DISCOVERING THE POSTMODERN NOMAD:

A METAPHOR FOR AN ARTFUL INQUIRY INTO THE CAREER STORIES OF

EMERGING ADULTS TRANSITIONING UNDER THE CARIBBEAN SUN

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explored the educational and occupational decisions of emerging adults from a small Caribbean island (referred to as "SCI") during a time of robust socioeconomic and infrastructure development, followed by a sudden change in the labor market resulting from political uncertainty and an economic downturn. Using an interdisciplinary conceptual framework, the dynamic interplay between career decisions and the structuring effects of resources, geographic location, socioeconomic development, race, class, and gender were illuminated. What drives this research is the question of *how does living in a labour market during a boom and/or bust period of socioeconomic and infrastructure development in a small Caribbean island (herein referred to as the "SCI") contribute (or not) to the educational and occupational (career) decisions of local emerging adults?* Key questions that underpin the research include: how do students describe and rationalize their post-secondary career choices and experiences; and what other contextual features/forces play a role in these decisions and why?

The constant comparison analysis of the participant interviews revealed five overarching themes which describe the career behaviour of participants. These included: *shifting, giving back, going with the flow, projecting, and doing it for me*. To further explore these themes the author created geographic residency timelines using demographic survey data collected from participants. The timelines provided a linear overview of participants' career stories. An analysis of the residency timelines confirmed the themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow." They also illuminated the idea of mobility which is synonymous with migration; referring to the movement of people from one geographic location to another. To visualize the outliers of 'projecting' and 'doing it for me', and perhaps gain additional insights, the author turned to the arts-informed approach of collage work. The analysis of collages in combination with other contextualizing practices validated the idea of mobility and yielded four contextual features that support mobility: *birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances.*

The study concluded that mobility is a necessary behavior of emerging adults from the SCI. Without the institutional infrastructure to support the educational and occupational experiences required to cultivate skilled human capital essential for socioeconomic and infrastructure development, young people must move off-island. Under the themes of "shifting,"

"giving back," and "going with the flow," the four contextual features connect with mobility as either enabling or limiting the exploration and pursuit of career opportunities of emerging adults.

Using the metaphor of a "postmodern nomad," this study explores the ways in which the SCI's development plans can address the demands of the local labour market by facilitating the return migration of its emerging adults. The analysis of the data revealed that nurturing patronage; fostering self-awareness, self-efficacy and self-sufficiency; establishing school, community, and business partnerships; and revising government programs and policies assistance (i.e., scholarships and financial aid) for young expatriate residents and local Islanders can lead to the cultivation and retention of human capital. The study concluded that emerging adults from the SCI are cognizant of the local socioeconomic landscape in relation to the global marketplace, and entrepreneurial in their pursuit of career aspirations. These characteristics point to the urgency in establishing career development programming for both young people and their families, which disseminates relevant information attending to needs of a developing economy. The various analytic approach applied to this inquiry contributes to the knowledge base on life-changing decisions transpiring during school-to-work transitions and provides a descriptive, in-depth understanding of the career decision-making experiences of emerging adults from a part of the world that is relatively under-researched.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude qualitative a exploré les décisions éducatives et professionnelles des adultes provenant d'une petite île des Caraïbes (dénommé «PIC») pendant une période de développement socio-économique et une infrastructure solide, suivie par un changement soudain dans le marché du travail résultant de l'incertitude politique et un ralentissement économique. L'utilisation d'un cadre interdisciplinaire conceptuel, l'interaction dynamique entre les décisions de carrière et les effets structurants des ressources, la localisation géographique, le développement socio-économique, la race, la classe et le genre ont été éclairés. Quels sont les motivateurs de cette recherche est la question. De découvrir quel impacte à le fait de vivre dans un marché de travail pendant une période de développement socio-économique solide dans une PIC. Est-ce que cela contribue (ou non) aux décisions d'études et de carrières pour les personnes que l'on retrouve dans les PIC ? Les questions clés que l'on retrouve: comment les élèves rationalisent leurs choix de carrière poste-secondaires et leurs expériences; et quelles autres caractéristiques contextuelles jouent un rôle dans ces décisions et pourquoi?

L'analyse de comparaison constante des entrevues avec les participantes a révélé cinq thèmes généraux qui décrivent le comportement professionnel des participants. Il s'agit notamment: un renversement, redonner, aller avec le courant, fait saillant, et de le faire pour soi-même. Pour explorer d'avantage ces thèmes, l'auteur a créé une frise chronologique géographique en utilisant les données d'enquêtes démographiques recueillies auprès des participants. Les frises chronologiques ont donné un aperçu des histoires de carrière linéaire des participants. Une analyse des délais de résidence a confirmé les thèmes de «renversement», «redonner», et «aller avec le courant». Ils ont également éclairé l'idée de la mobilité qui est synonyme de migration; se référant à la circulation des personnes d'un endroit géographique à un autre. Pour visualiser les valeurs de «fait saillant» et «le faire pour soi-même», et peut-être comprendre d'avantage, l'auteur s'est tourné vers la démarche de recherche avec le travail de s'exprimer à travers de collages artistiques. L'analyse des collages jumelées avec d'autres pratiques de conceptualisation valide l'idée du rendement de quatre éléments contextuels qui soutiennent la mobilité: droit de naissance, l'autonomie, les réseaux et les finances.

L'étude a conclu que la mobilité est un comportement nécessaire pour les adultes qui émergents de la PIC. Sans l'infrastructure institutionnelle pour soutenir les expériences éducatives et professionnelles nécessaires pour cultiver la population qualifiée indispensable au

développement socio-économique et les infrastructures, les jeunes doivent se déplacer hors de l'île. Sous les thèmes de «renversement», «redonner», et «d'aller avec le courant», les quatre caractéristiques ont des liens avec la mobilité comme étant le pour et le contre de la poursuite de possibilités de carrière des adultes qui y émergents.

En utilisant la métaphore d'un «nomade postmoderne», cette étude explore les façons dont les programmes de développement de la PIC peuvent répondre aux exigences du marché du travail local en facilitant le retour dans la PIC des adultes émergents. L'analyse des données a révélé qu'il faut éduquer et entretenir l'autonomie, l'efficacité, d'établir des partenariats scolaires, communautaires et commerciaux, de réviser les programmes gouvernementaux et l'assistance politiques (bourses et aide financière) pour les jeunes résidents expatriés et les habitants de l'île pour ainsi pouvoir conduire à la culture et la conservation du capital humain. L'étude a conclu que les adultes émergents de la PIC sont conscients du paysage socio-économique local dans le marché mondial, et qu'ils ont l'esprit d'entreprise dans leur poursuite de leurs choix/vies professionnelles. Ces caractéristiques soulignent l'urgence dans l'établissement de programmes de développement de carrière pour les jeunes et leurs familles, qui diffusent des informations pertinentes en répondant aux besoins d'une économie en développement. L'approche analytique appliquée à cette enquête contribue à la base de connaissances sur les changements de vie et des décisions prisent pendant les transitions de l'école au travail et fournit une description et une compréhension plus approfondie des choix de carrière des adultes qui proviennent d'une partie du monde qui est relativement sous-étudiée.

DEDICATION

To Mom & Mohit

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(Inspired by a poem written by Nikki Giovanni entitled "You came, too")

This journey started long before I ever stepped foot inside a classroom. It began with two incredible individuals who witnessed the historical transformations of independence in the 1940's, who persevered by candlelight in the absence of capital to craft beautiful career stories of their own in the 1950's, who were brave enough to love in the 1960's, who embraced challenge and change in their pursuit for a new home in the 1970's, who nurtured and loved more than anyone I have ever encountered in the 1980's (and still continue today), who achieved great success and celebrated new adventures in the 1990's, who maintained strength and faith and gently guided me through discipline and love in the millennium, and who continue to breathe selflessness, gratefulness, honour and integrity into the trajectory of life that continues to unfold.

I came to this world seeking life
I came to this world seeking love
I came to this world for only you

I love you Mom and Dad.

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* * *

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I came to the school seeking new experiences
I came to the school seeking new knowledge
I came to the school for a change and challenge

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You have dried my tears
You have held my heart

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* * *

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Life is full of many important decisions. Decisions on educational and occupational possibilities are regarded as career decisions and are considered to involve a continuous process of learning and development that occurs throughout the lifespan. Literature in the area of career development and postsecondary choices and experiences of young people confirm that decisions about family, school and work are scaffolded by a number of contextual factors. What drives this research is the question of ***how does living in a labour market during a boom and/or bust period of socioeconomic and infrastructure development in a small Caribbean island (herein referred to as the "SCI") contribute (or not) to the educational and occupational (career) decisions of local emerging adults?*** Key questions that underpin the research include: how do students describe and rationalize their postsecondary career choices and experiences; and what other contextual features/forces (i.e., social, cultural, and economic conditions) play a role in these decisions and why? The qualitative approach applied for this study contributes to the knowledge base on life-changing decisions transpiring during school-to-work transitions and provides a descriptive, in-depth understanding of the career decision-making experiences of emerging adults from a part of the world that is relatively under-researched.

Context of Study

Emerging adults[1] between the ages of 18 and 25 are viable resources for countries wanting to participate and prosper in the new global economy. Education is seen as a means of cultivating such resources as young people acquire "the knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes embodied in individuals, which facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being" to be leveraged in their respective homelands (Côté, 2001, p. 30). This investment in cultivating what is known as "human capital" ensures the potential for socioeconomic prosperity and global competitiveness; however it does not guarantee development objectives (Bourdieu, 1986; Cunningham & Correia, 2003). For example, islands of the Caribbean have been known for producing a high quality of human capital that typically migrates to more developing nations

[1] Emerging adults are also identified as "young people" with the characteristics of youth culture contributing to their life experiences.

like the United States (Mishra, 2006). In development literature this "flow of high skilled immigrants from developing countries to developed countries" is known as *brain drain* (Lien & Wang, 2005, p. 153). In economics the term brain drain "designates the international transfer of resources in the form of human capital and mainly applies to the migration of relatively highly educated individuals from developing to developed countries" (Beine et al., 2008, p.631). Many islands of the Caribbean, including the SCI, have struggled to retain their "viable resources"'.

Studies in South East Asia and Latin America conducted by the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank confirm the importance of educational investment in young people as they have observed that national economic and social performance coincides with development, and the accumulation and distribution of human capital (Filgueira et al., 2001). With globalized markets and increased migration rates, developing economies, such as the SCI explored in this study, are directing their focus towards the connection between their youth and the economic prosperity of their nation (Kairi Consultants, 2007). Concern and hope have been directed towards young people to become the "embodied individuals" with knowledge and skills required to lead the nation through the 21st century. Similar to other Caribbean islands, the relative smallness of the SCI poses geographic challenges in providing resources and capital to keep up with necessary socioeconomic activity and cultivate human capital locally. The SCI continues to dramatically grow in both population and infrastructure, with much of the development directed towards the country's primary industry — tourism. Rapid changes, especially during the past five years, have altered what was once a relatively quiet "hidden treasure" for local Islanders[2] and permanent residents. Ambitious socioeconomic development plans coupled with the massive inflow of expatriates to meet labour market demands situates the SCI as an interesting setting for a study focused on young people's career decision-making experiences.

While much research has been dedicated to the career decision-making processes of high school and college students living in Western countries, little is known about these elements as they relate to students living in Caribbean countries undergoing boom and/or bust periods of socioeconomic and infrastructure development. The discrepancy between national investments in education, professional work opportunities available locally and abroad, and the educational and

[2] Reference to a "local Islander" reflects any person born in the SCI or who was born outside the island but has at least one parent who was born in the SCI.

occupational decisions and experiences of young people has important implications for the accumulation and distribution of human capital. These plans, processes, and implications provide the backdrop to this study which seeks to explore and gain a deeper understanding of the factors that may contribute (or not) to the educational and occupational career decisions of emerging adults who have completed the majority of their early schooling (K-12) in the SCI.

After grade 11, students from the SCI typically pursue their A-Levels[3] in the Sixth Form at secondary school, attend the local community college where they can complete courses that will enable them to attend postsecondary university or college degree programs, or directly enter the workforce (usually in one of the island's many vacation resorts as front desk clerks or other clerical positions; or find work through family referrals). With few secondary schools offering the Sixth Form on the island, and with a limited selection of professional programs and courses offered by the local Community College (the only postsecondary institution available in the SCI), emerging adults who are interested in pursuing postsecondary studies must leave the island to seek further education and professional training abroad, usually in the southern United States, Canada, England (United Kingdom), or larger Caribbean states such as Jamaica, Barbados, or Trinidad and Tobago. Overseas scholarship programs available to local Islanders support eligible persons in acquiring the skills necessary to meet the growing labour demands, however the return on the investment of these funds is not known.

Prior to the booming socioeconomic and infrastructure development in the SCI, which peaked in 2007, many emerging adults sought work off-island while foreign investors, entrepreneurs, and tourists looking for an exotic and tax-free locale to call home relocated to the island. Expatriate residents established themselves as successful entrepreneurs and respected professionals by providing the SCI with much needed goods (such as jewelry, specialty foods, and fine art) and services (such as restaurants, Internet cafés, scuba diving certification, real estate and financial investment firms); and by filling the numerous professional and skilled labourer positions which local Islanders have not been able to fill (such as engineers, doctors, architects, and teachers). While no specific statistics or claims of brain drain have been noted in any of the SCI's government documents or institutional reports, the island has experienced one of the highest migration rates in the world. With 9.98 migrants/1,000 population, the influx of

[3] A-levels are Advanced Level General Certificate of Education subject courses and exams usually studied in the last two years (grades 12 and 13) in a Sixth Form at high school or at Sixth Form Colleges. They are most commonly used for entrance into British universities, as well as other tertiary institutions in many Commonwealth countries.

immigrants in recent years who were called upon to fill both skilled and unskilled labour demands necessitates innovative schemes that will counter the imbalance of immigrant and local workers and promote a locally driven development plan with local entrepreneurship (Kairi Consultants, 2007). Accordingly, the SCI government published a Socio-Economic Development Strategy plan which provides action plans to be carried out from 2008 through to 2017. With one area of focus being education and employment (or better understood as "education for employment"), special emphasis has been placed on educating and preparing local Islanders so they can participate more effectively in the country's development. Locals currently employed in the labour market are included in the action plans that suggest a need for more preparation (i.e., training) and professional development. Also, the government has acknowledged that young people require resources to pursue programs and receive occupational preparation that will help to fill specific job vacancies.

> Experience has taught us that young people can play an important role in national development if provided with the right tools, the learning and empowerment to employ those tools and a supportive environment in which to use them. Young people can and should lead the way in economic growth and poverty reduction. By the same token, however, the same energy and vitality, if left unharnessed or if marginalized can have a dramatic negative effect on social and economic stability. (Correia & Cunningham, 2003, p. vii)

Despite the documented interest in cultivating human capital among young people, there is no call to action that examines the particular needs of emerging adults and the ways in which policies, programs, and services may target the socioeconomic development needs of the SCI. For this reason, I believe this inquiry comes at a pivotal time, not only as an exploration into the career decision-making experiences of emerging adults, but also as an investigation into the specific ways in which their career trajectories unfold and the possible ways resources may be used to cultivate interest and investment in the SCI's developing economy.

The Impetus of Curiosity

The uniqueness and authenticity of individual lived experiences—especially the experiences articulated by young people—tell a lot about the relationships and environments we

all inhabit. Stories about lived experiences contribute to our understanding of the choices and opportunities individuals explore. I am fascinated with such stories and, in particular, I am curious about career decision-making experiences related to education and work. While existing career development theories reveal patterns and similarities across experiences, individual career stories are unique and authentic. I have watched career stories unfold in the lives of students I have taught over several years in a culturally diverse high school in a Toronto (Ontario) suburb and this has revealed the variations in educational and occupational possibilities and the variations in interests, influences, and other contextual circumstances. From the initial impressions, aspirations, and intentions of grade 9 students to postsecondary applications and related planning in grade 12, how and why students choose their livelihoods and follow particular career pathways intrigues me.

I am forever curious about where my former students go after graduating high school. Have their visions for the future transpired from adolescent aspirations to adulthood reality? My own career path includes many twists and turns: candy striping and volunteering in a hospital as an adolescent, an undergraduate degree in Education as a young adult, followed by certification and working as a travel agent, hair dresser, and high school social science teacher in my twenties, and now an education graduate student in my thirties. These lived experiences and stories have ignited my interest in learning more about the experiences of young people in high school and during their postsecondary phase of life. My research is inspired by this fascination with career "stories" and a genuine interest in career decisions, especially those of young people early in their career pathways.

Also fueling my interest in this field of research is a fourth-year field experience I participated in during my final year of a Bachelor's of Education degree at McGill University. Through a school-university partnership with a private high school in the SCI, I spent four months working alongside social science teachers (namely expatriates) at the only private high school on the island providing Sixth-Form (i.e., college preparation year with A-level courses). During this time I welcomed the opportunity to learn more about "island life" from the perspective of expatriates and local Islanders. With a genuine love of Caribbean percussion, culture, and people, I had been lured to the turquoise waters and sunshine of many Caribbean islands prior to my field experience placement in the SCI. Each visit to the islands had revealed more than the steel pan melodies, snorkeling adventures, and fresh conch salad most tourists

experience. I viewed my time in the SCI as an opportunity to learn more than what a tourist typically experiences during a vacation.

As I navigated the social circles of both expatriates and local Islanders, I quickly learned that there were two distinct perspectives about the SCI's culture and its people, as well as ways to experience both. The primarily expatriate group (commonly referred to as "expats") of colleagues from my placement site introduced my roommate and me to a rather large expat community consisting of North American and European professionals. With the smallness of the SCI, most expats were acquainted with each other in one way or another. This presented many invitations to numerous social gatherings around the island. While I indulged in dinners and dancing with colleagues and their friends on weekends, my exposure to the local culture felt minimal. However, an early morning Sunday drive to the grocery store led me to an unanticipated opportunity to connect with another social circle.

While expats would spend their Sundays resting after Saturday night socials, local Islanders attended worship at one of the many churches on the island. I still remember driving along the main road that Sunday morning and finding the streets deserted; only to find the streets packed with well-dressed church-goers an hour later. The following Sunday I decided to attend a local Pentecostal church where I sang in prayer along with the swaying rhythms of the gospel choir. After the service, I was approached by several students who welcomed me to their church and expressed great delight in my attendance. Each week thereafter, I was encouraged to attend various places of worship around the island by students and their families. For the duration of my field experience my weekdays were spent working and socializing with expatriates, while Sundays were spent attending local church services followed by invitations to local cultural and social events by students and their families. It was during these weekend activities that I learned a lot about the SCI's culture and the lives of my students outside of the classroom. I also learned a lot about "island life" from both communities of expatriates and locals. The distinct identities of expatriate and local Caribbean cultures became transparent in addition to the surprising similarities in student academic and social activities on the high school campus.

Since my fourth-year field experience I have visited the SCI each year, sometimes twice, reconnecting with former colleagues, students, and their families. While nurturing these relationships over the years, also I have developed a genuine curiosity about the career pathways of my former students. During the many encounters with parents of my students, I would have

lengthy conversations about the rapid socioeconomic development which was unfolding while most students were graduating from high school and/or completing the Sixth-Form, and beginning to explore postsecondary opportunities off-island. My curiosity in career pathways was further fueled by my work as a geography and sociology teacher at a suburban high school north of Toronto (Canada). In more recent years prior to enrolling in graduate school, I also taught the Ontario curriculum grade 10 compulsory Career Studies (GLC2O) course which continued to increase my curiosity and fascination with the career pathways of emerging adults. These experiences are thus the impetus for my study.

The Research Site

My first two years as a doctoral student were spent on familiarizing myself with theoretical literatures and methodological approaches, and during this time the process of envisioning the inquiry began to take shape. As per my annual travel plans, I visited the SCI in January 2007. As usual, the weather was perfect and all of my former students from my field experience were home with their families enjoying their winter break. However, unlike previous visits, the relative quietness and serenity typically felt on-island was interrupted with the reverberations of political rallies and campaigning candidates in preparation for the national election. I attended two political rallies with my local Islander and expatriate friends. I listened attentively to the rhetoric of charismatic candidates and party leaders as they peppered their speeches with biblical quotations and blind optimism, promoting a future of wealth and prosperity for all as they promised to transform the SCI into the "Monte Carlo" of the Caribbean. Adding to the noise were large bulldozers, cranes, articulated dump trucks, and the bustle of new construction developments transforming much of the island's sprawling bush lands and beachfront into commercial and residential properties. The largely undeveloped, unspoiled virginity of the SCI that made it a hidden gem in the Caribbean appeared to be quickly dissipating. When I asked local friends about their perspective on the fast eroding tranquility of the SCI, they eagerly responded to my questions and observations by expressing disapproval of the environmental impact while also sharing enthusiasm about the potential social and economic prosperity the development would bring to the local economy.

I returned to the SCI in the autumn of 2008 to a landscape drastically changed from the way it looked during my visit 19 months prior. Local newspaper headlines called it a "Caribbean

Hangover" and "Economic Meltdown"[4] as the construction development and high-end tourism boom years had come to an abrupt stop with the onset of the 2008 financial crisis. In addition to the global economic chill, political corruption in the SCI exacerbated the halt in socioeconomic and infrastructure plans for the island. Amidst the robust activity and sudden downturn in development, my former students had been preparing for and participating in the transition between high school and postsecondary life. Some had already migrated off-island to pursue their undergraduate degree in institutions situated in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom; others were in the process of exploring educational and occupational options, processing applications for scholarships and financial aid, and determining the next step in their career pathway. I recalled conversations I had had with these emerging adults and their families during recent years (between 2002 and 2007) while the economy and employment had doubled and the surrounding bustle of development prompted optimism and reflection on the subsequent prosperity. While I engaged in many conversations about the changing landscape over conch fritters and beer, with both expatriates and local Islanders, I wondered how changes in the socioeconomic and political landscape of their country would affect their futures.

It was my curiosity, the nurturing of relationships with colleagues, students, and their families from the SCI during and after my field experience, and the observations, conversations, and considerations I have shared here, that collectively pointed to the SCI as a germane backdrop for an inquiry into the career pathways of young people.

Situating Myself in the Research

> *The qualitative researcher's perspective is perhaps a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meaning systems of others—to indwell—and at the same time to be aware of how one's own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand.* (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 123)

I have shared earlier in this chapter how my curiosity about the career pathways of emerging adults and my increasing familiarity with the SCI converged and suggested an interesting context in which to explore the decision-making experiences of young people amidst a changing socioeconomic landscape. As I explain in greater detail in Chapter Three, to engage

[4] For the purposes of anonymity, references to the names of the local newspapers are withheld.

in research that moves beyond the widespread positivistic research that maintains that there must be objectivity and neutrality in studying and understanding human experience I turned to qualitative inquiry. Qualitative research allows the researcher to explore unapologetically the behaviour, perspectives, feelings and meanings of people's experiences (Patton, 2002). As I came to learn more about the nature of qualitative methodologies early on in my graduate studies, I became aware of the politics of writing and engaging in qualitative research (Clark & Ivanič, 1997; Fine, 1992; Lincoln, 1995; Schwandt, 1994).

> As qualitative researchers we are not separate from the study, with limited contact with our participants. Instead, we are firmly in all aspects of the research process and essential to it. The stories of participants are immediate and real to us; individual voices are not lost in a pool of numbers. We carry these individuals with us as we work with the transcripts. The words, representing experiences, are clear and lasting. We cannot retreat to a distant "researcher" role. Just as our personhood affects the analysis, so, too, the analysis affects our personhood. (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009, p. 61)

In line with the post-structuralist and post-modernist critique of the notion of a qualitative researcher having "a bounded and impenetrable sense of self that can be used as an objective tool in the field" (Chavez, 2008, p.474), I situate myself in the research as an outsider (observer) who has nurtured relationships with the research site and its people, but as one who does not leave the impression of fully understanding or speaking from the experience of sharing the same attitudes, behaviours, values, and knowledge of Caribbean culture as the participants contributing to this study (Geertz, 1973/2000). Others may consider me as an "external insider" who is perceived as an "adopted insider" by the local community but I reject this position as I do not necessarily share the same beliefs and views of the participants I am studying (Bank, 1998, p. 8). I am cognizant that my assumptions about Caribbean culture and lifestyles could be based on false understandings and impressions. As a critical researcher, I am aware of how such assumptions can romanticize the culture I have chosen as my research site. To counteract this, I have chosen methodologies and practices from the field of social science (such as the reflexive processes used in documenting field notes, recording reflective memos, and inviting member checking) to engage in this inquiry without being blind to the discursive reproduction of power (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Patton, 2002; Schwandt, 1994; Steinberg & Cannella, 2012; Tobin & Kincheloe, 2006; Ulrich, 2006).

The politics of my writing and research are undoubtedly influenced by my social and cultural experiences and location. Inspired by Fusco (2008), I have asked myself throughout the inquiry process "what kind of person am I who was able to gain access to, and ask questions about" the career decisions and experiences of emerging adults from the SCI (p. 169). As I situate myself in the research process I am aware that my access to the participants is a result of the relationships I developed during my fourth-year field experience, and have continued to nurture during my brief but frequent visits to the SCI. In addition, my ongoing experiences working with Caribbean youth have "informed the direction of my research, the kinds of questions I asked, and decisions about the data I wanted to collect" (Fusco, 2008, p. 169). It has been theorized that research participants often provide their "best" (i.e., honest, genuine, etc.) accounts to researchers who share their social and cultural characteristics (Adamson & Donovan, 2002; Liamputtong, 2008, 2010; Scott, 1998). I feel that the differences in culture and ethnicity between the participants and me did not stifle agency among the participants as they appeared to share freely constructions of their career pathways. I believe my interviews with participants can be seen as a culmination of several years of ongoing dialogue about their lives in the SCI, and more specifically about their educational and occupational considerations, choices, and experiences. It has been suggested that perhaps the strength of qualitative work lies in "cultivating close ties with others and collaboratively shaping discourses and practices in the field" (Monahan & Fisher, 2010, p. 357). I would agree that my entry and access to the research site was possible because of the relationships I developed and have continued to nurture over the past decade. "Mutual care and friendship; revelation of respect for personal vulnerabilities; and attention to issues of relational reflexivity, relational ethics, power-relation, and the temporary nature of understandings" are the elements upon which I established trust with the participants and approached the inquiry process (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 27).

In this conversation about being an outsider carrying out cross-cultural research, it is important to mention that my position may carry some advantages. Coloma (2008) suggests that "becoming an outsider also has its own usefulness, such as providing different perspectives on cultural and community norms, asking questions that require more detailed explanation, and developing other forms of interactions and spaces often relegated to non-members" (p. 15). I am, however, mindful of the limits of my learning about the phenomenon under study as culture remains to be an enigmatic enterprise rooted in the imagination and rituals of its members, and

that there are many variations in the interpretations of culture and experience (Geertz, 1973/2000, p. 12).

I acknowledge that the interpretations I ultimately offer in this study are those of a Canadian born, South Asian woman, and Toronto (Ontario) suburban resident, from a small but well-educated family who earned her undergraduate degree from an internationally recognized institution, who has worked as a high school social science teacher since 2000, who has travelled extensively throughout the Caribbean, and who has most recently returned to the site of her fourth-year (teacher education) field experience to engage in graduate research. While often I am presumed to be of Caribbean descent, I am not, despite having a fond appreciation and interest in the music, literatures, cultures, and geography of the islands. I engage in this awareness and curiosity as an "outsider"/observer of the unfolding career pathways shared by participants. Accordingly, I bring to this inquiry a commitment to openly and consistently acknowledge my own ideological and political position (and power) from which I will appropriate and represent what I observe in the research field. In doing so, I have paid particular attention to the ethical consequences of my research practices, including the methodological approaches used, the inclusion of co-constructed viewpoints, and the politics of representation in reflection of ethnocentrism (Geertz, 1973/2000).

Finally, with the caveats mentioned above in mind, I have tried to embed a postcolonial epistemic reflexivity into my research approach by reflecting on my own geographical, institutional, and cultural sense; my own position and status; and to bring to the surface the cultural, ideological and knowledge resources from which I draw upon to conceptualize this inquiry and engage with participants (Fine, 1992; Gandhi, 1998; Jack & Westwood, 2006; Lincoln, 1995; Prasad, 2003; Said, 1978). To quote Edward Said (1994, pp. 9-17), the role of the intellectual is:

> to raise embarrassing questions, to confront orthodoxy and dogma (rather than to produce them)…whose *raison d'être* is to represent all those people and issues that are routinely forgotten or swept under the rug … [to be] someone whose whole being is staked on a critical sense, a sense of being unwilling to accept easy formulas, or ready-made clichés, or the smooth, ever-so-accommodating confirmations of what the powerful or conventional have to say, and what they do. Not just passively unwilling, but actively willing to say it in public.

By pursuing inclusive research practices that engaged participants (or emic perspectives) at various stages of the unfolding inquiry, I tried to avoid the appropriating and essentializing representational practices of Euro-American (Western) knowledge systems, which I could have brought into the inquiry process while analyzing and distilling the most salient features of participants' career pathways from an etic (outsider) perspective. However, by attending to the politics of writing and representation in the research process, I hoped to avoid the use of stereotypes, generalizations and hegemonic language that could appear to neutralize the context and culture of the research site, and my ensuing interpretation of the phenomena I explored in this study.

Terminology

When I was searching for relevant research pertaining to the career-related decision-making of young people, I found several terms that were significantly interrelated and relative to this research. The literatures on "school to work transitions," "youth pathways," "youth career trajectories," and "post-16 choice and decision-making" all feed into conversations about what happens to young people after they complete secondary school, which in the SCI is Year Five or grade 11. Literature on young people and their educational and occupational decision-making continues to evolve and as the discussion progresses over time the terminology used to examine career pathways also changes. Throughout this inquiry, I will use several terms interchangeably.

Essentially, the common thread in this study is the term *career*. It is used synonymously with terms such as *job* and *occupation*, but is best understood as a lifelong process of acquiring and refining personal skills, knowledge, and experiences in preparation for making choices and decisions related to personal, educational, and occupational pursuits. A *job* denotes a specific type of work for which one receives pay, while an *occupation* is the category of jobs with similar features or characteristics. Historically understood as one's "spiritual calling," *vocation* is another term often interchangeably used with occupation but more accurately refers to an occupation where a person is particularly qualified for the position. In writing this dissertation, I have used *job* and *work* interchangeably, as well as *occupation* and *vocation* to refer to possible considerations in the career decision-making process that may begin prior to high school graduation, but are central in examining the range of possibilities that confront the emerging

adults from the SCI as they exit mandatory schooling (typically post-16 or grade 11) (Brown, 2003; Brown & Brooks, 1996).

Terms such as *school to work* and *transition* essentially refer to the period following the completion of formal schooling (grade 11 or A-levels[5]). It is considered to be a transition point between adolescence and adulthood when "youths begin to identify and pursue their adult occupational paths" (Tseng, 2006, p.1442). The terms *career pathway* and *trajectory* are used interchangeably as metaphors to reflect the multiple educational, occupational, and life possibilities, opportunities, and directions available during the transition period between secondary (high school) to postsecondary schooling (or more commonly referred to as *tertiary education* or *tertiary institutions* in Commonwealth countries) and adulthood. Pathways and trajectories may include such directions as full-time work or full-time postsecondary studies, part-time work or part-time study, unemployment, marriage and children, and so forth.

In the career development literature, terms such as *career development, career education, career guidance, career advising* and *career counseling* often are used interchangeably, although there is a distinction in counseling literature between *guidance* and *counseling*. Career *guidance* is an umbrella term that reflects a service offered by professional educators such as teachers and school counselors where students are provided with information about personal and career related issues, as well as on the adjustments required to attain goals. Career *counseling* is described as a "helping process" provided by qualified (and/or certified) counseling professionals who help individuals focus on personal awareness, interest and attitudes in relation to their career goals (Maddy-Bernstein, 2000). Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad and Herma (1951) first introduced the concept of *career development* as a "lifelong process of decision-making" specifically directed to occupational choices (Patton & McMahon, 2006, p.6). In my review of the terminology, a variety of components of career development can be included in this inquiry. They include: (1) helping students recognize their skills, interests, and talents; (2) introducing students to the multitude of educational and occupational opportunities available to them; (3) assisting students in matching their life goals and aspirations with various pathways that will help them meet these goals; (4) and educating students about the current economic and social trends that will enable them to become critical occupational decision makers.

[5] A-levels are Advanced Level General Certificate of Education subject courses and exams usually studied in the last two years (grades 12 and 13) in a Sixth Form at high school or at Sixth Form colleges. They are most commonly used for entrance into British universities, as well as other postsecondary institutions in many Commonwealth countries.

The career trajectories of young people is a complex journey and warrants that those who study these life pathways should appreciate the complexity of adolescent relationships, interactions, thought processes, and the environments which nurture their development. Accordingly, my use of the term reflects Maddy-Bernstein's (2000) review of the terminology which builds on Sears' (1982) definition of *career development* as "the total constellation of psychological, sociological, education, physical, economic, and chance factors that combine to influence the nature and significance of work in the total lifespan of any given individual" (p. 2). Also, I have decided to reference the career development processes, career pathways and trajectories of participants by using an all-encompassing reference to *career stories.* Gaining a deeper insight into the career decision-making experiences of emerging adults from the SCI will require participants to share narrations of their subjective educational and occupational choices and actions, and make sense of their pathways as they unfold through time and space. By attending to both the holistic nature of careers and to specific career transitions, the discursive constructs offered through career stories provide insights into individual sense-making by drawing on memories, reflection, and aspirations. I believe the term *career stories* more accurately reflect my intention to engage in this qualitative inquiry as more of a "biographer who interprets lives in progress rather than as [an] actuary who counts interests and abilities" (Savickas, 1992, p. 338). Adopting this stance has enabled me to build a rich, complex, multifaceted, and integrated picture from the perspective of the participants.

It is evident that career development involves one's whole life, not just a single occupation or point in that development. As such, it concerns the whole person. Moreover, it concerns an individual in the ever-changing contexts of his or her life. Environmental pressures and constraints, the bonds that tie him or her to significant others, responsibilities to children and aging parents, and the total structure of one's circumstances are also factors that must be understood and reckoned with. "In these terms, career development and personal development converge. Self and circumstances – evolving, changing, unfolding in mutual interaction – constitute the focus and the drama of career development" (Patton & McMahon, 2006, p. 7). The existence of *aspirations* and *goals* are central tenets in this unfolding journey of young people's career development. Both aspirations and goals can be fluid, constantly changing over time, and play a significant role in how individuals make career decisions. Defined as the "educational and vocational 'dreams' that students have for their future," I will frequently refer to *aspirations* as

enabling individuals to envision themselves in a variety of educational and occupational settings (Akos, Lambie, Milson, & Gilbert, 2007, p. 57); and *goals* being the "determination to engage in a particular behavior or activity" that affect future outcomes that turn dreams into reality (Albert & Luzzo, 1999, p. 77).

It is important to note that while a conversation regarding decision-making implies making a choice and deciding on a course of action, I will interchangeably use career *choice* and career *decision* to describe the review of option(s) arriving at an educational and/or occupational selection relative to one's career pathway. All other terms related to this inquiry are defined within the disciplines in which they are used. However, it is important to remember the terminology provided here as they are woven through the interdisciplinary descriptions provided throughout this inquiry.

Finally, it is important to formally define the characteristics of the demographic on which this research focuses. I define *emerging adults* as young people between the ages of 18 and 25. My definition is inspired by Arnett (2004) who characterizes emerging adulthood as "a new period of life for young people…lasting from the late teens through the mid- to late twenties" (p.4). During this time, young people are neither teenagers nor adolescents, nor are they adults. According to Arnett (2004, p. 8), emerging adulthood includes five main features: (1) it is the age of *identity explorations*, of trying out various possibilities, especially in love and work; (2) it is the age of *instability*; (3) it is the most *self-focused* age of life; (4) it is the age of *feeling in-between*, in transition, neither adolescent nor adult; (5) and it is the age of *possibilities*, when hopes flourish, when people have an unparalleled opportunity to transform their lives. In the writing of this dissertation I use *emerging adults* and *young people* interchangeably to call attention to the demographic of participants who are indeed the central focus throughout this inquiry. The qualities provided here in relation to the cultural, socioeconomic, and geopolitical landscape of the SCI are illuminated through this inquiry using various qualitative approaches that portray the career development of emerging adults.

Overview of the Dissertation

My research addresses the unique complexities of career decisions in association with the structuring effects of resources, geographic location, socioeconomic development, race, class, and gender. It provides a significant interdisciplinary conceptual and empirical deepening of

previous work (provided in the preceding chapter) through in-depth interviews with local and expatriate emerging adults from the SCI. My thesis questions the possible association, if any, between the socioeconomic landscape of the SCI and the processes by which young people explore and pursue educational and occupational (career) decisions. To what extent are the unfolding career stories the result of internal processes (such as interests and aptitudes) and to what extent are career stories externally (such as contextual features) defined and motivated? What social, cultural, economic, and political purposes may be served by an understanding of young people's career decisions and the construction of their career stories? Rather than casting the culture of the Caribbean and of emerging adulthood as prior, fixed aspects of career development, here they are analyzed as emergent features of participants' unfolding career trajectories. I believe that the results of my thesis advance the existing research in the areas of school-to-work transitions (primarily focused in the context of the Caribbean) and the globalization of careers by contextualizing the socioeconomic development requirements of retaining human capital in the SCI in association with how local and expatriate participants describe and rationalize their career decisions.

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters which attend to the conceptual and methodological aspects of the inquiry process. Central to this dissertation was the context and impetus for its conception, and the subsequent research questions guiding the work. I have shared these in this chapter, an overview of the research site which described how the SCI made a germane backdrop to explore the career stories of emerging adults. Also, I acknowledge my presence as an outsider (observer) in the research field and attend to my relationship with the research site and participants by situating myself in the research. Chapter One culminates with an overview of the terminology used throughout this dissertation.

Chapter Two provides the conceptual framework undergirding this study and begins by exploring the development of career theorizing and examining the theoretical orientation of the work. An interdisciplinary approach is offered as I attended to the trends and issues using a variety of lenses. The ideas and explanations from the literatures on social cognitive career theory (SCCT), cultural capital, human capital theory, as well as the literature on third-culture kids (TCKs) are intersected to form what I believe is a compelling conceptual framework on which to build the work. I conclude the chapter by drawing important insights and information to identify gaps across the fields.

In Chapter Three, I offer an overview of the methodological approach used throughout this inquiry. I begin by situating myself ontologically followed by a review of qualitative research and the approaches relevant to this study. With reference to a "Qualitative Design Matrix," I describe explicitly the various steps of data collection, including the use of social media for recruitment, a demographic questionnaire for the selection of participants, and details of the interview process. Next, I attend to the analysis of data and more specifically, the categorizing and contextualizing approaches used to distill salient features of participants' career stories. Finally, I attend to trustworthiness and persuasiveness to add credibility to the work by discussing the complementary methods used to corroborate the findings and arrive at a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Chapters Four and Five define pivotal moments in the analytic process. I show how visual approaches in qualitative research were used to contextualize the data by helping to visualize the career stories of participants, elicit ideas about the data, and bring forth a sort of "visual vocabulary" to articulate what was emerging in the work. I share how I engaged other perspectives during the analytic process which helped to confirm themes, illuminate new ideas, and expose contextual features[6] connected to the research questions. In both chapters I explicitly show and explain the processes of engaging visual processes in qualitative work.

In Chapters Six and Seven I begin by providing an overview of the analytic process. Then I corroborate and connect the ideas and features illuminated in Chapters Four and Five by providing excerpts from the coded data. Next I propose an overarching concept for understanding the way in which living in a labour market undergoing robust socioeconomic and infrastructure development, followed by economic downturn, contributes to the career decisions of emerging adults from the SCI. I address the polemical use of this concept as it relates to defining the career stories of participants in relation to their social, cultural, and geographic identities. In addition, I define my proposed explanation of this study in relation to the globalization of careers as an ideology and policy. Chapter Six and Seven highlight the major findings of this qualitative inquiry.

Finally, Chapter Eight concludes this dissertation by first providing a review of the chapters. Then I discuss the limitations and challenges associated with the methodology. Later, I

[6] I use the term "contextual features" throughout this dissertation to describe defining (i.e., external/environmental) features (and/or factors) that impact on an individual's career decisions. The term is not to be confused with my reference to "contextualizing" analysis described in Chapter Three.

discuss the contributions and implications of this study in reference to the shaping of public policy and programs that attend to the globalization of careers and assistance to SCI emerging adults in their exploration and pursuit of career opportunities. I conclude this chapter by suggesting some possibilities for future research by advancing the existing body of work in the area of socioeconomic development requirements for retaining human capital in association with the career development of young people.

CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND FOUNDATION

Theory provides a detailed conceptual map describing patterns and relationships within a set of real-world phenomena.

> When we refer to a 'theoretical orientation' or 'theoretical perspective' we are talking about a way of looking at the world, the assumptions people have about what is important, and what makes the world work. Whether stated or not, all research is guided by some theoretical orientation (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 33).

The theoretical perspectives undergirding this research study reflect a critically conscious, constructivist, multi/ interdisciplinary approach to exploring career development and its plausible relationship to socioeconomic and infrastructure development. In the essays I prepared for my comprehensive examinations (as partial requirement of the doctoral process), I attended to the trends and issues in a variety of lenses separately, drawing important insight and information, relevant and applicable theories and findings, and identifying gaps across the fields. After submitting my examination papers to my doctoral committee for evaluation, I distanced myself from the literature for a few weeks and returned with a fresh set of eyes in preparation for my colloquium. For this oral presentation I performed a quasi-analysis of the literature which identified recurring themes across the various fields and lenses. Psychological, feminist, critical, sociological, geographic, and comparative educational research highlights similar themes impacting on the experiences of young people's career decision-making process. These themes (or factors) include traditional and reconceptualized career theories, identity and self-efficacy, educational and community systems, contextual features, migration, and the world of work. Further distilling the themes across the varying research perspectives, I prepared a synthesized review of my examination papers and colloquium. This provided a conceptual framework grounding the research proposal for this study, and subsequently laying the foundation for my inquiry.

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT), cultural capital, human capital theory, and literature on third-culture kids (TCKs) form the compelling conceptual framework which undergirds this study. By intersecting the ideas and explanations from a variety of lenses, I explore the dynamic interplay between the career decision experiences of emerging adults and the structuring effects of resources, geographic location, socioeconomic development, class,

race, and gender. Following an introduction and overview of the various approaches applied to understanding career development, an explanation of each theoretical foundation is provided in this chapter.

The Development of Career Theorizing

As I introduced in the previous chapter, the qualitative approach applied for this study contributes to the knowledge base on life-changing decisions transpiring during school-to-work transitions and provides an in-depth understanding of the career decision-making experiences of emerging adults from a part of the world that is relatively under-researched. The theory and practice of career development is a fundamental component of the applied research design as it provides the umbrella to exploring career decisions and experiences. The earliest literature on career decision-making can be traced back to the work of Frank Parsons (1909), *Choosing a Vocation*. Considered as the *Father of Vocational Guidance*, Parson's work shaped discussions focusing on the intrinsic nature of career decisions and the environmental influences that shape the essence of this process. Parsons premised the person-environment (PE) dynamic as the key to understanding career selection (Parsons, 1909). Although commonly associated with a logical positivist worldview, Parsons "acknowledgement of a broader context and the active role of the client in their own career decision-making processes…sits more comfortably with the constructivist worldview" (Patton & McMahon, 2006, p. 21). Being the first conceptual framework for career decision-making, Parsons described career choice as a problem-solving behaviour which was affected by three key factors: (1) clear self-understanding, (2) knowledge of occupations, and (3) the ability to draw relationships between self-understanding and the knowledge of occupations.

> He reasoned that if individuals possessed these attributes, not only would they make appropriate choices for themselves but also the production function of society would be served by promoting greater efficiency in matching persons to occupations (Peterson, Sampson, Reardon & Lenz, 1996, p. 424).

Parsons work continues to advance social justice by advocating individualized approaches to career counseling as well as inform counselor-directed approaches where case appropriate assessment instruments are used to assist clients in developing and applying self-knowledge to

career selection (Patton and McMahon, 2006). Following the work of Parsons, how individuals navigate the multitude of options and decisions along their career pathway has been examined through several perspectives which I have summarized below. These perspectives include structural, process, eclectic, and constructivist approaches.

Structural Approaches

Structural approaches consider the link between aspects of self in relation to demands encountered in the environment (Holland 1996, 1976, 1985; Parsons, 1909). Parsons' (1909) work provided the foundation of emerging structural approaches, and gave rise to what became known as *trait and factor theory*. The theory examined the "influence of the environment on the personalities of individuals" and the objective use of assessment measures to match individuals with appropriate occupations (Patton & McMahon, 2006, p. 23). Trait and factor theory failed to recognize the flux and multiplicity in career choice, presuming choice as "a single, static, point in time event where there was a single right answer...available for everyone" (p. 23).
It was not until the mid1950's when trait and factor theory was revisited and recognized as a non-inclusive understanding of career decision-making. It appeared that this theory had avoided the developmental process of career selection and the importance of what McCrae and John (1992, p. 207) called the "richness of human individuality". Eventually, trait and factor theory gave rise to the more dynamic "person-environment fit" (PE) theories which I introduced earlier. Offshoots of the trait-factor approach may be seen in Holland's Vocational Typology theory (more recently titled: "a theory of vocational personalities and work environments") which suggested that individuals who are successful and satisfied in their career selection are those who have found work environments that reflect their true personalities and where other people (e.g., peers, co-workers, superiors) with the same or similar personality characteristics work as well (Holland, 1985, 1997). Holland's theory places personality as the primary factor in vocational choice and work environment as the reinforcement of career satisfaction.

The commonly referenced hexagonal RIASEC model (Figure 1) provides a visual representation for defining the relationships between personality types and environments and their interactions, and is an often career assessment reference used in schools to assist students with their career exploration (Lokan & Taylor, 1986). Holland's RIASEC model of occupations (Table 1) is a structural approach providing a theoretical organization of six different personality/interest types. Holland describes the career decision maker as developing preferences

and interests which evolve into competencies through their interaction with cultural and personal forces in their social and physical environments.

Figure 1: Holland's Hexagonal RIASEC Model

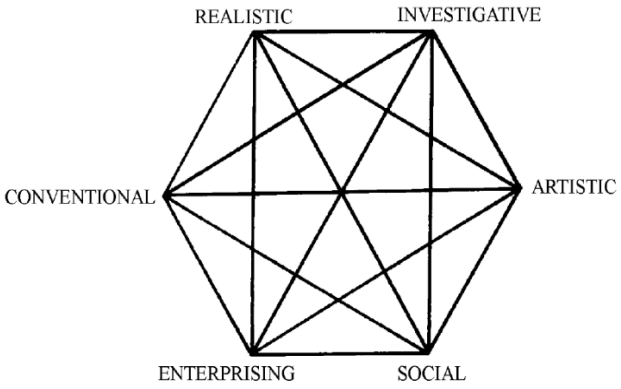


Table 1: Holland's RIASEC Model of Occupations

Types, descriptors, and occupations according to Holland's typology

Type	Descriptors	Occupations
Realistic	has practical abilities and would prefer to work with machines or tools rather than people	mechanic; farmer; builder; surveyor; pilot
Investigative	analytical and precise; good with detail; prefers to work with ideas; enjoys problem solving and research	chemist; geologist; biologist; researcher
Artistic	artistic or creative ability; uses intuition and imagination for problem solving	musician; artist; interior decorator; writer; industrial designer
Social	good social skills; friendly and enjoys involvement with people and working in teams	nurse; teacher; social worker; psychologist; counsellor
Enterprising	leadership, speaking and negotiating abilities; likes leading others towards the achievement of a goal	salesperson; television producer; manager; administrative assistant; lawyer
Conventional	systematic and practical worker; good at following plans and attending to detail	banker; secretary; accountant

The RIASEC model of occupations is the copyrighted work of *Dr. John L. Holland***,** and his publisher, *Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc. (PAR)*(Patton & McMahon, 2006, p.32).

Eventually, individuals search for optimal interactions between their personality and environment – seeking occupations that complement their acquired capabilities and allow them to express their attitudes and values (Holland, 1992, 1997; Patton & McMahon, 2006).

Process Approaches

Conversely, process approaches attempt to account for the variability in career choice and development throughout an individual's lifetime. Contrary to the stability and consistency of traits studied through structural approaches, process approaches consider the opportunities of chance and change through the intrinsic nature of human development and life roles, and the influence of context (social and physical environmental impacts) on individual lived experiences. Central to this approach is the belief that human development and identity formation evolve through human-environment interactions. Process approaches view the individual as an "aggregate of social relations" and examines vocational/occupational choice within identity formation, which is conceptualized through development tasks across the lifespan (Vygotsky, as cited in Moran & John-Steiner, 2003, p. 6).

To narrow the scope of the lifespan, development theorists such as Erik Erikson (1968) and Lev Vygotsky (1960) posit specific development features during adolescence and young adulthood as being important times in career decision-making. Donald Super (1953) also identified adolescence and early adulthood as critical times in career development; specifically a time where developing a vocational identity is a central developmental task (Erikson, 1968). Super examined the "occupational stories" of people from a variety of backgrounds and ages and described career development as a process categorized by five stages occurring across one's entire life-span: Growth (4-13), Exploration (14-24), Establishment (25-44), Maintenance (45-65), and Disengagement (65+). Like Erikson, Super believed that everyone progresses through developmental stages at different times with emerging adults moving through an *exploration* phase and a career *establishment* phase between the ages of 18 and 25. Super's exploration stage includes three developmental tasks confronting the individual: crystallization, specification and actualization.

> Crystallization should develop the attitudes, beliefs and competencies needed to clarify vocational self-concept. Specification involves specifying an occupational choice that requires that individuals explore deeply, sifting through tentative preferences in

> preparation for declaring an occupational choice. The third task and final task of the exploration stage – actualizing an occupational choice – requires that the individual realizes a choice by converting it into actions that make it a fact. (Nabi et al., 2006, p. 377)

Without exploration and attaining an accurate account of self-concept and knowledge, Super believed it would be difficult to achieve life/work balance. Super (1990) and Ginzberg (1952) further proposed that between the ages of 14 and 24, individuals are progressively narrowing their career options from identifying tentative options to making final decisions regarding career choice.

Proposing a rather circumscribed sequence of stages in adolescent career development largely determined by chronological age, Gottfredson (1981, 2002) included a discussion of career aspirations in her theory. Her *Theory of Circumscription and Compromise* asserts that after age 14, adolescents begin to adjust and compromise their aspirations according to more realistic factors reflective of their sense of self. *Circumscription* involves the capacity to develop and reject occupational aspirations to accommodate external realities which match appropriate career pathways with individuals. When examining tentative career options, young people begin to progressively eliminate occupational options on factors such as perceived power (ages 3-5), gender roles (ages 6-8), prestige (ages 9-13), and an orientation to one's internal, unique self (ages 14+). As abstract thinking develops, individuals are increasingly able to determine which career pathways are suitable and compatible with their abilities and aspirations. As young people in the final stages of circumscription start to unconsciously explore and understand the realities of various occupations—for example, what a day in the life of a general surgeon, elementary school teacher, or law clerk looks like—they begin to eliminate occupational alternatives based on various criteria important to them. Often these criteria weigh in such things as sex roles and prestige level. Young people during this stage have idealistic aspirations that may or may not be easily or realistically attainable. If they commit themselves to these aspirations prematurely, they may lose confidence and direction and eventually feel dissatisfied with their career choice (Gottfredson, 2002, 2005).

Thus, the gateway to establishing oneself in a career is a "self-actualizing process" of exploration where adolescents must think about the possible areas of work, collect information about themselves and the world of work, consider possible career choices, and commit to an

educational pathway that will help them achieve desired occupational visions (Patton & Lokan, 2001). By engaging in such exploration with a sense of self-confidence, young people develop a sense of *career maturity* described by Betz (1988) as "the extent to which the individual has mastered the vocational development tasks, including both knowledge and attitudinal components, appropriate to his or her stage of career development" (p. 80). The "key to each stage is a vision of the rational individual striving to arrive at a vocationally mature relationship between himself and the world of work" (Owens, 2005, p. 31). Understanding career development as a process premises that the accumulation of knowledge over time makes people better prepared and informed to make career choices; becoming "career conscious individuals" who are "able to reflect and project thoughtfully as transitions are made from one phase of life to another" (Magnuson & Starr, 2000, p. 91).

Eclectic Approaches

The impacts of factors in career development are accounted by eclectic approaches which integrate multiple theoretical orientations representative of the complexities of human behaviour (Cory, 1991). The integrative perspectives put forth through eclectic approaches are especially valued in career counseling as they provide counselors with greater freedom in selecting appropriate techniques for a wide range of individual needs. Perhaps the most well-known eclectic theorists are Krumboltz (1979) and Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1996) who further explored the factors of learning, cognition, and the processes involved in decision-making. Krumboltz's learning theory for example, describes the impact of acquiring *self-efficacy* through contextual learning processes within career decision-making processes (Krumboltz, 1979, 1994, 1996; Krumboltz, Mitchell, & Jones, 1976). Self-efficacy, defined by psychologist Albert Bandura, is "the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations" (1995a, p. 2). Efficacy beliefs influence how people "think, feel, motivate themselves, and act," which enables individuals to envision themselves in various educational and occupational settings (p. 2). Much like Super's life-span theory of career development, Krumboltz placed much emphasis on self-concept and exploration. His theory posited that genetic influences, environmental conditions and events, learning experiences and task approach skills (skills applied to new situations or tasks) lead individuals to a "self-observation generalization" (Mitchell & Krumboltz, 1996). While the generalization may or may not be accurate, just as one's self-concept may or may not coincide with the concept others have

of an individual, the self-observation generalization statement validates beliefs about one's own capabilities, which in turn impacts the perception of personal characteristics that can be applied to new situations.

> The successes and failures that accrue in these encounters influence the individual in choosing courses of action in subsequent learning experiences, increasing the likelihood of making choices similar to previous ones that led to success and of avoiding choices similar to those that led to failure…because the individual changes as a result of the continuous series of learning experiences, the situation changes because environmental, cultural, and social conditions are dynamic. (Brown, 2003, p. 43)

Not surprisingly, the generalization suggests available and attainable career pathways, and leads to career choices the individual presumably thinks are a fit (Brown, 2003).

An extension of the eclectic interaction between the triadic dynamics of personal factors, behaviour, and the environment is further distilled by Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). SCT maintains that positive expectations of personal capabilities which are regulated through self-efficacy are instrumental in elevating educational expectations which eventually lead to academic and career success (Bandura, 1994, 1995b, 1997; Brown & Lent, 2006; Fouad, 2007; Lent et al., 1994).

> A strong sense of personal efficacy creates self-directed lifetime learners who are valued and economically rewarded in today's society (Lent, Hackett, & Brown, 1999). Strong efficacy beliefs, along with fundamental learning tools supplied by formal education, result in students who possess skills necessary for social and economic stability. (Smith, 2002, p. 1)

Bandura's SCT has been used as a lens for numerous studies on self-efficacy variables which hypothesize "that higher levels of ethnic identity and higher levels of perceived (parent/teacher) support would be related to greater career decision self-efficacy and greater outcome expectations" (Gushue &Whitson, 2006, p. 115). "Harmoniously blending theoretical concepts and methods into a congruent framework," eclectic approaches to career development "integrate existing perspectives and transcend individual models" (Cory, as cited in Patton & McMahon, 2006, p.16).

Constructivist Approaches

Finally, constructivist approaches contrast the more reductionist and empirically determined views of career development described above. Constructivism "views the person as an open system, constantly interacting with the environment, seeking stability through ongoing change" (Patton & McMahon, 2006, p. 15). Whether distal or proximal, environments are interpreted systems in which constructivists believe individuals extract multiple meanings and competing interpretations. As the career decision-making processes "represent a unique interaction of self and social experience," young people cognitively engage in constructing their career aspirations and pathways alongside others present in their environment (Young & Collin, 2004, p. 381). They construct these realities by being reflective, active, and aware of societal conditions, and are subsequently required to breakthrough stereotypic and negative sources of youth projections. Hence, the constructivist notion of career decision-making is that it can only be understood in the context in which it occurs (Brown, 1996). Mahoney (as cited in Patton & McMahon, 2006) presents five basic assumptions derived from constructivist approaches to career development: active agency (i.e., an individual's engagement in shaping his or her own life), order (i.e., focus on organizing experiences to create meaning), self (i.e., focus on personal identity), social-symbolic relatedness (i.e., focus on context), and lifespan development (i.e., focus on the ongoing development processes towards homeostasis). These assumptions reflect the narrative construction of the subjective career being facilitated "from the inside out"; that is, an individual's internal voice and self-concept (Ibid, 2006, p. 15).

Contextualizing career construction as being shaped by social process, career identity is seen as the culmination of the social nature of learning, self-efficacy, and knowledge construction (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Keppler, 2000). The social constructivist perspective on career development provides a lens which explores the role of family, peers, and culture (e.g., gender, race, socioeconomic status) as either barriers that interfere or liberators that assist individuals to construct their career identity and make associated decisions. Savickas (1989, 1993, 2000, 2001) was one of the first career theorists to link career development with constructivism by revising Super's theory and formulating a social constructivist understanding of career construction (Savickas, 2002b, 2005). Savickas emphasized the importance of self-efficacy and believed individual self-concept is developed "through the interaction of inherited aptitudes, physical makeup, opportunities to observe and play various roles…and evaluation of

the extent to which the results of role playing meet with the…approval [of others]" (Savucjas, 2005, p. 46). He described the construction of a career identity and associated future dreams as emerging through the "active process of making meaning" of past experiences which unfold as narratives or "life themes" (p. 43). Narratives reiterate the complexity of career identity socially constructed over the lifespan and "tell how the self of yesterday became the self of today and will become the self of tomorrow" (p. 58).

A Kaleidoscopic Metaphor and Approach

A review of the structural, process, eclectic and constructivist approaches encompassing career development theorizing reveals the evolving discourse bridging developmental, social, and cognitive psychology with social constructivist theories. For this reason I consider a meshing of these approaches as kaleidoscopic in nature, reflective of the roots of this research study, and representing an epistemological stance that emphasizes the diversity and complexity of career development. The turning of a kaleidoscope brings certain pieces into focus while others are unclear. Another turn and the pieces shift, revealing another arbitrary and dynamic pattern. Take one piece away and the image is not quite the same. Similarly, eclectic and constructivist approaches which integrate structural and process approaches to career theorizing provide multiple reflections of seeing and understanding interrelated features (or "bits" and "pieces") radiating from, and impacting, on individuals along their career pathway. Each "piece" of the pathway is vital and systematically interacts and affects another.

