

Neither Here nor There: Exploring the Transnational Identity of West African Migrants living in South Africa

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award of the degree of Master of Arts in International Relations



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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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DEDICATION

“So, here you are
too foreign for home
too foreign for here.
Never enough for both.”

- Ijeoma Umebinyuo, Questions for Ada

I dedicate this dissertation to the youth of the African diaspora, for those who seek to find a place amongst the external and internal displacement. This work is my minor contribution to the innate universal human desire to find belonging.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
AOF	Afrique Occidentale Française
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease of 2019
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NYSC	National Youth Service Corps
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
SAPS	South African Police Service
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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ABSTRACT

Transnationalism as a theory has explained the causal nature of migration over time, against the backdrop of an ever-changing globalised world. The movement of people and their motivating factors have been deeply researched within migration literature and other surrounding fields. However, the intricacies of transnationalism among migrants have remained fairly unexplored, with little being written specifically on the topic of intersecting identities and othering experienced by transnational migrants.

In South Africa, xenophobia has been a strong issue connected to migrants, whereby those from other African countries face discrimination based on their nationality, ethnicity, and economic disparities. However, there is a dearth in understanding how othering as a concept manifests beyond the overt forms of violence, and how it links to systemic forms of exclusion.

The term 'West-a-phobia' explores a more specific phenomenon of xenophobia, whereby West African migrants living in South Africa face discrimination based on specific national, cultural, and economic characteristics of their identity. By using this concept, and by providing the historical context of othering, this dissertation explores transnational identities through unpacking concepts such as 'othering', 'transnationalism', 'identity', and critiquing the nation-state. A qualitative approach was implemented by interviewing six respondents residing in Cape Town and Stellenbosch, South Africa. Respondents' contributions were collected via online response sheets and face-to-face interviews from August to November 2019. This was followed by critical analysis and concluded with evidence-based nuances surrounding the intersecting tenets of the aforementioned concepts. The key findings from this study conclude that West African migrants that have lived in South Africa over a certain period of time experience a lack of cohesion and integration into society. This takes place through processes of othering through physical differentiation and cultural characteristics. Furthermore, West African migrants maintain a connection to their country of origin through engaging in what Crush and MacDonald (2000) characterises as transnational activities. Finally, this study concludes that there are stratified layers to the conceptualisation of citizenship, and that the qualitative research done corroborates with certain aspects of transnationalism theory.

Keywords: identity; migrant; nation-state; othering; transnationalism; West-a-phobia

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background on the Study

Internal, intra-regional and international migration take place within diverse political and socio-economic contexts in Africa. The impact of migration had varying implications depending on specific national contexts. African countries are experiencing challenges and opportunities relating to migration, such as the brain-drain phenomenon, diaspora links with countries of origin, and the issue of remittances from within and outside of Africa. Pressure placed on formulating cohesive national and regional migration policies is further fuelled by unstable political climates, different types of regional conflict, and rapidly growing populations. Africa is projected to have the largest population growth rate over the next 15 years, increasing from 1.19 to 1.68 billion (United Nations, 2020). The predominant approach to researching migration in Africa often focuses on a top-down approach and fails to address nuanced contemporary struggles and challenges. The nature of national borders has become increasingly porous, transcending dated notions of sovereignty, and belonging with a state. There is a need to provide insight into how displacement, movement and replacement can create new forms of political consciousness and identity amongst individuals in an increasingly globalised world.

However, against the backdrop of globalisation and increased interconnectedness, contemporary political agendas acknowledge the mobilising power of identity. Although globalisation is an example of overlapping complexities surrounding the identity of people, there are still rigid definitions kept in place to gatekeep access to resources, or to furthermore define a migrant's access by how they are placed within national hierarchies of importance. High barriers to naturalisation exist when governments want to ensure that people remain long-term non-citizens and are removed when they want to increase the population numbers (Boccagni, Lafleur & Levitt, 2016:446). As a result, marginalised outsiders fall into different categories defined by state apparatus or international organisations, yet there is a theme of commonality amongst groups of people that are distinguished as being the 'other'; retaining an old or pre-existing identity in a new environment is integral to maintaining social capital and networks. Migrants or those in diaspora within diasporic formations are "more likely to develop complex affiliations, meaningful attachments and dual or multiple allegiances to issues, people, places and traditions that lie beyond the boundaries of the resident nation-state" (Cohen, 2004:7).

Building on this sentiment, West Africans in South Africa are a prominent example that fits into the description of diasporic formations and movement. Since the early 1990s there has been an increasing movement of foreign migrants (particularly from the West African sub-region into South Africa). Increasing tension amongst African foreigners and South Africans has been noted through different attacks over a scattered timeline. It has also been widely acknowledged by different think-tanks and International Government Organisations, that xenophobia in South Africa is an issue of concern. Research conducted by the South African Migration Project (SAMP), and the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) noticed a considerable growth of hostility and negative sentiments expressed towards foreign migrants (Minnar & Hough, 1996). SAMP noted in their focus groups on research conducted as recent as 2014 that respondents “across race and class lines tied migrants to all sorts of social problems, including unemployment, crime, housing shortages and poor service delivery”. South African attitudes to migrants and refugees indicate that there is a level of societal conditioning that perpetuates othering.

1.2 Research Aims and Objectives

This dissertation aims to analyse the intersecting identities of West African migrants in host communities within the South African context. To achieve this, transnationalism as a theory will be tested as to whether it correlates or differentiates from the qualitative data. A deeper exploration into the history of othering, migration in the African and South African context will be discussed, along with re-examining conceptualisations on integration within the nation-state. This will be done to understand the nuances, patterns, behaviours within transnational migration, and understand how people’s identity interweave amongst it all.

The objectives of this dissertation are listed as follows:

1. Conduct a literature review on key concepts such as ‘migration’, ‘migrants’, ‘othering’, and ‘transnationalism’ to create a theoretical framework for analysis.
2. Interview West African migrants living in South Africa.
3. Contribute to the studies conducted on West-a-phobia, building on the term coined by Petkou’s research done in 2005 on West African migrants living in Johannesburg, South Africa.

1.3 Main Research Question

Using key conceptual frameworks established through a comprehensive literature review, this research will be addressing the following question:

How does West African migrants' identity interplay with transnational migration in the South African context?

1.4 Significance of Research

The following research conducted in this dissertation will:

- Contribute to the existing literature of transnationalism concerning identity.
- Contribute to the existing literature on West African migrants living in South Africa, with a specific focus on those who have lived in the country for a longer period, and voluntary migrants.
- Add to critique on South Africa's stance on migration by applying a historical lens to understanding contemporary challenges surrounding processes of othering.
- Provide qualitative research based on the experience of West African migrants living in South Africa to further expand on transnationalism as a theoretical framework.

1.5 Literature Review

Migration literature spans across a multitude of academic fields within the social sciences, ranging from Sociology, Anthropology, Law, Political Science, International Relations, and Economics. The advantage of applying a transdisciplinary approach is a cumulative deeper understanding of the historical context, and concepts being brought forward. This literature review will look at the history of migration, its definitions, and transnational migration. This will then be followed by a three-part breakdown of identity concerning national, economic, ethical, and cultural factors. A brief definition of West African migrants will be provided within the South African context, justifying the selection of this demographic for this dissertation.

1.4.1 Historical Context of Migration

Hollifield (2004) studied the effects of migration during the post-World War II era: a time of economic restructuring and the 20th century boom of migrant labour. His article highlights key components as to how migration was seen as a threat to national security and the ability to disrupt how states identified their population and created the distinction between who belonged and who did not. Migration can change the ethnic composition of societies, as the movement of individuals not only becomes a key feature of the global economy but a redefining characteristic of nations. Opportunities for migrants in other countries are rising due to the growing demand for highly skilled workers along with an increase in transnational networks. At the same time, this creates a need for a regulated, organised means of migration facilitated by states willing to prioritise the civil rights of the individual. However, as Cohen (2004:111) points out, this interpretation of migration is tied closely to the neoclassical theory of international trade that is predominantly concerned with the movement of goods, and less about the movement of capital or labour across national boundaries. Furthermore, his definition fails to address contemporary contexts and multiple factors that contribute to migration, and this is where the work of Levitt (2010) falls into place. Chapter 2 will deal with a more rigorous definition of migration within the African context.

1.4.2 Transnational Migration

Levitt (2010) delves into understanding transnationalism beyond prioritising the nation-state as the main framework. The nature of her work deals primarily with transnational migration and the ongoing discussions of its significance throughout the literature. Most of her arguments form part of a larger critique of the nation-state and the construction of national borders. This affects how one defines identity and provides a one-dimensional approach to understanding transnational processes and cross-border dynamics. As mentioned in the introduction, national narratives around who belongs and who does not are codified through measures and barriers put in place regarding naturalisation (Boccagni, Lafleur & Levitt, 2016:446). The state apparatus in turn, uses migration as a tool to serve geopolitical interests. As a result, this power structure influenced early work on migrant transnationalism, as contested space has implications for the conceptualisation of transnational activities over time (King & Collyer, 2016:186).

This in turn influences a migrant's relationship to their home country and their relationship to their host country. Going beyond this exchange allows more than a fixed unit of analysis, and

transnational migration is looking at social relations, cultural exchanges, and social geographies. Beyond this, from a theoretical perspective, one would look at multiple explanations and interpretations that do not rely on overstated arguments surrounding reasons for integration. Through her definition of transnational migration, Levitt (2010) also challenges the notion of focusing solely on the experience of migrants. To have a more comprehensive understanding, it is important to look at everyone who exists within a shared socio-political space, as they are multi-layered and multi-dimensional (Levitt, 2010).

