situations or educational level may limit their involvement in school activities or assisting their child complete homework tasks, the parents were able to draw on other family members or members of the community to assist them to support their children's school learning.

My study shows how the families involved themselves in social networks within the township context. An example of this was Lizel's mother's involvement in the church. It was through her involvement in the church that she found out about a Further Education and Training (FET) college where she later enrolled to study further. As a result Lizel's mother says that Lizel sees her mother as a role model and commits to working hard at school.

The three boys and their families in my study are all members in local soccer clubs. The parents discussed how they actively support their children's involvement in the sport clubs as it keeps them away from the negative influences of the township and encourages them to dream of one day becoming successful soccer players. According to the families, involvement in the soccer club creates a form of discipline for their children, as being part of a club and playing in a team requires them to obey

the rules of the club and commit to attending practices if they want to play in the team matches. The parents show their support by making time to go and watch their children play their soccer matches.

Another form of social support which has assisted to build cultural capital to support their children's school learning is the access to a maths tutor organised by the school. All four families have prioritised finances to pay for this maths tutoring provided by the school. They send their children to school on Saturdays for two hours at the cost of R100 every month for their children to get extra support in maths. The school also provides adult maths classes which some of the parents attend in order to be able to support their children's maths homework from school. This form of learning practice that builds cultural capital is also found in linguistic capital.

Yosso (2005) describes linguistic capital as one that includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language. Linguistic capital as a resource highlights the possibility that working class children arrive at school with multiple language and communication skills from their homes and communities.

An example of linguistic capital is found in township family environments through the rich oral storytelling traditions that include listening to and recounting oral histories, parables, stories and proverbs. My findings show that these families spend time talking together and sharing oral history stories from the parent's childhood or stories about extended family members. This form of linguistic capital that is supported by the parents spending time telling their children stories not only gives them knowledge about the history of the family but also builds their communication and language skills.

A further example of how the diverse cultural and linguistic environments, found in the township context can support school learning, is found in friendships which township children establish across cultural and language divides. Liou, Antrop-Gonzalez and Cooper's (2009) research suggests that many high achieving children seek friends who possess diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds because they positively support their academic achievement. For instance, Lizo has a friend who is unable to speak either IsiXhosa or Afrikaans, so they communicate in English. This

supports Lizo's English language acquisition and school learning which takes place only in English. The interview data from two other families indicate that the parents actively encourage and support their children interacting with friends who speak English as a way to support their child's English language and communication skills.

The families in my study also supported their children's literacies through the active engagement with English programmes on TV. All of the families interviewed made mention of how they actively encouraged their children to watch English programmes on TV and spent time afterwards discussing and debating aspects of the programmes with their children. One of the fathers notes: "*These debates give the children the foundation to use to help them when they have an argument at school*". These parents also spend time talking to their children about general 'life' issues and concerns. Lizo's father notes:

*We talk about everything, my likes, and role models and about adopting my life style ... I explain each and everything to him. We also discuss his school day and current events in his life and during these conversations he gets to tell us about his school activities, training and church.*

Other support practices that the families engage in, which supports their children's linguistic ability, involves buying English educational games and books. Duma's father says that he spends time reading to his children to develop their love for reading. Other families have bought English music CDs or DVDs. All the parents showed an awareness that they needed to develop and build their children's competency in English in order for their children to be successful in their school learning. Phelo's father notes:

*You need to take your child to places where they can hear and use English – for example church, clubs and library. You must make sure that the children's play areas and toys include materials in English and also encouraging your child to watch and listen to programmes on television, radio and the internet where they will hear English.*

What is apparent from the above discussion is that despite impoverished families being seen as devoid of supporting their children's linguistic competency, the families in my study, despite the constraints of their social circumstances, both

valued linguistic competency and supported their children's English language development in various ways. All four families made an effort to provide their children with multiple opportunities to engage in the building of linguistic competency in order that they might achieve in their school learning and aspire to studying further after school in order to establish a successful career path.

Yosso (2005:77) states that aspirational capital is the ability of students to maintain hopes and dreams for the future even in the face of real and perceived barriers. This resiliency is evidenced in those who allow themselves and their children to dream of possibilities beyond their present circumstances, often without the objective means to attain those goals. Thus, aspirational capital as a form of resiliency can be described as a cultural resource which is acquired through parents and families as a way to transmit attitudes that are needed to succeed despite the impoverished living circumstances of township families.

