

INTERGENERATIONAL MOBILITY AND INEQUALITY IN CARIBBEAN CAREGIVER
MIGRATION IN TORONTO

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Abstract

One of the most pressing, yet undertheorized contemporary concerns in Canada is the social mobility of the children of immigrants. While literature on immigrant integration has focused on measuring levels of immigrant success using adaptation and integration measures in Canada, there is very little theoretical research on the complexities of Caribbean migration to Toronto. More importantly, while studies examine the intersectional spatialities of migrant domestic worker programs across the home, school, neighbourhood, and transnational space, less attention has been given to examining how these intersectionalities are articulated within second-generation Caribbean immigrant experiences. The purpose of this research is to fill this gap in the Canadian geographical literature and ask: How do the conditions created by domestic worker programs of the 1980s and 1990s shape the experiences of the next generation in Caribbean immigrant families in intersecting ways? Through semi-structured, oral life history interviews with six caregiver-child pairs, this research examines how Caribbean caregiver children experience the home, school, neighbourhoods, and transnational spaces as both constraint and possibilities. By focusing our attention on the voices of Caribbean caregivers and their children, the research demonstrates how the educational and employment trajectories of caregivers and their adult children are influenced by the geographies of race, gender, class, migration, and settlement. This research seeks to gain insight into Canadian urban geography and provide a deeper understanding of the intergenerational experiences of Caribbean caregiver children.

Dedication

To my mother; who carries everyone, while asking little for herself. You are a constellation of
light.

To all domestic caregivers and their children in this research whose migration journeys made this
research possible.

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With the completion of this thesis, I offer my deepest thanks to those who have coached me, both on and off the court, and who have held space for my thinking and growth.

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AM: Your love is thoughtful and searching. With you, care feels like a way of thinking, and thinking feels like a form of love.

KO: In the shadows, we etch rainbows. From 3 a.m. theorizations to laughter that interrupts exhaustion, you held both my academic spirals and my human ones.

KR: Your care stretches across time and distance. Through voice notes and steady encouragement, you reminded me to keep moving.

SR: We connect when needed most. You ground me in purpose and remind me to move with intention.

TN: Your strength is steady and embodied. You show me that resilience is practiced, not performed.

To my sister, who reminds me to be fearless - we are stronger than our last wound; my father, who teaches repair through nourishment; my two cats, who show me that a quiet presence can hold power.

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Chapter One: Introduction

My early understanding of caregiver migration was shaped during my childhood, growing up as the daughter of a Caribbean caregiver, long before my engagement with the topic in academic contexts. My experiences were shaped in the areas that my mother could not enter; clarinet recitals, basketball games, and many anxious nights prior to my high school examinations. Growing up in a home shaped by the complexities associated with caregiver migration motivated a question that has been the foundation of my research; how do Caribbean caregivers and their children experience the urban landscapes and transnational spaces?

One of the first formal pathways to facilitate Caribbean migration into Canada was the West Indian Domestic Scheme, introduced in 1955 by the Louis St. Laurent government (Calliste, 1993, 1994, 1996; Stasiulis & Bakan, 1997; Teelucksingh, 2006; Toney, 2010). Canada and Commonwealth Caribbean countries, such as Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad, signed a bilateral agreement to introduce a workforce to fill the demand for caregiving labour from affluent families in Canada. The requirements included being single (not married and without children), and being between 18 to 35 years of age. The move from the Caribbean to Canada was incentivized by the promise of eventual landed status. The West Indian Domestic Scheme officially operated between 1955 and 1967 and was replaced by the Temporary Employment Authorization Scheme (TEAS, 1973-1981), then succeeded by the Foreign Domestic Movement (FDM) of 1981-1992 and later by the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) in 1992. The women who entered Canada through domestic worker programs became vital to the country's social reproduction, allowing the middle class to capitalize on the dual-income household model. As noted in a 2012 report by the Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP), the legal and

structural frameworks established by caregiver programs have produced long-term patterns of occupational segmentation along racial lines; that is, the overrepresentation of racialized women in domestic, health and service sectors and their underrepresentation in secure or unionized employment (IRPP, 2012).

This thesis uses a small case study to investigate the intergenerational outcomes of Caribbean caregiver migration in Toronto, focusing on the everyday experiences of the children of Caribbean caregivers - specifically how they aspire to and navigate urban space. This research examines their experiences in the context of Canada's changing immigration attitudes and policies, which transitioned from a Eurocentric majority to a multicultural mosaic in the 1960s. The caregiver programs of the mid to late 20th century reproduced structural hierarchies. For example, researchers whose work examines caregiver migration at multiple scales, such as Pratt (2004; 2012), Parreñas (2001; 2005; 2015), and Farrales (2017), demonstrate that global care chains reproduce gendered and racialized dependencies that mirror earlier colonial geographies. While scholars have analyzed the impacts of global care chains in relation to the Filipino community, the Caribbean context remains unexplored in Canadian geographic literature. Despite the role Caribbean women have played in social reproduction in Canada, there remains a gap in geographic research regarding their children. Their children have grown up in Canadian schools, labour markets and neighbourhoods marked by persistent anti-Black racism, thus rendering this an urgent urban issue. Critical scholars have investigated the intersections of caregiver migration with the intergenerational outcomes of second-generation immigrant children in Toronto. For example, Kelly (2012; 2014) has researched and documented downward mobility among Filipino youth raised under the Live-in Caregiver program, citing how family separation, credential devaluation, and labour market segmentation contribute to

intergenerational inequality. Notably, Filipina caregivers enter Canada with high levels of education and professional training yet are systematically channeled into low-wage domestic labour (Pagaling, 2025). Such findings prompt consideration of how other communities migrating under similar labour schemes encounter comparable forms of inequality and constraint. Caribbean families who have migrated to Toronto occupy a specific historical and racial position in this landscape. As James (2012) notes, Black youth in Canada, including those within Caribbean immigrant families, face systemic barriers in their schools, workplaces, and urban neighbourhoods (Bauder & Sharpe, 2002).

Building upon the existing literature, the thesis draws from a growing body of Canadian migration scholarship including Kelly and Maharaj's (2019; 2022) contributions, which partly draw upon the research in this thesis. The authors examine the children of Filipino and Caribbean caregivers in Toronto and describe how historical structures of migration, education and racialization intersect to produce inequality across generations. In conjunction, these analyses highlight that migration outcomes are structured by state policy and uneven spatial interactions. My research expands upon these findings by locating caregiver migration - specifically from the Caribbean - within a geography of care and linking affective labour and intergenerational aspiration through spatial and emotional analysis. I will utilize Harding's (1991) concept of situated knowledge; that knowledge is best understood when placed in the context of those experiencing the circumstances. Therefore, I will present analytically grounded narrative accounts developed through oral life history interviews with six caregiver-child dyads, and one individual participant, examining their intergenerational experiences.

Chapter one begins with an introduction and a historical overview of the context of caregiver geography and migration. The second chapter contextualizes the research historically

and theoretically and traces Canada's migrant care program and the intersectional dimensions of race, gender and citizenship as well as the ways in which domestic labour channels are exclusionary. Chapter three provides a general overview and builds on existing literature regarding intergenerational mobility and the educational outcomes of racialized youth, and re-reads segmented assimilation through a geographic lens, placing "home", "school", "neighbourhood" and "transnational field" at the center as the primary geographic spaces shaping immigrant children live. Chapter four is focused on methodology, and includes recruitment, ethics, and reflexive positionality, and describes how I analyzed the narrative interviews. Chapter five presents oral history portraits of Caribbean caregiver families to better understand the conditions surrounding their experiences and histories. Chapter six presents my findings based on oral histories from mothers and their adult children, and highlights how the educational and employment trajectories of caregivers and their adult children are influenced by the geographies of migration and settlement. Chapter seven concludes with a discussion of the research findings.

Chapter Two: Contextualizing Caribbean Caregiver Migration

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will explore the historical background and immigration policies that led to Caribbean migrant domestic workers entering Canada in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Although approximately 100 women from Guadeloupe informally arrived in the 1910s, it was with the introduction of the West Indian Domestic Scheme in 1955 that formal recruitment began. The scheme laid the groundwork for later programs in the 1980s and 1990s which specifically recruited Caribbean women to support the social reproductive needs of wealthier families in major cities, particularly Toronto and Montreal, where settlement was concentrated (Calliste, 1993).

This pathway represents an important part of the history of how Caribbean women became part of the daily life of Canada; it also serves as a reminder of how various historical, political, social, geographical and legal dimensions of citizenship intersect to result in different types of experiences for families with caregivers (Calliste, 1993). While the migration of caregivers is driven by push and pull factors, these terms lose their applicability in relation to the inherent personal aspect of caregiving and the development of the personal spaces created every day by women (e.g., the kitchen or care site), where caregiving occurs. Alongside this, both of these spaces represent how racialized citizenship is regulated and governed through the state-controlled pathways to which these racialized women were admitted; thereby influencing the potential of both the mobility and aspirations of Caribbean women, whose children experience the complexities of their own migration, while negotiating the conditionality of their right to belong. To understand how the children of these women can navigate their complex migration experiences and conditional right to belong, we need to examine how the law, policy

and spatial regulation of migration create the conditions in which the children of these women live their daily lives.

This chapter starts by describing how Canadian immigration programs are founded on colonial ideology and law. The early 20th century immigration policies of Canada were built on a race-based approach to creating a nation. After that, I will present the generationally dependent framework of the political neoliberal era and the establishment of dependency and disposability as a global cycle through different forms of temporary worker programs (TEAS, FDM, LCP). Finally, I will outline the long-term impacts of this framework in terms of how political absence has been established as a permanent reality in urban space in Toronto. As a whole, this chapter sets the stage for developing the historical and theoretical framework to support the main argument of this thesis: the inter-generational experiences of Caribbean immigrants in Canada will be forever tied to the socio-economic realities of their parent(s) as they entered Canada through careworker channels.

2.2 Caregiver Histories and Spatial Patterns in Canada

Canada experienced labour shortages in the mid-1950s, shaped by post-war economic expansion and the increasing participation of white middle-class women in the workforce. Labour shortages of this kind were addressed through state-led migration programs that formed part of a broader nation-building project, oriented towards securing a racialized labour force while maintaining the social and demographic composition of the nation. However, the state's willingness to admit migrant workers remained constrained by the same racialized logics that have structured earlier immigration policies. A calculated compromise was reached in 1955 with the establishment of the West Indian Domestic Scheme (WIDS) - a program allowing for the

entry of Caribbean women under very restricted conditions of service. Between 1955 and 1967, approximately 3000 women (primarily from Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados and Guyana) entered Canada to work as live-in domestics in private homes (Calliste, 1993). These cohort of Caribbean women were envisioned not as future citizens, but rather, as temporary labourers, intended to fill a specific workforce gap within a restricted timeframe. Kobayashi (2013) points out in her study of nation and multiculturalism in Canada that nation building has historically been based on inviting 'desired' and 'acceptable' populations to Canada - primarily white Europeans. Canadian immigration policies made this viewpoint explicit. For instance, the 1910 Immigration Act granted authorities power to exclude anyone who was deemed "not suitable to the climate and/or demands of Canada" (Matas, 1985). This language operated as a basis for racial exclusion rather than any objective assessment of climate suitability. The contradiction is evident when considered alongside the arrival of approximately 100 racialized women from Guadeloupe in the same period. Furthermore, in 1911, an Order-in-Council formally stated that "the Negro race is known not to be suited in climate or requirements of Canada" (Calliste, 1993, p. 138). Migration policy here functioned as a means through which the state regulated movement and delimited the presence of racialized populations within the state. For Kobayashi (1994), these mechanisms of control represent technologies/forms of spatial governance, structuring how bodies move through space on the basis of race, gender, and class. Racialized labourers from the Caribbean and elsewhere in the 'Global South', were frequently admitted to Canada through strict temporary worker programs such as fruit-picking, caregiving and manual labour. While, the economic utility of these individuals may have given them access to Canada, their economic value did not automatically translate into the sedimentation of social and legal rights. Although there were some exceptions for a small number of Black nurses,

teachers and others in these categories, Henry and Tator (2009) suggest that they were not indicative of any shift in the application of racial separation; instead they represented examples of the government's ability to 'tolerate' people of colour as long as they did not pose a threat to Whiteness (i.e., as long as Whiteness was perceived as a normalized condition of membership). The foundations of Caribbean caregiver migration were therefore established decades prior to the arrival of the first domestic workers, as the state had already developed the framework through which it regulated criteria for entry and residence within the nation. Such terms would later become re-labeled as 'labour demand'; however, the racialized histories and processes underlying the architecture remained unchanged.

A key feature of the eligibility requirements for the WIDS was how they reflected the moral and financial expectations that employers had for caregivers. The base-line criteria for hiring these workers included that they could only be single females, between 18 and 35 in age, and only have a minimum amount of formal education (elementary school at best). Professional credentials (such as health-related certification) or previous familial obligations were deemed to be irrelevant; thereby indicating that the program sought to hire female caregivers who appeared to be "manageable" to employers. Caregivers under the WIDS were employed under contract for one year. However, contracts were renewable at the discretion of the employer. A further aspect of the WIDS, which constitutes a spatial component was that caregivers lived with the employer in their home; an arrangement which diminished the boundary between public employment and private service. Silvera (1989) captures this dimension clearly when she states: "Your bedroom was never really your own...it was the employer's." (p 22). In terms of immigration policy, the domestic realm was where individual employers controlled the flow of immigrants and their homes became de facto borders. I draw upon Foucault's (1990) concept of biopower; thus we

may interpret the employer's home as a micro-panopticon. That is to say, employers utilized surveillance mechanisms such as physical proximity to caregivers, dependency, and emotional control to monitor the behavior of caregivers. As well as controlling the labour process, employers acted as gatekeepers of legality and were empowered to threaten deportation for what was perceived as disobedience or insufficient gratitude. Kobayashi (1994) refers to this form of governance as spatialized governance through intimacy; that is to say, the regulation of racialized bodies is performed through relationships, living arrangements, and daily routines. Parreñas' (2001) research provides additional insight into this analysis; she argues that migrant women provide "reproductive labour without reproductive citizenship". (p. 78). What Parreñas means is that these women are caring for the children and elderly of wealthier countries while being denied the opportunity to reproduce themselves. According to WIDS regulations, the family reunification of many caregivers was often delayed until four to six years after their arrival in Canada (Calliste, 1993; Silvera, 1989); an interruption that has serious emotional and intergenerational ramifications. Furthermore, gratitude was presented as a moral currency; therefore, to complain about one's working conditions was to risk deportation, and to speak out against the inequities of one's working condition was to jeopardize one's future. Although initially framed as a temporary measure, WIDS instituted a model of "structured intimacy" - a model which commodified care while creating a hierarchical system of emotion and race. This model would eventually become the paradigm for subsequent caregiver programs that would refine the central concepts of the WIDS, rather than dismantle them; thereby deepening the WIDS' underlying logic into Canada's immigration policies.

The 1970s and 80s, represented an era of global restructuring of care, labour and migration under the ideology of neoliberalism, which brought about privatization and the

diminishment of the welfare state. For those living in Canada this has translated into the decline of public funding investments for educational support, healthcare, and child care with the burden of social reproduction now being placed on individual households. Also, there has been a disproportionate amount of absorbing of domestic labour by women. At the same time, there has been an increase in dual income household families among white, middle class Canadians, with the gains of second wave feminist movements creating a "care deficit" according to Arat-Koç (1989;). Instead of creating new public infrastructures, the Canadian State chose to utilize transnational labour markets, and recruit racialized women from the Global South to do the care work that would sustain the economic and social lives of the middle class.

Federici's (2004) theory of social reproduction demonstrates how neoliberal capitalism transformed intimate life through commodification. The labour of cleaning, cooking, and caregiving - long considered invisible within the walls of the home - has become increasingly reorganized as a global service market. As Federici states, the commodification of care does not raise its status, but rather intensifies its devaluation by transferring the costs of social reproduction to those who are least protected by labour law. Therefore, Caribbean women have come to Canada as invaluable yet disposable workers - creating value while at the same time having no social recognition and no job security. In terms of policy, the WIDS program was replaced by the Temporary Employment Authorization Scheme (TEAS, 1973-1981), then the Foreign Domestics Movement (FDM, 1981-1992) and eventually the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP, 1992-2014) in order to refine the disciplinary logic of WIDS. For example, under FDM, work permits became tied to a specific employer and live-in residency continued to be required. Additionally, when a worker lost their job they typically lost their legal status as well (Mikita, 1996).

Citizenship was still subject to conditions of compliance with rules and regulations; rights to citizenship were also dependent upon a caregiver maintaining an approved employment relationship in a private residence. According to researchers Hsiung & Nichol (2010, p. 115), caregivers in Canada who worked under either the FDM program and/or the LCP program were exempted from provincial labour codes and therefore prohibited from forming unions, and thus are among the least protected and most vulnerable workers in Canada. In Canada, the LCP is the ultimate example of "managed inclusion" according to Sharma (2006, 102): an immigration policy that welcomes immigrants to work in Canada but excludes them from full membership. Caregivers had to be employed in full time, continuous employment at 24 hours per week for a minimum of 24 months, prior to being eligible to apply for permanent residency (Pratt, 2004). An interruption of continuous employment, whether due to illness, dismissal by an employer, abuse, or a family emergency, would reset the 24-month clock, or jeopardize the opportunity to apply for permanent residency. In essence, the legal linkage of continuous employment and permanent residency status illustrated how neoliberal policies of governance merged the concepts of care and coercion, transformed the private home into both a place of employment and immigration control checkpoints. Tungohan et al. (2015) and Tungohan (2017) demonstrate that after completing the LCP program, many caregivers continued to experience structural barriers in the Canadian labour force, and were frequently employed in low paying or precarious jobs, providing a steady income since there were no other forms of support. Additionally, deskilling further exacerbated the inequality experienced by these caregivers. Lightman et al. 2022 demonstrated that caregivers earn significantly less than the average median income Canada, and that this wage disparity persisted regardless of the level of post-secondary education of the caregiver. Many of the Caribbean professional caregivers, who had previously worked as

teachers, nurses, or civil servants, saw their educational credentials devalued, and their identity redefined as "low skilled". Kelly's (2014) work on social mobility, noted that only 15% of children whose mothers entered Canada via the LCP completed university, even though many of the mothers held a degree of post-secondary education. Farrales (2017) demonstrated the connection between the patterns of delayed sponsorship and economic disadvantage, which resulted in children entering the workforce at an earlier age to supplement the income of households that were stretched across borders. Lightman et al. (2022: 30) also demonstrated that "the women who came through the LCP...earned less than comparable women arriving through other entry categories," which demonstrates how the intersection of gendered care work and immigration status can create a cycle of economic advantage. Additionally, such patterns demonstrate how neoliberal restructuring has increased dependency while masking its racial and gendered dimensions. The domestic worker represents both a solution to and a symptom of Canada's care crisis - the state uses the domestic worker as a means of outsourcing the reproduction of society, while simultaneously preserving the existing racialized hierarchies of citizenship and belonging.