At the beginning of this inquiry I found a limited discussion in the field concerning career development that critically examined adolescence and young adulthood—specifically the transition between high school, postsecondary life and the world of work. I emphasize "critically" because most empirical studies employ quantitative or mixed methods approaches that neglect to empower young people to articulate their own career development and/or criticize or praise the communities, organizations, and situations that engage them in creating and achieving their personal definition of success. Furthermore, the current literature is primarily grounded in counseling/vocational psychology, which neglects to locate the possibility of economic, geographic, and political structures in relation to curriculum and instructional practices within schools and the relationships between families, schools, and communities. The aim of this study is to capture the associations and new arrangement of the "bits" contributing to the career decisions of emerging adults from the SCI during the boom and bust of socioeconomic

and infrastructure development on the islands. To grasp the complexity and significance of making educational and occupational decisions, a kaleidoscopic approach is required to integrate the socio-cognitive constructs of decision-making with the influences of contextual features. For this reason, Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 2000) provides an integrative "kaleidoscopic" perspective to observe the multiple reflections of emerging adults and their educational and occupational decision-making experiences.

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)

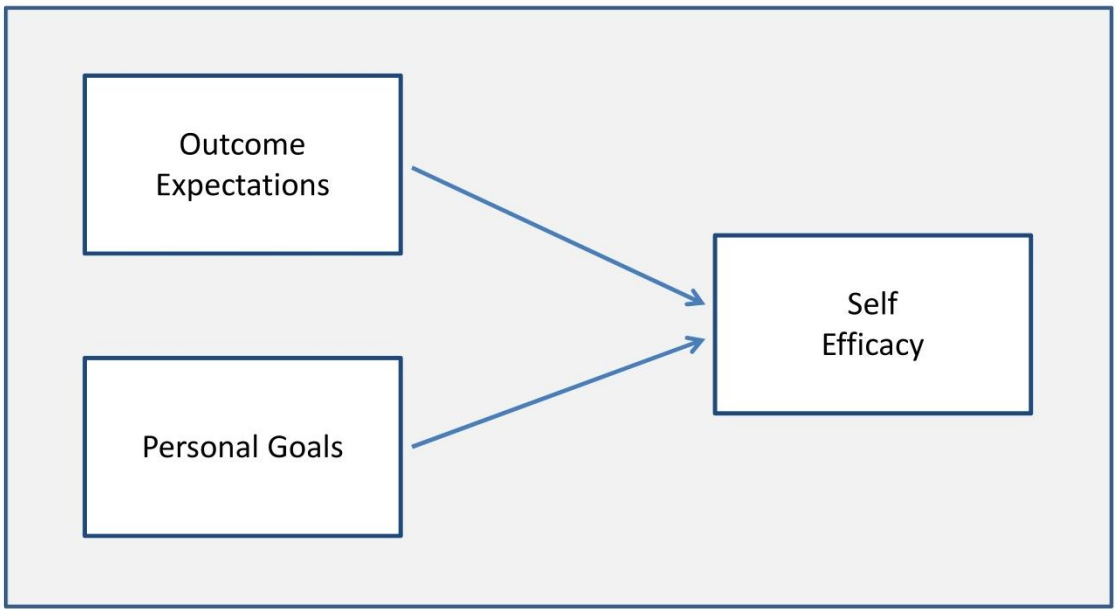
In specifying the role of self-efficacy in career decision-making and informed by Krumboltz's learning theory, Lent, Brown, & Hackett (1996, 2002) established the SCCT which revised Bandura's (1986) SCT. SCCT is concerned with the interplay between individuals, institutions, environmental and behavioural variables and "considers how social context may exert a crucial influence on these cognitive factors and, consequently, on the development of career interests and career choice" (Gushue & Whitson, 2006, p. 115). Simply, the basic premise posed by SCCT is that occupational interests are largely determined by self-efficacy and outcome expectations, which are driven by various contextual factors acting as either barriers or facilitators influencing career interest(s) and choice (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). For example, individuals may excel at music, but if they do not believe they have musical talent, or that a job or career in music lacks status (e.g., money, prestige), or that others do not approve of the activity, then they will not develop the interest. There are three major tenets of the SCCT, each focusing on specific cognitive mediators: self-efficacy (c*an I do this?)*, outcome expectations (*if I do this, what will happen?*), and personal goals (*how much do I want to do this?*). Figure 2 illustrates the interrelatedness of these factors affecting career choice and a description of each, including the synergistic effect of context on career development that follows.

Self-efficacy

The degree to which an individual thinks he or she is capable of succeeding at a particular endeavor is the core of SCCT. The greater the perceived barriers to an occupation, the less likely an individual will pursue related careers. Consequently individuals who develop poor self-efficacy will eliminate possible occupational options. Similarly, people who have greater

confidence in their abilities to perform specific tasks, that is to "organize and execute courses of action" which "attain designated types of performance," are more likely to be interested in and motivated to pursue those tasks (Bandura, 1986, p. 391). There is an opportunity for change however, modifying or uplifting individuals from poor self-efficacy can alter their aspirations and help them access new experiences. These new experiences can open the door to educational and occupational possibilities previously deemed impossible or unrealistic (Brown & Lent, 1996).

Figure 2: SCCT Model of Factors Affecting Career Choice



As individuals interact complexly with their environment and with others, they acquire cognitive, social, and behavioural skills necessary to form strategies that help them achieve their goals. Such contextual influences can be positive or negative. SCCT posits a supportive environment as vital in career development and differentiates between two types of influences: distal and proximal. Distal influences include resources for skill development and access to role models. They "help shape social cognitions and interests" (Patton & McMahon, 2006, p. 85). Proximal influences include job availability, satisfaction, and compensation. They become "critical choice junctures" in the decision to pursue a particular career (p. 85). Individuals are in constant interaction with both environmental influences. Consequently, self-efficacy is not a

fixed trait but a set of dynamic self-beliefs acquired through personal attainments, social persuasion, physiological states and reactions, and vicarious learning. The relationship between these domains include reciprocal actions of engagement in activities perceived to reflect personal strengths; that is, people are interested in doing things they believe they are good at and are more likely to spend time improving their capabilities at things in which they are interested.

Perceived barriers and self-efficacy have been the focus of numerous empirical studies interested in marginalized communities based on ethnicity, class, and gender, such as Asian Americans (Kelly, Gunsalus, & Gunsalus, 2009), Mexican Americans (Flores, Navarro, & DeWitz, 2008), South Asians (Mani, 2005), battered women (Chronister & McWhirter, 2003), and gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals (Adams, Cahill, & Ackerlind, 2005; Chung, 2003). A central feature of these studies is the important relationship between self-efficacy and role models who appear to impact on the career decisions of young adults.

> Learning experiences, especially observational learning stemming from significant role models (e.g., parents, teachers, heroes), have a powerful influence on career decisions, making some occupations more attractive than others. Positive modeling, reward and reinforcement will likely lead to the development of appropriate career planning skills and career behaviour. (Canadian Career Development Foundation, 2008)

Vicarious learning through opportunities to observe others' similar successes can facilitate the development of positive self-efficacy beliefs. For example, research has been done on the influence of role modeling on women's perceived self-efficacy, especially in nontraditional careers (Gysbers, Heppner, & Johnston, 2003). Lent et al. (1996) acknowledged "that the individual is an active agent in these processes" (Patton & McMahon, 2006, p. 83) and have drawn from Betz and Hackett's (1981) study of women's perceptions of their mathematical and scientific aptitudes. Here, individual agency hinders optimal career choice as the role of perceived barriers limit women, for example, to pursue mathematical/science pathways. The role of self-efficacy is powerful as it can "primarily inhibit the translation of interests into choice goals and goals into actions" (or choice) (Albert & Luzzo, 1999, p.432). Self-efficacy directly contributes to interests and goals, and has an effect on outcome expectations. This effect may be explained by the fact that people tend to expect more desirable outcomes in activities in which they see themselves to be efficacious.

Outcome expectations

Outcome expectations refer to "the imagined consequences of performing particular behaviour" and consequently influence the development of career interests (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, p.83). Whereas self-efficacy is concerned with, "Will I be able to do this?" outcomes are concerned with, "If I do this, then what will be the outcome?" Bandura (1986) further defines outcome expectations as the anticipation that particular outcomes follow particular types of actions and include beliefs about extrinsic reinforcement (e.g., receiving tangible rewards such as a certificate or trophy for successful performance), self-directed consequences (e.g., internal pride for successfully completing a challenging task), and outcomes derived from task process (e.g., absorption, social consequences/approval or admiration from peers) (Lent et al., 1994). When individuals anticipate positive consequences arising from a specific career choice, they are naturally more interested in the particular career path. However if people anticipate primarily negative consequences, they may be less likely to pursue those particular career options. The beliefs an individual has about what is realistically possible or likely to happen are not synonymous with desired outcomes. On the contrary, outcome expectations correspond to what an individual believes is reasonably likely to happen, as opposed to what one might wish would occur.

SCCT suggests that outcome expectations are important determinants of career interest and goals as individuals weigh the desirability of possible career options. However, outcomes are not inseparable from self-efficacy. Bandura (1986, 1989) describes the relationship between self-efficacy and outcomes expectations as a cognitive process encapsulating important affective reflections. He classifies outcomes as reflecting either physical (e.g., financial gains), social (e.g., status), and/or self-evaluative (e.g., pride) anticipations and believes each are influenced by self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986 cited in Patton & McMahon, 2006). In theory, individuals are more likely to be interested in a given career if there is occupational valence—a match between anticipated outcomes of a particular career and their desired outcomes. What is also important is the relative value or attributed significance an individual places on a particular outcome (Lent et al., 1994).

Goals

Goals reflect an individual's determination to engage in a particular activity or to produce a particular outcome (Bandura, 1986). Ideally, personal goals are consciously articulated objectives that intensify the efforts of an individual. They are not only relevant and purposeful to an individual's life, but are also intended to direct behaviour with a sense of purpose. "Through goal setting, people envision a possible career option (or options) and the steps necessary to attain it (Lent & Sheu, 2010, p. 694). SCCT maintains that individuals set goals to organize their actions and, in particular, guide their own career behaviour. These goals reciprocate personal beliefs in one's on capabilities (i.e. self-efficacy) and anticipated outcomes (i.e. outcome expectations). For example, when people feel confident and efficacious about a task, they typically expect positive outcomes and become more interested in the activity. When people are interested in an activity, they typically set goals for continuing participation and improvement in the activity. And when people participate more they increase their performance which often leads to confidence about their desired goals and rewards which can be intrinsic (such as the development of skills or personal enjoyment) and/or extrinsic (such as public accolades or trophies).

Context

The eclecticism of SCCT accounts for both developmental and contextual complexities of human behaviour as it relates to career choice. I selected the theory to inform this study of emerging adults in the SCI because it includes a contemporary perspective on human development, recognizing that individuals are active participants in their own development and not simply passive creatures to be stimulated by their imposed environment. From a constructivist perspective, career development is an active process, fluid and flexible, and therefore open to change over space and time. Individuals develop their career aspirations and pursuits by interacting within the circumstances and conditions in which they reside. In other words, there is a reciprocal relationship between individuals and context. "Humans shape their contexts, contexts shape their inhabitants, and human change and development occur at the interface of the person and the context," (Porfeli, Niles, & Trusty, 2005, p. 29). Understanding this relationship provides a dynamic lens for examining the interplay between individuals and their physical, social, political, and economic environment, and how this interaction relates to career choices and experiences. In essence, along with the social cognitive perspective of SCCT,

I contend that an ecological framework of understanding context conceptualizes the intersection of individuals, social context, and the embedded processes that connect them.

My understanding of context draws on the ideas of Bronfenbrenner (1979) who refers to the collectivity of environments in which individuals inhabit, exist, and interact as the "ecological" environment. "The ecological environment is conceived as a set of nested structures, each inside the other like a set of Russian dolls," (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 3).

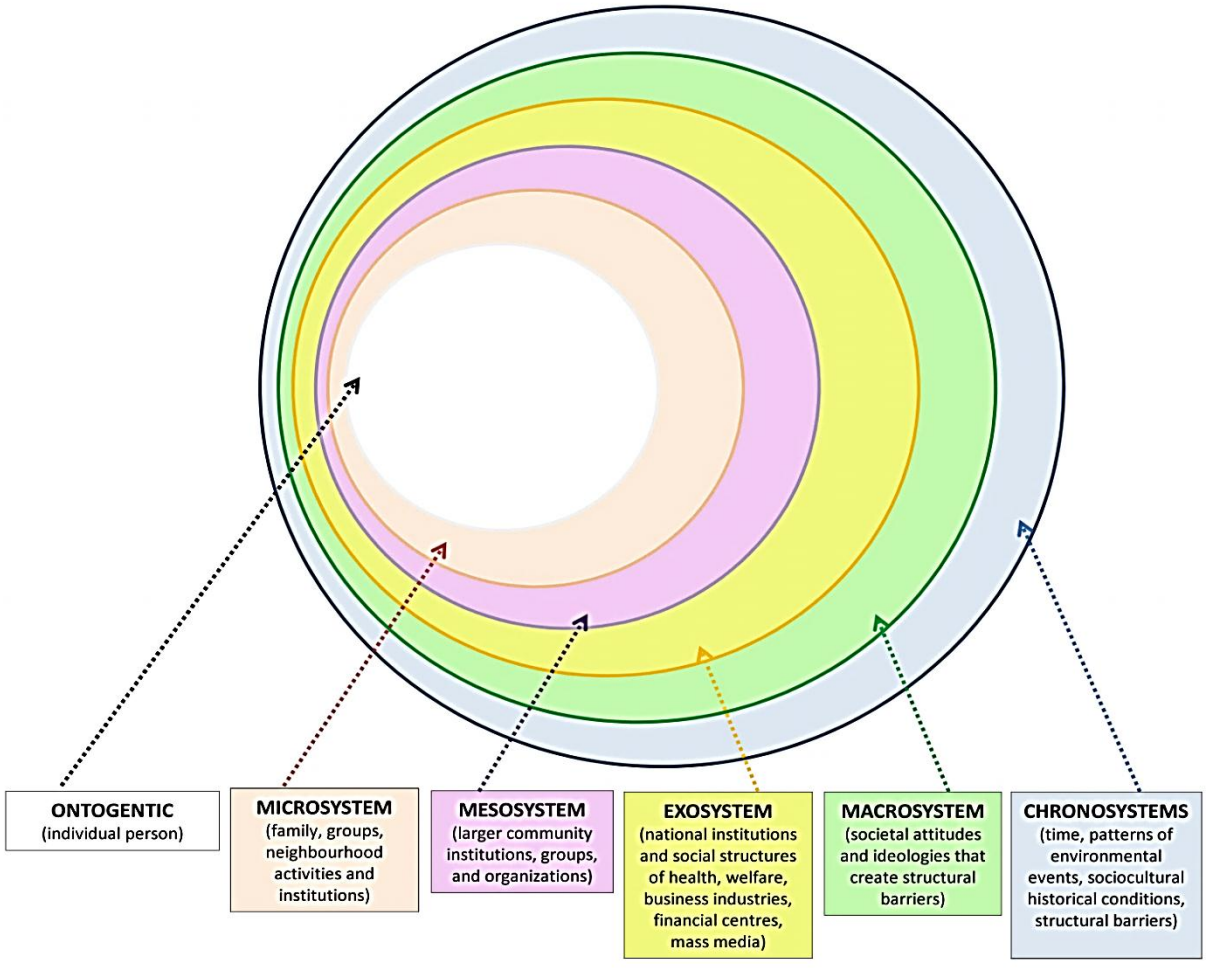
> Bronfenbrenner suggests that an ecological system includes nested contexts within systemic domains of bio-psycho-social-historical influences that affect individual development. Namely, social contexts are the "nested contexts" of an individual's life and include a person's family, school, peers, church, neighborhood activities, and sociocultural structural conditions. The nested contexts within systemic domains are multileveled, bidirectional (reciprocal), and transactional such that the activities and persons within a given context affect the individual, who in turn has a reciprocal impact on the same context. (Stevens, 2005, p. 47)

Consider the overlapping concentric circles in Figure 3 which provide a visual of the synergic interactions within and between the embedded contexts. Situated in the centre of the model is the individual encompassing intrapersonal factors such as personality, character, self-efficacy, self-awareness, values, and goals. These factors interact with the wider social and historical context. The individual's interactions with family, peers, and school in the microsystem for example, serve as a "nested" context for young people's thinking and action in their social and political environment. The structural barriers within the chronosystem for example, prevent access to opportunities, privilege, and power (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 2004). An example of such a barrier is the old boys' club of white Anglo-Saxon protestant males who retain money and power through a rather incestuous network of social and business connections (Briggs, 1998; Friedman & Krackhardt, 1997; Gushue, Clarke, Pantzer, & Scanlan, 2006; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2000).

Vondracek, Lerner, and Schulenberg (1983, 1986) apply Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework to understanding the contextual factors associated with career development. In their "developmental-contextual" model, the hierarchically arranged "nested" social structures of Bronfenbrenner's model are shown to provide a life-span classification system of career-related human contexts. Vondracek et al. (1986) attempt to build on developmental theorizing of career development by taking into account the dynamic nature of the interaction between individuals

and their ever-changing contexts. They emphasize the relationship between the "individual," the "microcontexts," and the relationship between the two (i.e., nature and nurture); and how they exist and operate on multiple levels in relation to educational and occupational choices and actions (Porfeli, Niles, & Trusty, 2005, p. 31). Vondracek et al.'s (1986) model suggests that the environment differentially encourages or inhibits an individual's abilities to capitalize on intrapersonal characteristics (such as personality, capabilities, and interests) and translate them into career outcomes. Furthermore, individual agency and self-determinism are emphasized. "People select, delete, and modify their contexts to achieve their goals and in turn, human contexts select, delete, and modify their inhabitant to achieve their goals (e.g., mission statements)," (Porfeli et al., 2005, p. 31).

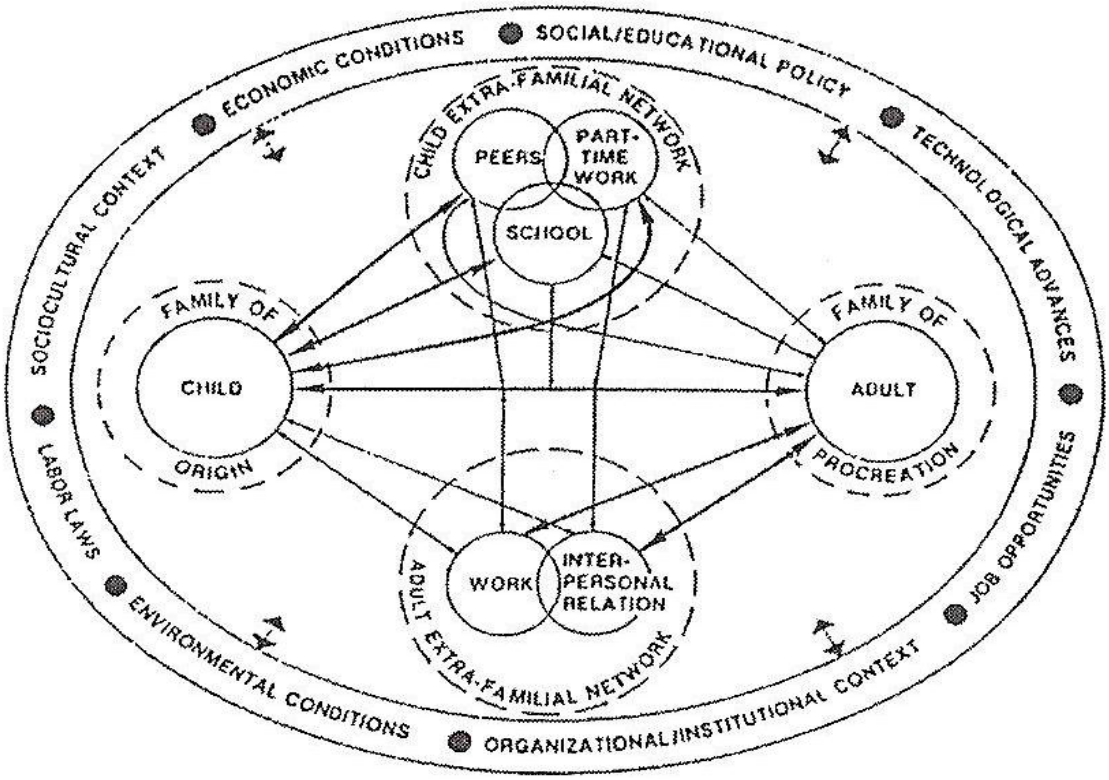
Figure 3: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model of Embedded Contexts



(Adapted from Patton & McMahon, 2006, p. 186)

The dynamic interaction model of career development, shown in Figure 4 accounts for "the complexity of occupational careers, their antecedents, their unfolding, and their consequences" (Vondracek & Porfeli, 2008, p.211). It also accounts for the continuous interaction of person and context illustrated by eight contextual variables in the outer circle and the interactive roles of family (origin and procreation) and extra-familial networks (children and adults) in the four inner circles (Patton & McMahon, 2006, pp. 89-90).

Figure 4: Dynamic Interactional Model of Career Development



(Adapted from Lerner, cited in Patton & McMahon, 2006, p. 90)

The developmental-contextual approach argues that an individual's actions are not only affected by the chaotic and reflexive nature of the constantly changing environment (context), but also in accordance with his or her own unique characteristics operating at multiple levels (including bio-psycho-social-historical) throughout the lifespan. For example, when an individual experiences issues with his or her health, such as falling ill with a chronic disease like rheumatoid arthritis or diabetes, the change at the biological level naturally contributes to a change at the psychological

level, such as reduced self-efficacy; changes in other levels will inevitably follow which will impact career choice, consideration, and action. While Vondracek et al.'s (1986) model emphasizes individual agency in the continuous interplay between person and context and the unfolding of a unique career construction, a critical perspective suggests that individual agency should be reconsidered as it is negated by the transmission of cultural capital (Greenbank & Hupworth, 2008; Patton & McMahon, 2006; Vondracek et al., 1986).

Cultural Capital

The sociological concept of *cultural capital* was first used to explain educational outcomes in France during the 1960s and has since been used to further our understanding of differences in educational achievement. Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1986) conceptualized cultural capital as the attributes (such as knowledge, experiences, values, attitudes, ideals, education and skills) an individual acquires over the course of life, which is seen to have value by the dominant culture. Bourdieu (1986) conceptualized three forms of cultural capital: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized. In the *embodied* state, families socialize individuals and offer experiences and knowledge about particular cultures, traditions, values, and practices. The *objectified* state includes material goods individuals own. The *institutionalized* state consists of institutional recognition which is mainly in the form of academic achievement, credentials or qualifications. In more recent years, Bourdieu (1990) also discussed *linguistics* as a form of cultural capital where particular ways of speaking are deemed more "proper" and thus have higher value than others. This is of particular interest when working in post-colonial and ethnic communities where particular speech practices such as Ebonics, Patois, Creole and urban slang are considered the "non-privileged" or lesser form of linguistic cultural capital, and referred to as such in educational settings (Campbell, 2006; Fordham, 1999).

Bourdieu's thesis about cultural capital argues that social reproduction is maintained through the education system and that schools affirm and reward the dominant culture (particular types of speech, likes/dislikes, and knowledge). As cultural capital is based on the familiarity with the dominant culture in a society, Bourdieu (1986) distinguishes another three types of capital: (1) economic capital – resources measured by cash and assets; (2) social capital[7] – resources measured by the relationships, group memberships, and networks individuals have

[7] In youth culture, social capital is often attributed to having "connections" with people.

access to; and (3) symbolic capital[8] – resources measured by the prestige, honour, and attention one is afforded as he or she acquires social position. Bourdieu views symbolic capital as a source of power that can often be used to acquire economic and social capital. As those in possession of the types of capital described here are typically from the middle and upper classes, disadvantaged youth turn to schools for affirmation of their authentic identities. Bourdieu explains that learning is considered to contribute to privileged knowledge where language, skills, talents, and achievements (i.e., cultural capital) are typically accessed through selective institutions, facilities, teachers/instructors, and additional educational activities (such as horseback riding lessons or foreign exchange programs). Being cognizant of privilege allows us to acknowledge that schools are not equalizers that value all cultural resources, but rather institutions that value and endorse particular types of knowledge, languages, habits, dispositions, and skills which reflect family background rather than individual merit. According to Bourdieu's theory of cultural reproduction, individuals from families of lower socioeconomic classes are less advantaged than middle socioeconomic class pupils in gaining educational credentials because of their lack of cultural capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977/2000). Bourdieu dismisses the meritocratic premise of school success where instead of being "an instrument of liberation and universality" based on demonstrated ability, talent or "merit" is "really a privilege" only offered to characteristically middle and upper socioeconomic classes (Bourdieu cited in Eakin, 2001, p. A15). Talent and achievement are thus understood to be the byproduct of invested cultural capital (Jenkins, 2002).

Other researchers have referenced cultural capital using gender and race as measures of advantage/disadvantage, such as communities privileging boys over girls, fluent English-language speakers over English-language learners, and white students over black students (Hatcher, 1998; Staff & Mortimer, 2008; Sullivan, 2001). In addition, Ainsworth (2002) also mentions social capital (or resources acquired through relationships) as a means of disadvantaging individuals from accessing privileged, preferred, or valued capital. In this case, communities with high levels of social capital, evidenced by "strong social networks, feelings of trust and safety and community participation," provide environments where young people have access to resources (such as adult mentors), information and opportunities that all contribute to

[8] Symbolic capital was added later by Bourdieu and elaborated on in his book:
Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste.* London: Routledge.

positive academic and social outcomes (Tennent, Tayler, Farrell, & Patterson, 2005, p. 1). This provides a valuable lens to observe Caribbean communities with dense expatriate populations such as the SCI. Emerging adults from the SCI are surrounded by rapid developments in tourism, offshore banking and real estate, but have varying levels of exposure to cultural and social capital depending on family and cultural background.

The concept of cultural capital as it relates to career decision-making (career development) is primarily based on interrogating economic and social class barriers in association with educational access and achievement. Institutions and societal expectations that place the burden of making wise educational and occupational decisions on the individual must also consider the burden (or blessing) of gender, race/ethnicity, and class that often steer individual pathways. "How to finance a college education, complete basic admission procedures, [or] make connections between career goals and educational requirements" requires accessing personal and/or professional resources which are not always known or available (Vargas, 2004, p. 7). For example, students from families of lower socioeconomic classes tend to have parents with little or no postsecondary education who subsequently lack the familiarity or resources to prepare their children for higher education (Gibbons & Shoffner, 2004); or students from particular ethnic communities may face either parental disengagement with higher educational opportunities, or the opposite—extraordinary pressure from their parents to succeed (Mani, 2005; McCarron & Inkelas, 2006; Saunders & Serna, 2004). When parents possess less direct knowledge about the associated economic and social requirements and benefits of a postsecondary education, students often become disinterested or lose momentum in accessing resources for higher education.

It has also been noted that higher education reproduces and reinforces divisions in class by systematically excluding individuals who do not possess capital (e.g., working class and rural peoples) (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Reay (1998) revealed through her work with working-class mothers, that "a combination of diminished resources and less social power meant that they were not able to generate cultural capital [for their children] from their time and effort to anything like the extent that middle class mothers were able to" (p. 198). In a longitudinal study with girls and mothers in New Zealand, Walshaw (2006) corroborated the work by Lucey (2001) which indicated that "working-class parents who 'do all the right things' cannot guarantee 'the kind of educational success routinely achieved by middle-class children" (p. 185).

> Middle class parents have the financial resources to encourage their children to engage in activities…which help to develop the values and dispositions (i.e., cultural capital) valued by employers (Brown, 1997). Once in higher education, these middle class students have the economic capital, and often the networks (i.e., social capital), to continue to develop what Brown and Hesketh (2004) refer to as their "personal capital". This is made up of "hard currencies" such as work experience and sporting and cultural achievements and "soft currencies" such as interpersonal skills…Students from working class background are less likely to enter higher education with these advantages. (Greenbank & Hepworth, 2008, pp. 493-494)

In the Caribbean context, Sullivan (2001) affirms that parental capacity to provide their children with activities and learning experiences ("intellectual resources") has a direct impact on student GCSE[9] level exam scores. Greenbank and Hepworth (2008) also note how the parental provision of "hard currency" translates into career opportunities maintaining that students who are able to engage in career preparation activities (e.g., related work experience, cultural exposure opportunities such as travel, sporting, and group activities that build leadership and team work skills, etcetera.) "develop the kind of skills, attributes and knowledge sought by potential employers" (p. 493).

As a "contextual" feature, the impact of cultural capital on both men and women is emphasized in Vondracek et al.'s (1986) Developmental-Contextual Model described earlier in this chapter (see Figure 5). Schoon, Martin, and Ross (2007) applied the model to their investigation into the connection between socioeconomic family backgrounds to career development. "The model postulates that the influence of parental social background operates via the proximal family environment … conceptualized by material conditions experienced in the family home, and the parental educational expectations for the teenager" (Schoon et al., 2007, p. 80). The pathways shown in the Developmental-Contextual Model reflect the dynamic interaction between the family environment and the developing individual and link differences in socialization processes and opportunities evident across family socioeconomic status levels to

[9] GCSE exams are the General Certificate of Secondary Education exams awarded in the British system of education typically practiced in the Caribbean. Students are required to write these exams in specific subject areas at the secondary level. Their performance on these exams determines if the student can proceed to Advanced level in the sixth form, college, or further education.

"differences in teenage aspirations, timing of transitions, and adult attainment (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Vondracek et al., 1986)" (Schoon et al., 2007, p. 80).

> It is assumed that school motivation, aspirations, and academic achievement are associated, and that they increase with the material and aspirational encouragement from parents (Erikson & Jonson, 1996). Furthermore the model postulates pathways linking family motivational and economic resources with individual agency factors to the timing of the birth of the first child. Individuals with fewer personal and family related resources are assumed to start their family formation earlier than others … The formulation of life plans during adolescence can help to direct and guide the transition from the present to the future, and are significant predictors of consequent educational and occupational attainment (Clausen, 1991; Elder, 1974/1999; Schneider & Stevenson, 1999). (Schoon, et al., 2007, p. 81)[10]

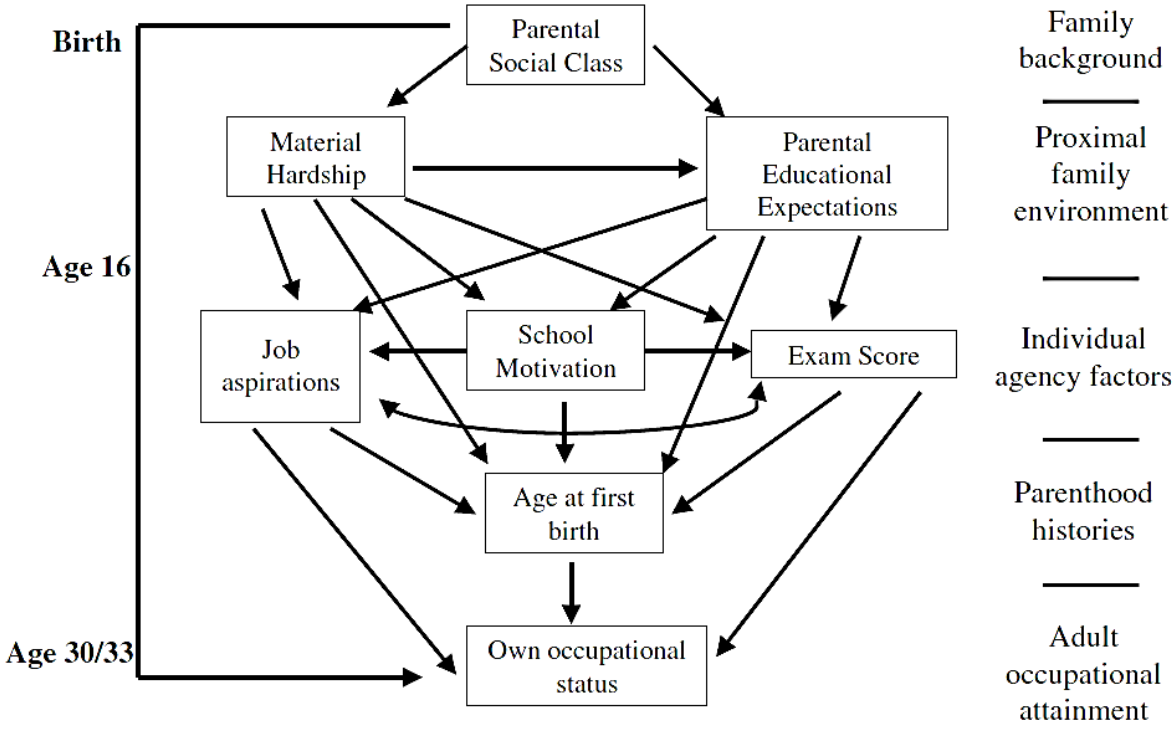
Figure 5 suggests that children from privileged social backgrounds are exposed to higher parental expectations, financial resources, and better material conditions, role models, occupational knowledge, and informal/kinship networks. Such privileges eradicate potential barriers to occupational attainment, for example, payment of tuition fees, purchasing of a personal computer and/or other costly technologies, and accessing funds for educational travel experiences (Schoon et al., 2007). In the context of this study, privilege associated with cultural capital can also have an impact on the investigative process of off-island career options and the decision to leave the SCI for educational and occupational opportunities abroad.

Human Capital Theory

> *According to prevailing opinion, survival in the 21st Century global economy hinges on the generation of a labour pool made up of nimble minded, skilled personnel with the willingness to embrace learning and innovation as a life-long endeavour amidst a constantly changing landscape.* (Koh, Towndrow, & Soon, 2008, p. 1).

[10] It has been suggested that young men and women from less privileged backgrounds are more likely to enter into parenthood earlier than those from more privileged backgrounds. Early parenthood is typically associated with reduced occupational opportunities (Schoon, Martin, & Ross, 2007, p. 79).

Figure 5: Developmental-Contextual Model of Career Development



(Schoon, Martin, & Ross, 2007, p. 80)

Education is inseparable from economics as individual knowledge is seen as a type of "natural resource" and economic device for nations. This concept of humans as "capital" (human capital) is defined by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development as "the knowledge, skills and competences and other attributes embodied in individuals that are relevant to economic activity" (OECD, 1998, p. 9). Accordingly, human capital comprises learned skills accumulated through both formal and informal education, innate abilities, motivation, and work habits (Mazza, 2004). Human capital can be understood as two types: "humans as labour" (for production) or "humans as possessing capital" (in the form of knowledge, skills, and experience) (Kwon, 2009). The human capital view suggests that highly educated people are generally highly skilled people as well; and skilled workers are typically more productive (Becker, 1964). The core thesis of the theory is that "peoples' learning capacities are comparable to other natural resources involved in the production process; when the resource is effectively exploited the results are profitable for both the enterprise and for society as a whole" (Livingstone, 2004, p. 162). Accordingly, a national commitment to education and job- specific (or vocational)

schooling is an investment which directly imparts useful knowledge and skills to workers, generating higher future income for individuals and enhancing economic development in a society (McMahon, 1998; Patron, 2008).

With human productivity being a nation's "capital", "human capital theory" suggests that an investment in education is an investment in productivity, sustainability, and economic growth (Becker, 1964). Countries, especially developing nations, place (formal) education at the forefront of their development plans as it increases their ability to participate in the new global economy. In fact, many economists posit that the primary resources of nations reside in people, not material resources.

> Human resources constitute the ultimate basis of wealth of nations. Capital and natural resources are passive factors of production, human beings are the active agencies who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organization, and carry forward national development. (Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 1997, p. 102)

Nigerian education professor Babalola (as cited in Olaniya & Okemakinde, 2008, p. 158) provides three arguments behind human capital investment:

i. the new generation must be given the appropriate parts of the knowledge which has already been accumulated by previous generations;
ii. the new generation should be taught how existing knowledge should be used to develop new products, to introduce new processes and production methods and social services; and
iii. people must be encouraged to develop entirely new ideas, products, processes and methods through creative approaches.

Despite the Marxist perspective of the human capital paradigm which argues against reducing people into commodities, a development perspective acknowledges that educated individuals not only generate new ideas for production, but also have increased opportunities for employment in the labour market.

> Many of the developing nations have thus realized that the principal mechanism for developing human knowledge is the education system. Thus, they invest huge sums of money on education not only as an attempt to impact knowledge and skills to individuals

> but also to impart values, ideas, attitudes and aspirations which may be in the nation's best developmental interest. (Olaniyan & Okemakinde, 2008, p. 161)

Human capital theory justifies such investments in education, advocating for national expenditures on education in both developing and developed nations (Fagerlind & Saha, 1997). The SCI's socioeconomic development plans show a commitment to increased investments in primary, secondary, and tertiary education with the intent to increase local islander participation in postsecondary education. More specifically, the government hopes that at least 80% of secondary school graduates will enter postsecondary or tertiary level education, with at least 70% of the local islander workforce holding postsecondary accreditation (either technical or tertiary training) by the year 2017. The goals of unleashing local potential and increasing human capital are directed towards improving labour productivity and economic sustainability. This is even more apparent in the development goal of having 20% of all 18-24 year olds either graduated or enrolled in science or engineering focused tertiary education (National Socioeconomic Development Strategy (NSDS), (2007a, 2007b). While these development goals may appear ambitious, they do address the demand for more skilled and professional personnel. According to the theoretical framework of human capital theory, such plans are necessary to ensure local participation in the new global economy and shift the labour market's dependency on immigration to education.

Sharf (2006) believes that human capital theory contributes to the understanding of career development as it provides insight on individuals who are influenced by income and status in their career decision-making process and may consequently migrate for better opportunities. According to human capital theory, people move to find employment and remuneration more appropriate to their formal education and training (Becker, 1964). Islands of the Caribbean have been known for producing a high quality of human capital that has typically migrated to more developing nations such as the United States and Canada; their motivation typically being better salary prospects and the hope for a 'better life' (Blossfeld, Klijzing, Mills, & Kurz, 2005; Checchi, 2006; Mishra, 2006). In development literature this "flow of high skilled immigrants from developing countries to developed countries" is known as "brain drain" (Lien & Wang, 2005, p. 153). In economics the term brain drain "designates the international transfer of resources in the form of human capital and mainly applies to the migration of relatively highly educated individuals from developing to developed nations" (Beine, Docquier, & Rapoport,

2008, p. 631). For the developing world and small state economies, the loss of human capital through migration can be detrimental to development goals and participation in the global economy (Skeldon, 2005).

The Movement of Human Capital

The movement of human capital and brain drain is a phenomenon grounded in migration. Consequently, to understand human capital theories one should begin by understanding migration. The earliest theories of migration were centered on economic factors which suggested migration as a means of mobilizing cheap labour for capital. Under the macro-level, capitalist notions of the "dual labour market theory" (Piore, 1979) and "world systems theory" (Wallerstein, 1974), migration was a productivity response in which people moved to where their skills were needed and where they would be optimized in exchange for a positive monetary net return. Wallerstein's theory recognizes the economic interdependence and inequality of nations, suggesting migration as a natural consequence of economic globalization in which the exploitation of poor peoples from the developing world enhanced labour markets in the developed world, perpetuating inequitable development (Wallerstein, 1974). A decade later, the "world society approach" articulated migration as a consequence of cultural globalization, where the world wide exchange of cultural values between people render an awareness of economic imbalances and prompt movement (Hoffmann-Nowotny, 1989).

Providing a much needed holistic view, "migration systems theory" (Kritz, Lim, & Zlotnik, 1992, following the pioneering work of Mabogunje, 1970) describes international migration as a "continuous interplay with historical, economic, cultural and political linkages between the countries, both on the micro and macro levels" (Bijak, 2006, p. 15). In addition to economic, political, and institutional factors, an individual's decision to migrate (or not) may reflect collective action (i.e., community/peer following; although the theory of collection action suggests that people sharing a common interest do not always act in common) (Olson, 1965), social opportunities, and/or myriad of personal considerations (e.g., proximity to family, quality of life, physical limitations/disability, etc.), (Castles & Miller, 1998). "The fundamental assumption of migration systems theory is that migration alters the social, cultural, economic, and institutional conditions at both the sending and receiving ends – that is, the entire developmental space within which migration processes operate" (de Haas, 2006, p. 67).

More recently reflective of the global economy, Massey (1990, 2002) applies social capital (i.e., relationships, networks, privileged forms of knowledge and skills that advance one's potential migration) to a "cumulative causation theory"[11] of migration. "Social networks connect members of the sending community with immigrants in a receiving community and thereby draw new migrants into the network by lowering the costs and risks of migration" (Fussell, 2010, p. 163). Massey's view of migration also perceives the socioeconomic development and integration process in post-industrial countries as the impetus for international migration (Bijak, 2006, p. 15).

> The causation of migration becomes cumulative because each act of migration alters the social context within which subsequent migration decisions are made, thus increasing the likelihood of additional movement. Once the number of network connections in a community reaches a critical threshold, migration becomes self-perpetuating because each act of migration creates the social structure needed to sustain it. (Massey, Durand, & Malone, 2005, pp. 29-30)

Synthesizing relevant insights and contextual aspects of migration, the basic premise of cumulative causation theory is that the likelihood of community members participating in migratory experiences increases as others in the sending community migrate because "successive immigrations make the process easier for those who follow" (Elliott, Mayadas, & Segal, 2010, p. 21). In addition, economic, political and social characteristics of the sending communities shift from the movement of human capital. As a result, the consideration of migration is made more or less attractive as residents consider and explore connecting to new destinations (Fussell, 2010).

As mentioned above, migration theories provide causal explanations for migration, Martin and Widgren (2008) simplify the decision to migrate into two broad categories: economic and non-economic (see Table 2). Underlying factors encouraging actual migratory action are grouped into three categories: demand-pull, supply-push, and network factors. Economic migrants, for example, may be offered a higher paying job through an international recruiting agency (demand-pull factor), be forced to consider relocating because of job loss (supply-push), or be offered a promotion by their present employer, requiring them to move abroad (network/other). Noneconomic migrants, for example, may relocate to join family members who

[11] Developed by Gunnar Myrdal (1957) and further applied by Massey (1990, 2002).

have already settled abroad (demand-pull), may flee their home country due to famine or war (supply-push), or may participate in an international exchange program to learn a new language (network/other). The smallness or developing state of nations may also drive migration due to an economic supply-push for suitable occupations. Quinn and Rubb describe this mismatch between education and skills with job availability as the "education-occupation" factor (Quinn & Rubb, 2005, p. 164).

Table 2: Factors That Encourage Migration by Type of Migrant

	Factors		
Type of migrant	**Demand-pull**	**Supply-push**	**Network/other**
Economic	Labour recruitment (guest workers)	Unemployment or underemployment; low wages (farmers whose crops fall)	Job and wage information flows
Noneconomic	Family unification (family members join spouse)	Fleeing wars and persecution (displaced persons and refugees/asylum seekers)	Communications; transportation; assistance; organizations; desire for new experience/adventure

Note: All three factors may encourage a person to migrate. The importance of pull, push, and network factors can change over time (Martin & Widgren, 2008, p. 4).

Caribbean Context

The white sand beaches, turquoise waters, and slower-pace of island life in the SCI (and other Caribbean states) have been common 'noneconomic network' (pull) factors for many migrants from developed economies. Entrepreneurial opportunities to participate in the development of the islands have sugar-coated migration to the Caribbean with economic benefits which have enticed and sustained large expatriate communities on islands like Grand Cayman and the SCI. However, the current economic slowdown in the SCI has prompted many workers involved in commercial and residential real-estate and construction to seek opportunities in neighbouring Caribbean islands and abroad (economic supply-push). For recent high school

graduates, the lack of tertiary education providers in smaller Caribbean states has provided an impetus for noneconomic network migration. Migrating abroad for higher education increases awareness of foreign labour markets which has deterred some graduates from returning to the developing economies of their home country. On the contrary, those who want to reside close to family and friends return home as a result "noneconomic demand-pull" factors. Local Islanders from the SCI who choose to migrate tend to settle in the Bahamas, the United States, Canada, or the United Kingdom. Pull factors for these geographies include birth place (i.e., many Local Islanders are born in either the Bahamas or the United States), immigration policies (i.e., Local Islanders are considered to be British Overseas Territory Citizens and can consequently live and work in the United Kingdom), economic stability and opportunities (i.e., more developed countries tend to offer diverse work opportunities), and familiarity (i.e., interaction with expatriates from particular countries generates interest and awareness of off-island locales).[12]

In the Caribbean context, "migration is not a passive reaction to internal 'pushes' and external 'pulls'. "Within the wider international and national context, migration is part of a dynamic set of negotiations at all levels," (Thomas-Hope, 2002, p. 58). The movement of Caribbean migrants can be classified into three types: *long stay residence* (for work or study), *short-stay* (such as contract work), and *return migration*. It is not uncommon for a single Caribbean migrant to engage in all three types of migration over the lifespan. Also, it is typical for a family to have various members engaged in a combination of migration types at the same time.

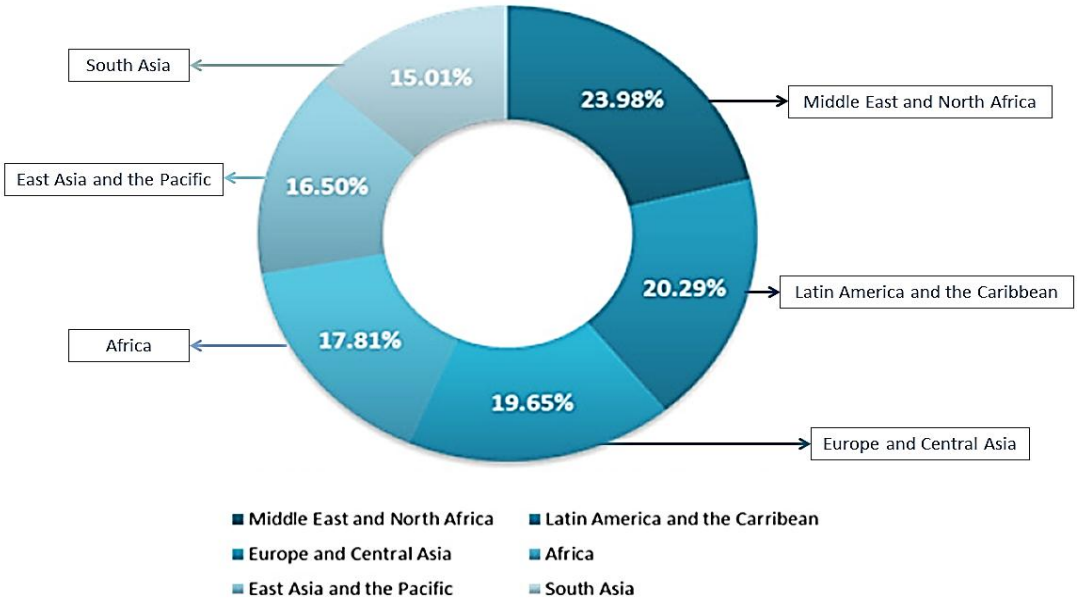
> Even migrations that are long-term do not necessarily reflect a total displacement of the migrants from their household and community but rather, the establishment of a transnational set of interactions and linkages that are associated with movements of people, money and goods and ideas in support of the expectations and obligations of the transnational household or family (Schiller *et al*, 1995; Thomas-Hope, 1986, 1988, 1992). (Thomas-Hope, 2002, p. 59)

The decision to move for the Caribbean migrant is strongly influenced by the perception of what constitutes a better life, individual qualifications, individual employability or lack of employability, networking, altruism, familial relations, and personal agency. While these

[12] These claims are referenced from national development reports on the SCI's demographics and migration trends. I have withheld a citation to preserve the anonymity of the island.

considerations parallel those of migrants from more robust and developed economies, the prevalence of a "skills gap" in the Caribbean points to variances in typical push and pull factors. Anecdotal evidence suggests the lack of certain skills in the local population have led to gaps in the workforce of small developing economies of Latin America and the Caribbean (see Figure 6, which reports that 20% of Latin America and Caribbean firms face a severe skills gap) (Schwalje, 2011, p.19). As some countries continue to develop rapidly (such as the SCI), the subsequent demand and requirement for human capital increases. The Census collected in 2001[13] reported that immigrant populations to the SCI reflect a demand for general labourers in the tourism sector which is not only the primary wealth generator for the islands, but was also the fastest growing industry during the economic boom from 2002 to 2008. The robust socioeconomic development during this time and subsequent rapidity in commercial (resort) developments caused a skills gap which required the intake of foreign labourers and a political refocus on retaining local (human) capital.

Figure 6: Global Skills Gaps Prevalence by Region



* % of firms indicating they face a major or very severe skills gap

(Schwalje, 2011, p. 19)

[13] It is important to note here that a Census of Population and Housing (CCPHC, 2001) is conducted once every ten years by each of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Member States, however data for the SCI has only recently been collected which has presented challenges for examining long-term migratory trends in the SCI.

As a consequence of a limited local labour pool, many small island developing states (SIDS), such as the SCI, place little emphasis on professional designations and appropriate qualifications to public service positions. Mills (2001) points out that in the SCI, "job promotion and training opportunities are generally a reward for political patronage" (p. 224). He also asserts that local residents distrust the local education system and regard overseas education as having higher value. For many young people completing secondary school in SIDS, pursuing postsecondary education requires the student to travel abroad. In terms of young women from rural and SIDS, traditional female-dominated occupations such as teacher, nurses, or health-care workers require college education and consequently draw daughters away from their home community. The fear of children not returning home (post-college education) may hinder family support and allocation of resources for off-island tertiary studies. The cost of building the infrastructure for local tertiary educational institutions to be competitive with foreign providers exceeds local resources. Many SIDS, including the SCI, lack trained educators to staff local colleges and universities. Consequently, community colleges do not reach their enrolment caps as students either migrate off-island, or are deterred from pursuing educational opportunities due to socioeconomic factors.

> Equipping those students who are unable to attend school with skills that will enable them to participate meaningfully in a volatile labour market is a major challenge for the education sector in most small-island developing States. The relatively poor quality of education in the Pacific States is negatively influencing employment prospects and has forced these countries to rely on expatriates to fill high-skill positions. (United Nations World Youth Report, 2007, p. 145-146)

Yearly or even monthly observations of the SCI over the past several years clearly indicated noticeable demographic changes in the presence of Filipino, Dominican, Haitian, British, Australian, and Canadian migrants[14]. The net immigration for the SCI presently yields a population of foreign-born persons greatly exceeding native-born populations. Flexing immigration policies and inviting migrant workers into the country has been the way the SCI (and many other SIDS) has kept pace with rapid infrastructure development, foreign investment in tourism, and with the technological developments resulting from globalization. These stresses

[14] As mentioned earlier on page 44, these observations are referenced from national development reports on the SCI's demographics and migration trends. I have withheld a citation to preserve the anonymity of the island.

have led some countries to demand educational curriculum reform in order to meet the rapid changes and to curb risky behaviour among youth (such as sexual activity, which has been found to be 30% lower for boys and 60% lower for girls who are connected with schooling) (Cunningham and Correia, 2003; United Nations World Youth Report, 2007).

Thomas-Hope (2002) suggests that "migration has become deeply embedded in the psyche of Caribbean peoples over the past century and a half" and is the primary pathway for "upward mobility through the accumulation of capital – financial and social" (p. 58). Accordingly, the Caribbean in particular, has the highest brain drain amongst all small state economies with three out of every four skilled Caribbean individuals living outside of their country of origin (Beine, Docquier, & Schiff, 2008).

> Caribbean migration is highly responsive to occupational and educational opportunities in other countries, yet there is also a strong tendency to return to the native country later on. Strategies for harnessing the potential human capital at all points of the migration trajectory, as well as the financial and other material generated by and available through migration, are necessary so that these potential assets are not wasted. (Thomas-Hope, 2002, p. 67)

Although no data has been reported about the SCI, data obtained from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2006) suggest that approximately two-thirds of all highly skilled individuals from island economies (such as Jamaica, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, Fiji, etc.) have emigrated to the developed world. In recent years, the global economic crisis that commenced at the end of 2008 has challenged small states that rely heavily on banking and tourism, such as the SCI, to retain their human capital. Without a stable labour market for both locals and expatriates, the brain drain for university graduates was approximately 32% in 2009; that is, 32 of every 100 graduates chose to reside outside their home country (Crossley, Bray, & Packer, 2009; OECD, 2010). Thomas-Hope (2009) calls attention to the economic benefits of retaining and attracting human capital (i.e., an enhanced labour force and entrepreneurial capacity) but cautions about the social implications of the growing differential between local and migrant (expatriate) populations—especially since unlike locals, expatriates around the world are typically compensated with higher salaries and relocation assistance. Common perceptions are that immigrants (movement inwards) place demands on strained national resources, while emigrants (movement outwards) reduce the pressure on limited national

capacities. She suggests that the integration of migrant workers be carefully managed to avoid conflict and/or negative feedback, and avoid the development of xenophobia on island (Thomas-Hope, 2010).

Theoretically, the effects of brain drain are debated between economists who argue whether the departure of skilled workers is compensated by other migration impacts, such as remittances, technology transfer, increased trade flows, and activities of diaspora communities. Others suggest that the presence of a brain drain may in fact increase the average education level of those who do not participate in migration and remain in developing economies *(*Dumont & Lemaître, 2004; Schiff, 2005; Sriskandarajah, 2005a, 2005b; Stark, 2002). Despite remittances from migrants and return investments, small states typically suffer more than they benefit from suggested migration remunerations (Beine, Socquier, and Rapoport, 2008). According to Schiff and Wang (2009), "the loss of productivity growth is three times higher in small states than in the other countries" (cited in Crossley, Bray, & Packer, 2011, p. 21).

> Another dimension of this challenge relates to the structure of domestic labour markets. In the Eastern Caribbean, for instance, employers struggle to find qualified candidates in emerging skill areas, yet at the same time large cohorts of low-skilled young people suffer from underemployment and unemployment. In Saint Kitts and Nevis, finding a first job takes on average 14 months for a Common Entrance Examination graduate (World Bank, 2007). In other words, the education system does not adequately prepare young people for the world of work …The arithmetic of labour market balances has much less margin for error in small states than in larger states. In highly specialised areas, needs can be met by one or two individuals. Anything less than this small number is a severe deficit, and anything more is a problematic surplus. (Crossley, Bray, & Packer, 2009, p. 739)

As mentioned earlier, the SCI has recognized the urgency to provide adequate programming and provisions for youth to access higher education in their current socioeconomic development plans. "Higher education is increasingly seen to be important for small states as they diversify their economies to cope with the rise of the knowledge economy and service-based markets (Bourne & Dass, 2003; Sweeney, 2003; Atchoarena et al., 2008; Bacchus, 2008; World Bank, 2009)" (Crossley et al., 2009, p. 739). Human capital theory provides a lens to explore the global migration spectrum and more specifically, the variety of phenomena and enigmas concerning

brain drain and mobility of emerging adults from one of the world's leading exporter of skilled peoples—the Caribbean.

Third-culture Kids (TCKs)

> *The movement of people across national borders is a visible and increasingly important aspect of global integration. Three percent of the world's people – more than 213 million people – now live in countries in which they were not born.* (World Bank, 2011, p. 86)

While the majority of global migration is driven by the flow of migrants from poor to rich economies, the global economy has offered entrepreneurs, educated and skilled professionals from wealthier nations, opportunities in developing foreign markets. As I have described in the preceding section, the mobility of human capital is not a new phenomenon, however it has become more and more common as internationalizing business firms are required to expatriate executives to areas such as the Middle East and East Asia for global competitiveness (McLachlan, 2007). While some expatriates participate in the relocation and transience (i.e., the short-term occupation of space experienced by passing through or remaining in a geographic locale for only a brief time or sojourn) as single professionals, military, missionary, and Foreign Service families have been long-time participants in the transient lifestyle (Wallach & Metcalf, 1994).

The term "third culture kid" (TCK) was created by Useem et al. (1963) who studied the experiences of American expatriate families posted in India during the late 1950s. Calling attention to the experiences and development of children and adolescents who accompany their parents to live and work overseas, Useem (1993, 2001) describes TCKs as belonging to a "third culture" that is created and learned from leaving their country of origin and ancestral culture (i.e., "home" country) to live in a foreign country (or countries) (i.e., "host" or second culture). TCKs typically spend at least one year (or more) outside of their home country from birth to the age of eighteen. Recent literature suggests that the length of time spent in another country may not be a critical component in acquiring a "third-culture". Rather, individual experience, integration or exposure to the "host" or second culture/country, as well as other activities occupying a young person's time, may have greater impact on developing a sense of relationship (not ownership) to

a particular culture(s) (Fail, 1996; Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004; Lam & Selmer, 2003, 2004).

The "third culture" is formed as a result of exposure and blending of multiple cultural experiences through schooling, living environment(s), and social networks. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK's life experiences and relationship to all cultures are established, TCKs do not have full ownership or sense of belonging in any (Pollock & Van Reken, 1999, p. 19). Casmir and Asuncion-Lande (1999) cautiously define the "third culture" as being more inclusive than the conjoining separate cultures. They propose that the "third culture is not merely the result of the fusion of the two or more separate entities, but also the harmonization of composite parts into a coherent whole" (p. 294). Less common terms referenced in the literature to describe the highly mobile young people considered TCKs include "global nomads" (McCaig, 1984, 1996, 2001), "transculturals" (Willis, Enloe, & Minoura, 1994), "internationally mobile" (IM) youth (Gerner, Perry, Moselle, & Archbold, 1992), "cultural hybrids" (Bhabha, 1994; Greenholtz & Kim, 2009), and "cross-cultural kid" (CCK) (Van Reken & Bethel, 2005). TCKs can also be defined as "sojourners" or "children of sojourners" that refer to individuals who are temporary residents of a place. Current descriptions on sojourners include students who study abroad and workers completing foreign short job contracts (Fry, 2007; Peterson & Plamondon, 2009; Yang, 2000).