1.4.3 Definition of ‘Migrant’ and Processes of Migration

For the sake of this dissertation, it is important to define what one means by ‘migrant’ taking into consideration the different explanations of migration. The use of the term ‘migrant’ for this dissertation will be used according to the definition of Anderson (2010:301), referring to people regardless of their length of stay, rather than distinguishing between ‘immigrants’ and ‘migrants’. Migrant as an umbrella term refers to people moving, and applying a transnational lens implies that migrants should be understood as forming part of two or more dynamically intertwined worlds. Therefore, transnationalism can be defined as “the process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement” (Basch, Schiller & Blanc, 1994:8). The focal point of defining a migrant relates to the nature of their transnational lives, either as an individual, part of a collective, or both. This gives people the scope to decide to what extent they belong and exist based on options beyond home and host communities (Levitt, 2010).

There are three identifiable processes of migration. This includes forced-voluntary, skilled-unskilled, and temporary-permanent (Van Hear, 2010). These groupings were consolidated by highlighting two underlying factors: reasons people migrate and, secondly, the patterns and conditions of movement.

i. Forced-voluntary Migration

This dichotomy can refer to conflict-related migration, and the spectrum of whether the choice to migrate was voluntary or not. A definition of voluntary means “acted by choice, with free will and without compulsion” (Erdal & Oeppen, 2018:985). A choice becomes voluntary when it is made in the context of acceptable alternatives, or the lack of alternatives is acceptable to the person making the choice (Erdal & Oeppen, 2018:986). The example best used to understand forced migration, are those that are defined as refugees.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 1979), the term refugee refers to:

“...every person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination, or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of origin or nationality”.

The UNHCR’s definition provides a broadly acceptable template for understanding forced migration through a security lens (Adelman, 2001:8).

Within the African context, this definition was ratified through the 1969 Organisation of African Unity (OAU)’s Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (1969 Convention). The period in which this ratification occurred was when many African countries were experiencing some form of internal conflict; this could be traced to struggles against colonialism (Okello, 2014). The 1969 Convention focused primarily on standardising the treatment of refugees fleeing their country of origin, for whom their reasons for leaving were due to political oppression as opposed to economic adversaries. It also helped to contextualise the treaty with United Nations’ 1951 Convention, aiming to solve the refugee problem according to continental issues surrounding security, subversive activities within refugee host states and the question of whether ‘freedom fighters’ could be classified as refugees (Wood, 2014). In this case, refugees can be classified as forced migrants, however, the subsequent choices make the forced-voluntary dichotomy more of a spectrum.

Erdal and Oeppen (2018:994) recognise this spectrum, by stating that from a bureaucratic perspective, defining migrants according to collective definitions creates definitional discrepancies for the sake of maintaining certain interests of different actors. Labelling migrants according to whether their displacement was forced or voluntary greatly impacts how their experience is viewed themselves and by outsiders of the process. Consequently, there is the risk of polarising extremities, which fail to give a nuanced perspective on the reasons why people migrate.

ii. Skilled-unskilled Migration

Skilled-unskilled migration links to earlier definitions of migration, by defining one’s contribution to the labour market through occupational skills or education levels, or both (International Labour Organisation [ILO], 2019). According to the ILO (2019), there is no set

definition of the term ‘skills’, as there is no singular methodology for skill analysis. In a context of economic globalisation characterised by complex flows of skilled and unskilled migrants, the differentiation on types of migration appears to be a challenge for researchers.

Kugler, Levintal and Rapoport (2018) provide insight into the characteristics of a skilled migrant using the financial sector as an example. They mention the skills required, such as high cognitive abilities, in-depth knowledge of their home country’s economy, and ability to gain new knowledge whilst being a liaison or reference to reach out for potential business in their home country. As a result, countries favour skilled migrants over unskilled migrants due to their critical skills in the form of human capital. Consequently, governments are less prone to favour the legal entry of lower-skilled migrants (Czaika & de Haas, 2015:317).

Unskilled migrants, or synonymously known as low-skilled migrants represent a large fraction of employment in services. They are often the most vulnerable to exploitative recruitment practices and fill labour intensive jobs that national workers are reluctant to perform. These are what Benach et al. (2011) define as ‘3-D’ jobs; dangerous, dirty, and degrading.

The tension between skilled and unskilled migrants can further be problematised. Migrants from poorer countries face higher levels of constraint and may not have international accreditation to practice their professions abroad. In certain cases, ‘unskilled’ migrants are overqualified for the jobs they have in host countries. These intangible barriers can be classified as *de facto* migration barriers (Czaika & de Haas, 2015). Government’s migration policies are skill-selective and driven by motivations for national development that fail to centre the experiences and needs of incoming migrants. On the other hand, government migration policies can encourage emigration, whereby their citizens become migrants. In the developing world, transnational migration is seen as a means for upward social and economic mobility. Countries such as the Philippines have a culture of emigration; there is a promotion of labour exportation from the government, and Filipino migrants’ remittance income provides an important contribution to national revenue (Cohen, 2004:172).

iii. Temporary-permanent Migration

Temporary migration is migration to a country that is not intended to be permanent and is for a specific or a limited amount of time, typically for a definite purpose (Foulkes, 2015). It is “any form of territorial movement which does not represent a permanent, or lasting, change of usual residence” (Bell & Ward, 2000:88). Permanent migration is defined as a permanent

change of residence, with no intention to return. The duration of migration is linear, and a single transition means there are little to no seasonal variations (Bell & Ward, 2000:90).

Analytical tools of migration are in tune to quantitative understandings of mobility, and therefore makes it easier to provide data on this form of migration. This is due to quantitative migration literature concentrating predominantly on patterns of migration according to spatial factors, and the implications it has on economic and social indicators. However, the nature of temporary and permanent migration is not homogenous and requires one to apply a transnational lens to broaden the definitions and allow for nuances in understanding a migrant's experiences and relationships with certain indicators.

Those that fall on the spectrum of temporary and permanent migration may classify as return or relay migrants and have a mixed experience of migration. According to Durand (2011:77), relay migration is the result of the combination of various internal and international migratory processes. Arizpe (1980) utilised this term to describe the migration that occurs amongst families as a strategy for survival and economic diversification. However, the context of Durand's work was built on reinterpretations of Arizpe's findings, which was based on the migrant experience of Latin American countries such as Mexico and Puerto Rico in the late 20th century. Furthermore, their methods of theorisation were from an anthropological approach to understanding migration. This means that this definition of return and relay migration may require contextualisation according to the research objectives and specific differentiating factors that motivate migration in the African context.

1.4.4 Identity

Identity provides a space to exchange and share aspects of commonly shared attributes. This can be based on different factors, such as place of origin, cultural and linguistic traits, along with participation in socio-cultural activities. From a migrant's perspective, identity can be utilised in different ways. Building on the previous discussions on migration, this section will look closer at the concept of identity, and how it is defined according to national, economic, ethical, and cultural factors.

i. National Identity

National identity is often used interchangeably with political identity, as the conceptualisation of the nation-state is intrinsically tied to political processes. The definition of political identity can be construed as "political units (nation, state, town, and region), geographic areas and groups to which one feels they belong to, that are in some significant subjective sense a part of

his own social identity; in particular, these include those units and groups to which he feels a strong loyalty, obligation or duty” (Xiaomei & Shimin, 2014:160). Political identity can either be interpreted as inclusive or exclusive, whereby the latter relies on the state implementing “forcible assimilation in language, religion, ethnicity, and culture” (Xiaomei & Shimin, 2014:161).

In a national political system, identity is essentially expressed as an individual members’ recognition and approval of political systems and cultural institutions based upon a common culture, including their perceptions, emotions and judgements relating to political participation. This coincides with the definition of citizenship, as an individual acknowledged in relation to the state. Therefore, the state’s political identity has the potential to become a confirmation of an individual’s political legitimacy, as their interests are systematically represented. There are two ways to quantify political identity; political participation and homogenous value consciousness. Political participation can be mechanised as a qualitative indicator for the relationship between the individual and the state. This is due to the multiple indirect ways the individual can interact with the state and can either build or negate the potential capacity for which to be embedded into structural norms. A lack of identification to the nation-state or its operating branches of mechanisation can indicate weak political will amongst the public, but also a lack of an overarching political identity.

Within the context of African countries, national identity has its own applicable definition. Following the independence from former colonial powers in the late 20th century, newly elected governments were tasked with not only ensuring economic growth but the promotion of a new national identity. The nation-building project across the continent has common challenges of national parties attempting to unify a broadly multi-ethnic society into one community through national political integration (Keller, 2014). Yet, to dismantle the embedded intricate societal structures prevalent in the numerous ethnic groupings and to assimilate into a unified homogenous state structure has proven to be complex. The shift from colonial powers’ administrative systems to contemporary Western political institutions had little effect in ensuring the accurate representation of vast forms of African polity and governance. As a result, ethnic identities have played a major factor in varying contestations around who has rights to claim legitimate inclusion and access in the postcolonial state (Keller, 2014:6), without a transformation of the systems to reflect historic contextual dynamics.

ii. Economic Identity

Economic identity can influence a migrant's motivations to relocate, such as access to better jobs, opportunities, and resources.