As programs claimed opportunity, many caregivers were subjected to devaluation and structural marginalization. Women of colour coming into the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) or its predecessors were often deskilled. Their professional qualifications were ignored and labour was narrowly defined as "domestic." Many caregivers lived and felt the precarity of their work every day. As one of Banerjee et al.'s (2018: 45) respondents noted: "I notice that they wouldn't even look at you... As soon as they see that you're a caregiver or nanny in your resume, they don't give attention to it already... That's the saddest part of being in the Live-in Caregiver Program." This quote is illustrative of how conditional inclusion - access to residency and

opportunity dependent upon obedience and servitude; which produced profound inequalities within Canadian labour markets, making caregivers both indispensable and structurally undervalued. While policy rhetoric portrayed domestic work as an opportunity for women of colour to "better themselves," Sharma (2006) characterizes this as the moral economy of grateful labour. The legal design of caregiver programs ensured that a migrant's entitlement to remain in Canada was dependent upon her compliance and productivity, thereby converting her employer into a private agent of the state. The live-in stipulation, which has been justified as a necessity for "continuity of care," has erased spatial, temporal, and juridical boundaries: the house has become simultaneously workplace, bedroom, and surveillance site; and rest is now indistinguishable from preparedness. Thus, conditional citizenship operates as a form of spatial governance (Silvera, 1983; Pratt, 1999). Citizenship is not a stable status, but rather a territorial practice - a system of control implemented by confinement, dependence, and bureaucratic delays. Even after the establishment of the LCP, which ostensibly provided a route to permanent residency, this route remains limited and tenuous. For example, migrants were required to perform twenty-four months of uninterrupted live-in work over a period of four years; if they interrupted the employment, their progress toward residency would be forfeited (Pratt, 2008). Consequently, this means that caregivers frequently endure exploitative or unsafe conditions to protect their eligibility to reside legally in Canada. According to Silvera (1989), many women have endured verbal and/or sexual harassment in order to avoid losing their eligibility to work in Canada. Furthermore, employers will sometimes confiscate passports, restrict access to food, or limit contact with family members. Arat-Koç (1989, p. 89) has described the domestic environment as a quasi-legal environment in which labour rights are suspended under the rubric of privacy. Therefore, the domestic sphere has become a frontier of unfreedom in Canada, an

internal border zone in which the application of the rule of law is selective. Additionally, the state's definition of "dependence" - the major rationale for importing foreign care labour - has been both gendered and race-based. The combination of Canada's welfare retrenchment and aging population have generated a structural need for private care; however, instead of providing public services, Canadian policymakers have utilized the global labour of women of colour to fill this need. This substitution reflects what Bannerji (2000) has termed "the racial management of reproduction": the exportation of care to women of colour in order to allow white, middle-class women to pursue professional careers, while maintaining existing racial hierarchies.

2.3 The Children of Caregivers

The contradictions of conditional citizenship did not exist solely at the level of the individual worker, but also had implications for those workers' families. The "two-step" migration process - temporary labour followed by the possibility of obtaining permanent residence - led to long delays in the reunification of families and subsequent long-term emotional separations. For example, Statistics Canada reported that the average waiting period for sponsorship under the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP) between 1995 and 2005 was over four years (Kelly, 2014). When children eventually rejoined their mothers, many reported feeling emotionally distant from their mother due to lack of contact during the lengthy periods of separation (Silvera, 1983; Pratt, 2005), as well as experiencing communication barriers when they were finally reunited with a person who had become a stranger (Silvera, 1983; Pratt, 2005). These types of disruptions demonstrate that legal precariousness is both a policy condition and an affective one: it can be seen in the ways that individuals experience attachment, belonging and inter-generational trust. Thus, Canada's caregiver programs created a double bind: inclusion

based on servitude and opportunity based on endurance. Citizenship has been transformed from being a right to being a reward - dependent upon the successful navigation of exploitation and the ability to endure the emotional cost of such exploitation.

An important question that emerges is; what does this mean for the next generation in terms of the transmission of inequality? The consequences of these programs are not limited to the women who migrated through them. Their children form the next generation and live in the post-migration world, influenced by the absence, endurance and sacrifices that enabled their mothers to migrate. These inheritances are both emotional and spatial. Young people who grew up in the Caribbean and were later brought to Canada to live with relatives may have attended school systems that failed to recognize their transnational displacement and/or the disrupted educational trajectory that resulted from it. Migration, according to Pratt (2012), is not a singular event, but rather a multi-temporal process of adjustment and translation; a process that extends over time and over generations. Studies conducted by Kelly and Maharaj (2019, 2022) on second-generation youth of Caribbean and Filipino origin living in Toronto's inner suburbs illustrate these dynamics. Many first generation and 1.5 generation (define) students entered secondary school already tracked into "Applied" or "Technical" streams of study, regardless of academic aptitude. Teachers perceived differences in language, accent, culture and other aspects of difference as deficits, thus resulting in lower expectations and restricted access to university preparatory course work (James, 2012). This resulted in a structural misalignment between aspirations and opportunities, what Kelly (2014) refers to as 'aspirational displacement,' whereby high ambitions meet institutional constraints. Young people interviewed for research studies noted an acutely aware appreciation of the sacrifices that their mothers made to secure better lives for them, however, they also expressed a sense of dissonance.

Data from Statistics Canada illustrate that significant differences exist in education levels among different racialized groups within Canada. For example, it is estimated that about 27 percent of Canadian-born people with parents who have Caribbean origins have achieved at least a Bachelor's Degree level; this number is substantially less than for other groups such as South Asians; however, it has been reported that their levels of post-secondary education exceed 60% (Statistics Canada, 2023). Even though significant racialized labour market disparities still exist today, Black Canadians experience a much higher rate of unemployment and earn an average income that is significantly lower than the rest of the country (Statistics Canada, 2023). There also exists a "geography of constraint," which represents the spatial manifestations of racial capitalism; many family members were initially placed into Toronto's outer suburbs including Scarborough, Jane-Finch and parts of North York. These outer suburban locations contained affordable housing yet provided poor quality funding for schools, few job opportunities and limited forms of public transportation. While the constraints experienced by residents within these neighborhoods cannot be solely attributed to the concept of "neighborhood effects," they do demonstrate how racial capitalism operates through its physical presence as well as through the ways in which the legacies of colonialism and historical migration policies have been built into the physical environment.

2.4 Caribbean Spaces in Toronto

Since the 1950s, Toronto has served as a major hub for Caribbean migrants who have come to Canada as caregivers, and as such, the city is both haven and hierarchy, promoting the value of diversity while creating segregation through policies regarding the design of cities, public housing and education. The way in which Caribbean settlements were organized is due to the interplay among affordability, the social network created by previous generations of

migrants, and the level of neglect provided by the government. Early arrivals in the WIDS program were placed into middle-class white households in downtown neighbourhoods such as Forest Hill, Leaside, and Rosedale, where they worked and lived in a space they did not consider as "their" space. Once they moved on to independent housing, there was no shortage of discriminatory rental practices and informal racial covenants that pushed them to the outskirts of the city, to areas that would eventually be referred to as the "immigrant ghettos" and areas that were characterized by low levels of investment in infrastructure. By the 1970s and 1980s, census data showed that Caribbean families had established themselves as a cluster in suburban municipalities such as Scarborough, North York, and Etobicoke (Mensah, 2010), which resulted from the suburbanization that occurred during the post-war era, and offered relatively cheap housing options but little in terms of access to job centers or institutions of higher learning. Hulchanski's et al.'s (2010) conception of "Three Cities" study of Toronto highlights how the degrees of economic and racial segregation have increased dramatically over time, with "City 3" having absorbed most of the racialized poverty that is concentrated in areas where many Caribbean families reside.

McKittrick's (2007: 2011) concept of a "Black sense of place" provides insight into how Black people create a sense of belonging in geographic locations that were not intended for them; and how they transform excluded spaces into culturally, spiritually and emotionally inclusive spaces. For second-generation young adults living in these geographically isolated areas, Toronto is a complex location that is at once home and horizon, and thus, simultaneously a source of belonging and of proof. Many young adults growing up in these neighbourhoods internalize the notion that achieving success will require them to leave behind the very neighbourhoods that raised them and, implicitly, to distance themselves from the stigma

associated with those areas. However, as Peake and Trotz (2002) noted, the process of leaving the neighbourhood of one's childhood is a form of spatial grief, the understanding that the places where one grows into adulthood are systemically denied to the nation, and that moving upward in society can feel like an estrangement from the community that makes survival possible. In this regard, the geography of Toronto's urban landscape is analogous to the moral geography of the caregiver program itself; inclusion through service and exclusion through space. As is the case with the caregiver's confinement in the home of their employer, the same is true for the next generations' confinement in the peripheral areas of the city; and both are produced by architectural structures that translate racialized labour into spatial confinement, despite ongoing efforts of the community to inhabit and re-signify the spatial area.

Chapter 3: Geographies of the Next Generation

3.1 Introduction

Sociological models and theorizations have been widely used to study the outcomes of second-generation children of immigrants. Many of these theories have tended to rely on linear models of integration to explain how immigrants move up the social ladder. For instance, Gordon's (1964) stages of acculturation, and Park's (1921) race relations cycle are examples of "unidirectional" conceptualizations of immigrant modes of incorporation. Historically, immigrant families tended to gradually adopt the values and behaviours of the host country. This represents a linear mode of adaptation and eventual assimilation in Park's formulation and from cultural adaptation in language, dress, and values to structural incorporation into schools and workplaces, in Gordon's staged model (Gordon, 1964). Both models expected this process of incorporation would occur over time; i.e., as the children of immigrants went through school and experienced increased employment mobility, they would become increasingly indistinguishable from the native-born population, and racism would be viewed as an intermediate step. It is also important to acknowledge that these models were developed primarily from the experiences of European immigrant communities migrating to US cities in the early twentieth century. These research studies focused on the life courses of predominantly Irish, Italian, Jewish, and Eastern European populations, and did not account for the racialized data of those outside the boundaries of white (Park, 1921; Alba & Nee, 2014). Therefore, the study of assimilation was developed using a limited number of groups, rather than the multiple geographies through which migrants traveled that shaped their second-generation outcomes (Massey & Jess, 1995; Gordon, 1964).

To begin with, Waters and Jimenez (2005) note that second generation immigrant families were often portrayed as having followed a predictable path toward inclusion in the

middle class, as opposed to being represented as a diverse group of people who have had different experiences based upon the differences found in the unevenness of the schools and neighbourhoods that the family lived in, and also based upon the labour market that the parents had been working in (Waters & Jiménez, 2005). Temporal distance from migration was viewed as a way to reduce inequality as residential dispersion, educational achievement and occupational mobility were seen as byproducts of the process of generational succession. The limits of this thinking are becoming increasingly evident in modern urban centers, where the children of immigrants experience profound differences in the ways they settle into new places, and experience opportunities for advancement in new schools and labour markets. In these contexts, life chances are shaped by temporal distance from migration, but by the physical structures - the spatial architecture - of the institutions and organizations that provide access to education, housing and social mobility in daily life (McKittrick, 2006; Massey, 1995).

In an effort to address some of these issues in the American context, the theory of segmented assimilation Portes & Rumbaut's (2001) work demonstrate that incorporation of immigrants moves beyond linear portraits of mobility and suggest that mobility should be characterized as contingent, stratified and uneven over time. Segmented assimilation posits that the ways in which mobility is experienced by immigrants children are influenced by the interplay of parental human capital, racialization in the host country, state policies and the presence of ethnic institutional support (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). The empirical findings of segmented assimilation theory show that while many immigrant youth have successfully attained upward mobility through educational attainment and labour market inclusion, many others - particularly those categorized as Black or Latino - have faced elevated risk of downward assimilation due to concentrated urban poverty, school segregation, and

constrained labour markets (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Therefore, the findings challenge assumptions about linearity and the limitations of variation in the immigrant incorporation process. While segmented assimilation remains a foundational theoretical contribution, it still does not sufficiently explain how these different paths are constructed through space. Although schools, neighbourhoods, and labour markets are identified as critical locations, they are primarily conceptualized as background conditions rather than as spatial systems that create opportunities through the design of institutions, the distribution of resources, and the creation of boundaries (Zhou, 1997: 2001; Waters & Jiménez, 2005). In cities like Toronto, which has a large number of Caribbean families living in suburban and inner-suburban neighbourhoods, which are shaped by high housing prices, precarious labour, and segregated schooling environments, spatial processes are not secondary to mobility, but are primary in explaining why there are such sharp differences in outcomes among groups (Fincher et al., 2014). A spatial perspective on second-generation mobility utilizes critical human geography perspectives to suggest that social outcomes are created through spatial relationships, rather than simply occurring within space (Cresswell, 2010; Bauder, 2008; Massey, 1994). Relational conceptions of place (Massey, 1994), theories of mobility (Cresswell, 2010), and work on geographies of belonging (Bauder, 2008) together propose that place is made up of social, economic and political relationships that exist at multiple scales. When applied to second-generation research, these perspectives reveal that homes, schools, and neighbourhoods function as spaces where social reproduction, race formation, and state power intersect. Furthermore, for Caribbean and Filipino families, the ways in which settlement conditions are shaped by historical labour recruitment through domestic worker programs, credential devaluation, gendered migration

streams, and uneven municipal investments shape the ways in which their children think about, constrain themselves to, and strategically act upon education, work, and adulthood.

The home is also an important location for understanding the experiences of the next generation. While some researchers see immigrant families as having either an advantage or disadvantage with respect to education based on cultural values, other researchers such as Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994), Holloway & Pimlott-Wilson (2010), and Pratt (1999, 2012) have shown that the home has been shaped by global care chains, precarious employment, and gendered divisions of labour. For example, immigration from the Philippines and Caribbean countries to Canada through programs like the Foreign Domestic Movement and later the Live-In Caregiver Program created settlement conditions characterized by long working hours, downward occupational mobility, and economic insecurity. These settlement conditions create structures around family rhythms, care arrangements, and intergenerational expectations for young people, creating responsibilities, time scarcity and emotional labour that shape the ways in which young people interpret educational opportunities and the value placed on parental sacrifice.

Schools represent the second major space that shapes the trajectory of immigrant youth. A large body of literature within both educational sociology and geography highlights the ways in which schools reproduce racial and class-based hierarchies. For example, Bettie's (2003) study demonstrates that students' paths are shaped by their raced and classed expectations, while Kasinitz et al. (2004) show that the institutional practices of schools (including academic tracking, guidance counseling and teachers' expectations) have a significant impact on the pathways available to students. Studies of Caribbean students in Toronto by James (2012) and Dei (1999: 2007), etc. and others show how these students experience lowered expectations,

punitive disciplinary practices and under-representation in academic tracks at a disproportionate rate to their white counterparts. Similarly, Filipino youth experience similar patterns of institutional misrecognition due to stereotypes of docility, complacency, and lack of leadership ability (Kelly, 2012: 2014; Farrales, 2017). These inequalities are fundamentally spatial: The geographic distribution of school catchment areas, neighbourhood segregation, and unequal access to specialized programs creates different educational geographies that shape the possible futures of young people.

Neighbourhoods constitute a third terrain from which the second-generation experience of mobility should be understood. Neighbourhoods actively create opportunities for action. Canadian urban research, for instance, demonstrates that neighbourhoods are unevenly mapped spaces, where housing markets that have been racialized and constrained by low levels of affordability have long been shown to be significant influences upon the location of immigrant settlements in Toronto. Furthermore, the pattern of disinvestment at the level of municipalities has also been demonstrated to be an important influence upon the availability of a range of community resources, transportation options, safety conditions, social connections, and the narrative frameworks through which youth develop understandings of their position within the city. For many youth of Caribbean and Filipino background, neighbourhood spaces represent sites of both constraint and support. In other words, while stigma, surveillance, and limited access to community-based resources may limit the potential of youth to thrive in certain ways, neighbourhood spaces also contain strong networks of community-based support, shared survival strategies, and forms of cultural infrastructure of care.

Transnationalism represents a fourth fundamental terrain of second-generation mobility. Scholars such as Blanc et al (1995), Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt (1999), Parreñas (2005) and

Levitt (2009), demonstrate that the process of migration creates transnational social fields through which obligations, identities, care, and economic flows circulate among different locations across national borders. For communities whose members migrated to other countries primarily to engage in domestic work, the transnational ties associated with their migration often involve heightened expectations regarding the emotional and financial obligations they owe to one another. These transnational obligations can therefore shape the ways in which second-generation youth interpret success, sacrifice, and adulthood.

Together, the spatialities of the home, school, neighbourhood, and transnationalism provide the theoretical basis for a spatial analysis of second-generation mobility. Rather than viewing outcomes as either the successful achievements or failed attempts of individuals, this chapter argues that mobility emerges out of the intersections of structural inequality, racialized geographies, gendered migration histories, and the spatial organization of daily life. Classical assimilation theory pursued universalism; segmented assimilation documented variability without fully addressing the geographic bases of those divergences. This chapter uses a spatial approach, based on scholarship in urban, educational, and migration geography, to argue that it is where we encounter places that our experiences are created.

The next sections will examine each spatiality in detail. The first segment examines the home, to illustrate how responsibilities within the home, gendered labour, and economic insecurity shape youth's attitudes about education and adulthood. The second examines schooling as a spatial institution to demonstrate how youth's educational pathways intersect with migration, race, gender, and class. The third examines the neighbourhood geographies of youth in Toronto and uses scholarship on Toronto's urban political economy to show how youth outcomes are affected by spatial concentration, stigma, and community resources. The final

section makes clear how transnational ties shape youth's expectations and obligations, as well as their long-term mobility strategies. Collectively, the sections establish the spatial logics that inform the methodological decisions and empirical investigations that follow, and position geography as an essential analytical lens for making the next generation trajectories visible.

3.2 Home: Domestic Geographies

The home forms the primary site through which the subsequent generation trajectories are experienced. Classical assimilation frameworks identify families primarily as carriers of “culture” or as bounded units that either facilitated or obstructed integration (Gordon, 1964; Farley & Alba, 2002). In contrast, scholarship across geography, sociology, and migration studies show that the household is a spatially produced institution, shaped by labour markets, immigration programs, racial stratification, and transnational histories of inequality. Feminist geographers argue that the home cannot be understood as a private sphere insulated from structural processes; rather, it is a critical node through which class relations, racialized labour, and gendered expectations are embedded in everyday life (Holloway & Valentine, 2000; Katz, 2004. For the children of immigrants in Canada - particularly Caribbean and Filipino households whose settlement trajectories were shaped by colonial labour recruitment, care-migration pathways, and persistent labour-market penalties - the home becomes the first arena in which second-generation children encounter both the material consequences of migration and the emotional economies of sacrifice, obligation, and endurance that sustain family life (Calliste, 1991; Sharma, 2006; Pratt, 2004, 2012).

The domestic sphere is deeply structured by racialized and gendered labour markets, which shape the temporal rhythms, material resources, and emotional atmospheres available to children. Canadian research consistently documents downward occupational mobility, wage penalties, and credential non-recognition among immigrant parents, particularly those from the Caribbean and the Philippines (Reitz, 2001: 2002; Hou & Coulombe, 2010; Banerjee & Verma, 2012; Kelly, 2012). Statistics Canada repeatedly confirms these patterns, showing that immigrant households are disproportionately concentrated in lower income brackets, work longer and less predictable hours, and face significantly higher housing-cost burdens (Hou & Picot, 2016). These structural conditions reorganize everyday domestic life: shift work fragments parental presence; long commutes from peripheral suburbs reduce time for supervision and care; financial strain limits access to enrichment activities; and housing precarity generates instability or overcrowding. Such conditions are not merely contextual. They shape the basic conditions of studying, resting, and growing, producing unequal access to privacy, quiet space, and emotional security that directly affect educational engagement and psychosocial wellbeing.

Research on gendered migration provides critical insight into how these structural pressures are lived and managed within the home. Parreñas' work on Filipino transnational families demonstrates how global care chains generate emotional ruptures and reconfigure familial authority, with responsibilities falling disproportionately on daughters who become caregivers, translators, and emotional intermediaries (Parreñas, 2001; 2005). Pratt's (2004) research on domestic workers in Vancouver similarly illustrates how the legacies of care-labour recruitment shape intergenerational dynamics over time: mothers recruited as nannies or cleaners confront systemic deskilling and exhaustion that reverberate within households, producing heightened expectations for children to redeem the sacrifices of migration (Pratt, 2008; 2012).