The literature on TCKs was accessed during the analytical phase of this study described in detail in Chapters Four and Five. While searching for literature that might help to expand my understanding of the migratory actions of adolescents and emerging adults, TCKs emerged as an important component of the overall findings/explanation of my study. The literature on TCKs provided a lens for exploring the developmental and career perspectives of young people who have lived in another country other than that of their passport (or parental birth country). Unlike immigrants whose mobility intentions are permanent, TCKs are members of temporary mobile expatriate families who intend to return to their "home" country at some point in their lives. There are three primary subpopulations of TCKs derived from the parents' profession or overseas sponsoring organization: business/work (including government/Foreign Service, education and research professionals), military, and missionary (Cottrell, 2002). While the families of the expatriate participants in this study migrated to the SCI with business/work and entrepreneurial intentions, their children share the same commonalities typical TCKs share

across the identified subpopulations. That is, (a) being raised in a genuinely cross-cultural world, and (b) being raised in a highly mobile world—young people share more commonalities with others who have lived in countries and cultures different than their home country and culture than with their country-of-origin counterparts (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). The depth of the cross-cultural immersion experienced through living (not visiting) another culture/country imprints significant impressions and values on TCKs which are often reflected in their adulthood actions. Many "actively seek ways to expose their own children to the world's range of countries and cultures and purposely teach and model the valuable and enduring message that differences among people are cause for celebration, exploration, and respect" (Glicksberg-Skipper, 2000, p. 12). According to Fail (1996), the average adult TCK will move an average of 4.3 times before the age of 18. Whether it is the transient nature of the TCK herself or the constantly coming and going of others around her, the backdrop of the TCK's social and physical surroundings is often changing (Cockburn, 2002). Since many attend international schools while abroad, the mobility of staff and students are a defining characteristic of their school environments. As several participants in this study recalled from their high school days, teachers arrived from various parts of the world, taught for a few years and were then either off to another foreign assignment or returned "home". For TCKs, the world is boundary-less and change is inevitable.

While many of the expatriate participants included in this study spent the majority of both their childhood and adolescence in the SCI, there is an underlying assumption that they will leave the islands to pursue postsecondary educational and occupational opportunities in their ancestral country to benefit from local tuition fees and to avoid the need to apply for a student visa. According to Pollock and Van Reken (2001/2009), "TCKs are raised in a neither/nor world. It is neither fully the world of their parents' culture (or cultures), nor fully the world of the other culture (or cultures) in which they were raised" (p. 4). Expatriates living in the SCI may adopt a taste for traditional foods, sway to the traditional "rip saw" music, and perhaps even pick up some local idioms, however they typically name more than just the SCI as "home" and unlike their local SCI islander peers, mobility is an inherent reality for them; there are no boundaries to accessing opportunities and experiences. The question of "where is home?" is often a difficult one for TCKs to answer, especially amongst their country-of-origin counterparts. However there is a sense of relief when discussing the same question with other TCKs who share this genuine lack of understanding of a traditional "home" (Cockburn, 2002, p. 479). Pollock and Van Reken

(2001) identified four characteristics that describe TCKs who have lived in countries and cultures different from their home country and culture: (a) distinct differences from peers, (b) expected repatriation, (c) privileged lifestyle, and (d) system identity. I will discuss the most relevant aspects of each characteristic relative to the experiences and developmental aspects of SCI expatriates.

Distinct differences from peers

While the (native) SCI local islander population racially identify as "Black", the majority of the expatriate population from North America, Europe and Australia racially identify as "Caucasian" (or "White"). Jamaican expatriates and those from other neighbouring Caribbean islands may be racially "Black" but are easily identifiable with differences in their English-speaking dialect and accent. While ethnicity can be noticeably seen (or heard), SCI expatriates and TCKs carry hidden diversity markers in their differing world views and cultural background which are distinct from peers of both their home country and culture, as well as in their second country and culture. Their exposure to multiple cultures and international mobility typically results in TCKs becoming "adaptable and flexible as they move about different worlds" (Cockburn, 2002, p. 481); they are 'cultural chameleons' who are able to bridge different cultural environments (McCaig, 1996), have the sophistication to be accepted in any social circles (Useem, 2001), have a desire to travel and foreign language ability (Gerner & Perry, 2000; Hayden, Rancic, & Thompson, 2000; Useem, 2001).

Lam and Selmer (2004) share a typical anecdote of TCKs as "having a curious 'cultural marginality', which describes an individual living at the edges of two or more cultures, never really understanding those cultures but experienced enough not to offend anyone from any of them" (p.361). This developed alternate frame of reference results from their cultural experiences and can sometimes isolate TCKs from their own reality. Conversely, Fail et al. (2004) calls this "multiple sense of belonging in different places and an ability to adjust and fit in and enjoy the advantages of being 'a part and yet apart' (Downie, 1976) of and from a place" (p.333) as "constructive marginality."

> There is a certain ambivalence which does not necessarily disturb them but gives them a sense of being different from those around them. They are positive and enthusiastic about

> the advantages of their background and the ability it has given them to feel at home in different places and also to relate to other people like themselves. (p. 333)

As adults, TCKs are familiar with change and comfortable moving in and between various social and physical environments. They exhibit a need to be mobile, struggling to settle and remain in one place (Cockburn, 2002; Useem et al., 1993).

Expected repatriation

More common with business/work TCKs than military and missionary TCK subpopulations, and unlike immigrants, families are often awarded travel expenses to visit their home country and are also expected to return to their home culture upon completion of their foreign work contract or job opportunity (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). Despite establishing businesses and their primary residence in the SCI, expatriate students and their families typically travel between their home country and the islands, maintaining familiarity social ties with their ancestral community, as well as holding property, status, and business relationships in their home country.

Typically, TCKs repatriate to their home country to pursue postsecondary educational and occupational opportunities. Since there are no established universities or colleges in the SCI, students wishing to pursue tertiary education at reputable academic institutions must travel abroad, with expatriate students typically returning to their home country (namely in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada) because of tuition incentives based on nationality status.

Privileged lifestyle

Parents of TCKs are generally well educated and/or well cultured to have either welcomed or created the opportunity to migrate to a new country. TCKs typically attend good academic schools which often offer college preparatory curriculum. Multiple studies have revealed that higher education is an expectation of TCKs and their families (Fail, 1996; Useem, 2001) with Fail (1996) documenting an average of 5.4 years of postsecondary educational pursuit among all participants in her study.

The literature on TCKs describes privileges typically afforded to diplomatic families (such as chauffeurs), military families (such as access to the commissary), and missionary

families (such as domestic services at hand). The expatriate participants in this study come from entrepreneurial families who have established very successful businesses in the SCI. This success has afforded students the luxury of accessing institutions, experiences, and opportunities anywhere in the world without being daunted by the cost of investment or the current uncertain job market of the SCI.

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System identity

Pollock and Van Reken (2001) suggest that TCKs "may be more directly conscious than peers at home of directly representing something greater than themselves – be it their government, their company, or God" (p. 23). Often sponsoring organizations, businesses, and institutions provide explicit expectations, structure, and/or internal services for TCKs and their families. Little has been explored in the literature about this characteristic of TCKs however the construct of identity and sense of belonging have warranted attention, with many suggesting that these issues may pose the greatest challenges for TCKs (Bennett, 1993; Fail, Thompson, & Walker, 2004; Pollock & Van Reken, 2001; Schaetti & Ramsey, 1999a, b). As cultural identity is acquired through observing and absorbing social and physical cues from the surrounding environment, TCKs often experience many different cues, cultural rules, behaviours, and values from their home culture and the culture(s) in which they sojourn. These differences can often obscure the transmission and internalizing of cultural cues and confuse the development of a cultural identity (McCaig, 1994; Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). This confusion is reflective of the TCKs deviancy from mainstream culture and their membership to a transnational "third" culture (Cottrell, 2006).

The odysseys and resulting characteristics of TCKs undoubtedly warrant further inquiry as the number of TCKs continues to increase with more families participating in the competitive global economy. I utilize the work that defines the experiences of TCKs as a foundation for exploring and understanding the possible relationship expatriate participants interviewed for this study have with their families and their sense of home or place. Prior to the establishment of PSH[15] in the SCI, high school students were required to seek tertiary education off island after the completion of Form 4 (grade 11), often completed at the age of 16. The offering of A-levels for students at PSH was established in hopes of grounding their sense of home and place in the

[15] PSH (Private School High) is a pseudonym used to name the high school all participants in this study attended in the SCI.

SCI prior to leaving to pursue further studies. As I explore further in the proceeding chapters, the literature on TCKs sheds light on the sojourner experiences of young people who have pursued postsecondary education abroad and share similar experiences as TCKs who have lived in a "second" country and culture.

Summary

Perform a search for "career development" in any associated academic journal and one will be lost in a sea of theoretical frameworks, discourses, and philosophies. Include a cursory survey of human capital and one will drown in the constructed interconnections with human resource management, vocational behaviour, talent management, leadership training, and so on. The conceptual framework I have described intersects career development theorizing with a social and economic understanding of human capital development by premising emerging adults (and youth) as the instrumental interconnection between the two models. Using a kaleidoscope as a metaphor, the review of literatures pertaining to contextual features of career development (SCCT and cultural capital) and human capital (economics and migration), as well as the experiences of highly mobile young people (TCKs), provide fertile ground for exploring the dynamic interplay between the career decision experiences of emerging adults and the relationships (if existent) between education, economics, migration, and the potential impact of race, class, and gender in developing small island economies. A way of thinking through these tangled linkages is to explore career development and human capital using the conceptual framework I have described in this chapter, which has not yet been applied in the existing theoretical and empirical studies found in the literature. Despite vocational counseling texts and career development theories identifying adolescence and young adulthood as the exploratory phase (and consequently critical time) of the career decision-making process, the literature fails to inform governments and organizations with a holistic understanding of what contributes (or not) to young people embracing and rejecting possible pathways and how such choices can be mediated to reflect development objectives. As I describe in the following chapter, the methodological design helps ground the findings in the expressed sense of experience shared by participants, while the conceptual foundation provides possible insight on the career stories of young people living in an ever-changing globalized market that capitalizes on education, mobility, and awareness of opportunity.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

A review of the literature on young people and their educational and occupational decision-making processes reveals an ever evolving body of work that explores the complexity in possibilities and considerations. As I have shown in the previous chapter, the conceptual framework for my study forms a compelling interdisciplinary intersection of possible ideas and explanations through which I have explored the dynamic interplay between the career decisions of emerging adults and the structuring effects of resources, geographic location, socioeconomic development, class, race, and gender. To garner a deeper, more authentic and nuanced explanation of the career decisions and experiences of emerging adults from the SCI, my study required a process of inquiry that was emergent and flexible in its design, and that included various approaches to collect and analyze qualitative data. With the intent of exploring new perspectives and ideas about the complexity of educational and occupational decision-making experiences, a qualitative design was used to yield a detailed and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. Also, I was attracted to qualitative approaches as they resonated with the philosophical beliefs and worldviews (some of which I shared in Chapter One as I situated myself in the research) undergirding my work.

In this chapter I provide an overview of the methodological approaches employed for data collection and analysis. Strauss and Corbin (1998) define methodology as a "way of thinking about and studying reality," and methods as a "set of procedures and techniques for gathering and analyzing data" (p. 10). I begin this chapter by positioning myself as an educational researcher engaged in qualitative inquiry by referencing Butler-Kisber's (2010) ontological continuum shown in Figure 7 below. After defining qualitative research I describe how data was collected and analyzed with reference to a "qualitative design matrix" (QDM)—a visual representation of the inquiry tools I referenced, revisited, and modified throughout the unfolding inquiry. The QDM also provides a visual reference from which I explain the critical considerations which I used to maintain trustworthiness in the inquiry process. My discussion of methodology aims to show the logic behind this creative process by describing how selected approaches were used to maintain attentiveness and pay homage to the voices of individual experiences.

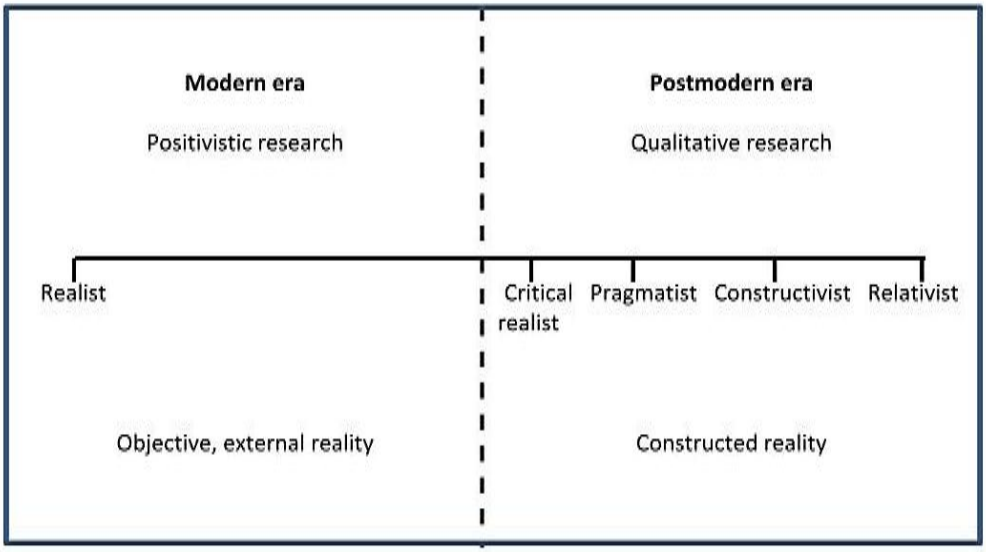
Ontological Continuum

> *Doing research is much more than applying methods. Personal theories of researchers can and do influence all aspects of the research process. […] researchers ought to identify the beliefs that have the most significance for a specific study. By identifying such beliefs, they acknowledge that data creation is theory dependent and that a personal framework of beliefs permits some things to be noticed and others to be ignored.* (Tobin & Tippins, 1993, p. 14-15)

Qualitative research is a vast and complex field that includes several continuous evolving paradigms. Butler-Kisber (2010, p. 6) offers a visual of a "Qualitative Inquiry Continuum" (see Figure 7) where multiple ontological and epistemological perspectives are situated. Despite the multiplicity and fluidity of a researcher's perspective, one can align oneself somewhere along the continuum between a realist/positivist to relativist/postmodern way of thinking. As a researcher fascinated with career stories and with a genuine interest in career decisions, especially those of young people early in their career trajectory, I value the subjective perspective of experiences and believe reality to be influenced by the context of the situation. Accordingly, I situate myself in the postmodern era along the ontological continuum between social (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Bandura, 1986) and critical (Foucault, 1977; Freire, 1970) constructivist perspectives (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Jordan, Carlile, & Stack, 2008). These perspectives seem to best reflect the paradoxes of human behavior and career development as they "emphasize the constructed nature of the social world" (Bevir, 2010, p. 1284), "accept that there are multiple ways of understanding/knowing the world that are always constituted and contextually dependent" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 7), and recognize human experience and its relationship to power inequities and truth (Kincheloe, 2008).

Traditionally, positivist paradigms have underpinned career theorizing. In recent years, research adopting a contextual worldview from the constructivist paradigm has been advocated because it conceives career development as an ongoing, relational process between the individual and the changing contexts of his or her environment and life situations (Patton & McMahon, 2006).

Figure 7: Qualitative Inquiry Continuum



(Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 6)

McIlveen and Patton (2006) adhere to a constructivist ontology, arguing vocational psychology and career counseling are powerful social institutions which influence individual lives, but also are influenced by broader global forces that have an impact on them. They affirm that a contextualist perspective acknowledges the broad range of factors affecting and interacting with an individual's career development (McIlveen & Patton, 2008). Schwandt (1994) proffers constructivism as a vehicle of inquiry reflecting a shared goal of "understanding the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" and having "an abiding concern for the life world, for the emic point of view, for understanding meaning, for grasping the actor's definition of a situation" (p.118). Bujold (2004) advocates a constructivist approach for conceptualizing career stories, defining career development as a creative process involving multiple decisions, risk-taking, anticipating unforeseen events, overcoming obstacles, inner conflicts, and unpredictable or serendipitous outcomes. The relevance of constructivist ontology to educational and occupational decisions and experiences lies in its emphasis on how people construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct their own subjective experiences of their career trajectories (Denzin & Lincoln, 1995; Schwandt, 1998).

As a researcher concerned with justice, adopting the tenets of a "critical" perspective provides another lens to challenge the dominance of the positivist-realist paradigm which

overlooks that education and career experiences are fluid, relational, and transformative processes that are reflective of personal development, change, and transition enacted contextually over time (Patton & McMahon, 2006; Young & Collin, 2004). I am drawn to a critical constructivist epistemology because it provides a stance from which to uncover power relationships and inequities in society (Rogers, 2004). A contemporary critical understanding of career development and career guidance in professional and educational settings requires a reflexive and critical awareness of systemic discursive practices. It requires inquirers to consider the individual and his or her interactions with counselors, teachers, and/or mentors "as part of a recursively dynamic system surrounded by higher order influences" where the counselor, teacher and/or mentor is not "privileged as the expert dispenser of truth" (Patton & McMahon, as cited in McIlveen & Patton, 2008, p. 24). Several eminent career theorists/scholars propose that postmodernist critical approaches to research in vocational psychology and career counseling are vital to improving career guidance by challenging practitioners to be reflexively and critically aware of their own discursive practices, and by exposing economic and political capitalist ideologies involved in the commodification of education—often in response to demands in the labour market (Brimrose, 2006; Brookfield, 2005; McIlveen & Patton, 2006; McMahon & Watson, 2006; Peavy, 1997; Savickas, 2000; Young & Collin, 2004).

Ways in which the "economy; matters of race, class, and gender; ideologies; discourses; education; religion and other social institutions; and cultural dynamics interact to construct a social system" (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2008, p. 407) and the dynamics of how privileged groups support status quo to maintain their privilege (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000) are important contextual considerations of educational and occupational opportunities.

> The world-out-there *affords* me certain opportunities, which I may or may not take up and act upon – but the world-out-there *does not determine me or my actions.* The world-out-there does present boundaries, affords me opportunities, does (doesn't) exert influence on me, and will effectively render my adaptive and creative actions more or less viable. However, the world-out-there is never known to me than through my conceptual, perceptual, and sensory lenses. (Peavy, 1998, p. 38)

According to the critical constructivist view, individual choices are to a significant degree socially constructed; they are a function of pre-existing conditions over which individuals have limited control. I believe that individuals "co-construct their personal and social realities…in a

joint action with others and in relations with the physical environment" and that this "interaction and interdependence with surrounding social and physical worlds" impact on perceptions, considerations, and actions (Peavy, 1998, p. 38). Accordingly, the career choices and decision processes of emerging adults from the SCI reflect multiple and equally valid possibilities and experiences which correspond to my chosen thematic approach to inquiry grounded in critical constructivist ontology. Whilst critical theory "supports the ideal of the independent critical researcher" and calls for one to "adopt a freer approach in which imagination, creativity and the researcher's own learning together with his or her analytical interpretive capabilities can all be called upon" it is limited in constructive methodological suggestions (Alvesson & Sköldberg (2000, p. 131-132). For this reason I opt for a partial adoption of the theory by committing to a reflexive and critical consideration of "the ideological-political dimension that is characteristic of all social science, thus avoiding the uncritical reproduction of dominant ideas and institutions" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 162).

Qualitative Research Design

A subjective and nuanced account of human experience is portrayed best through qualitative inquiry which allows us to "discover a phenomenon, a process, the perspectives, and worldview of people involved, or a combination of these" (Merriam, 2002, p. 6). For these reasons, a qualitative design was chosen to explore the educational and occupational career decision-making experiences of young people from the SCI. Developed in the social sciences, qualitative inquiry is grounded in understanding the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live. It studies social phenomena in their natural settings and involves gathering empirical evidence (i.e., personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, observation, historical, case study, visual texts, etc.) to generate knowledge (Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, 2005). Encompassing many theoretical positions, methods, and approaches to research, qualitative research is rather complex to define, however Denzin and Lincoln (1994) offer the following generic definition:

> Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and

> collection of a variety of empirical materials…that describe routine and problematic moments and meaning in individuals' lives. (p. 2)

Beyond this general description, qualitative research does not conform to a prescriptive practice or code that novice researchers can simply duplicate or apply. On the contrary, the practice of doing qualitative research requires the researcher to conceptualize this form of inquiry as a flexible process where various research approaches can be applied depending on the research focus, questions, and the researchers own worldview. This flexibility allows researchers to adapt the inquiry as understanding deepens and/or circumstances change (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002) and is best suited for eliciting, interpreting, and understanding the complexity of "career stories". Reflective of my constructivist worldviews, a qualitative research design provides a methodology where the questions posed about career experiences—the phenomenon of interest—drive the study rather than the method(s) or tools of inquiry selected (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, 2005).

Constant Comparison Approach

Researchers engaged in qualitative work "deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand…each practice makes the world visible in a different way" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.4). In applying more than one interpretive practice in the inquiry process, "the researcher builds a complex holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting" (Creswell, 1998, p. 15). I gave careful consideration to the choice of a suitable research methodology to address the research questions within a constructivist paradigm. I deemed that a constant comparison approach would be suitable for this study and believed that a range of interpretive approaches (see following section discussing QDMs) would strengthen my work (Patton, 2002). Emerging from Glaser and Strauss's (1967) theory-building qualitative approach known as grounded theory (GT), constant comparison inquiry offers a way to conceptualize the similarities across participant stories and helps the researcher get a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. A constant comparison approach to qualitative inquiry is more commonly defined as a categorizing approach to data analysis (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Maxwell & Miller, 2008) and defined as "comparing incidents with emerging conceptual categories, and reducing similar categories into a smaller number of highly conceptual

categories, and an overall framework or substantive theory develops" (Merriam, 2002, p. 143). Thomas (2009) describes this analytic approach as an essential method in interpretive research and synthesizes its application as a series of iterative steps where the researcher compares sections of data.

> It involves going through your data again and again…comparing each element – phrase, sentence or paragraph – with all of the other elements…you emerge with *themes* that capture or summarize the contents of your data [and then] *map* your themes to show the *interconnections* between them. (Thomas, 2009, p. 198)

In applying this approach to data analysis, I adopted Charmaz' (2005) constructivist GT perspective which "assumes the relativism of multiple social realities, recognizes the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed, and aims towards interpretive understanding of subject's meanings" (Charmaz, 2003, p. 250). Charmaz summarizes her approach to GT as an explicit assumption that theory "offers an interpretive portrayal of the studied world, not an exact picture of it" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 10).

With initial procedural details for data analysis described by Lincoln and Guba (1985), constant comparison inquiry "incorporates several procedural elements which help control for (yet do not purport to eradicate) the sources of bias that can potentially influence data collection and analysis (Fassinger, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1998)" (Scott, 2008, p. 39). Although not a linear process, for purposes of discussion Glaser and Strauss (as cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1985) described the constant comparison approach as following four distinct stages: (1) comparing incidents applicable to each category, (2) integrating categories and their properties, (3) delimiting the theory, and (4) writing the theory. As social phenomenon are recorded, classified, and compared across categories, the researcher employs *rules of inclusion* where a "look/feel-alike" criteria is applied (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In the process of identifying (or defining) the criteria, "salient categories of meaning are inductively derived" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 136).

My rationale for selecting a constant comparison approach was informed by counseling psychologists who hold that GT is a constructivist approach (Ponterotto, 2005) because the design helps to ground the results in the expressed sense of experience shared by participants (collected by posing a set of common questions), rather than drawing from a prescribed set of theories or list of variables (Merriam, 2002; Patton, 1990; Ponterotto, 2005). Charmaz (as cited

in Butler-Kisber, 2010) suggests that constant comparison inquiry is a constructivist approach if the researcher "does not subscribe to the objectivist, positivist assumptions in its earlier formulations" (p. 24). The emergence of categories, patterns, and themes constitute an inductive process of analyzing data, allowing the theory to materialize as the analysis proceeds (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Patton, 2002). Riessman (1993) describes this concept of theory to mean "knowledge found in the ordinary thinking of people in everyday life" (p. 23) which is revealed through the initial descriptive coding of categories and subsequent emergence of themes. Accordingly, using constant comparison inquiry allows for an inductive approach to research where interviews with participants may be interpreted to describe a "story line" of the generalities and variations across cases in the study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). By using constant comparison inquiry I was able to "group answers…to common questions [and] analyze different perspectives on central issues" (Patton, 1990, p. 376) and faithfully represent "the meanings that were being constructed by the participants…in the situation" without ignoring my own perspectives and experiences (Thomas, 2009, p. 198). Thus the methodological framework applied to this study not only includes the possibility of multiple realities rather than a definable truth, but also emphasizes the context of social class and worldviews of participants while being attuned to individual bias of the researcher (Patton, 2002).

The Qualitative Data Matrix: Data Collection

To reiterate, what drives this research is the question of *how does living in a labour market during a boom and/or bust period of socioeconomic and infrastructure development in a Small Caribbean island (SCI) contribute (or not) to the educational and occupational (career) decisions of local emerging adults?* Key questions that underpin the research include: how do students describe and rationalize their postsecondary career choices and experiences; and what other contextual features/forces play a role in these life decisions and why? The impetus for this research and reason for engaging in an inquiry grounded in the experiences of young people from the SCI are explained in Chapter One, however here I will delve more deeply into the specific ways in which the inquiry unfolded using constant comparison inquiry as well as a variety of qualitative approaches.

Initially when I reviewed literatures on qualitative methodologies that could be useful in exploring these research questions, I envisioned a series of spider webs with overlapping,

connecting, and evolving ideas of how to collect and analyze data that would best explore the experiences of participants. To organize the elements of this "web of possibilities" I transferred the various options into a matrix. Although the use of matrices have been typically advocated as a decision tool in qualitative analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2008; Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006; Schatzman, 1991; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), I found the visual image of a QDM quite useful for imagining how particular approaches to data collection (such as demographic surveys, participant interviews, and observational field notes) could be used to elicit descriptive data and connect with the research questions. The aesthetic of a matrix includes similar benefits as concept mapping which provides a "visual sense to messy thoughts held in the mind during the analytic process" (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010, p. 7). The intricate weaving and layering of data collection approaches and analytic options represented graphically in a matrix provided me with a visual organization of the range of choices I could consider, and illustrates the complex multi-dimensional and connective nature of the approaches I was considering.

As I reflected on what it means to engage in critical constructivist research the initial QDM I conceived (see Table 3 below) was produced after considering available approaches, and discarding options that were conflicting or overlapping with others, and did not seem to facilitate exploration of the research questions or align with my research perspectives. It was important to me that the approaches to data collection would elicit information reflecting context and culture, lived experience, and that would engage with participants in relation to their individual and collective contexts. The following approaches were determined to be the best ways to collect primary and secondary data: demographic participant survey/questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, document analysis, fieldwork observations (also known as "field notes"), and memos adapted from a personal (research) reflective journal. I anticipated my fieldwork would require at least several months, if not a year, to gather the rich descriptive data that I believe were essential for the study. I decided that semi-structured, in-depth interviews with former students who attended the same private high school in the SCI would form the primary data for my study. Also, I planned to conduct interviews and/or have conversations with other students and stakeholders, collect relevant public documents (such as the national socioeconomic development plan, statistics, local newspapers, etc.), and produce reflective memos. In addition to written field notes, I also planned to collect (using my personal camera) photographs of the

SCI landscape (such as construction sites, local neighbourhoods, school structures, etcetera,) with accompanying field notes (i.e., captions) which I call "photographic field notes". I intended to use these as secondary data sources that would not be analyzed in detail, but rather could be juxtaposed later with the results from the primary data to either confirm or disconfirm findings. The QDM shown provides an overview of the various data that was collected. This summary is made more explicit in the description of data collection approaches discussed later in this chapter.

Table 3: QDM: Methods for Data Collection

	Context/Culture	**Reflection of Lived Experience**	**Engagement**
Context/Culture	Demographic Questionnaire	Semi-structured Interview Protocol (PSH students)	Member Checking
Reflection of Lived Experience	Fieldwork Observations	Semi-structured Interview Protocol (PSH & non-PSH students)	Reflective Memos
Engagement	Document Analysis (national development plan, newspapers, etc.)	Unstructured Interviews and/or Conversations (Stakeholders)	5 weeks on island (SCI, Caribbean)

Data Collection Sources

In Chapter One I shared how I was able to gain access to the participants and research site. Later, in this chapter, I provide examples of the questionnaire and interview protocol, and share how participants were selected for the study. As I explained earlier, I characterized the data used to explore the career stories of emerging adults from the SCI into two groups: primary and

secondary. Primary data included demographic questionnaires (or surveys) and in-depth interviews (using a semi-structured interview protocol) collected with the specific research goals and questions in mind, from both local Islanders and expatriates between the ages of 18 and 25 from the SCI (Hox & Boeije, 2005). Secondary data included supplemental information collected from a variety of sources to provide depth and breadth to the study by including other perspectives that would help to confirm and disconfirm what was emerging in the work. As I introduced earlier in this chapter, sources included informal interviews and conversations with immediate stakeholders (i.e., parents, teachers, other emerging adults apart from the participants selected for this study) which I recorded as field notes, photographic field notes, and various public documents (such as local newspapers and the SCI's socioeconomic development plan) to name a few. These features of the data collection process were imperative to ensure that I was able to gather rich, in-depth information about participants' career stories. In so doing, I was able to get a deeper, more nuanced understanding of their unfolding career pathways amidst socioeconomic uncertainty.

Entry and Ethics

As I discussed previously in Chapter One, a key impetus for this study has been my ongoing relationship with former colleagues, students, and their families that began over a decade ago during my fourth-year field experience in the SCI. Over the years I have visited the island on numerous occasions, typically staying for at least 10 days with friends. Through my network of friends and former colleagues from the SCI, and through my habitual review of the local "Weekly News" accessed in print and online, I became aware of the profound impact the unpredictable and unrelenting worldwide economic climate has had on the off-shore investment and tourism driven economy of the SCI. Coupled with political uncertainty and an abrupt halt in many commercial development projects, the rapid changes in the socioeconomic and geopolitical climate compelled me to begin my fieldwork with another visit to the island in April 2010. As shown in the QDM (see Table 3), travelling to the SCI enabled me to engage in qualitative work, and allowed me the opportunity to connect face-to-face with participants and stakeholders (i.e., parents, teachers, other students, school administrators, employers, etc.), extend my existing network. This return provided me with an opportunity to make field observations through the lens of a researcher rather than as a tourist.

Fortunately my resources and schedule afforded me five weeks in the SCI, from April 28, to June 2, 2010. I was rather nostalgic and excited about beginning my fieldwork on island as my return to the SCI coincidently and precisely marked a decade since I had initially visited there. New commercial and residential properties, restaurants, recreational facilities, and infrastructure improvements occupying the once barren landscape of bush and dirt roads had become typical of subsequent visits I had made to the SCI over the years. However, conversations with friends and reports from the SCI Weekly suggested that the development observed during this visit would perhaps be more profound than I had observed in the past. Returning to the island with theoretical lenses and not just sun shades undoubtedly gave me a more reflexive and critical review of the turquoise waters and breezy landscape. Accordingly, as I snapped photographs of abandoned construction sites, the newly built hospital, and a relatively quiet beachfront, I noted my first impressions of the obvious changes in the socioeconomic landscape in my research journal.

A Certificate of Ethical Acceptability of Research Involving Humans (Appendix B) was issued on May 3, 2010 by McGill University's Research Ethics Board (REB II). Prior to obtaining ethical approval I refrained from inviting individuals to participate in the study, however I did send a general email to friends on the island informing them of my travel dates. Also, I confirmed a condominium rental in the same community I resided in during my field experience in 2000. Although during previous visits to the island I typically found accommodations in one of the local communities while staying with friends on the island, I chose the central tourist community because of its proximity to the grocery store, beach and restaurants, and because it was suggested as the most accessible and pedestrian-friendly area on the island because of its central locale. Although I was fully aware that my travel dates were during the (s)low tourist season, I was struck by the high number of hotel vacancy rates and the radically low-priced airfare. My return ticket from Toronto, Canada on WestJet airlines was less than $400 which was significantly cheaper than the average $1000 fare I had paid in the past. These initial observations became quite noteworthy and are discussed further in Chapter Five where I address the SCI's economic climate and its impact on local morale and the labour market.

I arrived in the SCI on April 28, 2010 on a direct flight from Toronto, Canada. Despite the small size of the island, it took several days to negotiate a car rental, obtain a cellular phone,

navigate the roundabouts along the main road, and familiarize myself with the multitude of shops and services that had not been available when I had first resided on the island a decade ago—nor had existed during my visits prior to 2007. Although I was no stranger to the island, I found myself being more observant of the environment and began noting the evident changes in infrastructure, population, and landscape. I recorded my initial thoughts and reactions in a reflective journal which were later condensed into reflective memos and revisited during the analysis of data.

Fieldwork for my study commenced the moment I landed in the SCI as a researcher (and not a tourist). During my five-week stay on the island I was able to collect the bulk of both primary and secondary data for the study .With potential participants (who were to be considered for participation in the study as primary data sources) scattered throughout the Caribbean, Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom, I was fortunate to be able to use the digital and hardcopy distribution of demographic questionnaires to determine a purposeful sample of participants who met the criteria outlined in my description of *Participant Selection for Primary Data Sources* provided below. From the final selected sample of 12 participants, I was able to complete six face-to-face interviews with participants who were either working on the island or temporarily visiting family and friends. These interviews were conducted between May 10, 2010 and May 30, 2011. Interviews with the other six participants contributing to the study were conducted over several months using computer mediated communication (CMC) technologies (such as Skype) and via telephone calls.

Participant Selection for Primary Data Sources

In order to collect primary data for the study I employed *purposeful* (or theoretical) *sampling* to select participants who would provide in-depth information about their career decision-making experiences. Purposeful sampling is a kind of "criterion sampling" which involves choosing participants who meet a particular set of criteria (Patton, 2002, p. 348). For this study, the criteria used to select participants for the interviews included the following:

1. Participants had to be between the ages of 18 and 25 years of age (at the time of the interview).
2. Prior to any postsecondary activity, participants had to have received the majority of their schooling in an accredited school located in the SCI.

3. Participants had to be alumni of Private School High[16] (PSH), having completed a minimum of two years of their secondary education at the school between grades 7 and 11 (or Forms 1 – 5) on the island.
4. Participants needed to identify themselves as either local Islanders from the SCI, permanent residents of the SCI, or as expatriates (holding a permanent residency card for the island).

   *(Participants were not required to be residing at the time in the SCI)

Participants were recruited through a network of people I have met over the years since my first visit as a teacher candidate in 2000.

Potential participants were contacted through formal emails and social networking. On May 7, 2010 I posted an invitation to participate in the study (see Appendix C) on the wall of a public group on the social networking media interface known as *Facebook* (see Figure 8). The group is categorized under "Academic Organizations" and was initially created by me in 2006 to reconnect with former students and colleagues from the high school in the SCI, where I completed my fourth-year field experience. There are currently 180 members who have joined the group. Members post comments and/or share photographs and videos. Individual member profiles are only accessible when permission is granted by the profile creator. I posted the invitation for participation on the "wall" (front page) of the Facebook group. The same invitation was sent via email to people in my network of former students, colleagues, and friends with whom I have kept in touch over the years. Also, I requested that they forward the invitation to others who might be interested in participating. The invitation asked interested individuals to respond privately to the Facebook post or email invitation through either a Facebook message posted to my profile or to my private email address.[17] This ensured that interest in participation was kept confidential.

[16] "Private School High" is a pseudonym for the high school attended by the primary participants in this study. For contextual comparative reasons I chose the interviews with alumni from one particular private high school as the primary data collection, while interviews with other emerging adults served as secondary data.

[17] Facebook privacy settings provide the security for confidentiality (such as protecting individual identity, granting strict access to only authorized individuals, and limiting access to personal information, including photographs). Individual users are able to determine the scale of confidentiality and security. However, personal messages sent through Facebook can only be viewed by the sender and intended recipient(s).

Figure 8: Facebook Invitation for Study Participation

*For the purpose of maintaining anonymity and confidentiality the identity (name and photos) of the Facebook group and its members have been omitted or blurred.

Those who responded were then emailed a letter (Appendix D) providing a detailed description of the research purpose and the requirements of participation, such as: completing a survey, commitment of one 60–90 minute interview (either in person or using computer mediated communication technology [CMC], such as *Skype*), follow up conversations via email, telephone

or other CMC, potential risks and benefits of participation, information regarding privacy and confidentiality, and the informed consent process giving participants the authority to withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason without consequence. Participants were also informed that they would not receive any compensation for their participation in the study. Also, I included my contact information so that potential participants could connect with me if they had any questions or concerns about the study.

Through my network I recruited 22 emerging adults as potential participants, as well as four interested emerging adults who responded to the Facebook invitation. Each potential participant was then emailed (or hand delivered) an information package with the following:

- Description of Research Study (Appendix E)
- Primary Informed Consent Form (Appendix F)
- Participant Demographic Survey (Appendix G)

After a few days of delivering the information package I connected with each potential participant to review the contents of the information package, answer questions and/or concerns, and determine dates and time for future contact and whether we would connect through CMC technology (such as *Skype*) or in person. I obtained informed consent and completed demographic surveys from 19 emerging adults interested in participating in the study. The methodological objective for using the survey was not to collect original data that made any claims to be representative of all participants. Instead, surveys were used based on three particular strengths of the method. First, they provided insight into relevant background information of participants required for the earliest stages of my fieldwork. This included items such as ethnicity, national "status" on the island, and a review of postsecondary educational activity. Second, it was the most effective and efficient method to access the geographically dispersed individuals and assess their interest and commitment. I suspected that individuals who returned the surveys promptly were not only interested in participating in the interviews, but also would be more accessible for follow-up contact required during data analysis. Finally, other than gaining precursory information about potential participants, data collected from the surveys provided entry points for discussion and probing during interviews; while also enabling me to tease out irrelevant or inappropriate questions.

Completed surveys were returned to me as either hard copies given to me in person by participants or as scanned copies sent to my personal email address. The survey data provided

pertinent demographic information such as age, sex, nationality, and so forth, as well as an overview of what individuals had been doing since completing their secondary schooling (i.e., high school; grade 11; 5th Form). The results from the participant demographic surveys yielded a purposeful sample of 12 participants consisting of six expatriates, six local Islanders, eight young women, two young men—all of whom met each of the four aforementioned criteria (see Table 4).

Table 4: Participants Based on Purposeful Sampling (Primary Data)

	Participant (pseudonym)	SCI Status	Sex	YOB[*1]	Postsecondary Education	Current Location[*2]
1	Participant B	SCI local Islander	M	1984	LLB (2006)	SCI
2	Participant J	SCI local Islander	M	1986	BSc (2011)	UK
3	Participant H	SCI local Islander	F	1987	BSc ('08), MSc ('11), PhD ('15)	USA
4	Participant TM	SCI local Islander	F	1987	BA (2006)	USA
5	Participant L	SCI local Islander	F	1987	AA (2004), P (2006)	SCI
6	Participant TA	SCI local Islander	F	1984	AA (2002)	USA
7	Participant KT	Expat/ local Islander	F	1987	AA (2005), BA (2008)	SCI
8	Participant R	Expat/ local Islander	F	1987	Dip (2013)	Canada
9	Participant KS	Expat/Bahamian	F	1987	LLB (2010)	SCI
10	Participant A	Expat/Jamaican	F	1988	BA (2009)	SCI
11	Participant C	Expat/Canadian	F	1987	BA (2010)	Canada
12	Participant I	Expat/British	F	1987	BA (2009)	Africa

[*1] YOB: Year of Birth (Age)

[*2] At the time of completing the Participant Survey and participating in the Interview

Education Abbreviations: (LLB) – Law, (Dip) – College diploma, (BSc) – Bachelor of Science, (BA), Bachelor of Arts, (AA) Associates Degree, (P) Professional/Trade Training (ex.: Mechanic, Police, Dental Hygienist, etc.), MSc (Masters of Science), PhD (Doctor of Philosophy)

Interestingly, the participants who were most accessible and keen to participate in this study were young women. From the initial 26 potential participants who were provided with an information package, five out of the seven who did not return the informed consent form or participant survey were young men. Despite my repeated efforts to locate and invite a cross section of participants reflective of the desired purposeful sample, I was unable to obtain commitment from more men and in particular, expatriate men. My inability to achieve the desired variation in participants was disappointing, however, it was unavoidable. I decided to leave the open invitation posted on Facebook and allow the process of data collection to unfold.

While I did not anticipate this, nor would I have wanted to, the juxtaposing of secondary data with the descriptive and rich data collected from the range of experiences shared by the 12 participants illuminated findings that I believe are equally reflective of what would have emerged if I had managed to get in the study my desired variation of young men and women, who were both locals and expatriates.

Interview Protocol

Interviews have long been an important tool for qualitative researchers (Opdenakkar, 2006). Kvale (1983) defines the qualitative research interview as "an interview, whose purpose is to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena" (p. 14). Interviews are particularly useful for eliciting details of life stories which are reflected in participant's experiences. The researcher/interviewer can pursue information in-depth around specific areas of interest, and investigate further the responses to questionnaires/surveys (Seidman, 2006).

My belief that "memory has a way of making the past consistent with the present as people amend their ongoing autobiographies" (Josselson, 1987, p.9), encouraged me to create a semi-structured interview protocol with open-ended questions to provide a space where participants could share their career stories (narratives) openly and naturally. I decided that this type of conversational interview protocol was the best way of eliciting rich descriptions, explanatory, natural and holistic accounts of participants' career decision-making experiences. While the demographic surveys provided an appreciation of some of the unfolding "career stories" of potential participants, I carefully devised an interview protocol (Appendix H) with questions that focused on the perceptions, perspectives, and experiences of the participants. This approach was used to allow the conversation to flow as naturally as possible, but also it permitted me to direct the discussion when necessary to cover avenues and issues, that might be relevant to my study. The semi-structured approach ensured consistency across interviews and facilitated a clearer grasp of their career trajectories for purposes of data analysis. With an opportunity to probe further with context-relevant questions, the interview protocol also provided an opportunity for me (the interviewer) to build rapport and trust with each participant (whether face-to-face or via CMC) as well as to seek elaboration and clarification of what they were

communicating (Creswell, 2007; Knox & Burkard, 2009; Kvale, 1996; Moutakas, 1994; Patton, 2002; Seidman, 1991).

To preserve the words and actions of the interviewees McMillan (2000) suggests that the researcher should apply the skills of listening carefully, prompting when appropriate, and clarifying and paraphrasing in order to illuminate participant stories. During the interviews I allowed for some variation in the order of questions to create a relaxed and comfortable conversational two-way exchange between the interviewees and me, while also avoiding as much as possible any leading questions that might influence the responses of participants. I did not include close friends as participants in this study because of our previous interactions (as teacher candidate and student) during my fourth-year field experience in 2000. This was important since some of the participants in this study were individuals who I accessed through my network of former colleagues and students from the SCI. The use of a semi-structured protocol kept the interview with these participants focused and avoided personal conversation irrelevant to the study.

The design of the interview protocol is a modified version of Seidman's (1991) three-part approach coupled with ideas proposed by McMillan (2000). Seidman (1991) suggests that a gradual revealing of the participants' experience gathered over three interactions (or exchanges) is ideal. The first exchange "establishes context of participants' experience," the second "allows participants to reconstruct experience within context," and the third "encourages participants to reflect on meaning of experience" (p. 11). Accordingly, an introductory exchange with participants via telephone, email, Facebook, and face-to-face contact (part one of Seidman's approach), followed by a semi-structured interview (part two of Seidman's approach), with follow-up "member checking"[18] to clarify, verify, and elicit elaboration on experiences and corroborate findings from the previous interview (part-three of Seidman's approach), was used to set interviewees at ease and to allow for further probing and exploration of ideas and reflections about experiences. While I was conducting fieldwork in the SCI I reviewed the audio-recorded interviews and began transcribing them within three days from the time of the interview. Doing this while still on island afforded me with the opportunity to conduct some "member checking"

[18] "Member checking" involves inviting participants to review their interview transcript for accuracy, and to clarify or elaborate upon any statements and/or add information as needed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

with participants face to face, while all other follow-up questions, clarification, and further probing occurred via email.

In preparation for possible times during the interview when participants might require probing to elicit memories, I brought along photographs to trigger memories and elicit thoughts and impressions of their secondary school experiences and reflections of how the SCI has changed over the years (Appendix I). Photographs were selected from my personal collection of images that documented educational, social, and development (economic) activities in the SCI. While I acknowledged that the photographs might have steered the conversation in ways that might have been different if the photographs had been taken by the participants, I felt the advantages far outweighed the disadvantages. The photographs were used during the initial exchange and interviews with three participants (Seidman's parts one and two of the interview approach). The use of photographs to elicit responses during interviews is known as the "photo-elicitation technique" and has been found helpful when researching with children and young people (Calderola, 1988; Harper, 1984, 1988; Heisley & Levy, 1991). According to many researchers, the use of photo elicitation during interviews has various advantages. For instance, the visual material can promote rapport with participants by enabling the researcher to grasp the viewpoints and social worlds of the individuals; especially those of children and young people (Capello, 2005; Clark, 1999; Fischman, 2001). The power of images has also been noted to trigger richer conversations about memories and reflections, and bridge the distant social and cultural worlds between interviewer and interviewees (Epstein, Stevens, McKeever, & Baruchel, 2006; Hazel, 1995; Holliday, 2000). Using photographs alongside the interview protocol not only puts interviewees at ease, but also elicits information about both content and context (the "what" and "how") of participant experience with the phenomenon, thus providing a deeper understanding of experiences. Perhaps one of the challenges in using photographs during interviews rests upon the researcher. When transcribing audio-recorded interviews into text, the researcher must keep careful record of which photographs were used to elicit specific references to their experiences shared during the interview. Archiving this material can be more complex than archiving interview transcripts (Meo, 2010). To address this issue, I associated the same photograph(s) (shown in Appendix I) with particular questions from the interview protocol to keep a record of association between photo-elicited responses.

As discussed earlier, I conducted face-to-face interviews with six of the selected participants during my fieldwork on island. Interviews were scheduled at a convenient and comfortable venue chosen by the participant. Locations included participant homes, professional offices, and restaurants. Upon my return to Canada, interviews with the six other participants who were not available for face-to-face interviews were contacted using *Skype* (a CMC technology allowing voice/video calls over the Internet) and via telephone. Prior to beginning the interview with each participant I reiterated the purpose of the study, reviewed and provided a copy of the informed consent form, and ensured each participant that his or her comments would be strictly confidential and his or her identity would remain anonymous. I encouraged each participant to discuss any questions or concerns he or she had that were related to the study and reminded each participant that he or she could decline to discuss my questions and/or end the interview at any point. Once the participant had given his or her final approval I turned on the digital audio recorder and proceeded with the interview. All the interviews lasted between 60 and 120 minutes and ultimately provided insights into how the participants' opinions differed and what issues drew consensus.

Transcription

Within 24 hours of completing an interview, I transferred and catalogued each digitally recorded interview electronically and safely on my password-protected computer using the Sony Digital Voice Editor software that came with the digital audio recorder I purchased for my fieldwork. Within three days from the interview date, I reviewed the audio recording and transcribed the interview using the Sony software which allows for variable speed playback and ease in starting and stopping to help ensure accuracy. Despite the time-consuming and tedious task of transcribing, I completed all of the transcriptions (verbatim) myself to maintain consistency and confidentiality. I verified each transcript by listening to the audio recording and reading the completed transcript to check for accuracy and to ensure I had captured the true voices of participants as they described and reflected on the experiences of their unfolding career stories. In this process of verification, I noted nonverbal cues (such as smiles and hand gestures), bracketed laughter, used ellipsis "…" for lengthy pauses for thought, bolded the text to denote degrees of emphasis (such as a higher tone/pitch in voice), and indicated exclamations with an upward pointing arrow sign (i.e.,↑) (Seidman, 1998). To minimize my voice as the interviewer I

selected a lighter shade of blue for the font colour while keeping the text of the participant's voice black. Any irrelevant or personal/social conversation was reduced to a smaller font size in light grey colour. In essence, verifying each transcript added to the credibility of the collected and recorded data by ensuring the transcripts read as close to verbatim as possible to the audiotaped interview. Finally, in formatting the transcripts, I did not number each line manually because the CAQDAS automatically numbers each passage upon uploading the Microsoft Word document transcriptions. An excerpt of a transcript is provided in Figure 9 to show how transcripts were prepared to be authentic and accurate representations of the actual interviews.

Figure 9: Sample of Interview Transcript

Place: Leeward Hwy., Boardroom at Participant A's place of work
Date: 2010/5/19

Interviewer: Can you recall what you were most looking forward to, what you were looking forward to most after graduating high school?
Participant **A:** Um... in terms of the future?
I Yeah.
A I really really didn't think that far. I know this might sound so weird.
I No not all.
A I know there were a lot of kids that were thinking of this, that but I really, for me it was just about, I really thought I would stay around Provo and probably do A Levels and hang out with my same friends and you know, and that was about it. And then it…just thought my whole world turned upside, actually no, you are going to England. I was like, What? It wasn't like…And I think again, when I went to England it completely changed, like you know, that ended high school. Cause I'd be still in high school. You know, I think then it was more that I thought, 'Okay what do I need to do?' 'Where do I want to go?' And I was like, 'Oh my God I want to live here' cause I was thinking of living in Dubai at one point, then I was thinking of living like in England, but then the weather got me, then the States, but the States was really hard. You know you got to get your Green Card and all the applications, it's really hard. And I thought, shit, I can't even do that! I can't even go to university there, cause there's no way I could do SATs. Cause in my…
I You weren't able to do SATs?
A See the thing is, I find like SATs, the… it's so different from the way you're taught, like the British system of teaching is completely different from the American way.
I In what way?
A In like, uh, especially in universities. Uh, in uh, like the States it's more practical. So, so one of the girls here went to university in the States and she learned QuickBooks and how accounting QuickBooks work together. We didn't learn any of that. Everything was hand…done by hand. You couldn't…
I In England? Really?
A Yeah, you do everything by hand. We didn't really learn Excel, like accounting in Excel.
I You didn't learn that?
A No, right! So it was like you had to get a simple calculator and you had to understand everything. You know you'd learn the history of accounting and you know, history of finance, and the stock market.

After transcribing each interview, I emailed each participant a thank-you for his or her participation and several elaboration and/or clarification follow-up questions that I had recorded in my journal along with the corresponding excerpts from the interview transcript. I also invited participants to review the transcript of their interview. Inviting participants for "member checking" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was a challenging process as many took much time to respond because of hectic and/or mobile work/school schedules or lack of urgency or interest in the project. After transcribing all 12 interviews and saving them as Microsoft Word documents I uploaded the digital transcript files into a CAQDAS called MAXQDA. This software was selected because of its easy storage, organization and retrieval capabilities, and more importantly because of its easy user interface that allows researchers to assign codes to the categories that emerged, add memoranda, and establish an audit trail by tracking the analytic process (see section on *Coding*).

Confidentiality

All of the interview material was preserved using a digital audio recorder which enabled the recordings to be easily transferred and catalogued electronically and safely on my password-protected computer. All of the primary and secondary data collected for this study was stored using the CAQDAS known as MAXQDA. This ensured confidentiality and facilitated the easy storage, organization, and retrieval of data, such as survey data, interview transcripts, audio data, photographs (visual data), observational field notes, journal reflections, and reflective memos. While there were no paper copies of transcripts or photographs, I did have a hard copy of my reflective journal which I kept in a locked filing cabinet in my personal residence. Also, I made back-up copies of the data which I transferred to an external hard drive and stored in the locked filing cabinet. All data generated for this study remained confidential to the fullest extent possible. Other than myself, only my doctoral supervisor, Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber, had access to the data for the purposes of our ongoing supervisory meetings. There is no information that identifies participants appearing in the dissertation or will there be in any future papers or publications resulting from this study. Anonymity of participants was ensured by using a pseudonym in place of real names throughout the dissertation work. The informed consent forms completed by participants will be destroyed after five years.

The Collection of Secondary Data

As introduced earlier in this chapter, the collection of secondary (or supplemental) data provided depth and breadth to the study by confirming and disconfirming what was emerging in the work during my analysis. Several approaches were used to collect secondary data: informal interviews and conversations with immediate stakeholders recorded as field notes, photographs with accompanying field notes (which I refer to as "photographic field notes"), a researcher reflective journal, reflective memos, and public documents in the form of local newspapers and the SCI's most recent socioeconomic development plan. I share details of how I accessed and collected information using each of these data approaches in the following discussion.

With an intention to juxtapose the experiences and perspectives of individuals other than the selected primary participants with the primary data collected for this study, I engaged in informal conversations and interviews with *immediate stakeholders*. I began collecting these secondary data by interviewing five interested potential participants who did not meet the criteria for the purposeful sample, but who had already signed the informed consent form and completed the demographic survey. Then I approached other individuals living and working in the SCI who had been referred to me by participants, and provided them with the same information letter and package I had provided to the participants interviewed for the purpose of primary data collection (see Appendices D and E). After obtaining informed consent (Appendix J) I recorded my conversations with the immediate stakeholders listed in Table 5 using a digital voice recorder, or by making detailed field notes (when individuals did not approve of the use of audio taping). Instead of transcribing the audio recordings, I reviewed each interview several times and summarized interesting and important details in field notes.

Questions posed to all immediate stakeholders emerged from information obtained in the primary data and from my observational field notes (see details below). I hoped that my interactions with immediate stakeholders would enable me to hear varying generational and cultural perspectives and experiences of navigating the socioeconomic and geopolitical landscape of the SCI in relation to the exploration and pursuit of educational and occupational opportunities. Fortunately, those who contributed illuminated many of the issues and experiences shared by the participants who contributed to the collection of primary data.

In addition to interviews and conversations with immediate stakeholders, I recorded observational field notes and took photographs. Where possible and when permission was granted, I photographed and made observations of the SCI landscape and its people.

Table 5: Immediate Stakeholders (Secondary Data)

	Participant	SCI Status	Sex	Current Location[*1]	Additional information
1	Emerging Adult D	Haitian/SCI local Islander	M	SCI	Public H.S. grad (2006); working at IGA
2	Emerging Adult G	SCI local Islander	M	SCI	Public H.S. grad (2006); working at Scotia Bank
3	Emerging Adult V	Haitian/ SCI local Islander	F	SCI	Public H.S.grad (2007); not working
4	Emerging Adult T	SCI local Islander	F	SCI	Religious-based H.S. grad (2006), SCI Comm. College ECE (2008); teaching assistant at local private school
5	Emerging Adult S	SCI local Islander	F	SCI	Public H.S.grad (2001); SCI Comm.College (2003); Degree (UK) (2006) parent of 2 children, Accountant
6	Parent H	SCI local Islander	F	SCI	Mother of PSH[*2] graduates and other local high schools; Nurse
7	Parent E	Haitian/ SCI local Islander	F	SCI	Mother of Clement Howell H.S. graduates; unemployed
8	Parent B	British	M	SCI	Parent of prior PSH student; reside in Provo 20+yrs.; business owner
9	School Admin FS	SCI local Islander	M	SCI	Secondary School/Education
10	School Admin FL	SCI local Islander	M	SCI	Tertiary School/Education
11	Government ME	SCI local Islander	M	SCI	Tertiary School/Prominent Educator
12	Immigrant/ Migrant Worker 1	Filipino	F	SCI	Nurse @ new hospital
13	Immigrant/ Migrant Worker 2	Filipino	F	SCI	Nurse @ new hospital
14	Immigrant/ Migrant Worker 2	Jamaican	F	SCI	Nurse @ new hospital
13	Immigrant/ Migrant Worker 3	American	M	SCI	Physician @ new hospital
14	SCI Adult	SCI local Islander	F	SCI	Emergency Physician @ new hospital
15	SCI Adult	Canadian	M	SCI	Real Estate Agent/Developer
16	SCI Adult	SCI local Islander	F	SCI	Long-time resident of the SCI

[*1] At the time when the individual participated in the interview/conversation for data collection purposes

[*2] "PSH" is an acronym for "Private School High"

The photographs included abandoned construction sites, public and private school facilities, local businesses, traffic on the main road, people bustling around the downtown core, the airport,

recently developed residential neighbourhoods, older neighbourhoods, Sunday church events, as well as other interesting features that caught my eye. In terms of photographs that contained images of people, I was careful to not include faces since I had not received permission to use these in my study. For example, after taking a photograph, I made a hand written note about the approximate age, ethnicity, and observable duties of employees at various hotels and resorts around the island. During a visit to the local hospital I recorded notes of my conversations with emergency room nurses and the attending physician, as well as social and demographic observations about employees and patients. I also recorded observational field notes about my initial impressions of the halted construction of commercial structures, improved infrastructure in particular regions (or neighbourhoods) on the island, and so forth. I also noted cultural, social, and economic activities in the SCI and activities during interaction with participants. On occasions where I documented my observations with photographs, I wrote brief captions for each image and filed them with my field notes (Appendix K). It is important to mention here that some of my field notes were used as a catalyst for further probing during interviews with participants, as well as during member checking (i.e., photo-elicitation). I believe these observations added a contextual understanding to the analysis and helped to triangulate the study by confirming some of the issues and experiences obtained through interview data (McMillian, 2000).

Throughout the inquiry process I was aware of my own inevitable researcher biases and worldviews that were influencing the understanding and analysis of the data. When immersed in the research field and engaging in qualitative research it is imperative for the researcher to be critically aware of her biases and existing belief system. Consequently, I kept a *reflective journal* (where I practiced reflexivity) to record experiences, reactions, thoughts, questions, concerns, theoretical ideas, emotions and other associated reflections related to the research project during both data collection and analysis (Fassinger, 2005; Patton, 2002; Polkinghorne, 2005). Reflexivity is an "important tool for reflection on the research process including the reciprocal influence of the research on the researcher" (Bringer, Johnston, & Brackenridge, 2004, p. 255). For example, in one of my entries, I recorded my impressions and experience at the local hospital.