Economic identity can be understood through markers such as income, and decisions relating to monetary dispensation. This classification can be critiqued, as neoliberal capitalism frames an individual's value according to their socio-economic contribution. This is often used as a means of justifying the isolation of certain groups of people from accessing political autonomy, citizenship and additionally their integration into a community. Migrants' experiences vary, as those that would be deemed highly skilled and have lived in a host country long enough to acclimatise to the socio-economic context would have faced lesser barriers than low-skilled migrants. This distinction is also reflected in the literature, as the discussion surrounding the economic migrant's experience focuses on the impact that transcultural capital has in generating new forms of entrepreneurship and development (Banda and Adetomokun, 2015:98).

Neoliberal economic policies within a competitive global market highlight the multifaceted developmental issues and challenges for Africa. Yet, developed and developing countries alike end up facing what Hollifield (2004:887) terms a 'liberal paradox', where the economic liberal reasoning to open up borders to facilitate free trade contradicts the concurrent immigration policies that aim to stunt regulated migration into the country. The justification of implementing immigration is to prevent a dramatic changing of the ethnic composition of its societies and an avert potential political backlash. Therefore, a migrant's economic identity is seen as imperative to determining their desirability to the country they are immigrating to, along with the communities they find themselves located in.

An example within a migrant's economic identity is the role of remittances as a global resource. Remittances are widely understood as monetary flows from a host country to a home country initiated by migrants. They are part of a "private welfare system that transfers purchasing power from relatively richer to relatively poorer members of a family, or a community" (Gupta, Pattillo & Wagh, 2009:105). Remittances are utilised for financial consumption, or to contribute towards the development of human capital – in the form of investments in education, health, and better nutrition. Data suggest that individuals with higher levels of skills and recognised education tend to send greater remittances compared to lower-skilled individuals.

However, this may fluctuate due to multiple factors, such as whether migrants are documented and have access to financial structures, or whether individuals are incentivised to invest in their home communities. Home countries' ties are not necessarily quantifiable solely by monetary means, yet the depth of remittances can influence a migrant's economic identity. Career choices are made to leverage higher income and generate more capital that can be shared with immediate family or invested in home countries. Such investment can contribute to developing infrastructures in migrants' home communities; this includes building or renovating public spaces, providing healthcare, and developing youth programmes. Some of these structures can create space for knowledge capital to be diffused and contribute positively to community development and empowerment.

Furthermore, diaspora in host countries can develop solidarity platforms to mobilise socio-economic resources and practicalize contributions made to home communities. This support system amongst migrants creates a larger impact beyond an individual's contribution. Remittances are another aspect of migrant's economic identity and play a significant role in connecting migrants over ethnic and cultural differences towards the betterment of home communities. It enables migrants to take on a new form of economic citizenship, in which highly skilled labourers are given a wider range of options in terms of mobility and access to different nation-states, and do not rely on a nation-state for guidance or stability (Obadare & Adebani, 2009:511).

iii. Ethnic and Cultural Identity

Contestations around ethnic and cultural identity are happening against a backdrop of an increasingly globalised world, whereby social and cultural barriers formed nationally are falling away for a global cultural identity. Ethnic groupings are more likely to cross borders than be geographically located in one country. Keller (2014) describes socio-cultural identity as being fluid, which contrasts more rigid definitions of political and economic identities. A breakdown of ethnic and ethnic identity correlates to forms of citizenship that apply specifically to the African context. Mamdani (2017) posits that communitarian citizenship and residence in a national community (which is seen as a by-product of colonialism) are seen in constant confrontation with each other, a distinction between what is termed national and subnational citizenship, respectively. Political systems in Africa are heavily informed of ethnic identities and communities that claim rights to access resources and opportunities. This is essential to justifying nation-building projects that uplift specific groups that are in power. Albeit ethnic and cultural identities' ability to transcend borders, contemporary understandings of ethnic

identity tie play a part in creating and establishing political systems. This means that bureaucratic frameworks that are meant to implement legislation and oversee governance are overtly and covertly informed by certain norms and values, traditions, religions, languages, and education.

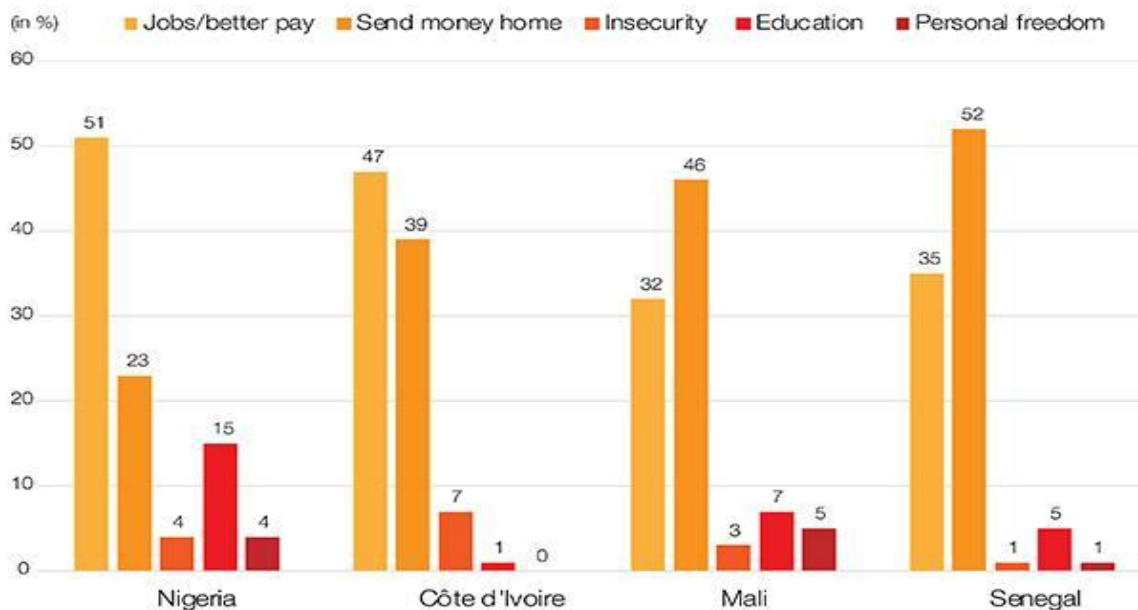
Post-colonial Africa was built on socio-cultural foundations in which ethnic kinship networks provide a centralising tenant for social relations. Therefore, it becomes problematic to discern whether ethnic identity can be posited as a hindrance to a cohesive national project.

1.4.5 West African Migrants

West African migrants are migrants from a specific region in Africa that are comprised of 15 African states. West African migrants' capacity to identify with their home countries can be limited to superficial identity, let alone regional signifiers of unity. Historically the region differed from other parts of the continent; colonialism in West Africa did not experience the settler-colonial dynamic as the terrain was an undesirable environment for European settlers.

On a regional level, under their geographical proximity, combined with mutual economic and political interests as being the regional hegemon, West Africa has had a reasonably cooperative political economy. This is due to the role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Fifteen member countries make up ECOWAS: Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Burkina Faso (Okom & Dada:2012). The justification for defining West African migrants within this regional parameter is due to the economic grouping of said member states, along with the cultural crossover of ethnic groupings between different countries. This region has had continuous post-colonial challenges such as civil war, which in turn has become a hindrance towards fostering economic development. West Africa contains a magnitude of diversity in language, culture, population, along with similarities that crossover national borders before colonisation. This region can be used to understand patterns on migration, and where there may be similarities and differences. However, a central tenet to justifying the use of West African migrants is because economic opportunities are predominant reasons for migration. Kirwin and Anderson (2018) present research that identifies the motivating factors for migration amongst West Africans. The graph below shows that of the five reasons for migrating, jobs and better pay has the largest percentage compared to the others (Fig. 1). Therefore, one can conclude that West African migrants' identity is tied to their economic livelihood and transnational modes of integration.

WHAT IS THE MAIN REASON YOU WOULD MIGRATE TO ANOTHER COUNTRY?



Source: Nationwide surveys, December 2016-January 2017

Extract: Kirwin, M. and J. Anderson (2018), "Identifying the factors driving West African Migration", *West African Papers*, No. 17, OECD Publishing, Paris.

© 2018. Sahel and West Africa Club Secretariat (SWAC/OECD)

Figure 1: Graph showing motivating factors of migration for West Africans (Kirwin & Anderson, 2018).

1.6 Research Methodology

This research has been designed as a qualitative approach to explore explanations of key concepts such as 'transnational migration' and 'identity'. In combination with the literature review of secondary sources, a conceptual and theoretical framework was established, which was utilised through a discourse analysis to unpack qualitative data. Data was collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews and respondent sheets. To participate in this research, respondents had to fit the following criteria: those who were of West African descent and have resided in South Africa for a minimum of 3 years. Additionally, those who met this criterion, but were dual citizens of South Africa through naturalisation or descent also qualified to participate. Supplementing in-depth questions with impromptu follow-up questions provided a deeper insight into the research objectives. Selective sampling was used for analysis in Chapter 3 and 4. After the call for respondents, two nationalities of West Africa were represented: Nigeria and Ghana. Therefore, 'West African migrants' in this dissertation will refer to migrants who are from these two countries.