These gendered burdens interact with age and birth-order hierarchies, as Orellana (2009) and Parreñas (2005) show, with eldest daughters performing extensive logistical and emotional labour that shapes both their educational trajectories and their capacity for self-care. These responsibilities are not voluntary expressions of family loyalty; they are strategies for managing precarity in households structured by racialized labour-market exclusion. Within these homes, aspirational labour - conceptualized by Pimlott-Wilson (2011) - captures the emotional, logistical, and often invisible work parents perform to secure children's futures despite structural disadvantages. While immigrant parents may lack time, institutional familiarity, or economic capital, they mobilize narratives of sacrifice, discipline, caution, and resilience as tools of mobility. Kelly's work on Caribbean and Filipino youth in Toronto demonstrates that families engage in complex hybrid strategies that challenge deficit framings: sharing childcare with extended kin, enforcing strong expectations around educational attainment, and cultivating moral frameworks centred on gratitude, perseverance, and respectability (Kelly, 2012, 2014; Kelly & Maharaj, 2019: 2022). These practices are embedded within transnational moral economies shaped by migration histories, remittance obligations, and responsibilities to family members abroad, shaping how children understand success, obligation, and their own futures.

Housing geographies constitute another critical spatial dimension through which domestic inequality is produced. Canadian scholarship highlights how racialized immigrant families face persistent barriers to accessing affordable, stable and high-quality housing, resulting in overcrowding, frequent residential mobility, or residence in aging high-rise buildings with infrastructural deficiencies (Murdie & Teixeira, 2003). The structural conditions that materialize in the housing the generation inhabit, shape sleep, study environments, stress levels, and sense of security. The home thus operates simultaneously as material infrastructure and

relational space, with both dimensions profoundly shaping how young people experience care, discipline, privacy, and support. The home also functions as a key site for the formation of future orientations, forming the cognitive and affective schema through which young people interpret risk, possibility, and responsibility. Their navigational orientations are classed, racialized, and gendered scripts shaped by parents' migration histories, labour-market struggles, and encounters with institutional exclusion. Within Caribbean and Filipino households, such orientations often produce a tension between aspiration and caution: the imperative to "make something of yourself" coexists with a sober awareness of racism, employment precarity, and the fragility of middle-class security. Children internalize these lessons through everyday observation, family storytelling, and transnational ties, shaping how they imagine education, work, and adulthood.

Despite the constraints that structure immigrant homes, scholars emphasize that domestic spaces are also sites of adaptation, cooperation, and collective resilience. The work of McKittrick (2007) is instructive here, as she encourages us to imagine Black spaces, not as a site of deficit, but rather, as sites of Black possibility. Katz's (2004) concept of resilient agency captures how young people navigate structural inequalities through relational strategies rather than individual autonomy. That form of agency emerges from necessity and from the redistribution of labour within households facing systemic exclusion. The body of research demonstrates that the home is a primary site through which inequality is produced and mobility is shaped; where the next generation first encounters the consequences of racialized labour markets, gendered migration pathways, housing precarity, and transnational obligation. It is where structural inequalities become intimate, shaping early understandings of responsibility, ambition, constraint, and risk. It is also where children acquire relational competencies - care work, translation, emotional regulation, conflict navigation, and academic persistence - that shape their ability to navigate

schools, neighbourhoods, and eventually labour markets. Any analysis of second-generation mobility that neglects the home as a spatial, political, and emotional institution reproduces the very limitations that feminist geographers and migration scholars have long challenged. To understand differentiated second-generation trajectories in Toronto, analysis must therefore begin here, with the domestic geographies that quietly but powerfully contour the landscape of opportunity long before young people enter classrooms, workplaces, or the wider city.

3.3 Educational Spaces

Schools forms a second spatiality through which second-generation mobility is shaped. Unlike early assimilation frameworks that imagined schooling as a conveyor belt toward opportunity, research across critical education studies, urban sociology, and geographies of childhood demonstrates that the school is a spatial project: an institutional site where racialized governance, resource distribution, teacher expectations, and historical legacies converge to shape how children learn and imagine their futures. For the subsequent, schools are often the first state institutions to interpret and evaluate children whose parents entered Canada through racially segmented labour markets, translating migration histories into assessments of ability, behaviour, and potential. In Toronto, where formal streaming has been dismantled yet its logics persist through course recommendations, guidance counselling, disciplinary practices, and uneven access to enrichment, schools operate as key mechanisms through which these inherited inequalities are reproduced in everyday encounters (Dei, 1996; James, 2012).

A key insight from critical race theory is instructive here; inequality is structured through processes of institutional sorting and racialized perception. Research by Dei, James, Henry, and Hernandez-Ramdwar documents how Black and Caribbean students are disproportionately interpreted through racialized scripts of deviance, attitude, or deficiency, shaping disciplinary

outcomes, academic counselling, and teacher–student relationships (Dei, 1996; James, 2012). These interpretations are institutionalized through disciplinary codes, zero-tolerance policies, and risk-management frameworks that render certain students hypervisible as problems while others remain invisible as academic potential (Walcott, 2003; James, 2012). For second-generation youth, these encounters occur at precisely the moment when they are expected to embody successful incorporation, producing a disjuncture between institutional expectation and racialized treatment that shapes their sense of belonging and educational possibility.

The dismantling of formal academic streaming in Ontario represents a significant policy intervention that reshaped, but did not eliminate, educational stratification. In 2020, the Ontario Ministry of Education announced the de-streaming of Grade 9 mathematics, which was implemented across publicly funded schools in September 2021. This reform followed extensive evidence demonstrating that streaming disproportionately directed Black students into applied pathways associated with more limited post-secondary opportunities (James et al., 2017; Power, 2017). De-streaming was framed as an equity measure intended to delay academic sorting and expand access to university-bound pathways for students historically excluded from them. However, existing research on student pathways suggests that while formal course structures have shifted, differentiation persists through classroom-level practices, including assessment, teacher expectations, and guidance counselling processes that shape student trajectories beyond Grade 9 (Parekh et al., 2021). For racialized immigrant youth, these institutional processes intersect with earlier schooling experiences shaped by racialization and spatial inequality, increasing the likelihood that differentiation re-emerges through prerequisite structures and course selection in later grades. As Parekh et al. (2021) demonstrate, inequities in secondary pathways are not confined to initial course placement but unfold cumulatively across transitions,

particularly between Grades 9 and 12. The promise of de-streaming is therefore unevenly realized, contingent on how schools interpret and support students across these subsequent decision points.

For second-generation Caribbean youth, these institutional processes intersect with earlier schooling experiences shaped by racialization and spatial inequality, increasing the likelihood that differentiation re-emerges through prerequisite structures and course selection in later grades. As Parekh et al. (2021) demonstrate, inequities in secondary pathways are not confined to initial course placement but unfold cumulatively across transitions, particularly between Grades 9 and 12. The promise of de-streaming is therefore unevenly realized, contingent on how schools interpret and support students across these subsequent decision points. Spatial inequalities further mediate the effects of de-streaming across Toronto's educational landscape. Schools located in lower-income and highly racialized neighbourhoods operate within broader contexts of uneven access to academic supports, including tutoring, enrichment programming, and informal networks of guidance (Kelly, 2014; Ghosh, 2018). In contrast, families in higher-income areas are more able to supplement instruction through private tutoring, extracurricular programming, and sustained parental advocacy, thereby reproducing stratification outside formal policy structures. Research on immigrant youth in Canada shows that access to such supports plays an important role in shaping post-secondary pathways and educational outcomes (Anisef et al., 2010). Inequality is particularly pronounced at key transition points, especially the movement from Grade 8 to Grade 9, where teacher recommendations, institutional expectations, and parental advocacy converge to influence course placement. Evidence from the TDSB in 2017 as found by Power (2017) and the work of James & Turner (2017) demonstrates that Black students were historically overrepresented in applied streams, a process shaped not

only by academic performance but by systemic bias within institutional decision-making. These early placements carry long-term consequences, influencing peer networks, access to academic resources, and eligibility for post-secondary pathways.

In their everyday experience, students develop strategies to navigate these institutional constraints. Research on Black youth in Toronto demonstrates how students manage how they are perceived within school environments, adapting behaviour, language, and affect in response to expectations and disciplinary scrutiny (Dei, 1999; James, 2012). These forms of psychosocial labour, while not captured in formal metrics, shape engagement with schooling and longer-term educational trajectories. Informal networks, including peers, community organizations, and trusted educators, often provide guidance and support in navigating unevenly distributed opportunities. Family dynamics further shape these processes. Studies of immigrant households in Canada demonstrate that structural constraints on parental participation, including long and inflexible work hours, are frequently misinterpreted by schools as a lack of engagement. This misrecognition contributes to deficit framings of racialized families and reinforces institutional inequalities. At the same time, transnational obligations and family expectations influence educational decision-making among second-generation youth, shaping how risk, mobility, and aspiration are evaluated (Waters, 1999; Levitt & Waters, 2002).

3.4 Neighbourhoods: Spaces of Influence

A third spatiality shaping the experiences of second-generation immigrant children, is the neighbourhood context, which provides the material conditions through which they grow up. The place of settlement of caregiver children in their neighbourhood is influenced by the pathways of

their parents' migration, the labour market exclusion and segmentation of their parents, and restrictions on housing practices available to their parents. Most Caribbean mothers came to Canada through the Live-In Caregiver Program and settled in either the inner suburban or peripheral areas of the city, where they had access to rental housing that was within public transit range of their jobs as caregivers. According to immigration records, 30,000 dependents of live-in caregivers came to Canada between 1993 and 2009, majority to Ontario, which has produced a large second-generation Caribbean population with questions related to the neighbourhoods in which they were raised that exhibit discrepancies in public investment (TIEDI, 2013; Pratt, 2008).

The reputation of the neighbourhood also plays a role in how schools, workplaces, and housing markets are experienced. For instance, immigrant youth raised in low-income, racialized areas such as Jane–Finch, Malvern, Rexdale, and parts of Scarborough encounter spatial narratives that transcend geographic boundaries. In these neighbourhoods, Canadian census and municipal data demonstrate that these neighbourhoods have persistently lower median household incomes and higher concentrations of racialized and immigrant residents relative to the city average (City of Toronto, 2006; Walks, 2013). James' (2012) work on Jane and Finch stigmatization, finds that postal codes often operate as shorthand for race, class, and presumed 'risk', influencing how Caribbean youth are evaluated by employers, educators, and institutions rather than merit. Geographers have ascribed this pattern to place-based stigmas, particularly in employment and housing of racialized newcomers during the 1980-1990s. Canadian research finds that neighbourhood identifiers such as postal codes and are frequently used as informal proxies for reliability and fit in Toronto's labour and rental markets (Kobayashi & Peake, 2001; Galabuzi, 2006). While large-scale postal-code audit studies remain limited in the Canadian

context, qualitative studies consistently show that racialized job seekers receive fewer callbacks even when education and experience are accounted for. As a means of navigating neighbourhood based discrimination, It is not uncommon for marginalized communities living in highly stigmatized neighbourhoods, to omit postal codes from resumes, using relatives' addresses, or relying on informal networks rather than formal applications. These strategies form an adaptive technique to a negative patterned institutional response. While James' (2012) research highlights the structural and institutional constraints Black Caribbean youth face in Toronto's neighbourhoods, McKittrick (2006) complicates this account by emphasizing the ways Black people actively produce spaces of hope, care, and possibility within these same geographies. Black geographies, within this context actively become affective and gendered spaces where youth and families negotiate safety, belonging, and resilience. Attending to these dimensions illuminates how Caribbean girls, for instance, might navigate, transform, and inhabit neighbourhood spaces differently than boys, performing forms of relational labour, care work, or emotional management that shape everyday mobility strategies. Incorporating a Black geographies lens ensures that analyses of second-generation neighbourhood effects move beyond deficit or risk framings, recognizing instead the coexistence of constraint and possibility, and prefigures the intergenerational stories explored in Chapter 5, where caregivers and youth actively create social, emotional, and aspirational infrastructures within constrained urban landscapes.

The neighbourhood disadvantage is produced through external institutional practices rather than resident behaviour or culture. Early neighbourhood-effects literature framed inner-city areas as sites of cultural deficiency, an orientation decisively challenged by Bauder's (2002) Toronto-based analysis demonstrating that labour-market segmentation, housing discrimination,

and uneven service provision structure neighbourhood outcomes. This insight is especially salient for the children of caregivers. National census data show that children of Live-In Caregiver Program entrants have among the lowest university completion rates of all immigration admission classes, at roughly one-third the rate of children of business-class immigrants, and experience weaker labour-market returns even when educational attainment is similar (Statistics Canada, 2016). These outcomes reflect the cumulative effects of parental deskilling, constrained settlement, and institutional sorting across neighbourhoods over time.

Uneven public investment across Toronto's neighbourhoods further structures second-generation opportunities. Municipal analyses demonstrate that areas with high concentrations of racialized and immigrant families receive lower per-capita funding for libraries, recreation centres, and youth programming, while local schools face heavier guidance-counsellor caseloads and fewer enrichment opportunities (Murdie & Teixeira, 2003; City of Toronto, 2006). For children of Caribbean caregivers - many of whom worked long or irregular hours - access to nearby after-school programs, libraries, and safe study spaces mattered significantly. Where these resources were limited, youth absorbed additional responsibility for self-regulation, sibling care, and time management, shaping educational engagement through constraint rather than lack of aspiration.

Institutional governance, rather than exposure to violence, constitutes a central neighbourhood effect shaping second-generation experience. Ontario Human Rights Commission findings and Toronto-based scholarship document disproportionate police contact, surveillance, and institutional monitoring of Black residents, independent of neighbourhood-level harm (Henry & Tator, 2009; OHRC, 2018). For Caribbean youth growing up in stigmatized areas, public space becomes a site of constant interpretation. Being questioned while waiting for transit,

gathering with peers, or moving through commercial spaces teaches young people early how visibility is read and regulated. These encounters shape second-generation mobility through self-monitoring and route selection rather than fear, influencing how youth move through the city and engage institutions (James, 2012).

Spatial effects accumulate across childhood and adolescence through repeated institutional encounters that teach second-generation youth how opportunity is distributed and withheld. Children of Caribbean caregivers learn early how schools, employers, and state actors read space, and how mobility must be strategically managed in response. Research on Caribbean youth shows experiences of being tracked into under-resourced schools, navigating long commutes, or encountering spatial stigma shape durable orientations toward authority, risk, and aspiration (James, 2012; Kelly, 2014). These orientations are practical strategies developed through everyday encounters with guidance counsellors, transit systems, and hiring processes, and they continue to shape post-secondary decision-making and labour- market navigation into adulthood (Statistics Canada, 2019).

Collective infrastructures of support emerge in response to institutional absence and uneven public investment. In many Caribbean-dense areas of Toronto, faith institutions, community centres, informal tutoring networks, and extended kinship systems compensate for gaps in state provision. Urban and migration scholars document how racialized communities build alternative infrastructures of care, education, and social reproduction when formal institutions fail to meet everyday needs (Katz, 2004; Holloway et al., 2010; Kelly, 2014). Churches function as spaces of homework help and mentorship; and informal childcare and resource sharing circulate through extended family networks. Yosso's (2005) framework of

community cultural wealth illuminates how social, navigational, and resistant capital circulate within these spaces, sustaining second-generation youth under conditions of constraint.

Urban space therefore functions as a governing framework that embeds migration policy, labour-market stratification, and racialized regulation into everyday life. For the children of Caribbean caregivers in Toronto, stigmatization growing marked by place does not determine outcomes, but it powerfully shapes the conditions under which futures are imagined, constrained, and pursued. Scholarship on racialized urban space demonstrates how planning decisions, policing practices, and institutional investment patterns encode inequality into the geography of the city (Galabuzi, 2006; Walks, 2013; McKittrick, 2006). Understanding the mobility of the next generation in this context requires treating neighbourhood not as a backdrop to inequality, but as an active spatial mechanism through which opportunity is filtered, negotiated, and contested across everyday life.

3.5 Transnational Ties and Contexts

Transnationalism has long structured migration scholarship, but its relevance to the children of immigrants has often been under-specified in empirical terms. Early work by Glick Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton (1992) documented the persistence of cross-border practices among first-generation migrants, including sustained involvement in labour markets, political organizing, and family life across national borders. Later scholarship shifted attention toward the children of immigrants, asking how those born or raised in receiving societies inherit, negotiate, or disengage from these cross-border formations (Portes 1996; Rumbaut 1996; Levitt and Waters 2002; Levitt 2009). Research consistently shows that for the children of immigrants cross-border engagement rarely involves frequent physical movement. Instead, everyday life in cities such as

Toronto is shaped by inherited obligations, moral expectations, and informational flows that link schooling, work, and family decision-making to parental migration histories and to ongoing responsibilities beyond the nation-state (Levitt 2009; Waters et al. 2010).

Levitt and Glick Schiller's (2004) framework of transnational social fields provides a concrete way to theorize these processes. Transnational social fields refer to interconnected networks of social relations through which ideas, resources, norms, and obligations circulate across national borders. Second-generation youth are embedded in these fields from birth. Empirical studies show that children grow up hearing detailed accounts of parental sacrifice, remittance commitments, experiences of downward occupational mobility, and encounters with legal and labour-market precarity that shaped migration trajectories (Levitt and Waters 2002; Rumbaut 1996). Haikkola's (2011) research on transnationalized childhoods illustrates how regular phone calls, financial transfers, and family narratives produce early awareness of responsibility and constraint, even among youth who have never travelled. These inherited relations shape how education, work, and adulthood are evaluated long before formal institutional guidance intervenes.

Filipino and Caribbean families in Canada demonstrate how cross-border obligation functions as a structuring condition of family life rather than a symbolic attachment. Research on Filipino transnational families shows that long-distance caregiving reorganizes household authority and emotional labour, with children often absorbing heightened expectations to contribute to family stability (Parreñas 2001; 2005). Kelly's studies of Filipino-Canadian youth in Toronto provide clear empirical illustrations: young people described selecting college programs over longer university pathways, delaying graduate study, or entering the labour

market earlier in order to support parents and relatives through remittances or shared household income (Kelly 2014; 2015). Educational aspiration remained strong, but decisions were filtered through assessments of debt, program length, and financial risk rather than through individual preference alone. Caribbean families exhibit parallel dynamics shaped by distinct historical and racialized migration pathways. Research on Caribbean domestic worker migration documents how narratives of sacrifice, discipline, and deferred mobility circulate across generations, framing children's success as a moral responsibility to honour past hardship (Calliste 1991; Sharma 2006; Waters 1999; Vickerman 2002). James' (2012) work with Caribbean youth in Toronto shows how parents regularly invoked migration struggles when discussing schooling, employment, and behaviour, reinforcing the expectation that educational failure would represent a wasted sacrifice. Connections to the Caribbean were maintained through periodic travel, remittance practices, church networks, and extended kin relations, but also through everyday reminders not to squander opportunity. These narratives shaped how young people interpreted institutional barriers and racialized treatment within Canadian schools and labour markets.

Fernández-Kelly's(2008) back pocket map helps specify how these inherited orientations operate in practice. The back pocket map refers to a set of cognitive and moral frameworks transmitted through family experience that guide how young people interpret institutional risk and evaluate opportunity. Their work demonstrates that children of immigrants internalize practical lessons about which pathways are dangerous, which institutions can be trusted, and which strategies offer stability. Among Caribbean and Filipino youth, these maps are assembled from parental stories of deskilling, warnings about discrimination, and memories of constrained opportunity in countries of origin. Empirically, this appears in cautious program selection, reluctance to accumulate student debt, preference for employment with predictable income, and

geographic immobility tied to family obligation (Kelly 2015). These frameworks shape concrete decisions about schooling, work, and mobility rather than abstract orientations toward success. Segmented assimilation theory identifies divergent incorporation pathways shaped by class position, neighbourhood context, and institutional reception (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Cross-border obligation refracts these pathways by introducing additional evaluative criteria into decisions about mobility. Research shows that youth embedded in strong moral economies of responsibility often pursue upward mobility through sustained discipline, while simultaneously limiting risk-taking in education and career choice (Levitt 2009; Waters et al. 2010). Educational incorporation unfolds alongside ongoing accountability to multi-sited family networks rather than through gradual detachment from them.

