Parent engagement with their children's primary school: a case study of two Indian migrant families

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Declaration

I declare that this submission is my own work and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material that has been accepted for the award of another degree or diploma at a University or institution of higher learning. The data that forms the basis of this submission was obtained from a single study involving parents of two Indian migrant families. This study was conducted with the approval of the Macquarie University Ethics Review Committee (Human Research) and the protocol number for this project is 5201700456.

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9 October 2017

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Abstract

Recent research has highlighted the need for attention to migrant families and their experiences with the school system, to understand factors affecting student learning and success. While there is research endorsing the importance of the school-home partnership (Glick & Hohmann-Marriott, 2007; Markose & Simpson, 2016), there has been limited research attention to the growing demographic of families from India who represent the fourth highest migrant population group in Australia. This project is a case study of two Indian migrant families, and their perceptions of, and experiences with their children's primary school.

The study adopts a qualitative approach and families were selected by purposive sampling in line with pre-defined criteria. Data were collected in semi-structured interviews, in two stages. Interviews focussed on parents' migration journeys and views on parent involvement. Findings suggest that, being transnationals, both families had a global outlook and wished to contribute to a critical evaluation of the education system. The project has brought to light challenges faced by two families from a minority group, in their perception of barriers to their participation in the parent community at the school.

This investigation seeks to contribute to existing literature on education in diaspora communities. Through two case studies, it hopes to shed light on the school-home partnership as a factor in better student outcomes and makes suggestions on ways of strengthening this partnership.

Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Statement of topic

Parent Involvement in school among migrant families: A recipe for success in schools. By understanding the experiences and perceptions of migrant families with their children's school, we can strengthen the school-home partnership.

1.2 Overview of Research problem

A range of studies has examined the acculturation experiences of immigrant families in Australia for example Mansouri & Johns (2017) and Mok & Saltmarsh (2014). Among the relevant studies there has been a number which have addressed the parents' often problematic relationship and experiences with their children's school (Markose & Simpson, 2016; Markose, Symes, & Hellstén, 2011; Mok & Saltmarsh, 2014). It has been demonstrated that this relationship is a factor in children's success at school. Many factors are in play through the process of acculturation for migrant families impacting their views on their children's education, including parent beliefs about education and their appropriate role in the school-home partnership. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) families may have less confidence in participating in schools (Cardona, Watkins, & Noble, 2007). Withdrawal and 'self-exclusion' can have detrimental effects for the children as issues are left unaddressed or unresolved (Lamont & Lareau, 1988; Lareau & Weininger, 2003). This disconnect may result in parents giving up on school-home communication and 'education anxiety' as to children's achievement (Cardona et al., 2007). This may lead to parent's sense of isolation and withdrawal from participation in school communities.

A limited number of studies show that there are particular frustrations in communication and understanding of schools in parents of Indian background, which may arise from failure to understand the schema and goals of Australian primary school education (Cardona et al., 2007; Ho, 2011a). Families with transnational backgrounds may have critical perspectives on education and simultaneously hold parenting models inherited from their family backgrounds

(Farver, Xu, Bhadha, Narang, & Lieber, 2007; Inman, Howard, Beaumont, & Walker, 2007). Given the size of the Indian diaspora group in Australia (detailed in Chapter 2), it is a group which has received limited research attention.

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This project takes a case study approach to investigate the dynamics of two families' experiences and perception of the school-home partnership with their children's primary school. The author believes that a case study approach will enable two in-depth and individual pictures to be constructed, with both commonalities and differences, to provide illustrative studies to the research field.

1.3 Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine two case studies of Indian immigrant families and their relationship with their children's school in the primary years. The research questions are:

1. What are the parent perceptions of educational practice in their children's school? What are their expectations from the school-home partnership?
2. What are the parents' views on parent involvement? To what extent, and in what way, do they involve themselves?
3. How do the two case studies illustrate the multidimensionality of acculturation? How do parent ideologies impact on responses to experiences at school with leadership, teachers and parent communities?

1.4 Aims

To explore and understand the perspectives of two Indian immigrant families' perceptions and experiences of the school-home partnership in their child's learning, through a case study approach.

1.5 Key Terms

Acculturation – those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936).

CALD – acronym for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse; is often used adjectivally (as in CALD background) in place of other phrases that are seen to be problematic in some way: non-English speaking, migrant, ethnic etc.

Diaspora - the concept of diaspora inhabits the 'transnational' and refers to complex multidirectional flows of human beings, ideas, products, cultural and physical, and to forms of interaction, negotiation and exchange, processes of acculturation and cultural creativity, webs of exclusion and struggles to overcome it. Appropriate frames of reference need to be established (Tsagarousianou, 2004).

Educational Capital – is a specific form of what Bourdieu (2011) calls 'cultural capital'. Educational capital refers to the forms of knowledge that are specifically useful within the education environment, including not just academic knowledge, but skills and competencies (like literacy), knowledge of the educational system, qualifications (Cardona et al, 2007).

Identity – the ways in which people conceive of themselves and are characterised by others (Vertovec 2001).

Integration – defined as the establishment of a community reliant on the skills, knowledge and competencies of all its members, which will result in permanence and strength (Rodríguez-Valls & Torres, 2014).

Transnationalism - is a social phenomenon and scholarly research agenda grown out of the heightened interconnectivity between people and the receding economic and social significance of boundaries between nation states. Due to declining costs in telecommunications, travel and financial transfers, migrants are now connected instantaneously, continuously, dynamically and intimately to their communities of origin.

Chapter 2 Literature review

This review considers the existing research and theoretical frameworks which have contributed to the current research understanding of diaspora groups, processes of transnationalism, as applied in the context of parent relationships with the school system, and in the diaspora community of Indian migrants in Sydney, Australia. The structure of the literature review is shown in Figure 2.1. The theoretical frameworks will guide the researcher in gaining an understanding of the process of migration and acculturation. The cultural beliefs and expectations from schooling among migrant families will help understand their perceptions of the school-home partnership. Existing literature on various strategies adopted by schools including the role of educators and other programs implemented will give insight into what is currently being done in the changing environment of more diversity at schools.
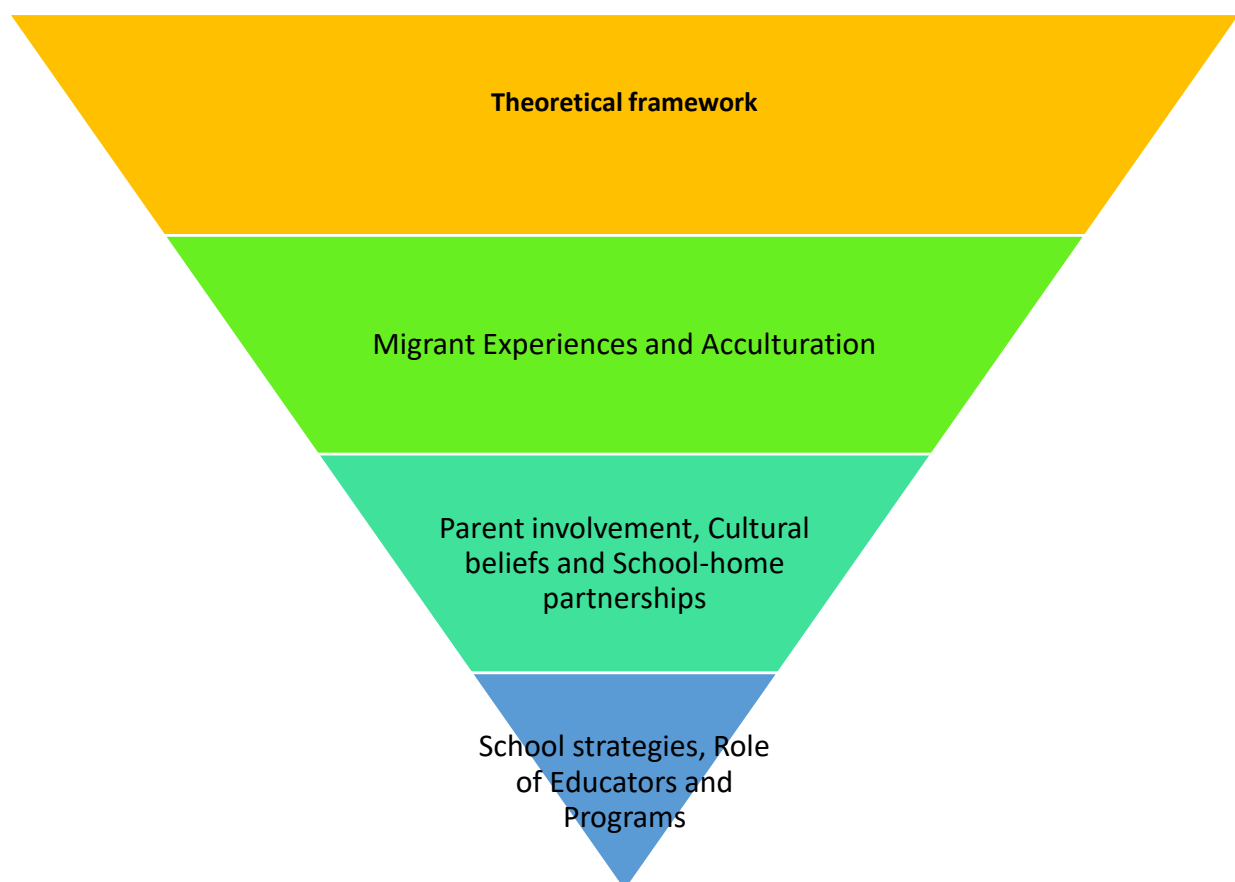
Theoretical framework

Migrant Experiences and Acculturation

Parent involvement, Cultural beliefs and School-home partnerships

School strategies, Role of Educators and Programs

Figure 2.1 - Structure of Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical framework

In analysing the discourse of the parents from two Indian families, this thesis takes as its theoretical framework an understanding of the notion of acculturation. Acculturation processes have been studied for many decades (e.g. since the work of Redfield Linton & Herskovits 1936). Acculturation refers to those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups. Acculturation has become a well-recognized and important area of study (Berry, 1980). Broadly, as applied to individuals, acculturation refers to changes that take place as a result of contact with culturally dissimilar people, groups, and social influences(Gibson, 2001). Acculturation is now understood to be influenced by family, institutions including school, and workplace and society attitudes. Berry's model (1997) and the extension provided by Padilla & Perez (2003) will be used as the theoretical framework to interpret the process of acculturation as evidenced in the parents' response to the school. More recent theories including the multidimensionality model by Schwartz et al (2010), and the critiques presented by Ward & Geeraret (2016) will be incorporated into the analysis to understand the two immigrant families and their process of migration. Bourdieu's theory (2011) on 'forms of capital' will be used to understand the interplay of factors in influencing the school-home partnership. Lee and Zhou (2014) explain how ethnic capital plays an influential role in providing access to ethnic resources giving the group a competitive advantage. Literature by Modood (2005), a respected thinker on ethnic minority, on overcoming racism in schools enhanced understanding and provided another perspective as his experiences are in the UK.

Berry's theory (1997) on acculturation and adaptation remains informative in exploring the contemporary concepts of transnationalism and identity. Berry's conceptual framework is based on the significant links established between culture and behaviour by cross-cultural psychology (Bhugra, 1995). There are several variables that influence the process of acculturation including social and personal variables in the country of origin, country of settlement and events that happen through the stages of migration.

Acculturation occurs at the group or collective level as well as at the individual and psychological level (Graves, 1967). Berry (1997) suggested that the process of acculturation is influenced mainly by three factors: voluntariness, mobility and permanence. Psychological

acculturation can be experienced at various levels – culture learning, acculturative stress or psychopathology (serious disturbances affecting well-being). As depicted in Figure 2.2, various strategies of acculturation exist – Integration, Assimilation, Separation and Marginalisation. These are based on how one values maintaining one's cultural heritage and developing relationship with the larger society. For example, if a migrant family places high value on maintaining their cultural heritage and developing relationships with the new country, they tend to adopt the strategy of integration. Similarly, marginalisation can occur when migrants place no value on developing relationships or maintaining their heritage.

Berry's **Acculturation Model**

	NO	YES
YES Is it considered to be of value to develop relationships with the larger society?	Assimilation	Integration
NO	Marginalization	Separation
	NO	YES

Is it considered to be of value to maintain one's cultural heritage?
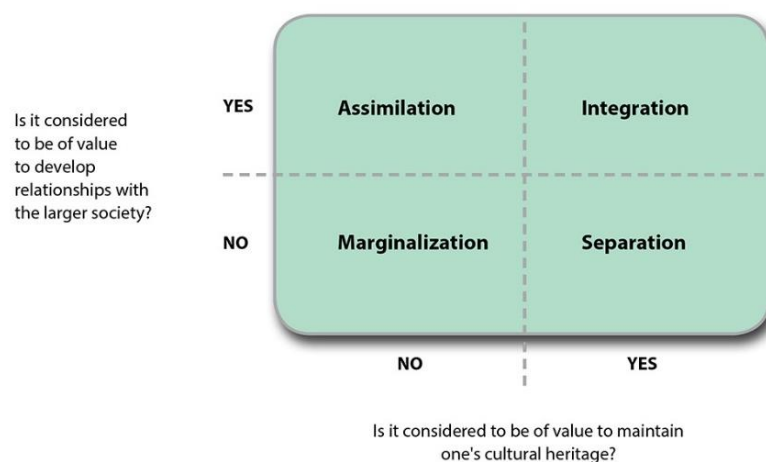
Figure 2.2 - Acculturation Strategies - (Berry, 1997)

While Berry's model has been influential, studies have continued to critique and refine the model against changing populations of globalisation including work by Padilla & Perez (2003), Ward (2008) and Schwartz et al (2010). Berry's (1997) work in the field recognised the importance of an individual's choice in the matter of acculturation (Padilla & Perez, 2003). The model presented by Padilla and Perez (2003) factors in areas of social cognition, cultural competence, social identity and social stigma and incorporates contemporary work in social and cognitive psychology extending the work by Berry. There is a complex interplay of personal and social identities and a continuous reorganisation of them throughout the process for the migrants. Membership of the host culture and attachment to values of their heritage both play an important role in the process of acculturation (Padilla & Perez, 2003).

In the article 'Thinking outside the Berry boxes' (Ward, 2008), a further critical extension is provided to the framework adding to our understanding and knowledge. Ward (2008) develops the ethno-cultural identity conflict and the motivation for ethno-cultural continuity and explains its importance in acculturation strategies in the long run. Ward points out that 'integration' is the preferred strategy and has the most adaptive outcomes for the migrants.