> *So last night I ended up rushing to emergency. Thank goodness the new hospital is open because I don't think I could have survived in the old one— the derelict building alone*

> *used to make me queasy. Of course me being me, despite the pain, I conversed with everyone who attended to my care. I was curious to see who works there and in what capacity. To my surprise, I only encountered one local islander. And she wasn't that great of a nurse. She didn't even know how to draw blood??? Makes me question where she received her training. And she seemed so disinterested in being there—as if I was occupying her precious time. It was 2A.M.! After a few failed attempts another nurse attended to me. This one is from Jamaica. She was excellent! Experienced for sure! She said she just moved to the island several months ago. In the few hours I was in emergency, two Jamaican nurses, one British, and one from India attended to my care. All were great! Then the internal medicine specialist showed up—a young man from Connecticut. He told me to call him George…* (Journal Entry, recorded on May 15, 2010)

This example is one of many experiences during my analysis of the data. I became more aware of how my personal interactions and experiences were intersecting with my interpretation of the experiences of participants. While I could not avoid this, I was made more cognizant of it. As a result, I looked for analytic approaches to illuminate the voices of participants and minimize the influence of my assumptions. The practice of keeping a journal provided a space for me to be honest and aware of how my own worldviews, assumptions, and experiences could be shaping and having an impact on my work.

I recorded *reflective memos* regularly. The reflexive practice of "memoing" helps the researcher clarify thoughts about the research (Glaser, 1978). Although originally used in grounded theory approaches to qualitative research, memos to help articulate and clarify researcher bias by: articulating assumptions and subjective perspectives about the research field, recording initial reactions after each interview, reflecting on prior and present experiences and interactions in the research field, and exposing personal experiences and thoughts triggered during fieldwork (Birks, Chapman, & Francis, 2008; Creswell, 2007; Glaser, 1978). The functions of memos "can be described using the mnemonic 'MEMO': Mapping research activities; Extracting meaning from the data; Maintaining momentum; Opening communication" (Birks, Chapman, & Francis, 2008, p. 70). Memos document the research journey of the inquirer.

> Qualitative research is an evolutionary journey. The researcher must expect different ideas to emerge and operational directions to change in response to what is found in the data…Memoing therefore provides a mechanism by which the perspective of the

> researcher can be recorded for later critical review or confirmation. Memos are contemporaneous, a snap-shot of thought processes at a given stage of the research that facilitate an understanding of what perspectives were held and why decisions were made. (p. 71)

Throughout the data collection and analysis process, memoing helped me to establish a relationship with the data, while preserving (and retaining) ideas that might otherwise have been forgotten. In particular, much of the memoing I engaged in included noteworthy events from my observations in the field, thoughts about emergent patterns and/or issues, theoretical meanings derived from the data (noting concepts and themes), and reminders and instructions as the research process unfolded. For example, in one memo I recorded my reaction to a participant's comment about the politics of securing a government scholarship.

> *As I'm listening and reading through Participant B's interview, this sense of "entitlement" comes about. He actually names it...but he says that about others, not himself. He says that the government was just giving away scholarships to anybody and everybody, despite their performance. And that he, who worked hard and was a good student, was told he was not going to get a scholarship...even though he was promised. Promised? I do not understand how one can be promised a scholarship. From my perspective, a scholarship is not a given, it is earned. Perhaps there were better candidates for the award than Participant B. Why has he not considered this? Why is it assumed that it is the government's responsibility to fund postsecondary education? I need to explore this further in my next conversation with Participant B. Perhaps I'll also understand this more in the other interviews with participants.* (Journal Entry, recorded on July 6, 2010)

Interestingly, this memo allowed me to record my initial frustrations and confusion with Participant B's comments/experiences. With reference to my initial thoughts, I then prepared follow-up questions for Participant B to help probe and further understand his experiences.

While I did not fully grasp the great value of memoing in the beginning of my fieldwork, many of the ideas, questions, thoughts, and impressions I had explored in my reflective memos proved to be quite significant later while I was analyzing the data (Glaser, 1978). I believe this form of reflexivity also contributed to transparency in my work, and therefore, as a result, served

to increase the trustworthiness and credibility of the study by providing "a space and place for exploration and discovery" (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 81-82).

A final component of my secondary data was a collection of *public documents* in the form of local newspapers, and the SCI's most recent socioeconomic development plan. The newspapers provided information about current events happening on the island, as well as public commentary on the changing and uncertain socioeconomic and political landscape. I reviewed the SCI's development plans which provided pertinent statistical and demographic information about relevant migration and employment issues, as well as programs and policies related to population growth, education and labour market needs, health and social services, and economic development on the island. This document also included reference to recent (<5 years) census and development reports provided by The Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM). I used this information to familiarize myself with the socioeconomic climate of the SCI as well as demographic and economic trends on the island. Also, I referenced local newspapers to formulate relevant interview questions, as well as follow-questions, for participants. The information obtained through these public documents was later juxtaposed with the experiences and commentaries shared by both primary participants and the other stakeholders who voluntarily contributed to the study.

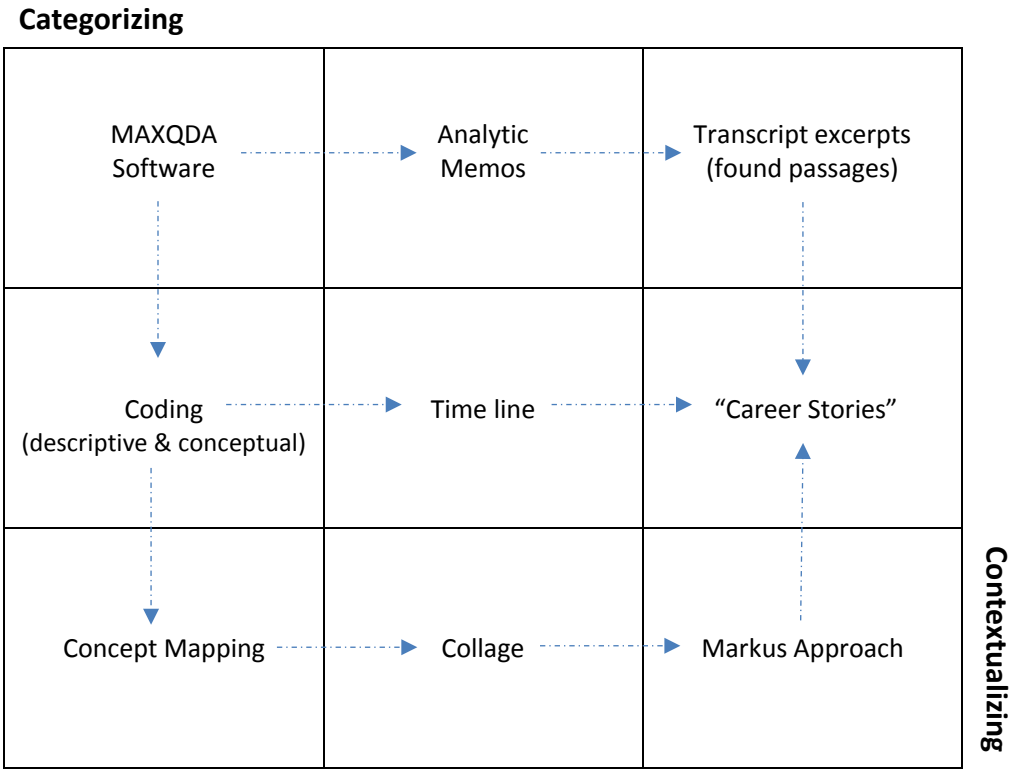
The Qualitative Design Matrix: Data Analysis

> *Data analysis is a process that requires astute questioning, a relentless search for answers, active observation, and accurate recall. It is a process of piecing together data, of making the invisible obvious, of recognizing the significant from the insignificant, of linking seemingly unrelated facts logically, of fitting categories one with another, and of attributing consequences to antecedents. It is a process of conjecture and verification, of correction and modification, of suggestion and defense. It is a creative process of organizing data so that the analytic scheme will appear obvious.* (Morse, as cited in Saldaña, 2009, p. 149)

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, to organize the "web of possibilities" available for data collection and analysis I organized the most applicable approaches into a matrix. It is important to note that the eventual matrix seen in Table 6 is the result of an evolving process of

inquiry. These approaches were selected to deal with the data as analytical questions arose. For example, after the third round of coding/categorizing I decided to graph a time line of events to help visualize the various career trajectories. While I explain the process of creating the time line in more detail in Chapter 4, I will note here that I did not anticipate graphing such information until well into the analysis of the data. The findings discussed in Chapters Four and Five evolved from the various approaches used for data analysis shown in the figure below. An overview of these approaches employed during the analysis of data follows.

Table 6: QDM of Interpretive/Analysis Tools



Categorization Using CAQDAS

As previously discussed, all of the digital transcription files were inputted into a CAQDAS known as MAXQDA. The software was used to store and organize the interview transcripts (as well as observational field notes, memos, and other relevant documents collected during the inquiry process). MAXQDA was used to unitize the data into categories, assign codes to these categories, add memoranda, and establish an audit trail by tracking the analysis process

(which adds credibility and trustworthiness to the study). Before coding the data, I assigned identification labels for each interview transcript using a pseudonym for the participant's name referenced by letters (ex.: PB or PTM); a letter indicating whether the interview was conducted via Skype (S) or face to face (F); and the month and year the interview was conducted. MAXQDA automatically applies a number for each paragraph/passage of conversation in the transcript text file which enabled me to easily reference specific passages of the interviews. These numbers were used in subsequent steps of the analytical process to identify excerpts of interview data used to revisit the section and context of passages in the original interviews. For example, PTM/F/June10/85 would indicate passage 85 from a face-to-face interview with participant TM that took place in June 2010.

I began my analysis reading each transcript twice while simultaneously listening to the digital recording. Then I began highlighting significant and poignant statements using the MAXQDA software, while listening and reading each transcript. I selected single words and passages using the mouse and used a "drag and drop" maneuver to assign an appropriate code. During the initial coding of data I applied broad descriptive codes, identifying and summarizing the general topic related to words, sentences, and passages from the interview transcripts (Saldaña, 2009). "Descriptive coding leads, primarily, to a categorized inventory, tabular account, summary, or index of the data's contents," (Wolcott, as cited in Saldaña, 2009, p. 72). After my initial effort (or first round) of coding, almost every sentence and passage from all 12 transcripts were included in one of 13 descriptive codes depicting contextual *topics* participants had described *about* in regard to their career decisions and experiences (see Table 7) (Saldaña, 2009). While categorizing the data I also continued to make reflective memos about thoughts, ideas, possible explanations, and questions that came to mind. I was able to create and link memos to specific codes or selected segments using MAXQDA's Memo Manager which became an essential part of developing an analytic understanding of the data and a way of building conceptual reflections.

Generally, codes devised during data analysis represent themes and ideas that are placed into categories for focus, thus breaking "the interview into data bits" (Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg, & Coleman, 2000, p. 2). The sentences, quotes, and passages relating to key issues and/or that point to recurrent events or activities uncovered in the data are compared and further distilled and placed into sub-categories. "According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), the art of comparison has

to do with creative processes and with the interplay between data and researcher when gathering and analyzing data," (Boeije, 2002, p. 394). During the second round of coding I continued to review the interview transcripts and coded segments, recording reflective memos and further distilled the initial broad descriptive codes into subcategories that described particular features of the descriptive codes. An example of some of the codes emerging from this round of coding is provided in Table 8.

Table 7: First-Round Descriptive Codes

- Subjects & Examinations
- Extra-Curricular Activities
- Self
- Teachers
- Other People (ex.: peers)
- Scholarship
- School / Education
- Aspirations
- Nationality
- Job Market & Prospects
- Expatriates & Migrant Workers
- Family
- Government & Politics

Table 8: Example of Second-Round Descriptive Codes

First Cycle Codes	**Second Cycle Codes**
Teachers	Their plan for the student
	Feelings for teachers
	Subject guidance / interest encouragement
School / Education	Private vs. public school
	Life abroad
	Selecting a school
Nationality	Patriotic commitment to give back to country
	Getting local Islander status
	Why live (or not live) in the SCI? Why come/not come home?
	Patriotism to other countries despite growing up on island
Family	Responding to parent support and/or guidance
	Self-directing without family support and/or guidance
	Following parental levels of education and professional achievement
	Having children (marriage and children)
Government & Politics	"Islanders first" mantra
	Political party/voting affiliation and loyalty
	Business partnerships with local islanders in the SCI

During the third and fourth round of coding I moved beyond descriptive to conceptual codes which reflected contextual actions and functional aspects in the data (Charmaz, 2002). Using gerunds (i.e., "–ing" verbal nouns) to describe either observable (e.g., playing, drinking) or conceptual (e.g., adapting, negotiating) actions, conceptual coding identifies "ongoing action/interaction/emotion taken in response to situations, or problems, often with the purpose of reaching a goal or handling a problem" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, cited in Saldaña, 2009, p. 77). As Saldaña (2009) suggests, process (or conceptual as I reference throughout this dissertation) codes should answer the question "what are they doing" or how does this particular category "function" in relation to participant accounts of the phenomenon under study. This iterative process was perhaps one of the most challenging times during the analytic process—comparing, contrasting, and identifying relationships between the existing subcategories. I reviewed the segments from the second round of coding and searched for themes that might subsume a group of categories that could be distilled using gerunds to break the data into even smaller "bits". Eventually the 41 descriptive subcategories were collapsed into five conceptual codes which emerged through posing the following questions (Saldaña, 2009): (1) what is happening here? and (2) how do these categories function? Through conceptual coding the categories became saturated and I arrived at five categories: "shifting," "giving back," "going with the flow," "projecting," and "doing it for me". At this point I also used concept mapping (which is explained in further detail in Chapter Five) to help identify "look alike, feel alike" qualities which facilitated the application of "rules of inclusion" (see Table 9), which are parameters written as propositional statements that describe the properties of each category (Lincoln & Guba, as cited in Dye et al., 2000, p. 2). While the parameters provide flexible boundaries to include and exclude "bits" of data in each category, defining each category also allowed me to organize the most salient threads and develop themes that cut across both local and expatriate participant stories. Reflective memoing during the coding process also contributed to the identification and construction of common activities in career decision-making experiences shared by all participants.

Table 9: Rules of Inclusion

Themes	Rules of Inclusion
Shifting	*Includes* considerations, exploration, and/or awareness of opportunities (options) not limited to a specific geographic locale; includes teeter-tottering (moving back and forth) between two or more geographic locales
Giving back	*Includes* the considerations and/or a desire to return "home" to the SCI after postsecondary schooling with either a sense of responsibility or commitment to contribute to the development of the island and/or participate in the local labour market
Going with the flow	*Includes* serendipitous events or arrival at present career point without any forethought, planning, or deliberate action in regard to educational and occupational decisions.
Projecting	*Includes* an awareness of educational/occupational opportunities (options), resources, benefits, and/or limitations available to the individual in comparison to others; *Includes* an awareness of the current economic crisis in relation to impacting career decisions and actions
Doing it for me	*Includes* expectations of what is entitled or deserved to the individual by others based on nationality, academic achievement/merit, and/or personal desire to pursue particular educational or occupational activities

Contextualizing the Data

After reviewing all of the data and refining the descriptive criterion for each theme no new themes emerged. This indicates when "saturation" is reached (Flick, 1998). Through the process of categorizing (coding) the interview data I was able to construct a general understanding of the participants' career stories and locate commonalities across individual experiences. However, I felt a need to delineate in order to connect the themes more holistically and to reveal more general ideas that I could cluster around my research questions. Maxwell and Miller (2008) name this as the process of "contextualizing" the data. Contextualization strategies "do not focus primarily on *similarities* that can be used to sort data into categories independently of context, but instead look for relationships that *connect* statements and events within a context into a coherent whole" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 98). To begin this process, I reviewed the coded data segments with specific attention to how the segments were related to the five themes. Collectively, the segments called attention to the tendency of participants to discuss their career stories by describing *what* justified their pursuit of a particular postsecondary path of education and/or occupation, *what* considerations were involved in their decision to leave and return (or not return) to the island(s), and *what* they recalled as poignant moments over the past decade (see

Table 10). I became more curious about the possible reasons behind *what* participants were doing (i.e., their behaviour) with regard to their decisions to explore and pursue certain educational and occupational opportunities. I reviewed the QDM on interpretive/analytic tools and chose to engage my visual senses in this unfolding process of meaning making.

Table 10: Excerpts of Coded Data Segments

THEMES	EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEW DATA
Shifting	"I'll use it as a stepping stone" (PL/May10/84)
	"I just felt I didn't want to be there…and they [my parents] said …you can come back" (PKS/F/May10/91)
Giving back	"I want to go home…it will be my last stop" (PH/S/May11/230)
	"the younger generation are pushing much harder" (PJ/S/June11/358)
Going with the flow	"I've never really thought of education as something you couldn't do." (PA/F/May10/66)
	"Just do a career, do something that I enjoy, do all this stuff and then at the end I can teach what I've learned to people" (PA/F/May10/202)
Projecting	"honestly it was my parent's decision" (PJ/S/June11/64)
	"…just about everyone I told…were like..."man, so many lawyers are going to be here in the country… why don't you try to do something else?" (PL/F/May10/72)
Doing it for me	"I started going to the Community College but I couldn't finish because they wouldn't give me a scholarship" (PTM/F/June10/131)
	"they didn't really push school at all…I just did everything myself and nobody really pushed me" (PR/F/May10/90)

Returning to the demographic survey data I had collected from participants prior to their interviews, I decided to use the information in connection with interview data to chart career-related events and activities on a time line. The time lines represented each participant's career story spanning the past 10 years. From a conceptual standpoint I felt that organizing the

experiences of each participant onto a time line would provide a linear picture of participants' pathways. The painstaking hours of collating the graphic visualization of participants' career stories resulted in time lines that were based on the geographic residency patterns of expatriate participants and local islander participants. This process is explicitly described in Chapter Four where I portray visually these time lines that were colour coded using blue to show when participants were on-island, and green to show when participants were off-island. The analysis of these time lines confirmed the themes of "shifting," "giving back" and "going with the flow". Interestingly, as will be shown later, they also reflected the idea of mobility which was closely depicted by comparing the blue and green dimensions in the time lines.

As I used descriptive and conceptual coding to delineate the themes, time lines distilled the career activities of participants into a series of migratory considerations and actions. The analysis of the residency time lines in connection with the coded data segments also revealed how mobility is embedded in each educational and occupational opportunity and the subsequent decisions made to pursue such options. While the idea of mobility reflected three of the themes (i.e., "shifting," "giving back," and "doing it for me"), I was unable to draw any relationship between the idea of mobility and the themes of "projecting" and "doing it for me." The occurrence of these two "outliers" (categories of data that do not seem to fit anywhere) provided me with an impetus to revisit the QDM of interpretive/analytical tools to locate an approach that would probe further at the hidden dimensions and unidentified connections among the themes. This was a pivotal moment in the inquiry process as I moved from constant comparison analysis and opted to engage in the arts-based/arts-informed (from here on I use the term "arts-informed" research because I am a researcher coming to art, rather the reverse (Cole and Knowles, 2008)) practice of collage work. In Chapter Five more detail about the theoretical and procedural aspects of arts-based/arts-informed is provided. Here, I offer an overview of what transpired as I applied artful analysis to account for the themes of "projecting" and "doing it for me."

I turned to collage to visualize and help to see where the outliers fit in my work and hoped as a result, to gain additional insights. I collaged each of the five themes (i.e., "shifting," "giving back," "going with the flow," "projecting," and "doing it for me"), titled them, and wrote a brief descriptive paragraph for each. I share these images in Figures 12 -16 in Chapter Five. As the interpretive process thus far was solely based on my own perspectives and understanding, I chose to engage peers and colleagues in the "Markus Approach" to facilitate further discovery

(Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 105). The Markus Approach is a blind, reflective process which invites multiple perspectives, highlights the multidimensionality offered by images, and reveals possible gaps or missing parts of the research puzzle. Collages are shared with others without revealing information about the theme or title of the collage. Viewers are invited to share their impressions and interpretations of the collage by jotting down two or three adjectives (in response to the collage) on post-it notes and attaching them to the back of the collage. While this activity has been readily practiced in graduate research classes and workshops, the artist of the collage, in this case the researcher, then reads aloud the adjectives from the post-it notes, and then shares the original description and title for the collage. Sometimes the adjectives of others echo the intentions of the researcher and validate the work and at other times the adjectives bring about new revelations about the work (and data). "The whole exercise underscores the ambiguities and multiple interpretations that are inherent in visual work," (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 105).

As a result of the collage work and the elicitation of responses from the Markus Approach, I discovered new ways of thinking about and understanding the data. After reviewing the feedback and juxtaposing the adjectives with my initial descriptive paragraphs for each collage, the idea of mobility was validated in the collages that were reflective of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow." The adjectives in response to the collages of "projecting" and "doing it for me" however, did not provide any definite connection with the two outliers themes. To make sense of these I turned to concept mapping (which I describe in greater detail in Chapter Five) to help organize the list of adjectives. Concept mapping offered a relational approach visualizing and organizing potential connections and relationships among the descriptors (Buter-Kisber & Poldma, 2010). Interestingly, this work yielded four contextual features[19]: birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances, which I explain further in Chapter Five (pages 125-126). It was at this "eureka" moment that suddenly I saw how these contextual features acted to either enable and/or limit the mobility of participants as they engaged in the exploration and pursuit of educational and occupational opportunities.

To further explore the four contextual features with the intention of looking more closely at the aspects defining birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances, I created some additional

[19] I use the term "contextual features" to describe external/environmental (or defining features) impacting on participant's career decisions (i.e., birthright, autonomy, networks and finances). The term is commonly referenced in career development literature, and specifically in SCCT discussed in Chapter Two (see page 29). The term should not be confused with my reference to "contextualizing" analysis described in this chapter.

collages using the same steps I had used previously and created four collages, titled each, and recorded a description of what each was intended to portray. I found the fragmented and collective images in the collages useful in finding the words to articulate the most salient aspects of each contextual feature. To confirm the connections I was finding through my own analysis, again I invited colleagues to respond using the Markus Approach. Once more, I used concept mapping to organize the adjectives and was able to see that the responses of the viewers resonated not only with the interview data, but also with the idea that there is an intersection between the capacity for mobility that is informed by birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances.

To clarify and verify my evolving understanding of participants' career stories, I revisited both primary and secondary data. Using the four contextual features as a lens, I reviewed categorized excerpts from the interview transcripts, juxtaposed references from my reflective memos, and tried to see the data holistically as an interconnected web of textual and visual ideas contributing to young people's career decisions. My use of arts-informed approaches showed how the career decisions of emerging adults from the SCI are reflective of educational and occupational opportunities which necessitate mobility, and that are facilitated by birthright, autonomy networks, and finances. An overview of the unfolding analysis described in this chapter is provided in Appendix A.

For a story to not be dismissed as simply hearsay it must be confirmed as being truthful and credible. To do this, journalists often seek out "eye witnesses" that are willing to share and authenticate first-hand accounts of the unfolding event. Tax auditors refer to other documents and the "paper trail" of information that may (or may not) confirm activity. Criminal investigators question primary sources or suspect(s) to piece together a time line of events and perhaps an explanation for the crime. Parents often use intuition when it comes to stories from their children. To substantiate a story the storyteller must verify the details being shared from other sources. In qualitative research, "the extent to which the data, data analysis, and conclusions are believable and trustworthy" defines the credibility of the study (McMillan, 2000, p. 2 72). The researcher must show that he or she has obtained the information from credible sources. This is done by using multiple sources of data (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), using complementary analytic strategies to interpret the data (Maxwell & Miller, 1996), by making the

process of inquiry transparent (Mauthner & Doucet, 1998), and by being emerged in the field over time (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Trustworthiness, Credibility, and Persuasiveness

To build trustworthiness and credibility into this study, I employed a variety of practices to ensure transparency. For example, before I engaged in this inquiry I acknowledged my positionality and exposed my previous interactions and relationships with the research site and its people; I collected both primary and secondary data from a variety of sources to allow me to juxtapose and confirm/disconfirm findings; I created an audit trail of the data collection and analysis process by using a well-known software (MAXQDA/CAQDAS) that afforded me with the functionality to track all aspects of the analytic process; I documented my engagement with the visual approaches by collecting images of the evolving processes (i.e. photography); I engaged in "member checking" while transcribing interviews and in the writing of this dissertation by encouraging participants to read through the work, reflect, and provide feedback; I recorded thoughts, impressions, frustrations, and evolving ideas in a reflective journal, as well as in reflective memos which were often referenced throughout this inquiry; and while engaging in the artful approach of collage work, I engaged the perspective of others to corroborate and/or enlighten my unfolding analysis. I believe these complementary and relational approaches contribute to the credibility of my work and to and enabled me to arrive at a more complete and holistic understanding of the phenomenon under study.

These strategies of combining different data sets, types of analyses, methods, theoretical perspectives, and researcher perspectives/ worldviews to study one particular phenomenon is known as *triangulation* (Denzin, 1978; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The primary purpose of triangulating a study is to address the different dimensions of the phenomenon, collect and organize various pieces of the puzzle, and gain a more holistic, contextual, and complete understanding of the world (Patton, 2002). By using more than one research approach, the researcher is afforded more control over minimizing bias and enhancing validity, thus reinforcing the trustworthiness of his or her findings (Mathison, 1988).

The idea of triangulation originated with sailors and surveyors who determine the location of a point by measuring the angles bridging three known points. With careful measurement, the sailors and surveyors navigate the world much like I navigated the research

field. Richardson (1994) however, rejects the term triangulation believing there is far more than "three sides" to navigate and understand the world. She believes the image of a triangle is inadequate for explaining the multidimensional options for exploring particular phenomena. Richardson (1994) uses the metaphor of a crystal, which unlike the "rigid, fixed, two-dimensional" triangle conveys the dynamism of contextual, complex, and transformative qualitative research.

> The central image for "validity" for postmodern texts is…the crystal, which combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach. Crystals grow, change, alter, but are not amorphous. Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colours, patterns, arrays, casting off in different directions. (p. 522)

This is not to imply that triangulation or crystallization is a "quick fix" for all studies. On the contrary, the research questions, available resources, and worldviews of the inquirer(s) will guide which approaches are most appropriate to test for credibility and persuasiveness (Mathison, 1988). *Crystallization* simply recognizes that different aspects of the social world can be considered from different (not all) perspectives, and embraces both the multiple opportunities and constraints expected in qualitative inquiry. This opportunity to "know more" about a phenomenon is the goal intended through triangulation or crystallization. Whether their work is grounded in traditionally scientific or social science disciplines, researchers adopting multiple inquiry approaches and perspectives are able to draw interpretations from multiple sources of data and through different lenses, and thereby secure an in-depth understanding of their work while increasing the persuasiveness of their findings (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007; Kelle, 2006).

Janesick (as cited in Ellingson, 2009) "encourages us to think of qualitative research as being both like a precise, orderly, scripted minuet *and* like a free-flowing, responsive, creative improvisational dance" (p. 73). As I describe and explain my attraction to, and use of visual approaches in the proceeding chapters, it becomes apparent that I regard qualitative inquiry in the same creative light suggested by Janesick (2000). I certainly embrace the natural evolution and multidimensionality of the unfolding process of inquiry. I have welcomed "opportunities as they arise" and have adapted "the needs of the people and context in which [we] work" (Janesick, 2003, as cited in Ellingson, 2009, pp. 73-74). I believe the methodological approaches

I engaged in allowed me to respond to changes and shifts in the social world of participants, which is reflected in the quality, persuasiveness, and presentation of my work. There [has been] is no attempt to assume neutrality in the research and there is no attempt to dismiss my inherent biographical and multicultural layers of "class, racial, cultural, and ethnic community perspective" that inform every interpretive study (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 23). The quality of any interpretive study is *reflected* in the researcher's identification of his or her biases and ideology as part of his/her conceptual framework for the study; and *refracted* through a variety of lenses and methods used to conceptualize and understand the phenomenon. Much like the always changing reflection and refraction of the metaphorical crystal, the ingenuity of subjective knowledge has been embraced.

To bring depth and breadth to the study the voices of 12 primary participants (see Table 4), reflecting both SCI local islanders and expatriates from various communities, were included. The voices of other emerging adults from the SCI and immediate stakeholders (see Table 5) were obtained through formal interviews and informal conversations about their educational and work-related experiences, thoughts about the job market, political climate, and social and economic development issues. These voices were accessed during the analytical phase of the study to verify what was happening in the field.

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the methodology used in this study. By first presenting relevant methodological literature to support my position on the ontological continuum, I have provided a justification for the selected methods of data collection and analysis guiding the work. Qualitative research allows for ingenuity, flexibility, and adaptability of an emergent research design. For this reason I attempted to articulate the process of categorizing the data by providing detailed accounts of each stage of the coding process. The contextualization/visualization of the data occurred by using time lines, an arts-informed approach (collage making) and concept mapping which are described in more detail in subsequent chapters. In this chapter, I revealed the decisions and justifications at each step in the inquiry process, and provided evidence of the transparency and rigour of the research design. I reviewed the issues in data collection, including recruitment and selection of participants for the demographic questionnaire/survey, interviews and field observation site.

As a means of accessing and understanding the social world as experienced by social actors themselves, each step of the methodological process was rationalized in relation to the preceding ones and based on my own familiarity with the research tools. By attending to transparency I hope to establish trustworthiness, credibility, and persuasiveness in the study. Also, I included critical reflections of the research through an examination of the design challenges, power relations, ethical issues, and limitations. The following two chapters (Chapters Four and Five) are the elaborations of the analytic processes discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: EXPLORING THEMES, EMERGING MOBILITY

To recap, what drives this research is the question of *how does living in a labour market during a boom and/or bust period of socioeconomic and infrastructure development in a small Caribbean island (SCI) contribute (or not) to the educational and occupational (career) decisions of local emerging adults?* Key questions that underpin the research include: how do students describe and rationalize their postsecondary career choices and experiences; and what other contextual features/forces play a role in these life decisions and why? The preceding chapter provided a discussion of the qualitative methodology I used to uncover the themes that emerged, and presented the career stories of the participants in my study. The rigorous categorization of the 12 interviews unfolded in a descriptive and conceptual coding process which distilled five emergent themes: "shifting," "giving back," "going with the flow." "projecting," and "doing it for me." Constant comparison inquiry enabled me to construct a general understanding of the participants' career stories and identify commonalities across individual experiences.

After uncovering the five themes mentioned above, I chose to integrate data collected from the demographic surveys and interviews by charting a time line of participants' career stories. Also, I engaged in collage work to contextualize the data. The combination of both visual approaches provided a way to explore holistically the categories and show possible connections to the five themes (listed above) which responded at least partially to my research questions. Prior to contextualizing the data, I concluded that the five themes reflected the postsecondary career choices and experiences of my participants because they illustrated the activities and behaviours associated with the exploration and pursuit of educational and occupational opportunities. However, I determined that I would be able to delve more deeply into the data using visual analyses.

In this chapter I describe these visual approaches in more detail, and show how the idea of mobility unfolded when I integrated the survey and interview data onto time lines. This visual approach accentuated the multiple dimensions of participants' on- and off-island mobility. Also, I show how the coded interview transcripts helped me to connect the categories to specific excerpts illuminating the career decision-making experiences and behaviours of participants.

Integrating Demographic Survey and Interview Data

In my search for a more holistic understanding of the data, I referenced the demographic surveys each participant completed in the initial phase of this study, and combined these data with the career stories participants shared in their interviews. Initially, I plotted each participant's career events (such as high school graduation, college attendance, etc.) on two separate time lines—one for local Islanders and the other showing the trajectories of expatriates. The first draft of the time lines charted career activities extracted from the surveys, such as graduating from high school and attending college, which I plotted along a continuous line marked by the years 2009-2012. I drafted the time lines on overhead transparency sheets, which allowed me to overlay each participant's time line over the other and note patterns. After charting the data obtained through the surveys, I reviewed the transcripts to add additional career activities, such as the participation in internships and work experiences. Gaps appeared along several participant time lines because those participants were not engaged in career activities. I wondered what they were doing during these times. I revisited the transcripts and isolated activities that "filled in the gaps"; activities that I had initially ignored because at the time I did not think they were relevant to the career trajectories of participants. In fact, it became apparent that they were important features of their educational and occupational options and eventual decisions. Such activities included sudden life changes such as pregnancy and/or parenthood, and death of a loved one.

After completing the time lines I began to overlay each participant's time line with one another but encountered difficulty analyzing the patterns across participant trajectories. I found it challenging to make comparisons from the existing plotted career trajectories. I decided that the time lines needed to be streamlined and synthesized. With careful consideration of all career-related activities, I organized the time lines into two sections which I defined as "School Ideal" and "School Non-Ideal" career trajectory activities. These sections were based on the expectations and career development goals of PSH and the SCI's goal for retaining human capital. That is, the mission and/or mandate of the PSH administration and its faculty is to strongly encourage academic achievement among their students, so that they will be prepared for and accepted into postsecondary programs in established college/university institutions located in North America or Europe. Since my review of the SCI's public documents (as discussed in the previous chapter) indicated a need for the SCI to retain human capital for socioeconomic development, the ideal scenario would be for emerging adults to return home after pursuing

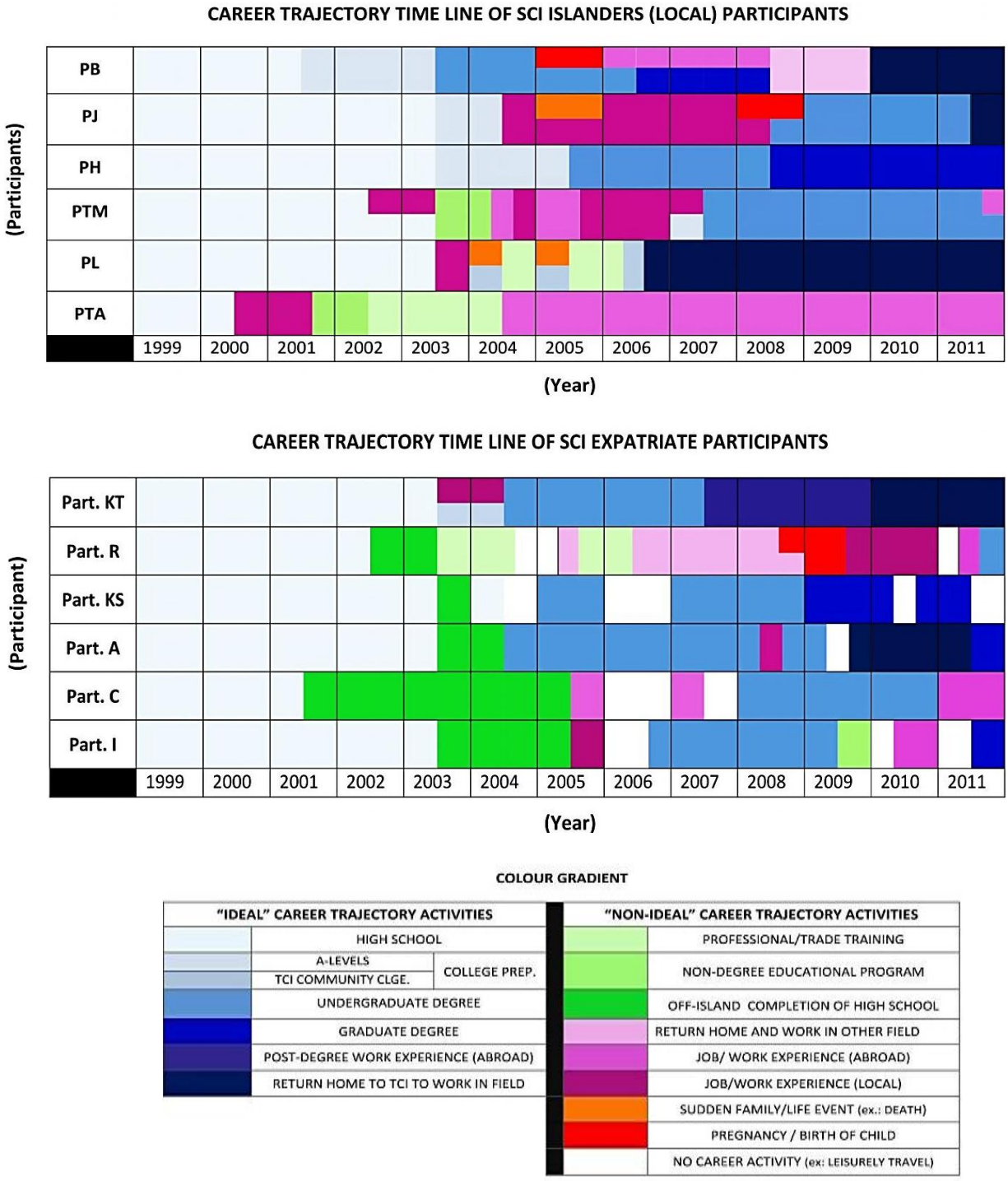
educational and occupational opportunities off-island. The "Non-Ideal" time line, therefore, was made up of indicators that illustrated unexpected and unplanned life events (such as the death of a family member or birth of a child/pregnancy). I posited that these events presented "barriers" or challenges to what I considered were "preferential" career activities. I defined a "preferential" or "ideal career trajectory" as a path that included graduating from high school, attending a degree-granting college program, participating in work internships or related experiential activities, and eventually returning home with a job related to the degree obtained. I colour-coded the "ideal" career trajectory activities in shades of blue, and identified the "non-ideal" trajectory activities using a gradient of other colours (i.e., green, purple, orange, red). The usefulness of using such colour gradients was that they provided an easy visual reference to career stories that reflected "ideal" activities or "ideal" pathways (indicated with a stream of blue shades) and also these colour gradients allowed me to visualize "non-ideal" deviations from the career development goals of both PSH and the SCI. A copy of the time lines showing the career trajectories of SCI expatriate students and local Islander students are provided in Figure 10.[20]

Analysis of the Time Lines

The basis I used for interpreting these time lines was that a fluid gradient of blues indicated an "ideal" unfolding career trajectory. That is, based on the philosophy of education at PSH (as reviewed in Chapter 1) which has continued to be encouraged by the school's administration today, a career trajectory free of barriers and challenges would involve seamless transitions from high school to university/college preparation, to an undergraduate degree, followed by either graduate school or a return to the individual's community for participation in the local job market, preferably in a position relevant to the field of study pursued by the individual during his or her tertiary education. My initial analysis of the time lines produced the following observations which I noted in a reflective memo recorded on May 28th, 2011 (shown on page 106).

[20] Note that I added an additional "non-ideal" activity for the time line of expatriate students— "no career activity." There were several gaps in the career stories shared by expatriate participants where they described spending time with friends and family in the SCI or leisurely traveling between the islands and foreign destinations.

Figure 10: Time Lines of "Ideal" and "Non-ideal" Career Trajectory Activities



1. *Except for local Islander participant PH and expatriate participant KT, all other participant career trajectories were interrupted by "non-ideal" activities.*
2. *Unlike their local Islander peers, 5 out of 6 expatriate participants had moments in their career trajectory where they did not participate in any career activities. For example, during these times of "no career activity" participants engaged in leisurely travel, spent time visiting family and friends in the SCI, were in transit, on a "break", or were considering or creating (i.e., applications) options between career activities.*
3. *At time of data analysis, less than half of the participants (5 out of 12) were residing in the SCI.*
4. *A general overview of participation in the job market, indicated by shades of purple in the colour blocking of career activities, local Islander participants entered the job market earlier than their expatriate peers. All but one expatriate participant left the SCI prior to the age of 18 to complete their secondary education off-island; evidently not participating in any college/university preparation on-island (such as the SCI Community College or A-level offerings at PSH).*

At this point in the inquiry process I connected what was emerging in the analysis of the time lines with the results generated through the categorization of data. I recorded these thoughts in a subsequent reflective memo shared below.

> *The colour blocking of "non-ideal" career activities illuminate the presence of barriers (or challenges) evident in almost all of the participants' career pathways. The coded data segments categorized as* ***"projecting"*** *and* ***"doing it for me"*** *include passages from all local Islander participants and all but two expatriate participants who discuss limitations associated with their "non-ideal" activities. In these passages participants describe how individual limitations (such as discouragement to pursue a particular career path, lack of support or guidance, etc.) and structural limitations (such as affordability of tertiary education, personal/familial responsibilities, etc.) interrupt their initial career goals and/or planning.*
>
> *The charting of "no career activity" appears to illuminate the* ***"going with the flow"*** *behaviour of participants during their various career pathways. More importantly the fact that only expatriate participants are afforded the opportunity to "take a break" and*

not actively pursue career activities during their trajectory points to a significant difference between the experiences of local Islanders and expats. Furthermore, a glance of both time lines highlights the evident differences in individual experiences while also isolating similar features among demographic groups, such as the noticeable "breaks" in expatriate pathways in comparison to local participant trajectories.

At first comparison, the career trajectory time line of SCI expatriate students appear to be more fragmented than the time line of local Islander participants. Perhaps the blocks of "no career activity" offsets what I perceive as the "ideal" trajectory. I'm not exactly sure how to explain this precisely but there appears to be more fluidity in the gradient of colours in the time lines of local participants despite the presence of purple, red, and orange non-ideal indicators. I interpret these observations as illuminating the off-island residency of participants (either for completion of secondary or tertiary education, participation in internships, exchange programs, or in the job market abroad) in combination with moments of "no career activity." This interpretation corroborates data segments categorized under ***"shifting."*** *Coded data segments describe leaving the islands, adjusting to new environments, returning 'home,' and considering and exploring opportunities in various geographic locations.*

*Four local participants and one expatriate participant refer to the SCI as "home" and express a desire to participate in the local job market, reside, and raise a family in the SCI. These interview passages were coded under "****giving back.****" Three of these participants (PB, PJ, and PKT) are working in their occupational fields in the SCI while participant "H" is currently completing graduate school with hopes to return to the SCI. The families of each of these participants continue to reside in the SCI as well.*
(Reflective Memo/May 31, 2011/Career Trajectory Timelines)

It was evident that much of this interpretive analysis was driven by my personal perceptions, assumptions, and experiences. To take note of my ontological and epistemological impact on the inquiry process, I reflected on my own career trajectory through memo writing. I also reflected on the typical career trajectories of students whom I have taught over the years at a Toronto suburban high school to attend further to researcher bias. During this reflective process, evident

differences in the career pathways of SCI emerging adults were confirmed in comparison to my own experiences and those of my former suburban students.

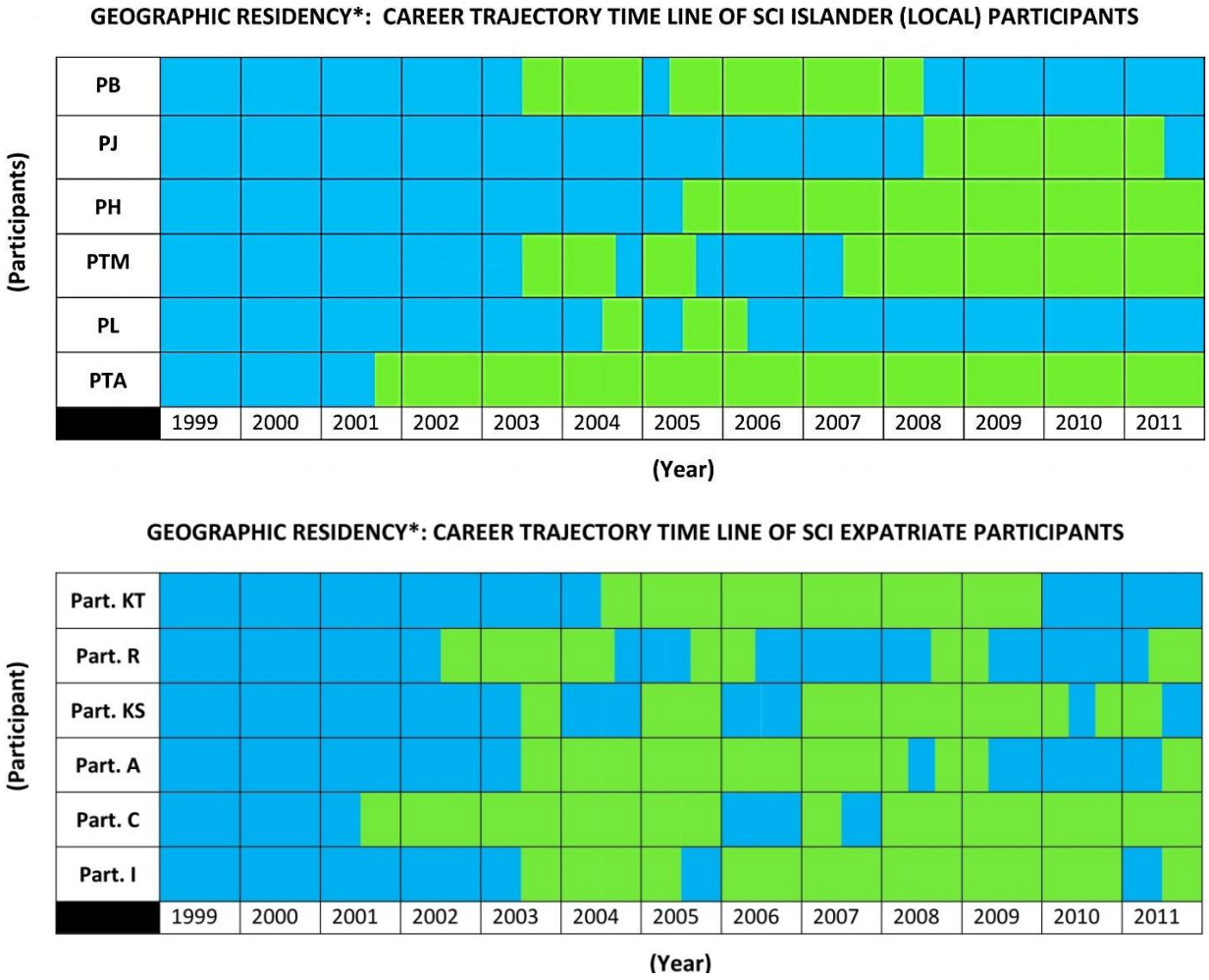
To validate these differences I referenced field notes and memos from conversations and interviews with emerging adults from my secondary data collection. The juxtaposing of both primary and secondary data validated the similarities in SCI career transitions and confirmed differences from my personal experiences. An excerpt from my reflections is shared in the following reflective memo:

> *…These time lines appear so different in comparison to my own career trajectory. In fact the time lines are so different from those of my previous students from MSS. The typical high school graduate heads off to college or university within the province of Ontario, and then returns after obtaining their diploma/degree to the city of Toronto or surrounding areas to work. While some leave home (perhaps a few hours' drive away) they do so post age 18. SCI students seem to leave home as early as 16 which is very young in my opinion. I suppose there are few choices on-island and better options off-island. When I think about my own career trajectory, when I left Ontario to attend university in Montreal at McGill, it was out of the ordinary. Out of my graduating class of over 250 students, only four of us ventured out of province and only one moved abroad to study in Scotland for medical school. Only a handful of students I've taught over the years have left Ontario for school; a few to the US on sports scholarships, a few to the Caribbean for (pre)medical school and, a few to other provinces. There is something very different in the career trajectories of the participants. The local participants seem to have a lot more challenges than the average high school graduate; death of a family member and parenthood was experienced by two participants before entering the professional workforce, and five out of six participants have worked before and during their studies—which is not as prevalent with the expat participants. Why are these time lines so fragmented in comparison to those I have seen with my former students in (Toronto) suburbia? What is driving the fragmentation (i.e., challenges) vs. the fluidity? Something is very different about the career pathways of SCI students than those I see occurring in suburban Toronto or Montreal.* (Reflective Memo/June 2, 2011/Residency Time Lines)

My reflective memos called attention to the apparent differences in career pathways but I believed the time lines could be streamlined further to allow for a more linear comparison of the

career trajectories. More specifically, I observed that the reflective memos relating the coded themes and time lines, as well as the memo noted above, focused on residency. That is, the fluidity and fragmentation in the colour gradients were not only associated with specific career activities but were also representative of whether participants were on-island or off-island pursuing educational and/or occupational activities. The revised time lines based on residency patterns are shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Geographic Residency Time Lines



RESIDENCY TIME LINE INDICATORS	
	ON-ISLAND
	OFF-ISLAND

*excludes temporary residency in the SCI during summer and other holiday break visits

Connecting Themes With the Idea of Mobility

The charting of the geographic residency patterns of participants over the course of their postsecondary career trajectory was a pivotal moment in the inquiry process. The gradient of blue (on-island) and green (off-island) gave an immediate and helpful visual overview that allowed me to understand the fragmentation and fluidity of career activities I had questioned earlier. Central to this understanding was the "movement of people across national borders" which I remembered as global migration (World Bank, 2011, p. 86). The residency time lines clearly show the location of participants during their trajectory, but also highlight the idea of mobility as necessary for pursuing postsecondary opportunities. Differences in expatriate and local time lines were also confirmed as the time line of SCI expats presented less fluidity in the gradient of residency patterns. Except for participant KT, other expatriate participants frequently move on and off-island. However, juxtaposing the residency time lines with the initial career activity time lines confirmed that mobility was not always associated with career activities. I decided to call this "flexible mobility" (or migration free of any specific push or pull factors). Since all expatriate participants have lived more than two thirds of their lives in the SCI, I found it important to associate their mobility within a Caribbean context. However, also it was important to acknowledge that they are not Caribbean by nationality or ethnicity, which consequently prompted further investigation into their behaviour.

I looked into the literatures to see if further understanding of the "flexible mobility" I was exploring could be found. The literature on "third-culture kids" (TCKs) (provided in Chapter Two, page 53) offered insight into the experiences of young people who straddle or shift between different geographic spaces and cultures. Interestingly, TCKs whose behaviour and experiences are those that shift like this have been called "global nomads," "transculturals," and "cultural hybrids." At first these descriptors first appeared to provide a possible explanation for the fragmented residency time lines, but they did not explain the social and cultural characteristics of expatriate participants when compared with those of TCKs. While the experiences TCKs include mobility and like the expatriate participants, a sense of home or place, TCKs are typically afforded privileges given to diplomatic, military, and missionary families which were not reflected in the lives of the expatriate participants contributing to this study. In addition, I was dissatisfied with the literature's relevance to local Islander participants. To understand what was

happening to the participants in my study, I realized that the TCK experiences recounted in the literature were not synonymous with what I was seeing here and that I had to probe more fully.

I will share how I continued to explore the idea of mobility (from the time lines) in connection with the five themes by revisiting the coded interview transcripts. The following reflective memos share my initial thoughts about what was emerging in my analyses of the data.

> *The expatriate students seem to be straddling between two countries—definite "shifting". From a geographic perspective there is something quite migratory occurring here. They seem somewhat nomadic. Except for KT the expats come and go, do this, do that—they appear to be "going with the flow" by either being indecisive or carefree with no clear idea of what they want to do, where they want to live, etc. TI (local) participants appear to return "home" (SCI) to work after leaving the island for school. Similar to Participants B, J, and L, Participants H and TM express their intentions of "giving back" and returning to the islands after they complete their education. They feel connected to their families and ideally want to raise their own families in the SCI and contribute to the development of the community. I imagine for Participants B and J, who are both fathers, it is even more important to be "home" and close to family. Perhaps this is why expatriate Participant R is so drawn to the SCI—she feels more connected to her son's father's family who are SCI local islanders and are less mobile than her own expatriate family who are scattered between the SCI and Canada.* (Reflective Memo/June 5, 2011/ Residency Time Lines)

> *I am juxtaposing the residency time lines and referencing the coded segments from the interview transcripts that are listed under "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow." I am hearing the participants discuss the various educational and occupational "options" they had but each independent option required them to leave the islands. Migration is inevitable for emerging adults in the SCI. Some leave as early as 15 years of age (which negates the original mission of PSH). Some choose to stay on at the Community College, complete their A-levels, or work to earn money. However, all of the participants, regardless of which postsecondary option they choose, must leave the islands eventually. After they leave, some come back and some continue living off-island. At times when they do return to the SCI during their charted trajectories, the time lines*

> *confirm that this is temporary; some stay for a few months, others for a year. But they do leave. Participants B, J, L, KT, and KS currently reside in the SCI. All of them have completed their educational studies. KS expresses her desire to leave again but is currently not financially independent to act against her family's wishes*. (Reflective Memo/June 5, 2011/Residency Time Lines)

As evident in my reflective memos, I was able to connect the themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow" with the idea of mobility but did not see how the themes of "projecting" and "doing it for me" connected to what had emerged through the analysis of the residency time lines. I decided to let these themes remain as outliers for the time being and synthesized my emerging understanding of the collective and highly mobile nature of participants' career stories in the following memo:

> *I am referencing the coded interview data while analyzing the residency time lines and am seeing that each career decision is related to migration. Participants consider leaving the islands and returning to the islands based on the relative and perceived financial, familial, emotional, and facilitated opportunity (i.e., ease of access, transition, and familiarity).Based on these considerations they then decide to physically come or go. Even with unplanned, serendipitous-like movements, participants' career decisions are connected to migratory considerations and migratory actions. These inform and underpin every career activity of both expatriate and local emerging adults, and ultimately drive their unfolding trajectories.* (Reflective Memo/June 8, 2011/ Residency Time Lines)

The residency time lines isolated and illuminated the idea of mobility that was lurking under the surface of the participants' career stories and that I was exploring in my reflective memos. Despite individual differences in educational and occupational decisions, each participant's time line contained a geographic component consisting of the need to move on and off-island to pursue educational and occupational opportunities.

Summary

In this chapter I provided a detailed account of the unfolding analysis of geographic residency time lines. By charting demographic survey data with interview data onto time lines, I

was able to depict visually the continually evolving career pathways of participants[21]. This process was lengthy but vital in deepening my understanding of the career decisions of emerging adults from the SCI. As a result of the careful analysis of the geographic residency time lines, the idea of mobility emerged. When I revisited the coded interview transcripts, as well as my ongoing reflective memos, I was able to connect the idea of mobility with the themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow." However, I was unable to find a connection with the themes of "projecting" and "doing it for me." Wishing to investigate these outliers further, I revisited the QDM of analytic options to see how I could contextualize the data. The emergent and flexible design of qualitative inquiry allowed me to access the arts-informed approach of collage work to corroborate the five emergent themes derived from coding the data and attend to the questions remaining from the data charted on residency time lines (i.e., the two outliers of "projecting" and "doing it for me"). The following chapter provides a detailed account of the usefulness of artful inquiry in contextualizing the data to arrive at a deeper, more nuanced understanding of participants' career stories.

[21] It is important to note that the career trajectory and residency timelines I have presented show the career activities of participants between 1999-2011. They do not include experiences that have since continued to unfold in more recent years following this study.

CHAPTER FIVE: COLLAGING THEMES, CONNECTING CONTEXTUAL FEATURES

The preceding chapter revealed how I revisited demographic survey data along with interview transcripts and portrayed them visually on geographic residency time lines to get an overview of participants' career pathways. The linear visual of the residency time lines confirmed the themes of "shifting," "giving back." and "going with the flow." Interestingly, they collectively reflected the idea of mobility as well. As descriptive and conceptual coding were used to delineate themes representative of participant career stories, time lines distilled the career activities of participants into a series of migratory considerations and actions and revealed how mobility is embedded in each educational and occupational opportunity and the subsequent decisions to pursue such options. The analysis of geographic residency time lines was a pivotal part of the unfolding inquiry, however I was still unable to account for the themes of "projecting" and "doing it for me." These two outliers provided the impetus to revisit the QDMs of analytical options referenced in Tables 3 and 6 in Chapter Three, and locate an approach that would probe further into the hidden dimensions and unidentified connections between the broader idea of mobility and the themes of "projecting" and "doing it for me."

As introduced in Chapter Three, I elected to engage in the arts-informed inquiry approach of collage work to visualize the outliers and perhaps gain additional insights into participants' career stories. During the process of engaging with collage work, I also turned to concept mapping to visually document the relational aspects emerging in the work. In this chapter I introduce the genre of arts-informed research and provide a detailed account of the collage work in this inquiry, as well as why I decided to use arts-informed work as an analytic tool, and how it was used to unravel further the complexity of the participants' career stories.

Why Artful Inquiry?

> *The creative process of arts-informed research is defined by an openness to the expansive possibilities of the human imagination.* (Cole & Knowles, 2008, p. 61)

Through the work of Elliot Eisner and Thomas Barone (Barone, 2006; Eisner, 1981, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997; Eisner & Barone, 1997) arts-based and arts-informed inquiry methodologies emerged in the 1990s and since have been developed through the efforts of a diverse community of researchers from various disciplines (such as education, social work,

sociology, nursing, anthropology, etcetera). As mentioned in Chapter Three, Cole and Knowles (2008) have added to the range of interpretation and practice put forth by Eisner and Barone (1997) by distinguishing "arts-informed" research from "arts-based" research. Departing from the greater creative commitment reflective of arts-based research, "arts-informed research is defined by an openness to the expansive possibilities of the human imagination" (Knowles & Cole, 2008, p. 61).

> Rather than adhering to a set of rigid guidelines for gathering and working with research materials, a research using arts-informed methodology follows a more natural process of engagement relying on commonsense decision making, intuition, and a general responsiveness to the natural flow of events and experiences. Serendipity plays a key role in the inquiry process much as it does in life. (p. 61)

The essence of the distinction between arts-based and arts-informed research rests on where art enters the research process (de Mello, 2007). Arts-*based* research is focused on the arts where art making is part, or all, of the data collection process. Arts-*informed* research isn't necessarily focused on the arts but brings art to bear on already collected data, "reflecting instead a researcher who has been inspired by a work of art, arts methods, or a body of work to attempt to represent their research" (Rolling, 2010, p. 105), and thus having "strong reflexive elements that evidence the presence and signature of the researcher" (Knowles & Cole, 2008, p. 61). While there are several interpretations and practices of using the arts in educational research, I have opted to use the term "arts-informed" research to reflect the work I have engaged in during this inquiry. Arts-informed work "draws from the creative arts to inform and shape social science research in interdisciplinary ways, thus redefining methodological vehicles in the field of education" (Sinner, Leggo, Irwin, Gouzouasis, & Gaur, 2006, p. 1226).

While the traditional researcher is concerned with answering questions, the arts-informed researcher hopes to generate new questions by deconstructing and re-constructing understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Diamond & Mullen, 1999). Reflecting a postmodern way of thinking, the intentions and applications of arts-informed research approaches challenge claims of "truth" and "knowledge" which reduce human experiences and activities to linear and definitive processes, and claims that articulate activities with absolute certainty. This change in attitudes towards "claims of truth" recognizes the contingent, contextual, and constantly shifting and evolving process of discovering the reality of social life and generating knowledge in social

science inquiry. By experimenting with arts-informed research texts, the researcher hopes to facilitate learning, further discovery, and cultivate an understanding of phenomena, thus achieving "the heuristic purposes of enhancing perspectives and raising important educational questions in the minds of readers" (Barone & Eisner, 2006, pp. 96-97).