Geographic literature further demonstrate that processes operate through spatial organization. Kelly (2015) documents how Filipino-Canadian youth negotiate identity and success across multiple urban spaces, including transnational contexts, thus embedding these relationships within emotional and moral attachments to family members abroad. Wessendorf's (2013) research on roots migration shows that second-generation return visits function as strategies for recalibrating aspiration and resolving identity tensions rather than nostalgic attachment. Family narratives, digital communication, and remittance practices continue to shape decision-making among youth who do not travel, linking Toronto's urban inequalities to broader geographies of migration and responsibility across the life course.

Spatial formation of everyday life across home, neighbourhood, school and transnational terrain structures the conditions in which next-generation individuals encounter inequality. The previous chapters have demonstrated that each of these terrains function as interconnected sites through

which social, economic and political processes become manifest; in turn, they condition the ways in which inequality becomes experienced and lived. Migration history, labour market exclusion, and racialization are embodied in these physical spaces and organize daily routines, institutional encounters, and future aspirations. Access to opportunity is organized through the differential distribution of resources, institutional practices, and spatial location within both the city and beyond. As such, the analysis demonstrated how trajectories of next-generation individuals develop through interaction between institutional arrangements and lived experience as spatial processes become realized across these terrains. Within the context of the home, forms of labour market exclusion, gendered pathways associated with migration (e.g., women's roles as caregivers), and housing constraints (e.g., overcrowding) are embedded within the temporal and relational organization of family life and develop an individual's early understanding of their responsibility, risk, and aspirations. Similarly, at school, these conditions are rendered as differentiated pathways through practices of evaluation, counseling, and placement that structure access to educational and occupational futures. Neighborhoods also represent areas where these dynamics are embedded within an urban landscape that includes uneven public investments in education and infrastructure; territorial stigma resulting from the concentration of marginalized populations; and regulatory practices that govern how opportunity is perceived and navigated. Furthermore, transnational fields expand on these processes by connecting them across space; therefore, decision-making is situated within ongoing relationships of obligation, memory, and expectation that link contemporary conditions to broader geographies of migration and care. These spatial formations interact with one another across different scales to produce how next-generation youth understand possibility, constraint, and responsibility. Therefore, a spatial perspective shows that inequality is created through the organization of space because

institutional arrangements, urban infrastructures, and historical migration patterns converge to create life chances. This chapter contributes to a geographic argument that next-generation mobility cannot be comprehended without consideration of spatial organization since opportunities are distributed unequally; are mediated by institutions; and are accessed differently across social and spatial contexts. As such, this chapter presents geography as a critical component to this area of study and provides an analytical framework to demonstrate how structural inequalities are formed and reproduced through spatial configurations that shape everyday life. Finally, this chapter establishes the theoretical basis for empirical studies of Caribbean caregiver families living in Toronto that will demonstrate how spatial processes are lived and negotiated in practice; thereby illustrating how structural conditions are interpreted; acted upon; and how inequality is recreated or altered across geographies of next-generation.

Chapter Four: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This project comes from an understanding that methodology is bounded by geography, history, and relationality - concepts of accountability that also make this research both possible and necessary. Questions that inform this study arose from the experiences of Caribbean care-giving families living in Canada and therefore require a methodological framework capable of containing the complexities inherent to emotionality, spatiality, temporality, and structure. I am approaching these studies as both a daughter of a former caregiver from the Caribbean Canadian Diaspora and a Human Geographer. In this case, methodology serves as a tool to engage individuals who contribute their experiences as co-theorists of their experiences. This research is composed of semi-structured interviews with caregiver immigrants and their children whose lives have been influenced by migration and their daily interactions within the urban environment and have been transnationally connected. Narratives allow participants to move freely between different temporalities and emotional registers and acknowledge the lived memory as part of the history of Canada. The data were analyzed through a thematic analysis focusing on the content and affective features of the data including but not limited to: silences, hesitations, repetitions, and breaks. In conducting this research, my positionality as a family member, diasporic individual, researcher/academic impacted my listening, interpreting, and being accountable in the field. The emphasis placed on my positionality in the context of this research should be viewed as "data" rather than "bias". A brief overview of the conceptual

underpinnings of my methodological approach is provided in this introductory section.

Following this, a more detailed explanation of my research design, interview structure and analytic practice will follow.

4.2 Positioning Myself as a Researcher

As the daughter of a Caribbean caregiver, I have a deep and personal connection to studying the children of immigrants. My mother migrated to Canada from Venezuela in the 1980s, and entered into the homes of affluent white families as a foreign domestic worker. She worked over 50 hours per week, without overtime pay, and experienced verbal abuse behind closed doors. Her employment was also a form of social and spatial containment. She was part of an entangled web of legal and socio-economic restrictions common among many Caribbean women who migrated as domestic workers. Upon exiting live-in caregiving, she remained tethered to the care economy - not by choice, but by structural design: limited social networks and the stigma of domestic work created the walls around her professional life. As her daughter, I witnessed the long hours, the multiple jobs, and the chronic exhaustion she went through during my childhood. My sister and I grew up with "structured absence"; she rarely had time to assist with homework or attend school events, not because she did not care, but because the economy of care left little room for mothering one's own children. In early childhood, I realized that in immigrant households like mine, dreams of higher education would always be weighed against financial survival. The idea of attending university was unattainable - not due to a lack of ambition, but because there were few social and economic resources. I carried the burden of wanting to alleviate her burden. Although government funded loans were available, the concept of entering adulthood with large amounts of debt seemed irresponsible in a family that was already strained.

In addition to the confines of my home, I recognized systemic inequalities in the public school system. Within my predominantly white high school, I could not ignore the ways in which visible minority students were treated differently than their white counterparts. I observed how teachers and guidance counselors directed racialized young women towards college programs in care work (personal support work, early childhood education, social services) and directed their white peers (especially those from middle- and upper-class families) towards universities and professional careers. This pattern of direction emerged as a mechanism of sorting, both overt and covert, with significant implications for the futures of those affected. These everyday interactions revealed that schools function as gatekeepers of aspiration, quietly perpetuating paths based on both race and class.

Their narratives provide a temporal depth to capture both the immediate nature of separation and the gradual process of developing intergenerational impact. Utilizing these practices, this research design creates a political ethic: to reject deficit and extractive paradigms; to position Caribbean caregiver families at the center of scholarly and policy debates; and to assert that knowledge emerges from not only what is spoken, but from the conditions under which speech is made possible (Wynter, 2003; Alexander, 2005; McKittrick, 2007) Ultimately, what develops is not only a methodology, but a collective project of theorizing from below-one that attends to the dignity, agency, and intellectual labour of those too often marginalized from the record (Silvera, 1989)

4.3 Recruitment and Research Settings

To gain access to potential participants, I used snowball sampling. Given the specificity of the research and community being studied, this technique was most appropriate. To recruit participants, I first asked my mother to spread the word about my research project at her

workplace where there are a few Black women who work as caregivers. There was no conflict of interest as she does not have any personal relationships with these women. When I initially designed the project and submitted my proposal, I intended to interview 10 parent-child dyads.

No material compensation was given to the participants, and many of them viewed participating in this study as a means of asserting their agency and protest - a means of sharing and archiving their stories in a context in which their voices remain understudied (Wynter 1992; Silvera 1989). The criteria for participation in the study as a Caribbean caregiver were as follows: those who migrated to Canada between 1980 and 2000 under the Foreign Domestic Movement, TEAS, and/or the Live-In Caregiver Program. For the adult children, we included either Canadian-born children, or those children who were later reunited with their mothers. I chose to examine these families as they are the ones who have lived through and can now reflect upon the long-term effects of policy and migration in Canada (Harding, 1991; McKittrick 2007).

Of the intended 10 pairs, I managed to recruit six mother child pairs, and one solo adult caregiver daughter (her mother politely declined to be interviewed) using snowball sampling as a method. If I were to conduct similar research in the future, I would use snowball sampling, but I would also make a greater effort to outreach the Caribbean community and broaden my network. Towards the end of the project, I reached out to a local religious institution called Our Lady of Good Counsel Caribbean Canadian Roman Catholic Church. The church kindly suggested that I post a blurb in their bulletin explaining my project. The bulletin did not yield any responses. In hindsight, I realized that I had not established rapport with the members of the parish and I strongly believe that if I had attended church related events over the course of my MA, it would have helped my expand my participant pool.

Throughout the month of April 2019, I conducted face-to-face and telephone interviews with six caregiver dyads (six mother-daughter pairs and one solo caregiver adult child), resulting in a total of thirteen interviews. Interviews spanned weekdays and weekends and were scheduled at the participants' convenience, between the times of 4:00 and 8:00 p.m. Each respondent was interviewed for approximately 45 minutes or longer depending on factors such as availability and willingness to speak. The interviews took place in a neutral location which was either at a coffee shop or a park in a quiet area. Before each interview, I introduced myself and the project, then each participant was given a consent form (see Appendix A). I ensured that their responses would be treated with care and hard copies of the data obtained from the interviews as locked in a filing cabinet, and files on my laptop are password-protected. I asked for permission to audio-record the interview. None of respondents objected to the use of an audio device. To record the interviews, I used the 'voice memo' application on my cellular device. Last, I kept the conversations confidential and did not disclose the material of the conversations between the mother-child pairs, so as to maintain respect for privacy amongst the participants. Participant names were given pseudonyms to protect their identity.

4.4 Data Analysis

The way I organized the analysis was both spatial and transversal. The architecture of home, school, neighbourhood, and transnational connections provided an entry point into each family's story, while specific themes like resilience, silence and stigma were common to many of the interviews and thus revealed their own unique geographies (Ahmed 2004; Henry & Tator, 2009). The focus on these themes was directly related to the broader research question, which asks how the educational and employment trajectories of caregivers and their adult children are influenced by the geographies of race, migration, and settlement. Depending on the individual's

generation, gender, or social position, 'resilience' may have meant staying alone in your house, negotiating surveillance by teachers at school, maintaining connections to family members across borders, etc. In cases where interviewee responses didn't seem to fit into a particular theme, I designated a 'miscellaneous' category and documented those in memos, often returning to them later as theoretical tools for my research (Harding, 1991). Representation of the participants' voices also impacted how I decided what to highlight from each of the interviews. I selected stories that broke with expectations or challenged assumptions, such as when one caregiver articulated; that absence was love. (Silvera, 1983; McKittrick 2006). When there was a clear conflict between interpreting the data, and honoring the voice of the participants, I would at times withhold my own extensive analytical interpretation, allowing the weight of a pause, a contradiction, or a moment of laughter to do its work (Smith 1987, Ahmed 2004).

Care analytics were also used in the coding process, but in terms of how I treated sensitive material. I made comfort a primary factor in every decision I made regarding the analysis of their data, and, when appropriate, I reviewed my interpretations with my supervisor, rather than imposing my own interpretation on the participants (Harding 1991). If there is one overarching lesson to be learned from this analytic process, it is that people's experiences can never be reduced to a single narrative or explanation. The contradictions, the messiness, and the creative ways that Black and Caribbean families navigate the geographies they live in cannot be mapped out through simple charts, nor can the act of telling someone's story be considered mapping (Silvera 1983; McKittrick, 2006). Caribbean caregiver families provide important insight to the contested geographies of migration, care, and belonging (Silvera 1983; McKittrick 2006).

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has described the methods employed in this research project; a decolonizing framework with reflexivity similar to McKittrick (2014) that co-theorizes researchers' own lives. I illustrated how a reflexive approach was used in planning and executing life-history interviews as a daughter of a caregiver, and how the dyadic nature of life history interviews (i.e. caregiver-child dyad) was used to allow for the voices of the spatiality, affect, and intergenerational relationships present to be heard. I also demonstrated that when one considers the methodology of the research, ethics cannot be separated; i.e. the decision-making around recruitment, the collection of data, the analytical process and the representation of the results are all part of a larger commitment to narrative justice and diasporic accountability.

I showed that the knowledge developed in this study is located within the body and location, and that affect and intergenerational memory were central to developing knowledge rather than being relegated to the periphery or marginalized. This serves as a basis for understanding the empirical chapters that follow. The format of the analysis in the empirical chapters follows directly from the conceptualization of space that occurred in this chapter and has a direct relation to the results of the study. As previously stated, the concept of diasporic entwinement is methodologically operationalized through dyadic interviews, spatially based questioning, and an analytical process that does not remove the emotional legacies of the participant's family from the policy architecture of racial capitalism. The next chapter describes the participants' stories and outlines the complexities of Caribbean caregiver migration to Canada.

Chapter 5: Voices From the Field: Caregiver Journeys

5.1 Introduction

Caribbean caregivers played a key role in social reproduction in Canada, allowing Canadian families to participate in the professional labour force. In spite of their important contributions in social reproduction, their social, emotional, and intergenerational experiences remain profoundly understudied in the Canadian literature. In her work in Black geographies, McKittrick' (2007) highlights that even when Black women are included in the geographical literature, the black 'subject' (often female) is often treated through abstractions; subordinate and with struggle. Knowledge is often created without their input. As she puts it, "While the power of...space works to hierarchically position individuals, communities, regions, and nations, it is also contestable - the subject interprets, and ruptures, the knowability of our surroundings. What this contestation makes possible are 'black geographies,' which I want to identify as "the terrain of political struggle itself," or where the imperative of a perspective of struggle takes place" (2007:6). The point McKittrick is making here, is that when we use Black voices, we broaden our vantage point on the issues facing these communities. Black stories thus complicate the narratives of 'struggle' and we begin to see spaces of hope and possibility. Put another way, what Black communities need is not always in relation to what they are lacking, but rather what works and what can be done to reinforce these successes. Caribbean caregiver families deepen our understanding of the emotional and structural dimensions of immigrant life, as we learn how it unfolds in urban spaces such as schools, neighbourhoods, and labour markets, often shouldering the weight of those sacrifices alongside their own aspirations. The narratives that follow illustrate what scholars have observed: that educational and occupational trajectories of the next

generation are deeply shaped by the emotional and material legacies of their parents' migration (Boyd 2002; Waters 1999).

5.2 Journeys Across the Sea: Caribbean Migration Journeys

5.2.1 Dayana & Naomi: Between Dreams and Duty

“I would bring my daughter to work when I took longer shifts. She did her homework while I did mine. I couldn't help her with her subjects 'cause I was always tired. I was still always on her case about her work. School comes first!”

I begin my exploration of caregiver families through the introduction of our first dyad - Dayana and Naomi. Together, they demonstrate the complex interplay of endurance, love, care, fatigue and resilience, within Caribbean caregiver families. Their story traces caregiver migration as a process of situated, but traceable histories, rather than a fixed temporal trajectory which reveals the structural, economic, and familial constraints shaping their experiences under migrant domestic programs. For Dayana, migration as a caregiver materialized in gendered and racialized labour geographies that shaped household resources and practices. However, their narrative also complicates the dominant “struggle” framework: it reveals how women cultivate spaces of hope which operate as protective and generative sites even in the absence of state resources. I read Caribbean caregiver spaces, inseparable from Black geographies, through McKittrick's framing of black life to highlight that second-generation mobility moves beyond constraint or precarity but is co-constituted by relational, imaginative, and aspirational geographies of care. The domestic and community support creates conditions for intergenerational continuity and aspiration, showing how endurance is spatially and socially produced.

Dayana's story begins in a small village located just outside of Kingston, Jamaica. She was raised in the turbulent political and economic climate of the 1970s; a period marked profoundly by deepening socioeconomic inequality in an island developing in a recovering post-colonial landscape. For many working-class families, especially those in rural spaces; the neoliberal restructuring of the Jamaican economy meant cuts to social spending in the realms of healthcare and education; rising food prices, and a diminishing pool of work. Dayana moved through a corridor of narrowing job opportunities, which was balanced against the currents of familial responsibility. Through this tightening landscape, her dreams of leaving emerged as a survival strategy. In the early 1980s, Dayana learned of the Canada's Foreign Domestic Movement (FDM) program that was introduced in 1981. Government officials and recruiters promoted the program as a 'pathway to citizenship'. For Dayana, it was an opportunity to create 'a room of ones own'. Though, the Canadian government framed the scheme as a 'benevolent endeavor', critical scholars like Bakan and Stasiulis (1994), Pratt (2004), Tungohan et al (2015) remind us, early caregiver programs functioned as a neoliberal mechanism through which care was extracted; offering neither fair working conditions, pay nor secure physical and social protections.

In 1983, she set forth to Toronto on an airplane, "thick with longing and determination." Upon arrival, Dayana was connected with a white, middle-class family in city's West End. Here she was responsible for caring for three children and upkeeping the physical environment. Her days commenced at dawn, and extended well past dusk: cooking, cleaning, all while solo managing childcare. She remembers working from, "Sunrise to sunset...and even after that." She further points out, "With this kind of work, you have to do a little more work. You're in someone else's home... so you can't tell them what you want!" She recalls preparing Jamaican stews and

rice and peas for the family - where the aroma of allspice, pimento, and nutmeg wrapped the kitchen like childhood memories, still, she never felt entirely at 'home'. She remembers thinking to herself "De only thing they complained about is de spice. But they ate de meat down to de bone and licked their fingers anyway!" Her humour is sharp-edged; on the one hand whilst the family praised her cooking and depended on her for intimate care, but she was underpaid habitually. With a promised of about \$515 a month; she would often receive one hundred dollars less. Dayana describes wanting . "...to say something because the money was mine. I worked hard for it," she explains. "I used to send money back home and I would fall short. I was angry, but I told myself every night, this wouldn't last. By the grace of God, I will get threww." Her use of the phrasal verb "to get through" and push despite unfavourable circumstance, captures both endurance and a refusal to let exploitative circumstances define her outcome.

Dayana came to find solace in a nearby church; a modest congregation tucked into a basement in the city's west end. Here, women assembled and the chairs were filled with women who looked she like did, sharing both faith and fatigue. The space of worship is where she established her social networks in Canada and became part of her survival infrastructure, providing emotional support and practical information in a context where formal protections fray. She remained tethered to the employer family and fulfilled the required 24 months in the caregiver program, where she then transitioned from domestic caregiving to into a housekeeping in a prominent hotel in downtown, Toronto. Though it was not the upward mobility she had initially imagined, the lateral move still felt like progress. She was no longer tethered to the employer. More than a change of pace, she had taken a fancy to Brant, a Jamaican maintenance labourer. It was a short matter of time before they moved in together and some years later, had their daughter, Naomi.

Growing up, both of Naomi's parents worked full-time, with her mother taking an additional part-time job to cover bills. The economic and emotional strain of these overlapping shifts weighed heavily on the household. "We were just passing one another," she remembers. "Some days it was like the bills were the only thing talking to us." Eventually, the relationship frayed under compounding pressure, and eventually, they separated when Naomi was about a year old. Despite the rift, Dayana remained unwavering in her dual role as both breadwinner and caregiver. Naomi became the compass by which she navigated life. On weekends, they enjoyed the cinema which served as a brief escape from the repetition of routines. At home, she taught her how to cook, fold laundry, and, as she put it, "manage time 'cause life ain't easy." She worked two jobs and funnelled much of her earnings into after-school programs and tutoring. "You have to keep them busy so they stay out of trouble," she explained. Naomi absorbed these lessons. "Having the extra help made me feel like I was walking into class like a sharpened knife," she recalls. "I felt confident." Her academic success was inseparable from her mother's sacrifices, but also from the specific educational geographies Dayana managed to access. Once Dayana secured a more stable schedule at the hotel and a reliable part-time job, she was able to rent a modest apartment on the outskirts of Lawrence Park - a predominantly white, upper middle-class neighbourhood where public schools had well-funded programs, committed teachers, and enriched academic streams.