In their study on conceptualisation, operationalisation and classification of acculturation, Ward and Kus (2012) showed how integration occurred more frequently through cultural contact and when attitudes were examined. It is necessary, though, to include behaviour and cultural adoption to get a holistic picture (Ward & Kus, 2012). Ward adds to the theory by showing that not only does the group have influence over an individual, but the reverse can be true as well.

This study has also been informed by the work of Schwartz et al (2010), who suggest that there is a multidimensional process of acculturation, whereby there is a meeting among heritage-cultural and receiving-cultural practices, values and identifications, enabling more complex understanding of acculturation processes in migrants (see Figure 2.3) . Studies conducted by Schwartz and colleagues (2010) also illustrate the role of ethnicity, cultural similarity and discrimination and bring to light the 'context of reception' for the acculturation process. The context of reception refers to the different attitudes held by the receiving society towards different ethnic groups and the support the migrants receive from members of the local community. This assists the process of integration.
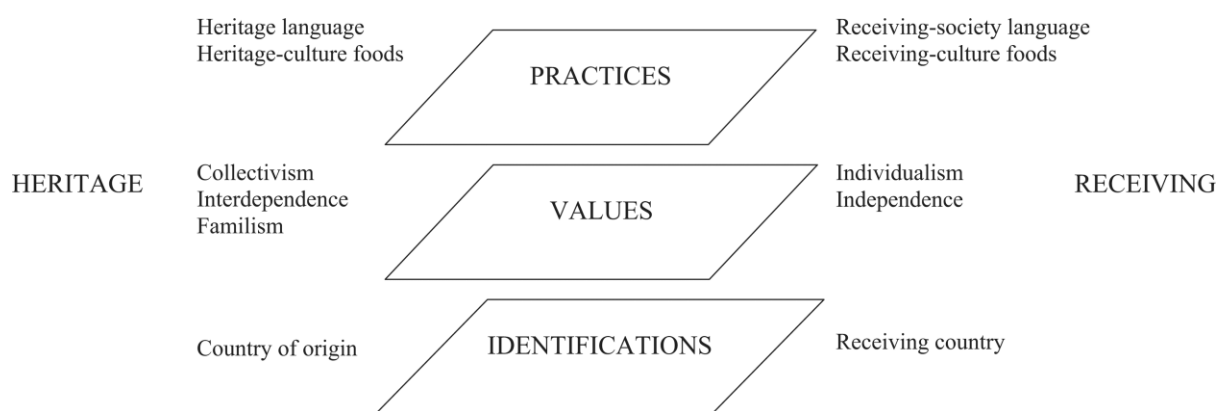

Figure 2.3 - Multidimensionality of Acculturation - (Schwartz et al., 2010)

In summary, Berry's model provides a good starting framework, but with advances in areas of research like psychology and growing transnationalism and globalisation, it is essential that we move to more multi-dimensional models which recognise the dynamic nature of the process of acculturation and how it is influenced by the ecological context (Ward & Geeraert, 2016). By understanding acculturation, we gain insight into the backgrounds and motivations of the migrants and the impact of culture, values, practices and identifications on the strategies used to settle in the new environment.

Bourdieu's (2011) theoretical writing on 'forms of capital' have contributed to researchers' knowledge and understanding. Parents use their economic, social and cultural capital which benefits their children. Bourdieu (2011) explains that capital, while it takes time to accumulate, has the potential to produce profits. While the benefits of economic capital are obvious due to access to buy resources, cultural and social capital also have enormous advantages. Cultural capital exists in three forms: long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body, the form of cultural goods like books, and educational qualifications. Social capital is access to collectively owned resources due to membership of a group and based on networks and relationships. These concepts assist in understanding the factors that contribute to the school-home partnership.

2.2 Migration and Transnationalism

Globalisation across the world is leading to cultural diversity in homes, workplaces and schools. At 30 June 2016, 28.5% of Australia's estimated resident population (6.9 million) was born overseas. India constitutes 1.9% (468,800) and ranks fourth in the top ten countries of birth, besides Australia (ABS, 2016). An increase in the number of migrants in Australia in recent years is making it imperative to understand the experiences and perceptions of migrant families, especially their experience of the education system in Australia. The migration of Indian communities and the future of their ethnicity in Australia is of interest due to their large numbers. The Indian diaspora is the third largest in the world, after the British and Chinese, comprising 25 million people in 130 countries, according to the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs Annual Report 2007-08 (Khorana, 2014).

Migration patterns have also undergone various changes in the last few decades. Dade (2004) explains there is 'a new type of ''hyper-connectivity'' between migrants and their home communities'. This is due to affordable travel and easy access through telecommunications and financial freedom. 'Migrants are now connected instantaneously, continuously, dynamically and intimately to their communities of origin. This is a fundamental break from past eras of migration' (Dade, 2004). In the last two decades, there has been a shift from permanent migration to transnationalism (Hugo, 2008). For example, Figure 2.4 depicts the complexities involved in the India-Australia international migration systems. Migration takes different forms including permanent settlement in Australia, temporary or return migration to India, and even some circular migration of moving between the two countries. This impacts the motivations and expectations of migrant families with respect to schooling as well.
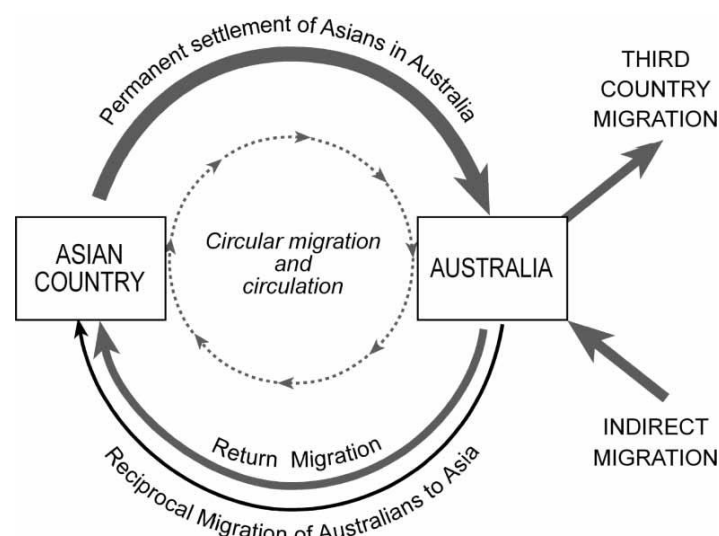
Figure 2.4 - India-Australia international migration systems - (Hugo, 2008)

Mok and Saltmarsh's (2014) study of children of three Chinese families in the Australian context furthers understanding of the concept of transnationalism, which is increased connectedness among migrants by having linkages to the home country and other places that have been lived in. Linkages are social, economic, and political, creating multiple homes, sites of belonging and subject positions (Vertovec, 2001). While membership of different clubs and organisations aids migrants, it is only when a sense of belonging happens that they feel

accepted and recognised (Antonsich, 2010). All individuals strive to feel a sense of belonging as it is a core human need (Antonsich, 2010).

Ethnic identity is what a community sees as a place of belonging as an individual and a collective (Faria, 2001). Ethnicity, on the other hand, is the 'cultural thumbprint' and includes our beliefs and practices (Faria, 2001). As proposed by sociologists, a definition of the term 'Indianness' in context is essential as it could imply different meanings for residents of India and those that have migrated to other lands, and individual meanings for individuals in those groups. The Indian diaspora has adapted and adopted values from the new countries and there is hybridisation and syncretic forms of culture (Jain, 1998).

While there is existing literature on Chinese and Lebanese families in the Australian context (Markose & Hellstén, 2009; Markose & Simpson, 2016), studies on families of Indian origin are limited (Khorana, 2014). Insights into the process of migration for the two families will enable this study to understand how processes of acculturation and transnationalism have influenced their perception and experience of the relationship with their children's schools.

2.3 Immigrant experience and Acculturation

When understanding the experiences of migrant families, we need to look at three timeframes – pre-migration, migration and post-migration (Candy & Butterworth, 1998). Families would have moved for various reasons including work, prospect of a better life, education and safety (Candy & Butterworth, 1998). Australia is of great interest as a migration destination due to the political, social and economic stability and appears like a haven especially if the domicile countries have challenging situations (Faria, 2001). It is important to understand the backgrounds and situations of the families as they could have come from affluent backgrounds and luxurious lifestyles in their home countries, while their migration may lead to downward mobility (Candy & Butterworth, 1998; Peltola, 2016).

The current project aims to identify the agents of socialisation (Markose et al., 2011) amongst the migrant families. When new families migrate, relatives, friends and workmates play a significant role in settling them in (Candy & Butterworth, 1998). Loneliness and isolation draws migrants to people with similar backgrounds. Children at times become the cultural/language brokers (Park-Taylor, Walsh, & Ventura, 2007) assisting their families by

becoming liaisons between the new society and their family. The younger generation tends to acculturate at a faster rate than their parents which might cause familial tensions (Farver, Narang, & Bhadha, 2002). Understanding of the social capital (Bourdieu, 2011) used by migrant families would be useful in understanding the community resources used to navigate the new and mainstream culture (Markose & Simpson, 2016). Families imitate the behaviours of contacts established within their communities by accessing the ethnic resources in the form of social networking and get direction and guidance on courses of action to help their children (Lee & Zhou, 2014). For example, in some sectors of Australian society, it is common to see children from Asian backgrounds going to coaching and tutoring centres in the apparent quest to achieve academic excellence and hence accessing the ethnic capital available (Cardona et al., 2007; Lee & Zhou, 2014). This disrupts what should be a level-playing field for all, that would lead to comparable results.

Utilising the community cultural wealth would lead to large benefits (Markose & Simpson, 2016). Tapping into aspirational capital i.e. maintaining high ambitions irrespective of current situations, plays an important role in student outcomes as seen in the latest report by the Australian Scholarship Group (Velegrinis, Phillipson, & Phillipson, 2016). The study investigates the state of education in Australia through the parents eyes (Velegrinis et al., 2016) and provides information on the state of education using three indices: aspirations, educational resources and learning.

As seen in Figure 2.5, this is influenced by the ethnicity group families belong to, it being highest in Indian and other Asian families (Phillipson, Phillipson, Noor, Pryce, & Gundi, 2016).
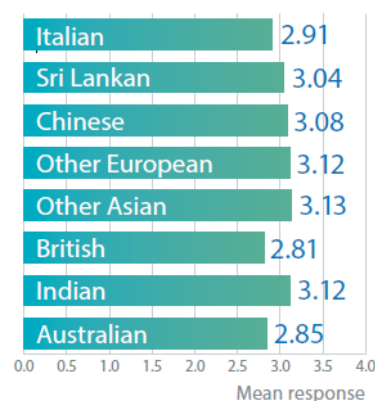

Figure 2.5 - Our family has high aspirations for our child's education - (Phillipson et al., 2016)

As seen, migrant families go through stages in their migration journey and their individual degree of accumulated cultural, social and aspirational capital provides guidance and support, while navigating the new environment.

2.4 Parent involvement, cultural beliefs and school-home partnerships

Parent involvement is impacted on by various factors as seen in this section. Cultural beliefs held by families play an influential role in shaping ideologies about education. To understand the school-home partnerships, we need to consider both factors impacting parent involvement and cultural beliefs held by some families.

Parent involvement is defined as representing parents' 'active commitment to spending time to assist in the academic and general development of their children' (Borgonovi & Montt, 2012). Parent involvement is helpful in building school-specific social capital (Bourdieu, 2011), influencing achievement and behavioural outcomes and providing opportunities for parents' self-growth (Turney & Kao, 2009).

As shown in Figure 2.6, in the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model of Parent Involvement (Anderson & Minke, 2007), there are five levels explaining why and how parents become involved in their children's education and its impacts on student outcomes

At level 1, parents' decision to be involved is influenced by high role construction, a high sense of efficacy, and opportunities and demands for parental involvement by school and children. A parent's choice of involvement (Level 2), is influenced by parents' knowledge and skills, demands on time and energy from work and other commitments, and perceptions of the school being welcoming.

Parents provide support to their children at home by providing resources and help as required, keeping channels of communications open with the schools and participating as much as possible in school-related events. Specific requests from teachers also lead to favourable results, whether it is accompanying children during excursions or attending and volunteering at events at school (Anderson & Minke, 2007). Being involved allows three mechanisms which can influence student outcomes (Level 3): modelling, reinforcement and direct instruction. As per the modelling theory, parents that are involved send the message of education being important to them, which leads to students valuing education themselves. Reinforcement assists by providing children with the attention, praise, interest and rewards

related to their behaviours and promoting school success. Instruction both open-ended and closed-ended can influence outcomes as well.

Level 5	Child/Student outcomes
	Skills and knowledge
	Efficacy for doing well at school

Level 4	Mediating/Tempering Variables	
	Parents use of developmentally appropriate involvement strategies	Fit between Parents' involvement actions and school expectations

Level 3	Mechanisms through which Parental involvement influences child/student outcomes		
	Modelling	Reinforcement	Instructions Closed-ended | Open-ended

Level 2	Parents' choice of involvement forms influenced by;		
	Specific domains of parents' skills and knowledge	Mix of demands on total time and energy from: other family demands | employment demands	Specific invitations and demands for involvement from: Children | School/Teacher(s)

Level 1	Parental Involvement Decision		
	Parents' construction of the parental role	Parent's sense of efficacy for helping children succeed in school	General opportunities and demands for parental involvement

Figure 2.6 - Hoover-Dempsey and H.M. Sandler Model of Parental Involvement - (Anderson & Minke, 2007)

As seen, parent involvement is influenced by numerous factors and the choice of involvement is dependent on the family situation. Minority immigrant families may face additional barriers to parent involvement as shown in the study conducted by Turney & Kao (2009). Language differences, complex curricula in senior years, unfamiliar content and expectations due to schooling in other systems, feeling of being unwelcome by schools, existing group dynamics within school environments and communities and no childcare are some of the factors identified as barriers that may be faced by migrant families (Daniel, 2015; Turney & Kao, 2009).

People's beliefs about the education system are influenced by their experiences in their home country (Mok & Saltmarsh, 2014). At times, practices and strategies followed by migrant families may fall outside the realm of traditional frameworks used to define school-home partnerships thus creating a false impression of migrant families not being involved (Daniel, 2015). As beliefs about the purpose of education differ between cultures, various approaches may be adopted by immigrant parents and their focus will be on different aspects. This study acknowledges that stereotypes and some cultural essentialism (Dervin, 2016) are often evident in research of this type. While this study has tried to achieve criticality, and aims to avoid essentialism where possible, in choosing to examine parents of Indian background in Australia, it is positioned within studies of ethnicity. The author is thus interested in other similar studies which examine educational beliefs in different ethnic communities. The researcher is aware that Dervin (2016) has referred to this double-standard as a "Janusian" approach.