Practices of art-informed research offer multidimensional, alternative, and creative processes and tools that move beyond traditional text-based research activities often applied to data collection, analysis, interpretation, and representation. As a creative inquiry process, arts-informed approaches offers researchers ways in which to make sense of difficult and complex questions that are not easily answered in linear telling, revealing tacit knowledge and making visible the knowledge and meaning construction that often is not as easily communicated in traditional forms of texts (Pink, 2006; Sinner et al., 2006). Without any formal training or previous engagement in art making I chose to engage in arts-informed research because of the possibilities artful practices provide for interpreting and representing "the richness and complexity of human experience" (Knowles & Cole, 2008, p. 32). These creative processes encourage the expression of multiple truths and evoke embodied and more nuanced understandings of human phenomena. Also, there are elements of freedom and imagination that art induces that engenders more intuitive interpretations. Those engaged in projects that aspire to "describe, explore, or discover" can rely on arts-informed research practices for their ability to delineate processes and reflection, elicit memories, generate discussion, communicate aspects of social life, and create critical awareness on important issues (Leavy, 2009). From her review of art genres and research, Finley (2008) describes the more significant features of using artful approaches to research which reflect the evident value of arts-informed practices. These include (1) making use of the affective senses of experiences, drawing on emotions, imagination, and intellect to understand and respond to the world; (2) providing the researcher with the "interpretive license…to create meaning from experience" (p. 72); (3) offering a creative license to researchers to make important decisions about what artful ways will best represent the research; and (4) providing "dialogic spaces" that reveal tensions and criticism in the academic community, in social science research, and about social constructions and social life (p. 72). In turning to artful inquiry for this study, I was drawn to Finley's description of involving the senses and imagination.

Up to the point of choosing to engage with the arts in this study, I felt as though I had exhausted the intellectual and responsive features of sifting through the data and making important decisions about categories. As I became frustrated with trying to find ways to account for the outliers of "projecting" and "doing it for me" I recalled Barone and Eisner's (2006) suggestion that artful inquiry has an "illuminating effect – its ability to reveal what had not been noticed" (p. 102). With an affinity to all things visual, and inspired by the work of Davis (2008), MacKenzie and Wolf (2012), Markus (2007), and Promislow (2005) who have relied upon arts-informed research approaches in their own research fields, I turned to collage work with confidence and anticipation of what could be understood further and illuminated in the data.

Flip, Snip, Feel, and Glue: Engaging in Collage Work

As an artful and holistic interpretive tool, one way collages are created is by "cutting and sticking image fragments from popular print/magazines onto cardstock" (Butler-Kisber, 2008, p. 265). In the making of a collage, multiple images are pulled together on a single canvas intuitively, spontaneously, and serendipitously—inherently using metaphors (implicit comparisons), metonymies (replacive relationships), and challenging "the dichotomy of the intellect and the sense" (Irwin, as cited in Butler-Kisber, 2008, p. 268). Collages offer profound ways to evoke sensory and embodied responses, and provide ways of expressing ideas that are more difficult to articulate in traditional text. As the artist creates a collage she forgoes "conscious control over what is being presented which contributes to greater levels of expression, and in turn greater areas for examination and subsequent clarification" (Williams, as cited in Butler-Kisber, 2008, p. 268).

I was first introduced to collage in a summer 2006 session of a graduate research *Interpretive Inquiry* course at McGill University, instructed by my thesis supervisor (Butler-Kisber, 2008, 2010). Using collage in inquiry as a reflective process and as a form of elicitation, we were instructed and encouraged to apply collage work to thinking about our own research projects. As a reflective process, the researcher begins her collage work by focusing on a specific question or dilemma, or phenomenon, and then chooses images that metaphorically reflect aspects of her thinking.

> Then operating intuitively, she creates a collage producing a visual composition with the selected fragments. This collage process breaks away from the linearity of written

> thoughts by working first from feelings about something to the ideas they evoke, instead of the reverse. The resulting visual juxtapositions frequently reveal new connections and understandings that have previously remained tacit (Butler-Kisber, 2007, 2008; Davis & Butler-Kisber, 1999). (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010, p. 3)

As a form of elicitation, collage acts in much of the same way that free writing does in literary circles, eliciting and allowing "inner and unconscious thoughts to bubble to the surface" (p. 4). When using collage as an elicitation approach, the researcher may choose to collage major themes that have emerged from their field work, data collection, or analysis. The resulting visuals often help to bring forth a sort of "visual vocabulary" (i.e., words used to articulate, elaborate, and discuss interpretations), as well as elicit ideas that may remain elusive prior to engaging in the process and exercise of collage work (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010).

> Whatever the original intention or idea of the collagist may be, the multiple levels of processing frequently assure that the result will be made "strange," opening up the possibility for the emergence of tacitly or intuitively known content and the appearance of unexpected new associations (Davis & Butler-Kisber, 1999, p.5). (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 107)

As mentioned earlier, after the analysis of the career trajectory time lines accounted for the themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow," I sought another visual approach that might help me understand and account for the two remaining outliers ("projecting" and "doing it for me") and produce additional insights about the career stories I was exploring. Accordingly, I chose to engage in collage work as a reflective process by creating five collages reflecting each of the five themes that had emerged through constant comparison analysis (i.e., "shifting," "giving back," "going with the flow," "projecting," and "doing it for me").

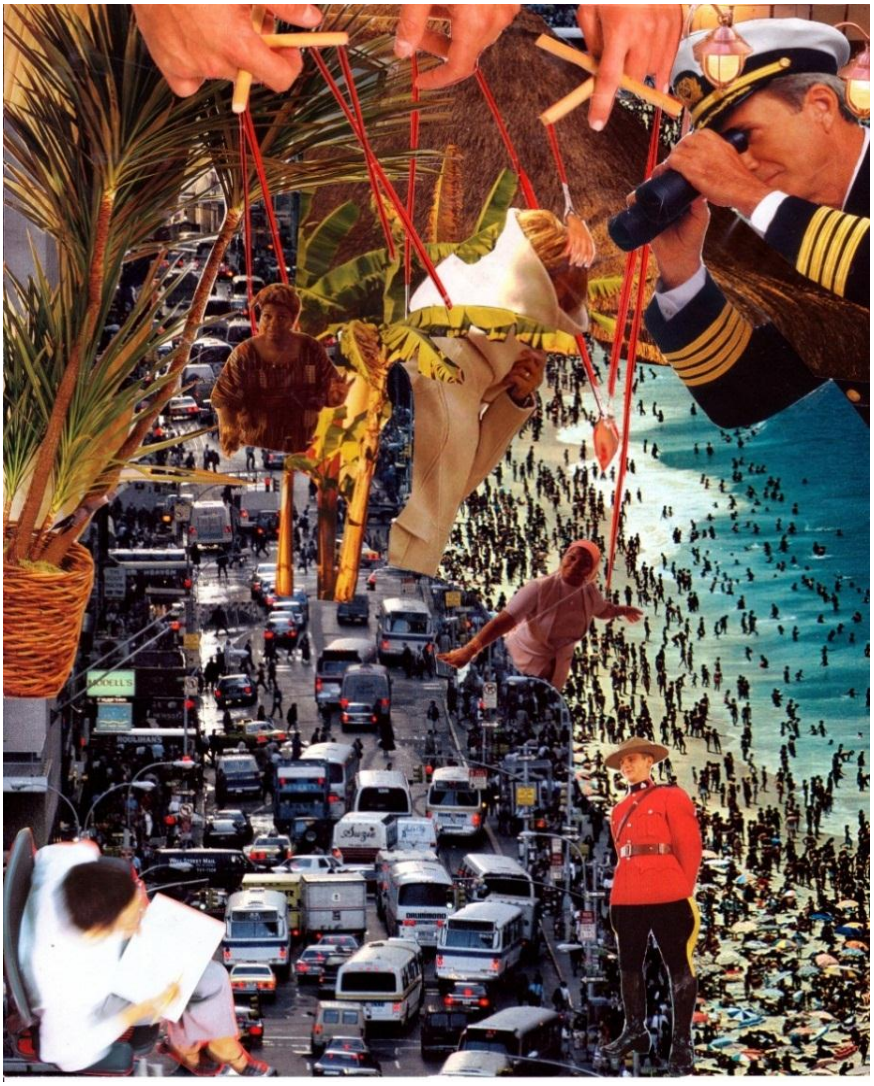
I began my collage process by rummaging through piles of magazines, tearing out images that appeared to resonate with each of the themes in focus. Next I snipped and reviewed the carefully cut-out images, arranged and rearranged the images onto 8x10-inch cardstock, and glued them down to create five collages. My technique for engaging in the collage work followed the work of Davis (2008b) who honours the value of unplanned composition created from a fusion of shattered fragments. She suggests that as "scraps, details, and hints intrude from the periphery, both literally and figuratively" in collage work, meaning is created "accidently,

capriciously, provocatively, [and] tangentially" (p. 250). Ethnographer, Pink (2007), also attests to the significance images have on understanding relationships, environments, and complex of human experiences.

> Images…are inextricably interwoven with our personal identities, narratives, lifestyles, cultures and societies, as well as with definitions of history, space and truth. Ethnographic research is likewise intertwined with visual images and metaphors. When ethnographers produce photographs or video, these visual texts, as well as the experience of producing and discussing them, become part of their ethnographic knowledge. Just as images inspire conversations, conversation may invoke images; conversation visualizes and draws absent printed or electronic images into its narratives through verbal descriptions and references to them. In ethnography images are as inevitable as sounds, smells, textures and tastes, words or any other aspect of culture and society. (p. 21)

Eisner (1997) suggests that arts-informed research can "increase the variety of questions we can ask" (p. 8) and that "the probability [of] multiple perspectives will emerge" (as cited in Promislow, 2005, p. 47). The collages raised my intuitive thinking to a conscious level and produced a sort of "visual vocabulary" from which I was able to find the words to title each collage and create textual notes of inchoate metaphorical and symbolic interpretations. The process of collecting and arranging the images, and later recording more complex and explicit interpretations of the completed compositions allowed me to do this (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2009; Promislow, 2005). Examples and descriptions of each collage are offered in Figures 12 – 16.

Figure 12: Collage on Shifting: *Blur*



Thinking about the idea of "shifting" as it relates to the participants in my study and an over-arching theme in career pathways of emerging adults from SCIs, I selected images that seem to "feel" as much as particular words and passages repetitively used during interviews: "family," "Mom," "home," "coming back," "going home," "not sure," "people I knew," "work," "need a job," "money," "people here," "stripped of culture," "what I want," "commit," and "accepting." To me the images in the collage represent "blurs"— a blur between city and island, a blur between wants and needs, a blur between who and what is family, a blur between who controls what, who makes the decision(s). The Canadian Mountie vs. the Islander Woman—a blur; the puppeteer's hands maneuvering things and people – a blur; the captain looking through binoculars, focusing to rid the blur; the almost seamless transition between traffic and a busy beachfront—a blur; and the woman dressed in a white coat, in the centre of the collage, constantly shifting and moving between one world to the next—a blur. The collective use of the images resonates with a sense of both tension and curiosity about the various locales and a woman in the centre unsure of her place and the direction to explore. Blur.

Figure 13: Collage on Giving Back: *Patriotic Growth*

When I reflect on the theme of "giving back," each of the participants spoke about patriotism (or a strong tie and/or allegiance to the SCI) in one way or another. Some spoke about their relationship with the islands through ancestry and the contributions their elders have made. Others placed the SCI among other destinations they feel connected to and consider "home." With the coded excerpts under "giving back" in mind I flipped through magazines and was drawn to earthy elements such as the bird's nest in the bottom right corner, soil and flower buds in the bottom and middle left; these represent beginnings and a foundation for being. I snipped images of trees, eggs, pearls, and the ocean. As I arranged the images together I returned to the magazines and snipped images of hands. While arranging and layering the images onto the cardstock I imagined a community and the role of an individual in contributing to its growth and prosperity. The individual is a vital component—growing, learning, absorbing, reflecting, and perhaps contributing. The eggs symbolize protection (eggshell) and familiarity yet also opportunity to emerge and contribute. The pearls embody the richness and presence of opportunity. The map of the Caribbean is "home" and community. And the hands, supporting, clasping onto others, entwined and linked with the natural elements represent the necessary grounding and impetus for sustainability; where individuals are connected with their community, are compelled to give back and contribute vibrancy (the yellow material), and connect with others to build strength in the network. The result is patriotic growth.

Figure 14: Collage on Going with the Flow: *Serendipity*

There is something almost magical and creative about unplanned experiences. Lending one to serendipitous moments brings about unimaginable consequences, or consequences for which one is ill prepared. One needs to have faith and flexibility, and perhaps a little bit of luck to dance around life without any plans or worries. For some of the participants, this is how they described their career trajectory—an evolving set of serendipitous experiences. The butterflies in the collage represent the resulting metamorphosis and freedom inherent in "going with the flow." The thrown paint and vibrant colours reflect chance, inventiveness, and resourcefulness in creating and seizing opportunities. The carefree dancer is peaceful and graceful without restraint, fear, or worry. Wouldn't it be lovely to sit in a café all day, reading your favourite book or passing the time with friends? Will our intentions and work enable us to wear whatever hat we desire? Can we really do and be anything we want? Perhaps we should cross our fingers and hope for the best. Through an open door there is a train station where a woman awaits to head in any direction. An American passport looms above. An obstacle for some, a license to move effortlessly across borders for others. Serendipity may be a privilege few are afforded; availing opportunity and limiting possibilities. Serendipity may be a distraction; a detour off path and a distraction from persevering with purpose.

Figure 15: Collage on Projecting: *Surveillance*

Surveillance of our environment—the landscape, people, and activities around us, offers us an awareness of where we can and should be. As we observe our environment we see others and ourselves through new lenses, we see opportunities and restrictions, and we see differences between us and them. This awareness can be both limiting and motivating. As participants share their career stories they seem to ascribe approval and criticism about their decisions to the outside world. The woman staring out of the window in the top left corner is looking outwards; a convenient view rather than assessing the scene in the window reflecting the uncertainty of leaving the turquoise tranquil of the Caribbean waters. The woman in the bottom left frames her desires and hopes. Will it or she fit? The eyes in the top right corner seek justification, reasoning, and opportunity. The figure emerging from the bottom right holds up a measuring tape—what shall become of me on the road ahead? If we compare riches, shouldn't we also compare faults? The Caribbean woman smiles as her head is embraced by another's hands. The woman at the end of the road is fearful or perhaps humbled by the redirection of criticism, impulse, discomfort, and convenient awareness. Are obstacles, worries, mistakes, and differences obliterated when we project and avoid the discomfort of consciously admitting our personal contributions to the absence or presence of opportunity? The collectivity of images in this collage point to the ease of an outward glance and the challenge of inward surveillance.

Figure 16: Collage on Doing It for Me: *Waiting for the Rose*

As I intuitively collected relational images from magazines, I found myself drawn to images of locks, doors, and boxes. When I reviewed the extracted images there was a uniform darkness as the images lacked the colourful vibrancy that I had been drawn to in previous collage work. Black, white, and tones of grey and brown were evident in almost all of the images. As I started layering and moving images around onto the cardstock I was drawn to placing a red image emerging from the concrete. Although not initially a rose, the red image reminded me of Duncan-Andrade's (2009) reference to hip-hop artist Tupac Shakur's "*The r*ose *that grew from concrete.*" The reference speaks about cultivating hope, engaging young people with pride in their histories, cultures, and communities, and raising the collective commitment of students and educators to growth healthier communities. That is, hope generates possibility. "Doing it for me" articulates a sense of entitlement which harvests blame and resentment within people. It pollutes hope. Entitlement inhibits a person's sense of urgency to contribute to his or her own success. It removes from the individual the responsibility of contributing to the growth of his or her community. I continued to layer a lock, keys, and an image of a cracked surface to reflect the waiting for others to make the roses grow. In the bottom left is an image of young Black boys staring up at a plane in the air … possibilities. In contrast, an image of a young White woman carefully treading the concrete turf, shaded by an umbrella and with a suitcase and money by her feet, oblivious of her material fortunes. The money being deposited in the suitcase is reflective of the expected material contributions of others while the emerging hands from the cracked concrete offer nutrients to the starved landscape.

Engaging Others in the Analysis of Collage Work

It is important to emphasize that the collages I created were reflections of my own interpretation of participants' career stories (Jongeward, 1997). Having acknowledged this, I decided to engage others to respond to my work to expand my interpretations about the collages. I did this by engaging several colleagues enrolled in the 2011 summer session *Interpretive Inquiry* course at McGill University (EDEC707) in the Markus Approach; an approach I had found useful in the past (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 105-107). As I have shared in Chapter Three, the Markus Approach invites blind feedback/reflection by showing the collages to others without revealing information about the theme, title, or purpose of the collage. Then viewers are invited to share their impressions and interpretations of each collage by jotting down two or three adjectives on post-it notes and attaching them to the back of the collage. Next, the adjectives are shared aloud with the group of viewers along with the original title and description. Something quite illuminating can happen at this point as sometimes the adjectives echo the intentions of the researcher and validate the work, and sometimes the responses highlight aspects that were unexpected and unintended; bringing about new meaning and thus underscoring "the ambiguities and multiple interpretations that are inherent in visual work" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 105).

The Markus Approach process was a poignant moment in my analysis of participants' career stories. The external responses to the five collages validated the idea of mobility that I had uncovered through the residency time lines. For example, some of the common responses to the collages reflective of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow" included the following descriptors: *community, navigation, exploration, gamble/risk, complex, fluidity, change, passage, searching, and breaking free / carefree.* The responses from my colleagues also introduced new ideas and descriptors which deviated from my own descriptions of the collages reflective of "projecting" and "doing it for me." To attend more closely to these new ideas it was important at this point of the analytic process for me to clarify my thoughts. I recalled an article in which Butler-Kisber and Poldma (2010) investigated how concept mapping can be a useful visual approach for informing qualitative work. Accordingly, I turned to concept mapping using the adjectives that viewers shared during the Markus Approach to try and see connections among the descriptors, articulate relationships, and "rebuild rational, analytic ideas into a new visual form" (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010, p. 13). While I had not previously explored the use of concept

mapping with collage work, Butler-Kisber and Poldma's (2010) article suggested that it could be a useful tool in qualitative analysis.

> Concept mapping allows the researcher to step away for the moment from the textual analysis, and visually document the relations between the interpretations of voices or relational concepts emerging, and to develop diagrams, matrices, or groupings of ideas that demonstrate the links among these concepts. The resulting schematic provides a means to express the relational aspects of the emergent progression of messy thoughts, transferring the written word to the visual word and conceptual idea. When the diagrams are developed, the researcher then can return to the writing and use the diagrams to organize the concepts that have surfaced. (p. 13)

The ways in which fragments of images are pulled together and portrayed in collage work create ambiguity by evoking alternative intellectual and affective responses. Alternatively, concept mapping provides the researcher with visual graphic tools to reduce ambiguity by moving from written analytic text to visual and relational dimensions and back again (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010, p. 6).

I began visually organizing the descriptors of the collages reflecting the two outliers by jotting down the adjectives shared by viewers through the Markus Approach, and linking relational ideas as they emerged. While mapping these ideas I continued to flush out emerging concepts by exploring the dynamic interplay between descriptors. Surprisingly, the visual restructuring of adjectives (shown in Figure 17) illuminated four contextual features: birthright, autonomy, network, and finances. Figures 17 and 18 provide show the schematic representation and the unfolding process of grouping text, exploring relationships, and distilling themes using a series of symbols and drawn shapes. As I thought further about these features, I began to see the relationship they had to mobility because they were either barriers and/or enablers in the participants' ability to engage in mobility. At this pivotal moment, I was able to see how all five themes were connected to the idea of mobility.

Figure 17: Formalizing Initial Hand-Drawn Concept Map

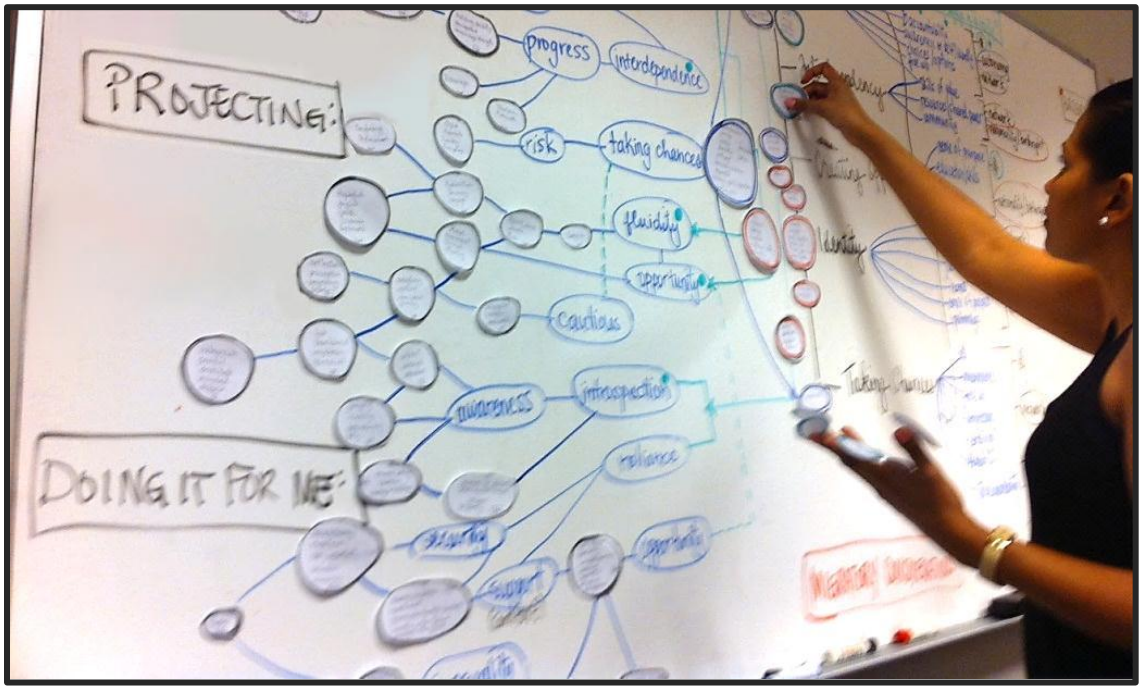
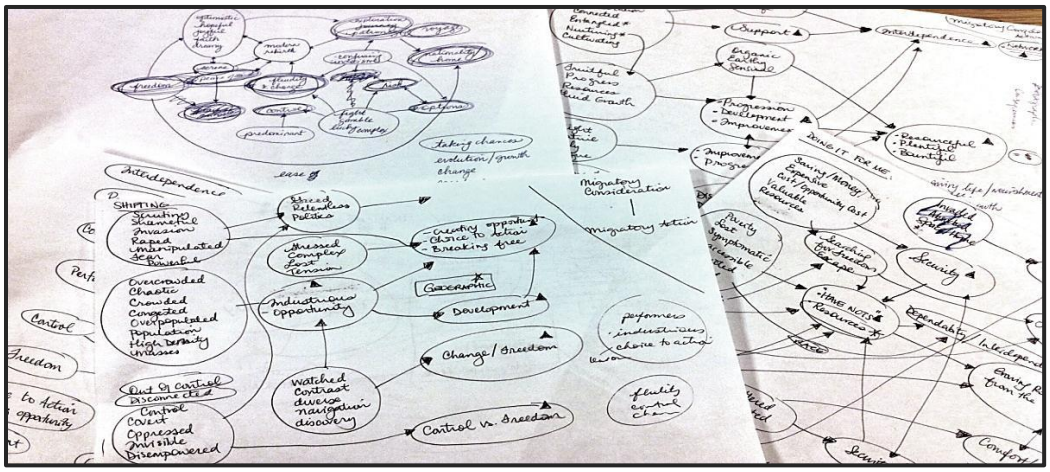


Figure 18: Refined Hand-Drawn Concept Map

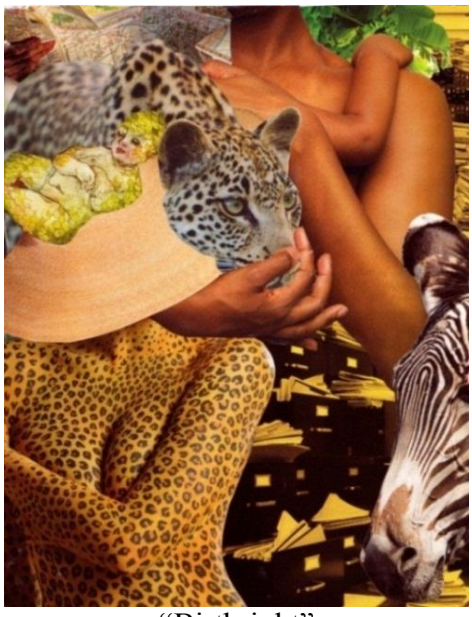


Confirming and Connecting Contextual Features

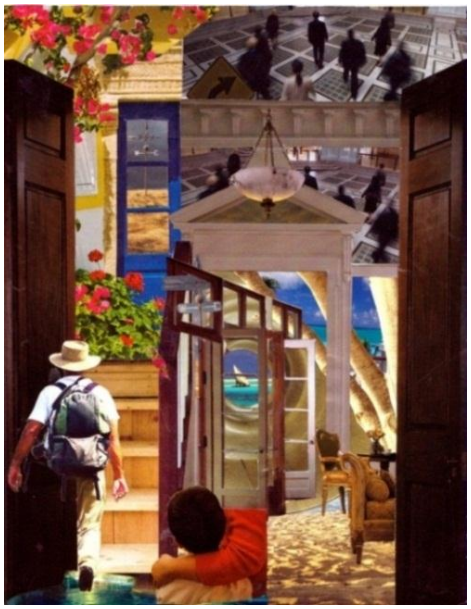
To explore further each of the five contextual features uncovered through the concept mapping of the responses elicited from the Markus Approach (Butler-Kisber, 2008, 2010), I returned to artful analysis. I chose to engage in collage work as a form of elicitation, hoping that the process would help me look more closely at "birthright," "autonomy," "networks," and

"finances." Also, I hoped that the process would elicit a "visual vocabulary" that would assist me in articulating the connection between the contextual features and the idea of mobility within participants' career stories. The same process in creating, titling, and describing each collage was used as described earlier. Figure 19 shows the resulting four collages representative of each of the four contextual features.

Figure 19: Collages of the Four Contextual Features



"Birthright"



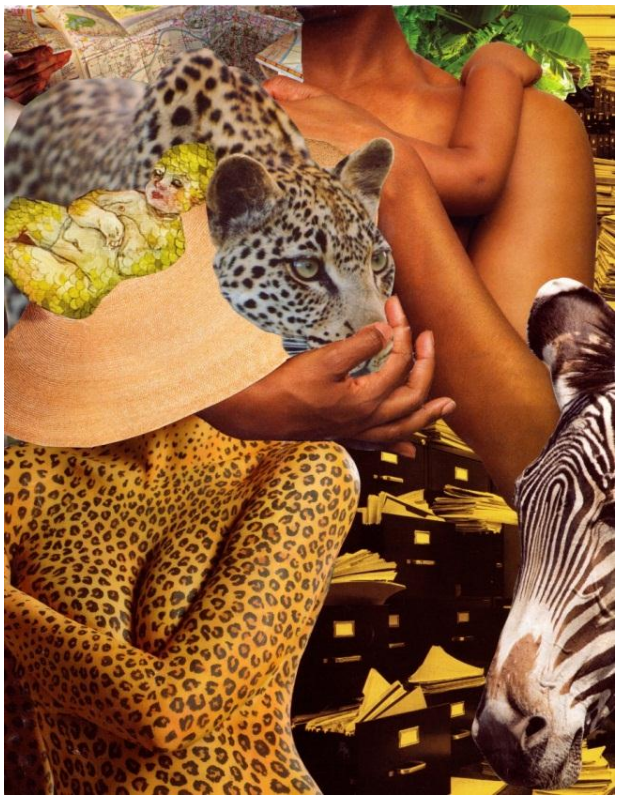
"Autonomy"

"Networks"

"Finances"

As I reviewed each collage, I was able to extract the most salient aspects of each contextual feature and how these related to the idea of mobility. I articulated these salient aspects by writing a descriptive paragraph for each collage. An example of these brewing relations to the collage on "birthright" is shared in Figure 20.

Figure 20: Collage on Birthright: *Convenient Chameleon*



This collage was created with the emerging idea of birthright and nationality in mind. I was drawn to photos of animals as I tore out pages from magazines, as well as pictures of crowds and varying landscapes. Many images were discarded, however those that remain illuminate the significance of birthright and nationality on the career decisions and experiences of emerging adults in a SCI. The images of the filing cabinets overflowing with files reflect the bureaucracy around nationality and status that many of the participants spoke about in their interviews. Whether one's parents are local Islanders or one has acquired local status may appear to equate to equal SCI status, however reality proves otherwise. Permanent resident card (PRC) holders, expatriates, and migrant workers struggle with the politicization of SCI status and are consequently required to navigate social and business communities carefully. The black and white stripes of the zebra illuminate that race does matter. The embrace of child and parent suggests confidence in maternal/paternal patriotism however this too is political and significant in the career trajectories of the participants. The camouflage of the leopard-painted body and hidden face represent the straddling between and perhaps struggling for, identity; searching for the more appropriate answer to "where are you from?" For those who are able to name themselves with the conveniently appropriate identity, there is instant access to the social and business community of choice—this is reflected in the stealth and authority of the leopard. Finally, a map in the top left-hand corner is a metaphor for the navigation of self and the importance birthright and nationality play in establishing one's way and place on the island. Access to resources may be limited or in excess depending on identity reflected in "status."

Once again, I engaged others in the Markus Approach to get validation or new perspectives. Next, I applied concept mapping to organize the adjectives that were elicited using the same process. Again these descriptors resonated with how in the interviews, participants had described and rationalized their postsecondary career decisions. Interestingly, the gamut of descriptors shared by colleagues also echoed the initial descriptions I had recorded for each collage, and offered a vocabulary from which I could articulate how the four contextual features served to support and/or limit participants' mobility. My analysis of the collage work helped me to synthesize "birthright" as encompassing identity, ethnicity and nationality; "autonomy" as reflecting a sense of independence (self-sufficiency), consciousness of responsibilities (self-awareness), and a sense of potential and capability (self-efficacy); "networks" that were embedded in personal, political, institutional, and community relationships; and "finances" were a means of accessing economic resources. To validate the relationship between the four contextual features and the idea of mobility I referred back to the interview segments that had been coded as "projecting" and "doing it for me." I used this opportunity to see the data through a new lens and juxtaposed how participants described the contextual features of "birthright," "autonomy," "networks," and "finances" as empowering and/or disempowering aspects of their capacity to engage in career activities; namely "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow."

It was through these artful approaches (collage work and concept mapping) that I was able to find the words to articulate how each contextual feature contributes (or not) to participants' ability to engage in mobility in the pursuit of educational and occupational opportunities. Below I share an example of how excerpts from primary data confirmed the connection between four contextual features and the idea of mobility. More specifically, I share how Participant KS illuminated the relationship between "birthright" and "finances" with her decision to migrate on and off-island.

The story of Participant KS

The absence of financial constraints and the support of her parents permitted Participant KS to engage in planned and unexpected mobility following her high school graduation. Over a three-year period she traveled back and forth between the United States, the SCI, and the United Kingdom. I categorized these moments along her career trajectory as either "shifting" or "going with the flow." Participant KS explained her desire to leave the SCI and pursue postsecondary

studies in an Afro-centric college in the United States. She recalls a yearning to connect with her ethnicity immediately after completing high school at PSH.

> *I wanted to experience what it's like to be more in an African American community because…growing up in* [PSH], *I didn't think I got that experience of being, of learning more about my history from there ...* [sighs] *we had British teachers, you know, it just wasn't the right thing at that time, it just didn't feel like we were learning about our culture.* (PKS/F/May10/141-149)

> *I was looking forward to the idea of exploring everywhere other than* [home] *I guess. And I guess because I had been in the US* [referring to the United States] *as well, I felt more at home, not at home, but I felt more comfortable there* [referring to the States] *than here* [referring to the SCI]. (PKS/F/May10/287)

Participant KS identified "birthright" as the impetus for leaving the SCI to learn more about her ethnicity; a community and heritage from which she felt disconnected after spending several years at PSH where all but one of her teachers were white expatriates. She clearly attributed her desire to migrate off-island (i.e., "shifting") with the lack of Black teachers at her high school (i.e., "birthright"). I coded her explanation for leaving the island to explore this connection with her ethnicity as "projecting."

After her freshman year in the United States Participant KS made the rather impromptu decision to return home (i.e., "going with the flow"). She expressed feeling overwhelmed with the intensity of Black hurrah during her freshman year and found the historically Black university to be academically unchallenging and socially overwhelming.

> *…having grown up with a bi-racial Mum it's always very strange to you to be drawn into a setting where everyone is so pro-Black, if that makes sense. And for me it was just overwhelming, and I found that was another factor that played out in me deciding to leave.* (PKS/F/May10/295)

Despite being a racially Black expatriate living in a SCI, Participant KS identified feelings of being an "outsider" and feeling disconnected from her heritage. I interpreted her responses as reflecting the contextual feature of "birthright" which provided the impetus for her mobility; and

I concluded that her movement on and off-island without any barriers was facilitated by the "finances" provided by her parents.

Summary

In the previous chapter I uncovered through the analysis of residency time lines that the exploration and pursuit of educational and occupational opportunities is strongly associated with the idea of mobility, characterized with frequent migration on and off-island. The analysis of data described in this chapter offers insight into the contextual features contributing to participants' career decisions. More specifically, this chapter has shown how artful inquiry can illuminate hidden dimensions and previously unidentified connections in the data. By explicitly describing the process of creating and analyzing the visual characteristics of collages I have shared how collage work helped to connect the two themes of "projecting" and "doing it for me" (which remained as outliers from my analysis of the participants' residency time lines). The collage work provided a springboard for interpreting and articulating important aspects of the data which I had not uncovered in my constant comparison analysis. Also, the images produced a "visual vocabulary" which provided me with a contextualized way of generating more depth and breadth in my understanding of the participants' career stories.

The application of the Markus Approach and concept mapping proved to be beneficial in eliciting other perspectives, organizing reflective responses, and documenting the progression of meaning-making. I believe the analytics of the collage work not only illuminated the contextual features of birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances from the themes of "projecting" and "doing it for me," but also connected these features with the idea of mobility that had emerged when I produced the residency time lines. I was able to demonstrate that participants described and rationalized their capacity to explore and pursue educational and occupational opportunities (i.e., career decisions) in relation to the presence and/or absence of these contextual features.

The following chapter explores the participants' career stories with the understanding that the career decisions of emerging adults from a SCI are inherently connected to the idea of mobility which is facilitated by four contextual features (i.e., birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances). The idea of mobility is representative of the way in which participants engage in "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow." I have described how the four contextual features that emerged in my artful analyses facilitate (and/or hinder) the ability of the participants

to engage in on and off-island mobility. These four contextual features indicate how participants ascribe their access to opportunities ("projecting"), and articulate their expectations of what is entitled or deserved to the individual by others ("doing it for me").

CHAPTER SIX: CONTEXTUAL FEATURES AND THE CONNECTION WITH MOBILITY

This chapter explores the career stories of participants by connecting the idea of mobility with the four contextual features explored in the preceding chapter. According to the various analytic approaches used to examine the career stories of the twelve participants interviewed for this study, participants described and rationalized their postsecondary career choices and experiences. Mobility emerged as an essential factor in their exploration and pursuit of educational and occupational opportunities. The five themes of "shifting," "giving back," "going with the flow," "projecting," and "doing it for me" highlighted that the career trajectories involved on and off-island mobility to various geographic locations, namely the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and other Caribbean islands. The participants also described and rationalized their capacity to engage in mobility in relation to the presence and/or absence of four contextual features that had an impact on their postsecondary career choices and experiences. These features included: birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances. As described in Chapter Five, the thematic coding of interview data using a constant comparison approach, as well as the visual analysis of charted career pathways and collage work, revealed an important connection between these contextual features and mobility. In this chapter I use excerpts from the data to corroborate this connection.

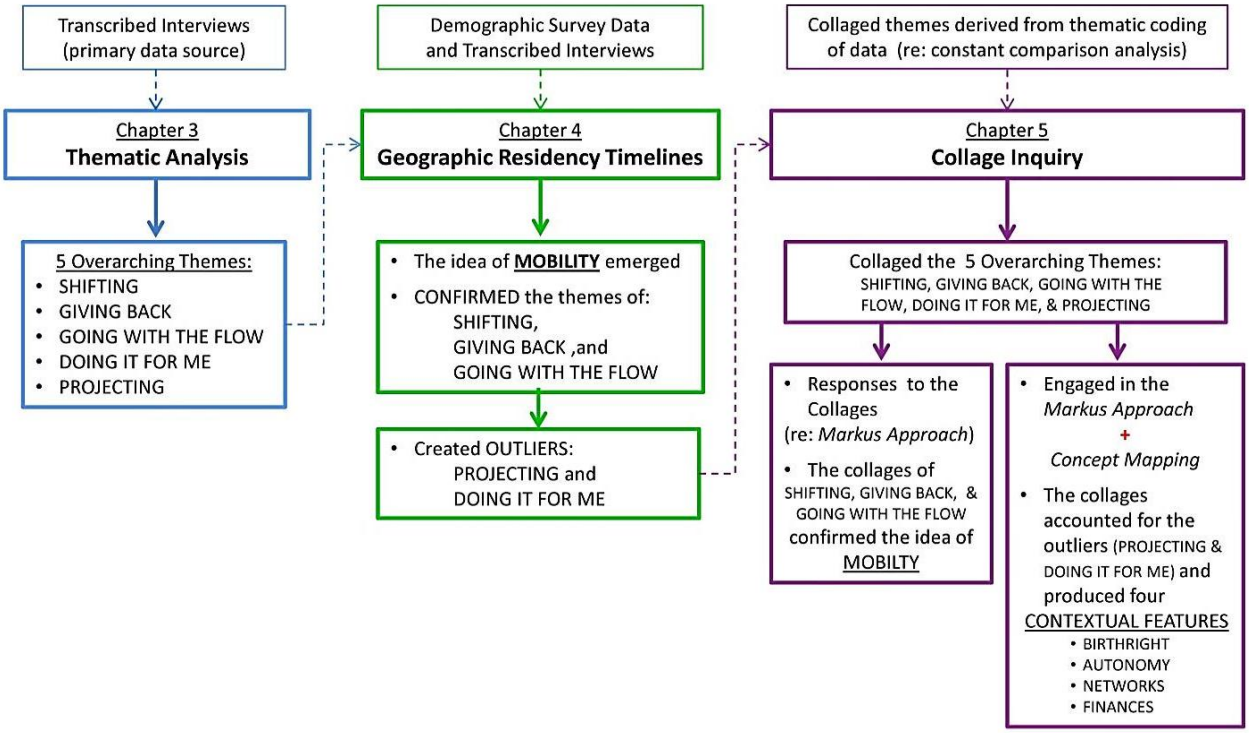
It is important to keep in mind that this chapter is the culmination of the work I have shared in the preceding chapters and builds on the themes and ideas which emerged using a variety of analytic approaches. An overview of my analyses (shown in Figure 21) led me to what I believe is a credible explanation of the unfolding career stories of participants amidst an unpredictable economic era.

Corroborating Mobility and Its Connection With Contextual Features

To corroborate this notion of movement between geographic locations with participants' career stories, I revisited the coded segments of primary data, as well as my field notes and research memos. By turning to the textual data, I discovered commonalities across participants' pathways which required individuals to leave and return to the SCI at various points in their pursuit of postsecondary opportunities. However, what differed among participants' pathways were the destination, frequency, and duration of their on- and off-island mobility. The following

excerpts from the interview data corroborate the idea of mobility as it relates to the themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow" and connect birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances as facilitating and/or hindering the highly mobile career pathways of the participants.

Figure 21: Overview of the Analytic Process



Exploring the Theme of "Shifting"

In Chapter Three, I described the most salient features of "shifting" which included: (1) the consideration, exploration, and/or awareness of opportunities (or options) not limited to a specific geographic location, and (2) teeter-tottering (moving back and forth) between two or more geographic locations. The participants who wished to pursue postsecondary college/university education or professional development had to leave the island to engage in career opportunities (such as Participant L's law enforcement training in the Bahamas and Participant KT's undergraduate studies in Florida illustrated on pages 105 and 109) and continued to move frequently on and off-island over the course of their career trajectory

described in my interviews with them. The idea of mobility was reflected in the shifting behaviors of young people as they explored various educational and occupational opportunities, accessed resources and programs (such as financial aid, familial support, and apprenticeships) both locally and abroad, temporarily visited home to reconnect with family and friends, rested and found temporary work in between transitions from school to work, and returned home with the intention to stay or in preparation for new educational or occupational experiences. In the excerpt below Participant I comments on the on- and off-island shifting of her peers since her last sojourn on the island.

> *This time has been really strange actually. So I come back and from last time I was here at Christmas—Laura's moved to Canada, Sharmaine moved to Canada, Eric's moved to London, um I mean everyone's kind of shifted...every time some of friends are still here. Like Jonas is still here, Arina has just come back from holiday. It's kind of a mix, every time you come back there's a whole different set of people here…and I think Mia is moving back to the Bahamas at the end of the summer.*[22] (PI/S/July2010/72-74)

Within a year, both expatriate and local peers of Participant I engaged in the teeter-tottering between various geographic locations; a common thread throughout participants' career stories.

These emerging adults described and rationalized their career decisions in connection with what I have called the contextual features of birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances. The following excerpts from interview data illuminate the ways in which these contextual features contributed (or not) to the mobility embedded in the educational and occupational decisions of participants as they engaged in "shifting."

Birthright

I began each interview by asking participants to tell me about where they were born and about their family's ancestral heritage. While I expected to hear a list of North American and European countries by expatriate participants, I was surprised to hear that none of the local participants were born in the SCI. Interestingly, all of the emerging adults who identified themselves as local Islanders were born in countries outside of the SCI due to the lack of medical facilities on island at the time of their births. As a result, all of the local Islanders who participated in this study were not only SCI nationals due to their ancestral ties, but also

[22] The names of peers have been replaced with pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality.

nationals/citizens of another country. All but one expatriate participant held Canadian or European passports while the birthplaces of local participants varied between the Bahamas and the United States. I inquired further about the "status" and "nationality" of each participant and came to learn that although local participants hold a passport for the SCI, they are also entitled to the same rights and benefits of British nationals, and to the rights and benefits afforded by their place of birth (such as the United States). This affiliation with more than one other geographic location supported mobility and enabled both local and expatriate participants to shift between geographic boundaries to access local tuition fees, financial aid, and additional career-related resources from more than one state.

Local Participant TM's residency shifted frequently between the United States and her home in the SCI. She explained that since she was an American citizen (because of birth) and also a native of the SCI (because of ancestral lineage) her motivation for shifting on and off-island was connected with her ability to access financial aid for college and secure part-time work, both at home and in the United States. Earlier in her postsecondary pathway, Participant TM attended the local community college in the SCI because she had received a government bursary. When she failed to secure a university scholarship she went to the United States where she was able to obtain financial aid and enroll in a Job Corps training program.

> *I got a scholarship from the US Government. They were paying for me to* [go to school] *because I was born here I was eligible to get financial aid. So I used financial aid for that, to go to school in Georgia* [102]*...I left for College for a year and then I came back, put school on hold for about a little while and started working at the bank* [back home in the SCI] [126]…*well actually I came down to Florida and worked for a few months and then I moved back home in 2005* [135]…*and in late 2007 I came back here* [to Florida] *and started College* [again] *because it was quick and affordable with Financial Aid here* [141]. (PTM/F/June2010/102-141)

Participant TM's frequent shifting was driven by accessing postsecondary educational and occupational opportunities in various states and was enabled by her American birth certificate and ancestral lineage to the SCI. Her birthright supported the mobility required to pursue her career goals.

Without the burden of immigration or residency applications or the need for student or work visas, participants who associated their nationality with more than one state were able to

consider multiple institutions in various geographies off island. For example, Participant J was able to pursue tertiary education in the United Kingdom without the burden of international tuition fees because of his local status in the SCI and his associated British citizenship.

> *One of the main reasons I came over here* [referring to the United Kingdom] *rather than the States was because as* [SCI] *Islanders you could apply for British Passport and be looked at as a UK student. So basically if you do that you'll pay the UK students fees rather than international.* (PJ/S/June2010/276)

While pursuing tertiary education abroad was relatively barrier free, Participant J indicated that he anticipated difficulty in securing work in the United Kingdom after graduation because the economic crisis had limited job prospects in his field in the United Kingdom. He said that he believed that his local Islander status will enable him to access government resources for young entrepreneurs at home. Accordingly, birthright became the impetus for Participant J's shifting back home to the SCI.

In Chapter Five I shared how "birthright" contributed to Participant KS's frequent mobility on and off the island over a three-year period as she explored educational options at an Afro-centric college in the United States, suddenly returned home, and then departed the SCI for a small and diverse liberal arts university in the United Kingdom. Despite being a racially Black expatriate living in the SCI, Participant KS felt like an 'outsider' and remembered feeling disconnected from her heritage. This yearning to explore her identity consequently led her to pursue postsecondary education in a more diverse institution. Similarly, Participant A considered that her biracial ethnicity facilitated her comfort level with both expatriates and locals in the SCI. This comfort level led her to pursue an International Baccalaureate program in the United Kingdom without much concern about any possible cultural and/or social barriers. Contrary to her expectations, soon after Participant A migrated to the United Kingdom she experienced challenges with nationality and identity.

> *When I went to England and everyone was all about which school did you go to, what grades did you get? I was like, "Whoa, what is this?" You know, I want to make money was on everyone's agenda and like that never crossed my mind* [68]*…I cried and I complained. I'd come home at Christmas and I'd sing songs about how my Mom doesn't love me anymore* [Participant chuckles and smiles]. *The school I was at was a boarding*

> *school* [in Europe] *and a lot of people were Germans, cause it was a language-oriented school…and it was just weird for me because no one was speaking English around me, right…I would cry to my Mom, this is terrible, I hate this* [78]! (PA/F/May10/66-78)
>
> *I think I felt comfortable here* [referring to the SCI]. *I felt in England, I felt an outcast….I didn't speak German, I was this island girl. I just felt so out of the mix that I didn't enjoy it. I thought oh, I could come back here* [referring to the SCI] *like everyone else, it'll be really good.* (PA/F/May10/245)

Participant A's experience with identity issues while abroad led to a sense of alienation and prevented her from remaining in England. She explained how much she looked forward to holiday breaks where she could escape the cultural and social alienation she was experiencing abroad. Subsequently, after completing her undergraduate degree, this became the reason for her to return to the SCI. In this example, the contextual feature of birthright (which encompasses identity, ethnicity, and nationality) contributed to Participant A's initial migration off-island, her frequent shifting between England and the SCI during holiday breaks, as well as her ultimate decision to return home.

The excerpts I have shared from the career stories of Participants TM, J and A corroborates the idea of mobility that is inherent in the shifting behaviour of participants between various geographic locations as they explored and pursued career opportunities. The excerpts also confirm the connection between birthright and shifting and the ways in which birthright supported participants' mobility.

Autonomy

I asked each participant during our interviews if anything or anyone inspired or contributed significantly to their career decisions. Several participants named particular teachers, family members, and mentors from the community, while others attributed their unfolding career stories and subsequent triumphs and failures to themselves. For example, Participant B discussed how his choice of university in the United Kingdom differed from the one suggested by his mentor. He believes that it was his unwavering commitment to his career aspirations, spiritual faith, and confidence that empowered him to go off-island and pursue his undergraduate degree in law at a small liberal arts university in the United Kingdom.

> *I was already driven….I mean my plan wasn't her plan* [referring to a teacher at PSH] *but…My plan was to live my life and you know I knew where I was going, I knew the direction I was headed, I knew what I wanted. I have to live my life, you know.* (PB/F/May10/1005-1007)

Participant B had a strong sense of self-efficacy and faced with optimism and perseverance the challenges he experienced in earning a postsecondary scholarship, becoming a father during his undergraduate degree studies, and returning home to an uncertain job market. Without expecting external forces to create opportunity or projecting challenges onto others, Participant B did not expect external forces to create opportunities, nor did he project onto others the challenges he encountered. Rather he attributed his capacity to shift on and off-island to pursue career aspirations with his sense of "autonomy." The embedded nature of self-awareness, self-efficacy, and self-sufficiency in the contextual feature of autonomy (see Chapter Five, page 130) were found to affect significantly the participants' capacity for mobility when they departed from their homes, explored new spaces and places, and engaged in the constant shifting among various geographic locations. The following excerpts illuminate how these features of autonomy have emerged throughout the career stories of participants.

For example, Participant TA, who was both independent and aware of her potential, had an insatiable desire to leave the SCI and explore another locale.

> *I really wanted, I just wanted to leave and my mom didn't want me to leave* [38]*... Only thing I wanted to do at that time was leave so it didn't really matter where I went* [62]*… My oldest sister went to school in Georgia taking up nursing and she bragged about how it was always this and that. So I decided to go there. I wanted to go, I didn't want to go too far and I figured Georgia is right there by Miami so if I ever get home sick at college I can always come back to Miami and the SCI* [70]. (PTA/F/June2010/38-70)

Despite her mother's concerns, Participant TA left home at age seventeen and moved to the United States to pursue an associate degree in early childhood development. Without any familial support she secured financial aid and a part-time job, found an apartment, and enrolled as a full-time student. When I asked Participant TA if she had had any fears or concerns about leaving home as an adolescent, she indicated that her longing to be free from the responsibilities

of caring for three younger siblings outweighed any apprehensions she may have had about leaving home.

Participant A's autonomy, for example, reflects the independence and self-sufficient nature modeled by her mother. She shared how seeing her mother overcome adversity through hard work taught her to savour any and all opportunities to learn. This was the impetus for her most recent career decision to pursue graduate studies in Canada.

> *I can do anything, you know, and never just settle to no one thing, you know. Try to know a variety of different things, like in the world, jobs, whether it be jobs you know, or politics and just really soak in as much as you can when you're somewhere and just better yourself and enhance yourself, you know.* (PA/F/May10/241)

Participant A also indicated that she regretted that she only realized her mother's strength much later in her career trajectory. Interestingly, her lack of autonomy brought her back to the SCI after completing her undergraduate studies; a consequence of disempowerment and the absence of autonomy. She has since recognized that when she doubted her own ability, she also limited her career options.

> *I was like I've got to find a job. I wanted to come back here* [referring to the SCI] *because it was…I guess I don't think that I can get anywhere. Like I don't think I would have passed any of the online tests to get into Deloitte or any of these financial firms in England. And my university isn't a Red Brick or Ivy League as they say in the States—it's just a private school so it's not rated. And I'm thinking to myself, there's no way I'm going…I don't speak any other language other than English so for me it was just like, against all the people in Europe, I could not at all compete.* (PA/F/May10/164-165)

I share this excerpt as it illuminates how an empowered sense of capability intersects with shifting. Participant A's mobility between the United Kingdom and the SCI was driven not by exploring and/or pursuing the range of opportunities available globally, or an entrepreneurial desire to establish herself at home, but by a lack of recognition of personal potential. Fortunately upon her return to the SCI in 2009, her self-efficacy was elevated through mentorship by her supervisor at work and a mature reconnection with her mother. With a renewed sense of autonomy, Participant A left the SCI to pursue graduate studies in Canada in 2011. In a recent conversation with her, she said she anticipates shifting between various geographic locations in

pursuit of job prospects in the Middle East and Europe while the local job market and associated socioeconomic crisis in the SCI is resolved.

Synonymous with autonomy is a greater capacity to explore and pursue educational and occupational opportunities. For emerging adults from the SCI, mobility is inevitable as they must leave home to pursue a college/university education or professional development. In the excerpts I have shared from the career stories of Participants B, TA, and A, the consideration of career opportunities in various geographic locations and subsequent shifting is connected with their autonomous self: a sense of independence (self-sufficiency), consciousness of responsibilities (self-awareness), and a sense of potential and capability (self-efficacy). Perhaps these are signifiers to those invested in the development of human capability and human capital. I would argue that it is vital to instill autonomy in young people so they will develop this independence and see themselves as having the potential to be productive contributors to the labour market. Without such autonomy, self-doubt interferes with the potential to retain (and gain) human capital.

Networks

During interviews with participants I inquired about their experiences as students at PSH. A common thread in their collective responses was their ability to access networks established by the administration of the school. I juxtaposed these responses with conversations I had with other emerging adults from the SCI who attended local public and religious affiliated schools (noted as "secondary data" as described on page 83) to confirm what was emerging in my analysis. It was evident that students of PSH had direct access to networks of mentors in the local business community who offer professional knowledge and internships, and to networks of potential mentors in institutions abroad because of the relationships established by school administrators and expatriate teachers. These networks were not easily accessible to non-PSH students and alumni.

> *Once we told them* [school administrators and teachers at PSH] *what we wanted to do* [referring to occupational interests] *the benefit of going* [to PSH] *and having her* [the Principal] *on your side is that she knows like a lot of people in the community, that of a professional background, so once we told her what we wanted to do she tried her best to get us a placement for the summer. So during Fifth Form I went to work for* [a local

businessman] *from the UK, and that was my first experience at the time…and* [the Principal] *she set it up.* (PJ/S/June10/84)

Unlike the emerging adults from the public and religious schools in the SCI, young people who are affiliated with PSH, as either students or alumni, are provided with opportunities to connect with established professionals on the island and with educational leaders in institutions abroad. It became apparent that accessing these networks enabled participants to pursue career opportunities both locally and abroad with the support of mentors established both on and off-island. The benefit of being able to access such networks is a reflection of the privilege (or social capital) afforded to the young people who attend(ed) PSH whether they are local Islanders on scholarships or expatriate students whose families can afford the tuition fees.

During his high school years, Participant J learned about the importance of networks and of establishing professional relationships with a variety of people. He attributed this to having had the opportunity to interact with a variety of cultures and people at PSH. After his father died in a tragic accident, Participant J took over his family's construction company. Despite the hardships of establishing himself as a young leader among senior workers, he indicated that much of his current success came from support and assistance of expatriates with whom he built relationships while working on local construction projects. Although these relationships were cultivated in addition to his network established through PSH, Participant J believes his mentors from PSH were instrumental in convincing him about the value of building such relationships. Interestingly, his network of expatriate construction professionals helped him to select an appropriate undergraduate degree program to enhance his skills as an entrepreneur, as well as to enable him to compete for local construction projects. In fact, a former client of Participant J offered both emotional and financial assistance which provided the means to travel abroad for his undergraduate studies.

I met some clients from the UK that I did the majority of their projects and they saw potential in me because they were amazed how young I was and I was building their homes and getting it done properly… so the guy was like "I think you should go back to school", and I was like "blah blah blah" you know what I mean. But then he was like "No, seriously I think you should go back to school, I see potential in you". When things started to slow down [referring to the economic slowdown in the SCI], *him and his girlfriend at the time, they encouraged me. Because they was living in the UK so they*

> *helped me search for schools and they traveled to the school and checked it out, they told me about it and I applied to the school, I got accepted, and then once I got accepted in the next couple of months I was on a flight. So basically they did the research about the university for me because they were looking for a place that had a good student life but wasn't so expensive like London.* (PJ/S/June10/170)

Undoubtedly, Participant J's investment in establishing a network with professionals in his field facilitated the shifting that occurred during the most recent years of his career pathway.

All of the local Islander participants indicated that political affiliations were instrumental in accessing government scholarships. As an outsider, this was surprising to me since academic merit appeared to have no bearing on the allocation of government funds for educational purposes. Expatriate students, regardless of academic achievement, are ineligible to receive government scholarships. I learned from my interviews with participants and stakeholders, that political affiliations of local Islanders are typically based on family loyalty and patronage to a particular party. Last names are often good indicators of political choice and automatically link individuals to an established network. Unfortunately, students without such ancestral affiliations to local politics experience challenges in securing a government scholarship despite academic merit. An example of how the lack of ancestral political affiliations connects with participants' career stories is illustrated in an excerpt from my interview with Participant KT who experienced challenges in securing financial assistance from the government. Despite being born in the SCI (but to expatriate parents), Participant KT recalled her frustration in applying for a postsecondary government scholarship.

> *When I applied to the Ministry do you know the person told me that my last name is not local…my last name isn't a local name* [64]!... *the lady told me over the phone, my last name is not local that's why I couldn't get a scholarship! I will never forget that* [72]*… Because the majority of what always happens is everybody knows like as soon as they look at me everybody would know you are not from here...Growing up here, this is what it's like, oh you are a foreigner* [243]! (PKT/S/June2010/64-72, 243)

After two appeals for a scholarship, Participant KT turned to a senior administrator at the local community college, hoping that a local intermediary would be able to assist with the processing of her scholarship application. Unfortunately she was in the last year of her undergraduate

program when she was finally approved for a scholarship to attend school in the United States. It was evident that Participant KT's lack of access to a political network made securing a scholarship an arduous and extremely frustrating process. It was only when she connected with a local mentor (from the community college) who had political affiliations with the government that her scholarship application was processed; however, even this took much time and effort. As I mentioned earlier, all of the participants from this study candidly spoke about the value in accessing political networks—whether established through ancestral (or family) association, social and/or business contacts. Accordingly, Participant KT was not the only emerging adult to face challenges in navigating the application process for government scholarships. I would suggest that the application and selection process of the scholarship program should be made more transparent by defining specific requirements for applicants and openly announcing recipients in order to build public confidence in the allocation of financial bursaries and awards. Clearly by defining the expectations and requirements for scholarships, it would moderate any sense of entitlement perpetuated by the politics of politically-based networks and eliminate interference with the plans and preparations for shifting on the part of emerging adults in the SCI.