For Naomi, attending school in that context generated a particular kind of double consciousness. On one hand, she benefitted from smaller class sizes, extracurricular activities, and teachers who were quick to identify her as "university material." On the other, she was acutely aware of being one of the only Black, working-class students in a sea of affluence. Lunchtime conversations about ski trips and international vacations sharpened the contrast

between her mother's relentless shifts and her classmates' seemingly effortless comfort. "I always knew I was there because my mom worked herself to the bone," Naomi reflects. "It wasn't just my own effort. It was all the hours she wasn't home." Her awareness of this layered labour - her own and her mother's - shaped how she understood both success and debt. Educational achievement became a way of honouring the sacrifices that structured her childhood.

Many years later, Naomi became a nurse at a hospital in downtown Toronto. In that role, she often helped new immigrants navigate the same institutional and structural barriers her mother had faced: figuring out forms, understanding workplace hierarchies, interpreting the unspoken rules of Canadian professionalism. "Sometimes I see my mom in them," she says. "I know what it's like to have your intelligence and your work taken for granted." Her trajectory is not a neat story of upward mobility or a simple endorsement of "working hard" as a solution to structural inequality. It is a generational achievement shaped by love, labour, and the spatial scaffolding of migration policy and place. Dayana's endurance and strategic navigation of Toronto's care and housing markets created the conditions under which Naomi could access a different set of opportunities. Naomi's success, in turn, loops back into the community through her professional practice and her ongoing support of her mother.

Read through the lens of intergenerational diasporic transmission, Dayana and Naomi's story reveals how care, constraint, and possibility are braided across time. Dayana's long hours as a domestic and cleaner did not "lift" her daughter into a different class position; they also produced a geography of obligation, gratitude, and critical awareness that Naomi now carries into her own work. Their life history traces a map that is at once intimate and structural: from a small Jamaican village to a church basement in the west end, from a live-in room to a rented apartment near Lawrence Park, from hotel hallways to hospital corridors. At each turn, care

moves with them - sometimes as absence, sometimes as pressure, always as a form of survival that exceeds the language of policy.

5.2.2 Pauline & Kemar: Perseverance, Growth and Ambition

“Caregiver children, they always want to do much better... much better than what their parents did and they go for it... Caregiver mothers motivate their kids and want them to always do good or better than they did... that’s what we want in this lifetime!”

Our second family, Pauline and Kemar, teach us about endurance, care, and the creative strategies Caribbean mothers use to produce possibilities across generations. Together, their story traces how relational and spatial networks are built through caregiver labour, sacrifice, and small circuits of hope despite being roped under gendered and racialized constraints. Pauline’s journey illuminates how Caribbean women actively craft geographies of strength and aspiration for their children - spaces of hope that McKittrick identifies as central to Black geographies. Her story complicates simple narratives of struggle or upward mobility, showing instead how care, resourcefulness, and relational endurance generate possibilities that exceed what policy or formal institutions provide. By attending to the intimate, structural, and spatial dimensions of her life, we can see how her labour not only sustains survival but also lays the groundwork for Kemar’s social, educational, and professional trajectories.

Pauline’s story begins in rural Trinidad in a small town where opportunities were fragmented and few, for women. Growing up in late 1980s, she saw a period marked by economic stagnation and deeply gendered limits on mobility. In a paradoxical twist, those years sharpened her awareness of constraint but also deepened her longing for possibility. Her dreams for herself were modest and were scaffolded by her dreams for her new son, Kemar. Their family

experienced loss and grief through the passing of Kemar's father at a very young, the responsibility of building a future for him rested entirely on her shoulders. A distant relative working in Canada introduced her to the caregiver program - well known across the Caribbean as both an opportunity and a risk. By the early 1980s, the Foreign Domestic Movement (FDM) had become a major pathway for Caribbean women seeking work abroad. The program was intriguing in that it promised food on the table, a salary to send home, and hope of reuniting with her son. Her early years in Canada were physically taxing. She worked as a live-in caregiver for a family with young children where she would rise before dawn to pack lunches, prepare breakfasts, and ready the children for school. The mornings reminded her of Trinidad; the warmth of kitchens, domestic rhythms, but she did not anticipate the long work hours. Still, she became accustomed to and adapted to their routines, expectations, and especially moods. She was treated kindly, but kindness did not undo the sense of containment that live-in caregiving imposed: a life measured by someone else's clock. Though Pauline still created small circuits of joy; on weekends she met other Caribbean women at the West Indian grocery store, each of them sifting through shelves of imported goods as if reaching toward something they feared might slip away. She found solace in early Indian cinema and in the laughter that rose easily among women who understood that survival required more than endurance - it required communion. These fleeting gatherings stitched the beginnings of a support system, a quiet infrastructure of care.

After three years, Pauline transitioned from caregiving to factory work. The job was exhausting but steady, and with steady work came a kind of agency she hadn't felt since leaving Trinidad. She rented her own apartment and began the long process of sponsoring Kemar. Almost five years after she had left home, mother and son were reunited. She remembers his arrival as a kind of spiritual unburdening - proof that her sacrifices, though heavy, had not been

in vain. Life as a single mother in Toronto demanded a brutal juggling of time, money, and hope. Pauline worked full-time at the factory and attended night school, eventually earning her high school diploma. From there, she trained as a hairstylist and later became the manager of a busy salon. For Pauline, education was never an indulgence; it was an obligation - an inheritance she intended to pass down to Kemar.

Kemar grew up watching his mother stretch every hour and every dollar until they could hold the shape of a future. The lessons she taught him were never abstract; they were embodied. He saw how exhaustion could coexist with devotion, how scarcity demanded discipline, and how sacrifice was chosen for the sake of someone else. Without a father present - a loss that shadowed his early childhood, Pauline became both anchor and horizon. At sixteen, Kemar entered the workforce, mirroring Pauline's ethic of responsibility. He studied business management and worked his way into an upper-managerial position at a large Toronto transportation company. "I always wanted to do better than my parents did," he reflected; and to make them proud. His phrasing is almost protective; an acknowledgment of how deeply his mother's struggle shaped his ambitions.

For Pauline, teaching familiarized Kemar with how to navigate the world with purpose. Their shared values: discipline, humility, perseverance - became the architecture of their relationship. Pauline's journey reveals what is often obscured in policy debates about migration: that sacrifice is not a static narrative of hardship but a generative force. Her story is one of refusal - to accept the limits imposed upon her, refusal to let her son inherit the stagnation that shaped her youth, refusal to allow the constraints of the FDM to define the boundaries of her life. Kemar's trajectory, in turn, is a testament to the unseen infrastructures that Caribbean mothers build, through labour, through longing, and through an ethic of care that stretches across borders.

His success is not a bootstrap fable; it is the work of intergenerational endurance. It is the outcome of Pauline's insistence on laying a foundation she herself was denied.

Together, their story exemplifies the quiet, creative, urban infrastructures and strategic labour of immigrant women who carve out possibility, where none is offered. It is a reminder that ambition, when inherited under conditions of scarcity, becomes more than aspiration - it becomes survival.

5.2.3 Charlene & Chantale: Sacrifice, Aspiration and Motherhood

Next, we move to Charlene and Chantale, who show us the complex interplay of sacrifice, aspiration, and intergenerational care. We learn how mothers actively construct geographies of possibility and support, even when gendered, racialized, and structural constraints intersect. Through Charlene's endurance and strategic navigation of Toronto's caregiving economy; it becomes clear that labour, and hope, produce spaces of strength and opportunity for her daughter, exemplifying what McKittrick identifies as key to Black geographies of hope. Their lives complicate narratives of struggle or upward mobility alone, highlighting instead the intertwined dynamics of care and resilience.

Charlene's story begins along the north coast of Montego Bay, where sea breeze and sunlight shaped her earliest memories. Her parents worked long hours at a nearby resort, and she and her brother spent their days tracing the shoreline - close to beauty, close to labour, apprenticing themselves to the quiet tensions of Caribbean tourism economies. Born into a rural village where possibilities for women were restricted but never entirely foreclosed, Charlene carried a quiet, persistent ambition: not to leave, exactly, but to expand. Her vision of

“elsewhere” was never fully defined, but always present - a horizon she kept returning to, one that honored her beginnings while dreaming toward futures not yet named.

She was passionate, empathic, and drawn to care work long before she had language for it. A family member’s suicide when she was young left a mark that never fully faded; it made her want to pursue psychiatry, to offer mental health support to women, children, and families rendered voiceless by systems that refused to see their pain. That calling only deepened when, at eighteen, she lost both parents in a traumatic car accident. Grief arrived suddenly and without mercy, and caring for her younger brother became an urgent, non-negotiable responsibility. Her dreams stretched further away, but they did not disappear. They flickered like far-off stars - distant, but not extinguished.

Life created pathways where she once thought none existed. In her early twenties, she met a farmer from a neighbouring village, and together they built a small, intentional life. When their daughter, Chantale, was born, Charlene felt a joy that was expansive, almost cellular. Motherhood deepened everything - her sense of purpose, her sense of responsibility, her sense of time. Love, especially in contexts marked by precarity, always carried weight: it required not only nurturing but provision. And as Chantale grew, Charlene felt the horizon she once imagined press more urgently against the edges of her life.

Migration, then, was not abandonment - it was strategy, sacrifice, and love shaped into action. In the late 1970s, Charlene left Jamaica for Toronto, a heartbreak she carried like a second spine. She left behind a husband, a child, and a landscape she adored, believing that distance today would generate opportunities tomorrow. That belief steadied her as she entered Canada’s caregiving economy, working as a live-in nanny for a family in Toronto’s West End. Her days were long - far exceeding the agreed-upon hours - and her evenings were shaped by

exhaustion, homesickness, and the unspoken demand to always say “yes.” The threat of deportation, coupled with living in her employer’s home, meant acquiescence was often a quiet form of self-protection. But, she carved out pockets of life in the small spaces she could. Weekends brought the steady resonance of steelpan music, a sound that stitched home back into her body. And every week, she saved her coins for phone calls to Jamaica - brief, fragile connections that moved her to tears but kept her grounded. Chantale’s voice, even through static, was the tether that kept her anchored. After three years, Charlene transitioned into factory work - labour-intensive but more stable, offering a degree of independence she had not felt since leaving home. She rented her own place, saved aggressively, and finally sponsored her daughter. Chantale’s arrival in Toronto was both triumphant and disorienting. She was fourteen - old enough to remember everything, young enough to still be unmoored. She had been separated from her mother for nearly four years, and reunion meant stepping into a city that was colder, faster, and far less forgiving than she had imagined. School became the first site of rupture. Chantale’s Jamaican accent, a beautiful marker of identity, was treated instead as difference to be mocked. Classmates made fun of her; teachers dismissed her when she struggled to read aloud, interpreting unfamiliar vowel sounds as incompetence rather than transition. Their impatience left scars, small but cumulative, puncturing her confidence and sense of belonging. Her mother noticed. Charlene, who had endured her own humiliations inside employers’ homes, recognized the familiar cruelty that institutions often direct toward Caribbean girls.

Despite these circumstances Charlene pressed forward. She saved what she could to support Chantale’s training as a personal support worker - one of the limited, but still meaningful, pathways available to working-class immigrant youth in Toronto at the time. For Charlene, it was not just about employment; it was about positioning her daughter within a field

of care, a continuation of the dream she herself had carried but had been unable to pursue.

Chantale, too, understood the symbolic weight of this path: it aligned with the deep empathy she inherited, the same familial call to help others that had shaped her mother's early aspirations.

Their neighbourhood -Jane and Finch - was alive with immigrant life but constrained by structural limits. Opportunity was uneven, and upward mobility often stalled. Chantale felt the pressure of these spatial boundaries; she felt the need to push against them, to outrun the narratives that clung to their postal code. School alienation layered onto neighbourhood stigma, forming a landscape that both constrained and motivated her. She wanted to escape the boundaries that seemed to close in around so many of her peers - not to reject her community, but to refuse its imposed limitations.

Through the challenges, both mother and daughter remained bound in both verbal and unspoken ways. Charlene wanted more for Chantale - more love, more opportunity, more respect than she had ever received. And Chantale saw her mother as her blueprint of endurance: a woman who had crossed oceans, broken her own heart, and carried grief with dignity so her children could walk through wider doors. Together, their story forms another thread in the long, intergenerational tapestry of Caribbean migration: sacrifice as inheritance, love as infrastructure, hope as survival. Their lives - from rural Jamaica to Toronto's west end, from the factory floor to the hallways of immigrant-heavy schools - illuminate a narrative of devotion shaped by distance, stitched by perseverance, and held together by a bond that refused to fray. Their journey, like the rhythmic waves of the Caribbean Sea, moves with force and constancy: a love that endures across borders, reconfigures time, and redefines what it means to build a life out of both loss and possibility.

5.2.4 Monica & Kingston: Navigating Complexities and Triumph

Our fourth dyad, Monica and Kingston, illuminates the ways Black Caribbean mothers navigate trauma, structural precarity, and migration to create new possibilities for their children. Their story demonstrates how care, resilience, and strategic labour generate relational and spatial infrastructures of hope, even when formal institutions fail to provide protection or recognition. Monica's endurance and deliberate crafting of stability for Kingston exemplify what McKittrick describes as Black geographies of hope; spaces where survival, love, and opportunity are actively produced. Their experiences complicate simple narratives of mobility or success, showing instead how trauma, transition, and intergenerational care intertwine to shape enduring possibilities across time and space.

Monica grew up in Port of Spain, Trinidad's urban centre, in a family whose livelihood was woven through the aisles of their village grocery store. The shop was both a workplace and a gathering place, a site where commerce, neighbourhood ties, and everyday rhythms converged. As the city expanded, so did the family business. A second shop opened in a nearby community, a symbol of ambition and possibility. When economic pressures intensified, the stores faltered. Both locations were eventually sold to Dion, a long-time family friend. His transformation of the shops into a successful chain marked the end of a chapter Monica had assumed would always anchor her. As a teenager, Monica was a dreamer who thought a lot about studying business and building something of her own. Yet ambition collided with circumstances. Her parents could not afford higher education, and the pathways she imagined closed before she could reach them.

It was during this vulnerable period that a man close to the family, someone trusted, presented what appeared to be an opportunity. He promised training, financial support, and the possibility of schooling in exchange for work in his home. Beneath the illusion of generosity was

a predatory intent that Monica, despite her refusals, could not escape. The violation that followed was devastating. It altered her sense of safety, trust, and belonging. When the justice system failed to believe her, and the community responded with silence rather than protection, Monica could no longer remain in the world that had raised her. Trauma hollowed out the places that once steadied her. She left school, withdrew from the family business, and stepped away from a life that had become suffocating. A close friend eventually told her about the caregiver migration program that many Caribbean women used to build new beginnings in Canada. It offered a route out of the geography of her trauma and the structural limits that shaped her adolescence. Monica migrated to Toronto in the early 1990s through this pathway, carrying grief, hope, and a quiet determination to start again. She arrived in Scarborough and soon found work with an upper-middle-class family in the East End. The couple, two lawyers with demanding schedules, relied on her heavily. Monica rose before dawn to care for their children, prepare meals, maintain the household, and absorb the emotional weight that lingered when parents work late into the night. She loved the children deeply, which often placed her in difficult positions. Their affection for her blurred into expectation, and the parents rarely needed to articulate their requests. The pressure to say yes existed in the air, accompanied by the unspoken reminder that her job and her immigration status were vulnerable.

Years passed, and the demands of caregiving began to wear on her. The work became less about shared trust and more about silent endurance. Monica longed for a life shaped by her own aspirations rather than the emotional labour of raising other people's children. Eventually, the couple recognized both her exhaustion and her potential. Their final act of generosity was transformative. They helped enroll her in a night-school administrative assistant program and covered the tuition themselves. The certification opened a new door. Monica secured work at a

family-owned dental clinic, her first job with predictable hours, a steady income, and a sense of professional pride. She eventually moved to Malvern, a Scarborough neighbourhood where she found community and comfort. Life began to settle into something steady. She walked daily with her Jack Russell Terrier, Scotch, named after the pepper, and it was on one of these walks that she met Rodrigo. He was persistent in a gentle way, asking her out for doggy dates until he became a companion she could trust. Monica, once convinced she would always stand alone, began to imagine family again. Together, she and Rodrigo built a household grounded in shared responsibility, emotional care, and the determination to give their children what neither had growing up.

Their youngest son Kingston, was raised in a home defined by stability. This was something Monica never had in her youth. Unlike his mother, Kingston grew up without the constant strain of financial precarity. Education was not fragile or conditional for him. It was expected. He moved through school hallways with a sense of possibility created by the foundation Monica spent decades constructing. His schooling in Malvern offered resources, mentorship, and teachers who influenced him deeply. He credits his career path, particularly his decision to become a high school teacher, to those educators and to the guidance counselors who recognized his potential. His success emerged from a structure his mother had built long before he entered a classroom. Where Monica encountered systemic barriers and quiet exclusions, he encountered access and recognition. Their experiences were not symmetrical, yet they were deeply relational.

Monica's migration to Canada was an act of survival, but also an act of profound love. She rebuilt her life in the aftermath of trauma, shaping a stability sturdy enough for her children to flourish within it. Kingston's journey became a continuation of that love. It carried forward the

dreams Monica once held for herself but had to relinquish in order to survive. Their story is one of generational recalibration, where trauma transforms into transition, and transition into triumph. It reveals how intergenerational change emerges through the invisible labour of women like Monica, whose quiet endurance becomes the structure within which their children learn to dream.

5.2.5 Laurette & Anya: Between the Past We Leave and the Future We Shape

Our fifth caregiver family Laurette and Anya take us through the intergenerational layers of care, aspiration, and resilience among Caribbean mothers and daughters. As Black women navigate constrained opportunities, structural precarity, and migration, they are actively creating spaces of hope and possibility for their children. Laurette's sacrifices, strategic adaptations, and enduring labour generate relational and spatial infrastructures that McKittrick identifies as central to Black geographies - spaces where survival, creativity, and dignity are produced even in the absence of formal support. This dyad complicates linear narratives of mobility, showing instead how ambition, care, and intergenerational inheritance intertwine, producing outcomes that are relational, cumulative, and deeply grounded in the work of everyday life.