1.7 Limitations

Cape Town and Stellenbosch were the primary location points for data collection. This affected the type of data collected due to environmental factors, as respondents from other provinces such as Gauteng were not accessible for face-to-face interviews. Focusing on economic migrants added another layer of stratification in selective data sampling – the reasoning behind the respondents' decision to move to South Africa was based on seeking socio-economic opportunities that they otherwise would not have had access to in their country of origin. As a result, this allows for the ability to choose based on decision laid before them, and individual agency. Comparatively, those migrating due to factors such as political conflict, civil war, violence, or human rights violation face a different process that takes away aspects of their agency in a more overt form. Although the definition of the migrant is an umbrella term to describe people moving, within the scope of this study it was used to describe economic migrants' three main facets of identity (national, economic, ethnic, and cultural) as defined in the literature review. Furthermore, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks relied heavily on the collection of secondary sources and data, highlighting discrepancies in how abstract concepts applied to contemporary discussions around the research topic. Due to the definition of the West African migrants, these findings focused on a specific experience that might differ from other migrants from other West African countries. It should be pointed out that the coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19) negatively impacted the sample size of people who were interviewed, as travel and interaction were further limited by national restrictions on movement.

The final limitation that needs to be highlighted is the question of motivation for what fuelled my interest in choosing this topic for this dissertation. As a migrant myself with Nigerian roots, my own identity has influenced the way I view certain subjects and topics surrounding transnationalism, othering, and South Africa and its policies. It is important to note that the critical analysis that is to be presented in this dissertation will be done on empirical evidence provided from various global scholars' work studying this phenomenon, and on the six respondents. The interpretation of this topic is not done to paint different actors in a certain light, or with an agenda, but to contribute to an existing knowledge base. By applying a comprehensive, methodical approach to this topic, I hope to shed light on a reality that exists for West African migrants living in South Africa.

1.8 Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 introduces the dissertation topic by providing a background to the study, along with the research aims and objectives. This is followed by the research question, along with the methodology and limitations.

The second chapter will provide the conceptual and theoretical framework of this study. An overview of the existing paradigms on transnational migration located in different contexts will be discussed, summarising complex identities and a history of migration development in different host communities.

Chapter three covers a transnational perspective on West African Migrants in South Africa. Qualitative data was collected from a range of interviews with West African migrants living in South Africa. This data is recorded through a preliminary data analysis of each of the six respondents. This then sets the backdrop for continuing the analysis in Chapter 4.

The fourth chapter gives a critical analysis of the interviewee's responses by applying the conceptual and theoretical framework from Chapter 2. This analysis explores the tenets of identity, the process of othering, and integration within the nation-state. This creates the outline for delving further into the experiences of the six respondents.

The final chapter presents a summation of the dissertation and discusses whether the research has provided further insight into the research question. It provides a summary of the chapters by going over the main points of discussion brought up in Chapter three and four. It concludes with suggested recommendations to South Africa's policy stance on migrants, along with recommendations to further the scope of this research.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine the historical context of transnational migration in Africa through the lens of inclusion and exclusion and provide an overview of the history of migration in South Africa. Furthermore, a conceptual framework of othering will be explained and proposed as a tool for analysing the qualitative data collection in Chapter 3.

2.2 Historical Context of Transnational Migration in Africa

This section will be divided into four parts: Pre-colonial Africa, Colonial Africa, Post-colonial Africa, and Africa in the 21st Century. Identifying key features of each of these periods in history will provide a contextual understanding of Africa's relationship with transnational migration and how this relationship has shifted over time. Furthermore, examples of historical othering along with a thorough literature review will lay the foundation for the theoretical and conceptual framework utilised for this dissertation.

2.2.1 Pre-colonial Africa

Throughout historical literature in Africa, there are parallel narratives that support different takes on the nature of transnational migration. One narrative romanticises African societies before the influence of colonisation; in earlier works, nuanced societal formations and migration patterns were either simplified or dismissed. The other narrative follows the idea that African societies clashed with one another and had their own structures that enforced oppressive conditions for people who were outsiders. Both generalisations carry truths to a certain degree and will be explained in this section.

Undoubtedly, the history of pre-colonial Africa was a combination of centralised polities, stateless communities, and non-hierarchical formations. Migration focused less on human movement, but rather showcased the congruent nature of society and its communities. The capacity to control human mobility was not a central tenet to maintaining societal structures, as there was a willingness to incorporate newcomers. Historically, migration in Africa saw the movement of language and ethnic groupings, and this is reflected in the overlapping representation across national borders. Social formations revolved around livelihood, as non-hierarchical structures predominated before the introduction of cattle-owning pastoralism that restricted the usage of land. Pre-colonial African states did not create conditions for human mobility to be controlled and identifying with a community was based on ethnic groupings.

However, where there was welcoming of outsiders in some pre-colonial societies, there were also coinciding negative perceptions of outsiders, and forms of inclusion and exclusion.

In an excerpt from *Strangers in African Societies*, Shack and Skinner (1979:40) explain how outsiders were perceived during pre-colonial Africa:

African strangers, in the pre-colonial era, were neither here nor there. They moved with relative ease from one political entity to the next, often engaged in occupations disdained by wider society. Trade, certain craft specialities, bards, jesters, minstrels, ritual practitioners of medicine and so forth, were some of these disdained occupations. Extensive trading networks were formed through indigenous African states... that created links between otherwise hostile societies by facilitating exchanging of goods and services from outsiders i.e., strangers.

Often, upward social, or economic mobility within hierarchical structures was not possible for foreigners, as people not embedded into the societal fabric did not enjoy full citizenship, which was reserved for people who owned land and were not enslaved. Cohen (2017) cites the example of how during the time of kingdoms, those that formed part of the lower tiers of society contributed towards “fostering long-distance trade and raising defensive or offensive armies.” Populations remained mobile through these types of transactions and events, and patterns of integration amongst groups from different regions in Africa reoccurred through these coercive methods.

2.2.2 The Scramble for Africa: Colonial Influence

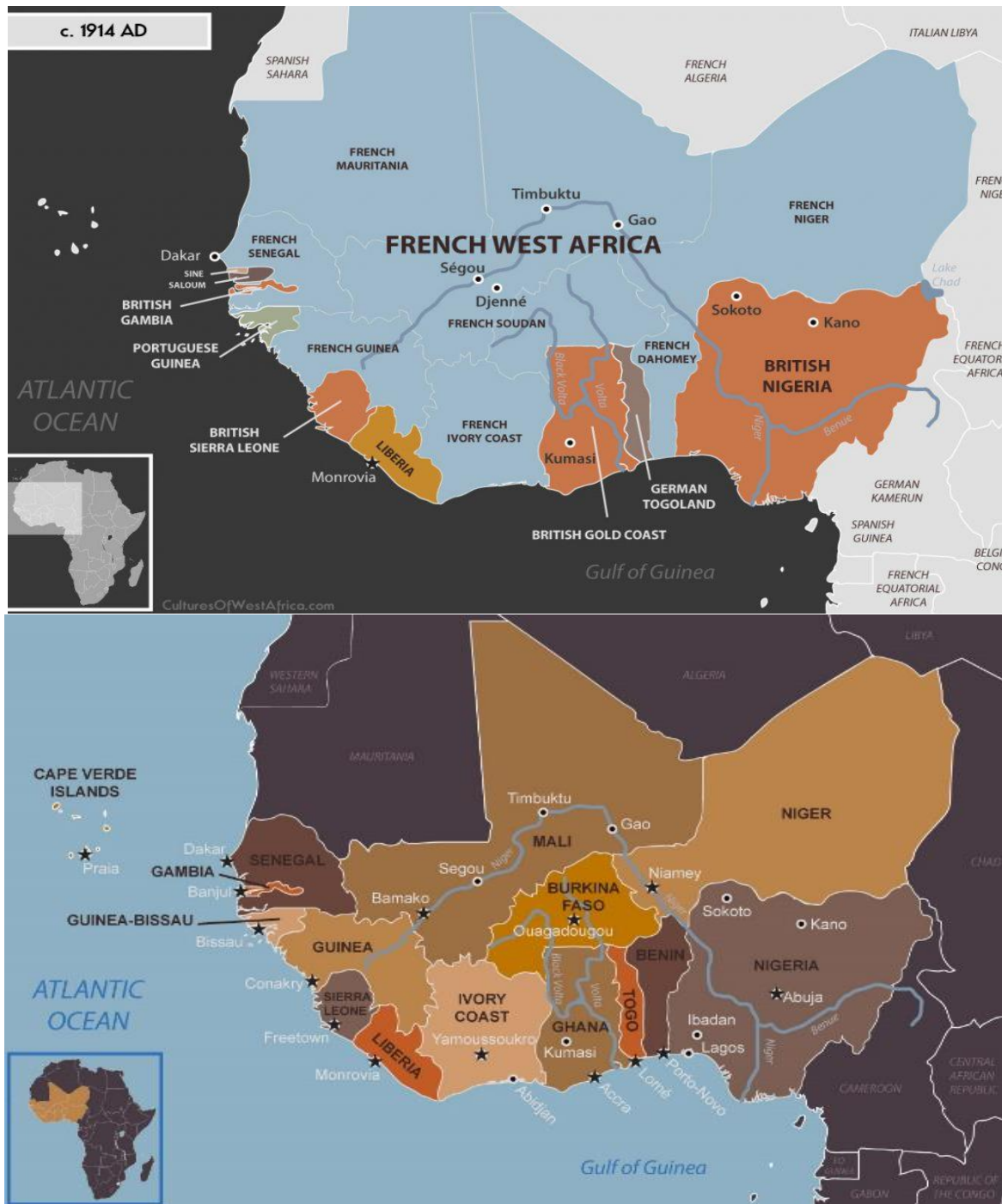


Figure 2: Comparative maps of West Africa before the independence era in 1914 (top) and present-day map of West African from 2018 (bottom). Adapted from Cultures of West Africa (2018).