Wagner (1993) has written that many Muslim families believe that the purpose of education is to be a Muslim of good character and that knowledge of their holy books and scriptures is the path to this. The 'curriculum of the home' which includes activities undertaken as a family, behaviours modelled, and attitudes promoted, all contribute to academic success (Walberg, 1984). Some Chinese parents' values may be influenced by values expressed in proverbs and idioms from their culture like 'Compared to scholarly pursuits, everything is lowly' (Siu, 1992). Siu (1992) suggests that some Chinese parents highly value sustained efforts more than innate abilities and this may explain their push towards working hard.

Chao (1994) has found that some Chinese migrants believe in 'chiao shun' – training intended to drive them to achieve in school and ultimately meet the societal and familial expectations of success. Parental comments on discrimination also justify the belief that working hard and pursuing higher education might help combat issues of marginalisation (Chao, 1994). Some Chinese parents may invest in buying resources for education, expose their children to varied experiences to nurture their development and provide an atmosphere conducive to learning at home (Crane, 1996). In the Chinese culture, principles may be based on Confucianism which values and emphasises hard work, endurance, modesty and respect for one's elders (Yang & Zhou, 2008).

It has been suggested that parents' own experience of schooling helps to explain their expectations and approaches for their children and schools (Cardona et al., 2007; Faria, 2001). In Faria's (2001) study, participants acknowledged how the Indian parents steered career choices and even life-partner decisions to the ones they believed were more lucrative and suitable.

The Indian values of respect for elders and adherence to the wishes of the parents were visible and prevailed. 'The pursuit of education went beyond education for education's sake' (Faria, 2001). They truly believe that education is the key to social acceptance and recognition and hence no compromises are allowed. Data collected by a longitudinal study (Glick & Hohmann-Marriott, 2007) in the US also supports the significance of race, ethnicity and national origins on the academic performance of children in immigrant families.

Owing to their beliefs and needs, immigrant families may perceive that schools are not meeting their imagined needs of their children. In the study conducted by Cardona et al (2007), parents who enrolled their children for extra coaching and tutoring cited the need to compensate for the perceived failure of the school to equip their children with the tools to participate successfully in an increasingly competitive international job market.

Studies need to explore whether migrants are using education as a tool for combating ethnic discrimination and hence are driven to ensure success (Peltola, 2016; Yang & Zhou, 2008). Minority groups acknowledge the prejudice that may exist from the majority culture (Andreouli, Howarth, & Sonn, 2014). However they must try to empower themselves to be agents of change and not passive victims (Andreouli et al., 2014). Schools can support this by awareness activities to reduce prejudice, paving the way for interconnectedness (Andreouli et al., 2014).

The study acknowledges the variability of migrant histories and intersection with factors such as class, gender, faith, level of education and family experience. In sum, the literature has established that migrant families' beliefs about education impact on their perceptions and expectations of the schooling system in Australia. This influences their actions and attitudes in the school-home partnership.

2.5 School Strategies, Role of Educators and Programs

Although it is not the focus of this thesis, schools can promote partnership with parents through different programs and strategies. The role of schools and educators is a vital link in the school-home partnership. Strategies and programs that have been successfully implemented are examined briefly to support the research study.

Home and school are not dichotomous units but need to work as a partnership (Goodall, 2015). Epstein (1995) identifies six types of parent involvement that schools can use to promote partnership between schools and homes:

- parenting (such as parent education workshops and other courses or training for parents)
- communicating
- volunteering
- learning at home
- decision making
- collaborating with the community

This is also acknowledged in the recent Family-School Partnerships Framework (DEEWR, 2008) which identifies seven dimensions for planning partnership activities:

- communicating
- connecting learning at home and at school
- building community and identity
- recognising the role of the family
- consultative decision making
- collaborating beyond the school
- participating.

The role of schools and educators is critical in bridging the gaps between migrant families and society. Schools can use the experience of migrants to broaden the horizons of the whole class and create tolerance and respect (Candy & Butterworth, 1998). Teachers need to be aware of their own and parents' attitudes that may be influenced by their historical, economic, educational, ethnic, class and gender events (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

Educators can learn and develop transcultural modes of thinking (Mansouri, Jenkins, Leach, & Walsh, 2009). They have the potential to perpetuate or shift cultural prejudices and barriers (Casinader & Walsh, 2015). Schools can begin to give greater consideration to parents' differing levels of educational capital, especially when ethnicity is involved, and the ways in which this impacts on their involvement in their children's education, both within the school context and at home (Cardona et al., 2007). Sparapani, Seo and Smith (2011) conducted a study of school strategies called *'Walking Around Culture'* which narrates three success stories on how teachers have navigated through different cultures and achieved student engagement.

For migrant families with children, school holds the link, as it is a major source of contact with majority cultures. Being equipped with knowledge about acculturation and developmental context gives educators and counsellors more armour to create healthy pathways for their students (Park-Taylor et al., 2007). Different programs targeting children and parents of migrant families have been implemented by the Australian Government. A program that has been successfully working in Queensland (Mitchelson et al., 2010) is called BRiTA Futures. This was started to assist children in primary and high schools coming from CALD families with the process of migration and acculturation. There are programs running to build resilience in children and youth like the Penn Resiliency program, Mindmatters and Bounce Back.

2.6 Synthesis of Literature Review

The review has constructed the theoretical framework which will enable analysis of the study data. It has explored a range of background studies which have informed the understanding of the project's research context.

The study attempts to understand the process of acculturation among two Indian migrant families. It could provide an insight into the stages of migration and cultural beliefs that shape and influence their views on education. Gaining knowledge on what parent involvement means to an Indian family and how they perceive the role of the educators and school could be influential. The aim of the research is to find out how the two migrant families would like to be included, investigating suggestions on specifics that can be undertaken at school to achieve this. This project hopes to contribute to the current literature on diaspora experience of school education. To achieve the research goals, the case study approach will be undertaken, which seems most suitable as explained in Chapter 3 Methodology.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Rationale and justification of design

Social research requires an epistemology with the capacity for in-depth observation and interpretation. As a result, the methodological approach is post-positivism (Mohd Noor, 2008) where reality is socially constructed and not objectively determined. The goal of the research is to appreciate the different constructions and meanings people place on their experiences (Mohd Noor, 2008). Social research was carried out using qualitative methods with the view to understand, discover and interpret social life and its meanings (Waller, Farquharson, & Deborah, 2016). It recognises that qualitative research will be subjective and relies on interpretations. While adapting the flexible nature of qualitative research, it was essential that the study adopted strategies to ensure rigour, credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability (Houghton, Shaw, & Murphy, 2012).

3.2 Strategies – Textual analysis & Case Study

This project used textual analysis and case study as its research strategies as they assist with providing a background and probing an area of interest in depth. The advantages of both have been explained below.

Textual analysis is a powerful tool and can assist in understanding the functioning of the societies we live in and how they are maintained through varied modes of communication (Jones, 2012). It is a researcher's way of making the most educated guess on the most likely interpretations of the text (Mckee, 2003). In looking at text, the relationship or connections are essential. This may be between the words and sentences within a text creating cohesion. Coherence occurs due to the relationship formed between the reader and the text, as the reader's knowledge and experiences will influence the interpretation. And there is also a relationship between one text and other texts creating intertextuality. Texts tend to promote an ideology – beliefs and assumptions about right and wrong, normal and abnormal. Ideologies are powerful as they help to create a shared vision and worldview on one hand but can marginalise groups and people on the other (Jones, 2012). This will be particularly useful when the researcher looks at the documents from the schools and government to see what

ideologies are being promoted especially with regards to parent involvement, inclusiveness and school-home partnerships.

Case studies have become increasingly popular in the social sciences as a rigorous approach in its own right into qualitative inquiry (Hartley, 2004). Case studies allow the researchers to maintain the holistic and meaningful facets of real-life events and help in understanding complex social phenomena (Yin, 2003). As explained by Yin (2003), when doing case studies it is important to remember that the researcher will tend to generalize theories using an analytical approach and will not be enumerating frequencies or statistical derivations. Case studies are a detailed investigation within their context and provide an explanation for the theoretical issues being explored (Hartley, 2004).

In summary, case study research is a heterogeneous activity using different methods and techniques, with single to multiple coverage options, involving varied levels of analysis and lengths of time (Kohlbacher, 2006). As this project considers personal lives, experiences and perceptions, the case study strategy was appropriate to uncover deep levels of human behavior and interactions. This approach was helpful in using existing theories to further expand our knowledge in the area and I discovered that the theoretical frameworks I started with gave way to new constructions of theory.

3.3 Methods

When choosing the methods for data collection, the research study proposed the following:

Textual analysis: I started by looking at government websites related to education. There are various policies and documents covering different aspects, providing guidelines for schools. They come under different jurisdictions, State, Federal, Department, BOSTES (Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW) (Appendix C). A decision was made to evaluate the NSW DoE Multicultural Education Policy and Anti-Racism endorsed by the government through the lens of textual analysis. These policies are pertinent to the area of research and come under the Department of Education. The way schools conduct themselves in handling diversity and racism issues is influenced by these policies. The direct daily impact on schools and their functioning makes it relevant to evaluate these two policies. From the official school website, there was access to the annual reports from 2015 and 2016. The

school annual reports generally outline the philosophies, values and practices endorsed by the school and hence these were chosen to be evaluated through textual analysis.

In-depth interviews : Taylor and Bogdan (1998, p. 88) define in-depth interviews as '*repeated face-to-face encounters between the researcher and informants directed towards understanding informants' perspectives on their lives, experiences and situations as expressed in their own words*'. The purpose of this technique is to have a conversation to uncover patterns and meanings. The use of narrative inquiry is highlighted by Barkhuizen & Klerk (2006). They conducted interviews with fifteen Africans in the process of migrating to New Zealand from South Africa. In their analysis, they captured the migrants' stories and looked at five different aspects: linguistic, cultural, process of change, identity changes and emotional responses to anticipated changes. This study influenced my decision to use a similar approach by conducting in-depth interviews with the participants with a view to understanding their experiences and perceptions about migration in general and the Australian education system in particular.

These considerations led to the study proposing interviews with the parents of two migrant families. The families were approached using intermediaries and participation was voluntary. Both parents of a family were interviewed together. Face-to-face interviews in two stages were conducted at mutually agreed and suitable dates, times and venues. While interviewing, a semi-structured approach was used in which some questions were prepared but the rest were guided by the interview, ensuring sufficient flexibility in the process (Appendix D & E).

I attempted to balance the role of maintaining a good relationship along with letting the participants steer the direction of the interview. While conducting the interviews, my fluency in India's national language, Hindi, gave the participants the option to respond or at times use some words or phrases from their language (codeswitching).

This proved to be an advantage as at times it becomes easy to express oneself in one's mother tongue. This was also effectively used in an African study by Barkhuizen & Klerk (2006). However, it also raises issues of complexity in the translation of transcripts.

Crouch & McKenzie (2006) explain that the benefits of in-depth interviewing outweigh the negatives of interviewer bias, variability of rapport and validity issues with interpretation, and hence the study adopted the method of in-depth interviews. This approach helped with the

ultimate goal of delving deep, uncovering uniqueness, determining meanings, constructing conclusions and building theory (Patton & Appelbaum, 2003).   Each case was re-contextualised to examine it individually and as a collective in relation to the existing frameworks. Finally, an attempt was made to understand the data from its point of contact and friction between individual experiences and the broader social context (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006).

3.4 Sample Selection

The project used purposive sampling to ensure the criteria for the project were met while choosing the participants. As mentioned by Patton (2002), the power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study. The cases chosen provided information on what is of vital importance to the research study, yielding insights and in-depth understanding. The below criteria were identified during the process of selection:

- Indian families who have migrated in the last 5-15 years. As migrants born in nations like China or India are relatively new arrivals to the country reflecting the growing significance of migration to Australia from countries in Asia in recent decades, this was identified as a criterion. Recent migrants are also more likely to have school-age children.

- Families with at least two children, with at least one child in primary school. This is to ensure that there are varied experiences with different children at school. The reason for at least one being in primary school is to ensure that the families can remember and recount experiences easily, as they would have occurred more recently.

- While there are suburbs in Western Sydney with higher concentrations of people born overseas (ABS, 2014), the profile of the family is more closely aligned in the chosen suburbs. In the north-western suburbs of Sydney, of increasing socioeconomic status, schools have seen an increase in their migrant population. This may be due to the attractiveness to parents, of schools achieving well in national standardised testing (NAPLAN)

- Parents with tertiary education and ability to find employment were chosen. This was included as the study investigated families where the parents are educated with

minimum undergraduate degrees and are working or able to secure jobs if they choose to, shedding light on this segment of society. The researcher believed that such families would have maximum opportunity and choice to engage with school, given stability of employment and financial security.

The researcher's individual judgement was used in selecting the cases, to ensure that the necessary information needed for the research was available. The process of data collection confirmed the selection of cases had been appropriate and rich information was gathered.

3.5 Introduction to the school site

This section presents some information that will be useful in giving the background and context of the school. The MySchool website (ACARA, 2008), is a resource for parents, educators and the community to receive information about each of Australia's over 9,500 schools and campuses. The MySchool website has data related to the profile and population of each school, outcomes from the 2016 round of NAPLAN testing, nine years of performance data for comparison and the latest financial figures on each school, including capital expenditure and sources of funding. MySchool enables comparisons to be made between schools serving students from similar socio-educational backgrounds, using the Index of Community Socio-educational Advantage (ICSEA).

In this study, I will look at the data provided for School X on the MySchool website. School X is a government primary school located in the north-western suburbs of Sydney. In 2016, the school had 464 students enrolled and 63% came from a language background other than English (LBOTE), as declared by their parents on enrolment.

In comparison, in 2009 there were 333 students enrolled, with 44% coming from LBOTE families. There has been an increase over the last 7 years. The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. A look at the NAPLAN results for this school reveals that in years 3 and 5, in all areas (reading, writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation and numeracy), School X is either substantially above or above the Australian school average, other school average categories being close, below, substantially below (Appendix A). The annual report of School X explains

its motto and practices and gives an idea of the culture the school is promoting (Appendix B). School X is focussed on creating:

- *successful learners, critical and creative thinkers*
- *highly skilled teachers, effective leaders*
- *informed families, inclusive community.*

The school is committed to these goals and it indicates a conducive environment to embrace diversity as seen in some of the initiatives undertaken by the school (Appendix B). The Government has been fully supportive (*English as an Additional Language or Dialect — Advice for Schools*, 2014) through various polices, plans and strategies to help schools embrace diversity and multiculturalism. The Multicultural Plan (2012-2015) outlines strategies to be undertaken across the Department which aim to promote community harmony, counter racism and support the specific needs of students and their families from language backgrounds other than English (Appendix C). The Department reports on achievements against the plan in its Multicultural Policies and Services Report.