In addition to addressing the challenges of navigating political networks in the SCI, participants also shared the experiences they had in tapping into networks off-island to help them prepare for their school-to-work transition. To my surprise, all the participants indicated how they valued professional experience gained off-island over experience on the island. They attributed this to the smallness of the SCI which limited their opportunities to cultivate relationships and network with experienced professionals in their prospective occupations. They said that shifting off-island to acquire education and professional experience enabled them to build a professional networks and personal portfolios which are essential for gaining access to the competitive labour market in the SCI. The following excerpt from Participant J's interview shows how participants see value in off-island experiences and illuminates the connection between networks and shifting,

> *It's very difficult for some people to make it in the SCI, especially because of something in your family's background or something like that. So a lot of people when they go off to school in the States or into the UK they want to stay there for like a couple of years, then build up themselves, then they build up their character so that when they return to the*

> *SCI they have something to offer* [without being inhibited by the government or other political associations]. (PJ/S/June2010/318)

Whether on or off-island, it is evident that the participants collectively acknowledged how networks facilitate and/or limit their mobility and subsequent access to postsecondary career opportunities. Participants indicated that the cultivation of relationships/networks through social, institutional, professional, and political associations was an essential feature that contributed to their career decisions.

While I was conducting my fieldwork and interviewing participants for this study, the impact of the global economic crisis on the socioeconomic and political climate of the SCI was clearly having an impact on the career decisions of participants. I noted the most visible impact in my photographs field notes (see Appendix K) which documented unfinished development projects around the island and contrasted how the once bustling tourist economy had declined, thus limiting job opportunities. To confirm what was emerging in my fieldwork, I also reviewed local newspapers where I found headlines that described the economic slowdown (or "Caribbean Hangover"[23]), which echoed the concerns of the participants, and confirmed the dichotomy between the once robustly developing economy and the more recent slowdown. Also, I spoke with a representative from the SCI's Ministry of Education to see if the fears and frustrations about challenges participants had experienced in accessing networks to support their career aspirations and subsequent mobility was shared by this ministry official.

> [Young people] *were just choosing what they wanted rather than being guided as to what the needs of the country were. There was no structure in place basically, to channel students into these areas* [referring to careers in great demand on the island, such as healthcare and education]. *When I say, "these areas," like areas that the country needs; nurses, medical sciences, teacher education. For example…if you look at primary schools, over sixty or seventy percent of the staff in government schools are foreigners and not locals…Students were not choosing these areas probably because of the salary and probably because of the working conditions…They wanted accounting and business…because students were not seeing enough local faces in these career—I'm talking about nursing and teaching…they were following the multitude of people from*

[23] As I mentioned on page 8 of the dissertation, references to the names of the local newspapers are withheld for the purposes of maintaining anonymity.

> *banking. But now with the global meltdown things have changed. We have limited resources...during the last administration 20 million dollars was spent on scholarships on an annual basis. That has significantly been reduced to $8.5 million…from 150 students to only 20 students receiving scholarships per year now. So students need to be redirected into areas which are needed. Role models from the community can help do this.* (Field note, recorded May 24, 2010, Interview with Stakeholder/Ministry Rep.)

This excerpt corroborates the importance of networks and mentors and indicates that at least this ministry stakeholder sees them as instrumental for assisting emerging adults with their career decisions, and in the cultivation of human capital for the island.

My analysis of the interview data and review of secondary data confirmed that the SCI government has been forced to re-examine its policies and consider ways of embracing the diverse population of its residents—locals, expatriates and temporary migrant workers. At the time of this inquiry no official statements or policies had been established, however a recent conversation with a senior policy advisor confirmed that processes for establishing better practices are underway.

> *This is the thing, we are focusing on, what you have to now look at if you want to survive in this changing economy, you have to choose what the country needs. And that's the new focus now and I think the message needs to resonate with the people. The government cannot give you a scholarship unless you decide to go into an area of need.* (Field note, recorded October 20, 2011, Stakeholder, Ministry Rep.)

I would argue that in addition to changes in public policy, the networks afforded to PSH students and alumni should become available to emerging adults throughout the SCI. School administrators and academic counselors from private, public, and religious institutions need to collaborate collectively with the local business community and the newly established health care centre to provide mentorship and perhaps internship opportunities for emerging adults. These opportunities will not only help young people prepare for their postsecondary pathways, but also will establish a local network of professionals who would be able to provide young people with valuable career guidance that will encourage and engage emerging adults to consider the many on-island possibilities for return migration upon the completion of education and professional preparation abroad.

Finances

In Chapter Four I described how the idea of mobility emerged from the analysis of residency time lines which helped to visualize the career pathways of participants. When I revisited the coded interview data, it became evident that shifting on and off the island for postsecondary education and professional development is not simply voluntary, it is a necessity. The cost of travel, tuition, and residency required to study at an off-island institution weighed heavily on the decision of participants to engage in this necessary mobility. I shared earlier how Participant TA's birthright enabled her to shift on and off-island rather frequently as she accessed various resources to support her career aspirations. Some of these resources were financial ones. Also, I have shared how Participant KT's mobility was delayed as she navigated the politics of securing a government scholarship. Both of these excerpts from participant's career stories highlight the importance of finances in the pursuit of career opportunities.

While the socioeconomic status among expatriate and local participants' engaged in this study varies, so does the way shifting connects with the contextual feature of finances. Finances either enable or limit participants' capacity to pursue off-island opportunities. Local participants hope for government scholarships to assist them in their postsecondary pursuits in addition to relying on family support and work income. Expatriate participants (currently not eligible to receive government aid) depend primarily on work income and financial support from family. As a result, finances can enable the shifting of emerging adults as they explore and pursue a variety of career opportunities, engage in internships and volunteer opportunities off-island, vacation and visit family and friends without the burden of cost.

> *You know I love coming back* [referring to the SCI] *but then if I come back here every time I don't get to see and experience anywhere new so I want to travel a bit.* (PI/S/July2010/70)

Finances can also deter, delay, and limit the shifting of emerging adults who want to pursue educational and occupational opportunities abroad.

Attending PSH may come at a premium in terms of tuition fees, but with the assistance of private/institutional scholarships and sometimes the extra efforts of parents and family, students from varying socioeconomic backgrounds are able to enroll in the institution. Within the walls of PSH students from a variety of backgrounds (i.e., race, class, gender, etc.) are provided with equal opportunity to engage in a range of learning activities that expose students to a range

of possible postsecondary career opportunities. Activities include using recent technology in the computer and science labs, and fieldtrips to various destinations across North America. Also, students have access to career advising throughout their senior high school years and when enrolled in the Sixth-Form, they are offered help to prepare their applications for admission to well-recognized postsecondary institutions located in the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom which are regarded as the obvious "next step" after high school graduation. It is important to keep in mind that despite the variation in socio-economic backgrounds of the participants contributing to this study (i.e., local Islanders who received scholarships and bursaries to attend PSH and their expatriate peers whose families could afford the hefty tuition fees), the graduates from PSH are afforded a degree of privilege that is not given to students from other local high schools; such as the access to networks discussed earlier in this chapter. However, not all PSH students experience a smooth transition between high school and postsecondary life because finances intersect with their ability to engage in the subsequent mobility encouraged by PSH programming. For example Participant B indicated that while he benefited from private education at PSH through an institutional scholarship, and the burden of cost never entered his mind, his desire to attend law school in the United Kingdom was primarily dependent on securing a government scholarship.

> *I depended on the scholarship. Because I mean, worst case scenario, my parents would probably, I guess mortgage a property or something… yeah mortgage a piece of property to get me that.* (PB/F/May10/951-953)

While he navigated the politics of accessing government aid and awaited approval of his application, Participant B admitted that he had been unprepared and unaware of the potential challenges that exist in pursuing higher education. Regrettably, he missed his first semester of college as there was a delay in processing his scholarship. Once abroad, he also learned that the currency conversion between American dollars (USD) and Euros (EUR) would require him to take on part-time work to afford the relatively high cost of living on campus and visits home during school breaks. As a result, the burden of finances altered the college experience Participant B had envisioned for himself by requiring him to be extremely conservative in the way he budgeted his school fees, the associated living costs, and participation in social activities. In addition, he had to work and save to finance his visits home, and frequent trips to a nearby city to visit his girlfriend.

Similarly, Participant TA shared how she delayed attending college in the United States and instead attended a trade school until she qualified for financial aid.

> *I had to go to the Job Corps Center; it's like a trade school. Financially wise that was the only thing that I could have done, cause I couldn't work on my own like how I wanted to work and go to school to take care of myself cause I was too young.* (PTA/F/June10/76)

Also, she shared how the cost of tuition has delayed her pursuit of an undergraduate degree.

> *…I just ended up working. I decided I was going to do financial aid again, but it's just been harder for me with my... I've had better paying jobs and because of the jobs, they won't give me what I need financially for the financial aid. I'd have to give up to gain. And then I won't be able to survive. Cause it's just me* [116]*…I still want to go on and get my bachelor's in early childhood education. I'm just waiting for that financial break to happen* [122]. (PTA/F/June10/166-122)

Participant TA admitted that while at PSH she was excited and committed to earning her bachelor's degree from an accredited institution in the United States. However, her excitement dwindled after she learned about the cost of tuition and living off-island. At the time of our interview, Participant TA was working in Florida hoping to accumulate enough money so that one day she might pursue her undergraduate degree and work in as an early childhood educator.

On several occasions throughout this chapter I have provided segments of Participant J's career story. In excerpts from his interview he shared how his mobility was affected by the death of his father which required him to halt his plans to pursue a college degree in the United States. Instead he felt compelled to remain in the SCI and work to help support his mother and younger siblings.

> *I didn't go to university that year cause I stayed with my Mom* [110]*… it was to help my family and also I guess, to help myself as well, because that was my financial support as well…after Dad left, I mean after that one I had to make a decision of what I was going to do to, to keep finances and I had to make decisions of what I was going to do for the rest of my life after this. You know, so I stayed and I took the company over* [referring to his father's construction company] *and I ran the company for like two years, three to four years, and during the economic slowdown of the depression in 2008, that's when I*

> *decided that I wanted to go back for school and finish what I started* [referring to his initial intension to pursue a college degree abroad] [116]. (PJ/S/June10/110-116)

This is an example of how Participant J's career trajectory was affected by finances which had impact on his career-related mobility by temporarily postponing off-island migration. However, as I discussed above, subsequently Participant J was able to pursue his undergraduate studies in the United Kingdom with the financial support of an expatriate colleague and mentor, in other words, through networks.

Unlike Participants B, TA, and J, Participant I considered herself a "global citizen" as she navigated educational and occupational opportunities in various locales without the burden of finances.

> *I don't know really where I consider myself from…I guess 'international citizen'* [55]…*I'm, we're all over the place* [referring to herself and her family] [61]! (PI/S/July2010/55, 61)

Frequently shifting on- and off-island, between different geographic locations, with varying purposes, Participant I's highly mobile career trajectory had already included a gap year in Australia, undergraduate studies in the United Kingdom, language immersion in Bogota (Columbia), an internship in Barcelona (Spain), a sabbatical in Malawi, and frequent visits with her family and friends in the SCI. Much of this had been without the burden of finances because she had monetary support from her parents. The excerpts shared here corroborate how finances interconnect with the mobility of emerging adults as they plan and prepare to access career opportunities and experiences abroad. For individuals with limited finances, migratory considerations are often redirected for the purpose of securing work, or are delayed until affordable opportunities become available. As I reflected on the career stories of former PSH students, it became evident that although they were encouraged to prepare for postsecondary studies abroad it would be important that the career development program at PSH include information on alternative postsecondary pathways for students who needed to delay their mobility or access to local career opportunities because of financial barriers. A broader range of career options presented by PSH administration and faculty to students would allow for a more inclusive approach to career advising.

Exploring the Theme of "Giving Back"

The interview data revealed that the participants considered the option of returning home to the SCI after pursuing career opportunities abroad. They did so because they had either a sense of responsibility or commitment to contribute to the island's development and/or to participate in the local labour market. I categorized these recurring comments made by participants under the theme of "giving back." Interestingly, the literature on human capital theory describes this phenomenon as "return migration" and suggests it is a common feature of Caribbean migration. "Caribbean migration is highly responsive to occupational and educational opportunities in other countries, yet there is also a strong tendency to return to the native country later on," (Thomas-Hope, 2002, p. 67).

> *I wanted to come back. I definitely wanted to come back here…because I felt, well first of all its home…and then…to take my rightful place here and try to help in the progression of the country*. (PB/F/May2010/269-271)

The analysis of residency time lines proved to be a valuable tool for visualizing the "giving back" of participants who had completed their postsecondary education and/or professional training abroad. The time lines confirmed the on-island presence (or return migration) of only five participants during the time of data collection, one participant at the time was pursuing work experience off-island and the other six were engaged in postsecondary and graduate studies abroad (in either the United States, Canada, or the United Kingdom). Excerpts from interview data were juxtaposed with the time lines to confirm and illuminate the reasons across participants' career stories that prompted their return home and desire to participate (and/or contribute) to the SCI's developing economy despite the current economic slowdown.

> *I think the majority* [of my peers] *will end up back in the SCI…it's home!* [even with the politics and economic situation] *it's not completely stopping them. People want to go back.* (PTM/F/June2010/291-295)

Accordingly, "giving back" was a common thread across the career stories shared by all participants.

It is important to note here that while the residency time lines did not confirm that all of the participants had returned to the SCI after pursuing career opportunities off-island. The time

lines of seven participants had not indicated a return migration at the time of this study, but interview data confirmed that these participants were pursuing educational and occupational opportunities off-island with the intent of returning home at some point during their career trajectory. The excerpts from the career stories I share here not only corroborates that mobility relates to the theme of "giving back" but also confirms how the contextual features of birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances either drive or discourage the desire to contribute to the SCI's developing economy, and subsequent return migration.

Birthright

The contextual feature of birthright is connected to "giving back" as both a motivator and inhibitor. For some participants, a strong patriotic tie to the SCI drove their mobility. They sought education and skills which would enable them to return home and contribute to their country's development.

> *My last stop will definitely be at home because my ultimate goal is to be instrumental in creating a weather service in the country and I feel like me being out here* [referring to the United States] *and educating myself in the field of meteorology, that's my responsibility to do that for my country* [259] … *I'm trying to prepare myself and um, and you know, in doing me and ultimately preparing myself to do what's best for the country* [271]. (PH/S/June2010/259, 271)

Despite being proud and nostalgic about their national affiliation with the SCI, some participants were disheartened by the changing social and political landscape. Concerns about the politics of nationality rooted in the growing tension among locals and expatriates, were discouraging their return home. Young people, especially expatriates, felt alienated from the island culture they had called home throughout their childhood and adolescence.

> *When I was going to university I wanted to come back* [243] *... I think I felt comfortable here* [referring to the SCI] *... in England, I felt an outcast ... I was this island girl. I just always felt so out of the mix that I didn't enjoy it. I thought oh, I could come back here* [referring to the SCI] *and like everyone else, it's really good. But it's just, I can't live here. I can't* [245] … *The mentality is just warped for me. The people, I just don't relate to them anymore* [expats and local islanders] [247] *... like the Islanders are too negative against the expats…there is quite a lot of racism here* [255] *... The instability. You have*

> *no idea what the future is going to be like. You have no idea what the politics is going to be like. You have no idea, you know* [286]. (PA/F/ May2010/243-286)

I probed participants further to understand the origins of this tension and asked them to share with me their thoughts about the changing landscape of the SCI. Participant R articulated her concern with the growing population and the diminishing 'smallness' of the island, as well as the weakening sense of community on the island which had remained protected until the development boom in 2006 which required an influx of immigrants to support the growing labour demands.

> *Well a lot of the people who move here* [referring to the SCI] *think they know everything, they're very pushy, taking up a lot of jobs from the local people, they think they are more qualified than everybody; they think they are more deserving of things. They come with this mentality that they've come, they've made a contribution as far as buying a house for themselves, and think they deserve* [local status] *and deserve like jobs and free health care, and land and all that and don't think about how it's affecting people here. They completely stripped this island of its culture. It's kind of sad.* (PR/F/May2010/120)

Interestingly, participants admitted that their increasing concerns began after the economic slowdown in 2008. Prior to this, the growing population of immigrants was regarded as necessary and vital to the development of the island.

> *The economic crisis and demise of the government has caused a sort of like rift between the people. There's always been this us and them, you know, local Islanders* [referring to individuals with ancestral ties to the island) *and non-local Islanders, there's always been that. But now it's even worse, like there's this...cause there's no jobs out there, Local Islanders feel that they should have the jobs that everyone else has, even more strongly now. You know, like right now we don't need that manager there cause look how many of us locals don't have jobs.* (PA/F/May2010/470)

This excerpt from Participant A's interview is just one example of what was shared by participants about their frustrations and concerns about the local labour market. When many of the commercial development projects in the SCI were halted during the onset of the global economic crisis in 2008, unemployment began to rise in the SCI as construction workers were no longer needed and the local service sector slowed down. As a result, residents of the SCI (i.e.,

local Islanders and permanent residents) began to scrutinize national immigration policies. There was a growing feeling that these policies were too lenient in granting work permits and permanent residency cards (PRCs) to immigrants (primarily from the Philippines and neighbouring Caribbean islands). The population was flooded with new immigrants holding both temporary work visas and PRCs and this influx of people was presumed to have generated job shortages in the local labour market. As a result of the frustrations about immigration policies and the increasingly competitive job market, many local Islanders and long-time residents (i.e., expatriates) began seeking employment opportunities off-island.

To connect birthright with the theme of "giving back," I share excerpts from the interview data that illuminate how both expatriate and local Islanders expressed a desire to return home to the SCI despite the economic crisis. These excerpts show how their career decisions intersect with the politics of nationality and ethnicity between local Islanders, long time expatriate residents, and new immigrants. Also, they illuminate how some participants had temporarily reconsidered return migration and opted to seek career prospects elsewhere because of their concerns and frustrations about the local job market and issues of birthright.

The participants had witnessed and/or participated in the SCI's robust socioeconomic and infrastructure development during the transitional years of their secondary and postsecondary career pathways (see trajectory time lines shown on page 105), and they reminisced about the professional optimism and security they felt prior to the economic slowdown. For example, Participant B was adamant that despite moving abroad to pursue an undergraduate law degree in the United Kingdom, he was committed to "giving back" to his community by returning home to participate in his country's thriving socioeconomic and infrastructure development and booming job market. He openly shared how he never imagined nor prepared for a slowdown in the economy and presumed his local status would help him avoid any difficulties in securing a relevant job in his field.

> *Well because I'm an Islander* [with ancestral roots to the SCI] *and you know, um, there are like so many expatriates coming in to fulfill job positions that locals should be, you know, really filling. And so, so I felt that you know, once I can get my degree and whatever, the qualifications I need to come back here and, you know, take my place, my rightful place.* (PB/F/May2010/275)

This "rightful place" Participant B refers to here is reflective of his ancestral ties to the SCI and an important feature of his commitment to "giving back." Interestingly, regardless of his birthright Participant B still faced competition in securing a job at a local law firm when he returned home on the cusp of the economic slowdown. He described the sixteen-month challenge he faced navigating the local job market. As we discussed his frustrations, he never entertained the idea that his job search might h been hindered by his lack of professional experience as a lawyer. Nor did he discuss that his job search might have been hindered by the large-scale impact of the global economic crisis which was straining the island's off-shore banking industry. Instead, Participant B attributed his challenges to the influx of foreign workers. Other participants also attributed the obstacles they encountered in their career trajectories on the influx of immigrants and expatriate residents.

> *It's home, it's the only home that I know but…foreigners…a lot of times you're going up against more experienced people from other countries, which I don't think is fair because if they don't promote from within* [the country]*, how are the locals ever going to get the experience?* (PTM/F/June2010/225)

When I asked Participants B and TM to explain their frustrations with the local labour market competition, they spoke about how during their transition into postsecondary studies, they were exposed repeatedly to a well-known political slogan that they heard from government leaders. This was, "Islanders first!" It rang out across the country from political candidates in the 2006 elections and transmitted a sense of entitlement to local SCI Islanders who then expected to be awarded career opportunities before expatriates or other nationals (immigrants), regardless of qualifications.

> *They* [referring to the former government representatives] *made it seem as if we didn't have to work. Like, work for a living.* [They] *made it as if because you're an* [local] *Islander you're entitled to it, you know. I mean, that was the push and that everyone can live* [a good life] *like they were…"Hey, look at me!"… they made it seem as if it's very easy to make money.* (PB/F/May10/1068-1072)

Whether working for banks, construction companies, or local businesses associated with the bustling tourism industry, no one anticipated the downward turn in the local labour market. Sadly, the halt in development brought uncertainty, fear, and frustration among expatriate and

local residents. Despite a desire to engage in "giving back," nationality is no longer a definitive passport to opportunity in the SCI. Instead, only individuals who are valued as human capital because they have acquired relevant skills, or who are able to access opportunities off-island can prosper.

Both local and expatriate participants have become more cognizant of the increased competitiveness in the local labour market which requires professional work experience in addition to education.

> *I want to go back home but right now the economy is not…jobs aren't the way that they were a few years ago when I started my degree so I think I would have more opportunities staying here* [in the United States] *for a while, looking for a job, getting experience* [165]…*I prefer to get more experience here* [in the United States] *so that when I go back home* [I'll be able to get a job despite competition] [227]. (PTM/F/June2010/165, 227)

Although the participants' return migration may be delayed as a result of the time commitments required to acquire an education and the skills to gain a competitive advantage in the economic slowdown, the SCI can retain valued human capital. The excerpts I have shared here illuminate the challenges participants have faced or will face in "giving back" and the disheartenment they feel about sociopolitical tensions. However, these excerpts also confirm the profound impact birthright has in fostering a desire for and a commitment to return to the SCI and in motivating individuals to navigate around these challenges for the betterment of their country.

Autonomy

The contextual feature I have described as 'autonomy' is closely tied to the desire of "giving back." As I shared earlier in Chapter Five (see page 130), autonomy reflects a sense of independence (self-sufficiency), consciousness of responsibilities (self-awareness), and a sense of potential and capability (self-efficacy). The excerpts I share here illustrate how these aspects of autonomy connect with the mobility of participants who engage in "giving back" to the SCI.

Participant J shared how his aspirations and postsecondary plans for the future were challenged after the sudden death of his father. His teachers and the Principal at PSH had encouraged him to pursue postsecondary studies abroad. However, after this loss he became responsible for his four younger siblings because he was the eldest. Participant J shared how he

was surprised by the source of strength and perseverance he found within himself to both attend to the responsibility of providing for his family, and to pursue his initial aspiration to study abroad.

> *…it was a lot of pressure and honestly I surprise myself, you know. I surprised myself like, um what I made out of it whatever, it was challenging, but I walked away with some experience and that same experience allowed me to continue ah, to continue to go off and further my studies and now hopefully in a couple of months I'll be graduating!... so I just made a decision that before there's no, before the construction industry completely stop, I just want to go off and further my education so when it does pick up I could probably be in a position once again to, to ah, to be a player in in ah, ah in the industry.* (PJ/S/June2010/124)

Participant J had no financial assistance from the government or encouragement from mentors, but nevertheless he assumed a leadership position at his father's construction company to support his family. Despite being younger than all of his employees, he taught himself several trades required to build homes and secured several large projects for the company during the socioeconomic boom in the SCI. Later, he committed himself to learn more about the construction industry. He equipped himself with the necessary knowledge and skills to continue building his father's business by choosing to pursue an undergraduate degree related to the construction industry. A sense of independence (or self-sufficiency) helped Participant J to shift from student to provider to support his mother and younger siblings, make intelligent career decisions that enhanced his personal and professional learning, and return home to contribute to the residential and commercial development on the island.

Excerpts confirmed the relationship between participants' mobility in pursuing career opportunities off-island with returning home to the SCI and when linked with their sense of autonomy, illuminate the importance of encouraging self-sufficiency and determination amongst the SCI's younger generation.

> *Because like back in the day it's like a lot of people were just waiting for someone to do something for them or you know when the ball doesn't roll in their court they give up. But the younger generation are pushing much harder, they're showing their talent, they're singing, they're dancing, they're just trying to do whatever, you know what I mean so.*

> *And I mean once they continue to embrace that, that's when I feel that the SCI is going to blossom, going to become like something great, honestly!* (PJ/S/June10/358)

Interestingly, in their pursuit of "giving back" to the SCI, many participants shared their intention to connect with the younger SCI generation and to help inspire confidence in the next generation of human capital. While reflecting on the challenges they faced, participants acknowledged the sense of responsibility they felt for encouraging young people to persevere through hardships and become independent in order to actively participate in the country's growth.

> *I'd like to stay in SCI and if they allow me I'd like to help them to develop the country. And I'll even, if it's possible I'd even like to go to some of the schools and talk to some of the kids and be an inspiration to them if it's worth that, you know what I mean*[336]*?... It's just that to show them they can be somebody, you know what I mean? Or they can be whatever they want to be, you know what I mean. Because in schools sometimes they want to tell you ooh you should be a doctor or a lawyer or whatever but there are so many other things the country needs to grow, you know, so I'd like to encourage them to become something and see whatever they want to do, and you know, just commit to that. You know, you don't have to be a doctor or lawyer, there is so much more progression needed to better* [the country]. *There are teachers, there's everything you know! Everything, anything they can be good at! I'd like to just show them, especially like the young mens; that you don't have to, when you finish school, ,even if you have to work for a couple of years, don't give up, just keep striving, don't try to get caught up in the system with stuff like that* [338]. (PJ/S/July2010/336-338)

This excerpt from Participant J's interview not only illustrates the sense of responsibility participants had about their desire to contribute to the SCI, but also the importance of instilling amongst the newer generation, an awareness of the need to strive and thrive in the developing SCI economy.

The data revealed that challenges often arose at some point during an individual's pathway. Participants acknowledged that in addition to independence and perseverance, it is important to envision, creatively, the numerous ways in which to contribute to the SCI's development. Participant H commented about the potential for growth and opportunity in the SCI

and also shared her frustration about the lack of entrepreneurial spirit among the local population.

> *I mean there, there are so many things people can do. I mean* [the SCI] *isn't completely developed as yet and there are opportunities there. I think people, especially local Islanders, they just, they're narrow minded when it comes to things that they can do. I talk to my parents about this continuously. When it comes to investment, people, everybody wants to build something for rent, and you know there's so many different things you can do at home* [in the SCI], *there's so many different things the country needs you know, at home. And I think people believe that it's the responsibility of the government to do everything all the time and I feel like that the mentality needs to change, you know. People feel like the government is responsible for almost everything at home and that mentality needs to change. Um…living in the US and the UK, I see bowling alleys, I see so many different things that are not at home and people need to sort of look into investing and starting up these types of business I believe. So there are opportunities at home but people just…it's either like you build a hotel, you build a building to rent businesses in and it's just the same thing all the time, you know.* (PH/S/June2010/298)

At the same time, participants admitted that an entrepreneurial spirit is not fueled by an awareness of opportunity alone. They suggested that there needs to be a shift in "mentality". Participant H discussed the value in developing self-sufficiency and self-awareness in the younger generation. Perhaps mentorship programs (alluded to by Participant J earlier), might be a key component in cultivating a sense of responsibility about giving back and contributing to the SCI's growth, and ultimately helping to retain human capital in the SCI.

The autonomous behaviour of participants was also illuminated in excerpts where participants articulated their professional goals and expectations in relation to "giving back." For example Participant KS conveyed an account of personal competency as she shared how she envisions herself entering the SCI labour force.

> *I see myself being the type of person to kind of, you know when they have the major developments for hotels, properties, whatever major developments that…hotels that we have around here. I see myself being that person to get everyone together you know,*

> *everyone – the directors of whatever company or that's coming up, um…the financers, get them together and I see myself being that person that drafts this particular contract, you know, makes deals with this particular sale of the land, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera, that kind of thing.* (PKS/F/May2010/359)

As Participant KS shared her career aspirations it was interesting to hear her speak with such a mature understanding of her potential for contributing to the SCI's development despite the existing economic climate. Participant H also expressed an awareness of how her interest and expertise in tropical meteorology complements the islands' development plans.

> *I'm looking you know, with the expansion of the airport as well, I am becoming more hopeful that what I want to do at home would probably be more…would become more important with the expansion of the airport. Because you need sort of a reliable,… umm reliable information in terms of meteorology with weather – at least to record with airplanes and so forth.* (PH/S/June2010/267)

I would suggest that by recognizing their individual potential and anticipating labour demands in the SCI with the intent to contribute to the labour market, emerging adults are able to acquire skills that will not only assist in the development of the SCI, but also will increase their chances of finding relevant work upon completion of their studies. Participant A shared her thoughts about how she may contribute to the SCI's commercial development as a financial analyst and how her ability to connect with people and develop relationships would be an asset in this industry.

> *I think when I was in university, when I was choosing what I was going to do and wanting to come back* [to the SCI]…*I felt that there was so much opportunity, there was so many jobs out there. There was development, that's really what I wanted to…I really wanted to work like for some sort of development firm, cause I really like talking to people and interacting with people...I felt like, oh, this is what I want to do, and I felt the boom* [and the bust of the economy], *but I felt there was a place for me here, it's home you know!* (PA/F/May2010/457-466)

The excerpts from my interviews with Participants KS, H and A demonstrate how aspects of autonomy have enabled these emerging adults to recognize their potential (self-efficacy) and fuel their sense of responsibility (self-awareness) to contribute to the local SCI economy and

thoughtfully make associated career decisions. Also, these excerpts show how aspects of what I define as autonomy (i.e., self-efficacy, self-awareness, and self-sufficiency) in association with an assessment of what additional services are required to meet the needs of a growing and diverse population provide an impetus for return migration in the SCI despite the economic slowdown. In this sense, participants appear to have an entrepreneurial ability to assess how their skills could be applied in a variety of innovative ways for the development of the SCI. This ability could help these emerging adults to participate in the local labour market almost immediately upon returning home. By securing work in their relevant fields would also enhance their sense of independence (self-sufficiency) which can be seen as a motivator for "giving back" to the SCI.

I would argue that by recognizing unexplored niche markets on the island in relation to personal interests and abilities offered participants ways to think about selecting viable career paths that would enable them to return home. Participant J, for example, shared how his assessment of specific labour shortages at home directed him into a specific area of need in the SCI that also matched his occupational interests.

> *And at first I wanted to be an architect because I was very good at art but then I noticed that the SCI, it had a shortage for Quantity Surveyors* [40]*…it's like a construction consultant* [44]*…So my Dad, him working in the field, from his experience, he always use to tell me like how tough it was being a contractor, but he always encouraged me to grow up and be a construction consultant. Because they only had like one or two back in the day and everything was ah, was surrounded by that, you needed those guys advice, so he advised me to grow up and be a construction consultant* [so that I could build our business in the construction industry]. (PJ/S/July2010/46)

Participant J also discussed how early on (late teens, early twenties) he recognized his potential in the construction industry while heading several projects for his father's company. Both Participant A and J's individual sense of potential and capability (or self-efficacy) has facilitated their mobility and enabled them to give back to the SCI.

Networks

Collectively, the data have illuminated the participants' desire for "giving back" to the SCI in relation to their awareness of the local SCI marketplace. However, with the economic

downturn and scarcity of work, the local labour market has become very competitive with job requirements mandating experience in addition to education. As a result of this, some participants' career stories confirmed a delay in their return migration home while they worked off-island to gain relevant experience. Other participants' described the benefits of accessing networks on the island that facilitated their return home and allowed them to begin "giving back." The excerpts shared here show how the smallness of the SCI helps to facilitate the access of networks, and how relationships between the business community and individuals are often nurtured through familial contacts.

Several participants described how their current jobs were obtained through contacts in the business community established through relationships with family members. For example, Participants R and A admitted that they secured their present jobs in the SCI through community and business networks established by their mothers.

> *I would have never gotten this job if I didn't know him. He really gave me a huge break. I mean if I didn't know him nobody would have hired somebody just based on knowing who they are, like with no education, no papers to say I'm qualified for this job, and so I mean its contacts.* (PR/F/May2010/190)

> *I think my Mom, she was talking to the CEO here* [referring to her the company where she presently works]…*he goes to the restaurant all the time and I think she talked to him* [telling him I was looking for a job] *and he's like "Oh okay, tell her* [to contact him]". *….Even in England, it's who you know. Like the people don't think so, it's who you know, it's what school you've been to, what grade you've got. That's usually how it goes, right. And uh, so I started my internship here, then that Christmas I'm coming to try to find jobs and I have all of these places lined up to do interviews, but I'm asking him* [the CEO of the company she did her internship with and is currently working for] *for a reference. He's just like, "You're asking me for a reference? Do you not want to work with me?" You know, he was like "I want you to work here…we need to talk, this is what I'll give you"! And he started planning out you know, what my salary would be. Then he's like… this is what your job will be, this is what I want for you in the future, this is what I'm thinking you can accomplish, and so on. It was all like all these things and like oh, okay. I*

> *guess I'll call you back, right. I'm like oh shit Mom, you know he really wants me to work here!* (PA/F/May2010/176-178)

With little to no work experience in their respective fields, Participants R and A were able to find work rather quickly after commencing their job search in the SCI. Despite the economic downturn, they were determined to join the local labour market and believed the smallness of the island would enable access to a network of potential employers. Fortunately, their mothers were able to connect them with the right people.

Similarly, Participant KS shared how the smallness of the SCI facilitates access to networks which was a factor in her intention to return to the SCI after completing her law degree in the United Kingdom. She discussed how her desire for "giving back" to the SCI and to participate in commercial development projects on the island were reinforced by her opportunity to tap into an established network of professionals with which her parents had built relationships over the years. In comparison to opportunities in other countries, Participant KS described how she anticipated the rather rapid advancement in her career through tapping into her family's established network on the island.

> *Eventually I do see myself coming back* [referring to the SCI] [353] … *I want to get involved with what my parents are doing, their projects etc. etc. Just kind of build on the foundation* [referring to her legal sub-specialty in real estate law and her parent's involvement in commercial development on the islands]*; I think that's easier to do here than anywhere else. This is where they've decided to settle down here* [355]. (PKS/F/May10/353-355)

I believe that Participant KS's intention of returning to the SCI after pursuing her postsecondary education is driven by her ability to access networks. When I asked her why she was not interested in pursuing another option, she admitted that there were challenges in trying to build a network outside of the familiar landscape of the SCI.

Participant J also commented on the significant impact his network had been on his career trajectory.

> *It's not all about going to school it's about … I mean it does play a big part but it's also about building relationships with people. So during all of my summer breaks, normally during summertime I'll go back* [to the SCI] *and there's this company back home and*

> *work for them and just to try to build up a relationship. Well it was an aspiration to build up a relationship with them and just during this year when I came home between my studies I think they were impressed by my performance and the guy offered me a job so I'm just looking forward to when I go back home that he stills keeps up to that offer so if he does then I'll go back home and work for him if everything goes alright.*
> (PJ/S/June10/196-198)

In order to fulfill his desire to return home after completing his undergraduate degree in the United Kingdom, and to be an active player in the local construction industry, Participant J recognized the value in building a network to enable him to access educational and occupational opportunities. His access to institutional networks (through PSH) and professional networks (through local business contacts) have increased his capacity for returning home to the SCI (i.e., mobility) and "giving back."

Presently there are no official policies or programs offered in the SCI that offer support for return migrants. This has had an impact on the mobility of participants such as Participant H, who reflected on the existing economic state of the SCI and the absence of policies and programs to assist her in furthering her career when she returns home. As a result, Participant H has delayed her return home.

> *The whole financial instability and the government not being able to fund certain things efficiently…I don't know but probably by the time I get home things will be better but it's just that right now the country is in so much disarray…it's just, it doesn't look hopeful, which is another reason I don't want to go straight home at the time.*
> (PH/S/June2010/269)

Anticipating a lack of government support, Participant H discussed the potential that exists in accessing networks in the local business community.

> *I mean I believe there are people I can turn to who have somewhat of a business sense and how they would build a business. Um, I know there's a gentleman, he was actually trying to employ me after I finished* [her undergraduate degree in the United Kingdom] … *at the airport I believe. He's the…he's the manager of the airport and I think he would be somewhat helpful with that* [referring to assisting her to establish a weather centre or services on the island] ... *So that is the tie that I am looking at. I don't want to be…I'm*

> *hoping that the government will be able to help but I don't, you know, seeing what's going on at home* [referring to the current economic and political instability]. *I don't want to end up relying too much on the government.* (PH/S/June2010/267)

Without any formal government assistance in place, she discussed how she was preparing for the anticipated challenges she could face upon returning home to set up a weather centre.

> *I feel like I want to get back, sort of get myself back into the Caribbean culture and living there. Um I would not return home as yet, I don't think I would do that right after getting my PhD. There's a few institutions weather services in the Caribbean that I've been eyeing and I might work somewhere within the Caribbean for a few years and then at some point return home.* (PH/S/June2010/247)

> *After I've gotten my PhD….if I go out to the Caribbean one of the things I have in my mind to do is to probably work at an established weather centre – one that has been there for some time and probably a young one to sort of see how things are done…the kind of struggles and things you need to do in order to establish a weather centre so I can see the bumps and bruises and what needs to be done, what needs to be in place by the time I get home and want to start something up to that degree.* (PH/S/June2010/265)

Participant H explained that by gaining valuable experience outside of the SCI would allow her to build relationships with other meteorologists in the Caribbean, as well as to establish a network between the SCI and other weather centres off-island. Her desire to give back to the SCI involved a delay in her return to the SCI for the purposes of establishing a network to support her vision.

While there is evidence of networks already in place in the SCI, it became evident in this study that participants from PSH benefit from the relationships, knowledge, and networks nurtured and established by the predominantly expatriate teachers and administration of the school. The participants shared the experiences they had in accessing these networks, as well as the networks fostered through familial associations. It is important to note that not all students in the SCI (such as those attending public or religious schools) have such an easy access to networks. Since networks are vital to the career decision-making process and return migration, my analysis suggests that educational institutions and the business community should establish networks that will help all students studying abroad to maintain a connection with the local SCI

labour market. This connection would ensure that all emerging adults (whether graduates from private or public schools on the SCI) have equitable and easy access to information about local opportunities, thus increasing the possibility that they will return to the SCI, and the human capital in the SCI.

Finances

One of the most dynamic features of the connection between the contextual feature of finances and the mobility of participants driven by their desire for "giving back" to the SCI was that regardless of their ability to access financial support or not, participants see the SCI as a geographic location where there is the potential to generate and accumulate personal wealth. The turquoise blue waters and natural beauty of the SCI entices many tourists to visit the island each year, however participants noted that in addition to the attraction of the beaches and appealing island atmosphere there is an opportunity to make money.

> *It's beautiful here! I mean we have the best beaches and snorkeling. Lots of people who move here now, I mean well in the past few years a lot of people came here to make a quick buck because there was so much money here. Um, but I mean why not make a lot of money and live on a beach – it's not really a bad life* [Laughs]! (PR/F/May2010/114)

Interestingly, two aspects of this connection between finances and the mobility of participants driven by their desire of "giving back" were illuminated through excerpts from the data. First, participants recognize opportunities to contribute to the SCI's development in highly lucrative industries such as banking and real estate. The potential opportunity to participate in these profitable industries suggested a push factor for participants to pursue career opportunities in associated fields abroad, and a pull factor for return migration. Second, participants knew they had to survey the SCI landscape for opportunities to access financial capital in order to fuel their entrepreneurial spirit. The recent economic and political instability in the SCI has eliminated the financial capital available for small business development, and, this in turn, has delayed migration back to the SCI.

Participant TA, like many other participants, specifically decided to pursue an undergraduate degree in finance to gain entry into the lucrative offshore banking industry in the SCI. Although living in the United States at the time of the interview, she described seeking out

a career path that would enable her to find work at home in the SCI and afford her a more secure financial future.

> *Cause its home. It's the only home I know and* [at home in the SCI] *there are certain opportunities that are better, like banking for me. For what I want to do, I think banking there is better than it is here* [referring to Florida in the United States] *because especially like offshore and investment banking, it's more, it's a more part of, something that helps the economy drive and you can make money, but for here* [Florida]*, it's not that big.* (PTM/F/June2010/215)

In a follow-up conversation, Participant TM shared her more recent consideration of integrating her business background with the growing tourism industry. Despite the current lull in industry, she believes that when the economy does pick up there will be an opportunity to provide mobile massage therapy services to patrons at the various hotels and vacations homes visiting the island. As she surveyed unexplored niche markets on the island and considered the relatively low start-up costs for the business, she indicated that perhaps becoming certified as a registered massage therapist would be a smart entrepreneurial move. Participant TM's recognition of an opportunity to contribute to the SCI's development in a highly lucrative industry (i.e., tourism) reflects the connection between finances and the mobility of participants as her desire for "giving back" is strengthened with the potential to make money.

Many of the participants noted the potential for new business opportunities in the SCI by reflecting on the existing growth driven by foreigners seeing potential on the island, and by local entrepreneurs who see prospects in offering services that are available in larger and more developed locales but unavailable in the SCI.

> *I also feel that if you see what else is out there* [referring to off-island locales], *you can bring something here that isn't here, then I think there is a lot of opportunity here. I mean I don't know, I can't say cause most of what I know is from* [the SCI] *when I'm here, which isn't much but I know there is a lot of opportunity here…as long as you have funding…I really do* [see a lot of opportunity in the SCI]. (PA/F/May2010/106)

In this excerpt, Participant PA shared how return migration is linked to funding. Other participants described how they pursued purposively educational opportunities abroad that subsequently could be used to contribute to the island's development. However, in the economic

slowdown and political uncertainty, these entrepreneurial possibilities have become less appealing because of the inherent financial risks and either delayed their return migration, or deferred their entrepreneurial pursuits.

> *When I came back* [during school breaks while pursuing his undergraduate degree in the United Kingdom], *like what I would do was I would look around while I was in England and Wales and see and try to find things we didn't have here that we had over there and try to establish it here* [referring to the SCI] [915]…*What service can I provide that are, that is a much needed service. And so that was my way of thinking back then. And then once everything, you know, cause I actually made several, I made lots of plans, you know, like different businesses, like thoughtful ones, I planned it out in depth* [so I could start something when I came back]. *After I came back* [after completing his undergraduate degree in the United Kingdom] *everything died down and I basically threw them all out the window and focused on what I'd actually gone to school for and found a job…maybe when things pick up I can look at them again* [referring to this business plans] [917]. (PB/F/May2010/915, 917)

The desire of "giving back" continues to be a factor in the career decisions of participants, but the decreased availability of financial capital and the associated risks in entrepreneurial investments have altered their mobility. For example, Participants such as Participant H (in excerpts shared earlier) and TM have delayed their return home, while others have returned home but have changed their occupations. However, the participants' desire for "giving back" to the SCI appears to supersede the challenges associated with the current socioeconomic uncertainty. They have a strong commitment to the SCI and, overall, are more optimistic than not about the financial opportunities that are available to them as young entrepreneurs and industry professionals.

As Thomas-Hope (2002) suggests, Caribbean states must devise strategies to retain and attract human capital if they want to further their development and participation in the global economy. It is vitally important to understand the motivations and the push/pull factors of mobility in order to develop policies and establish programs to retain and attract human capital. The characteristics of "giving back" that thread through the excerpts of data demonstrate that the participants in this study have an awareness of existing opportunity on the islands, have concerns about the lack of government support for returning migrants and realizing their entrepreneurial

visions, and about the existing socioeconomic uncertainty. Remarkably, regardless of the uncertainty of their futures, participants described how they assess the possible benefits and challenges of returning to the SCI, and consider the capacity in which they may be permitted to contribute to the local economy. This assessment translates into mobility that is contingent on the possibility to create opportunities and engage in existing opportunities in their fields of expertise. Participants also consider the social, political, and economic climate and reflect on their readiness and willingness to immerse themselves in the ever-evolving uncertainty and/or the promising (and perhaps inevitable) development. These considerations may or may not translate into immediate return migration but the insight gained from this analysis can be used to determine what can be inserted into career decisions of emerging adults that would continue to foster their desire for "giving back."

Exploring the Theme of "Going With the Flow"

The thematic analysis of interview data discussed in Chapter Three revealed that the theme of "going with the flow" was a common thread throughout the career stories of emerging adults from the SCI. There were moments in participants' career pathways that evolved without any forethought, planning, or deliberate action with regard to educational and occupational decisions. Similarly, residency time lines discussed in Chapter Four, illustrated obvious fragmentations in participants' career trajectories where individuals appeared to be engaging in "non-ideal" career activities (see Figure 10) or were frequently moving on- and off-island (see Figure 11). The revisiting of these interview segments through a lens of mobility confirmed a connection between participants' capacity to engage in unplanned and spontaneously presented career opportunities without hesitation and their movement on and off-island. Additionally, the four contextual features that emerged through collage analysis corroborated participants' unplanned and spontaneous mobility as being either enabled or limited by birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances. The excerpts I have mentioned here are shared in the following discussion.

Birthright

As I defined in Chapter Five (see page 130), the contextual feature of birthright reflects the nationality and ethnicity of participants. Birthright was found to connect with the ways in

which participants engage in "going with the flow" by providing emerging adults with the ability to travel to various countries without the need to prepare applications for student visas or work permits, and/or with the affordance of familial ties to geographic locations where resources can be easily accessed (such as residences, family members, etc.). For example, the residency time line of Participant I visually validated her frequent movement between the SCI, Europe and Africa. Excerpts from the data illustrated how much of her mobility was unplanned and spontaneous—she freely pursued adventures and opportunities as they were presented to her, such as a gap year in Australia and a study sojourn in Africa. As I reviewed the data further and reflected on the contextual feature of birthright, it became evident that Participant I's "going with the flow" career trajectory had been enabled by the flexibility afforded to British passport holders, by her citizenship in the European Union, and by her family's ownership of land and ongoing residency status in Africa. For example, while preparing for her graduate school entrance examinations, Participant I made the rather sudden decision to study in the comfort of her family's residence in Africa.

> *I graduated in June* 2010 [from a university in the United Kingdom]…*in the meantime you know, I decided to go out to Malawi for a while. So I went out to Malawi and I did the exams there* [to qualify for a physiotherapy program] *… I've got my masters in human rights starting in September* [back in the United Kingdom] [99]… *I was kind of back and forth between London and there* [Malawi] [103]. (PI/S/July2010/99-103)

The relative ease in which Participant I explained her carefree mobility between the United Kingdom and Africa is supported by her nationality status which is linked to the contextual feature of birthright. Similarly, other participants such as Participant TM and TA frequently referred to their spontaneous mobility between the SCI and America. As both are local Islanders who were born in the USA, the ability to pursue career opportunities in the United States was facilitated by their birthright affiliations with both countries. Both participants spoke about applying for jobs at home and abroad, about how their decisions to move on and off-island were dependent on wherever and whenever they received a job offer or institutional acceptance letter first. Accordingly, their "going with the flow" mobility was facilitated by their birthright.

In another scenario that illustrates the serendipitous and/or spontaneous mobility of participants "going with the flow" as they explored and pursued career opportunities, Participant C described how she decided to move off-island to Canada, following her boyfriend who had

gained entrance into a college in Alberta. Fortunately, while he had prepared for months to obtain a student visa and to secure finances for his international tuition and living costs, Participant C was able to whimsically follow him with her Canadian passport in hand and with the support of local family members who resided in a nearby city. Interestingly, within a year of relocating to Canada she dissolved her relationship and promptly packed her bags to return back to the SCI for a short while.

> *What I hadn't prepared for which became a huge shock to me was breaking up at that time, you know the love of my life, the man that I was supposed to marry and dropping out of university. That year of my life was the most unorganized, chaotic… um just fly by the seat of your pants kind of a year. (*PC/S/June2010/478)

Participant C admitted that she was fortunate that her familiarity and affiliation with both the SCI and Canada presented options to her during a rather unsettling time along her career trajectory. She described how she was able to escape easily from the stresses of wherever she was (either in the SCI or Canada) because her birthright afforded her the freedom and time to explore different options in various geographic locales.

> *It was amazing to feel that* [referring to the chaos and freedom she experienced when she broke up with her boyfriend and dropped out of university] *for once in my life because I had always been…I've always been referred to as the' mama', always, forever…yeah I've never been the girl that gets out of control, I've never been the person… I'm always the responsible person, so that year was kind of where I went a little crazy. Um, I explored so many different options for work, for school, for everything. (*PC/S/June2010/478)

After a few months in the SCI healing from her break-up, she returned to Alberta and worked for a while. Then she enrolled in an international business program at a local college. At the time of the interview, Participant C was completing her last year of an undergraduate degree and was thinking about the island of Aruba as her next stop. She described hearing about the island from a former PSH classmate of hers.

> *He just moved, ah he's been moving all over the place. They went from St. Martin, they went down to Trinidad and Tobago, and now he's in Aruba. And he's on the Dutch side*

> *and he's…I've never heard him speak more highly of a place and he's literally been all over the Caribbean!* (PC/S/June2010/46)

She discussed with excitement how she wanted to leave for Aruba immediately after graduation with her boyfriend. When I asked her about work permits and job availability, she indicated that she did not expect there to be any issues.

> *I'm straight up Canadian, so is my boyfriend, but I do not know how that works out, but I'm sure if you're wanted by a company then it'll happen, that kind of thing.* (PC/S/June2010/48)

In a follow-up conversation with Participant C, she shared how she had found it challenging to secure work in Aruba without a British or Dutch passport, and how her future plans to relocate will require more planning than her previous ones.

The excerpts from the data corroborated the idea of mobility with the theme of "going with the flow," and confirmed that the contextual feature of birthright intersects with participants' capacity to freely move between geographic locales. The excerpts from interviews with Participants I and C here, as well as previously shared excerpts from Participant TA and TM's career trajectories illuminate how nationality can either enable or limit the "going with the flow" career decisions of participants.

Autonomy

An analysis of the residency time lines and collage work juxtaposed with the thematically delineated excerpts categorized as "going with the flow" confirm how the contextual feature of autonomy (reflected in participants' self-sufficiency, self-awareness, and self-efficacy, as described on page 130) enable and/or limit participants' mobility to explore and pursue career opportunities without much forethought.

Excerpts from Participant R's career story provide an example of how being an independent single young woman enabled her to explore various career pathways without much preparation. Early in her postsecondary career exploration she considered attending school in a Canadian city but then suddenly changed her mind a month before the beginning of the semester.

> *I switched between a hundred different things…I wanted to paint cars, I wanted to be a car detailer, I wanted to do like custom work, and then I wanted to do car stereo systems*

> [22]… *And then I decided I wanted to be a fashion designer and was looking to go to this school in Montreal…I went there and did the tour and everything, was gonna do it and then, that was like a month before I decided to come back here* [to the SCI] *and I was just like ah, come back home, tired of Canada, it's too cold* [24]! (PR/F/May20/22-24)

With her carefree attitude and little attention devoted to career planning, Participant R openly admitted to being interested in a lot of things, but was unable to commit herself to a specific program of study.

> *I really didn't want to go to school so as soon as I had the opportunity to not, I didn't and just wanted to learn a little bit of everything* [chuckles]. (PR/F/May2010/90)

> *I don't really know what I wanted to take and I think the biggest thing, the reason I never went to actually get a degree or diploma or anything like that is because I couldn't commit for that long! Like for all the things that I was like, "oh I'm interested in doing this," it was a four-year program. There's no way I'm going to do it. That's why I was more interested in doing courses…six-week courses…* (PR/F/May2010/199)

Participant R's spontaneous mobility included sudden decisions to move on and off-island to enroll in a variety of diploma arts courses, assist a friend with a project, spend time with friends and family, and skip from job to job. She was afforded such freedom without consequence.

Interestingly, at the time of the interview, Participant R reflected on how her past indecisiveness about a particular career pathway and "going with the flow" attitude was enabled by her self-sufficiency and the absence of any particular responsibilities tying her to one geographic locale. However, as she became a young mother, she described how the responsibility of parenthood has limited her spontaneous mobility and chance-taking.

> *…when I got pregnant obviously there was no more going out, there was no more partying, I was not the priority anymore. My paychecks couldn't be blown on whatever I wanted, no more shopping and then that's when I realized I needed to get a better job, so I went and found a better job.* (PR/F/May10/152)

Despite dismissing any interest and value in pursuing college studies and being adamant that she did not want to ever leave the SCI, Participant R's career trajectory changed with the birth of her son. She began to seriously explore and pursue educational and occupational opportunities.

During a follow-up conversation with Participant R a year after the interview, she indicated that the responsibilities associated with motherhood led her to return to Canada to enroll in a college accounting program. After carefully exploring her career options and considering the job market in the SCI, she decided that it would be better to move off-island to pursue a business diploma focused on accounting, in a city where she could access additional support, such as local tuition at the college, health benefits from the state, and family assistance with childcare. It was Participant R's awareness of her personal responsibilities that limited her ability to enjoy, as she had previously, the luxury of simply "going with the flow." At this point in her life she was compelled to make career decisions to provide a better life for her child. Similarly, Participant J discussed how the birth of his daughter limited his ability to pursue opportunities anywhere, anytime. He said that his reason for leaving the SCI to pursue undergraduate studies in the United Kingdom was driven by the need to provide for his family, whereas in the past he had not given much thought about how his mobility had an impact on those around him.

> *…having my daughter, you know, it's like knowing that it's not only me anymore. That you know I need to grow and continue to do well, most of the responsibility is on me. That you have to be more responsible and turn out and be a provider and a father.* (PJ/S/June10/380)

As a father and the eldest sibling in his family, Participant J acknowledged a shift in his career decisions. He noted that his primary reason for returning home to the SCI was to attend to family responsibilities, whereas as prior to becoming a father he had the luxury of being able to explore and pursue opportunities in a variety of geographic locations.

The excerpts I have shared here have shown how autonomy has both facilitated and limited participants' capacity to simply "go with the flow." The excerpts from Participant I's career story demonstrate the connection between autonomy and the mobility of emerging adults and how the characteristic of self-efficacy provided participants with enough confidence to take chances and to casually explore and pursue educational and occupational options.

> *Um it's a very strange story…we had this student counselor who I don't like very much and he kept talking that Bristol is this wonderful place but telling me that I wouldn't get in so I shouldn't bother…So there isn't really any solid reason* [I decided to go]*…like I*

> *didn't even really go and visit it before I went but it having a reputation and based on my brother telling me it was a beautiful city I was like okay!* (PI/S/July2010/84)

Several participants described their career decisions as being somewhat "random" responses to what they heard from others. They dismissed what they were told they couldn't do, and they considered options without much thought given to the potential consequences.

> *This is very random as well. Like I got towards the end of my degree…and then somewhere along the way, I guess cause of my gap year and some of the work I did, I decided that maybe I would actually really like to do physiotherapy* [96*]…I mean I guess the only strengths, and I know this sounds very cliché but the only strength is that I really like the idea of helping people, so, but then my parents were like "Well you know, why don't you do that after you graduate". So I graduated in June 2010, they were like well, "Why don't you spend the year, do the exams you need to do to do physiotherapy*"*... and I guess that's what's I did next* [99]. (PI/S/July2010/96, 99)

The excerpts I have shared show the multifaceted connections between autonomy and the mobility of participants "going with the flow." While their self-sufficiency may have provided them with the freedom to spontaneously pursue opportunities wherever and whenever they arise, their self-awareness led them to question the potential consequences of their carefree and unplanned actions and persuaded them to resist "going with the flow." Undoubtedly, self-efficacy mediated the rather spontaneous actions of these emerging adults who took chances, "to roll with the punches," and follow their hearts.

Networks

For the purposes of this study, I defined networks as reflecting the significance of interdependency, the importance of sharing resources, and the benefits of building relationships with individuals from educational, community, and political institutions. A review of interview segments confirmed a connection between these aspects of networks and that of mobility among the participants who described "going with the flow" in their career trajectories. The excerpts I share here illuminate how the access to networks facilitated participants' mobility by offering career opportunities to them that were unplanned and unexpected. In these instances the participants seized the opportunity(ies) by "going with the flow."

Participant I repeatedly referred to "strange" and "random" events that occurred during her career trajectory. She admitted she really had not planned or purposely sought out many of the activities in which she had engaged. For example, while preparing her application and studying for her exams to study physiotherapy, she unexpectedly connected with a friend who worked for the United Nations. After a few conversations she was encouraged to pursue a graduate degree in human rights. Her friend advised her how to go about doing this, suggested a program of study, and assisted her with the application process.

> … *but then I also had one of my really good friends who came to visit and she works at the UN and she got me really excited all over again about human rights and encouraged me to apply for my Masters* [99]*…it was a really random thing. I was talking to her and she was like "Well you know, why not? Just write a reference statement, send it off and see what happens". And then yeah! Like I didn't think anything of it because I applied so late but then I got it so I told my parents and they said why don't you do that and then alongside that you can apply for physiotherapy and jobs and then when it gets to the end of the year you can finally make your decision and work too* [101]. (PI/S/July2010/96-101)

Throughout her international schooling experiences, Participant I discussed how she had met a lot of people whose parents worked for international organizations and as diplomats. She indicated that her network of former peers and colleagues were an asset because they provided her with valuable information as well as contacts which helped her pursue opportunities in a variety of career fields. Like several other participants, Participant I admitted that many of her career decisions were based on her pursuit of opportunities that became available to her unexpectedly because of relationships she had nurtured and maintained throughout the years of moving between the SCI, Europe and Africa.

After completing her freshman year at college in the United States, Participant KS returned home and announced to her parents that she did not want to continue her studies. During this break in the SCI, she was presented with an opportunity to study law at a small university in the United Kingdom. Prior to that, she had not planned to pursue a career in law, but when confronted with this unexpected opportunity by a close friend of her father, she decided to go into law.

> *…I did really well my first year…I came home over the summer and was just sitting down having a conversation with my parents and decided I'm not going back…They* [parents] *were very open minded…because I said I wanted to do something that was more stimulating, etcetera etcetera…a friend of the family…explained to me that he did the law program in the UK…and that's how I got onto that…he wrote me a recommendation, I got in and I was there* [in] *January.* (PKS/F/May2010/181-191)

These excerpts show how Participant KS changed her mind about journalism after one year, and with the support of her family and the guidance of a local lawyer in her family's network changed to a career in law. Quickly without much consideration or preparation for a career in law she moved off-island to the United Kingdom; all of this within a matter of months after suddenly deciding she no longer wanted to attend college in the United States. Participant KS acknowledged the spontaneous nature of her decision to change college majors during a summer break and move between three continents in less than six months. I was unable to fully grasp the forces that enabled Participant KS's effortless mobility at the time I explored the residency time lines and was curious to understand what features of her career story had afforded her the freedom to pursue such opportunities. It was by using the contextual feature of networks as a lens, that the interview excerpts categorized as "going with the flow" illuminated what had enabled Participant KS to pursue career opportunities on a whim.