Laurette had come from beneath the coral-hued skies of Barbados, where the smell of sea salt often clung to her skin like memories. She was an only child and grew up in a humble home. Her father worked at a port facility and her mother in the hospitality industry. Laurette aspired to work in the medical field, specifically as a doctor. She was motivated by the fact that the doctors she grew up with, did not resemble her. Her ambition took form during a visit to a local clinic, where the male doctor barely looked her in the eye. "We need more women in medicine," she whispered to herself. The reality at the time, was that in the early 1980s; there were few paths for

low-income families; and fewer for women. Laurette had adored her parents and grappled with the thought of leaving them but also living a life that was not her own. With hope in her heart, she purchased a one-way ticket to Toronto. She landed in December. “Weird ice,” she said, laughing. Her first job - as a live-in caregiver for a white family in midtown Toronto. Two daughters. A dog. A basement bedroom. She folded laundry with surgical scrutiny and packed school lunches as though wrapping gifts. She wove hair into braids and played pretend. “She was family,” they said. They meant it as kindness, but Laurette always heard the unspoken addendum: part of the family, until we move away. When they requested that she follow them to the suburbs, she wouldn’t. Quietly. Decisively. She had other promises to fulfill. With their help - an uncommon kindness in a city that is not always a place where grace is given - Laurette found a small apartment and enlisted in a healthcare aide program. The intention to study medicine had changed, constricted by time and the reality of raising a child alone. She became pregnant midway through her studies. The father was a boyfriend who ghosted before Anya learned to walk. And that’s what Laurette did; she did what women like her have always done: she made the dream do a little adjustment, fold, bend around the edges of her child. She finished her training while raising Anya, and with help from her previous employers was able to secure a full-time position in health care, with benefits that would ground their little family through seasons of uncertainty. Anya was raised in a sun-warmed little apartment filled with laughter and replays of *The Fresh Prince*, the sound of her mother humming gospel songs as she pressed scrubs. After school, they’d cook together, their bodies stepping to the same groove, like old jazz notes. But there were silences as well - the ones Anya didn’t grasp at the time. Nights when Laurette’s back hurt so much she could not sleep. Mornings when the rent was paid late because the money had gone to a cousin in Barbados who needed school fees or to her mother’s sister

who needed heart medication. “People back home say we’re rich,” Laurette would sigh, weary if not angry. “How can I tell them no?” Laurette never asked Anya to help out, but after coming to Canada, Anya decided to. A job at a Caribbean restaurant, then another at a music store. She saved tips in a jar marked “Freedom,” though she no longer knew what that even meant. Art had always been her refuge - pencil strokes on canvas that felt like inhaling. Her teachers said she was talented, that she should take it up professionally. But poverty edits the script. Dreams are costly. Paint doesn’t pay rent. And her mother had worked too long for her to risk it all on galleries and grant proposals. In the end, Anya went for practicality: a Personal Support Worker program; short, affordable, and marketable. “I can always make drawings on the side,” she told herself, but the hours were intense and plentiful. She paid for college with no provincial loans, her self-sufficiency a kind of silent rebellion. While she was changing linens and helping lift clients out of hospital beds, part of her was somewhere in a sketchbook - an alternate life playing out in charcoal and ink. This dyad, however, is not a tragedy, but layering. Laurette’s sacrifice was not a conclusion so much as an inheritance, restructuring: from the promise of medicine to the dignity of care; from art as a means of production to art as a refuge. In this mother-daughter line, there is no clear upward line, no bootstraps fantasy. Instead there is resilience, grit and a gentle defiance: not to give up on each other, not to give up on themselves. What they have forged together may not be glamorous or guaranteed, but it is solid. It endures, shelters, and that’s often more than enough.

5.2.6 Marva & Lloyd: Separation and Sacrifice

“Me came here to care for people chirren so I could care for me own one back at home. I leave me son back at home wit he dad, aunty and uncle....These people and de government don’t want you to bring your chirren here when you come but they want yuh to care for their own...”

Marva and Lloyd form our sixth dyad and they illuminate the unseen costs of migration, separation, and caregiving within Caribbean families. Caregivers like Marva, navigate structural precarity, racialized labour, and restrictive migration policies while maintaining the bonds that structure care across borders. The prolonged separation from her son highlights the emotional and spatial toll of caregiver programs, showing the limits of policy frameworks in supporting familial cohesion. In the face of these constraints, Marva creates relational and temporal structures of endurance, persistence, and hope - spaces of resilience that McKittrick identifies as central to Black geographies. This dyad complicates narratives of intergenerational mobility, showing how sacrifice and care can simultaneously produce opportunity, stress, and relational debt, revealing the profound labour; both visible and invisible, which sustains families across continents.

Marva’s story starts in a town named Linden, nestled in the north-eastern area of Guyana. Her parents were farmers, and she helped them for many years; she aspired to pursue a career in nursing. She envisioned leaving behind small town life and pursuing an education and a nursing career in the capital city of Georgetown. Her own parents were quite traditional and they very much wanted her married before the age of 16. But Marva remained undeterred; the idea of an arranged marriage was not for her. Still, family pressures were relentless, and by age 18 she had given in, marrying a family friend. At 19 she had given birth to her son, Lloyd. Still, the burden of her marriage and its restrictions became increasingly unbearable. She craved a freedom that

seemed unattainable. Marva heard through relatives abroad in Canada and England about temporary worker programs created for Caribbean migrants, including the caregiver program in Canada. For Marva, it felt like this was a foundation – a chance. But the program’s requirements contained a cruel paradox: caregivers would have to migrate without their children. After much discussion with her husband, they decided that Lloyd would stay behind in Guyana with his father, aunt and uncle. In 1984, with a cousin’s help, Marva bought a one-way ticket to Toronto. When Marva arrived in Canada, she was excited but also overwhelmed. Her first job, for a young couple with a newborn, was a new beginning. But the reality of her work soon set in. “It’s like dey don’t see you as a person,” she said, of the coldness of her employers when they picked her up at the airport. Rather than a bright welcome, they handed her a grocery list of things to do on her first evening. The first moment of contact for her was one of immediate utility, not human connection. “I come here to work but I didn’t even get de chance to put down me bags. “De baby was crying in de back seat with de mother and dey tell me to calm him down.” Marva threw herself into her work for the next two years, taking care of the house, the baby and getting her housework done, proud of her efforts, but never enough. The family was obsessively unhappy, and one evening when Marva was assigned daughter duties at a dinner party, the casual racism and dehumanizing attitudes cross the line into something impossible to overlook. One guest referred to her as “the maid,” an unambiguous reminder of her racialized labour; and later, Marva overheard her employer’s comment, “The women from the Caribbean don’t talk back.” In that moment, Marva knew that it was her race that affected how others saw her as having less of a right to speak up - her silence registered as servitude, and her long hours were unpaid. She had to work overtime, was frequently asked to work on weekends, and her wages were lower than agreed upon. Marva left the family after a year and a half, saying that she no longer wanted to

work as a caregiver. A family friend helped her get a job at a roti shop. Though the job offered some stability, Marva was intent on bringing her son to Canada one day. But the barriers were formidable. She couldn't establish financial stability when she did not have proper documentation or a job on record, so she worked in cash-paying positions, sending money home and saving. She rented a room in a house, sending money home to Guyana, and holding out hope of having her papers in order to join Lloyd. In 1991, after seven years of persistence, Marva was offered a permanent, full-time job at another roti shop. Finally, she was able to find a two-bedroom apartment. Marva was reunited with her son after the separation of seven years; the reunion was bittersweet, though. Marva remembers the emotional strain of separation, saying, "...none ah dat... will ever replace de muddah and child bond. How could I come take care of people chirren but I cyah take care of me own? They are Evil to separate people family from each other. Dey need to change dey laws." Lloyd, who grew up with his father in Guyana, had his own challenges when he came to Toronto. He longed for his father's support and for the close-knit, social fabric of his home community. Challenging lines of thought came up as he reflected on the isolation he felt in Canada. Lloyd said his mother put in long hours at the roti shop and commuted long distances limiting the time that they had together, something that was always understood as part of a sacrifice to provide him with a better life. Marva was encouraging; she shouted that Lloyd should get a higher education. "Wah you tink I workin' dese shifts for go rollin' roti fuh people? So you could be betta den me," she would always say. Driven by his mother's sacrifices, Lloyd worked over 20 hours a week at a fast food restaurant throughout high school and later enrolled in a program that would give him a diploma in business. He could barely see the promise of a better future. But when Marva fell ill, tragedy struck, and Lloyd dropped out of school to take care of her, perpetuating a cycle of sacrifice that

had become the hallmark of their lives after their parting. Through their respective journeys, Marva and Lloyd provide insight into the heavy emotional and physical cost of migration and family separation. Their story embodies the sacrifices of Caribbean migrant workers, and the complex relationships between generations of hopes and deferred dreams. Their challenges highlight the often-invisible price of caregiving labour, in which the motivation to care for another person can come at the cost of one's own family and health.

The caregiver journey unfolds through interconnected spatial formations (household, neighborhood, labour market, transnational family network), which influence how sacrifice, opportunity, and responsibility are constructed and experienced throughout the journey. The previous sections have illustrated that the journey of a caregiver is not merely an economic strategy, but a relational and spatial process of negotiating structural constraints (racialized labor markets, restrictive policies, unequal access to resources). In addition, the analysis has demonstrated how caregivers create infrastructure for survival through their daily practices of care, financial resource generation and community building that support not only their immediate households, but also their extended family networks across international boundaries. The experience of caregivers in the household setting is characterized by temporal demands and emotional obligations that disrupt and reorganize family life and form the basis for children's early development of discipline, aspirations, and responsibility. In like manner, the conditions of employment for these workers create the basis for forms of under-employment, workplace precariousness and limited job mobility that can limit both current economic security and future economic opportunity. Additionally, the local neighborhood setting mediates the experience of working-class families with respect to education (schooling) community resources (social services, libraries etc.) and social networks (neighborhood organizations etc.), thus influencing

how second-generation individuals recognize and take advantage of opportunity in the urban environment. Lastly, the transnational relationship adds another layer of complexity to this dynamic by creating a spatial framework for decision making, particularly with regard to remittances, obligations and memories that link past experiences of migration and care to current circumstances. The interaction among these different layers of space at various scales creates intergenerational pathways that do not follow a straight line or are consistent over time, but are created through a continued negotiation of constraints and possibilities. Thus, using a spatial approach, it can be seen that caregiver migration produces ways in which inequality, mobility and aspirations are organized; where institutional arrangements, labour systems and historical patterns of migration converge to establish life opportunities. This chapter provides empirical evidence and theoretical foundations for a geographic understanding of Caribbean caregiver families by demonstrating that intergenerational outcomes cannot be disassociated from the spatial formation of care because opportunities are unevenly distributed and are therefore influenced by institutional arrangements as well as differences in social and geographic contexts.

Chapter 6: Geographies of the Next Generation

6.1 Home Geographies

The caregiver home is a spatial foundation where economic conditions, gendered expectations, and maternal sacrifices converge to shape the educational and employment outcomes of second-generation Caribbean youth. While the home is private, the narratives shared by participants reveal that it is also a site of structural inscription, where global labour markets, gender norms, and state disinvestment materialize. The emotional texture of home, rhythm and familial obligations profoundly shape, how caregiver children navigate their education and envision their futures. Kingston, one of the few participants who experienced relative material stability, describes the supportive conditions that made academic success more attainable:

“Yes. I was fortunate to have two working parents growing Up. They helped me fund university and I didn’t have to work much in high school. I had a part time job at Cineplex to earn spending money. I worked with the same company throughout university, but only taking minimal shifts...a few hours a week.”

Kingston’s reflection highlights the value of financial stability not only as a material resource but as a temporal and emotional buffer. Unlike many of his peers, he was able to focus on school without being overburdened by paid labour or domestic responsibility. As Basu (2004) argues, educational outcomes stretch beyond the matter of individual effort and are instead shaped by the ‘uneven geographies of support’. Kingston’s home afforded both literal and psychological room to fail, recalibrate, and re-enter academic spaces with backing. He goes on to recall:

“When I failed, my parents just paid for me to take it again...not without yelling at me of course! (laughs)”

This anecdote illustrates what may be understood, drawing on James (2012), as academic elasticity, more common among middle-income youth, where failure is a temporary financial hurdle. His family's economic standing transformed structural shocks into recoverable events rather than permanent derailments. By contrast, other participants narrated homes marked less by financial security than by emotional restraint and self-censorship. Lloyd, for example, described avoiding asking his mother for help when he struggled with mathematics, aware of her limited capacity to assist. He watched peers access private tutors that he knew his family could not afford and learned, early, to keep difficulty to himself. This emotional deferral reflects the effects of structural positioning rather than familial dynamics. For McKittrick (2007), she explains that Black geographies are often configured through what is withheld - support, presence, opportunity - through historical dispossession. Lloyd's silence is not just about mathematics; it is a quiet accommodation to a system that denies immigrant families the supports they need, then asks them to internalize the gaps.

The home's material and temporal constraints emerge even more clearly in Jade's narration of daily routines:

"My brother and I were responsible for cleaning up after ourselves, doing the dishes... you know, making sure the house was in order. Oh, and cooking as well, besides being at school, I spent an extra few hours caring for the home. I was always tired coming home. I was always sleepy. Sleeping is pretty much the first thing that I would want to do when I came home"

Here, home is both emotionally grounding and physically depleting. For girls in particular, the domestic sphere a space of reproductive labour. Feminist geographers like Pratt (2004) and Parreñas (2001) have long shown how gendered expectations in migrant families can

disproportionately position daughters as “junior caregivers,” folding them into the same labour patterns that structure their mothers’ working lives. Anya expands on this pattern, emphasizing how sibling care became an invisible yet time- consuming demand:

“I was always late for class...teachers thought I had issues at home because I came in late and didn’t do my work. It just that I was always busy taking care of my brothers, I didn’t have time to do my work. It was important to see them succeed.”

Anya’s sentiment reinforces the gendered dimensions of care and responsibility, and also reveals how social systems across spatialities, can misread the signs. Rather than seeing Anya’s lateness as a sign of family sacrifice, the school interpreted it as dysfunction. This misreading is spatial: it emerges when institutions apply middle-class norms to Caribbean migrant households that operate under radically different structural constraints. As Kelly (2012) notes, immigrant youth often perform ‘compensatory responsibilities’ within their families, shouldering duties that the system neither sees nor values. Together, the accounts of the home taken from the children of Caribbean caregivers, show us a vantage point that demonstrates that caregiver homes served as sites where classed, racialized, and gendered labour systems converge. These homes are rich in care but constrained in choice. What emerges is not a portrait of deficiency, but one of endurance, an intimate geography of making do, of pouring into children from already depleted wells. In the absence of structural repair, the caregiver's home is the first terrain on which intergenerational (im)mobility is negotiated.

6.1.1 Household Responsibility

The home is one of the key spatialities where socioeconomic mobility manifests, and household labour is one of its most intimate channels. In households shaped by caregiving

migration, domestic responsibility is a mechanism through which gendered expectations, intergenerational obligations, and economic pressures are absorbed by children. These responsibilities can, and do manifest unevenly, through social categorizations such as gender and race. Importantly, broader structural forces, including parents' time constraints, financial necessity, and the absence of support systems. Following Lareau's (2003) analysis of concerted cultivation versus natural growth, we see that in many caregiver households, domestic responsibility is structured less by parental design and more by economic and temporal scarcity. Unlike Lareau's white working-class families, these Caribbean homes are also transnationally shaped and racially stratified, resonating with what Parreñas (2005) calls "partial mothering," where mothers parent through fragmentation rather than pure absence. Children step into caregiving roles not because of neglect, but because the household economy demands it, and because love, care, and sacrifice are spatially entangled. Kemar's reflections demonstrate the emotional and logistical balancing act many caregiver mothers performed to create stability, even while relying on their children to assume parts of the household workload:

"My mom took care of everything else - my mom did the laundry, cooking, cleaning. My mom did all of that, as well as doing all of the stuff that she was doing with school and work. She made time for it."

Kemar's account vividly illustrates a portrait of labour layered upon labour. His mother's dual commitment to both paid work and domestic life reflects what Silvia Federici (2004) terms the invisibilized labour of social reproduction. In this case, it is not invisible, but overburdened. The spatial demands of caregiving outside the home do not diminish the expectation of full responsibility within it. Importantly, Kemar does not express resentment. His recollection affirms his mother's reliability and care, she "made time for it." The domestic sphere is not characterized

by abandonment, but by saturation. Every corner of the home is occupied by obligation. His sense of loyalty and emotional accountability surfaces again in Kemar's decision-making around peer relationships and academic motivation:

"I didn't get caught up with [my friends] because I was always in the thought that I don't want my mom to be embarrassed by me – I didn't want to let her down and I wanted to make her happy."

Here, care is reversed. Kemar's orientation to responsibility is not an imposition by his mother; rather, it is internalized through a deep awareness of her sacrifices. The household in this sense is one of emotional inheritance. As Parreñas (2005) and Basu (2004) note, this form of emotional labour is especially prominent in racialized migrant households, where children come to understand love as duty and maturity as vigilance. Kemar's comment also gestures to how household labour extends beyond cleaning or cooking. It includes self-monitoring, respectability, and emotional insulation. This emotional vigilance is one of the most under-discussed forms of inherited labour, the effort children put into protecting their parents from pain, shame, or disappointment.

Though it appeared that gender plays a role. In Lloyd's narration, we see a parallel dynamic. He speaks on caregiving responsibilities within the household and describe his experience with the unevenly distribution of household chores, shaped both by cultural norms and maternal strategy:

"I didn't do much around the house in terms of chores...My mom did it all. She said focus on school and she'd take care of the rest...Caribbean families are like that...the boys don't do much!"

laughs It's like that with my cousins. The girls are expected to help with the cooking and cleaning and we are given more freedom."

One can observe through Lloyd's account, a reflection of what Lareau (2011) characterizes as differentiated forms of parental involvement shaped by cultural logic. His mother's decision to shield him from household chores was a strategic effort to maximize his academic potential by shouldering the labour herself. Lloyd also made note that his female relatives and cousins undertook more of the domestic chores than their male counterparts. It is worth observing that while the distribution of household labour has gendered dimensions, care underscores the intent. The caregiver mother here is not enforcing patriarchal norms for their own sake; she is leveraging what limited power she has to support her son's educational advancement. As McKittrick (2006) reminds us, the geographies of Black life are often mapped through paradox, containment and care, tradition and resistance, all coexisting in the same domestic space.

At the same time, these gendered distributions produce stratified experiences within the same household. Jade's earlier description of coming home exhausted from chores stands in implicit contrast to Lloyd's relative freedom. The contrast reveals not just familial logic, but the spatial and gendered politics of reproduction, who gets to rest, who must labour, and how these dynamics shape educational outcomes. Girls are often pulled into domesticity earlier, their time fragmented by care, while boys may be shielded from these tasks in the hope of academic mobility. Both paths are structured by love, but that love is mediated by constraint.

Basu (2004, 2011) has shown that immigrant households in Toronto are often forced to adapt to constrained social geographies, where support networks are thin, housing is dense, and services are unevenly distributed. In these conditions, household labour is not merely tradition; it is a survival strategy. Children's participation in domestic care becomes an extension of their

family's limited access to institutional supports. Where no after-school care exists, older siblings take on the role. Where tutoring is unaffordable, parents ask children to manage their own assignments. These are not failures of parenting; they are the outcomes of spatial inequality, of what Basu (2011) terms "invisible exclusions" that render immigrant families responsible for their own social reproduction.

Across each narrative, inherited responsibility in the home is not a static transmission of chores, but a complex choreography of love, labour, and constraint. It is performed differently by gender, mediated by parental strategy, and shaped by the socioeconomic terrains families navigate. The caregiver mother is never framed here as absent or neglectful; on the contrary, she is ever-present, even when stretched thin. Caregiver children bear the weight of expectation, find themselves molded by their mothers' nurturing hands. Within these walls, the quiet labour of home transforms into lessons passed from one generation to the next, teaching not abstract virtues, but the lived experience of sacrifice, the muscle memory of resilience, and the steady heartbeat of responsibility.

6.1.2 Emotional Geographies

Spatial inheritance is not only material or task-based; it is atmospheric. In homes shaped by caregiver migration, emotion settles into the air, thick with love, but also with silence, exhaustion, and things left unsaid. These feelings may not always be spoken, but they are fully felt. As Ahmed (2006) reminds our analysis; emotion moves between bodies and spaces, attaching to histories and objects. The home, in this way, becomes both tender and unresolved, holding care but also the cost of it. It carries as much mood as it is memory. For children of Caribbean caregiver mothers, that mood is often a mix of pride, strain, and restrained care. Their educational and employment outcomes are shaped not only by what was done in the household,

but by how the household felt, how it held or withheld comfort, how it projected stability or stress, how it asked for silence, compliance, or gratitude. The emotional atmosphere of home, as McKittrick (2007) reminds us, is itself a geography, one structured by histories of displacement, racialized labour, and constrained intimacy.