3.6 Introduction to participants - The migration journeys of the two families

This section offers a brief synopsis of the migration story of each family, to provide background context to the two cases.

Family P - Family P consists of dad P, mum P, eldest child A, 13 years old at a selective high school in year 7 and triplets, 9 years old – two boys, B1 & B2 and one girl C at the local government public school in year 4.

Family P came on a study visa in 2003 as they wanted to experience a new country. Their first child was born in 2004 and they received their Permanent Residency (PR) in 2005. They decided to go back to Delhi, India in 2005 for a multitude of reasons and stayed there for 1.5 years. A work opportunity took them to the US with the understanding that it was short-term.

In 2008, they had triplets. As they were looking for stability and wanted to call one place home, having PR in Australia drew them back here, combined with the ability to get a job transfer to Sydney. At the time, their general perception of the education system in countries

like the USA and Australia was that it was of a good standard and hence this didn't sway their decision either way.

As migrants, they faced challenges including getting back to work due to additional eligibility criteria that were required to be met. Other issues like setting up social circles, no family support, lack of structured groups/religious meetings made things challenging. Dad P mentioned the barriers faced at times due to differences in accents and lack of localisation, which is not having the same knowledgebase about local things as the majority communities. They felt actions to make them feel more welcome including recognition of one major festival of their country, may assist migrants in the process of integration.

Family M – Family M has dad M, mum M, eldest son D, 10 years in year 4 in the local government school and daughter E, 8 years and in year 2 at the same school.

Family M came on a work assignment in 2005 and applied for a work permit. Their first child, M, was born in 2007 and they went back to India in 2008. Work brought them back in 6 months, they had their second child, D in 2009 and have been in Australia since. It was not a conscious migration and was mainly driven by work opportunities and the fact that a Permanent Residency had been obtained. Another important drawcard for staying in Australia was the contentment with the pre-school at the time and the culture of involvement in raising children, which was different from that in India. Due to their frequent visits to India and regular communication, Family M could make comparisons with the systems in place in different parts of India. Family M summarises their decision to call Australia home by mentioning the comfort of the hygiene factors, like walking to school and safe surroundings. The family may be considered transnational as evident from the fact that before they came to Australia work had taken them to Europe, the Asia Pacific region and South America.

Their outlook on future opportunities may be considered global as they believed that in today's world people should be part of a wider economy with the ability to go anywhere. As a family, Australia is becoming a base and place to call home due to emotional connections, social belonging and financial investments.

The migration stories of the families help us understand their journeys, experiences and outlooks and provides a context to understanding the findings in chapter 4.

3.7 Data collection

Before embarking on the actual process of data collection, a few factors were kept in mind:

- As a member of the Indian community, the researcher's own experiences and views (brief about researcher in section 3.8) may have had an impact on the process of interviewing and the interpretation of the data presented (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). As Kvale (1996) states, interviews are neither subjective nor objective but instead an inter-subjective interaction.

- Before conducting the interviews, the concept of bracketing (Minichiello, 2008) was explored by setting aside the assumptions that one holds about the topic, as far as is possible, while conducting the interviews.

- Interviewees were provided the option to use English or Hindi as they found suitable. This was to ensure the participants were comfortable, as at times it is easier to explain experiences in one's mother tongue. As the researcher understands the language, this option was made available with the intention of getting more meaningful data. During the interviews, Hindi was used to express emotions, jokes or remarks only and the interviews were primarily in English, not raising any issues of translation.

- The technique of storytelling (Askham, 1982) was useful in understanding the journey of migration and events and experiences associated with it. It allowed the participants to talk for extended periods by putting then at ease and by enjoying any detailed accounts in the narration.

- This was then combined with the technique of funnelling (Minichiello, 2008), where the researcher started by asking general and broad questions. As the interview progressed, more specific questions were asked to bring the focus to the area being explored.

- Probing is an effective tool while conducting in-depth interviews. Various question-asking strategies have been recommended by Schatzman & Strauss (1973) like asking the devil's advocate question, hypothetical or 'what if' questions, posing the ideal or using nudging probes to encourage the interviewees to continue speaking. Based on the flow of the conversations, the most appropriate and effective tools were used.

- Closing the interview needs careful consideration. The researcher closed by explaining the reason for closing e.g. 'I have the required information for now' and by checking

if they had any 'clearing-house' questions like 'do you have any questions? I am happy to answer'. The researcher expressed thanks. It was essential to remember that closing correctly was as important as the rest of the process as a relationship had been created and the researcher wanted to respect it and maintain the rapport developed.

- Interviews were audio-recorded and notes were taken in order to secure an accurate account of the conversations and avoid missing or losing any data (Mohd Noor, 2008). The transcription of the data from the interviews was done by the researcher. While it was time-consuming, it gave opportunities for reflection and comparisons and was also cost-effective. Transcription was an inherently transformative and interpretive process rather than a simple administrative exercise of preparing data for analysis (Kvale, 1996).

- In total, with family P, the researcher has 3.75 hours of recording and with family M, 2.52 hours. Taylor and Bogdan (1998) suggested that as a rule, an hour of audio recording can take 3-6 hours to transcribe and is estimated to result in up to forty typewritten pages of data. The researcher's experience was similar.

3.8 Data analysis

As detailed earlier (Section 3.3), two policy documents, Multicultural and Anti-racism and publicly available annual reports for 2015 & 2016 were selected. These documents are relevant, available and influence the school on its handling of diversity and related issues.

For the policy documents, as keywords would be different in both the Multicultural policy and Anti-racism policy, an approach to look at all the salient features of both policies was adopted. To analyse data from the textual analysis, searchable key words were identified in the annual reports and their context studied.
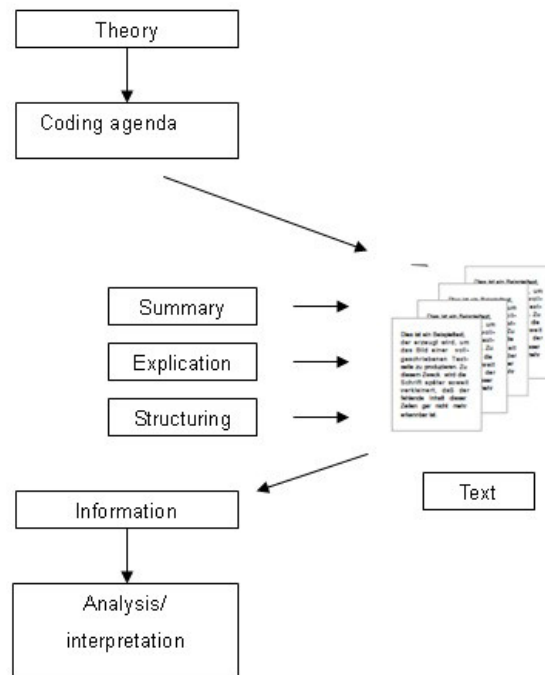
Figure 3.1 - Basic proceeding of qualitative content analysis - (Kohlbacher, 2006)

In order to analyse data from case studies, as suggested by Yin (2003), the researcher used theoretical frameworks, rival propositions and developed case descriptions. Techniques such as pattern matching, explanation building, time-series analysis, logic models and cross-case syntheses were useful. This study used qualitative content analysis to analyse the data. Figure 3.1 above explains how content analysis can be achieved. The researcher has the theoretical framework and the data (transcripts from the interviews). By looking at the data multiple times, the researcher begins to code the data and recognise themes. Summarising, explication and structuring were some of the analytical procedures that were used to analyse the data (Kohlbacher, 2006). Categories can emerge from the data also giving significance to the context in which they appeared. As explained by Kohlbacher (2006), qualitative content analysis gives the investigator the role of constructing meaning in and out of texts. Mayring's (2000, p. 2) definition explains clearly and encapsulates content analysis as "*an approach to empirical, methodological, controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytical rules and step by step models without rash quantification*."

Through my analysis I not only want to provide information that is descriptive, informative and evaluative but also connective (Suri, 2011). As a researcher, there was awareness that ethical representations and methodological rigour are indispensable in data collection as well as analysis.

3.9 Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher was influenced by the fact that she has been an immigrant and moved away from her home country, India, 17 years ago. She has lived in New Zealand and Australia during this time. Being an Indian migrant, the researcher had some factual and theoretical knowledge of relevant social situations and the home country and as a parent had experienced similar situations at schools. The study acknowledges this and understands that the interpretation of the data may be affected by membership of the Indian community. However, this also assisted in gaining rich insights, evident from the long duration of interviews with both families and their openness in sharing their experiences. As suggested by Crouch & McKenzie (2006), as a researcher, it is essential to be aware of researcher bias and hence use strategies to minimize it and increase the validity. The framework for this project has been based on analytical induction.

Context and familiarity – The context was continuously kept in mind while conducting the research. As recommended (Boddy, 2014; Morrow, 2013), open dialogue and reflection were used to understand and correctly interpret the minority experiences in culturally diverse communities.

For example, when seeking consent, culture was kept in mind and a personal, informal and friendly approach was used. The intermediaries were requested to call/meet the potential participants and explain the study rather than using email. Keeping cultural practices in mind, the cash amount which would be given as a token of appreciation was not mentioned at all to ensure that the families were not offended in any way.

Beneficence – As emphasised by Kirk (2007), principles of justice, safety, informed consent, and integrity were kept in mind always. Participants were reminded that any mention of illegal activities would be reported as required by the Ethics Department.

Confidentiality & unpredictability – To respect the participants, access to sensitive and private information was handled appropriately, always keeping in mind confidentiality (Mishna, Antle, & Regehr, 2004).

Trustworthiness – Trustworthiness in this study was achieved by using different strategies, as mentioned in the table below. Trustworthiness of data can be achieved by respondent

validation leading to credibility of findings and transparency demonstrated by the extent to which the research process can be audited by outsiders (Hardy & Bryman, 2004).

Yin (1984) highlights the importance of validity for case study research. Case studies have a strong operational set of measures and do not use subjective judgments to collect data. LeCompte and Goetz (1982) argue that internal validity in case study research is high, due to four characteristics:

- the extended contact and opportunity for the researcher to collect data and refine constructs and the closeness of her role as participant observer
- the informant interviewing is phrased closely to existing theoretical constructs
- observation is done in this case in the natural home setting, reflecting accurately the reality of the parent experience
- researcher self-monitoring ensures continual critical evaluation.

Below is a table illustrating and summarising the strategies that were employed for this project:

Approaches to Rigour	Strategies
Credibility and reliability	Participant checking of transcripts
	Explaining researcher status
Dependability, confirmability and validity	Audit trail
	Reflexivity
Transferability	Detailed descriptions
Context and familiarity	Careful planning (Boddy, 2014)
Beneficence	Clear communication regarding objectives and obtaining consent (Kirk, 2007)
Confidentiality & unpredictability	Respecting the participants and maintaining anonymity

Table 3.1 Strategies used in the study to support research rigour

Data collection was based on the methodology and strategies adopted for the project, chapter 4 will discuss the findings.

Chapter 4 Findings

This study posed the research questions identified earlier. The reader is reminded that these are:

1. What are the parent perceptions of educational practice in their children's school? What are their expectations from the school-home partnership?
2. What are the parents' views on parent involvement? To what extent, and in what way, do they involve themselves?
3. How do the two case studies illustrate the multidimensionality of acculturation? How do parent ideologies influence responses to experiences at school with leadership, teachers and parent communities?

In section 4.1, findings from the textual analysis are presented. This chapter includes in section 4.2, data from the interviews including the thematic analysis. A summary of the findings concludes this chapter.

4.1 Data from Textual analysis:

The research site: the school attended by the families' children

Due to the relevance to the area of research and the direct impact of these policies on the functioning of the school, an analysis was conducted by looking at two policy documents and their key principles

- the Multicultural Policy by the NSW Department of Education (2016b)
- the Anti-Racism Policy by the NSW Department of Education (2016a)

The Multicultural Policy includes all staff and students at NSW public schools. The multicultural principles contained within the Multicultural NSW Act (2000) provide the framework for the implementation of the Multicultural Education Policy. Principals are responsible for ensuring that school policies and practices are consistent with the policy and for including multicultural education strategies in their school plans. Schools report annually on achievements in multicultural education in their Annual School Reports. As one third of the students in NSW schools come from a LBOTE, it is imperative that cultural diversity is recognised and supported. The objectives of the policy clearly state the need to embrace

diversity through provision of programs and practices to counter any form of discrimination, inclusive teaching practices that develop intercultural understanding and provide support to students and parents from LBOTE backgrounds.

The Anti-Racism Policy supports the elimination of any form of racial discrimination within schools and applies to all staff and students at NSW schools. This policy is legally backed up by the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act (1977) along with the Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act (1975). Principals are responsible for examining and reporting on school practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy, nominating an Anti-Racism Contact Officer and ensuring they are trained and including anti-racism education strategies in their school plans. Teachers need to ensure that their own behaviour does not result in anyone experiencing racism. The objectives clearly state that no form of racism or harassment will be tolerated, that no one should have such experiences and that staff members contribute to the eradication of racism by showing and promoting acceptance.

As seen from the highlights of the two policy documents above, the Government has set up a good framework to embrace diversity through the Multicultural Policy. Principals and teachers are required to ensure fair practice and report on it. Schools need to be proactive by including strategies to support migrant families and by being advocates of intercultural understanding. The Anti-Racism policy complements the Multicultural Policy by providing training and education in these areas. The government has provided the necessary frame-works and their implementation and effectiveness need to be considered in depth to reach further conclusions.

Equipped with background information about the school, a textual analysis was conducted looking at the annual reports of School X from 2015 and 2016. Every public school is required to publish its annual report and make it available publicly. The purpose of this analysis was to provide contextual information on the school environment to which the parents were relating and discussing in the interview data. Key words were identified to create the analysis – multicultural, harmony, diversity, school-home partnership. The language used by the schools to describe parent involvement and related matters and has a great impact on the interactions (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

The word 'multicultural' appeared five times in the 2015 report and in the 2016 report the word appeared three times. The context is both cases is the same, whereby the school has listed the activities undertaken to promote multiculturalism.