As defined earlier, networks involve relationships with personal, educational, community and political institutions. In the excerpts I have shared here, "going with the flow" was enabled through the unexpected availability of opportunities offered to participants through individuals connected with particular career fields and/or institutions. In these career stories, participants were unsure of their career pathways. They had not prepared for the options presented by others. In other cases, participants described preparing for particular educational and occupational opportunities, but were then discouraged from pursuing such options by individuals who believed another career path would be a better choice. In these situations, participants were guided into rather spontaneous career decisions. Such is the case with Participant L who had initially prepared for a career in law, but was unable to move off-island to pursue her degree because she needed to care for a family member who was ill. As a result, and with prompting from mentors in the community, she quickly enrolled in a business program at the local Community College.

> *Okay, the reason I chose business was because, before I, before I chose a career program to do in College, everyone was like "What do you want to do?" "What are you going to do?" And I was like, I was to do law, I want to learn, I want to be a lawyer. And everyone I told that to, just about everyone I told me to not; they were like..."Man, so many lawyers are going to be here in the country and this and that, why don't you try to do something else?"* [72]*…So I said okay. I said to myself, okay, I like math and I like figures (numbers and stuff) and whatever so I said okay* [74]*...I'll try, I'll try and take a look at finance. So I went into finance and chose the business program* [80]. (PL/F/May2010/72-80)

After attending to her ill sister and completing her first year of finance at the Community College, Participant L realized that she did not feel connected to the field of finance in the way she had with law. Her older sister, who worked as a police officer, suggested that she should apply to the Police Force and put her in contact with the Commissioner of Police.

> *…I went to work at Customs, it was just like a temporary job…I have a sister, she's also a police officer…and I have a nephew now who's a police officer* [28]*...I'll apply for the Force and make money at the same time, and I'll use it as a stepping stone to my law career so I'll be familiarized with the law.* (PL/F/May2010/84)

Within weeks after receiving advice from her sister, Participant L moved off-island to study for the foundations of policing. Because of the job security and upward mobility afforded to her by the Police Force, and through the mentorship received by the Commissioner of Police, she changed from her original aspiration to study law. Participant L's career story shows how "going with the flow" was facilitated by individuals who were connected with particular career fields and institutions. These networks enabled her to make rather sudden and unexpected changes in her career path. It was the access to networks that allowed Participants I, KS, and L to explore and pursue educational and occupational opportunities without much planning for or consideration of the consequences. They were encouraged to benefit from their relationships with individuals connected to opportunities in a variety of fields by "going with the flow" and learning from these unexpected experiences.

Finances

Access to finances is a resource that fuels the capacity to explore and pursue career opportunities anywhere, anytime. Without much concern or consideration for the associated costs of plane tickets, accommodations, foreign tuition, or additional personal expenses, participants were able to engage in spontaneous mobility by "going with the flow" as they pursued educational and occupational options without forethought. Such is the case with Participant I, who opted to take a gap year after completing her secondary school studies. As she became friends with peers from around the world during her schooling, her curiosity grew about exploring other geographies. Australia popped into her mind as a destination during her summer break before the start of college in the United Kingdom. With the financial support of her parents, she took a gap year and travelled to Australia and volunteered in an orphanage in Mexico.

> *I took a gap year and I traveled in Australia for a while and then I came back here* [referring to the SCI] *to work for like four or five months. That was the deal with my parents, was if I worked for a while then they would sponsor me to go and do some traveling* [76]*…And then I spent six months in Mexico working in an orphanage and then I started university in England* [78]. (PI/S/June2010/76-78)

I asked Participant I if she had prepared for her gap year by working part-time at the local grocery store. She admitted that her earnings were merely a drop in the bucket, but that they satisfied her parents who financed her year of travel.

Participant I also shared that it was a rather spontaneous decision to volunteer in Mexico when she had learned from her peers about the opportunity to volunteer at an orphanage. She indicated that her parents and older siblings believed that this experience would add value to her gap year by giving her the time to determine a college major. As I reviewed Participant I's interview, I had recorded a reflective memo about the unexpected costs associated with international volunteerism.

> *Although there is a gamut of organizations encouraging young people to travel and participate in international volunteerism it is important to keep in mind that travel and personal expenses for food are typically the responsibility of the participant. Fortunately, Participant I was able to participate in the gap year opportunities she desired with*

> *financial assistance from her parents. However, this is not an option for everyone.* (Reflective Memo/July 12, 2012/Contextual Features)

It was evident that Participant I's "going with the flow" career decisions were enabled by the finances afforded to her by her family. This was evidenced further when I compared her pathway to that of Participant A, where access to finances limited her from "going with the flow." Participant A said that she had a keen interest in travelling abroad during her summer breaks in college, but that the option was unaffordable. Instead, it was necessary for her to return home to the SCI and work in order to save for the upcoming school year and build relationships with potential employers at home.

> *My Mom doesn't have money for me to go traveling and you know get that experience. . And getting a job after like a year in university would be really difficult especially in England. I wouldn't be able to support myself* [150]*…cause once you're out* [out of school] *you have to pay a Counsel tax, you know, and you have like all these things that you already have to pay, and I was like shit, there's no way I can support myself here. My Mom had no money after that so then okay, I'm going to come* [home to the SCI]*, earn some money and then leave. Like that's my thing. Save money and go, right. And so I started, I did an internship here summer 2008* [172]. (PA/F/May10/150, 172)

Although seemingly satisfied with her decision to gain work experience, Participant A had commented on the finances afforded to Participant I who was her peer at PSH.

> *…she's lucky because her parents can support her wherever she…you know she's traveled so much and her parents continuously support her, whatever she wants to do, and they have the patience for her to be like, "Oh this jobs not working out, maybe three months' time I can get a job." My Mom's like, "Get a job now!", cause by the time you finish, like working the next day you should…I mean, by the time you finish the university the next day you should be having work. So that was sort of mine.* (PA/F/May2010/272)

The excerpts I have shared above illuminate how the contextual feature of finances connect with the ability for emerging adults from the SCI to participate in rather spontaneous mobility and international career activities without the need to account for the cost of associated expenses and/or loss of wages.

What was particularly interesting to learn about participants' career stories and the connection between finances and "going with the flow" was that access to economic resources enabled participants to engage in unplanned and unexpected career opportunities which all participants felt were valuable experiences that would enhance their career trajectories. Regardless of access to economic resources, all participants acquired some form of postsecondary education or preparation (whether a two-year professional designation or a four-year undergraduate degree).

> *I was trying to get a government scholarship the year, the time I finished PSH. I sent in tons of applications and only until almost last year when I was coming to do my final year* [of his undergraduate degree]*, they called and said, "we want to help you now" and stuff, but I was almost finished. So it was difficult for me because I saw all my other friends that were getting scholarships and they were going off and parents were helping them do anything they wanted, and I was stuck at home. So I was always just like I have to try something, and I just kept trying…* (PJ/S/June10/290)

Also, during the time of the data collection, all emerging adults were pursuing educational and occupational opportunities with a desire to be independent, successful, and fulfilled by their career decisions. I believe this illustrates the resiliency and perseverance of participants who have described and rationalized their careers decisions and motivations without having access to the finances that were abundantly available to some of their peers. More importantly, the perseverance of emerging adults is an indication of how four forms of contextual features (birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances) intersect with the frequent spontaneous mobility of participants who are "going with the flow," but do not hinder the purposeful pursuit of educational and occupational opportunities on and off-island.

Summary

This chapter has provided excerpts from the data to corroborate the connection between the idea of mobility (emerging from the analysis of residency time lines) and four contextual features (emerging through the analysis of collage work) to illustrate the themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow." A detailed overview of the analytic process was provided in a graphic chart in Figure 21. I proceeded to explore each theme, using excerpts from

interview data to show how birthright, autonomy, networks and finances intersect with participants' capacity to engage in mobility. The mobility of participants reflected various push and pull factors that were synthesized from the three themes which emerged from the constant comparison analysis discussed in Chapter Three. Push factors to leave the SCI included the lack of postsecondary educational institutions available in the SCI, the current socioeconomic uncertainty that posed challenges in securing government assistance and/or work, and the relative smallness of the island that gave participants the impetus to explore other landscapes. Pull factors to off-island locations included the ability to access local tuition or secure a job because of citizenship or residency status (i.e., British passport, American birth certificate, etc.), government support in the form of financial aid or work preparation programs, the support of family and friends living abroad, access to established relationships/networks, and the opportunity to acquire professional education (or qualifications/designations) that would enable individuals to be competitive in the SCI's local labour market upon their return home.

A closer look into the theme of "shifting" revealed that the career stories of emerging adults from the SCI are unique because participants engage in mobility by venturing back and forth between the SCI and off-island geographic locations for a variety of reasons. The reasons for their shifting on and off-island included accessing postsecondary education and associated resources, exploring off-island locations for personal leisure and learning, visiting friends and family during holidays or in between career activities, working to gain valuable experience, accessing and/or accumulating personal and financial resources, and exploring or preparing for new opportunities. The excerpts confirmed that participants' birthright (i.e., national or ethnic affiliation with the SCI and other countries such as the United States and United Kingdom) has allowed them to move freely and rather effortlessly between different geographic locations without concern for student visas or work permits. The data also corroborated the connection of autonomy with the mobility of participants who were shifting on and off-island by showing how emerging adults who are independent (self-sufficient), cognizant of their responsibilities (self-aware), and have a sense of personal capabilities and potential (self-efficacy) appear to be better prepared and able to move frequently on and off-island. Networks helped participants in their shifting because they provided information, opportunities, and resources that enhanced participant mobility. Certainly, there are costs associated with mobility and the role of finances was shown to restrain, delay, or deter participants' shifting (i.e., a burden), or to enable emerging

adults to freely shift on and off-island and between various geographic locations without hesitation or concern for expenses (i.e., a facilitator).

The theme of "giving back" confirmed that birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances are closely connected with the consideration and/or desire of participants to return home to the SCI after exploring and pursuing educational and occupational opportunities. The excerpts I shared in this chapter showed how local Islander participants expressed a sense of responsibility and commitment to contributing to the growth of their ancestral homeland. Also, I have shared excerpts which demonstrate the strong attachment expatriate participants have to the SCI. These excerpts show how their desire for return migration has motivated them to make career decisions that will eventually lead them back to the SCI. Despite the disheartenment associated with the changing social and political landscape of the SCI, birthright and autonomy supersedes this concern for the participants collectively shared a sense of confidence about their ability to engage in the local economy, by realistically considering opportunities that would navigate around the challenges and allow them to contribute to the development of the SCI. Participants envisioned their contributions as professional services, industry knowledge and participation, mentorship of the younger generation, and as local entrepreneurs targeting unexplored niche markets on the island. I discussed in this chapter how an awareness of the socioeconomic uncertainty made participants realize the value of networks for the assistance they can provide for returning home. All of the participants described the importance of cultivating relationships, and the value in connecting with educational, community, and political institutions. These networks help to signal potential employers, provide financing opportunities, and to connect individuals with opportunities. Furthermore, the data suggested how it is important for the SCI's public and private institutions to build networks that can help to retain and attract human capital to the island. Although the current competitiveness of the local job market and economic slowdown have delayed some participants from returning home, participants described making career decisions that would prepare them to engage in the SCI's highly lucrative industries (such as banking and real estate) when the economy begins to boom again. The interview data confirmed that participants are very aware of the associated pull factors to, and economic benefits of life in the SCI (i.e., a tax-free location, a relative reasonable cost of living, free education and health care, and the profitable possibilities to engage the entrepreneurial spirit).

As I connected the four contextual features with the mobility of participants engaged with "going with the flow," I learned more about how emerging adults from the SCI explored and pursued career opportunities without much preparation or careful consideration. Excerpts from the interview data showed how birthright and residency affiliation with more than one country have allowed participants to pursue a variety of educational and occupational opportunities without the usual burden of securing visas, work permits, or additional costs that international migrants carry which often require careful advanced planning. Also, participants discussed how their autonomy either enabled or limited their ability in "going with the flow" by spontaneously allowing them to explore and pursue unexpected career opportunities without much forethought. Excerpts from participants' career stories showed how family responsibilities (such as children, aging or ill relatives) presented challenges to mobility because these responsibilities limited their capacity for "going with the flow." Attending to these kinds of responsibilities required the participants to consider carefully how a decision to move on- and off-island would affect others and have an impact on their careers. The data excerpts confirmed that emerging adults with self-efficacy are more likely to engage in "going with the flow" because they possess the confidence required to take chances and pursue experiences with little preparation. Networks were shown to be facilitators of career opportunities because they offered avenues and resources to the participants to pursue various educational and occupational options both on and off the island. Often, participants engaging in "going with the flow" were able to do so with the assistance, resources, and/or guidance from individuals affiliated with educational, community, or political institutions where relationships had been established, or through personal contacts acquired through the individual or family relations. In addition to the benefits of accessing networks, access to finances through either familial support, scholarships/bursaries, and/or other resources were found to help emerging adults pursue unexpected and spontaneous opportunities without the worry associated with the costs of purchasing a last-minute plane ticket, or incurring unexpected expenses due to minimal planning or careful consideration.

As I connected the four contextual features with the idea of mobility embedded in "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow," I recognized that emerging adults whose mobility was enabled by birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances (rather than being limited) could be regarded as privileged. Upon further reflection, I realized that the four contextual features were related to socioeconomic resources. I referred back to the existing empirical

literature I provided in Chapter Two which attends to the association of race, class, gender, and socioeconomic background with various sources of privilege that impact on the career development of young people. What became apparent is that it took capital, as we know it in the field of career development, to support the mobility of participants contributing to this study. While I had not anticipated making this connection in my analysis, Bourdieu's (1986, 1977) discussion of social capital had relevance to my evolving understanding of participants' career stories (see page 37). However, I would argue that the deeper analytical interpretations of participants' career decisions I have shared here confirm a much more dynamic interaction between the four contextual features and the idea of mobility; a relationship far more complex than one based on simply accessing resources and support for individuals.

The emerging adults in this study are a vibrant, resilient, globally aware group of young people whose collective career stories do not reflect that one group of individuals (such as expatriates) are advantaged with particular forms of capital that supersede the resources available to another group of individuals (such as local Islanders). Having said this, it is important to point out that this finding is specific to the context of this study where both groups of emerging adults (expatriates and local Islanders) were privileged because they attended PSH. Interestingly, the data reveals how these emerging adults from the SCI navigate their career trajectories in connection with the collective presence and/or absence of birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances used to facilitate their mobility. While the four contextual features support and/or limit the mobility of participants, their career stories cannot be attributed to a set of decisions based solely on the affordance of social capital. Instead, the career stories of these emerging adults from the SCI are reflections of an unfolding process of decision-making based on the developing socioeconomic landscape of the SCI, which has seen robust growth in previous years and is currently challenged by the effects of political uncertainty and the global economic crisis. Accordingly, the participants contributing to this study have described their career decisions based on the necessity to be mobile which I have conceptualized as the themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow." Furthermore, the contextual features that I have delineated demonstrate the ways in which emerging adults have rationalized how living in a labour market during a boom and/or bust period of socioeconomic and infrastructure development has contributed to their career decisions because of the need to engage in mobility for the purposes of pursuing postsecondary educational opportunities to explore professional

occupational experiences, and acquire the knowledge and skills required to become valuable human capital for the SCI.

In the following chapter, I suggest that the work carried out in this study is a pivotal piece for the existing body of research focused on the career development of young people. Chapter Seven uses reflective memos recorded throughout the analytic process and the findings shared in Chapter Six to build an explanation to respond to the overarching research question driving this study.

CHAPTER SEVEN:
UNCOVERING STORIES, DISCOVERING EXPERIENCES, BUILDING A THEORY

This chapter is my overall interpretation of the career stories of emerging adults from the SCI. I begin by referencing reflective memos recorded throughout the analytic process to reflect on the findings shared in Chapter Six. Then I build a theory which I believe responds to the overarching research question driving this study: *How does living in a labour market during a boom and/or bust period of socioeconomic and infrastructure development in a small Caribbean island (SCI) contribute (or not) to the educational and occupational (career) decisions of local emerging adults?*

Uncovering Stories by Revisiting Reflective Memos

As I corroborated the themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow" (reflective of the idea of mobility uncovered through the analysis of residency time lines) with the four contextual features of birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances (uncovered through the analysis of collage work), I learned how participants described their career decisions in conjunction with the inherent (or necessary) mobility required to access educational and occupational opportunities off-island. Also, I learned how their desire to return to the SCI illuminates the potential for the SCI to retain and attract human capital for the island's socioeconomic and infrastructure development, and subsequent survival in the global economy. To delve deeper into the connection between the idea of mobility and the contextual features supporting participants' mobility, I revisited reflective memos recorded during each state of the analytic process. In particular, as I returned to the series of memos recorded while analyzing the geographic residency time lines of participants, I found that on several occasions I had referred to the behaviours of participants as being nomadic in nature.

> *The expatriate students seem to be straddling between two countries—definite "shifting." From a geographic perspective there is something quite migratory occurring here. They seem somewhat nomadic.* (Reflective Memo/June 3, 2011/Residency Time Lines)

> *There is something very different in the career trajectories of the participants. They are all frequently moving between two countries—one minute in the SCI, the other in the UK*

or the USA. Especially the expatriate students who seem to be straddling between two countries—definite "shifting" which makes them somewhat global citizens I suppose, like modern nomads. From a geographic perspective there is definitely something quite nomadic about their behaviour (Reflective Memo/June 4, 2011/Residency Time Lines)

I'm actually surprised how similar the patterns are among expat and local participants. Almost all of them are moving, constantly. While some delay leaving the islands and others leave immediately after graduating high school, everyone does leave at some point and then returns, leaves again…it's a mobility cycle. As I refer back to the interview data there isn't always a reason behind why they move or "shift" so often. They're like nomads, roaming around, searching and seeking out opportunity. (Reflective Memo/June 5, 2011/Residency Time Lines)

Participant I freely considers herself a "global citizen," typical of a TCK (see "Third Culture Kids" described in Chapter Two on page 53). *But the other participants are not so blatantly aware of how their highly mobile career trajectories are so different from emerging adults from North America (at least the ones I have worked with and studied in the literature). Despite growing up on a small and somewhat isolated community, all of the participants describe and rationalize leaving "home" to pursue (career) opportunities as obvious decisions that they must make. Perhaps it's the smallness of the islands and the obvious existence of the outside world (as they witness the development) that sparks this almost nomadic lifestyle of moving wherever opportunities seems to exist and hoping to find their way home.* (Reflective Memo/June 8, 2011/Residency Time Lines)

While I had not given much thought to my "nomadacy" (or "nomadism") metaphor at the time I was writing these memos, when I returned to them, initially they conjured up my socialized images of the traditional tribal sense of a nomadic lifestyle; people moving from one place to another in search of food and a livelihood. These images undoubtedly reflect the deficit notions that have been linked to the term. However, the term did seem to have some resonance with the mobility notion that emerged in the career stories of participants (Cresswell, 1997; Kabachnik, 2010). At this point in my burgeoning understanding of the phenomenon under study, it was important to attend to these initial thoughts and impressions as I needed to understand why these

initial impressions appeared and how they might have had an impact on my interpretation of the data.

When I carefully read through the analytic "nomadic" observations I had recorded and juxtaposed these with excerpts from the categorized interview data, the traditional tribal sense of nomadacy faded. Instead, I realized that the career stories of the participants revealed a modern-day movement of people. While interestingly echoing some nomadic features in their mobility (such as moving from place to place), these career stories seemed more illustrative of a 'postmodern' notion of nomadacy; that is, a less primitive and deficit view of nomadism that extends beyond the existing literature on highly mobile career professionals who have been labeled "nomadic" because of their frequent travels (Hall, 2004; Iredale, 2001; McKenna & Richardson, 2007). Also, I began to see how this notion of a "postmodern nomad" encompassed the fluidity of contextual features (i.e., birthright, autonomy, networks and finances) that I had discovered related to mobility. This association prompted me to inquire into the pejorative use of the term nomadacy and to address the polemical concept of nomadacy as it relates to the career stories of emerging adults from the SCI.

Discovering the Postmodern Nomad

As I have explained earlier, a pivotal part of my evolving understanding of participants' career stories was through the exploration of themes in conjunction with the idea of mobility (and the contextual features that I discovered were linked to the themes that I labeled "projecting" and "doing it for me"). However, it was only when I revisited my reflective memos over time and in conjunction with the themes and contextual features that a more comprehensive interpretation of what was happening became apparent. Suddenly, I experienced an "eureka" moment when I realized that the term nomadacy, which was sprinkled throughout my memos, provided a metaphor and a lens for understanding more deeply what was occurring in these career stories (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). The metaphor of nomadacy, while inappropriate because of the negative connotations it has, still triggered my thinking and needed to be probed further. As I indicated in Chapter One, it was important to question and consistently interrogate the discursive reproduction of power in researching the "Other" throughout this inquiry. Using a variety of methodological approaches, I believe I attended to this. However, as an outsider carrying out cross-cultural research, it was also imperative that I avoid the appropriating and

essentializing the frequent representation practices of Euro-American (Western) knowledge systems. For these reasons, I provide here a discussion of the notion of a nomadic lifestyle as an evolving ideology. I begin by discussing my use of the term postmodern in association with nomadacy as a metaphor for understanding the career stories explored in this study. After problematizing the traditional discourse of nomadacy, I highlight how recent definitions intersect with the career decisions of emerging adults. Later I show how and why I have used the term "postmodern nomad" as a metaphor to help provide an overall explanation of the career decisions of participants in this study.

A Postmodern Metaphor

As I shared earlier, while I reflected on my reference to the mobility experienced by the emerging adults who contributed to this study, I referred to their ways of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow" as resonating with a metaphor of postmodern nomadism. It should be noted that I am not suggesting that the participants in this study were postmodernists, however, I did feel that a postmodernist perspective for thinking about their modern-day movement offered a way of thinking differently about the kinds of transitioning they were making in their career trajectories. Representing "a perspective to view phenomena, processes and various relationships among them beyond the usual perspective," (Doudexopoulou & Bartha, 2011, p. 59), postmodernism "rejects the possibility of presuppositionless representation, instead arguing that every knowledge is contextualized by its historical and cultural nature;" and asserts that a universal social science is impossible "because people's and group's different subject positions cannot be measured against each other," (Agger, 1991, p.117). To emphasize, I believed that this metaphor better articulated the transitional nature of the career stories shared by participants because it emphasized the rejection of modernist concepts of the self and the favouring of "mini-narratives" which I discuss in the following paragraphs.

While the conventional modernist perspective views the self as anchored in social structures with a sense of permanence reflected in relationships to people and communities, "the postmodern self sees the self adapting to transformations in society…anchored increasingly in change rather than stability" (Adler & Adler, 1999, p. 32). According to Éinrí (1994), "the migrant is the exemplar of postmodernist humanity. Living in a universe of shifting, plastic values, s/he must define an individual response, must largely construct his/her own identity," (p.

91). My understanding of the mobility of these participants seemed to reflect this postmodern sense of an existence in the ways in which participants described and rationalized their career decisions because it reflected "a state of continuous construction and reconstruction," (Gergen, 1991, p.7). The participants' career stories rejected the linear progression of career development and responded to the sociocultural, economic, and political environment of the SCI through movement between various geographic locations. The data showed that their mobility was related to the changing landscape of the SCI and to evolving goals, interests, and aptitudes determined by the individual.

Postmodernists see the self, then, as an illusion, evoked situationally, but adaptive and fragmented, emotionally flat and depthless (Goffman, 1959, 1974; Gubrium & Holstein, 1994; Jameson, 1984). Fundamentally eroded, the postmodern self is like the layers of Erving Goffman's onion: devoid of a core, it is decentered and ultimately dissolved (Dowd, 1991; Gergen, 1991; Jameson, 1984; Adler & Adler, 1999, pp.32-33). It is here where Bauman's (1992) dismissal of modernity's prescription for the homogenization of individuals expected to share similar values, attitudes and beliefs is applied to postmodernity's pluralism and multidimensionality of an authentic self, acting in relation to the given context (de Vries, Visscher & Gerritsen, 2005). Furthermore, it is the postmodern favouring of the authentic self and the stories that explain local experiences (rather than global concepts) found in "mini-narratives" (and the rejection of grand narratives) where I believed the mobility of young people explored in this study was best illuminated (Lyotard, 1984).

Under the modernist perspective, career development was viewed as a predetermined set of stages unfolding throughout an individual's life course. However, the postmodernist perspective illuminates the power of the self to surpass the structures of knowledge and power through "the endeavor to know how and to what extent it might be possible to think differently, instead of legitimating what is already known" and/or problematizing existing conditions (Foucault, 1985, p. 9). "The self in postmodern thought is not the unified, integrated, authentic self of modern times. Rather, the self is multiple, ever changing, and some say, fragmented" (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007, p. 260). In considering the various ways in which the mobility of emerging adults from the SCI is either facilitated and/or limited by the contextual features of birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances, I believe the metaphor of the postmodern nomad provided me with an excellent way of thinking about the transient nature of

participants' career stories expressed through mini-narratives; making no claim to universality, truth, or stability while emphasizing "community and locality…[and] concern [for] the complexity and nuances of interests, cultures, places, and the like" (Harvey, 1990, p. 351).

The Notion of Nomad(acy)

Synonyms of nomad(acy) include reference to "wanderers," "vagabonds," "drifters," and "roamers." The term suggests restlessness and displacement without any particular geographic space to call home. Our Western perceptions include the imagery of lost peoples without a destination or goal. While it is estimated that between 50,000 and 100,000 individuals around the world lead nomadic ways of life (such as the Roma in Europe), the term nomad has been used pejoratively with colonized peoples. More recently and interestingly, the term also has been used to describe the transient and protean careers of highly mobile professionals. Ironically, nomads continue to be represented as placeless, inferior, and as the primitive "other" in today's globalizing world of mobility. I believe, however, that it is important to interrogate the term to avoid contributing to its negative connotations (Agullo & Egawa, 2008; Cadin, Bender, de Saint Giniez, & Pringle, 2000; Cresswell, 1997, 2006; Kabachnik, 2010; Matthewman, 2011; Näsholm, 2011).

Departing from the traditional ideological aspects of nomadism which included "land, labour, and livestock" (Ahmed, 1981, p. 3), the conventional understanding of the nomadic lifestyle continues to be solely associated with movement (Kaufmann, 2009). As a result, recent conversations about globally mobile employees and the mobility of individuals whose family member(s) are pursuing work opportunities in countries away from home (such as TCKs) have begun to refer to these individuals as "global nomads" (Matthewman, 2011; McCaig, 1992). Movement, mobility, and migration are not new phenomena; however an increasing number of people around the world now have the access and the ability to.

Interestingly, contemporary perspectives of movement and migration tend to romanticize the transient nature of individuals, shifting around the globe with their portable homes, and with their borderless identities (Cresswell, 1997; Kaufmann, 2009; Nincic, 2006; Noyes, 2004). There is "a recognition that not only can one be at home in movement, but that movement can be one's very own home" (Rapport & Dawson, as cited in Nincic, 2006, p. 1082). Framing nomadacy with this contemporary view of mobility may suggest "manic placelessness" and the inability to commit to particular spaces for significant periods of time (Hoskote, 2002, p. 3). However,

Kabachnik (2007) suggests that spaces are significant to the nomad as "places are not inert, irrelevant backdrops upon which social stuff happens. Places are fundamental to how, and why, we live our lives," (p. 8).

Bondi (as cited in Handley, 2009) states "that the question of 'Who am I?' can be discussed from the starting point of 'Where am I?' (p. 98). The place a subject occupies reflects her mental state, desires, and direction in life," (p. 12). That is, place helps to shape behaviour (Carvalho, 2007).With the significance of place in mind, geographers also note that place and identity are inextricably interwoven, suggesting that perhaps the deficit notion of nomad(acy) takes issue with the ambiguity of nomadic identity (Candin et al., 2000; Cresswell, 2004; Curry, 1999, 2000). Braidotti (1994) writes about the signifying relevance of space and place but dismisses any form of identity construction.

> Being a nomad, living in transition, does not mean that one cannot or is unwilling to create those necessarily stable and reassuring bases for identity that allow one to function in a community… Rather, nomadic consciousness consists in not taking any kind of identity as permanent. The nomad is only passing through; s/he makes those necessarily situated connections that can help her/him to survive, but s/he never takes on fully the limits of one national, fixed identity. The nomad has no passport – or has too many of them. (Braidotti, 1994, p. 33)

However, the traditional description of nomad(acy) refers to individuals who have "annual circuits of wandering, not moving entirely away from fixed points in their mobile life, but returning to replenish themselves at the ancestral sources of water at the end of the steppe" (Hoskote, 2004, p. 3). This suggests that the assumption of placelessness and the questions concerning identity could be misguided as nomads may in fact have a sense of place as they seasonally follow a traditional route according to the availability of food supply and pasture land.

By comparison, Said's (1978) influential book, *Orientalism*, argues that history is socially constructed and suggests that it can be deconstructed and rewritten. He writes that our understanding of history and its people are "always with various silences and elisions, always with shapes imposed and disfigurations tolerated" (p. xviii). Said (1978) draws attention to explanations of the social and geographically varied identity of the "Other" and helps to illuminate the pejorative assumption about nomad(acy) and the romanticized and misguided images of peoples who we cannot uniformly essentialize. The idea is that mobility threatens the

ability to associate individuals with a particular culture. Crang, a geographer, has argued like Said (1978), that cultural lives are "characterized not only by the points in space where they take and make place, but by the movements to, from, and between those points" (Crang, 1996, p. 47). Similarly, geographer Doreen Massey (as cited in Handley, 2009) suggests that we conceptualize the way we think of place and space as areas that extend beyond boundaries.

> …they can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a large proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself, whether that be a street, or a region or even a continent. (p. 30)

In a period of intensified globalization, therefore, it must be recognized that globalization itself does not ultimately lead to global sameness given how frequently the networks of people extend beyond spatial boundaries of particular spaces and places as these "nomads" engage in mobility with varying intentions. The conceptual understanding of nomad(acy) must therefore be given a more extensive and nuanced treatment; one that does not allow for the dominance of the West over "the rest," imposing hegemonic impressions of the unfamiliar, nomadic "Other" (Featherstone, Lash, & Robertson, 1995).

The varied references to "mobility," "traveling," and "nomadism" that have been explored more recently provide a more nuanced appreciation of the concept of nomadism. In fact, these references have become somewhat "fashionable terms" with positive connotations in fields such as human geography, cultural anthropology, and social theory (Kabachnik, 2010). Among the more recent discussions of mobility relevant to this study, Flusser (2003) celebrates nomadism as a superior way of life in comparison to lives that are sedentary. "He denigrates sedentary ways of life, believing that those who live in houses are idiots, denied experience and imprisoned," and applauds the nomadic lifestyle for "living life according to undiscovered laws of their own" (Flusser, 2003, p.42 in Kabachnik, 2007, p.131). From this standpoint, any movement of peoples beyond the confines of the state are positively perceived, as "mobility becomes the path to resistance and liberation from domination" (Kabachnik, 2007, p.126). Deleuze and Guattari (1987) contrast nomad life with sedentary life, describing nomads as free from the bonds of nation and state that nomads "have no history; they only have a geography" (p.393). Braidotti (1994, 2012) adds to this discussion by suggesting that "the nomad does not

stand for homelessness, or compulsive displacement; it is rather a figuration for the kind of subject who has relinquished all idea, desire, or nostalgia for fixity" (Braidotti, 1994, p. 22). When this perspective is used to examine the movement of individuals seeking better educational and occupational experiences in new geographic locations, it grounds the behaviour of the participants contributing to this study in what I would argue is an emancipatory form of mobility.

Informed by the writings of the urban nomad by de Certeau (1984), the postmodern nomad by Chambers (1986, 1990), and "nomadology" by Deleuze and Guattari (1986, 1987), Cresswell (1997, 2006) also celebrates the nomad within the postmodern perspective. He describes the nomad as "the geographic metaphor *par excellence* of postmodernity," symbolizing resistance by transgressing order and spatial borders (Cresswell, 1997, as cited in Kabachnik, 2007, p. 129). The postmodern nomad is thus represented "as the ideal to be aspired to" where Deleuze and Guattari propose "celebrating the opportunities for resistance that mobility brings" (Kabachnik, 2010, p. 96). In this sense, the true postmodern nomad has a global perspective, "unmarked by the traces of class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and geography" (Cresswell, 2006, p. 53). Cresswell (2006) further defines this new ideology of the nomad as "abstract, dehistoricized, and undifferentiated – a mobile mass" (p. 54) that cannot be generalized or essentialized with "little attention [being] paid to the historical conditions that produce specific forms of movement, which are radically different" (Pinder, 2011, p. 229). For example, Mackie (2012) points out the "easy to leave at logical exit points; easy to return to" mobility of "young people [who] take trips [and engage in] interlocutions of the often-predictable narrative of school, university, and work which comes before full adulthood" (p. 1). Similarly, Bauman (1992, 1995) sees the traditional sedentary (or settled) majority being ruled by the postmodern nomadic and extraterritorial elite, "who are empowered by cheap air travel, communications technology and the ephemeral nature of a service and media based economy" (p. 1). The idea of postmodern nomad(acy) is unified by the fact that individuals "are actively choosing how to live their lives, whether they can articulate their motives or not" (Mackie, 2012). In view of this, the evolving ideology of the nomadic lifestyle reveals the more recent perspective of the postmodern nomad which provides an overarching perspective inclusive of various motives and forms of movement, including the rise of the professional (hypermobile) nomad (Sassen, 1988, 2001), the global nomad (Matthewman, 2011), the intellectual nomad (Pels, 1999), and the present condition of a globalized economy imposing mobility into the contemporary lifestyles of many.

When I thought about the career stories of participants using a metaphor of the "postmodern nomad," I began to have a more holistic understanding of the highly mobile educational and occupational experiences of emerging adults from the SCI. I was able to see the link between mobility and the four contextual features that were uncovered through arts-informed approaches. Then, it became evident that the ways in which emerging adults from the SCI described and rationalized their career decisions and experiences did not resonate with the traditional discourse on nomadacy, or with the modern resistance to sedentism. It was the metaphor of the postmodern nomad that helped me to see beyond modernist understandings of mobility. The ways in which participants described and rationalized their career decisions appeared to depart from the "traditional cyclical movements of pastoralists," the "itinerant way of life associated with economic activities adapted to the arid environment," and the transnational and continual movement "pushed by a particular ideology and philosophy of being connected to an imagined stateless nation … enabled through multiple citizenships and places of residence," (Kohl, 2010, pp. 451-452). Among these emerging adults, modernist notions of fixity, boundedness, and rationality were resisted (Kabachnik, 2007, p. 130) while the "resistance to bounded spatiality" was embraced (Sui, 2000, 331). In essence, the mobility of participants cannot be linked to the notion of modernity as their ways of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow," reflect an organic, complex, and transformational experience of movement (Doll, 1989). Existing definitions of nomadism associated with the career trajectory movement of young people are too static and prescribed to accommodate the kind of fluid, transitory conception of mobility that is necessary to appreciate the relationship between context, capital, and socioeconomic development. The postmodern metaphor that I posited, however, "concentrates on the tensions of difference and similarity erupting from processes of globalization and capitalism: the accelerating circulation of people, the increasingly dense and frequent cross-cultural interactions, and the unavoidable intersections of local and global knowledge" (Salberg, et al., 2012, p. 2). For these reasons, I turned to this postmodern metaphor that I believe helped me understand, and to advance the significance of place, space, and time in relation to identity (Flusser, 2003b).

While the postmodern metaphor of nomadism portrays within it, "mobile meanings, shifting connections, temporary encounters, and a world of intertextual richness and detail" (Sui, 2000, p. 331 in Kabachnik, 2007, p. 130), I believe my use of the postmodern nomad as a

metaphor in an artful inquiry into the career decisions of emerging adults transitioning under the Caribbean sun, criticizes generalities and offers a new perspective about the purposes of mobility for career and human capital development. It also serves as a springboard for discussion about how the exclusivity of existing conceptualizations of "new" nomadacy (i.e., global nomads, urban nomads, transient workers, etcetera,) that refer to privileged Western peoples, whose mobility is primarily grounded in leisure, business, and luxury can be expanded to include a more nuanced perspective informed by understandings of the complexity and "creative and innovative" movement of peoples from other geographic locations (such as the Caribbean) (Fischer, 2010, pp. 11-22). Unlike the Caribbean migrants of the 1950's whose intention to leave the islands were tied with the pursuit for a better life and a precarious hope to stay at their destination, the participants in my study, that I am describing as postmodern nomads of the SCI, reflect choice and freedom (Morris, 2004) intertwined with a necessity to move through various geographic spaces. While Deleuze and Guattari's (1986, 1987) articulations of the postmodern nomad describe an attempt "to free itself of all roots, bonds, and identities, and thereby resists the state and all normalizing powers" (Best & Kellner, 1991, p.103), the metaphor of the postmodern nomad from the SCI illuminates how it is the island roots of these emergent adults grew stronger through movement intended for the acquisition of purposeful knowledge and experiences.

The Modern Day Movement of People

As I have discussed earlier, the traditional discourse of nomadacy is predicated on pejorative notions of displaced wanderers. Contemporary inquiry into the modern-day movement of people reveals a more nuanced appreciation of nomadism that encapsulates the complexities of mobility in the globalizing economy. I discuss below how the notions of the postmodern nomad intersect with the career stories of emerging adults from the SCI and how I believe the postmodern nomad is authentically linked to the specific forms of movement exhibited by the "mobile mass" of young people who shared their career decision-making experiences and contributed to this study (Cresswell, 2006).

To further understand the postmodern nomad, Morley (2001) posits that it is important to distinguish between those who are voluntarily mobile from those who are forced into mobility for political or economic reasons. This is problematic for me as I reflect on the career stories of emerging adults from the SCI, where mobility is an educational and/or professional necessity as

a result of the lack of postsecondary infrastructure on the island and the current economic and political uncertainty affecting the local labour market. From a review of the contextual features supporting the mobility of participants, the postmodern nomadacy of these individuals can be seen as driven by the desire for upward mobility and professional expertise (which can be viewed as voluntary), and/or driven by the need to cultivate human capital for the SCI (which can be viewed as mandatory). I suggest here that a nuanced appreciation about the mobility of emerging adults from the SCI attests to the complexity of the ways in which young people engage in "shifting." Furthermore, I propose that the more recent notion of the postmodern nomad resists any pejorative underpinnings that may question or resolve discomfort in the freedom available to emerging adults to pursue opportunities in any place or space of choice.

As the interview data illuminated, the emerging adults in this study are global consumers of opportunities while cognizant of "home." From the perspective of the participants, home is the SCI, regardless of passport or residency status. Interestingly, Robertson (1992) suggests that individuals draw upon the nostalgia of their past (i.e., traditions, experiences, etc.) while considering the global environment as their home. With either assumption, emerging adults from the SCI are neither the lost nor displaced peoples as the traditional/pejorative definition of a nomad would infer. Noyes (2000), in his article on mobility in German South West Africa, argues that the Germans believed the nomadic Herero were uncivilized because of their "inability to develop an emotional attachment to land" (p. 51). The assumption that the nomad has a deficient connection to place and eschews local attachments and rootedness can be dismissed when the theme of "giving back" explicitly demonstrates the depth of the "rootedness" and attachment of the participants to the SCI.

At the start of this study I was unfamiliar with the literature on TCKs (see page 53). Interestingly, the literature offered some important contextual and causal considerations about the motivations, decision-making processes, and experiences of young people who are often considered global citizens because of their mobility and subsequent residencies in, and experiences of, different cultures and geographic locations. However, evident differences in the reasons for their mobility (i.e., mobility as a result of being a child of either a diplomat, military, or expatriate professional), in comparison to the mobility of emerging adults from the SCI (i.e., mobility as a result of living on an island without the sufficient infrastructure to support the career development of young people) are apparent. Accordingly, I have dismissed contending

that expatriate emerging adults from the SCI are simply exhibiting typical TCK behaviour, and I have avoided limiting the career stories of local Islanders as distinct from their expatriate peers because the data from this study have confirmed otherwise. The career stories in this study underscore the sense of place and identity of the participants associated with the SCI since both expatriate and local Islander's expressed a keen desire for "giving back" to their community.

The participants do not collectively reflect the traditional sense of a "global citizen" or even a "global nomad" who is drawn to adventure and exploration because of his or her transient upbringing and/or membership in a temporary mobile family with the privileged lifestyle afforded to corporate recruits, diplomatic, or military families. Instead, the "postmodern nomad" I propose here is an intrinsic feature of the career trajectories of all participants in the study which transcends Matthewman's (2011) description of global nomads.

> Nomads have an insatiable desire for new experiences and thirst for knowledge. Their sense of personal destiny means that they feel empowered to take rapid decisions – there is little procrastination: if opportunities present themselves they can quickly pack up and go. This mirrors the many leisure opportunities they experience. The era of cheap travel and internet connectivity means that events or "gatherings" can be pretty spontaneous, irrespective of where they are taking place. This is part of the challenge. And so is the nomads' attitude to future work careers. (p. 57)

While at first glance Matthewman's description may resonate with participants' "going with the flow," it is important to return to other findings that include the contextual features of birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances that either support or limit such mobility. I have shown that emerging adults from the SCI were not as enamored by their frequent mobility as honeymooning couples or temporary sojourners might be. The career stories shared by participants normalize mobility, and more importantly, underscore the significance of contextual features that supported their movement. The modern-day movement of the global nomad put forth by Matthewman is limited to the desire for adventure and new experiences because this motivation for mobility is associated with leisure activities. On the contrary, the modern-day movement of the "postmodern nomad" discovered in this study reflects a necessity for mobility that empowers individuals through an immersion in more developing (or developed) locations, and that enables young people to explore possibilities for their own personal and professional growth, an at the same time provides opportunities for development in the SCI.

The Postmodern Nomads of the SCI

In my interpretation of the phenomenon under study, it was important that I not simply assume that the discourse on mobility actually challenges or disturbs the polemical use of the term nomad and the notions surrounding nomadism. Although the exploration of participants' career trajectories was predicated on the idea of mobility in association with the four contextual features, I did not dismiss the fact that my initial assumptions recorded in reflective memos could do no harm. Indeed, my initial association of nomadism with the career decision-making experiences of participants coexisted with what I came to realize was a pejorative notion of displaced or lost peoples. With urgency, I further examined such assumptions and inquired into the historical, sociological, anthropological, and geographical underpinnings of nomadism to uncover the career stories from a critically-informed perspective. Accordingly, my emergent understanding shared here is reflective of clearly defined explanations of the mobility of participants, and proposes what I believe is an authentic definition of postmodern nomads of the SCI.

My proposition of the postmodern nomad articulated here is more practical and relevant and should help to expand the contemporary understanding of movement, mobility, and migration given the globalized economy and concern for the retention and attraction of human capital.

> …everything seems to be in perpetual movement throughout the world. *Most* people *travel* – academics, terrorists, tourists, military people, business people, homeless people, celebrities, migrants, refugees, backpackers, commuters, students, friends – filling the world's planes, trains, ships, buses, cars and streets. In the contemporary world, all sorts of political, technological, financial and transportation changes have been critical in significantly lowering the mobility barriers for many. Tourism, leisure, transport, business, travel, migration and communication are thus all blurred and need to be analyzed together in their fluid interdependence rather than discretely… Analyzing contemporary mobilities thus involves examining many consequences for different peoples and different places located in the fast and slow lanes of societies (Sheller & Urry, 2006; Hannam et al., 2006). (Hannam, 2009, pp. 107-108)

The dynamics of mobility experienced by the "postmodern nomads" in this study are based on the participation in a transient lifestyle for the purpose of cultivating human capital required for

the developing economy of the SCI. The postmodern nomad of the SCI has witnessed throughout his or her youth, a local labour market permeated by highly skilled foreigners and temporary migrants. These observances and experiences prompted "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow" as these emerging adults adjusted to changing environments and relationships, and in doing so, find "their own way of entering and leaving modernity" (Kaufmann, 2009, p. 264).

These postmodern nomads' connection with the developing economy of the SCI lies in the connection between the idea of mobility and four contextual features, which are the definitive features of the themes uncovered in the career stories of emerging adults from the SCI. Postmodern nomadacy is driven by robust socioeconomic development, as well as the cyclical nature of boom and bust development cycles. It reflects a changing social, cultural, and economic landscape which provides the impetus for highly mobile emerging adults (i.e., postmodern nomads) to move between geographic spaces to pursue educational and occupational opportunities because of the need to increase local human capital. The smallness of the SCI and an insufficient infrastructure that would support the development of local human capital necessitates frequent movement on and off-island to access such things as consumer goods, healthcare, social services, and postsecondary education. Unlike traditional nomadic discourse, movement in this context is not about the romanticized experiences that I have described earlier.

The practice of modern life and globalization can be seen as rooted in the perspective of the ancient nomad—survival requiring constant pursuit of fresh grass to feed a roaming herd. Similarly, our lives have become more mobile than in past centuries as individual survival is often associated with the pursuit of better opportunities, wherever they may be. Without borders and without any concept of outsider, mobility has become an inherent feature of our globalized, automated knowledge economies. The borderless identities commonly associated with nomadic discourse are not far reaching. Where my interpretation of the postmodern nomad of the SCI differs from other existing notions of nomad(acy) is that the postmodern nomad described in this study engages in mobility as a direct response to the relative smallness of the island and the inadequate (educational) institutional infrastructure available in the SCI to ensure young people are able to acquire the knowledge and develop their skills to actively contribute to the local labour market. That is, living in a labour market during a boom and/or bust period of socioeconomic and infrastructure development in the SCI contributed to the educational and

occupational (career) decisions of emerging adults by creating an environment where postmodern nomadacy is a necessary behaviour that is nourished and facilitated by birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances; and where mobility is inherently necessary in the pursuit of career opportunities and for the production of human capital from within the SCI.

Summary

This qualitative study explored the factors contributing (or not) to the career decisions of emerging adults from the SCI. The conceptual framework for the study suggested that career development is linked to social, emotional, and intellectual development and that when exploring the demographics of human capital development in small island economies such as the SCI, and more generally in Caribbean economies, mobility is an important factor in the socioeconomic development and subsequent labour market development. Throughout this study it has become evident that the career trajectories of participants are linked to the socioeconomic and political landscape of the SCI, and that provision for their capacity to pursue postsecondary career opportunities are closely tied to the contextual features of birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances (that emerged in Chapter Four). The excerpts shared from the interview data showed how the idea of mobility was embedded in the career decisions of emerging adults from the SCI whose considerations to explore and pursue various career opportunities in a variety of fields emerged in the themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow."

This chapter shared my overall explanation of the phenomenon under study. I have argued how the themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow" are central in understanding the career decisions of emerging adults and the structuring effects of resources, geographic location, socioeconomic development, race, class, and gender. My initial review of the reflective memos drew attention to my repetitive reference to a nomad metaphor for thinking about the career activities of participants. However, I also recognized the deficit notions of the term and consequently decided to explore this idea further. I referenced various thematically categorized interview segments which fueled my curiosity about the possible association, but also diluted the traditional tribal definition of nomadacy. The career stories of the participants revealed a modern-day movement of people which seemed to echo nomadic features of mobility. However, this association prompted me to inquire into the pejorative use of the term and to address the polemical concept of nomadacy as it relates to the career stories of emerging adults

from the SCI. It was important to me not to dismiss my initial thoughts, but also it was important to interrogate of the notion of nomad(acy) by referencing the recent discourse of nomadism found in the literature. A careful review of the literature revealed an evolving ideology that has arrived at a more nuanced appreciation of nomadism and its association with the modern-day movement of people.

In this chapter, I have shared how I uncovered participants' career stories, discovered the highly mobile experiences of young people as resonating with what I am calling a "postmodern nomad" perspective. In my proposition of the postmodern nomad, I highlighted how recent notions of nomadism intersect with the career decisions uncovered in this study, and more specifically, with the themes explored in Chapter Six. Issues of place and identity were also addressed as I rationalized my use of the term by differentiating the postmodern nomadacy of participants contributing to this study, from the more recent global nomadism suggested by other scholars. By articulating the dynamics of mobility experienced by postmodern nomads of the SCI, I have shown how young people participate in a transient lifestyle in association with the need to cultivate human capital for the developing economy of the SCI. In this discussion, it became apparent how the postmodern nomad explored here differs from other notions of nomadism. I have argued that my definition of a postmodern nomad reifies the career decisions of participants' career stories explored in this study and provides a persuasive explanation of these career stories and the contextual features connected with mobility. I would suggest that the work carried out in this study is a pivotal piece that needs to be added to the existing body of empirical research focused on the career development of young people. I would conclude that living in a labour market during a boom and/or bust period of robust socioeconomic and infrastructure development in the SCI contributes to the educational and occupational (career) decisions of emerging adults by constructing an environment where postmodern nomadacy is an important way of thinking about the mobility described in this study that was facilitated or hindered by birthright, autonomy, networks and finances; and where mobility is inherently necessary in the pursuit of career opportunities and for the production of human capital.

The following chapter concludes this dissertation by providing a summary of the chapters, and a review of the limitations and implications of the work. I share how my conceptual understanding of the career stories shared by participants, further illuminated by the explanation provided by postmodern nomadacy, can contribute to the ways in which schools,

communities, government, and the local business community in the SCI can assist emerging adults in their career development, while also fostering human capital for the island. Finally, I discuss the possibilities for future research in the field which challenge traditional counseling and intervention frameworks addressing the career decisions of young people.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

I have explored how participants describe and rationalize their career decisions in association with the contextual features supporting and/or limiting their mobility. A range of experiences were synthesized into an overall understanding about the assumption that young people in the SCI are unaware of the economic and political landscape and that this limits the possibility to cultivate and retain human capital in this small globalizing economy. While there has been a range of academic literature that has analyzed the school-to-work transitions, postsecondary/post-16, and career development experiences of young people within sociological and psychological frameworks, few researchers have associated these experiences and processes with the economic and political economy. My literature review indicated that there has yet to be a study from a geographic perspective that specifically addresses the increasing need to understand the career decisions-making experiences of emerging adults living in a labour market undergoing cycles of robust development and uncertainty. This qualitative study was designed to fill that gap. I have attempted to discover the ways in which emerging adults might see the SCI's landscape as a "playground" for personal growth and professional opportunity, and where the SCI may see its youth as potentially valued human capital. By expanding the discussion of career development to include mobility and ground this feature in the socioeconomic and political contexts of a specific community (i.e. the SCI), and by using qualitative arts-informed and other (visual) categorizing and contextualizing approaches (such as charting geographic residency time lines and concept mapping) to analyze the data, I have crossed the disciplinary threshold into what I believe is a deepening of previous empirical work. I provide in here, in Chapter Eight, a review of how this study has developed through the conceptual underpinnings and methodological processes described in each chapter. Then I outline the limitations of the study and suggest ways in which future research might address these issues. Next, I illustrate the methodological implications, and suggest some policies and practices that the SCI might adopt to cultivate human capital. Finally, I offer ways in which this study may provide an impetus for future work in the SCI as well as in other contexts.

Review of Chapters

In Chapter One, I introduced the context of the study by presenting the overarching question driving this research and the sub-questions I used to explore this work. The demographic of emerging adults, the urgency of a globalizing landscape for countries to invest in the cultivation of human capital, and unique features of a small Caribbean island were presented as important features of the research. I presented a rationale for exploring the career decision-making processes of young people from the SCI, and provided an overview of the SCI's secondary school education system and the interesting economic landscape that exists there. Later in the discussion, I situated myself in the research by sharing personal and professional experiences which provided my impetus for pursuing career stories. My familiarity with the research site was described and I indicated how I attended to the implications of doing cross-cultural research as an "outsider" in the field. Before providing an overview of the dissertation, I clarified the interchangeable use of terminology referenced throughout the dissertation and defined the characteristics of the demographics of the population on which the research focuses.

A comprehensive review of the literature that provides the conceptual framework for the study was provided in Chapter Two. I introduced theoretical perspectives from the literature on career development, Social cognitive career theory (SCCT), cultural capital, human capital theory, and literature on third-culture kids (TCKs). These literatures provided the basis upon which to build the inquiry. First, I shared the development of career theorizing, beginning with the earliest literature and then moving to pivotal theoretical and empirical articles that focused on structural, process, eclectic, and constructivist approaches to understanding career development. Next, I attended to each piece of the conceptual framework separately to draw attention to gaps in the literature and to rationalize the importance of conducting this type of study. SCCT emphasized the role of self-efficacy in the career decision-making process and the complexity of contextual factors (such as family, school, and sociocultural conditions) which highlight the continuous interaction of person and context (or environment). The sociological concept of cultural capital, as posited by Bourdieu (1986), was connected with career decision-making processes (or career development) because it helps to interrogate economic and social class barriers in association with educational access and achievement. Interestingly, it was brought to my attention how institutional and societal expectations place the burden of making wise educational and occupational decisions on the individual, rather than addressing his or her role in

the social reproduction of inequality by privileging particular forms of knowledge and language. Human capital theory provided insight into how national investments in education are transformed into an investment in productivity, sustainability, and economic growth. In the related discussion about human resources, the theory also illuminated issues around brain drain and for the need for developing nations to view its young people as vital contributors to their country's survival in the globalizing economy. The movement of human capital was reviewed through migration theories which provide causal explanations for the brain-gain/brain-drain phenomena in the global and Caribbean context. Finally, I shared the literature on third-culture kids (TCKs) who represent the temporary mobile experiences of children and adolescents who accompany their parents to live and work overseas. The literature on TCKs was introduced as relevant because of the cross-cultural experiences of young people from the SCI who migrate on and off-island in pursuit of career opportunities, and more specifically, because the expatriate population of young people in the SCI hold passports from other nations.

An overview of the methodological approaches used to explore the research questions and analyze the data was provided in Chapter Three. I began by situating myself along the ontological continuum, followed by an introduction and review of qualitative research principles and approaches relevant to the study. I provided a rationale for selecting a constant comparison approach for categorizing and analyzing the interview data. I have shown how I used a Qualitative Design Matrix to help conceptualized and organize my data collection and as a discovery process. The various steps involved obtaining access to the research site and consent from participants, using social media for recruitment, using a demographic survey for the selection of a purposeful sample, and for the interviewing process. I described how I attended to confidentiality, data management, and storage and how I used the CAQDAS known as MAXQDA to do this. In addition to the primary data I collected through interviews with selected participants, I collected secondary data to provide depth and breadth to the study by confirming and disconfirming what was emerging in the work. I provided an overview of the various sources and shared details of how I accessed and obtained information from key stakeholders, and other emerging adults from the SCI (i.e., non-PSH alumni). Secondary sources included informal interviews and conversations with immediate stakeholders recorded as written field notes, photographic field notes (that is, photographs augmented with written text), a researcher journal, reflective memos, and public documents in the form of local newspapers and the SCI's most

recent socioeconomic development plan. The bulk of this chapter attended to how the findings of this study unfolded. I explicitly showed the process of unitizing, categorizing and the coding of the data, and how the themes of "shifting," "giving back," "going with the flow," "projecting," and "doing it for me" emerged. Rules of inclusion were recorded for each theme which helped to synthesize the career experiences of the participants into these five themes. To describe the processes involved in contextualizing the data I referenced the Qualitative Design Matrix for data analysis. I used visual and arts-informed research practices to further my understanding of the phenomenon under study. For example, I used data obtained from the demographic surveys and interview data to chart the geographic residency time lines of participants which confirmed the themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow," and, as a result, illuminated the importance of mobility. I created and shared with colleagues, collages which also confirmed the idea of mobility and accounted for the remaining outliers of "projecting" and "doing it for me" that I had not been able to account for in the analysis of residency time lines. While describing the decisions and justifications at each step of the unfolding inquiry, I tried to make the process as transparent as possible to add rigour to the work. Also in Chapter Three, I discussed issues of trustworthiness, credibility, and persuasiveness.

Chapter Four highlighted my analysis of geographic residency time lines which provided a linear, visual overview of participants' career stories. I described the process of adding a gradient of colours to the visual career trajectories of young people and then how I synthesized their pathways by charting their on and off-island movement (i.e., blue for on-island, and green for off-island). Interestingly, the idea of mobility emerged through the analysis of the time lines which I confirmed by revisiting the coded interview transcripts and my reflective memos. The themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow" corroborated with the idea of mobility; however there remained two outliers ("projecting" and "doing it for me") which provided the impetus for employing another contextualizing approach which I described in greater detail in Chapter Five.

In Chapter Five I introduced artful inquiry as a contextualizing approach considered useful in eliciting ideas about the data and bringing forth a sort of "visual vocabulary" to articulate what was emerging in the work. I described the process of engaging in collage work, as well as the application of the Markus Approach that engages others in the analysis of data. The purpose of my collage work was to try to account for the two themes that I had put aside as

outliers following the analysis described in Chapter Four. The collage work unexpectedly and helpfully also confirmed the themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow." I turned to concept mapping to probe further at the themes of "projecting" and "doing it for me." To do this I took the descriptors made by my colleagues in and organized them visually on large sheets of paper. I provided Figures 17 and 18 to demonstrate how the visual structuring of adjectives illuminated four contextual features of birthright, autonomy, networks and finances. Subsequently, I was able to see how these features intersected with the capacity of individuals to engage in mobility and therefore, I was able to account for the themes of "projecting" and "doing it for me" when I realized through additional collage work that these contextual features acted as either barriers and/or enablers for mobility. I was able to corroborate this interpretation with excerpts from participant interviews. Chapters Four and Five illustrate the pivotal moments in these analytic processes.

In Chapter Six I recapped the unfolding analysis of participants' career stories and used excerpts from the data to corroborate the idea of mobility with the four contextual features uncovered through collage work. An overview of the analytic process also was provided in Figure 21 to help visually depict and track my evolving understanding of the educational and occupational decisions of emerging adults from the SCI. To explore and confirm the movement between geographic locations represented in the themes of "shifting," "giving back," and "going with the flow," and to synthesize how the contextual features intersect with this mobility across participant career trajectories, I revisited the coded segments of primary data, as well as my field notes and reflective memos. These textual forms of data helped me to synthesize how mobility was related to birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances. I concluded that the mobility of participants was influenced by various push and pull factors. Push factors included the lack of postsecondary educational opportunities available on-island, the socioeconomic uncertainty which made it difficult to secure government assistance and/or work, and the relative smallness of the island which prompted the participants to explore other landscapes. Pull factors to off-island locations included the ability to access lower tuition rates or secure employment because of citizenship or residency status (i.e., British passport, American birth certificate, etc.), the acquisition of government support in the form of financial aid or work-preparation programs, the financial and/or psychological support of family and friends living abroad, the access to established relationships/networks, and the opportunity to acquire professional development (or

credentials) that would enable individuals to be competitive in the SCI's local labour market upon their return home.