Chantale's narration makes this inheritance of atmosphere explicit. She remembers the emotional absence within presence, a mother who returned home physically, but not always affectively:

"I cried a lot. My nanny then held me and said, 'Chanty, your mumma will be back soon.' It wasn't the same. I was already asleep when she got in. I wanted to tell her about my day but even with her coming early, she looked too tired to listen... I don't blame her. Sometimes I feel like I never got the chance to know her."

Her account is not one of resentment, but an articulation of longing shaped by circumstance. The affective structure of this home was not neglectful but muted, pressed by fatigue and structured by economic survival. In Ahmed's terms, exhaustion becomes a sticky emotion in this space, clinging to walls, evenings, and routines. Chantale's desire to connect is spatially blocked not by intention but by labour, her mother's physical depletion creating an atmosphere where affect could not circulate freely. As McKittrick (2007, p. 94) notes, "Black spatialities are always negotiating violences that are made to seem natural." In this household, exhaustion becomes naturalized, a normal part of evenings, a condition of care.

Lloyd echoes a similar inheritance of silence. His account of childhood evokes an emotional atmosphere shaped not by anger but by adaptation, a quiet acceptance of being alone:

“I didn’t see my mom much. She left home at 6am to work and didn’t come back until dinner time. She spent a lot of time commuting to and from work....I did things by myself. I used to build puzzles and play downstairs with other kids in the building.”

Lloyd is not lamenting neglect. His tone is observational, almost matter-of-fact, but the emotional geography is clear. He inhabited a household where solitude was normalized and where care took the form of permission rather than presence. In McKittrick’s (2007) reminds us this is a Black space of strategic silence, a space where a child learned to self-contain so as not to burden an already burdened mother. The home, in this case, teaches emotional autonomy as a form of love. That love is not loud or demonstrative; it is structured, practiced, and quietly inherited.

This quietude also becomes internalized as emotional strategy. As Naomi explains, emotional regulation was a learned practice, a way to maintain peace, gratitude, and composure in a household stretched by work and worry:

“I tried not to complain too much when I was younger. I knew my mom was already dealing with a lot...like bills, work, everything. I didn’t want to add to it.”

This is the geography of emotional minimization, what Parreñas (2005) and Federici (2004) describe as children absorbing reproductive responsibility not only in tasks but in tone. Naomi’s silence is not detachment; it is an affective strategy shaped by empathy and structural constraint. Her restraint is part of the household’s emotional labour economy, a form of care that shields the caregiver. Basu (2004) reminds us that in racialized immigrant households, survival often requires emotional containment. Not all forms of love are loud; some are disciplined.

Jade offers another dimension to this emotional terrain. She describes not only her mother's fatigue, but the affective atmosphere it generated, one that made her feel responsible for managing both her own feelings and her mother's wellbeing:

"Her working multiple jobs actually just makes me sad, because I realize that it's a lot of stress on her."

Here we see that Jade's sense of sadness is ambient; these feelings move beyond a single event and reflects prolonged exposure to economic strain, embedded within broader patterns of Caribbean migration. It becomes part of the home's atmosphere, a subtle emotional background noise. In this way, Jade is not only managing her own emotions but absorbing the household mood. Emotional geographers like Anderson (2009) have theorized affective atmospheres as collective yet unevenly felt. In Jade's case, the stress was not directly spoken but deeply sensed, producing a home where children learned to monitor the emotional temperature as part of daily survival. The stress is not only her mother's burden; it becomes a shared emotional climate. Even moments of care and love carry the trace of this atmospheric intensity. Anya recalls her mother's tenderness but also the effort it took to express it, how care often came filtered through fatigue:

"Sometimes she would fall asleep while I was talking. Not on purpose... she was just tired. She'd apologize after and say, 'baby, I'm sorry, tell me again.' So I would. Because I knew she cared, even if she couldn't show it every time."

This is atmospheric intimacy, love that exists even when disrupted, that is practiced through repetition, forgiveness, and understanding. Anya's willingness to repeat herself, to keep sharing despite interruptions, reflects an emotional resilience cultivated within constraint. In McKittrick's framing, these are the hidden spatial practices of survival, the micro-routines

through which Black women and their families resist the erasure of care, even within geographies of extraction.

Throughout these narratives, the emotional geography of the caregiver home emerges not as a singular feeling, but as an atmospheric inheritance shaped by structural pressure and sustained within silent adaptability. Caregiver homes are rich with love; they hold overworked bodies, unspoken apologies, and quiet forms of resilience. The children raised within them rarely name emotional abandonment, but speak instead of atmospheres charged by care stretched across time, distance, and exhaustion. They inherit not just domestic responsibility, but the emotional work of interpretation, reading moods, absorbing silences, learning when to speak and when to wait. These are not failings of family. They are the consequences of a system that asks for care while offering no reprieve. The caregiver home, then, is not only a space of labour; it is a space where emotional inheritance is structured by the limits of time, energy, and structural support. And yet, within those limits, children learned to listen, adjust, and carry forward forms of care that were never absent, only overextended.

6.1.3 Conclusion

The caregiver household is not merely a backdrop to second-generation lives; it is an active structure of possibility and constraint, inscribed by migration, class, gender, and state neglect. For the children of Caribbean women who entered Canada through caregiving streams, home became the first site of structural inheritance. It was where maternal exhaustion met institutional absence, where love was measured in commutes and double shifts, and where the architecture of daily life reflected the asymmetries of who was permitted to dream and who was

tasked with holding the dream together. The interiors of Caribbean lives were dense, racialized geographies, bearing the sediment of extraction and the deferred promise of belonging.

What these narratives reveal is not a simple lack of support, but a transfer of responsibility, a state-led offloading of care onto Black and Caribbean families already structurally overburdened. Following Lareau's (2003) critique of middle-class educational advantage, we see how caregiver mothers, though often barred from institutional forms of engagement, enacted care through protection, provision, and sacrifice. Their children, in turn, became inheritors not just of culture, but of infrastructural gaps. They filled the silences left by absent guidance counsellors, stood in for unaffordable tutors, managed siblings in place of after-school programs, and learned to read their mothers' fatigue as both barrier and offering. As Federici (2012) reminds us, reproductive labour is not just unpaid, it is unseen. In these homes, it left marks, on time, on ambition, and on the very shape of the future. These insights formulate a domestic geography that had tangible consequences for trajectories and outcomes. For some, like Kingston, a relatively stable dual-income household and parental capacity to "pay for a course again" translated into uninterrupted university pathways and eventual entry into professional work. For others, like Jade and Anya, the weight of household labour and emotional responsibility contributed to chronic fatigue, lateness, and misrecognition in school, shaping both their confidence and the way educators interpreted their "effort." In cases like Lloyd's, the long-term impact was even more pronounced, with early educational disengagement compounded later by his mother's illness, leading to truncated post-secondary study and a return to work in order to care for her. These are not incidental outcomes; they arise directly from the intimate, overextended infrastructures of home.

To understand these households as educational sites is to engage in a more expansive geography of schooling, one that begins before the bell rings. Drawing on Basu's (2004) work on spatialized inequity in Toronto, we must locate these families not just in terms of care, but in terms of placement, zoned into under-resourced neighbourhoods, priced out of stability, and burdened with long commutes that stretched time and truncated presence. McKittrick (2007) argues that Black spatial life is often cast as marginal when it is, in fact, systematically produced as such. These homes were not passively located; they were strategically contained, part of a broader geography that constrains movement even before a child sets foot in school. But the domestic spaces described in this study domestic were not solely sites of constraint, they also functioned as zones of improvisation. In them, children cultivated emotional intelligence, resilience, and a quiet literacy of survival. What emerges across these narratives is not the trope of maternal absence, but the insistence of maternal presence in forms unrecognized by dominant metrics. Caribbean youth did not merely cope, rather they recalibrated. Caregiver children carried the emotional weight of the household, translated scarcity into strategy, and learned to want without collapsing under the impossibility of fulfillment. Their academic and career pathways cannot be understood outside these intimate negotiations of space, silence, and sacrifice.

As we move to the next section, we shift from the interior architecture of home to the institutional configurations of school. If home was where structural constraints were inherited, school was where they were interpreted, sometimes reinforced through racialized expectations, and sometimes interrupted by fleeting moments of recognition. We now ask how educational institutions responded to children shaped by caregiving economies.

6.2 School Geographies

6.2.1 Educational Support

Educational outcomes for second-generation Caribbean youth are deeply shaped by access to academic support, yet that support is not always equally distributed. In Toronto's schools, caregiver children often entered the system already carrying the weight of classed and racialized disadvantage, only to find that institutional responses to their needs were inconsistent, under-resourced, or dependent on individual teacher will rather than systemic design. This is not a reflection of parental failure, but of a broader geography of exclusion in which migrant families are structurally distanced from the forms of support, tutors, enrichment programs, targeted guidance, that middle-class families take for granted. As James (2012) and Kelly (2014) argue, school outcomes are embedded in racial, gendered, classed systems of advantage and deficit that reproduce inequality through everyday institutional practice. Lloyd's narration captures this structural exclusion in stark terms:

"I struggled in math class but how could I ask her for help..." he recalls. "I knew she was hurt knowing that she couldn't help... that would just rub it in her face."

Here, Lloyd is not describing a personal deficit in his mother's care, but rather the painful gap between aspiration and access, a gap shaped by migration histories, economic barriers, and the educational system's presumption that academic reinforcement comes from home. His teacher's suggestion that "if you still don't understand it, you can ask your parents" betrays a hidden curriculum of class privilege, one that presumes parental literacy, time, and financial capacity. Anisef & Kilbride (2008), Parreñas (2001) and Farrales (2017) have shown how such

assumptions contribute to the marginalization of working-class immigrant youth, who are held to the same academic standards without equivalent scaffolding.

This is compounded by geographic unevenness in school quality and programming. As Simmons (2010) illustrate, the availability of supplemental support, for example after-school tutoring, arts and STEM programming, is often contingent on a school's location within wealthier or poorer neighbourhoods. Children of caregivers, frequently concentrated in lower-income zones of Toronto due to housing affordability, thus inherit not only economic constraints but educational ones. Jade described attending a more resourced school and witnessing her classmates' access to extracurriculars and high levels of parental involvement. She commented: "*It does make me want to have what they have...*" - but the distance between wanting and accessing remained intact. The promise of opportunity was visible, but unevenly reachable. Despite this, some students still found ways to succeed, often through the encouragement of specific educators. Even these moments were unevenly distributed, the reliance on individual teacher motivation to provide tailored support leads to unpredictability, leaving structurally disadvantaged students reliant on chance encounters rather than guaranteed pathways. In this way, educational support in Toronto schools functions less as a universal right and more as a site of structural negotiation, one that second-generation Caribbean youth must learn to navigate without the assurance of institutional reciprocity.

6.2.2 School Sorting

For most of the period in which these participants were educated, streaming in Ontario schools remained a powerful mechanism through which structural inequality was reproduced. Students were placed into academic or applied pathways beginning in Grade 9, a practice widely

critiqued for disproportionately channeling Black, Indigenous, and working-class students into lower-status tracks with reduced access to university-bound options (James, 2012). Although the provincial government announced plans in 2020 to end Grade 9 streaming and began de-streaming core courses such as mathematics in 2021, citing its discriminatory impacts, these reforms arrived well after many caregiver children had already navigated streamed systems and their long-term consequences. While officially presented as an ‘unbiased’ process of academic differentiation, tracking often followed racial, classed, and gendered lines, disproportionately placing Black and working-class students into applied or vocational pathways. As Carl James (2012) argues, streaming is not only a pedagogical decision; it is a spatial and ideological sorting practice that channels students toward or away from opportunity. These institutional choices are rarely explained transparently, yet their effects shape life trajectories in lasting ways. For the children of Caribbean caregivers, streaming often limited their access to university-track courses, reinforced narrow expectations about their potential, and pushed them toward labour-market positions that mirrored their mothers’ own subordinated roles. Jade recalls that:

“...in grade 10, guidance counsellors would kind of like try to persuade us girls into fashion and cosmetology.”

This steering, while subtle, is persistent and reveals how racialized and gendered assumptions are embedded within career guidance. Fashion and beauty, while legitimate fields, were not presented as one of many options but as the most “suitable” direction for Black girls from working-class backgrounds. James’ work has argued, these forms of soft tracking cloak constraint in the language of interest and practicality, effectively narrowing the academic field. For caregiver daughters like Jade, whose mother’s migration was explicitly framed as a sacrifice for her future, such tracking not only felt restrictive but misaligned with her broader ambitions

for mobility and professional recognition. For Kingston, streaming operated under the guise of support but carried the weight of stereotype. A teacher, having reviewed his strong academic performance, nonetheless pivoted to ask about sports and then suggested:

“if you need financial aid, there are plenty of opportunities in sports for people like me.”

The euphemism “people like me” functioned as a racial code, presuming not only economic precarity but a fixed cultural script that conflated Blackness with athletics. Kingston’s experience aligns with James’ (2012, p. 479) warning that “positive stereotyping masks racism,” often limiting Black students’ perceived academic breadth by casting them in roles that are valorized yet structurally constraining. Sports scholarships may seem empowering, but when they replace academic encouragement, they become a form of racial channeling. These are not isolated anecdotes but are what As Glick Schiller (2018) point out as, the spatial organization of schooling in Toronto, combined with informal guidance biases, leads to patterned outcomes in which racialized students are overrepresented in applied and vocational streams. Kasinitz et al. (2008) observe similar dynamics in New York, where immigrant-origin youth are pushed toward immediate employability rather than long-term academic ambition. In Toronto, the children of caregivers often internalized these placements not as reflections of ability, but as institutional expectations. This has profound implications, particularly when, as Anisef & Kilbride (2008). note, students placed in applied tracks face significant structural barriers to transferring into academic streams later on, even if they demonstrate capacity and interest. Streaming is thus a spatial technology of exclusion. For caregiver children, it meant carrying not only the weight of expectation, but also the burden of misrecognition, being seen through the lens of risk, deviance, or instrumentality rather than potential.

6.2.3 Interactions with School Leaders

The classroom is not just a space of learning; it is a spatiality where power, perception, and possibility are unevenly distributed. Schools are institutions shaped by the racialized, classed, and gendered logics that move through them. For second-generation Caribbean youth, teacher perception is entangled in structural inequalities. The encouragement or dismissal they encounter in the classroom is often filtered through expectations tethered to race, economic status, and presumed potential. These projections do more than shape how students see themselves; they contour the very futures they are taught to imagine as possible. As James (2012) reminds us, “the perception teachers have of students informs the level of attention, discipline, and support they receive, this affects long-term outcomes” (p. 476). Here, second-generation youth must learn to navigate the dissonance between who they know themselves to be and how they are perceived. Kingston recalls an encounter with a teacher who spoke with a complex mix of praise and racial assumption:

“In grade 12 Mrs. [...] pulled up my academic record and said I have really good grades. She told me to continue taking science classes. This made me feel good about myself... Then the conversation shifted from my academic interests to extracurriculars... She said what do you do for fun? I told her that I like sports and play basketball after school... She says well ‘if you need financial aid, there are plenty of opportunities in sports for people like me’... I thought what the heck!... She saw me as a Black kid... Why did she assume I needed financial aid? She didn’t have to say the word Black because playing sports on a scholarship meant the same thing.”

The encouragement Kingston received was not without cost. Though framed as supportive, the teacher’s suggestion reinforced a racialized pathway, one that mapped Black success through

athleticism rather than academic merit. As James (2012) warns, “positive stereotyping masks structural inequity,” and in Kingston’s case, the reference to sports-based scholarships reflected a subtle rerouting of possibility, away from science and toward a path more socially legible for Black youth (p. 479). Kelly (2014) similarly notes that second- generation immigrant youth often experience “occupational steering” from authority figures as a soft form of redirection that constrains aspiration by aligning it with perceived identity rather than actual interest or capacity.

Differently, Naomi’s experience illustrates how positive teacher engagement, free from stereotyping, can serve as a stabilizing force:

“I got along well with the teachers. I didn’t feel like they were treating me differently because of my skin. I remember being complimented on my writing abilities and [they] always helped me find ways to improve. I never felt like the comments were related to my race... Whenever I doubted myself, I remembered their words of encouragement.”

For Naomi, teacher validation was not predicated on racial identity or assumptions of disadvantage. Instead, it affirmed her strengths and supported her growth. This aligns with Lareau’s (2003) discussion of “emotional scaffolding,” the way adults, especially educators, can provide students with both confidence and direction when family resources are limited. In contexts where parents are stretched thin by caregiving labour, the role of teacher affirmation becomes even more central. Though, even balanced or friendly relationships with teachers do not always translate into educational engagement. Lloyd explains:

“Teachers liked my personality...I didn’t have any problems.”

When asked about the courses themselves, he reflects:

“I didn’t have much interest in what they were teaching...Having come from Guyana, I was already so connected to my culture. When I came here and started school I felt a bit of a culture shock. Many of the classes like history felt so... removed from my own culture.”

Lloyd’s disinterest in the curriculum was not due to a lack of intelligence or motivation, but to a disconnect between school content and lived experience. Basu (2004) emphasizes that when curriculum fails to reflect the cultural backgrounds of immigrant students, engagement suffers. The emotional stakes here are not just about liking school but about whether school feels like a place one belongs, a place where one’s knowledge, history, and identity matter. Together, these narratives underscore that teacher perception is never just about grades or behaviour; it is about recognition. Recognition of potential. Recognition of cultural belonging. Recognition of the ways structural inequity filters into everyday encouragement. In schools shaped by both care and containment, the perception of a child can either sharpen or silence their future.

6.2.4 Conclusion

In caregiver children’s narratives, school serves as an extension of home, of labour, of history; material manifestations shaped by the weight of what precedes it, histories of migration, care labour, and the slow sedimentation of racialized perception. For the children of Caribbean caregivers, the classroom is in motion; shaped by their mothers’ working hours, the neighbourhoods they live in, the assumptions teachers carry, and the absence of their stories from the curriculum. The participants guide this analysis: Jade, Lloyd, Anya, Kingston, Naomi, Chantale, and Kemar each offer distinct vantage points across the educational spectrum, from early high school alienation to post-secondary decisions shaped by economic constraint. What unites these stories is their everyday persistence. Even in systems designed to sort and stratify,

many caregiver children adapt, not because the system is fair, but because they have learned to navigate its uneven terrain. Within institutions not always built to affirm them, students still find moments that interrupt erasure. An encouraging teacher, a science course taken despite streaming expectations, or a writing compliment that lingers long after graduation, these are small but consequential disruptions that reveal the emotional and structural stakes of being seen. As James (2012) and Jiwani (1992) argue, schooling in Canada is embedded broader systems of inequality, but reflects the same racialized, classed, and gendered logics that determine who is affirmed and who is excluded.

6.3 Neighbourhoods

6.3.1 Perception and Childhood Experiences

If the home and school are the first two key spatialities shaping intergenerational (im)mobility, the neighbourhood forms the third major terrain. The neighbourhood forms mesh that holds them together, the local world within which caregiver children move between bedrooms, hallways, bus stops, and classrooms. Neighbourhoods serve as a backdrop for daily routines, but they also mark the boundaries of what feels possible. As Massey and Denton (1993) argue, segregation is the concentration of advantage and disadvantage across the city. Participants' accounts show how living under resourced or stigmatized areas, or moving daily through more affluent districts, shaped their aspirations, their sense of belonging, and the routes they felt were available. In a few cases, neighbourhood geographies compounded the constraints already present in the home. Families priced into particular pockets of Toronto found themselves surrounded by limited services and stretched infrastructures. Youth described areas where community centres were

underfunded, libraries were distant or overcrowded, and after school programs were thin. For some, this meant that homework help and extracurricular enrichment were a forty minute bus ride away rather than a walk around the corner. As Simmons and Anisef (2005) note, the uneven distribution of services across metropolitan regions is not accidental, it reflects broader patterns of state disinvestment and market driven development. For caregiver children, these patterns translated into evenings spent managing siblings in small apartments rather than joining clubs or tutoring programs in well-resourced neighbourhoods.