'Harmony' was the next word looked at and it is used four times in the 2015 report and twice in the 2016 report. In both cases, the word is used to refer to the Harmony Day celebrations which occur at school each year and is inclusive of the whole school community.

In the 2015 report, the word 'diversity' is used to talk about learner diversity and the LBOTE community at school but the 2016 report only mentions learner diversity in classrooms once.

The word 'partnership' has been used four times in the 2015 report and thrice in the 2016 report focussing on the school's intent to further strengthen the relationship with the community and the P&C (Parents & Community Association).

The word 'involvement' has been used explicitly in the 2015 report in the context of the importance of parent involvement, whereas the same word appears only once in 2016 referring to the community. A close look at the reports reveals that there may be shifts in the focus or messaging from the school. This needs to be further investigated to arrive at any conclusive comments.

From the textual analysis, I can conclude that in the broader policy context and in this school, initiatives are being taken to implement multiculturalism and create an atmosphere of inclusiveness. School X appears to have taken steps by including this in their strategic directions and supporting the P&C and other parent bodies in different initiatives that promote and support diverse communities (Glick & Hohmann-Marriott, 2007; Markose & Simpson, 2016).

4.2 Interpretive analysis of data from interviews using research literature

Data analysis involves mechanical and interpretive aspects. Once all the data were collected, the first step was to decontextualize it by assigning codes and removing it from the reference (Blair, 2016). As the researcher did the transcription, it was beneficial in using coding strategies/mapping to see patterns and themes in the data. Themes assisted in interpreting both competing and contradictory points of views. A thorough analysis was undertaken by

revisiting transcripts multiple times, both the written and audio recordings, and looking across all the data collected. While the interviews mostly produced data based on the topic areas to be discussed, the researcher was aware of new topics being uncovered.

By using non-substantive codes for comments, jokes and remarks that can be left out of the analysis, the researcher found it helpful to focus on relevant data (Knodel, 1993). Creating an overview grid that provided a summary of the data collected was useful in the writing of the report. From the data, common themes emerged in the reporting of experiences and perceptions. These themes are:

1. The role of education through the stages of migration
2. Views on parental involvement
3. Critical evaluation of the education system
4. Experiences as migrants
   a. within the school community
   b. with school leadership and teachers
5. School-home partnerships

In overview, the findings will demonstrate that these themes illustrate how the process of acculturation is working in these two families, illustrating the theoretical frameworks provided by Berry (1997), Schwartz et al (2010), and Ward (2016). Transnationalism and connectedness to one's home country is shaping the ideologies held by families. The possession and use of cultural and academic capital as emphasised by Bourdieu (2011) can be seen in parents' perceptions of the school environment. At times, their lack of social capital in the school environment creates barriers that the families must navigate. These influence responses to the school-home partnership. The recommendations made by the families may be helpful in strengthening this relationship.

The themes identified after data collection and analysis are discussed in turn below:

Themes:

4.2.1 The role of education through the stages of migration

For family P, education was a key factor as evident in the fact that they used the MySchool website and based their decision on choosing a suburb when they arrived in Sydney, based

on school rankings. When an opportunity arose, they confirmed their choices through work colleagues and friends. Family P acknowledged their belief that the importance of education is 'embedded in their genes':

> *'Social DNA that we have in our minds or brains, that graduation is the minimum.'*
> (Family P Dad)

Also, being parents who are highly educated holding postgraduate degrees, education is valued and an undergraduate degree is considered a bare minimum. They believe that their background makes them drive their children to work hard and excel.

Even though the children were young in family M, education played a crucial role. They were extremely happy with their children's pre-school and didn't want the children to miss out on what they perceived to be a quality education:

> *'it was that they had one of the best pre-schools, the staff were lovely, the programs they were running were great and I just couldn't imagine leaving that.'* (Family M Mum)

The parents invested time in investigating and visiting five schools, to select their preferred school for their first child. There was also information gathering by talking to friends in informal and social settings. Based on the information they got from the sources, they chose School X as their primary school:

> *'I thought it was a very small, boutique, nurturing, really community, good families and I just felt right about it. I still remember when the letter came, I cried. I don't know, I get emotional, oh my god, he got into (School X), it was a big thing.'*

The value attached to education in both families is evident and supports existing knowledge in the field. While the two case studies are unique cases, and expectations are shaped by diverse backgrounds, they may reflect observations in other studies that Indian parents place a high value on education (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004; Farver et al., 2007; Mok & Saltmarsh, 2014). Different agents of socialisation like friends and work colleagues were used to help them settle down (Markose et al., 2011). Cultural and academic capital plays an influential role through the stages of migration as evident in the choices made by the two families (Bourdieu, 2011; Candy & Butterworth, 1998)

4.2.2 Parental involvement

The next theme identified was to capture the views of both families on what parental involvement means. This section attempts to address the second research question:

What are the parents' views on parent involvement? To what extent, and in what way, do they involve themselves?

Mum P described their parental involvement with their children as follows:

> *'Encouraging them, motivating them, making them feel happy, making them feel they have a lot of potential in them and helping them realise that on a day-to-day basis. All the aspects of day-to-day life, that encompass society and school and home and looking after their overall needs. It's all facets of their life, whether its music, sport, academics'*

They reported that they were happy to sacrifice their own needs and put their children and their needs as a priority. They reported that they were also happy with the expectation in Australian schools that parents are involved with their children. For example, the mother was the Table Tennis Co-ordinator in the sports program and helped with the Band Program. Dad P reported that he was involved at home:

> *'at home, I am reasonably involved with the kids, and their activities. Wherever I can …whether its helping with their assignments sometimes.'*.

They also acknowledged that if they were in India, maids and grandparents would be good support systems and they would have relied on them. Both confirmed that they perceive that the satisfaction of parenting is higher in Australia:

> *'I am taking and driving my child, so that involvement, I can see the spark in her eyes and I also equally feel that happiness.'*

Family M reported their belief that being engaged in the children's upbringing and level of involvement were crucial factors in making Australia 'home':

> *My parents, every time they visited, they were like 'this is amazing, we don't get to see this kind of engagement, service and attention to the kids.'*

Despite the greater help and support available in India, they preferred the system in Australia as evident from their comment:

> *'the children are influenced by a much larger section of people and therefore as parents your influence on them is lesser.'*

Family M had a good understanding about what it meant to be involved, in their comment:

> *'for me its end-to-end, it's their physical, emotional, social well-being. Raising happy healthy kids that's my involvement.' 'Provider, social and then education, that's how I see myself being involved in their lives.'*

Family M is highly involved at school, with the parents volunteering as class parents, part of the band committee and helping during different events in the school.

As is evident, the importance of parent involvement is clearly understood by all the participants. It aligns closely with definitions presented by Borgonovi & Montt (2012) on parental involvement as representing parents' 'active commitment to spending time to assist in the academic and general development of their children'. The families, especially dads, are aware of the constraints placed on their availability due to work commitments and related travel as well (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). As seen in the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model of Parent Involvement (Anderson & Minke, 2007), Level 2, demands on time and energy influence a parent's involvement.

However, the high level of engagement and willingness to participate in school among both families explains their understanding of the importance of building school-specific social capital (Turney & Kao, 2009). This social capital provides the networks, connections and benefits associated with membership of certain social structures which at times are lacking within migrant families. It also lends an understanding to the process of acculturation and the value placed on building relationships with the new country, implying strategies of assimilation and integration in focus as per the model presented by Berry (1997).

Parental involvement is influenced by numerous factors as illustrated in the five levels presented in the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model of Parent Involvement (Anderson & Minke, 2007). To create a supportive developmental environment for children, it is essential

that all three spheres, home, school and community, are collaborating and both the families have this understanding.

4.2.3 Critical evaluation of the education system.

The family perceptions in this section are to be understood as shaped by their individual, diverse, pre-existing experience and their expectations of education systems. As noted, this is not limited to an India-Australia dichotomy. Their perceptions are also shaped by their individual capacities in critical intercultural thinking.

Families M and P were evaluative in their approach to the education system. Family M saw the benefits of a 'no pressure' environment. For them this is illustrated by the fact that the only item carried to school in the child's bag is the lunchbox. This contrasts with the typical practice in India, where children carry many mandatory key textbooks to school:

> *'Lunchbox is the biggest thing in their bag which I felt was nice in a way, knowing what we did, its wow these kids are free to do what they want. And that is great. It's not so much from textbooks and from chapters and test based learning which I find really lovely.'*

They also appreciated the high quality of teachers:

> *'the teachers are engaged and take a lot of interest and are generally of very high quality.'*

Family P mentioned how they love the fact that there is a joy of learning being created and they do relevant and hands-on things:

> *'primary school is a lot more relaxed in school, the teachers focus more on enjoyment, the joy of reading, the joy of doing things than teaching to tests.'*

Family P expressed their ideology in the areas of global competitiveness and some cultural essentialism in questioning whether the pace and aggression in some of the Asian countries will outpace their children's abilities. As mentioned, this is evident when students take international exams like the ICAS (International Competitions and Assessments for Schools) and especially in subjects like technology and computer science.

Family M said they find the system is 'behind the curve' and wondered in recent times:

'I don't know if we are at a distinct advantage here, at least in the primary years.'

Family M reported their perception that public schooling needs to keep up with the times by having diverse sources of learning, which could be achieved by involving corporates and taking help from specialists to run specific programs:

'It's no more schools any more, even today I think internet, television, and there are hundreds peer to peer, there are such massive sources of learning and the education is no more limited to subjects.'

Family P also stated the same need for having new subjects like technology.

Some of the concerns raised in family M were their perceptions that the system catered to the median and there wasn't enough differentiation for children of different abilities, in fact, (unstated) for their children, whom they perceive to be advanced:

'you are left to yourselves to fend for your child outside the education system, and that I find is very, quite a big challenge.'

The amount of supplementation that they perceived was required outside of school to achieve goals which their ideology had shaped for their parenting, meant a heavy investment of additional time, money and effort:

'parents believe their kids are better than the average, they want them to learn more, what is the avenue for the, the avenue is only I will send them for a more rigorous learning experience and you've got a lot of certain private organisations who deal with science, and who deal with various other aspects…but doesn't really tie back into his overall learning.

Parent ideology can also be seen to drive participation in coaching and tutoring to enable children to compete (via competitive examination) to enter what are known as 'selective 'schools (Cardona et al., 2007). Selective schools arguably help gifted and talented students to learn, by grouping them with other gifted and talented students, teaching them in specialised ways and providing educational materials at an appropriate level. Selective high schools are unzoned so parents can apply regardless of where they live. This was discussed in

both families and they questioned the existence of this parallel system and the impact of it not being integrated into the mainstream. Both sets of parents commented that due to competition to get into desirable selective schools they feel pressure to put children into after-school coaching.

Families reported their belief that transition to secondary school involved a change from a more 'relaxed' system in primary school to a more marks-dominated system of assessment:

> *'that joy suddenly changes in a high school, that joy …no more that exploratory and practical connection to the subject.'*

Family M voiced similar concerns, evident in their comment:

> *'I do believe that the primary schooling system needs to pay a bit of a role here in terms of preparing kids towards the next journey.'*

Parent ideology is shown in their anxiety about their children's future success in their belief that 'every mark counts in high school'. University entry is determined, in New South Wales, through assessment performance, which is, in part, through public matriculation examinations. Entry to higher professional degrees (such as Law, Medicine) is controlled by setting a high entry mark (usually between 90-99):

> *'it's not just 99 but 99.99 and you are differentiating kids there and telling them you can chose careers or not chose careers based on 99.99 or 99.98. Right so how did you go from till year 6, carry your lunch bag in our school to then from year 7 to year 12, hang on you got to me that competitive.'*

From the data above on the evaluation of the education system by the two families, it becomes evident that both their own educational backgrounds and their transnational experience may have shaped their ideologies and their critical expectations of the education system (Dade, 2004). Increased connectedness and communication is greatly influencing perceptions and decisions regarding education. Their own school experiences are impacting on their expectations and approaches to education for their children and their desire for schooling to provide competitive advantage in the global market (Cardona et al., 2007; Faria, 2001).

Both families are willing and able to use their academic capital to supplement the education system by extra investment in resources in the form of coaching, tutoring and other avenues. This theme helps the researcher understand in depth and answers part of the first research question: **What are the parent perceptions of educational practice in their children's school?** In answering, in sum, both sets of parents perceive both positive and negative aspects of the Australian school system. They appreciate the flexibility, creativity and relaxed pressure. They criticise what they believe to be a lack of differentiation and extension for talented students. They perceive that the school may not reflect the competitive skills set they think their children need for the future. They imply that they are willing to be involved in a productive school-home partnership which will benefit their child. The success of this relationship however will be elaborated below.

The two families' perceptions of the school may illustrate how transnationalism, better connectivity and the academic capital of families can and will influence their ideas about education and the schooling system in Australia.

4.2.4 Experiences at school

The family experiences in this section are divided into two parts: interactions related to the school community and interactions with the school leadership and teachers. Their experiences are influenced by their cultural beliefs, family values, process of acculturation, views on parental involvement and the cultural and academic capital they possess.

4.2.4.1 School Community

Family M discussed their belief that migrant families are limited in what they can offer to do for the school, as they typically have two parents working and have limited options for childcare (although this may apply to many non-immigrant families also). As seen earlier, parental involvement is influenced by demands on time and energy for other commitments (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model of Parent Involvement (Anderson & Minke, 2007) . They believe that this results in what they see to be the 'majority' Anglo-Australian culture being

more involved and present at school committees and events, which is turn assists in creating and enhancing social capital which is highly beneficial (Turney & Kao, 2009).

Family M also find the community in general to be of global outlook and welcoming. They believe that at the children's level, they have experienced no identification by race. Parents expressed the observation that majority culture parents may not mean explicitly to create any exclusion. As seen, the families are aware of their own limitations being migrants and are reflectively attempting to understand their situation and others' perceptions, in their effort to acculturate.

Their insistence on there being a 'majority culture' is curious, given, as noted in Chapter 3 (Section 3.5), that the School X population features a high proportion of children of diverse background. The area in which School X is situated also features high levels of ethnic diversity, with many immigrants from China, Korea and India.