Agulana (1999 in Alike & Endosa, 2012:256) state that the family lays the foundation for the psychological, moral, spiritual and learning dispositions of their children. Olivier (2006) notes that children imitate the behaviour of 'significant others' within their immediate environments, thereby suggesting that parents, peers and other community members play a powerful role in motivating children in their learning. Parents' perceptions of their children's abilities and support, in their sense of efficacy and aspirations of success, therefore play an important motivating role in their children's learning (Olivier, 2006:56).

The participants in my research consistently referred to motivating their children as a way of supporting them to believe in their abilities so that they could perform well at school and become successful in their lives. The families displayed high expectations for their children and believed that they could flourish and achieve in their schooling. The parents of these children described how they used their own life stories to motivate their children to attend and stay at school. These stories included their own struggles associated with their upbringing as well as discussions as to why they did not finish school. Linked with this was the evidence that without sufficient education, they as parents have been unable to secure employment that can provide financially for the family to move out of poverty:

*I always tell my children that without education you won't get a nice job like my late brother who was a lawyer and I tell them about my cousins who have well-paying jobs. Education is very important today (Parent).*

It is these stories and constant reminders by the parents that they believe have motivated their children to focus on their studies and achieve well at school in order to one day study further and have well-paying jobs that will enable them to change their living circumstances. The discussion the families have with their children about the importance of performing well in school, places an emphasis on education as a means to escape poverty. The parents reiterate that having good marks might enable them to receive a bursary that will help exempt their already struggling families from paying for their education. As a result the four children have dreams of becoming a doctor, engineer, lawyer and fashion designer. The parents believe that it is their responsibility to keep this focus and dream alive as it assists their children to see beyond their immediate circumstances and aspire to a different future.

A further motivation by the parents in my study was their constant references to other successful family members who grew up in impoverished families but, through hard work and further studies, managed to get out of poverty.

*I tell him about my cousins who are having well-paying jobs and nice cars, that they persevered at school under difficult conditions, their mother being single managed to take them to school. Fortunately they got bursaries and worked hard to pass. Look where are they today (Lizo's father).*

These family members were not only held in high esteem by the parents and the children, but are regularly invited to visit the family and speak to the children about how they worked hard at school in order to achieve the marks that would allow them to enrol in university studies and get a good job. Contact with these successful family members provides aspirational support that helps their children to believe in themselves and look up to their extended family members as role models and people who have become successful in life. The parents in my study constantly pointed out family role models, as someone to aspire to, to keep their children motivated.

These families' domestic support practices that include constant motivation, high expectations and a belief that their children can achieve in school, provides a form of

cultural capital that supports their children's school learning regardless of the impact of the poor socio-economic situations in which they are currently living. The level of expectation and belief in their children's ability to succeed, displayed by the four families during the interviews, shows how these families motivate their children to work hard. In return, the four children do not want to disappoint their parents and are looking forward to being successful and improving the situation in their homes.

To conclude, these domestic support practices discussed in this section show that parents in impoverished townships value their children's education and choose to be involved as much as possible in their children's schooling. Williams (1996) states that children from poor socio-economic backgrounds will achieve more academically if their parents are involved in their schooling. Building on this Miller *et al* (2002) note that family interaction has an impact on a child's academic success. The families interviewed in this study have demonstrated that they have made an effort to build relationships with their children that include giving advice and guidance, talking to their children about their daily school activities and showing an interest in what they are learning at school. These domestic support practices also include caring and providing for their children emotionally and physically by providing basic care, food, shelter and by ensuring that their children attend school regularly.

The data discussed in this section therefore shows that the domestic support practices of these families provide forms of capitals that enable the four children to perform successfully in their school learning. Despite the fact that these families are living in impoverished conditions, they still maintain high hopes and dreams for their children's future-*aspirational capital*, which they support in numerous ways through their everyday living within the family, extended family and community-*social capital*. They use the available resources to support the acquisition of language-*linguistic capital* and they use their life histories to motivate their children to stay in school and be successful in their learning-*familial capital*. It is in this way, through the mobilisation of these forms of capitals, that the families in this study have provided cultural capital that supports their children's schooling.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

This research study has been an attempt to provide an understanding of the domestic practices of impoverished township families in order to show how these practices build forms of capital which support their children's schooling. The study started from the assumption that parents in township families support their children's education in ways that go unnoticed or unacknowledged by schools. Parents in impoverished circumstances are often perceived to be unsupportive or uncaring with regard to their children's education. This perception is based on issues around the lack of parental involvement in township schools, or the challenge teachers have of getting parents to support their children to complete their homework tasks or prepare for tests and exams. This study, therefore, has challenged this deficit way of viewing the way in which families living in impoverished circumstances respond to their children's education, and has offered an alternative understanding of the ways in which township families, via their domestic support practices, do in fact support their children's schooling.