At the same time, there were participants moved through spaces that were wealthier than their own residential areas, attending schools in more affluent neighbourhoods through specialized programs or zoning anomalies. Jade's experience is emblematic here. She travelled into a more affluent area for high school, walking past detached houses, tree lined streets, and stores that signalled a tier of comfort and security that felt out of reach. In interview, she explained that being in that environment "made [her] want to have what they have" while also heightening her awareness of how hard her mother was working to keep them housed. The neighbourhood sharpened the emotional contrast between her mother's multiple jobs and the apparent ease of the families around her. Neighbourhood landscapes were therefore affective; amplifying feelings of pride, guilt, and determination. Neighbourhoods were also discussed in conversations about responsibility and return. Kingston recalls a teacher in his predominantly Black and working class area, Malvern, who tied his educational trajectory directly to place:

*"In grade 12 I met a supportive teacher who actually convinced me to get a job in teaching. We called her Ms. *****... We had conversations about my upbringing and the neighbourhood I grew up in (Malvern). She told me that I could set a good example and give back to the community if I got into education. She was Black too and had a similar upbringing...*

so it came from a good place.”

Here, Malvern forms a moral geography. That is, space, in this example, the neighbourhood is invoked as a site that needs examples and role models, a place marked as lacking and therefore in need of return. The moral obligation is placed on those inhabiting the space. Kingston appreciated her encouragement, yet he later reflected on the ambivalence of feeling responsible for “taking care” of an entire community through his career choices. His account echoes James’ (2017) observation that youth raised in marginalized neighbourhoods are often interpellated as future community saviours. This call to give back can be empowering, but it can also reproduce a burdened relation to place, where mobility is always partially tethered to obligation. Jade’s reflections on work and promotion further illuminate how neighbourhood and labour markets intersect. After high school, she worked in retail environments where she observed that “they gear a lot of women to fashion, beauty stuff, and retail” and that, in managerial roles, “mostly white people” were promoted while Black and brown workers “have to work super hard to get there.” These workplaces were often located in or near the same affluent neighbourhoods where she had gone to school. The spatial continuity mattered. The same malls and commercial strips that had once signalled future possibility now became sites where racialized labour was visible but rarely recognized as management material. This underlines how neighbourhood spaces participate in a longer arc that connects schooling, work, and racialized opportunity.

Across their narratives, neighbourhoods appear as layered geographies, places where youth glimpse alternate lives, shoulder community expectations, and navigate concentrated inequality. They shape daily travel, exposure to violence or safety, encounters with police or mentors, and the visibility of different careers and lifestyles. For caregiver children,

neighbourhoods are where the structural conditions of housing policy, labour markets, and municipal investment crystallize into the everyday. They are local worlds, but they are also structural boundaries, contouring the routes along which intergenerational mobility is either channelled or stalled.

6.4 Transnational Spaces

6.4.1 Here and There

The geographies of intergenerational (im)mobility in this study are scalar and exist both at the local and transnational levels. Many of the caregiver homes at the centre of this research were first formed through separation, with mothers leaving children in the Caribbean for months or years before reunification in Canada. These absences and returns are spatial experiences that reverberate through educational and emotional trajectories. As Parreñas (2005) and Hondagneu Sotelo (2001) argue, transnational families inhabit “stretched” social fields in which care circulates through remittances, phone calls, and promises of reunion, while physical intimacy is delayed.

Lloyd’s narrative makes this temporal and spatial stretching particularly clear. He recalls his mother’s initial departure in stark, affective terms:

“She left when I was so young.... She called and sent money. Knowing that I was taken care of financially was good but I would have much preferred having her there with me to watch me grow up... I remember feeling angry with her for years. I knew she left to provide for us but I felt

angry because it seemed like she left us. I feel differently now that I am older and have a greater understand for her sacrifice.”

This is a transnational geography of care marked by ambivalence. Money moves, care is expressed through provision, though absence is more vividly expressed than money received through remittances. Lloyd’s anger does not negate his understanding of sacrifice, rather, the two feelings coexist. In McKittrick’s terms, his emotional life is shaped by “unsurprising violences,” the normalized expectation that Black and Caribbean mothers will leave in order to support their families financially, and that children will absorb the emotional cost as an inevitable part of migration. Reunification did not automatically resolve these tensions. Lloyd describes the disorientation of adjusting to his mother’s physical presence after years apart:

“Sometimes it was like living with a stranger... you do not know the person because of the time you spent apart. My dad, aunt and uncle also parented me differently. They were more relaxed and my mom was more strict with homework and when I came home.”

Here, home is split across time and place. The Caribbean household where he first grew up, with his father, aunt, and uncle, had one set of routines and expectations. The Canadian home he joined later, with his mother now present and working long hours in caregiving and service jobs, had another. His mother’s stricter approach to homework and curfews can be read as an attempt to secure the educational mobility that underpinned her migration, but for Lloyd it also meant adjusting to a parent he did not fully know. Transnational separation thus reshaped educational governance. Rules around study, attendance, and time are refracted through the guilt and urgency that follow years of sacrifice. The transnational histories in this study also intersect with later

turning points. When Lloyd's mother became ill and had to stop working, he describes stepping into paid work more fully and leaving school:

“No... my mom became sick and she had to stop working for a while. She was our sole supporter so I picked up more hours and dropped out. Right now, I am one of the managers at the McDonalds location that I work at but I wanted to move up even higher in the company, education helps you with that.”

His decision to drop out was a cumulative outcome of a transnational life course. A childhood shaped by mother absence and later reunion is followed by a young adulthood where he becomes the primary earner when her body can no longer withstand the labour that migration demanded. The risk and cost of migration thus reappear in his educational record. His truncated schooling and subsequent work trajectory are inseparable from the earlier geography of separation and remittance.

Other participants did not experience the same depth of transnational separation, but still inhabited stretched familial fields. Some, like Anya, pursued college programs that were explicitly framed as safe and practical, in part because of family memories of poverty in the Caribbean and the precariousness of their current status in Canada. Decisions to study personal support work rather than art were influenced by familial finances but, also in a longer transnational consciousness of risk; where economic instability in one country shadows choices in another. In this sense, educational pathways are saturated with “social remittances” (Levitt, 1998), the ideas and fears that travel alongside money.

Transnational geographies therefore form a fourth layer in this chapter's account of spatialized (im)mobility. They are less visible than neighbourhood boundaries or classroom

streaming, but no less powerful. Separation, reunion, and ongoing obligations to family “back home” shape how youth interpret their responsibilities, their acceptable risks, and the timelines by which they ought to succeed. For the children of caregivers, the future is never only Canadian. It is always measured against the sacrifices that made migration possible, the relatives who remained in the Caribbean, and the promise that their own movement might someday return care across borders. Taken together, home, school, neighbourhood, and transnational fields form an intertwined geography of intergenerational (im)mobility.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

Caregiver families narrate their educational and employment trajectories, and how their experiences are shaped by the urban spatial contexts, that structure life in Toronto. Drawing on six parent-child dyads and one caregiver child narrative, my research has explored the outcomes of the next generation, and has emphasized that intergenerational lives are complex formations at the intersection of their social, historical, and geographic conditions, associated with caregiver migration to Canada. The findings illustrate how labour programs such as the Foreign Domestic Movement and later the Live in Caregiver Program generated forms of precarity that extended far beyond the initial migration period. These programs anchored Caribbean women in low wage, low status sectors, often in live-in arrangements that constrained mobility and autonomy. Scholars such as Bakan and Stasiulis (1994), Tungohan (2018), and Parreñas (2001) have documented the gendered and racialized labour regimes underpinning these programs, and the narratives in this study affirm that these structures continue to shape household life, mothering practices, and the emotional and material inheritances transferred to children.

The work also showcases the centrality of place in shaping the experiences of the next generation. Toronto's neighbourhoods, schools, and labour markets operate as layered geographies that can either facilitate or restrict opportunity. Naomi's access to a well-resourced school near Lawrence Park created a context in which her academic potential was recognized early and nurtured through consistent institutional support. By contrast, Chantale's experience in Jane and Finch and her initial placement in a school that responded to her accent with ridicule revealed the persistent inequities documented by James (2012) and Kelly (2014). These spatialized differences reflect broader structures of racialization, class stratification, and urban inequality that have long shaped how Caribbean youth are perceived and positioned within the

city. The narratives collected here align with research by Reitz (2001: 2002) and Dei (1999:2007), underscoring that schooling is a site where belonging, competence, and future possibility are negotiated.

Across the parent-child pairs, participants described their academic and professional achievements as inherently relational. Their opportunities were tied to what their mothers endured, what their mothers managed to secure, and what their mothers refused to relinquish. This confirms Boyd's (2002) observation that the mobility of the next generation is frequently framed through the moral economy of sacrifice, where children understand their accomplishments as intertwined with the labour that made those accomplishments possible. At the same time, the stories complicate assumptions that migration automatically yields upward mobility. Kemar's managerial success, Kingston's journey into teaching, Chantale's entry into the care sector, and Naomi's professional role in nursing all illustrate different pathways shaped through a combination of structural constraints, institutional encounters, neighbourhood histories, and intergenerational support.

Together, these findings deepen ongoing discussions in migration and urban geography about how families navigate the uneven terrain of incorporation. The dyads show that mobility is shaped as much by emotional and relational inheritances as by structural ones. They reveal how the long workdays, the precarious jobs, the neighbourhood moves, and the daily acts of provision performed by Caribbean caregiver mothers created infrastructures of stability that their children then extended in new directions. The intergenerational practices observed affirm what scholars such as McKittrick (2006) and Walcott (2003) describe as the creative and strategic ways Black and Caribbean communities forge life within oppressive conditions. They build futures by drawing from histories marked by colonialism, displacement, and racial capitalism, yet their

lives resist reduction to injury alone. They assemble possibility through persistence, resourcefulness, and care.

While the research has produced significant findings; it is not without limitations. Four key limitations of the research were identified. First, the sample size of the research is very small, consisting of only 6 caregiver/child dyads and one solo adult child (thirteen individuals) and therefore cannot be considered representative of all Caribbean caregivers in Canada. Therefore, the results of the research will be able to describe the relationships within a specific group of caregivers in a specific location; however, they will not be generalizable across all caregivers in Canada. Second, there is also a potential for sampling bias and self-selection because participants in this study were recruited using snowball techniques through community networks. It is reasonable to assume that the participants in this study would tend to be the ones who are more involved, reflective and willing to discuss their experiences. Therefore, the experiences of caregiver families who have been isolated and experiencing crises, or fear participating in a research study, may not be well represented in the stories of caregiver families in this study. Third, the geographic focus of this study is on Toronto, which limits the geographic applicability of the findings of this study to other cities and regions of Canada. Although Toronto was chosen as the site of this study due to its large number of Caribbean migrant communities in Canada, the narratives about the experiences of caregiver families living in Toronto may not accurately reflect the experiences of caregiver families in other cities, including Montreal, Vancouver, and others. Finally, while being a member of the same ethnic group and having a similar family history and emotional world as the participants helped create trust and allow for the development of a rich and deep level of detail, I am aware that my own positionality and perspective will also affect the interpretation of the data. While I have attempted to maintain an

objective view of the data, I recognize that my lens as a researcher is influenced by factors related to my education, my commitment to social justice, the constraints of time and scope, etc., and therefore my interpretation of the data, as it is presented here, is just one of many possible interpretations of the data.

In essence, the research in this thesis demonstrates that the stories of Caribbean caregiver families are central to understanding how contemporary forms of labour, migration, and urban inequality coalesce. Their narratives reveal the layered geographies that shape opportunity in Toronto and highlight the need for policy frameworks that acknowledge the long-term consequences of care worker programs on family life. The study offers an empirical foundation for further work that examines moves beyond economic and educational outcomes but the emotional, spatial, and relational processes through which those outcomes emerge. In documenting these intergenerational journeys, the thesis contributes to a broader recognition of Caribbean caregivers and their children as knowledge holders whose lived experiences illuminate the complex politics of belonging and mobility in urban Canada. Their stories challenge linear narratives of success and instead foreground the entanglements of sacrifice, aspiration, and structural constraint that shape the children of Caribbean caregivers. They remind us that mobility is negotiated across time, across borders, and across the intimate geographies of home, school, neighbourhood, and transnational relations.

Appendices

Appendix A: Consent Form

Date:

Study name: Spaces of socioeconomic mobility? Educational trajectories and employment outcomes among the children of Caribbean caregivers in Toronto.

Researcher name:

My name is Cindy Maharaj, and I am a 2nd year Master's student in Geography at York University. I am the Principal investigator of this research project. Should you have any questions, I can be reached at: cmaharaj@my.yorku.ca

Purposed of the Research:

The main purpose of the research is to explore the primary factors shaping the education and employment outcomes of the children of Caribbean caregivers in Toronto. To explore this question, I will be conducting semi-structured life history interviews. The findings will be written up and presented as a Master's Thesis.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:

I will be asking you to answer a series of questions and thereby to construct a life history for me. The interview will take approximately for 1-hour. I will also ask to interview your [parent / adult child].

Risks and Discomforts:

I do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in the research. However, if at any time you are uncomfortable with the questions, you are free to discontinue the interview.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:

By participating in this project, you will be given a platform to narrate your lived experience and produce knowledge about your experience as [a/the child of a] caregiver in Toronto and the experience of your family.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer, to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions will not influence the nature of the ongoing relationship you may have with the researchers or study staff, or the nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

If you decide to stop participating, you may withdraw without penalty, financial or otherwise. In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible. Should you wish to withdraw after the study, you will have the option to also withdraw your data up until the analysis is complete.

Confidentiality:

Unless you choose otherwise, all information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research.

The interview will be recorded using an audio recorder. Your data will be safely stored in a locked filing cabinet and all files stored on my laptop will be password protected and only I will have access to this information. The data will be stored indefinitely in electronic form.

Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law. All names will be anonymized using pseudonyms. The data collected in this research project may be used – in an anonymized form - by me in subsequent research investigations exploring similar lines of inquiry. Such projects will still undergo ethics review by the HPRC, our institutional REB. Any secondary use of anonymized data by the research team will be treated with the same degree of confidentiality and anonymity as in the original research project.

Questions About the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact me at cmaharaj@my.yorku.ca or my supervisor, Dr Philip Kelly at pfkelly@yorku.ca and/or 416-736-2100 Ext: 66194. You may also contact the Graduate Program in Geography at geoggrad@yorku.ca and/or 416-736-5106.

This research has received ethics review and approval by the Delegated Ethics Review Committee, which is delegated authority to review research ethics protocols by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board, and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, Kaneff Tower, York University (telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca).

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____ consent to participate in '*Spaces of Socioeconomic Mobility? Educational trajectories and employment outcomes among the children of Caribbean caregivers in Toronto*' conducted by Cindy Maharaj. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature

Date

Participant

Signature

Date

Principal Investigator

Additional consent (where applicable)

1. **Audio recording**

- ☐ I consent to the audio-recording of my interview(s).

Signature:

Date:

Participant: (name)

Appendix B: Interview Schedules

I. Caregivers

Background Information

- I. When did you immigrate to Canada?
- II. Which Caribbean Island did you come from?
- III. Did you have any children at the time?
 - a. If yes, ask if mother came to Canada with the child and about any issues of separation. Find out child's place of birth, year of birth, and gender.
 - b. If no, ask where child was born, year of birth, and gender.
- IV. What motivated your decision to come to Canada?
 - a. Political reasons? Financial circumstances? Familial? Personal interest?
- V. How did you find out about the Canadian caregiver program?
 - a. Friends? Family? The Canadian government? The Caribbean government? Advertisements? Employment agencies?

Experience As a Caregiver

- I. Tell me about your experience as a caregiver
 - a. Working conditions? Relationship with employer? Any leisure time? Social ties while caregiving? Support systems (i.e. racial-ethnic communities)?

Labour Market Integration After Caregiving

- I. After working as a caregiver, how did you find out about work opportunities?
 - a. Social networks? Your previous employer? Neighbourhood advertisements?
- II. Did you face any employment barriers after caregiving?
 - a. Unrecognized foreign credentials? Discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, class, etc.?
- III. What kind of work did you do?
 - a. Which sector? Precarious work vs stable work? Hours worked? Benefits? Have you continued in a similar sector?

Work and Family Life

- I. How did you manage the balance between work and family time when your child was growing up?
- II. What types of activities did you do with your child?
 - a. Leisure activities? Programs outside of school? Was time or money a factor?
- III. Were you involved with school related activities?
 - a. Meetings? Homework? Extra-curricular activities?
- IV. Were there any major family events that affected your child's upbringing and educational trajectories?
 - a. Death of a family member? Unemployment? Marital separation?

Education and Employment Outcomes of Children

- I. What factors do you think shaped the educational pathway that your child followed?
 - a. Finances? Family circumstances?

- II. How was their educational pathway affected by the specific schools they went to?
- III. Did you feel that they got the support they needed at school?
- IV. How was their educational pathway affected by the neighbourhoods you lived in while they were growing up?
- V. What kind of work does your child do?
- VI. What do you think shaped their choice of work/career?
- VII. Do you see any general patterns in terms of the educational pathways or career choices among the children of other domestic workers?
- VIII. How do you feel that your work as a ##### shaped the educational pathway that they followed?

Closing

- I. Have I left anything out?
- II. Is there anything else that you would like to say before we conclude the interview?

2. Caregiver Children

Background Information

- I. When and where were you born?
- II. If interviewee was not born in Canada, ask when they came to Canada.

Growing Up/Family Life

- I. I know that your mom came here as a caregiver; what kind of work did she do afterwards?
- II. Growing up, did you spend a lot of time with your family?
 - a. Types of activities with family? Parental availability?
- III. Were your parents involved with school related activities?
 - a. Attendance at school related events? Helping with homework? Extra-curricular activities? Was time a factor?
- IV. What were your responsibilities to your family growing up?
 - a. Chores? Taking care of siblings? Caring for the home? Impact of responsibilities on school performance?
- V. Were there any major family events that affected your child's upbringing and educational trajectories?
 - a. Death of a family member? Unemployment? Marital separation?
- VI. Did you have any role models or mentors growing up?

Education and Employment Outcomes

- I. What factors do you think shaped the educational pathway that you followed?
- II. Reasons for staying and/or leaving school? Finance? Family circumstances? Highest level of education completed?
- III. How was your educational pathway affected by the specific schools you attended?
- IV. Did you feel that you got the support you needed at school?

- a. Experience with teachers? Guidance counsellors? Accepted by peers? Courses available? Post-secondary pathways?
- V. Do you think that your social characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, or class impacted the way you were treated at school?
- VI. How was your educational pathway affected by the neighbourhoods you lived in while you were growing up?
 - a. Neighbourhood demography? How others perceive childhood neighbourhood? Treatment based on childhood neighbourhood? Racial profiling? Experiences with police: positive or negative?
- VII. What types of resources were available in your childhood neighbourhood?
 - a. Programs? Employment?
- VIII. What kind of work do you do?
 - a. Sector? Full-time? Self-employed? Precarious work?
- IX. What do you think shaped your choice of work/career?
- X. How did you learn about employment opportunities?
- XI. Do you see any general patterns in terms of the educational pathways or career choices among the children of other domestic workers?
- XII. How do you feel that your mother's work as a ##### shaped the educational pathway that you followed?
- XIII. Have I left anything out?
- XIV. Is there anything else that you would like to say before we conclude the interview?

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