Family M commented on this demographic and their perception of the apparent ideologies and expectations of 'a lot of families'. They questioned whether the system is geared up for the changing landscape in terms of diversity in the community:

> *'the school has moved from a very Caucasian dominated school to a very Asian dominated school, where a lot of families have moved into the area from 0-5 years. And their backgrounds, their learning styles, their expectations from the system are really different and so therefore it is putting pressure on the system to start behaving differently.'*

The parents perceive a mismatch between parent expectations of their children's future needs and what they perceive the school is offering. They believe that changes in school need to be addressed to ensure their children can meet the challenges of the future:

> '*But the parents have very different outcomes, so it's becoming a very …it's almost like the system is…the parents are expecting different things but the education system is delivering different things. So, there is a mismatch*.' (Mum M)

Family M believe their children must be able to survive in a rapidly changing workplace:

> *'slowly starting to change to meet some of these needs which didn't exist earlier. They are new and you have to do it otherwise you are a redundant system.'*

Family P report their perception that initiatives in multiculturalism are tokenistic at school and offer suggestions for deeper attention to culture in the curriculum:

… they are talking about multiculturalism they should have a whole unit which is dedicated towards multiculturalism. Multicultural we only hear of it in that speech, we only hear of it on the Harmony Day…They have a multicultural policy so they say yes, …but the policy is very sketchy if you read it. It only says that we will not differentiate because of culture, but to integrate culture there is no word about that.

From the experiences of the two families with the school environment in general, it is evident that there are mixed feelings about the success of the school-home partnership. On one side, they understand that minority families volunteer less and are not so visible at school due to a variety of reasons which exacerbates the situation of invisibility, lack of social capital and not using opportunities to integrate.

On the other hand, they question whether the school understands how to create a school-home partnership that is relevant to the particular parent demographic of the school. They suggest that the school needs to fully acknowledge the changes in diversity within the community and parent expectations, rather than tokenistic gestures in their approach. This highlights the importance of the society in general and sites like schools in engaging deeply with the process of acculturation.

We now look at the largely unsuccessful experiences of the migrant families when interacting with the parent community of the school. As seen in the acculturation models presented by Schwartz et al. (2010), the receiving country and their interactions play a very important role in how the migrant families adjust to the new environment. Allowing migrant families to utilize the capital they hold, and assisting them building social capital in the school environment, holds the key to integration in the school environment.

Family M mentioned that views presented by them are often not fully considered by the parent community and school leadership. This dynamic was obvious and discouraging. While having the advantage of being exposed to different ways of being can add a lot of value, they are not allowed to. They felt shut down when they wanted to contribute and participate in the school community:

'You are shut down and you are expected to follow and not lead.' 'Fall behind the line, don't try to come in the front.'

The families perceived that the school community appeared to be attached to previously-used and proven ways of doing things, making it difficult for innovative ideas and new people to be involved. Family P also confirm this via their experience of trying to volunteer for a fundraising committee but a sense of discouragement resulted in them pulling out of it. They especially feel excluded from any leadership role, Family M perceives, of the larger parent community, that:

'they are happy to have the army but they don't want a general. – you can take up more responsibility and be more involved in critical decisions, they shut you down'.

Family P confirm this sentiment:

'For smaller things however, canteen duty and selling cupcakes, then they want people, and that's just run of the mill'.

The family suggests that in their view there are barriers to certain levels of desired participation such as leadership. Family M says:

'there is a barrier and you are not allowed past it'.

Continuing the "us-them" polarisation, Family M reports, in their apparent position as "other", they feel discouraged from offering leadership and using their various forms of capital in parent circles (such as the P &C):

'you can fold into their view, but not stand out.'

Family M explains the perception, that in their experience, sometimes being positioned as a migrant, "other", means that their capital (strength) is used against them:

'I just find they are lovely till they start to feel scared of you and fearful of you and till they start to feel that you are strong. That's when they start to build walls, and they start feeling fearful of you and they start getting, they start differentiating, starting to pull the thing that 'oh you are a migrant' to make it more comfortable for them.'

Family P also used similar words like fear, threat and defensiveness to explain what they perceive to be the behaviour of the majority group of parents at the school:

> *'They will discourage you and they would want you out. They are enjoying it with their set of friends and they want to manage it.'*

Family P also believed how even when they try to volunteer, they feel sidelined. It is unclear whether the Family P parent is speaking about frustration in his individual experience, or extrapolating to a larger imagined migrant group, denoted by "they":

> *'They put their hand up for something when the first meeting happened, and they didn't even get any information about how it's going to happen, what they are supposed to do.*

Family P, through examples, reiterated that they perceive, while difficult to specifically identify it, that there is racism on occasions in their dealings with the school:

> *'it's about the person, whether it's the class teacher, whether it's the principal, because it has to be their subjective opinion, we can't be very sure about whether racism played an important part there, but we felt that it was a factor.'*

A Family P parent believes that the principal openly discriminates at times:

> *'if someone else's child is on the stage, and doing well, the principal is nodding at that parent and hugs that parent. And she knows that I am sitting there, she doesn't acknowledge that, I know that she knows that I am there, but she would not look at me. What is this? It is racism.'*

While there maybe consciousness towards respecting cultural differences by the school principal, creating an atmosphere which does not breed discrimination or even such perceptions would be helpful.

She believes that her children are aware and perceptive of their treatment at school:

> *'The moment they pickup that you are teaching them biases in the world, school is teaching them what bias means in reality.'*

The choice, which is the consequence of these unsuccessful experiences of school-home partnership, for the Family P parent, is to withdraw:

'having volunteered in something that is of my interest, going there and having this kind of negative feedback from other parents, other migrants of my kind, and having a negative experience does put you off. So, then I decide to just exclude myself.'

The Family P parent further explains that after many years of trying to participate in school-home partnership, she has changed her approach:

'I just felt it was too much, because I don't want to get into any of the politics, I don't want to be friends with people there.'

Family M expressed similar views and said:

'that is enough of that; I am just going to spend my money and time on my child outside the school. Because I can't spend any more time inside the schools fighting these battles or trying to help, giving our points of view when it's not going to impact on the child or make a difference.'

Both families have expressed the desire to self-exclude and withdraw from the school environment. As seen in Berry's (1997) acculturation strategies, this could be viewed as the beginning of 'separation' strategies, which would be detrimental to the students and the whole community.

It has been suggested that Anglo Australian school communities may appear to feel threatened by the migrant population and their elite positions being shared (Watkins, Ho, & Butler, 2017). The diverse ideologies which may be held by immigrant groups are increasingly being seen as a threat to ways of parenting which endorse a more relaxed and liberal approach (Watkins et al., 2017). It may be that the majority communities are using derogatory labels such as 'tiger parenting', to mask anxieties or educational divisions in the changing socio-economic environment. Using Hage's (2012) characterisation of individuals of dominant cultures as 'spatial managers', we can view the responses from both families in this light. These barriers created for the migrant families through school politics, power struggles and dominance are not assisting with integration processes in minority communities. If this is not addressed within the school playgrounds, the ideologies of social cohesion and community harmony will remain a dream.

4.2.4.2 With school leadership and teachers:

The next area of interaction to explore is the experiences of the migrant families with the school leadership and teachers.

Family M report that they find the teachers open and eager to help. They say that they find it easy to talk to teachers and they believe that the teachers do not view them as migrants:

> *'And they're very eager to hear your thoughts, your views, they take on board a lot of the things, they are happy to listen to you, and have really good meaningful conversations'.*

The relationship of the two families with the school leadership and teachers reveals two important aspects. Interactions with the school leadership are generally limited and the families may not be privy to all the factors that go into making decisions. The school leadership is also represented by the principal and the interactions may only reflect the views of one person and not necessarily the whole school culture.

The comfort and confidence felt in the relationships with the teachers is a great strength and can be looked at closely to influence the culture at the school. As mentioned by the families, teachers being open and supportive has immensely helped and encouraged them to be involved and ask the necessary questions when required (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Teachers can be great mediators and break existing prejudices and barriers (Casinader & Walsh, 2015).

Secondly, the role of the school leadership in promoting and creating an inclusive framework within the school is paramount (Hazel & Allen, 2013). A close look at the guidelines and policies of the school may reveal better ways to manage volunteer parent bodies, consciously steering away from creating pockets of power in the school.

This theme on the interactions with the school community, leadership and teachers helps address the third research question: How do the two case studies illustrate the multidimensionality of acculturation? How do parent ideologies influence responses to experiences at school with leadership, teachers and parent communities?

4.2.5 On School-home partnerships

In this section, we look at the school-home partnerships and expectations from and by the school. The purpose of the sections above was to understand the perceptions and expectations of the migrant families of the Australian schooling system and address part two of the first research question - **What are their expectations from the school-home partnership?** Equipped with this information, it would help to strengthen understanding of the school-home partnership as seen in the following section. Below are some of the comments reported by both families on what the school expects from the parents and the implications of this.

Family P explained the expectation the school had in terms of involvement:

> *'but the school does expect more parent involvement overall. Yes, they do want parents to volunteer time for something or other.'*

Family M confirms this and explains how there are messages from teachers, the principal and the school in general about the importance of being involved:

> *'It's a joint effort, it's a partnership they call it, and it has to be, and you have to be very much involved and engaged with your child's learning.'*

Family M also explains how being involved and engaged at school can be advantageous:

> *'the information flows laterally, it's not always top-down, it flows across, around and everywhere. It's just about being there; if you are there you have the information.'*

Family M also explains their belief as to the advantage of being involved and how it can help them if they need to seek clarification or information about something from the school:

> *'so being involved, gives you access to, you know the school now so you know who to ask and but I don't think that would make it unfair for your child.'*

They believe that being involved has numerous benefits even though not all can be quantified or are tangible:

> *'It can be different for different people, but the benefit is nothing more than your child watching your behaviour, integrating yourself and being a core part of something'.'*

> *There is nothing tangible in all this, this is not a measurable thing, it doesn't always equate to an award, a reward or an academic'.*

They want the school to understand that they are a family that is highly engaged and involved, as they believe this may advantage their child:

> *'The school watches you as well and they look at you as being highly involved and the teachers understand, and when they look at your child, it's a little bit different, because they know this family is highly engaged, so that makes a difference, it does make a difference.'*

Family M explains their belief in the outcomes of a partnership and the reciprocity involved:

> *'It's a reciprocal relationship, if I invest in something, that person will invest back into me. It's very simple, it's about anything is life.'*

They also note their belief that not being involved can lead to families feeling alienated as they don't have communication networks. Then, when such families do decide to come to school, this could exacerbate feelings of isolation. This belief is captured in this comment by family M:

> *'but I think it's almost like a vicious circle, the less you know, the less involved you feel, the less you to want to be involved, and the less you know…'*

Parental involvement is complex and is affected by several factors which may act like barriers. Individual parent and family factors, child factors, parent-teacher factors and societal factors all influence the level of engagement of parents in their children's educational journey. Oversimplification in understanding parental involvement will not aid in improving it, instead a look at the various factors and barriers and finding ways to combat them will be effective.

As seen from the data, both families understand the importance and need to be involved. They could report on some barriers faced by them especially within the parent community. The parents' perceptions of the school culture plays a crucial role in determining their willingness to be involved (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

Based on their experiences and perceptions, both families were asked for recommendations on what schools can do to embrace diversity. They both made valuable and practical

suggestions as to aspects schools can look at to strengthen the school-home partnership, especially for minority communities. The suggestions are revealing as to their motivations, and are illustrations and applications of their social, cultural and economic capital. For example, they suggested that school processes should be transparent and equity should be visible. Engagement of parents in school activities should have a purpose and be linked to education and the well-being of the children. They suggested that the school could take an active role as mediator or bridge between different parent groups by conducting workshops explaining various aspects of the Australian education system, regular forums and/or one-on-one sessions to get feedback from diverse groups within the school community. This section provides into the expectations of the families from the school-home partnership.

4.3 Summary of Chapter 4

The study has collected data using two methods – textual analysis and in-depth interviews. As seen in the textual analysis, the Australian and New South Wales Governments and Department of Education are promoting and supporting multiculturalism. Policies have been in place for over three decades promoting cultural awareness and maintenance, community harmony and social equity (Watkins, Lean, & Noble, 2016). However, their relevance, framework and mode of delivery need to be carefully evaluated. A critical assessment will help us understand which measures are tokenistic in nature, and which are effective. Ho (2011b) argues that everyday multiculturalism can be found in the 'micropublics' of cross-cultural interactions in social settings like schools, workplaces and neighbourhoods. It is up to society to use this effectively in creating an atmosphere of respect and understanding the place of others around it.

Through the interviews, I can see that both families can be termed transnational, as they have worked and lived in various parts of the world, work being the main driver for their movements and they are connected to their home country by way of frequent travel and communication. Transnationalism, the process of migration and acculturation, cultural beliefs and their own experiences of school influence their outlook and expectations from the education system in Australia. Perceptions and experiences with the school system and the uses of various forms of capital contribute to their ideas about parental involvement and education.

For both families, education was a key factor, though different methods of research were adopted. Both families provided a critical evaluation of the education system which was influenced by their ideologies. They appreciated the teachers and the joy of learning being created in primary schools. However, some of the areas of improvement identified were:

- Global competitiveness can be improved and students can be geared to be global citizens
- Adapting and implementing diverse sources of learning involving the corporate sector and the community
- Catering to 'above the curve' students and putting a stop to parallel systems that are thriving
- Creating better transition programs and readiness for high school in the upper primary years

The families had experiences regarding their interactions with the school leadership, teachers and the parent community which were affected by their own pre-existing beliefs:

- Teachers are open and view every parent in the same way
- Dilution of views and full participation and involvement discouraged by the parent community and school leadership
- Existence of subtle racism
- Multicultural activities at school appear to be tokenistic at times
- Clear messaging from schools on the importance of being involved and engaged

The following chapter will discuss the implications of Chapter 4 findings.

Chapter 5 Discussion

5.1 Overview

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings and constructs answers to the three research questions. To reprise, these are:

1.	What are the parent perceptions of educational practice in their children's school? What are their expectations from the school-home partnership?

2.	What are the parents' views on parent involvement? To what extent, and in what way, do they involve themselves?

3.	How do the two case studies illustrate the multidimensionality of acculturation? How do parent ideologies influence responses to experiences at school with leadership, teachers and parent communities?

Before moving to these answers, Figure 5.1 below provides the reflective mapping of the different theories and concepts that contributed to analysis in the research study. The theoretical frameworks on acculturation processes (Berry, Schwartz and Ward) and uses of capital (Bourdieu, 2011; Lee & Zhou, 2014) informed the analysis. By using the concepts of culture, identity and intercultural learning we understand the migration journeys and the complex, problematic process of acculturation.