An event that changed the nature of migration on the African continent was the Berlin Conference of 1884. The abrupt mapping of borders limited movement, as the idea of

belonging and settling in a territory, was enforced through belonging to a nation (Declich & Rodet, 2018:446). The Berlin Conference of 1884 legitimised the Scramble for Africa, whereby European countries such as the UK, Germany, France, and others claimed territory over regions, gained larger access to natural resources and legitimised their presence by dismantling prior existing forms of governance.

Colonial rule in Africa disrupted the natural formation of boundaries, centralised authority, and rearranged cultural and social dynamics. Development and infrastructure were built around serving the economic interests of colonial powers. As a result, the skills needed to manage new economic functions created an imbalance in the control and distribution of resources, as social hierarchies were intravenously restructured.

Locals could not remedy the imbalance in the control and distribution of resources, as they were not placed in charge of managing the newly emerged systems of governance. A form of what was termed ‘protest migration’ was often done to signal political discontent with colonial abuses (Herbst, 1990). Due to infrastructure being developed around colonial cities, entire chieftaincies and their constituencies would relocate across national boundaries to avoid European rule. Protest migrations took place in French West African colonies, as the divided colonial zones did not enforce restrictive boundaries until the advent of independence in the mid-20th century. In contrast to Africans resettling in different areas, migration encouraged outsiders to contribute towards the infrastructure of their capitalist endeavours. Shack and Skinner (1979:5) state that:

Local African polities were thrust into the role of being involuntary hosts to uninvited guests. Migration encouraged by external authorities increased the numbers of Europeans and Asian strangers in commerce, mining, plantations, and urban centres outside their original homelands.

The regional structuring of the African continent caused ramifications towards how different colonial powers structured their occupations. In the case of West Africa, the region was divided into French and British West Africa (Figure 2, top); (Frankema & van Waijenburg, 2020:161). Once states achieved independence from their colonial powers, they needed to establish their governance and sovereignty within a short period after being part of a larger federal structure; namely, the federal organisation of French West Africa (AOF). This had consequences on the post-independence period, as the post-colonial African states became preoccupied with managing residues of a colonial state apparatus, along with forming a national image.

The overall mapping of Africa significantly changed over time (Figure 2, bottom). Moreover, the restriction of movement and an emphasis on defining who were citizens created multiple issues. For example, upon independence, Ghana initially defined their citizenship according to lineage as opposed to birth; those that were born in Ghana but had no familial linkages did not classify as Ghanaian citizens (Herbst, 1990:190). Enforcing a homogenous political identity became essential in the nation-building project, and discrepancies in determining who became a citizen of each African country set the precedent for enabling the politics of exclusion.

2.2.3 Post-independence in Africa: Consequences and Challenges

Post-independence allowed newly self-governing African states to exercise sovereign control. Many prioritised the empowerment of locals, by dismantling the quasi-legal enfranchisements that strangers had enjoyed outside their homelands as honorary citizens. This was also a significant stage in African governance, as it gave the power to distinguish between who was part of the state as a citizen, and who would be deemed an alien.

The concept of sovereignty was created in Europe when the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 established the notion of nation-states and its modern conceptualisations. European countries benefited and had initial economic advantages due to the importation of large numbers of migrants in the late 19th and early 20th century. However, by the end of the 20th century, the benefits started to fall away (Cohen, 2004). Large groups of unorganised labour were displaced by the rise in technological development, and the division of labour became further stratified by economic and political factors. Yet, because Europe evolved the conceptualisations of statehood and movement of people according to their contexts, Africa's interpretation of the governmental apparatuses was indirectly tied to their interdependent relationship with former colonial powers (Adejumobi, 2001). This directly affected post-colonial formations of citizenship, due to unresolved issues (distribution of economic resources, state structures, and social hierarchies) that were not coherently addressed. Fourchard and Segatti (2015) further state that not only were such issues left unaddressed, but deliberate discrimination and exclusion were either ignored or reinforced by state institutions.

Another characteristic of the post-independent period in Africa was the inability to dismantle the dual spheres of the state. Heterogeneity within African nation-states laid the foundation for mutual suspicion and conflicts since artificial borders failed to integrate communities that had little in common beyond an enforced national identity (Akokpari, 2008). Furthermore, the nature of the post-colonial state favoured partisan means of governance, with certain groups

gaining access to resources and opportunities; this was justified as being a remedy to those previously disadvantaged during colonial rule. The emergence of dual allegiance to the community one already belongs to was emphasised as a means through which allegiance to the state was granted, which further fuelled the increasing tension amongst local groupings. Ekeh (1975) discussed the concept of this duality extensively, along with Mamdani (2017), highlighting the dual legacy of colonialism. They state in their writings that this duality exists not only within the state itself but was a way for citizens to balance the new and old communities that they formed part of, notably the dichotomy that arose during urbanisation due to migration to cities. This dichotomy pertains to the identity of the individual, whereby private (or what Ekeh terms 'primordial') groupings form out of a person's public behaviour, and another aspect of their public behaviours is informed from public structures. Examples given are institutional and governmental structures (the military, civil service, and the police). This configuration of identity during the post-independent period in Africa influenced not only the societal formations during a critical period in nation-building projects throughout the continent; it also set the precedent for determining who was deemed a legal citizen according to political structures influenced by primordial groupings. This limitation is a failure to critique the colonial experience and its influence on matters of governance.

Yet, one cannot place sole blame on the post-colonial state as a means for perpetuating notions of exclusion. Obadare and Adebawi (2009) note the ways post-independence African leadership failed to transform the state apparatus according to the needs of their constituents and expected dissenting viewpoints to operate within these same structures that were being critiqued. One could argue that the necessity for the state was then forged through creating a homogenous national identity, as nationalism was a constructed ideology. As discussed in Chapter 1, national identity highlights an individual's relationship to the state, and national policy redressing past inequalities becomes one dimensional and monolithic in its implementation and efficacy.

2.2.4 Africa in the 21st Century: Contemporary Struggles

African migration in the 21st century has led to further introspection into the dimensions of movement and motivating factors. New forms of identity have informed the politics of governance, and the legitimacy of the state is scrutinised in its ability to realistically represent its populace. Currently, the largest migration flows from Africa are happening within Africa, and this is evident in the expected economic and population growth percentages in key African cities such as Lagos in Nigeria. Intra-Africa connections have long existed before the advent

of late 20th and early 21st century technological advances, yet the areas of focus around transnationalism within different African contexts have changed. According to Akokpari (2000), globalisation informs migration in Africa and has enabled cross-border exchanges and set the precedent for varying forms of integration relating to infrastructure development, immigration, and regional co-operation.

Migration in Africa has distinctive forms and characteristics compared to other parts of the world, as they are complex and dynamic. This is seen in the increase of female migration, the diversification of migration destinations, the transformation of labour flows into other forms of commercial migration, and the emigration of skilled professionals from Africa. Due to the mentioned trends, the map of migration flows is constantly changing, and this makes it tough to apply migration policies and programmes that take into consideration the nature of transnational migration in contemporary Africa (Oyebamiji & Asuelime, 2018:219).

In the 21st century, issues around migration in Africa no longer circulate solely around physical movement across borders. With the formation of ethnic groups within the diaspora, second-generation African migrants having no connection beyond heritage linkages, and permanent economic migrants resettling in other countries, new spaces, and migration dynamics are formed beyond previously mentioned motivating factors for forming. Consequently, this also affects how practices of inclusion and exclusion are formed and adds complex layers on top of conventional narratives surrounding migration, globalisation, and identity.

2.3 Conceptualising Othering – A Philosophical Approach to Understanding Identity

Sheth (2009) discussed how the law is utilised by the state to put in place covert forms of political and institutional racialisation that affect the population. Racialisation of a population according to Sheth (2009:51) is a method that codifies different aspects of a person's identity into a larger legislative framework. Instead of relating directly to racial identities, which in certain cases it may be the basis, racialisation in this context relates to “the perceived threat and vulnerability that characterise a certain subject-population” (Sheth, 2009). This is embedded in the set of regulations designed to govern existing populations, which is a process divided into three features.

The first feature is the description of the group. This does not relate to phenotypical descriptions, but to factors (nationality, ethnicity, religion, and economic identity) that are used as a marker for racial designation to a certain group within a population. Sheth (2009) goes on to describe how this description of a certain group then acts as a deliberate barrier between

them and the dominant group who holds power. Being racialised as a separate entity from the dominant group becomes the basis to enact de-alienation, whilst maintaining the outer shell of a unified racial identity.

There are discrepancies in choosing certain aspects of what constructs a group's identity, and the second feature explains how a group's behaviours are isolated to fit a description that paints a certain group as a threat or unruly. Under such a scenario, a group's behaviour is no longer linked to its historical, political, or cultural context, but are now intrinsically representative of populations (Sheth, 2009:52). As a result, these features are used as a basis to justify how these groups violate "beliefs, principles, or trajectory of a prevailing regime." This is reinforced through normative justifications for biases of assuming inferiority, which alters definitions and ascribes criminality and undesirable behaviours to a certain group. Sheth (2009:52) states that these features of the racialisation of a population often emerge through political events, and "are continuously embedded in legislation, political actions, and cultural discourses that are antagonistic" towards a group. This then leads to the third feature, whereby the continuous negative construction is entrenched into the national conscience, engendering potential consequences on a larger population.