In response to my main and sub research questions, this study has explored and brought to view the domestic support practices of township families that assist to position their children successfully in their schooling. By highlighting the living circumstances and domestic practices of impoverished township families, this study has provided an understanding of how these practices support the accumulation of capitals that support their children's performance in school.

In Chapter 1 I introduced the background to the research problem and the significance of this study. I briefly introduced the conceptual framework which underpins this study and which allowed me to respond to my main research question regarding how families' domestic practices in impoverished township families provide support for their children.

In Chapter 2 I offered a consideration of international and national literature that is pertinent to this research and presented the conceptual framework of this study which employed Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital and Yosso's (2005) notion of cultural community wealth (CCW). These theories provided me with a lens that enabled me to present an alternative way of viewing township families' domestic

support practices. Using Yosso's familial, social, aspirational and linguistic capitals enabled me to provide an understanding of the domestic practices that township families draw on to build cultural capital within working class contexts.

In Chapter 3 I described a rationale for adopting a qualitative methodological paradigm for this study and for choosing semi-structured interviews as the most appropriate research design for answering the research questions, underpinned by an interpretivist framework. This chapter sets out methodologically the approach I used to understand how families in township settings navigate their lived spaces to and the resources that these families draw on to support their children's schooling. This chapter describes the methods that I used that enabled me to explore the domestic support practices of township families that build cultural capital that enable their children to be successful in their school learning.

In Chapter 4 I presented my research findings in the form of a narrative description of each of the four families using the framework provided by Bourdieu's conceptualisation of cultural capital and Yosso's (2005) notion of CCW. This chapter included a discussion on township living within the Duduza Township. This provided an understanding of the context in which the complex domestic practices of the four township families play out. Included in this chapter is a presentation of the data from my interviews which illuminated the domestic support practices as forms of capital that these families provided for their children. In this chapter I showed, via the data presentation, that families from impoverished townships provide their children with forms of capital which enable them to perform successfully in school.

In Chapter 5 I provided an analysis and discussion of the findings that are presented in chapter 4. This chapter explored the multiple ways in which each of the four families' domestic support practices built cultural capital that positioned their children successfully in their schooling. My discussion here is premised on the argument that despite the constrained family living conditions of township families, these families' domestic practices do provide the necessary capitals that enabled their children to achieve in school. Using Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, and adopting Yosso's (2005) notion of CCW in this chapter assisted me to bring into view the alternative forms of capitals that these families, living in impoverished circumstances,

accumulate and draw on, to provide supportive cultural capital for their children's schooling.

Yosso (2005) argues that Bourdieu's views of cultural capital are limited to understanding how middle class homes produce cultural capital for their children that align with the schooling requirements of formal education. Yosso's forms of capitals, as "accumulated assets and resources found in the lives and histories of disadvantaged students" therefore assisted me respond to my research question that seeks to understand how families' domestic practices in impoverished township families provide support for their children's schooling (2005:77). These practices as shown in chapter five demonstrated how the families in my study mobilised various forms of capitals in their families and communities that enabled their children to achieve at school. These practices included caring and providing for their children emotionally and physically; showing that the parents valued education by providing the necessary time, space and resources for the children to complete their homework; displaying high expectations for their children; and constantly encouraging them to achieve at school. The parents in these families drew on their own and family members' life stories to keep their children motivated to stay in school and achieve results that would enable them to embark on further studies and a successful career. By pointing out role models in their families and communities who had been successful through hard work, the parents encouraged their children to dream of future career possibilities and have the hope that they would succeed and be able to change their family living conditions.

This thesis has therefore highlighted the different forms of capitals found in township families and their communities that are characterised by the abilities, skills, resources and knowledge that often go unnoticed and unacknowledged. Using Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and Yosso's (2005) notion of CCW provided me with a lens to understand the domestic practices of impoverished families and the cultural and social capitals that the families drew on to support their children's schooling. The data presented in chapter four that I have analysed and discussed in chapter five has shown how the domestic practices of the four families, living in impoverished township circumstances, were able to mobilise the resources available to them to build the necessary cultural capital that would support their children to achieve in their schooling.

In conclusion I suggest that this study has provided an alternative view of township living and families' domestic support practices to show that families living in impoverished circumstances possess and utilise an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts that support and build capital for their children's schooling. This study has highlighted that families living in impoverished circumstances, contrary to the perceptions of many, value their children's education and have high educational aspirations for their children. What the data has shown, through the lenses of Bourdieu's cultural capital and Yosso's notion of CCW, is the way in which impoverished families, via their navigational practices, draw on various family and community networks and connections to build the requisite capital required to assist their children's schooling. Thus, despite the social and economic constraints commonly found in township living, this study has shown how township families, via their domestic practices, build cultural capital that supports their children's schooling.