The study has struggled with cultural essentialism and attributing behaviours and attitudes to cultural backgrounds, both in reporting and analysing the participants' attitudes, and in the researcher's involvement. The parents' discourse illustrates perceptions of how all communities (they themselves, other sections of the school parent body, staff and principal) use capital – social, ethnic, cultural and academic, to their advantage. We can see how schools can be sites that embrace multiculturalism through various approaches, but that a simplistic approach does not encompass the complexities of intercultural interaction and relationships.
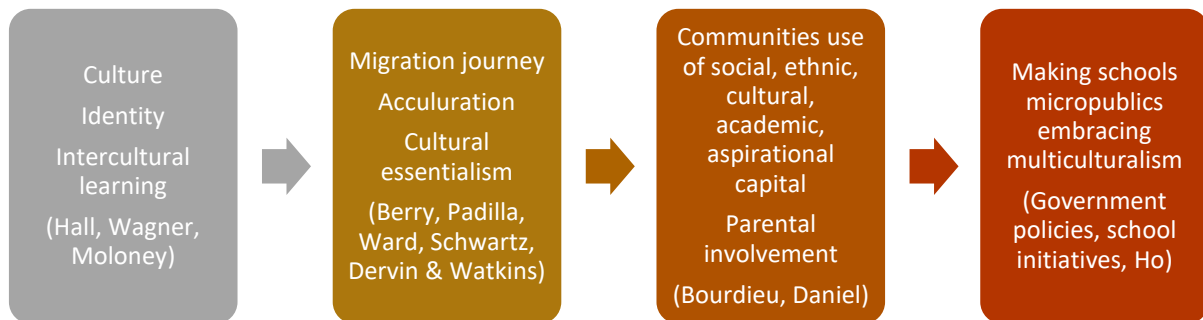
| Culture Identity Intercultural learning (Hall, Wagner, Moloney) | → | Migration journey Acculturation Cultural essentialism (Berry, Padilla, Ward, Schwartz, Dervin & Watkins) | → | Communities use of social, ethnic, cultural, academic, aspirational capital Parental involvement (Bourdieu, Daniel) | → | Making schools micropublics embracing multiculturalism (Government policies, school initiatives, Ho) |

Figure 5.1 - Researcher's model – Theories and concepts, contributed to study

This chapter considers how the core concepts of the thesis are represented and illustrated in answering the research questions. These will be used in conjunction with the theoretical models to understand and provide conclusions to the study.

5.2 Answering Research Question 1

Data from the research indicates that while the families enjoy and appreciate some of the differences and liberal ways of education in Australia, they have areas where they feel schools and the education system can do more for its students. Lack of understanding of the schema of the Australian education system at times, and unmet expectations due to held beliefs and experiences, appear to create a disconnect in the school-home partnership. Perceptions about barriers faced at schools from majority communities is contributing to feelings of the 'us-them' dichotomy, sometimes fuelling isolation and withdrawal.

5.3 Answering Research question 2

Parents from both families understand and enjoy the importance of being involved with their children. As student outcomes are positively influenced by parental involvement, they appreciate the school's efforts to encourage this behaviour and volunteer at school events and as committee members. Experiences in these activities however have not always been

successful. The involvement of both families goes beyond school life as well. Cultural beliefs and heritage influences this behaviour due to the high value placed on education in the Indian community. The use of cultural, ethnic, academic and aspirational capital is visible.

5.4 Answering research Question 3

The two case studies illustrate the multidimensionality in acculturation and how the process consists of the confluence among heritage-cultural and receiving-cultural practices, values, and identifications as shown in the model in chapter 2 (Figure 2.3). The two-case study sets of parents struggle with unmet expectations on one hand and the need to integrate into the new environment on the other.

There are many instances in the data which show how unacknowledged parent ideologies unconsciously influence their responses to experiences at school, with leadership, teachers and parent communities. The school and the families both understand the advantages of being involved and engaged and its positive impact on student outcomes, and yet cannot always make the partnership a successful one.

The families perceive the environment at times not to be encouraging participation, especially by what they see as 'majority' communities. Parents feel they want to be involved but are faced with barriers to entry. Two likely scenarios emerge, which may lead to the families withdrawing or excluding themselves from the school environment due to negative experiences, or families may continue to try to be involved despite resistance. Families that exclude or remove themselves from schools may be creating a disconnect in the school-home partnership adversely impacting on student well-being and learning. These families may start looking for alternative sources of education, fostering and supporting parallel systems of coaching and tutoring. This approach which is not integrated into mainstream student learning further distances children from the core education system. This may contribute to ethnic segregation and marginalisation. One possible cycle has been depicted in Figure 5.2 below, this figure is a representation of the problem and related issues that may arise resulting from perceived and real barriers in the school environment. However, they are other iterations such as the positive contributions to the school community due to the families being transnationals.
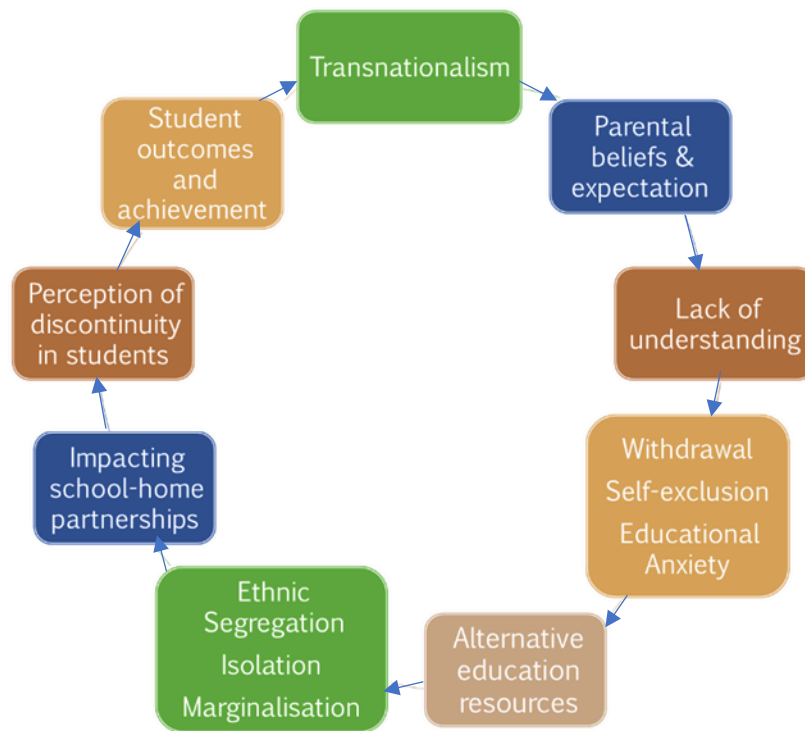
Figure 5.2 - Researcher's model on existing problem and related issues

5.5 Discussion of culture and identity

An important parameter of this thesis was to listen to two families' authentic individual voices and see how they construct identity and belonging through their interactions and relations with their childrens' school. Rather than stereotyping, it is important to note diversity which exists, within any one minority group. In this study I note that the families interviewed, whilst both from India, had diverse backgrounds and upbringing. While one family predominantly lived in New Delhi in the north of India the other family was a marriage of two different religions – Hindu and Christian. The husband lived in Mumbai, the cosmopolitan commercial capital of India and the wife grew up across different cities in India due to her father being employed in the Air Force. Their individual beliefs, values, practices and upbringing along with their own schooling experience would influence their outlook. The diversity within diversity is an important aspect when understanding their attitudes and expectations for their children and from the schooling system in Australia.

During the analysis, I looked for both vertical and horizontal threads in the stories of the participants. This was particularly helpful, as in this project, the researcher went back to interview the same participants after initial analysis with the aim of delving deeper and uncovering meanings.

The study showed us the influence of backgrounds in the two families' outlook towards education and parenting. However, it also highlighted that while common cultural backgrounds may create common threads in our behaviour, an individual or family may perceive and respond to situations differently. Dervin (2013) has referred to this as "diverse diversities" in the need to focus on the individual case and allow individuals to be stereotyped by cultural influences. Though a small sample of two case studies, it is challenging to confront the cultural essentialism that exists in discussions with and about different migrant groups (Aris, 2017).

As also seen through the interviews conducted, the concept of 'identity' (how people conceive themselves and are viewed by others) in the two families is multiple and fluid (Hall, 2011). Norton (1997) has emphasised the role of interpersonal relationships, ideological structures and personal and cultural histories in influencing the creation and adaptation of identity. The same ideology is reinforced by Dervin and Gao (2012) & Jackson (2011), when they explain the liquid or fluid nature of cultures and identities. This greatly impacts on both commonality and difference in how both the families perceive and react to similar situations in the school environment.

While conducting the study, another concept that gave insight into behaviour was Dervin's (2013) observation of migrants creating an image of the 'national self and other' and copying certain national characteristics to become like the other, described as a kind of "intercultural pygmalionism". In the modern-day context, acculturation and assimilation are more dynamic processes incorporating different perspectives on the phenomenon.

In the data, the parents' acculturation process was examined also through the lens of intercultural learning. This has been defined as involving critical reflection and knowledge of the self, from interaction with others (Moloney & Oguro, 2015; Moran, 2001). The process of acculturation in the families' relationships with the school is complex and ongoing. Their beliefs about parenting, and what they believe to be necessary for their children's competitive

future, are strong, and appear to have been only minimally impacted by the values projected by the Australian school. While they acknowledge some attractive qualities of Australian pedagogy, there is little evidence in their discourse of reflective critique of their own ideology or beliefs.

The concept of integration must involve both cultural maintenance and the struggle for inclusion (Ward & Kus, 2012). The thesis has been aware that it is vital to view approaches to parenting as individual, dynamic, complex, and influenced by one's surroundings, without oversimplification by falling back on culture as the explanation.

We have noted the distress in some areas of the parent data in Chapter 4. This confirms similar findings, such as Stephenson's (2001) work which highlighted the dislocation, alienation and despair faced by migrants from culturally diverse backgrounds. This thesis contributes to literature which is bringing to the forefront issues faced by migrant families at schools as detailed in Chapter 2 (see for example, (Markose & Simpson, 2016)).

The experiences of other minority communities including Aboriginals and the Chinese community helps elucidate both similarities and differences in the feelings of exclusion and marginalisation experienced in the school relationship. In this and similar studies, a careful approach is required so that we do not objectify participants and instead encourage them to have the agency required to respond to their situations.

As explained by Bourdieu (2011), all communities try to use their cultural, social and educational capital to construct and influence outcomes to their advantage. Data in this study suggest that schools at times value the cultural capital possessed by the majority families, as it more closely aligns with their own values of interconnectedness (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

Schools are generally middle-class institutions having middle-class values. They may inadvertently promote engagement from parents who align more closely with the school's apparent intellectual and economic orientation and thus marginalise other individuals (Avvisati, Besbas, & Guyon, 2010). As suggested in the study by Watkins et al. (2017), individuals in the Indian community in Sydney may have come from a highly competitive educational environment in India and thus transfer this to the opportunity for academic competitiveness in the NSW school system. The migrant families in this manner use their 'ethnic and academic capital'.

In the data presented in the policy documents and annual reports, we observe that the Government and the school are trying to help children and adults transcend cultural boundaries through policy frameworks and opportunities for participation and engagement. Parents in the case studies report, however, that they have both positive and negative experiences in this engagement, and may experience some rejection and discouragement in these interactions.

Ho (2011b) encourages us to look at relationships and interactions as more fluid sites of change and learning. While ideally, strong bonds and friendships are desired, practically if we can create 'micro-moral economies' recognising and acknowledging others, it would be an achievable goal. This means the ability of the society to acknowledge another's presence within a social space and to provide the freedom to inhabit that space without interference, would become a powerful form of recognition and respect (Ho, 2011b). The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, released by State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers of Education in 2008 (MCEECDYA (Ministerial Council on Education, 2008) states as one of its demands – "the need to nurture an appreciation of and respect for social, cultural and religious diversity and a sense of global citizenship". This must involve informed attention to diversity within schools, and to school relationships with the parent body which supports them. This study has highlighted the role of developing reflective 'interculturality' for all participants in the school-home partnership. This discourse draws attention to the processes involved as, in this case, parents and schools engage and exchange with each other. It involves the 'making visible' of one's own values and beliefs, and a reflective understanding of the experiences, perceptions and viewpoints of all parties involved (Dervin, 2011). It is hoped that this approach, featured in the Australian Curriculum, will be more strongly developed in schools (Harbon & Moloney, 2015).

Throughout the study, being a migrant, the researcher has engaged with intercultural learning, and acquired the ability to critically analyse the data collected, research papers relevant to the topic and her own experiences. The journey has been of moving from the present 'being' to 'becoming' a critical interculturalist. This work is an attempt to use the researcher's background on Indian heritage, combine it with living in different countries for the last 17 years to present, a critically interculturalist viewpoint. As seen throughout the study, families are influenced by a myriad of factors in their views on education, expectations

from the schooling system and their perceptions and experiences with the school community. This study brings to the forefront the complexity of the issues involved, and the need to get rid of the unhelpful 'us-them' dichotomy. There is an urgent need to challenge the essentialised notions of 'India and Indianness' to pave way for a society that embraces diversity.

The implications of the findings have been discussed and chapter 6 will present the conclusions from the study.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This study embarked on the process of understanding two Indian migrant families' perceptions and experiences of the Australian education system, as seen in one school. Parental involvement was examined through the lens of the families and how they engage with their children's journey in the school. The study provided an opportunity to look at the complex process of acculturation and the various factors that influence this process including beliefs, values and practices held by the heritage and receiving countries. The use of various forms of capital – cultural, social, ethnic, educational and aspirational, provided insights into the various responses to experiences within the school community.

6.2 Modelling and practice adopted in the thesis

6.2.1 Overview of Literature Review

Theoretical models provided the framework for the analysis. Research studies in the stages of migration provided an understanding of the process of acculturation. Parental involvement and its positive impacts provided the necessary understanding of its significance. The complex interplay of factors determining parental involvement provided the knowledge to understand the story from the parents' and school's perspective. The role of educators and the strategies used by schools in different countries provided a roadmap on what different approaches could be adopted to strengthen the school-home partnership.

6.2.2 Review of methodology and data analysis

The study adopted a qualitative approach as its research strategy. Textual analysis and the case studies were the methods adopted. Textual analysis was conducted by identifying key documents pertinent to the research. The Multicultural Policy and Anti-Racism Policy were studied by identifying salient features. The documents showed the existing frameworks in place by the Government to embrace diversity. At the school level, publicly available annual

reports were studied. This further confirmed strategies adopted by the school to adapt to the changing landscape of diverse communities within the school environment.