Racialising the population in this way makes it easier to codify racialisation into legislation without facing backlash for inconsistencies in the application. Creating legal loopholes means withholding the acknowledgement of the other group's right to legitimacy and equal participation within society. This is done through misrecognition through legal and political categories such as 'natural born citizen', 'naturalised citizen', 'legal resident', and 'illegal migrant'. Although this seems authentic, it pre-determines the nature of the character of membership according to the terms of entry into a space. Furthermore, this makes it easier for frameworks to dehumanise certain groups such as migrants as unworthy of protection under the law. The lack of protection reinforces dehumanisation, and the rigid categorisation feeds back into this cycle. Protection against the state becomes challenging when considering legal frameworks created in other contexts affect its ability to protect vulnerable populations. The limitations of Sheth's racialisation framework could be seen when her methodology is applied to a transnational context. The global political sphere encompasses multiple overlapping processes: state-state relations, globalisation processes, multinational institutions (both public and private), international organisations, and various treaties and procurement contracts (Keller, 2014). Non-state entities may enable similar frameworks of othering, and legal frameworks fail to represent the contemporary importance on certain values and principles.

Shifting power dynamics enable those previously disenfranchised to become empowered through enacting and reinforcing antagonistic forms of othering. Sheth mentions that the preservation of law itself is prioritised as opposed to preserving legal ends that protect vulnerable members of society. Yet, the function of the law and the state in overseeing the overall wellbeing of the population is one dimensional and lacks acknowledgement of non-state entity's roles in providing such protection.

Another limitation in Sheth's argument is found when applying the concept of racialisation within the African context. Scholars such as Okeja (2019) see otherness as a construction of social identities, and that the concept of otherness should be questioned in its nature and relevance. In what Fourchard and Segatti (2015) call economic indigenisation, the post-independent naturalisation processes failed to incorporate class dynamics into the discussions of citizenship in their paper on the everyday politics of exclusion and inclusion in Africa. They also analyse state-led manufacturing of differences, and class dimensions are often overlooked.

The third critique relates to understanding how othering fits into understanding transnationalism; Sheth places identity at the focal aspect of her analysis. Centralising the individual allows for a clearer interpretation of what constitutes as othering based on factors such as nationality, ethnicity, race, and religion. Yet, transnationalism goes beyond clear binaries and normative explanations for how groups are separated from others. Questions surrounding these conceptual crossroads will be unpacked further in Chapter 3, where the data may provide answers to discerning how othering can be understood within a transnational context.

2.3.1 African Context of Othering

Expanding on the limitations of Sheth's conceptualisation of othering, it is important to explain the social formations that influence transnational identity. As premised by Okeja (2019:15), otherness relates to the construction of identity, and how the relevance of these differences relates to judgement about who is fully human. The understanding of the individual can only be understood in relation to the other. From a philosophical perspective, the processes of othering are often absolutist and create an antagonist approach to reconciliatory practices. Examples such as xenophobia, terrorism, homophobia, and intolerance of varying kinds are often antagonistic forms of othering that fail to include reconciliatory practices (Okeja, 2019:20). Within Africa, multiple pre-colonial and post-colonial examples juxtapose the different roles of othering. Moreover, the question of who holds power to determine who is

othered requires contextualisation; and relying on moralistic discourse to analyse outcomes fails to recognise structural complexities embedded in different levels of engagement.

Another approach used to shed light on the processes of othering in Africa is by analysing the role of the nation-state. This relates to the underlying assumptions as to the apparatus of the state's baseline understanding of identity through citizenship. African states are often widely acknowledged in academic discourse as not having typical characteristics of a Weberian modern state. The main underlying rationale for this statement ties to the evidence that African states utilise patrimonial networks or communal leadership as the mechanisms for decision making and governance. Theorising these connections makes it easier to see that the role of local actors in the African context finds a way to mobilise ideology at a state, institutional, communal, and individual level of interaction. If political life in Africa is determined by pre-existing structures and modes of practice, then it becomes clear that political projects and discourse have strong non-state actors influencing their discourse, political projects' objectives, and the resultant outcomes. This includes deliberations of who is considered an outsider and who is not. For example, in earlier models of relief aid, development and structural adjustment, the international community created a diverse set of mechanisms for intervention in Africa (Latham, Kassimir & Callaghy, 2001). Individuals that had transcended national boundaries and entered transnational spheres of interaction found ways to influence the nature of interactions across boundaries, within their host and home countries.

Parallel to the development of transnationalism within a state-centric global order, the construction of citizenship as a baseline for identity becomes ambiguous in its criteria and requirements. Africans living in other African countries by state definition fall into non-citizen categories, but their identity can be formed and shaped by factors determined within their host countries and communities. However, migrants forming their constituencies and mobilising resources amongst their networks may not be the sole solution to combating antagonistic forms of integration. This can be a point of contention within the African context, as paradoxical re-echoing of nationalist rhetoric in countries are re-emerging. Kersting (2009) discusses this phenomenon taking place at the turn of the 21st century, whereby the exclusion of social groups within the same society sets the precedent for a new type of nationalism in Africa. Subsequently, internal xenophobia against the non-citizen forms and the unifying moment captured during independence is lost.

2.4 Transnationalism in the South African Context

Crush and McDonald (2000) apply transnationalism to the South African context through five different propositions. The first proposition relates transnationalism to the nature of the exchange, and how the multiple layers of economic, social, and cultural activity work with each other whilst forming new modes of migration. This requires a new form of mobility that goes beyond embedding oneself into a new society. The second proposition relates these activities to the “expansion and internationalisation of capitalist production”. The movement of labour has been discussed thoroughly by political science theorists, mainly on how it relates to the production of capital. Crush and McDonald (2000) state that the international political economy’s set-up was that the Global North demanded cheap labour to fuel their growth, as those from the Global South gain wider access to knowledge about economic opportunities located in the former. However, it is important to note that this article was written 20 years ago, and the nature of capitalist production and the power dynamics of the Global North and Global South have changed over time. Developing nations acknowledge the role that migration plays in developing their nations, and advantageously position their citizens that migrate as positive economic input into state development. Secondly, the type of skill and labour transaction taking place is not solely related to cheap labour opportunities. Highly skilled individual migrants with the capability to switch between different cultural and socio-economic barriers have become highly in demand across all sectors, as non-state and state organisations alike recognise the importance of being able to relate and operate from beyond developed nations, as it becomes embedded into modes of capitalist production.

The third proposition is central to the theoretical framework of this dissertation and states that transnationalism is utilised to describe migrants’ multiple identities. Historically, modes of assimilation were important to a migrants’ identity, as adjusting to their new environment was an area of focus. However, transnationalism argues that a migrants’ identity takes on multiple layers, and assimilation makes way for adaptation; not completely abandoning social and cultural practices from home countries but finding ways to incorporate new influences informed from their society. There is a spectrum in the literature surrounding the role of identity in transnationalism. For instance, scholars such as Bauböck (2003) discuss transnationalism, as a political theory, and its relation to conceptualisations of citizenship. Itzigsohn (2000)’s understanding on citizenship is built upon by Vertovec (2001), who sees transnationalism as a site for political activity for ethnic diaspora and is interested in institutions beyond the state that sustain this arena. Therefore, as a theoretical concept, the preference to utilise identity over

citizenship allows for a broader and nuanced analysis of migrant's experiences, although the latter still falls within this paradigm and has theoretical relevance for the sake of this dissertation. The fourth proposition is that transnationalism as the changing causal nature of migration and that the process changes over time. The fifth proposition is that transnational literature has become so broad due to changes in the aforementioned factors. The migrant experience has become multidimensional over time, with increased mobility and an increase in capital amongst transnational networks. This means that over time migrants in various communities have gained a certain degree of autonomy, their support is legitimised through previously denied access to resources and can offer protection and support to other migrants. Due to this newly established autonomy, migrants not only further embed existing linkages between home and host countries but create new linkages that transcend political boundaries.

2.4.1 West-a-phobia: A form of Othering towards West Africans

The group of African nationals that fall privy to specific forms of discrimination in South Africa are West Africans; a term that Petkou (2005) refers to as West-a-phobia. West-a-phobia is defined as the fear and dislike of West Africans, and the negative reactions solicited to them by South Africans. He explains that through external clues, attributes, characteristics, West African migrants can be easily identified and discriminated against.

Previous studies conducted have looked specifically at the experiences of West African migrants in South Africa. The works of Banda and Adetomokun (2015) examined the Yoruba identity in the Diaspora by interviewing Nigerian students based in Cape Town; Oyebamiji and Asuelime (2018) interviewed Nigerian families based in South Africa and their role as economic migrants. Other studies around transnational migrants' identity has been conducted and looked at how migrants in South Africa travelling to their home countries opens questions surrounding their perceptions of home. Marschall (2017) looked at this specific phenomenon, trying to understand whether a shift in the perception of home re-affirmed or changed a transnational migrants' identity.