In recommending a further study, I suggest that there is a need to further investigate how the capitals which have been highlighted in this study can be used in the school learning practices of children to support their school knowledge acquisition. In my literature review in chapter 2, McCarthy (1997) and Ngwaru (2012) support this premise by suggesting that many low income homes contain ample cultural and cognitive resources or 'funds of knowledge' (Moll *et al*, 1992) that have great potential for classroom learning and, if effectively utilised by schools, can enrich their children's learning opportunities. McCarthy (1997) notes that many schools do not consider that working class homes do provide sources of rich experiences of literacy practices embedded in the socialising fabric of family life. I would therefore suggest that a further study could consider ways in which schools could acknowledge and connect the family and community capitals highlighted in this study, to student learning in schools.

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## **Addendum 1: Interview schedule for parent / guardian interviews**

### **1. Introduction**

Thank you very much for agreeing to do an interview with me. I really appreciate the fact that you are willing to participate in my research. Our interview is scheduled not to take more than an hour. Once again, I must state that you are welcome to withdraw your participation should you feel no longer interested.

### **2. Family background information**

Firstly, I would like to know more about who you are and about your family.

Can we start about you?

1. Tell me your name and how old you are.
2. Where were you born? And how many were you in your parents?
3. Tell me more about your own education and qualifications: Where did you go to school?
4. What is the highest grade that you passed?
5. Are you working currently?
6. Where?
7. When do you leave for work and come back at what time?
8. What languages are you exposed to and how are they used in the home and community.

### **3. Let's talk about the children**

1. How many children do you have?
2. What are their genders? How old are they?
3. Are they all going school? Where?
4. What grades are they in?
5. Do they live with you? If not, with who and where do they live?

### **4. Family structure**

1. Would you tell me about your family?
2. With whom do you live in your house?
3. Where were you born?
4. When did you come to this township?

5. Why did you come here?

### **5. Parenting in a township home (Family circumstances)**

I would like us to talk about how you experience being a parent.

1. How do you understand your role as a parent?
2. As a parent I realize that it is expensive to school a child; there are probably a lot of expenses. Tell me about the expenses of school.
3. Let's talk support. What do you do to make it possible for your child to go to school?
4. Can you give a few examples?
5. What are the things that make it easy for your child at school?
6. Is it important?
7. Is it challenging to raise a child in a township home?
8. Tell me what makes it challenging.
9. Give me an example of how it is challenging based on what your friends say or what your family has experienced.
10. Are there benefits to raising a child in a township home? Could you give me examples of them?

### **6. Challenges at home**

1. Tell me a bit about what your children do at home.
2. Do they have any jobs or duties to perform?
3. When do they do these jobs?
4. Tell me about their schools homework expectations. Where do they do it?
  1. How do your children get their homework done?
  5. Do you help them with their homework?
  6. How do you help them with their homework?
  7. If not: Why not?
  8. Who helps them with their homework, is there someone else who helps them with their homework?

### **7. Roles of parents**

1. How is your child coping at school?

2. You said your child is (refer to age of child) and in grade 6, is your child happy at school?
3. Who are child's friends?
4. What race are they?
5. Is your child also friends with children who are not from his race?
6. If not, why do think that is the case?

#### **8. Parent involvement in child's education**

1. Every school expects the parents to be involved, how are you involved?
2. If the school schedule meetings do you go?
3. If not: why do you not go? Who goes?
4. What does the school do to accommodate parents at meetings?
5. How are you as a parent encouraged to attend school meetings?
6. What school activities are you involved in?
7. Tell me about the link between school activities and home.
8. What impact does your domestic practices has on your involvement in your children's education.
9. How does the school communicate with you regarding school activities?
10. How does the school communicate with you regarding your child's progress?
11. Are you satisfied with the ways in which the school communicates with parents, if not, how would you prefer to receive information?
12. How do you overcome the communication barrier when you have difficulties to communicate with the teachers?

#### **9. Questions regarding the parents aspirations for their child**

1. How do you encourage your children to stay at school?
2. Give me examples of how you inspire your child to work hard to achieve at school
3. What assumptions do you have about your children's aspirations?
4. How do your family's domestic practices support and keep your children's aspirations?
5. Do you think your family life circumstances have an impact on supporting or undermining your children's hopes and dreams they have?