In-depth interviews were conducted with two Indian families. The interviews were conducted in two stages – first interview (1.5 – 2 hours) followed by analysis, and then second interview to delve deeper and uncover meanings. Transcription by the researcher was the first step in the process of data analysis. This was followed the use of coding techniques and thematic analysis. Thematic analysis helped in identifying commonalities and differences between families.

6.2.3 Limitations of the Study

The study has the limitations of a case-study approach. The results cannot be generalised but will add to the existing knowledge in the field. Sample size is limited. Only two migrant families were interviewed. The predefined criteria in selecting the participants meant that I was looking at a small subset, a 'niche' group. Participants were selected based on existing relationships and this may have influenced the data collection and the interactions due to familiarity. As parents were interviewed together, at times one person could have dominated and influenced the discussion. Due to the semi-structured interview approach employed by the study, the questions between the two families may have been varied and inconsistent. While being a migrant herself benefitted the project, the researcher may not have completely eradicated researcher bias and her own perceptions and experiences. This will be factored into the analysis. Assessing reliability for this study is limited as only one researcher and one critical friend were involved.

6.3 Contributions of the thesis

There is a renewed interest in and focus on strengthening school-home partnership due to its direct impact on student outcomes, which makes this study pertinent and valuable. The OECD has endorsed the need to research the impacts of ethnicity on parental involvement and in different sociocultural contexts (Borgonovi & Montt, 2012).

This study has contributed to the existing literature in several ways. The research has delved into an area that has received limited attention. Migrants are a large and ever-increasing

proportion of the Australian population and this makes it imperative to understand their expectations and perceptions of the Australian schooling system. It helps us explore ways and means of encouraging parents to be involved at school, removing both perceived and real barriers in the system.

This research presents alternative strategies to enhance the school-home partnership. This would be helpful in the changing environment of increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in our schools today. For researchers, the development of intercultural responsiveness, namely the growth of understanding, sensitivity and awareness towards oneself in relation to the world should be emphasised when conducting future research.

6.4 Recommendations and Further Research

This section presents several recommendations and some suggestions for future research projects.

The first recommendation is to train teachers to learn and develop transcultural modes of thinking and an intercultural approach to both the curriculum and to the fabric of the classroom (Casinader & Walsh, 2015; Harbon & Moloney, 2015). Schools can use the experiences of the migrants to broaden the horizons of the whole class and create tolerance and respect (Candy & Butterworth, 1998). Our educators need to be equipped with the necessary skills and training to be able to handle the changing landscapes within schools (Watkins et al., 2016). The role of educators is critical in bridging the gaps between migrant families and society. Schools are significant sites where we can promote the right values and understandings about people from diverse cultures (Watkins et al., 2016).

A second recommendation is for schools to have clearly defined strategies to promote inclusiveness and embrace diversity. Schools can achieve this by acting as mediators and supporters for migrant families. Exploring the role of cultural celebrations and their impact is another avenue worth exploring (Niemi, Kuusisto, & Kallioniemi, 2014).

Future projects which further develop an understanding of migrant families, helping the Australian education system adapt to the changing landscape would be beneficial.

1. A project involving teachers, students and parents from a diverse school community will give the necessary insight and ability to view this issue from all perspectives. This could help in steering the direction of what needs to be addressed at school and Department levels.

2. More families could be interviewed to get more information on the variety of experiences and perceptions amongst migrant families. This would help identify whether consistent themes emerge.

3. Studies involving other migrant cultures would help to understand the similarities and differences with regards to education and schooling in Australia.

4. A study to investigate parental involvement through primary years, assessing if there is a decline as students move to high grades and the factors behind this.

This project was undertaken with the view to contribute to existing literature on education in diaspora communities. Indian migrants are one of the fastest growing migrant population in Australia, hence an understanding of their experiences and perceptions of the schooling system in Australia assumes significance.

The textual analysis provided an understanding of policies and initiatives taken by the Government and schools to embrace diversity in the changing landscape in the school environment by promoting multiculturalism and creating an atmosphere of inclusiveness. The insights provided by the in-depth interviews with the two families were valuable in providing answers to the research questions of the study. It became evident that both their own educational backgrounds and their transnational experience shaped their ideologies and their critical expectations of the education system. The responses on parental involvement by both families acknowledges their understanding of the importance of engagement in the educational journey of their children. The study informs of the myriad of factors that impact parental involvement. The experiences of the families while interacting with the school community, leadership and teachers brought to light the complex and multidimensional process of acculturation and the influences and impacts of transnationalism, parent ideologies and cultural belief on responses and expectations. The use of different forms of capital: cultural, social, academic and aspirational, further add to our understanding and its impact on the school-home partnership.

For these two families there were challenges in the school-home partnership. While they reported good relationships with teachers, one family reported experiences of rejection, or limited sense of agency, from sectors of the parent body. The other family was critical of curriculum which they perceived to be out of touch with contemporary needs. They perceived the 'multicultural' inclusion strategies to be tokenistic. For both families their sense of belonging to the school community was limited by these factors. This, at times, fosters feelings of self-exclusion and withdrawal, which are detrimental to the school-home partnership.

The research study hopes to have shed light on the school-home partnership as a factor in better student outcomes and made suggestions on ways of strengthening this partnership. The project brings to light the importance of critical interculturality and how this could assist in breaking the 'us-them' dichotomy and pave the way for social cohesion and harmony.

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Appendices

A) NAPLAN results from MySchool website for School X

The chart below displays average NAPLAN scores for each <u>domain</u>. The selected school's scores are displayed in blue. Also displayed are average scores for statistically similar schools (SIM) and all Australian schools (ALL). The coloured bars indicate whether the selected school's scores are above, close to, or below the other scores. **How to interpret this chart:**

SIM schools serving students from statistically similar backgrounds
ALL Australian schools' average

Selected school's average is:

■ **substantially above**
■ **Above**
  close to
■ **Below**
■ **substantially below**

	Reading		Writing		Spelling		Grammar and Punctuation		Numeracy	
Year 3	**481** 465 - 498		**470** 456 - 484		**498** 483 - 514		**509** 491 - 527		**472** 458 - 486	
	SIM 483 474 - 492	ALL 426	SIM 457 449 - 465	ALL 421	SIM 473 464 - 481	ALL 420	SIM 502 492 - 512	ALL 436	SIM 460 452 - 468	ALL 402
Year 5	**560** 545 - 575		**518** 504 - 533		**554** 540 - 568		**573** 556 - 589		**558** 545 - 572	
	SIM 553 545 - 562	ALL 502	SIM 514 506 - 522	ALL 476	SIM 534 526 - 542	ALL 493	SIM 563 554 - 572	ALL 505	SIM 548 540 - 556	ALL 493

B) *Excerpts from School X's Annual report*

- *School X delivers a high quality and balanced education in a nurturing environment. The school motto, 'Success for All', is reflected in the school's programs and practices. A strong and effective partnership exists between the community and the school. It provides an inclusive learning environment in which all students are supported to strive for excellence. Students actively collaborate, problem-solve and engage in positive learning experiences. Through quality teaching programs and a balanced curriculum, students develop the skills to be confident, curious, informed and inspired. They become learners who think critically and creatively. Our motivated learning community works together to achieve personal and school goals in a happy and caring setting.*

- *Student welfare is a very high priority. Social and emotional wellbeing and resilience are highly valued and recognised as being vital to the success of individuals and the community. Our 'Program Achieve' explicitly teaches students the skills needed for academic success and social and emotional well-being. Students learn the skills of 'confidence', 'organisation', 'persistence', 'getting along' and 'resilience'. The program which begins for all students on their first day each year, builds positive cultures of success and well-being in all classrooms and across the school.*

i)   *Initiatives undertaken to fulfil the strategic direction at School X*

        a. The P&C along with our community has worked in partnership to consolidate our standing as an inclusive school. Our school has been fortunate to have parent leaders initiate activities and drive events to bring our community together to benefit our students. This year has seen an increase in parent volunteers, particularly in the School Band Program. Our P&C have been active in addressing the challenges by communicating effectively to reach all parents and this continues to be an important goal. Through parent and teacher initiatives such as the International Canteen Days, Harmony Day, the Lunch and Learn Series and Chat and Play, parent social groups and support groups have been established. In 2016 these initiatives have continued to develop with increased participation and community involvement. These initiatives have
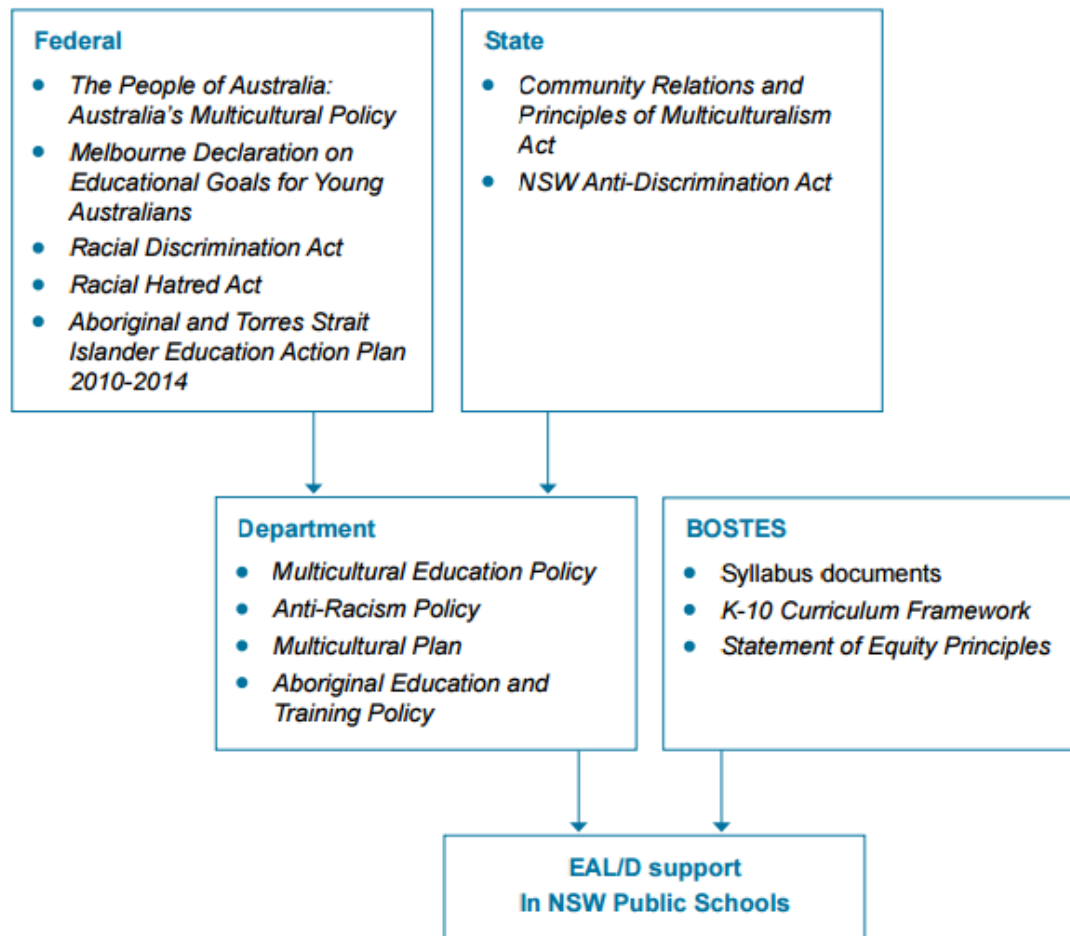
also opened the door for parents who have not previously been involved in the school community to take part in school and community events.

b. *In 2016, we supported multicultural education through the following programs and initiatives:*

• Children in K–2 danced and spoke of the significance of the Indian festival, Diwali.

• A parent information session was held for LBOTE (Language Background Other than English) parents to explain the EAL/D program.

• Communication with parents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds was enhanced by engaging interpreters for Parent/Teacher interviews.

• Intercultural Understandings were taught through English, HSIE and Creative Arts.

• The Think Global Act Local parent group ran lunches and dinners for parents around cultural themes and included cultural activities.

• International Canteen days were held to celebrate the food of various backgrounds such as Korean, Chinese and Indian.

• Our Anti–Racism policy was clearly communicated to all members of our school community and our ARCO (Anti–racism Officer) was available to manage any issues as they arose

C) Key policies supported by the Government

Key policies

Federal	**State**
• *The People of Australia: Australia's Multicultural Policy* • *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* • *Racial Discrimination Act* • *Racial Hatred Act* • *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014*	• *Community Relations and Principles of Multiculturalism Act* • *NSW Anti-Discrimination Act*

Department	**BOSTES**
• *Multicultural Education Policy* • *Anti-Racism Policy* • *Multicultural Plan* • *Aboriginal Education and Training Policy*	• *Syllabus documents* • *K-10 Curriculum Framework* • *Statement of Equity Principles*

**EAL/D support
In NSW Public Schools**

The Department's Multicultural Education Policy requires schools to promote positive community relations with parents and community members from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and encourage their participation in school life. Strategies to support the engagement of parents may include:

• ensuring interpreters and translations are used for effective communication

• providing professional learning for teachers and other staff in intercultural understanding and cross-cultural communication.

• ensuring that consultative mechanisms and decision-making processes are representative of the cultural diversity of the school

• utilising specialist resources such as strengthening family and community engagement in student learning resources

D) Interview Questions for families for Stage 1

Introduction

- Consent
- Audio recording
- Note taking
- Confidentiality
- Reminder about ethics
- Reason for conducting research
- What is required from the participants

Basic information

1. Tell me about your decision to come to Australia.
2. When you arrived at the decision to migrate were you thinking about schools?
3. If you think back on the initial years, what were some of the challenges according to you?

Experiences and perceptions

4. Tell me about your experiences of the school.
5. Are there any special challenges being migrants?
6. How would you describe the Education system in Australia?

Parent involvement

7. Parent involvement – how is your involvement?
8. Do you see any direct benefits of being involved?
9. What does your child/children enjoy most at school?
10. Any suggestions on what can be done about Parent Involvement?

All questions in red will be asked individually to both the parents at the time of the interview.

In general, best attempt will be made to ensure that both parents are participating and expressing their views and opinions.

E) Interview questions for families for Stage 2

1. What is your understanding of parent involvement?
2. What is your involvement?
3. Is there an expectation on parent involvement from school? If yes, what happens when you don't do it?
4. What are parents' expectations when they volunteer from the school?
5. Does parent involvement have an advantage at school? If yes, give examples.
6. What are your expectations of the school-home partnership?
7. How can the school-home partnership be strengthened?
8. What are the things that might help being migrants?
9. What can you do?
10. What can the school/community do?