Sophisticated transnational resistance networks in South Africa that protect the rights of migrants in South Africa have yet to be fully developed and funded (Crush & McDonald, 2000). Moreover, with continuous strings of attacks on African foreigners in post-Apartheid South Africa, and the continued pushback by organisations that provide immediate relief and support to migrants, there is a clear scholarly gap that fails to theorise how nuanced forms of othering impact the complex identities of migrants living in South Africa. This is evident in the

media, as reports on the experiences of African migrants in mainstream South African media are often reactive and are tied to events involving violent demonstrations and protests. Academia falls prey to a narrow lens too. Studies conducted on African middle-class economic migrants fall into a binary: they are either focused on an individual's attempts to gain upward socio-economic mobility or are about retaining aspects of their cultural identity from their home countries. Furthermore, explanations of othering are rooted in the local context of analysis and highlight specific phenomenon inherent to a societal structure.

The conceptualisations of identity and transnationalism by Crush and McDonald (2000) will be utilised as the tools for qualitative analysis. They put forward five different propositions that explain the nature of transnationalism in South Africa, Crush and McDonald (2000), and give weight to exploring the specific phenomenon of West-a-phobia. By looking at the experience of West African migrants in South Africa, a theoretical praxis will emerge between transnationalism and othering in a reimagined post-Apartheid context.

As mentioned in the contemporary struggles surrounding migration in Africa, the largest migration flows from Africa happen within the continent. As a result, understanding transnational experiences from beyond certain institutional parameters provides a broader conceptual and theoretical framework to interrogate individual experiences. Qualitative studies have been conducted with similar research paradigms. For example, Crush and McDonald (2000) examined transnationalism by analysing new migrant spaces and answered broader conceptual and theoretical questions around migration in South Africa. Vertovec's critical text on transnationalism informed various social studies conducted on the topic of migrants around the world in the early 2000s. This includes research done on Ghanaian migrants residing in the Netherlands (Mazzucato, 2008), the experience of Singaporean and British transmigrants in China (Yeoh & Willis: 2005), and 2nd generation migrants' identity in a globalised world (Somerville, 2008) to name a few.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the historical context of transnational migration in Africa, by looking at important dynamics that affected the movement of people and methods of inclusion and exclusion. Furthermore, a conceptual framework was established to understand how othering is used as a tool to differentiate between groups, with philosophical, legal, and political aspects, followed by a discussion of othering in the African context. Finally, a theoretical explanation of transnationalism in South Africa was provided, along with an example of othering by

introducing the concept of West-a-phobia. Chapter 2 has given an extensive historical background of othering in Africa, along with a literature review on theoretical aspects of othering. In the next chapter, I will present an overview of the historical and contemporary concepts underpinning this research, along with the legacy of othering within the South African context. Furthermore, the term West-a-phobia will be probed further to identify its conceptual origin, the purpose of the application for this research, and the validity in its relation to the research question. This will then be followed by an explanation of the research methodology, a detailed overview of the respondents along with preliminary data analysis, drawing on the initial themes emerging from the qualitative data.

CHAPTER 3: A TRANSNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON WEST AFRICAN MIGRANTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to present a transnational perspective on West Africans living in South Africa based on a historical overview of the forms of otherings and a qualitative assessment of participant interviews. To achieve this objective, the historical legacy of othering in South Africa against the social, cultural, and political backdrop of the country's development will be discussed, followed by an overview on West-a-phobia as the underpinning form of othering studied in this dissertation. Finally, the research methodology is presented, followed by a preliminary analysis of research data and discussion based on excerpts from the interviews conducted.

3.2 Historical and Contemporary Conceptualisations of Othering and West-a-phobia

3.2.1 The Legacy of Othering Migrants in South Africa

Africans that migrate to South Africa are aware of the notion that there are economic opportunities that are more available than in other parts of the continent. A factor that contributes to South Africa's unique and favourable economy is a bridge between the Global North and Global South, by which the country becomes a stable steppingstone between the two worlds. Quantitative data in the literature support this favourable economic position of South Africa among other African countries. For instance, a recent International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Report (United Nations, 2020:62) states that South Africa "remains the most significant destination country in Africa, with around 4 million international migrants residing in the country in 2019". Furthermore, the migrant population increased from 2.8% in 2005 to 7% in 2020 (United Nations, 2020). Another factor driving this increased migration as pointed out in the report is the contribution of migrants to the different sectors of the economy through the supply of low- and high-skilled workers.

The historical literature on migrants in South Africa indicates that the topic has been heavily researched across varying disciplines. Published articles by scholars such as Adjai and Lazaridis (2013), Alfaro-Velcamp and Shaw (2016), Crush, Chikanda and Tawodzera (2015), and Landau (2006) have reported on the historical ramifications of South Africa's attitude towards migrants. Two pieces, written by Nyamnjoh in 2006 and 2012, focus specifically on xenophobia and citizenship in South Africa, the normative explanations used to scapegoat

foreigners, and the violence of the state and citizens in maintaining exclusionary structures within Southern Africa. Similarly, Matsinhe (2011) deliberates on the legacy of othering in the South African context, delving into settler-colonial relations, the Union of South Africa, Apartheid, and other tangible historical events relating to types of othering. Both Nyamnjoh and Matsinhe delve into South Africa's history with xenophobia and provide tangible examples to highlight correlations between hierarchical classifications of people based on their identity and a country's history. In addition to the aforementioned research, McDonald, Mashike and Golden's 1999 SAMP policy report looked at the lives of African migrants and immigrants in post-Apartheid South Africa. They conducted large-scale surveys to establish the general profile of the African migrant population within the country. Some of the findings suggest that migrants in South Africa have little desire to settle permanently in South Africa but are aware they have access to better economic opportunities and social services compared to their country of origin. The most prominent argument that is seen in all the articles mentioned, is the perceived threat that migrants are to South Africa and its development, despite evidence suggesting otherwise. Yet, it is important to note the legacy and impact of how socio-economic structures created in the formation of the South African state, institutionalised othering to maintain a certain status quo.

The legacies of Apartheid policies continue to perpetuate economic deprivation and social inequalities. This skewed stratification remains a core reason to set the ground for a lack of social cohesion in South Africa, along with stagnating the dissemination of democratic processes and values in informal non-governmental spaces amongst citizens (Matsinhe, 2011). This situation gets even more compounded, complex, and potentially explosive when foreigners are caught in the middle as they can be easily targeted and blamed for such situations. The inheritance of an Apartheid immigration policy meant that it was based on a classical colonial settlement policy, which focused on the socio-economic needs of a minority, whilst institutionally disenfranchising the majority of the country through various discriminatory practices and frameworks (Matsinhe, 2011). In his paper on Afrikaner Nationalism, Dubow (1992) notes that an inseparable part of the structure of South African society rests on a deeply encoded pattern of paternalism and prejudice. One of the reasons highlighted for the resurgence of coded race relations was the context South Africa found itself in during the mid-20th century. Due to the expanded needs to wartime production, and the expansion of industrial development, the massive influx of Black South African workers came to be seen as a major threat to the privileged position of mainly Afrikaans-speaking unskilled

and semi-skilled labour in urban areas (Dubow, 1992:211). This fear and mythology surrounding the threat of outsiders prompted the South African government to systemically engineer their own notion of racial segregation. The conceptualisation of race within apartheid ensured that there were clear demarcations for where different groups were meant to live and develop themselves in their own political, economic, cultural, religious, and educational spheres. The ideological justification of manufacturing differences and preventing natural cohesion amongst the population of South Africa also became grounds for justification to enact structural and explicit forms of violence over many years. As a result, exclusionary policies coupled with limited access to socio-economic empowerment for marginalised South Africans compounded the projection of negative attitudes onto outsiders, as they are deemed as a constant pervasive threat to socio-economic access and empowerment. However, this is a normative explanation for understanding deeply complex processes that were cultivated over hundreds of years under colonialism, Apartheid, and marginalisation. The work of Matsinhe (2016), Adjai and Lazaridis (2013), Kang'ethe and Duma (2013), and Klotz (2016) provide in-depth analysis and discussion on the roots of exclusion of others in the South African context. Matsinhe (2016) discusses how the Apartheid regime in South Africa did its best to distance itself from the idea of race, and instead perpetuated raceless racism; the dominance of one group over another did not rely solely on a minority's perceived racial superiority, but instead on the ideology of "ethnic cultural differences...equal but separate development". This is an example of Sheth (2009)'s breakdown on the features of racialisation, whereby the law becomes a means to codify and preserve certain beliefs and principles that exclude certain groups of the population. The argument for separate development by the Apartheid government was based on homogeneous, inauthentic descriptions of certain groups, which assigned certain traits and behaviours to groups based on ideological justifications of their own perceived superiority and competence.

After the fall of apartheid, and the transition from the National Party to the ANC in 1994, there was a multitude of issues that the new government faced. One of these issues pertained to the country's existing relationship with the rest of the African continent. Although African countries were credited for taking in numerous exiled South Africans during the apartheid era, the political consolidation on a national level failed to have a cohesive approach to building bridges. An example of this is newly elected former President Nelson Mandela's criticism of Nigeria in 1995, in which he publicly condemned former President of Nigeria General Sani Abacha's execution of nine Ogoni political leaders (Mngomezulu, 2019). On top of the

condemnation, Mandela called for the international community to boycott Nigerian oil and ostracise Nigeria from the then OAU.