## **10. Social and personal human resources**

1. Can you give me examples of how family members support your children's education?
2. What are the domestic practices of your family that you perceive as impacting or supporting children's education? Eg. Reading to kids, enrichment, helping with homework, getting help for children's homework, liaising with the school and teachers etc.
3. Who provides the support above? – is it the father, mother, other siblings and the environment?
4. Observe: What conditions under which they provide this support? How do they struggle to provide this support?
5. Tell me how your family members manage under the circumstances?

## **11. Community, peers and social networks**

1. What social activities do you and your family takes part in (church, sport, etc.)
2. How do you feel about these activities in terms of supporting children's school learning?
3. How do you view the community's network in supporting your children's education? How do you support them to stay connected to the community networks that support their education? How do your children engage with other peers in the community?
4. What roles does religion play?
5. **Culture**-Let's talk about how you exercise your culture here? Is this place very different from other places you lived in? How is it different? What is your experience of living here? How are the changes and its impact on you as a family? What roles do culture play?
6. What roles do sport play?

## **12. Language and communication skills- role of story telling**

1. Tell me about different languages that you and your family can speak, read and write.
2. How do you go about supporting your children's language and communication skills?

3. Can you give me examples of things here at home that helps your children to develop language skills?
4. How often do we read and tell stories to the kids? Who does that?
5. Observe: Is there a TV?
6. What are our favorite channels? How often do we watch TV? Are the programmes we watch support the development of language and communication skills of our children? How do we measure that?

Is there anything else that you want to tell me?

Thank you very much for your participation.

## Addendum 2: Stellenbosch Ethical Clearance



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**Approval Notice**  
**Stipulated documents/requirements**

15-Aug-2016  
Sonamzi, Batandwa B

**Proposal #:** SU-HSD-001414  
**Title:** The domestic practices of selected township families in supporting their children's education

Dear Mr Batandwa Sonamzi,

Your Stipulated documents/requirements received on 22-Jul-2016, was reviewed and accepted.

Please note the following information about your approved research proposal:  
**Proposal Approval Period:** 13-Jun-2016 - 12-Jun-2017

**General comments:**

Please take note of the general Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter.  
If the research deviates significantly from the undertaking that was made in the original application for research ethics clearance to the REC and/or alters the risk/benefit profile of the study, the researcher must undertake to notify the REC of these changes.

Please remember to use your **proposal number (SU-HSD-001414)** 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.

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 2015 (Department of Health). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

## Investigator Responsibilities

### Protection of Human Research Participants

Some of the general responsibilities investigators have when conducting research involving human participants are listed below:

1. **Conducting the Research.** You are responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC approved research protocol. You are also responsible for the actions of all your co-investigators and research staff involved with this research. You must also ensure that the research is conducted within the standards of your field of research.
2. **Participant Enrolment.** You may not recruit or enrol participants prior to the REC approval date or after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials for any form of media must be approved by the REC prior to their use. If you need to recruit more participants than was noted in your REC approval letter, you must submit an amendment requesting an increase in the number of participants.
3. **Informed Consent.** You are responsible for obtaining and documenting effective informed consent using only the REC-approved consent documents, and for ensuring that no human participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their informed consent. Please give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents. Keep the originals in your secured research files for at least five (5) years.
4. **Continuing Review.** The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research proposals at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is **no grace period**. Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, **it is your responsibility to submit the continuing review report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur**. If REC approval of your research lapses, you must stop new participant enrolment, and contact the REC office immediately.
5. **Amendments and Changes.** If you wish to amend or change any aspect of your research (such as research design, interventions or procedures, number of participants, participant population, informed consent document, instruments, surveys or recruiting material), you must submit the amendment to the REC for review using the current Amendment Form. You may not initiate any amendments or changes to your research without first obtaining written REC review and approval. The **only exception** is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.
6. **Adverse or Unanticipated Events.** Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to Malene Fouche within **five (5) days** of discovery of the incident. You must also report any instances of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the REC's requirements for protecting human research participants. The only exception to this policy is that the death of a research participant must be reported in accordance with the Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee Standard Operating Procedures. All reportable events should be submitted to the REC using the Serious Adverse Event Report Form.
7. **Research Record Keeping.** You must keep the following research related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research proposal and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence from the REC.
8. **Provision of Counselling or emergency support.** When a dedicated counsellor or psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.
9. **Final reports.** When you have completed (no further participant enrolment, interactions, interventions or data analysis) or stopped work on your research, you must submit a Final Report to the REC.
10. **On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits.** If you are notified that your research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, you must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.

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.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator

Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)