Finally, in Chapter Seven I wove together my findings to provide an explanation of what was transpiring in the career stories of these emergent adults from the SCI. I posited that mobility was facilitated or hindered by the contextual features I had delineated earlier. I revisited reflective memos recorded throughout the analytic process and discovered that on several occasions I had referred to the behaviours of the participants as being somewhat nomadic in nature. While I had not given much thought to my metaphor of "nomadacy" while writing these memos, I had ruminated how what I was hearing from the participants reminded me of a nomadic lifestyle that is, people moving from one place to another in search of food and livelihood. I recognized that this definition of nomadacy represented fundamentally deficit notions about this type of lifestyle, yet still I found this metaphor helpful and decided to explore it more fully from a critical stance. I explored the pejorative use of the term "nomad(acy)," and traced the evolution of the term. I discussed the evolving ideology of nomadism and problematized the traditional discourse about it. I highlighted how recent definitions of nomadacy could partially explain the career decisions of emerging adults from the SCI, but was not sufficient to delineate the complexities of their mobility. This was a turning point in my study. I moved from what was a deficit notion of nomadacy to a more critical perspective and found that if instead I used the idea of a postmodern nomad(acy) as a metaphor, that it was a very useful way of encapsulating what was transpiring in the career pathways of my participants. My interpretation of the postmodern nomad of the SCI differed from other existing notions of nomad(acy), and their associations with mobility. I argued that what I am calling "postmodern nomadacy" among the SCI participants is a deliberate choice made by these young people regardless of the economic forecast. The nomadic behaviour of emerging adults from the SCI occurs during both the "boom" and "bust" periods of socioeconomic development as these young people must leave the island to further their education, with the ultimate goal of returning to make a contribution (i.e., "giving back"). When times are tough they have no choice but to leave the island to seek out opportunities elsewhere, possibly returning when the economic outlook on the SCI is not so bleak. Mobility is a direct response to the circumstances driving this study. That is, living in a labour market during a boom and/or bust period socioeconomic and infrastructure development in the SCI contributes to the educational and occupational (career) decisions of

emerging adults by constructing an environment where postmodern nomadacy is a quintessential behaviour experienced and facilitated by birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances; and where mobility is inherently necessary in the pursuit of career opportunities and for the production of human capital.

Limitations of the Study

No research is conducted without limitations. I address here the limitations of my study which include but are not limited to, participant sampling, the insider/outsider dilemma, and the time period in which this inquiry occurred.

Participant Sampling

The findings from this study are based on interviews with a purposeful sample of 12 emerging adults from the SCI who all attended PSH (see Table 4). While I attempted to include a demographic range of social, cultural, and economic backgrounds and experiences, it was challenging to secure interest from male participants. As a result, two males were included in the purposeful sample. Fortunately, I collected secondary data from conversations and informal interviews with two young men who attended a local public high school on the island to juxtapose with the primary data. Because of this I do not believe the gender ratio of participants diluted my analysis and findings but suggest later in this chapter how future research could be conducted through a more gendered (feminist) lens to account for how gender might be implicated in issues of human capital and career development. In the subsequent section of this chapter I put forward methodological reflections about the study and draw attention to bodies of literature on gender and labour markets that could be used for future research using the same participant sample of young women.

With respect to the demographic range of social, cultural, and economic backgrounds and experiences of experiences contributing to this study, it is important to note that all of the participants were graduates from PSH. While the privileges afforded to the students from PSH (discussed in Chapter Six) illuminated many interesting facts about the career decision-making processes of these young adults, secondary data collected from emerging adults who were graduates from the SCI's local public schools were juxtaposed to ensure depth and breadth in the analysis. It should be noted that all of the local Islander participants who attended PSH were

awarded scholarships to attend the school while all of the expatriate participants were not provided with any tuition assistance. In Chapter Six I made reference to how the privilege of networks and mentorship offered by the staff and administration of PSH were made available to all of the school's students. However, I also shared how students from less affluent socio-economic backgrounds faced challenges in their post-secondary mobility as the contextual features of finances and access to (familial) networks had an impact on their ability to engage in "shifting" and "going with the flow" (see pages 149-151). I believe that in-depth interviews with young people who have attended public secondary schools in the SCI would have perhaps added important insights on the postmodern nomadism I proposed in Chapter Seven because it would help to account for inequalities that probably exist between private and public sector education in the SCI.

I believe it would be important for future research to include an equal distribution of male and female participants, and to also include in the same sample, a cross-section of students from various public, private, and religious institutions for comparison purposes. If I were to pursue this inquiry, I would make greater efforts to ensure the inclusion of as many voices as possible and to tap into the experiences of young people from other communities (such as Haitian, Dominican, and Filipino) whose families have more recently immigrated to the SCI. Doing so would most certainly expand the understanding of the dynamics of human capital cultivation on the island. Needless-to-say, I am confident that the findings emanating from my work with the cross-section of expatriate and local Islander participants have provided some significant groundwork upon which to build future inquiries and shape policies.

The Insider/Outsider Dilemma

As I discussed in Chapter One, I situated myself in the research as an outsider who had nurtured relationships over time at PSH, the students, faculty, and other members of the SCI community. So in a sense this made me somewhat of an insider. All qualitative researchers bring biases and assumptions to their work. However, they do not apologize for these, but rather, try to account for them. I acknowledged from the outset that my views about Caribbean culture, its people, the landscape, and the differences in my own career trajectory experiences could be viewed as a limitation in this work. In addition, my "proximity" to the research site and the relationships I had nurtured over the years with both expatriates and local Islanders could be

another way that the results could be biased. However, I believe my diligence about keeping a researcher's journal and recording memos throughout the inquiry process helped me to avoid this and forced me to address possible biases throughout the inquiry. In addition, I included secondary data to corroborate or disconfirm what I was finding, but also to help prevent imposing my preconceived notions on the data, and had meetings with my supervisor during the process which helped me to balance my insider/outsider stance.

Furthermore, I believe, my closeness to the research site, my prior professional relationship with the participants, and the openness I established with participants using Seidman's (1991, 2006) approach to interviewing, made me more of an insider at times and allowed me to access information more easily, to probe for more details about particular experiences and obtain a more nuanced and authentic sense of participants' career stories. I would argue that I was able to uncover things that might have been overlooked by an outsider less invested or connected with the research landscape. In addition, I have shared transparently throughout this process how the multiple methodological approaches I used and my ongoing attention to reflexivity helped me to work through the tensions and complexities in my work. For these reasons, I believe I have attended to any concerns or questions about my role as a qualitative researcher conducting cross-cultural research from an "outsider's" perspective.

Time Period

The time period in which this research was conducted provided an interesting backdrop to the study. That is, after I obtained ethical approval to move forward with the collection of data I temporarily relocated to the SCI for a few months to conduct interviews with participants and stakeholders, as well as record observations of the landscape. Interestingly, the economic and political climate during this period was one of uncertainty. The tourism industry was at a low; all commercial development projects were halted; the newly built hospital had just opened three weeks prior my arrival and was staffed primarily with expatriate nurses and doctors, Haitian and Dominican custodial staff, and local nursing assistants and support staff; the local labour market was dominated by migrant workers from the Philippines and surrounding Caribbean islands, and small business entrepreneurs, real estate professionals, and long-time expatriate residents from the West (i.e., the United Kingdom, Canada, etc.). Unemployment was relatively high and the robust socioeconomic and infrastructure development that had vibrantly engaged locals,

expatriates, and new immigrants in development projects and other sectors of the labour market in previous years had clearly faded. As a result, this time period presented challenges in scheduling face-to-face interviews with all of the participants as many were off-island pursuing career opportunities abroad as a result of the current economic downturn. Also, the secondary data collected from local newspapers, the most recent national socioeconomic development plan, as well as my photographs and accompanying field notes reflected the uncertainty and stress amongst the SCI people in response to the lull in an economy that had once been so lively and robust.

I believe the use of CMC technologies to connect with participants was a limitation of my study. I would have preferred to conduct all of the interviews face-to-face (FTF) with participants, but this was not possible as participants were dispersed in various geographic locations, on and off-island. The use of CMC (or Skype, telephone and email communication) as a medium for collecting the data was not as ideal as FTF communication because it required closer attention to the storage of digital data to ensure confidentiality, and efficient data management skills, especially since the assumed anonymity of online communication often increases the self-disclosure by participants (Hodgson, 2004; Mann & Stewart, 2000; Tidwell & Walther, 2002).

> Many people perceive online communication as anonymous because there is no in-person contact and thus, little accountability. This anonymity may explain why some people are more willing to participate in e-mail interview studies, whereas others are more willing to stop participating, not respond in a timely fashion, embellish more, or be less friendly to the interviewer. (Meho, 2006, p. 1289)

The perception of anonymity inherent in CMC refers to a psychological process known as "deindividuation" which Festinger, Pepitone, and Newcomb (1952) define as a "diminished awareness of internal constraints" which may include "concerns about self-presentation, attention to social norms, and focus on the self" (Diet-Uhler & Bishop-Clark, 2001, p. 271). Deindividuation can make communication with others less inhibiting and somewhat impersonal, which can also make people feel more comfortable and confident in disclosing personal information that normally would be considered as private (Zimbardo, 1969). Because of this, it was important for me to explicitly provide details about confidentiality with participants and do my own due diligence to ensure the safety of my digital files.

The contextual cues (i.e., eye contact, body language, etcetera,) that are a part of FTF interviews are not available to a researcher using CMC. For this reason I chose to use the video option available through Skype to conduct interviews with participants when it was not feasible to meet FTF. The follow-up contact I had with Participants I and C required email communication. While this was not optimal it was certainly better than omitting a step that helped provide a "member check" for what was emerging in the analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). However, despite becoming familiar with Internet culture and etiquette, the absence of social context cues using CMC was not optimal. FTF offers cues such as the physical environment (e.g., location, size of space, surrounding distractions or the presence of other people) and nonverbal behavior (e.g., facial expression, tone of voice, body posture) that provide some of the most significant aspects of the interpretive reflexive practice of qualitative inquiry (Dietz-Uhler & Bishop-Clark, 2001; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Markham, 2009; Meho, 2006). Nevertheless, CMC presented itself as best possible option given the challenges of time, cost, and access to research participants living off-island. The use of this technology allowed me to ensure that I was able to interview a purposeful sample of participants who reflected the diverse perspectives of both expatriate and local Islanders which I believe adds credibility to the work.

Finally, I believe it is important to note that attitudes, behaviours, and experiences shared by participants during their interviews were reflective of their career decisions over the past decade. While I listened and recorded their career stories, it was evident that the current political and economic climate weighed heavily on their minds. They expressed candidly their concerns and frustrations about the rapid changes they had witnessed as young adults and at that time, the challenges and opportunities they were experiencing. I cannot predict what differences in the findings might have emerged if the data collection had been conducted before the economic downturn or subsequently as the country rebuilds. It is worthy to mention that the findings are, therefore, reflective of this particular period of time in the SCI's political climate and socioeconomic developmental progress and a snapshot of a particular point in their trajectories which will continue to evolve and change. If it had been possible, it would have been interesting to have conducted a longitudinal study, showing the career stories as they unfolded over a longer period of time. In my future work I hope to return to the participants to see where their career trajectories have taken them in subsequent years.

Implications of the Study

In this section I discuss the implications of this work which include methodological reflections as well as suggestions for policies and practices for assisting emerging adults from the SCI in their pursuit of educational and occupational possibilities, and for cultivating and retaining human capital for the SCI. Throughout this discussion, I make suggestions for future research.

Methodological Reflections for Future Research

I believe this study provides a helpful addition to the existing empirical work in the field of career development, school-to-work transitions, post-16 choices, migration and human capital production. I would argue that this usefulness is due to the interdisciplinary conceptual framework that I used to provide the background and rationale for the study, and to the various methodological approaches I used to analyze and interpret the data. While relatively new to the field of qualitative inquiry, the use of CAQDAS, and more specifically MAXQDA, enabled me to keep a precise audit trail of the entire analytical process. In addition to helping to store and retrieve the data, these programs allowed me to keep a log of the progressive coding of interview data and the time-specific recording of reflective memos. This was vital in the initial categorization and analysis of data; but also, I found that as I delved deeper into the data and employed visual and arts-informed research approaches, the software became less useful and I was required to systematically document the unfolding inquiry using more traditional approaches, such as photo documentation and textual notes. As I scanned, transferred, and stored the contextualized portion of the analytic process into MAXQDA, I was reminded of the great effort and structure required by the researcher to maintain good record keeping. While I applaud the technology for its database and organizational capabilities, and its ability to retrieve and manipulate various types of data, I nevertheless found it essential when using arts-informed approaches to expand the portrayal of data beyond my 13-inch laptop to a larger backdrop so that I could see the various puzzle pieces in their entirety. Figure 18, for example, on page 127, illustrates that at times it is best to avoid being enamored by the technological pull of convenience, and embrace traditional practices which allow for a more tactile appreciation for and a physical connection with the data.

Much of the research that has contributed to the fields of study in which I have situated my work, typically employ interviews with participants, questionnaires/surveys, and longitudinal statistical data from institutional data banks. Both qualitative and quantitative analytical approaches are then applied to the data to yield results. My review of the relevant literature, demonstrated that few researchers have adopted the use of visualizing approaches in order to understand the career development of young people that I have addressed in my work. The pivotal moments in my evolving understanding of the phenomenon occurred when I applied visual approaches for analyzing the data. I began by using concept mapping to help articulate "rules of inclusion" for the five themes that emerged from the descriptive and conceptual coding of data. This was followed by the charting of participant career stories on geographic residency time lines, and later I engaged in collage work along with concept mapping and the Markus Approach (as described on page 95). I believe that my results demonstrate the value of arts-informed approaches that have been relatively underexplored in the fields listed above. I would argue that the visual approaches that I employed were essential for developing a more nuanced appreciation and holistic understanding of the career trajectories and associated mobility of young people. I believe that in addition to the use of thematic analytic approaches and the synthesis of survey and statistical data, researchers should consider the benefits that visual approaches provide in distilling (hidden) themes, exploring connections and relationships among emerging ideas, verifying particular ideas, and eliciting a visual vocabulary that helps to make sense of the data by allowing the images to help articulate the intuitive and interpretative impressions germinating in the mind of the researcher.

Finally, in my discussion of the methodological implications of the study, I address a specific challenge raised by Butler-Kisber and Poldma (2010) in their article on the use of collage making and concept mapping in experiential research. The authors present challenges in how to systematically integrate concept mapping into the research process.

> Concept maps work when they are read alongside textual analysis as a juxtaposition of the verbal and the visual together, and as a means of reconstructing ideas in a relational manner (Poldma, 2006). They are not independent forms of analyses. (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010, p. 12)

I would suggest that concept mapping can be seen as a systematic approach to analyzing visual conceptualizations of the data. I propose an extension in the analytic value of collage work (and

other visual representations, such as photographs) through the integration of concept mapping used to organize, restructure, and delineate new ideas (or themes) using the visual vocabulary afforded by the image(s). In this sense, the integration of concept mapping with the Markus Approach (which I argue can be applied to interpreting most forms of visual representations of data) can be regarded as an independent approach or lens in the analytic process, used to extract categories or links directly from non-textual data by synthesizing ideas emerging in the analysis.

Implications for Future Research

I have mentioned earlier that initially, I did not set out to study the career stories of participants through a gendered lens. However, my sample of primarily female participants could have given me the impetus to examine the data through a feminist lens by drawing upon the literature from masculinity studies as well as feminist readings. I view my interpretation of the postmodern nomad, as it relates to the career stories of emerging adults who participated in this study, as contextualized by the experiences of both men and women. However, also I believe that the postmodern nomad I have proposed should be explored further through a feminist lens to examine how the features of young womanhood may provide a greater understanding of the capacity for female emerging adults from the SCI to engage in the changing socioeconomic climate on the island.

Some feminist scholars, such as Braidotti (1994, 2012), Carvalho (2007), and Massey (1994), build on Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) notion of nomadism (which I shared earlier in Chapter Seven) by exposing the hegemonic interpretations of place, space, and identity. From this perspective, the journey of the nomad takes on multiple and/or interchangeable meanings (Handley, 2009). For example, "spatially, the places visited inscribe the subject with elements of power and identity, while symbolically, the act of travel and exploration denotes an act of independence and self-creation" (p. 13). Such articulations of nomadacy complement contemporary feminist theory by developing "a vision of female feminist subjectivity in a nomadic mode" (Braidotti, 1994, p. 1). I would be curious to explore further how specific conceptualizations of feminist nomadacy relate to the career stories of the young women who contributed to my study, as well as how future work in this context might be used to look at intergenerational aspects of mothers and daughters in the context of career development, and how these intergenerational dimensions may be a contributing factor, or otherwise, to the career trajectories of the female emergent adults of the SCI.

For example, Braidotti's conceptualization of the nomad involves "the shedding of bonds, abandoning the constriction of women's traditional roles as wife, mother, and supporter" (as cited in Carvalho, 2007, p. 98). While I did not find any specific reference to gender roles and norms in my analysis of the data, it would be interesting to explore if the mobility uncovered in this study is associated in any way with gendered push and pull factors associated with the movement of young men and women on- and off-island, and how this movement may have transpired in previous generations. The scholars I have referenced above could provide direction for studying how "the female subject moves about in space that was traditionally controlled by patriarchal systems…asserting her desire for independence and a non-traditional life outside the constraints of domestic responsibilities" (Handley, 2009, p. 13).

McRobbie (as cited in Adkins, 2008) discusses the presence of young women in the discourse on education and employment put forth by the government of the United Kingdom.

> Young women are compelled to be active, willing, motivated, and aspirational. They can (through determination and hard work), transcend barriers of class, gender, and race and secure occupational identities, succeed at work, and material reward. As subjects endowed with newly found capacities to succeed economically…young women are increasingly incited (and normatively expected) to become wage earning subjects across their lifetime. (p. 192)

A critical exploration into the potentially gendered fabric of labour markets and associated postmodern nomadism that is essential for economic participation would add to the existing discourse on education and employment, as well as to the discussion of human capital development in small island developing states like the SCI. From this perspective, the social inclusion of young women (as human capital) can be translated into the economic inclusion of developing economies in the globalized, competitive marketplace.

Young women are increasingly being seen as "top girls" or as "can do girls," "attributed with freedom, independence and the capacity for success in education and the labour market" (Allen & Osgood, 2008, p. 2). It has been suggested that "in a workfare society in which there are 'no excuses' for economic inactivity (David, 2006) labour market participation is situated as an imperative for young women, and the most 'effective' defense against 'social exclusion'" (Allen & Osgood, 2009, p. 5). Harris (2004a) suggests that "young women have a critical part to

play in the smooth functioning of the new economy" and at all levels of social class (p. 60). However, while I propose that feminist readings will probe deeper into the interaction between gender and social class barriers (that may or may not impact on the capacity for mobility illuminated in this study), it is important to keep in mind that feminist scholars argue against the over-estimation of the extent to which class and gender constraints may have weakened with the social, political, and economic changes of the late modernity. Despite the observable existence of social agency among young women in the West participating in local labour markets, "the structuring [of] opportunities and identities available to individuals [and] the presence of inequalities which prevent some young women from entering the category of the 'I can be anything girl' (See Walkerdine et al. 2001; McRobbie, 2008; Ringrose, 2007)" should be included in any future inquiry into the career stories of participants engaged in this study, or any other study.

While Adkins (2008) proposes in her work that "the incitement for young women into employment is operative across the class spectrum" (p.192), a feminist perspective further extends the middle-class ideals and experiences that are typically used as a baseline in existing empirical work, to include women and girls from the working-class. A gendered lens might also provide a deeper understanding of the career stories of both male and female participants who experienced parenthood during their postsecondary transitions (Walkerdine, 2003; Harris, 2004b; McRobbie, 2007; Allen & Osgood, 2009). In addition, I imagine that a feminist lens also would illuminate the range of positions of the "successful female subject" in comparison to the "crisis of masculinity" as the career stories of female participants in such a study are juxtaposed with the career stories of their male peers (Epstein et al., cited in Ringrose & Walkerdine, 2008; Ringrose, 2007). Undoubtedly, there is a web of discourses and qualitative work that could evoke new understanding about the complexity and multiplicity of the postmodern nomadic career stories shared by the participants contributing to this study. While I maintain that my emergent understanding of the postmodern nomadacy of participants is authentically and uniquely linked to the socioeconomic climate of the SCI, there would be value in re-reading the career stories of the participants through an explicitly feminist lens. Doing so would help to define further the relationship between the local labour market, human capital development, and young women from the SCI, as well as expose inequalities (i.e., race, class, gender, etc.) in accessing social capital that intersects with the mobility of emerging adults. Also, based on what

is known about gender and race in different social, cultural, political, and economic contexts, it would be interesting to explore how an analysis of the data through a feminist lens might reveal how gender is more specifically implicated in the experiences of the SCI participants, how race, and educational privilege associated with private institutions might be implicated in the issues of human capital and career development.

Recommendations for Policies and Practices for the SCI

The processes involved in obtaining a better understanding of the features and factors contributing to the educational and occupational (career) decisions of emerging adults from the SCI have revealed the complexity and the nuances involved in the career decision-making process and have suggested ways that institutions may support this unfolding career development. More importantly, my findings suggest families, school administrators, teachers, the business community, government, and specific tools and practices can help direct and provide for the career development needs of a relatively understudied population. As the data suggest, support for young people during their career decision-making process is vitally important in the cultivation of human capital and subsequent development of the island. In reviewing the recommendations for policies and practices, I hope the SCI community will draw on these suggestions to support postsecondary life transitions of emerging adults; perhaps even becoming more attentive and responsive to the concerns and desires of the postmodern nomad. Also, I hope that the greater educational community in high schools and post-secondary institutions outside of the SCI will begin to look at the career development process of their students differently by becoming more aware and responsive to the evolving globalized job market and the changing demands for educational and occupational experiences and qualifications.

This study comes at a timely moment, where national policies to improve socioeconomic development in the SCI are being reviewed and revised to meet the changing sociocultural, economic and political landscape. Pressing issues include a need to increase the enrollment of young people in higher education to generate human capital so current and anticipated vacancies in the local labour market may be filled locally, and to address accountability issues in the administration and distribution of national scholarships. The recommendations for policies and practices will be shared with all participants who contributed to this work. Also, I will forward

these recommendations to the SCI's Ministry of Education to ensure that institutional leaders are made aware of the findings. It is my hope that the research will be helpful in contributing to improved career guidance services for students from the SCI, and that it will provide valuable insights that may inform educational policies and strategies in schools, and in future national socioeconomic development plans.

The findings of this study brought to light the vital role mobility plays in the career decisions of emerging adults. I have learned about how their behaviour as postmodern nomads reflects both intra-regional and international migration patterns and how the features of birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances interact with mobility. The impetuses for this "shifting" suggest that young people generally believe that there is great value in pursuing international opportunities and that these experiences will result in occupational opportunities in their post-graduate professional trajectory. At the same time, it is important that emerging adults reflect on the relevance and transferability of international educational and occupational experiences to their local communities. While particular areas of study might be relevant and/or of value in more developed locations, the same skills may not be required in smaller developing nations. For example, I remember meeting a young woman during my fourth-year field experience in the SCI who had graduated from PSH and obtained a diploma as a surgical assistant at a community college in the United States. Interestingly, upon her return home to the SCI she was unable to find work in her field because the local hospital did not provide surgical services. While this is not the case now that a new hospital has been built on the island, at the time of her return home to the SCI, the young woman decided to take a job as a receptionist at a local real estate office. To counter the mismatch between international educational opportunities and the labour needs of the SCI, it is important that emerging adults pursue relevant fields of study. Clearly, there is an opportunity to establish intra-regional opportunities for young people to pursue educational opportunities closer to home (i.e., neighbouring Caribbean islands which have institutions of higher education) and to participate in work-experience programs relevant to the developmental needs of small island states. I propose a collaborative cooperative education program between the University of the West Indies (any campus), CARICOM, and the SCI's community college, where academic learning in the areas of study related to developmental needs on the island would be enhanced through mandatory work experience opportunities. In the development and facilitation of this program, strong links to business and industry throughout

the Caribbean could be formed and students could find their studies more relevant to the ways in which they can participate in the SCI's growth. Students would be encouraged to enroll in specific courses of study at the university level which focus on a particular area of need or growth on the island (such as medical sciences, teacher education, building technology, engineering, environmental and/or agriculture management, etc.). Then they would be required to complete paid inter-regional (within the Caribbean) summer work experience placements related to their field of study and based on addressing development needs informed by CARICOM. Potential internship providers include affiliated organizations and/or businesses involved in CARICOM's several projects, such as CREDP (Caribbean Renewable Energy Development Programme), CAIRCOM's Agribusiness Development Programme, PANCAP (Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS), and so forth. Finally, upon completion of their degree and internship requirements, students could be invited by the SCI community college to participate in an on-island job placement program where individuals would be matched with potential employers that offer positions related to their professional skills and knowledge. The aim of this program would be to facilitate the retention and attraction of human capital as individuals would be pursuing educational and occupational opportunities viable to the SCI's development and relevant to the local labour market. Also, this program would contribute to sustainability, ethical, and socially just practices of retaining local human capital.

The implementation of any institutional practice attending to the matching of skill sets and interests of emerging adults with educational and occupational opportunities relevant to the specific developmental needs of the SCI warrants attention. Also, such programming would help to revise policies for the distribution of government scholarships by ensuring individuals are awarded based on academic merit, community participation, and on the potential for contributing to the island's future growth. Therefore, only individuals enrolling in identified programs of study focused on particular niche markets on the island (some have been listed above) would qualify for government assistance. The relative smallness of the SCI community may have enabled flexibility in scholarship requirements in the past, but the growing population and political instability requires formative guidelines. No longer should individuals feel entitled to receive assistance. Changes to the requirements need to be made openly available to the community through schools and community organizations. A revision of policy in this manner would attend to the frustrations and concerns the participants had about the administration and

distribution of scholarships and would clarify the application process for both students and their families. The policy recommendation I am suggesting also would warrant support for return migration where individuals receiving scholarships would be required to return home upon completion of their studies, therefore support their desire for "giving back" to the SCI.

In addition to revising government assistance for individuals wishing to pursue postsecondary education, I propose that the banking industry should engage in the cultivation of human capital by encouraging students and their families to devise educational saving strategies. With a growing population and recuperation from the current economic downturn, the SCI will be limited in its ability to financially support emerging adults in their career trajectories. Consequently, the onus of career exploration and pursuits will fall upon individuals and their families who, in the past, have not been encouraged to prepare for the associated costs of higher education. The SCI is a tax-free country, and young people could be shown through career development programs in their high schools, how to make optimal use of disposable income in preparation for their postsecondary transition. As postmodern nomads, emerging adults from the SCI are aware of the global landscape and ensuing opportunities and experiences available abroad. However, financial preparation may not only enable individuals to engage in the required mobility with fewer restrictions or worries, but also may allow more young people to seize spontaneous or serendipitous opportunities. Undoubtedly, "going with the flow" can expand the worldviews of young people; perhaps even fuel the entrepreneurial spirit of some, which may also contribute to the SCI's cultivation of human capital.

In the process of gathering secondary data such as relevant public documents and in speaking with other stakeholders on the SCI, I was surprised to find that many of the public and private high school providers on the island, as well as the local community college, had little or no documentation on the postsecondary lives of their students. Many teachers and administrators could not recall the whereabouts of their former graduates. In addition, I was unable to obtain any statistical data documenting the career trajectories of former government scholarship recipients who are mandated to return to the SCI after the completion of their postsecondary studies. It became apparent to me that there is a need to document the mobility of students in order to get a better sense of the "brain drain" that is having an impact on the island. I believe that by collecting such information institutional leaders and policy advisors would have the evidence needed to attend to human capital cultivation on the island. Also, it would help monitor

the "shifting" and "giving back" of emerging adults. More importantly, statistical data could be used as a starting point upon which to conduct further research on the career development of the island's young people. With the changing cultural diversity on the island, such information might suggest how to vary programming and policies to attend to the diverse and different needs of individuals to support their career aspirations.

The importance of networks uncovered through this inquiry suggests that it is imperative for young people to establish relationships with adults in their community. How to develop such networks and where to seek out possible mentors are important tools that should be made available to all students at the high school level and be incorporated into career guidance programming. As counselors work with students through the college application process, they should encourage students to participate in a mentoring relationship with an experienced worker in an area that is associated with an individual's career interests. I imagine that elementary schools, the new local hospital, and the several resorts on the island would welcome senior high school students as volunteers. This would not only provide young people with valuable experiences in the day-to-day activities in their potential career pathways, but also would connect them with mentors in the field.

With the digital revolution, emerging adults access information about anything and everything through the Internet. I believe that my study suggests the need to develop an information-based website specific to the SCI, that would provide career development tools (such as interest inventories), information on college programs and the application process (such as a list of relevant bursaries and scholarships, examples of college application essays, outlines of possible career pathways, and tools for financial planning), a database of interested adult mentors from the community, and volunteering, and work experience/internship opportunities, and finally a job bank specifically geared to new graduates from the SCI. This platform would provide open access to important information for young people, families, and the broader SCI community; as well it would generate a bridge between various stakeholders who could envision additional ways to assist emerging adults with their educational and occupational decisions.

Recommendations for Practices for the Greater Educational Community

For many years the phrase "think globally, act locally" has been a widely quoted aphorism in conversations about the environment, business, and urban planning (Geddes, 1998).

The concept is simple: consider the well-being of the planet, and take action in the community by being cognizant of how actions impact the global sphere. The findings from this study suggest this slogan should be rephrased to read "think locally, prepare globally." I believe that the postmodern nomadic metaphor I have articulated provides a helpful way for the greater educational community to think about young people and globalization. The career stories of the participants examined in this study illustrate the value in preparing globally to contribute locally, and the need for educators to help young people understand how global practices have an impact on their communities. By recognizing the vast opportunities available for young people beyond the borders of their community (and country), students and educators should see value in learning from different cultures, practices, and perspectives from abroad. In this sense, educators need to re-conceptualize the way they view the career development process. In 21st century, the career trajectories of emerging adults reflect an ongoing process of seizing educational and occupational opportunities as they arise. As young people acquire knowledge and skills in their field of interest, their education will most likely be transferrable to other industries, enabling mobility as individuals access a variety of professional opportunities. As well, it is important to recognize how globalization is a pull factor for young people to leave their communities. Accordingly, it is vital for communities to work with educators to provide opportunities for young people to envision ways in which they can contribute to innovation and progress within their community through ethical and socially just practices. Students need to be encouraged to think about local labour markets, to consider potential areas for growth, improvement, and sustainability, and acquire the skills to access information and opportunities outside of their community that can be applied locally to help advance the local economy and retain valuable human capital.

One of the benefits higher education institutions provide to emerging adults is an exposure to peers and faculty from varying backgrounds and with diversified perspectives and experiences. Faculty at such institutions often have the ability to connect students with opportunities for travel and study abroad, even offering financial support for those who are unable to participate due to economic restraints. As mobility becomes a central component in the pursuit of educational and occupational experiences, faculties and staff should attempt to include opportunities for young people to learn about global practices in various fields of professional learning. For example, schools of education may include modules that encourage students to

examine comparative education (i.e., curriculum) practices, while schools of engineering may introduce students to issues that may arise when working in various climate zones with different building codes and materials. It is important for higher education institutions to approach programming from the perspective that the skills and knowledge students acquire from their institution should be transferrable for a highly mobile, boundary-less career trajectory and for a globalized labour market.

This study demonstrated how the SCI is home to postmodern nomads who see and seek out career opportunities both on and off-island. Knowing this, it is important that all policies and practices addressing the cultivation of human capital and the subsequent career development of emerging adults attend to the inherent mobility of young people and nurture the desire to participate in the local economy, and establish support for young people to pursue their educational and occupational goals. I believe the recommendations I have provided are reflective of the new understanding and appreciation for the complexities of career decision-making I have uncovered through this inquiry.

Final Thoughts

When I introduced this study, I mentioned how life is full of many important decisions, and that decisions regarding educational and occupational possibilities involve a continuous process of learning and development throughout the lifespan. While I had not anticipated uncovering the complexities of such possibilities in the age of a globalized economy, the process of engaging in this inquiry progressed with an evolving discovery of untold stories and unexplored behaviours. What I have uncovered here is an understanding of how the socioeconomic and political landscape of a small island Caribbean state has transformed the lives of its youthful population into postmodern nomads exploring and pursuing career opportunities despite a climate of uncertainty. More importantly, this nuanced understandings of the career stories shared by emerging adults from the SCI are illustrative of how young people describe and rationalize their career decisions in relation to the contextual features of birthright, autonomy, networks, and finances; and how the SCI can cultivate human capital by attending to these important factors that guide their choices and experiences. I hope this study will inspire future research on the interrelatedness of career development and mobility; a rather urgent phenomenon when exploring the career pathways of young people amidst the complexities of globalization.

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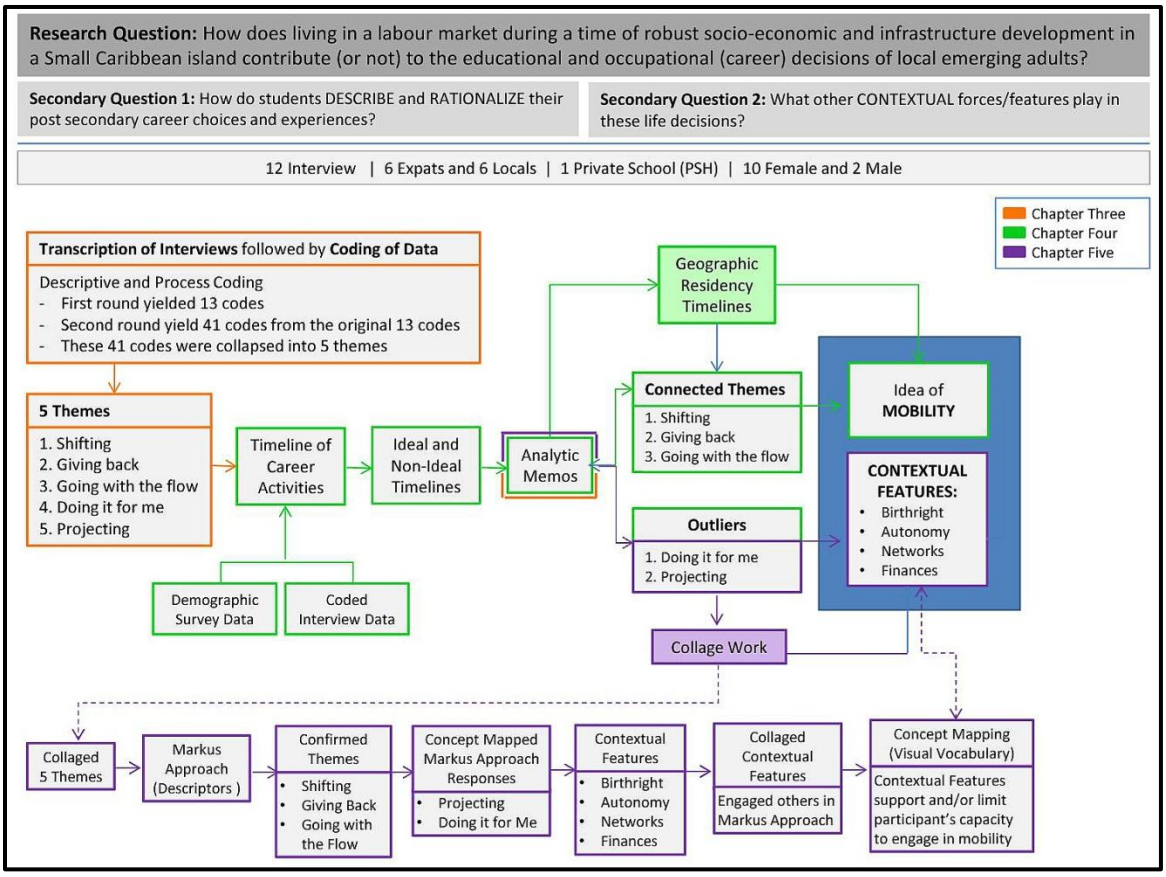
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW



APPENDIX B

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS ACCEPTABILITY OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMANS

McGill

Research Ethics Board Office
McGill University
1555 Peel Street, 11th floor
Montreal, QC H3A 3L8

Tel: (514) 398-6831
Fax: (514) 398-4644
Ethics website: www.mcgill.ca/researchoffice/compliance/human/

Research Ethics Board II
Certificate of Ethical Acceptability of Research Involving Humans

REB File #: 429-0410

Project Title: Transitioning under the Caribbean Sun: Educational and Occupational (Career) Decisions of Emerging Adults

Principal Investigator: Ramona Parkash Arora

Department: DISE

Student Status: Ph.D. Student

Supervisor: Prof. L. Butler-Kisber

This project was reviewed on May 03, 2010 by

Expedited Review ___x__
Full Review _____

Mark Baldwin, Ph.D.
Chair, REB II

Approval Period: May 04, 2010 **to** May 03, 2011

This project was reviewed and approved in accordance with the requirements of the McGill University Policy on the Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Human Subjects and with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct For Research Involving Humans.

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* All research involving human subjects requires review on an annual basis. A Request for Renewal form should be submitted 2-3 weeks before the above expiry date.
* When a project has been completed or terminated a Final Report form must be submitted.
* Should any modification or other unanticipated development occur before the next required review, the REB must be informed and any modification can't be initiated until approval is received.

APPENDIX C

SOCIAL NETWORKING INVITATION FOR STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Attention Former Students from the SCI!

Share stories about what you've been doing since graduating from high school in an interview with a researcher who is exploring the career decision making experiences of young people from the SCI.

Your time and involvement in this voluntary research project will be greatly appreciated.

Additionally, you may benefit from the experience by reflecting and clarifying some of your career goals and plans.

If you are interested in participating in this research project, please respond to this invitation by sending a private comment or message to me, AND/OR emailing me personally at: ramona.arora@gmail.com.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Ramona Parkash Arora
PhD Candidate & Teacher
McGill University

Researcher: Ramona Parkash Arora, Graduate Student

Contact Info.: (email) ramona.arora@gmail.com /
ramona.parkash@mail.mcgill.ca
(mobile) (416) 801-3482 / (649) 347-8211

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(tele.#) (514) 398-2252

**Please feel free to contact either my supervisor or me with any questions or comments.*

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LETTER

TRANSITIONING UNDER THE CARIBBEAN SUN: EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL (CAREER) DECISIONS OF EMERGING ADULTS

Dear [Insert *Interested Participant's Name*],

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study. I am currently a graduate student in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University, located in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. As such, the purpose of this study is to learn more about career decision making experiences of emerging adults (between the ages of 18 and 25) from the Turks and Caicos Islands. The goal of this study is to explore the career pathway of individuals in relation to their educational and occupational decisions and learn more about the factors that may contribute to making such decisions.

If you agree to volunteer for this study, you will be asked to complete a survey. You will then be asked to participate in one interview with me that will last approximately 60 to 90 minutes long. The purpose of the interview is to explore your career decision making experiences as an emerging adult and/or your views about the process of making decisions related to education and work. During the interview you may choose to skip any questions you do not want to answer. You can determine the date, time, and location for the interview so that it does not conflict with your other commitments. With your permission, I will make a digital audio recording of the interview so I can capture all that you say. The recording will then be transcribed by me and then printed in written form. A pseudonym will be used in place of your name in the transcription, in my final thesis, and in any written or oral presentations where the findings from this research project are shared. The recordings of the interview, as well as transcriptions will be stored on my password protected computer, as well as in a locked filing cabinet in my personal residence.

For the second part of the research, you will be emailed a copy of your interview transcript and invited to clarify the content, or confirm that it is an accurate representation of your participation. I may ask you follow-up questions at this time to also clarify my understanding of your experiences. At this time, you may make changes to your 'story' so you feel that it truly captures your experiences. It will also provide you the opportunity to add additional feedback to the research. Any information obtained during the course of the study will remain confidential. Findings generated from your participation and representation of your story will only be shared with your permission.

As there is little research regarding the career decision making experiences of individuals from Caribbean countries, your participation will be very helpful. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to you as a participant in this study; however you may withdraw from the study at any time without any repercussion.

If you agree to participate or have any questions concerning this research study, please contact me by email at ramona.arora@gmail.com, or by telephone at (416) 801-3482 (Canada) / (649) 347-8211 (TCI).
Thank you again for your time, I look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Ramona Parkash Arora

APPENDIX E

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

TRANSITIONING UNDER THE CARIBBEAN SUN: EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL (CAREER) DECISIONS OF EMERGING ADULTS

Study Name: Transitioning under the Caribbean Sun: Educational and Occupational (Career) Decisions of Emerging Adults

Abstract:

This research explores the educational and occupational (career) decisions of 'emerging adults'[24] living in a rapidly developing Eastern Caribbean island. This study primarily focuses on the cultural, social, and economic factors that may contribute (or not) to the personal and professional choices of emerging adults who are seen as viable resources for a country's competitiveness in today's globalized society. While an increasing body of theoretical and empirical literature on career development, career choice, school-to-work transitions and human capital development informs this study, little is known about how young people themselves, view the social and economic circumstances that contribute to their career decisions. Few studies have captured the unique processes guiding the educational and occupational choices and decision making of emerging adults. To address this gap in the literature this study uses a qualitative research design using interviews with selected participants. These interviews will offer different perspectives on interesting and unique life experiences and how these experiences contribute to the career decisions of emerging adults from the Eastern Caribbean islands; namely a small Caribbean island (SCI).

It is anticipated that this study will help foster an increased understanding of a complex process and hopes to provide insight for the development of resources assisting individuals in their career pathways.

Statement of Purpose:

In the past decade, the TCI have experienced a rapid growth in population and infrastructure development which has made it an interesting backdrop to explore the question that drives my research: *how does living in a labour market during a boom and/or bust period of socioeconomic and infrastructure development in the small Caribbean island (herein referred to as the "SCI") contribute (or not) to the educational and occupational (career) decisions of local emerging adults?* Key questions that underpin the research include: how do students describe, explain, and rationalize their postsecondary career choices and experiences; what role do parents, teachers, and school administrators (immediate stakeholders) play in these life decisions; and what other contextual features/forces play a role in these decisions and why?

This study aims to identify the similarities and differences of the educational and occupational decisions made by local and expatriate individuals who have attended secondary school in the SCI. It also intends to develop an understanding of how particular factors (such as peers, teachers, parents, etc.) contribute to career decisions and to encourage individuals to reflect on these decisions. It is hoped that the findings from this study will include recommendations to be shared with the SCI's Ministry of Education, to improve secondary and postsecondary school initiatives that assist young people in their school to work transitions.

[24] For the purpose of my research, *emerging adults* are young people between the ages of 18 and 25.

APPENDIX F

PRIMARY INFORMED CONSENT FORM

(Emerging Adult)
TRANSITIONING UNDER THE CARIBBEAN SUN:
EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL (CAREER) DECISIONS OF EMERGING ADULTS

Date: May 7th, 2010

Study Name: Transitioning under the Caribbean Sun: Educational and Occupational (Career) Decisions of Emerging Adults

Researcher: Ramona Parkash Arora, Graduate Student,
Contact Info.: ramona.arora@gmail.com / (416) 801-3482
Campus Address: Department of Integrated Studies in Education
Faculty of Education, Department, McGill University
3700 McTavish Street, Montreal, Quebec, H3A 1Y2, Canada

Supervisor: Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber, lynn.butlerkisber@mcgill.ca / (514) 398-2252

Purpose of the Research: This research is being undertaken as part of a dissertation to fulfill the requirements of the PhD in Education from McGill University. The results will be reported in the dissertation. I am conducting a qualitative research study on career decision making experiences of emerging adults from the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI). The study design entails an interview with individuals (between the ages of 18 and 25) who have attended secondary school on the island of Providenciales, in order to explore possible factors contributing to the educational and occupational decisions made by young people and how these decisions may (or may not) contribute to the TCI's competitiveness in the new global economy.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research: I would like to invite you to participate in this study. You will be asked to complete a demographic survey and participate in an individual interview that focuses on your experiences during and after secondary school; the educational and occupational choices and decisions you've made; as well as plans you may have for the future. You were selected as a potential participant because you have identified yourself as a TCI Belonger, Turks Islander, TCI Resident, or expatriate; attended secondary school in the TCI; are between the ages of 18 and 25; and have responded to calls for participants needed for this study. The interview will last about 60 to 90 minutes and will be recorded using a digital audio recorder.

Confidentiality: All data generated for this study will remain confidential to the fullest extent possible. Other than myself, only my doctoral supervisor, Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber, will have access to the data for the purposes of our ongoing supervisory meetings. There will be no information that identifies you personally appearing in the dissertation or any future papers or publications resulting from this study. Audio-recorded interviews will be transcribed by the researcher (Ramona Parkash Arora), and anonymity will be assured by using a pseudonym in place of your real name and of any person to whom you may refer to during the interview. I will quote some of your responses to the interview questions in my dissertation. As well, I may present part of the findings in future papers and/or publications in classes at McGill or in other academic and research contexts.

The data collected will be used in my dissertation and may also be used in possible future publications or studies that emerge from this study. I will keep an electronic version of the transcription on my personal computer, which is password protected. I will keep a hard copy of the transcription in a locked filing cabinet at my personal residence. The digital audio recorder contents will be also be stored in a locked cabinet at my personal residence. A summary of the results, as well as my final thesis will be made available to you after the completion of the dissertation.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You: You will benefit from the research by being able to discuss your experiences during and after high school. You will have the opportunity to reflect on personal and professional, educational and occupational decisions you've made in regard to your career pathway.

Risks and Discomforts: There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with your participation in this study. You may choose to not respond to any question(s) that make you feel uncomfortable. You may end the interview at any time without any repercussion. If you feel uncomfortable with any part of this study at any time, you can withdraw from the study without any consequence.

Voluntary Participation: No incentives will be offered for your participation. Your participation in the study is completely voluntary, and you are under no obligation to agree to be interviewed (either with a digital audio and/or video recorder). A decision not to volunteer will not influence the nature of the ongoing relationship the participant has with the researcher and/or the nature of their relationship with McGill University either now, or in the future.

Withdrawal From the Study: You can withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason without penalty, or decline to answer questions for any reason. The decision to terminate participation on any grounds will not affect any relationships with the researcher or McGill University. If you decide to withdraw from the study, all data generated as a consequence of your participation shall be destroyed immediately.

Questions About the Research: If you have any questions about my research in general or about your role in the study, please contact me or my supervisor:

Principal Researcher:	Ramona Parkash Arora ramona.arora@gmail.com / (416) 801-3482
Supervisor:	Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber lynn.butlerkisber@mcgill.ca / (514) 398-2252

This research study has been reviewed and approved for compliance to research ethics protocols by the Research Ethics Board (REB-II) of McGill University. Should you have any general questions, please contact the Department of Integrated Studies in Education office at (514) 398-4525. Should you have any ethical concerns regarding the research, you may contact Lynda McNeil, Research Ethics Officer for McGill University, at (514) 398-6831.

Thank-you for agreeing to take part in this study.

CONSENT

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above. You understand that your participation in this research is voluntary, and that you have freely and willingly consented to participate in this research study. Your signature also indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records. You may withdraw your consent at any time without any consequences.

Please check the appropriate box for each line:

	CONSENT:
I agree to be audio-taped.	☐YES *or* ☐NO
I agree that audio-recordings may be used in conference presentations	☐YES *or* ☐NO
I agree to be identified in the research study (thesis)	☐YES *or* ☐NO
I agree to be identified in journals, books and/or conference presentations	☐YES *or* ☐NO

I, _____, consent to participate in the study entitled: "Transitioning under the Caribbean Sun: Educational and Occupational (Career) Decisions of Emerging Adults" conducted by Ramona Parkash Arora. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement.

Signature of Participant	Printed Name of Participant	Date
Signature of Researcher	Printed Name of Researcher	Date

APPENDIX G

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

TRANSITIONING UNDER THE CARIBBEAN SUN:
EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL (CAREER) DECISIONS OF EMERGING ADULTS

This survey is part of the research project entitled: "Transitioning under the Caribbean Sun: Educational and Occupational (Career) Decisions of Emerging Adults".

NAME: FIRST NAME MIDDLE INITIAL LAST NAME

DATE OF BIRTH: DAY / MONTH / YEAR **COUNTRY OF BIRTH:**

NATIONALITY: **CURRENT RESIDENCE:** ☐ Turks and Caicos Is.

WHAT IS YOUR TCI "STATUS":
☐ Belonger
☐ Expatriate
☐ Permanent Resident
☐ Turks Islander
☐ Other

Please specify if OTHER: _____

☐ United States
☐ United Kingdom
☐ Canada
☐ Other

Please specify:
CITY / COUNTRY

WHERE IN THE TCI DID/DO YOU RESIDE:
☐ Providenciales ☐ North Caicos ☐ Middle Caicos
☐ Grand Turk ☐ South Caicos ☐ Salt Cay

Please specify neighbourhood: _____
(ex: Blue Hills, Long Bay, Chalk Sound, Leeward, etc.)

HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY YOURSELF:
☐ Turks Islander ☐ Bahamian ☐ Haitian
☐ Jamaican ☐ American ☐ British
☐ Canadian ☐ French ☐ Other

Please specify if other: _____

PARENTS BIRTHPLACE: MOTHER FATHER

PARENTS' OCCUPATION: MOTHER FATHER

DOES YOUR FAMILY RESIDE IN THE TCI: ☐ Yes ☐ No If "Yes", where? _____
(Ex: Parents/Guardians, Siblings, etc.)

IF "No", where is their primary place of residence? CITY / COUNTRY # OF YEARS?

YOUR CURRENT OCCUPATION: _____

EMPLOYER: _____

WHICH HIGH SCHOOL DID YOU GRADUATE FROM: _____

YEAR GRADUATED: YEAR **DID YOU COMPLETE THE 6th FORM:** ☐ Yes ☐ No

WHAT DID YOU DO AFTER COMPLETING YOUR GCSE EXAMS: ☐ A-Levels ☐ Work ☐ Other

Specify/Explain: _____

If applicable, WHERE DID YOU COMPLETE YOU'RE A-LEVELS? _____ YEAR COMPLETED

DID YOU ATTEND THE TURKS AND CAICOS COMMUNITY COLLEGE: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please specify location: ☐ Grand Turk ☐ Providenciales

If yes, please specify area of study: _____
(i.e. academic/subject concentration)

HAVE YOU PURSUED ANY FORMAL POST-SECONDARY TRAINING or EDUCATION: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please specific institution attended, program/specialization, and the years attended, and the designation received (ex: *Bachelors of Arts, Diploma in Business, Real Estate License, etc.*):

INSTITUTION	PROGRAM/ SPECIALIZATION	YEARS ATTENDED	DESIGNATION

HAVE YOU RECEIVED ANY SCHOLARSHIPS: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, specify: _____

_____

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION)

TRANSITIONING UNDER THE CARIBBEAN SUN: EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL (CAREER) DECISIONS OF EMERGING ADULTS

Opening Remarks:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Before we begin I would like to go over the consent form with you (bring two copies: keep one, give other to participant).
During this interview I want you to speak with you about your career decision making experiences. This includes decisions regarding educational and occupational choices and decisions. I do have some broad questions for you but feel free to talk about anything that you want to about your experiences during and after high school that may relate to your career. You will note that at any time you can stop the interview. You can also refuse to answer any question and still remain in the study.

Are you comfortable if I record this interview using an audio recorder?

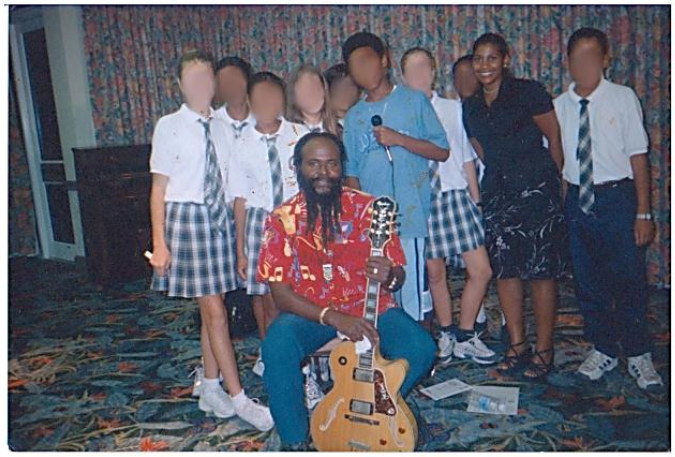
Interview Questions:

1. Tell me about your family and where you come from?
   (For example: *Where were you born? When did you move to the TCI? What brought your family to the TCI? What do your parents/guardians do for a living? Where does your family reside now?*)*
2. Describe the type of jobs or occupations that interested you when you were younger?
3. Tell me what it was like for you during high school? Did you like your teachers? Which subjects/classes did you enjoy most? What did you like/dislike about school?
4. What types of activities or hobbies did you participate in outside of school? Are there any particular people (such as friends and/or family members) who participated in these activities with you? What did you (and do you) like to do in your spare time?
5. Can you recall what you were looking forward to most after graduating high school?
6. What kind of things did you do to prepare for life after high school?*
7. Can you provide me with a timeline of events, activities, and things you did after graduating high school?*
8. Why do you think people want/don't want to live in the Turks and Caicos Islands?*
9. Who and what do you believe have had the greatest impact on where you are today?*
10. What are some of the 'turning points' or significant moments in your life that you believe have contributed to the decisions you've made about education and work?*
11. Did the cost of attending a postsecondary institution (such as college or university) or other training program have any impact on what you chose to do after high school? Did you apply/receive any scholarships for your postsecondary education?
12. Describe your family's view on education? Regarding work? Regarding marriage/ family/children?
13. What level of education do your parents and siblings have?
14. Can you describe what may be your current goals and/or aspirations?*
15. Are there any questions or things you would like to share that you didn't have a chance to speak about?*

NOTE: Questions with an * indicate questions that can be used for secondary data collection.

APPENDIX I

PHOTO ELICITATION TOOLS



APPENDIX J

SECONDARY INFORMED CONSENT FORM

(Immediate Stakeholder)

TRANSITIONING UNDER THE CARIBBEAN SUN:
EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL (CAREER) DECISIONS OF EMERGING ADULTS

Date: May 7th, 2010

Study Name: Transitioning under the Caribbean Sun: Educational and Occupational (Career) Decisions of Emerging Adults

Researcher: Ramona Parkash Arora, Graduate Student,
Contact Info.: ramona.arora@gmail.com / (416) 801-3482
Campus Address: Department of Integrated Studies in Education
Faculty of Education, Department, McGill University
3700 McTavish Street, Montreal, Quebec, H3A 1Y2, Canada

Supervisor: Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber, lynn.butlerkisber@mcgill.ca / (514) 398-2252

Purpose of the Research: This research is being undertaken as part of a dissertation to fulfill the requirements of the PhD in Education from McGill University. The results will be reported in the dissertation. I am conducting a qualitative research study on career decision making experiences of emerging adults from the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI). The study design entails an interview with individuals (between the ages of 18 and 25) who have attended secondary school on the island of Providenciales, in order to explore possible factors contributing to the educational and occupational decisions made by young people and how these decisions may (or may not) contribute to the TCI's competitiveness in the new global economy.

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Confidentiality: All data generated for this study will remain confidential to the fullest extent possible. Other than myself, only my doctoral supervisor, Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber, will have access to the data for the purposes of our ongoing supervisory meetings. There will be no information that identifies you personally appearing in the dissertation or any future papers or publications resulting from this study. Audio-recorded interviews will be transcribed by the researcher (Ramona Parkash Arora), and anonymity will be assured by using a pseudonym in place of your real name and of any person to whom you may refer to during the interview. I will quote some of your responses to the interview questions in my dissertation. As well, I may present part of the findings in future papers and/or publications in classes at McGill or in other academic and research contexts.

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Risks and Discomforts: There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with your participation in this study. You may choose to not respond to any question(s) that make you feel uncomfortable. You may end the interview at any time without any repercussion. If you feel uncomfortable with any part of this study at any time, you can withdraw from the study without any consequence.

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Principal Researcher:	Ramona Parkash Arora ramona.arora@gmail.com / (416) 801-3482
Supervisor:	Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber lynn.butlerkisber@mcgill.ca / (514) 398-2252

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Thank-you for agreeing to take part in this study.

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Please check the appropriate box for each line:

	CONSENT:
I agree to be audio-taped.	☐YES *or* ☐NO
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I agree to be identified in journals, books and/or conference presentations	☐YES *or* ☐NO

I, _____, consent to participate in the study entitled: "Transitioning under the Caribbean Sun: Educational and Occupational (Career) Decisions of Emerging Adults" conducted by Ramona Parkash Arora. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement.

Signature of Participant	Printed Name of Participant	Date
Signature of Researcher	Printed Name of Researcher	Date

APPENDIX K

PHOTOGRAPHIC FIELD NOTES

Tourists snorkel in the crystal clear turquoise waters which are under careful surveillance while development occurs.

Conch shells pile high at a local restaurant. What was once a small hut is now a full blown tourist attraction.

Despite the economic climate (or crisis), tourists continue to arrive at the SCI's airport. The airport expansion will soon bring more direct flights from Europe in hopes of boosting the tourism market. Currently, the island is experiencing a slow tourist season.

This was one of the few medical facilities on the island until the new hospital opened in April 2010.

The SCI government and Interhealth Canada's new full service hospital. It is currently staffed by primarily expatriate nurses and physicians.

The once sparsely developed internationally known shoreline on the island is now lined with high rise vacation condos and resort developments.

This naturally occuring crater/hole was one of the top ten things to see in the SCI when I first visited the island in 2000. To my surprise, it continues to be a popular tourist attraction.

This is the SCI's Community College campus.

APPENDIX L

REFINED CONCEPT MAP OF COLLAGE DESCRIPTORS