To counter the looming diplomatic isolation from the rest of the continent, former President Thabo Mbeki's made efforts to redirect South Africa's foreign policy towards embracing Pan-Africanism. His infamous "I am an African" speech made in the South African Parliament in 1996 attempted to revive prior ideologies of Pan-Africanism to deal with South Africa's reoccurring tendency to distance itself from other African countries (Mbeki, 2005). South African political leaders face the paradox of either seeming too sympathetic towards foreigners or utilising ignorance towards foreigners as political currency to favourably gain constituents and numbers in the polls. Negative attitudes towards migrants juxtaposed with the country's perceived role as a continental hegemon create different expectations for fostering integration and community. Hostility towards migrants is tied to the historical nature of the relationship between different groups that have lived in South Africa, and the antagonistic trajectory that is embedded into the social, cultural, political, and economic fabric of the state.

The legal framework of South Africa created boundaries and modes of exclusion amongst citizens and groups of populations. Apartheid legislation ensured strict border control, along with institutionalised discrimination. A notable example is the Aliens Control Act of 1991, later amended in 1995, that covered issues surrounding migrations, mainly combatting illegal immigration, and ensuring higher barriers of entry.

Consequently, limitations to structural changes had a spill-over effect on how migration laws are constructed with similar rhetoric and justification in post-Apartheid South Africa. The new government structure under the African National Congress (ANC) leadership aimed to rectify and abolish physical and legal boundaries of segregation. South Africans that were classified as outsiders during the Apartheid era was now able to integrate into previously exclusionary spaces and build towards a new nationalist project. The existence of terminologies and other modes of exclusion that were utilised before the advent of democracy meant that conceptualisations of otherness needed to be either abolished or reimagined under the new democratic order. However, immigration policies were tools used to construct national identities and controlling the movement of people and territory is "integral to the exercises and maintenance of state power" (Peberdy, 2001:16). The question of who belonged in the new South Africa became a codified process of sorting between who deserved to identify with the state and who did not. When discussing the mechanisms of inclusion, Peberdy (2001:16) discusses the criteria often employed by the state:

Immigrant selection may be tied overtly to criteria of productivity, class, wealth, and skills of potential immigrants, but the process of selection conveys powerful ideas about the self-image of the destination-state, race, national identity, and the stereotyping of non-nationals and their places of origin.

Nevertheless, this is not a uniquely South African phenomenon. Fourchard and Segatti (2015) highlighted the notion that there is a broader theoretical dimension to understanding nation-building projects in the African context, as insider and outsider dynamics based on racialisation can exacerbate class dynamics in a post-colonial context. This means that racialisation within societies is codified beyond one specific identifier of difference such as one's country of origin and shifts over time.

3.2.2 West-a-phobia and Other Contemporary Understandings of Othering in South Africa

Despite migrants forming their own constituencies and mobilising communal resources for socio-economic empowerment, these networks alone may not be the sole solution to combating antagonistic forms of integration. A re-echoing of nationalist rhetoric in African countries has focused on maintaining certain hierarchies. Kersting (2009) discusses this phenomenon which occurred at the turn of the 21st century, as the exclusion of social groups within the same society defines a new nationalism in Africa. Subsequently, internal xenophobia against non-citizens forms and the unifying moment captured during independence becomes less about the practice and more of an ideological principle in theory.

An example of antagonistic terminology utilised to incite othering practices is *makwerekwere*, which is commonly used in South Africa to refer to black Africans that are non-South Africans. This term has been constructed, as what Matsinhe (2016) terms as the country's bogeyman, exclusively targeting African foreign nationals, and this, in turn, enables the creation of fearmongering narratives around their activities. Identifiable through physical characteristics, inability to speak one of the South African languages, and distinct cultures including ways of dressing, certain African nationals such as Nigerians and Congolese, more notable than other African nationals, face higher chances of being discriminated against (Matsinhe, 2016). The term *makwerekwere* is an extension of xenophobic sentiments and highlights the collective Afrophobic self-contempt through a distinction between who holds power and who does not.

As mentioned previously, the term West-a-phobia coined by Petkou (2005), was built on qualitative research collected on the experiences of Cameroonians and Nigerians living in Hilbrow, South Africa. This research involved 112 respondents and used transnationalism as a

tool to contextually analyse the different sites of social and cultural exchange such as internet cafés, phone booths, hairdressing and beauty salons, restaurants, and bars. The central findings of the research posit that West African migrants can survive in their host countries due to being transmigrants and small business dealers. By going to different areas of small businesses, Petkou was able to identify the different economic activities as a way of surviving, predominately in the informal sector. The author directly ties the definition of West-a-phobia to the state of struggle West Africans face, and the different economic strategies they engage to generate some form of income. Furthermore, his dissertation framed a discourse around the systemic discrimination faced by West Africans due to preconceived notions as job stealers, criminals, drug dealers and carriers of disease, and how such perceptions have become underlying barriers of entry into the formal working sector.

Whilst Petkou's research is in-depth and provides elaborate explanations on the experiences of Cameroonians and Nigerians in South Africa from an economic perspective, there is space for expansion when discussing the transnationalism through the lens of identity. He recognised this knowledge gap: "the nature and how West African identities are formed in South Africa is subject to further research" (Petekou, 2005).

Juxtaposing the two realities of increased autonomy for migrants living in new spaces, with existing negative attitudes and behaviours of locals towards foreigners leaves a gap in addressing the issues faced by migrants. Firstly, the discrepancies of experiences vary depending on the given environment. Secondly, the legal status of the migrant can affect the solutions provided or created towards addressing their problems. Thirdly, the cultural and social impact of integration within the host country influences a migrant's perceptions towards antagonistic behaviours. Mirroring in migration refers to the passage between two countries, and the level of exchange between them. Transnational behaviour over time creates multiple realities. In turn, norms and values held by individuals living in different environments shift. A family from another African country that has settled in South Africa over a longer period may face covert challenges. These may be the labour-intensive process of obtaining Permanent Residency, or discrimination in workplace settings. Transnationalism theory indicates that integration into society over time changes from assimilation to adaptation, taking new influences and incorporating it into existing cultural practices.

In the next section, the research methodology applied in this dissertation will be presented, guided by the foregoing overview of the historical and contemporary conceptions of migration

and othering of migrants in South Africa, with special focus on West Africans living in South Africa.

3.3 Methodology

The data collection for this dissertation relied on qualitative methods, in the form of interviews and response sheets. The data collection time frame was between August to November 2019, with face-to-face interviews in Cape Town and Stellenbosch, in the Western Province, South Africa. Online response sheets were sent to respondents residing in Gauteng Province, South Africa, at the time of the correspondence. For both the interview and response sheet, the following nine open-ended questions were provided as starting points to explore their motive of migrating to South Africa, progress in settling in and integration, identity, and specific experiences of othering and discrimination with specific reference to West-a-phobia:

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself (name, age, and country of origin)?
2. Why did you move to South Africa?
3. What was your experience of initially integrating to South Africa like?
4. Do you have relationships or connections with other West Africans in South Africa?
5. What are some of the first thoughts that come to your mind when you think of the term ‘community’?
6. Do you feel integrated into South Africa?
7. Would permanently settling in South Africa be a viable option for you? If not, how so? What would be motivating reasons to leave?
8. Are there any specific instances where you faced discrimination for being West African/from a West African country? If so, how?
9. If you were granted South African citizenship, what effect would being South African have on your identity?

Each interviewee received a Cover Letter (Appendix A), Consent Form (Appendix B), and an Information Sheet (Appendix C) explaining the nature of the research being conducted and requiring their permission to record the interview for transcribing purposes. For Adeola, Lionel, and Adwoa, their interviews were done via email, and answers were given through online response on a question sheet (Appendix D). The other three interview responses of Emily, Mary and Donna were face-to-face interviews in Cape Town and Stellenbosch, with the questions being more open-ended for the sake of keeping a flowing conversation. Emily, Mary, and Donna were recorded via a Voice Memos App and transcribed (Appendix E).

3.3.1 Respondents

There were six respondents involved in the data collection process: Emily, Mary, Adeola, Adwoa, Lionel and Donna. For ethical reasons, the names used are not the respondents' real names. The demographic of respondents is predominantly women, as Lionel is the only male participant. Adeola, Adwoa and Lionel are based in Gauteng, and Emily, Mary and Donna are based in the Western Cape. The age of respondents ranged from 21 to 28 years. All the respondents have studied and lived in South Africa for a minimum of three years. In the next Section, the transcription of direct quotes from the respondents is provided through various excerpts as an overview of preliminary data findings. This will be the foundation to further explore findings through a thematic discourse analysis in Chapter 4.

3.4 Preliminary Data Analysis

Adeola, is a 21-year-old Nigerian-South African, currently pursuing postgraduate studies at the University of Cape Town. Her father is Nigerian, and her mother is South African. She moved to South Africa after her primary school years, because her parents had split up and her mother wanted to move back home. Upon her arrival in South Africa, she initially found it hard to integrate:

I spoke with a heavy Lagos accent. I had a lot of Nigerian mannerisms and I was not used to being around white people. I think language was the biggest barrier, I would try and make friends, but black South Africans tend to speak in their home language in social settings, although my mom is South African. She is coloured so I didn't share that.

She goes on further to explain her initial experiences of racial integration being culturally strange, as she attended schools in central Pretoria. She mentions feeling like a "token black person" while being friends with white South African kids. However, over time she gravitated towards being friends with non-South Africans as she "needed friends who just spoke English all the time and didn't expect me to know their kwaito references or watch Generations." This comment speaks to the importance of language being a tool of inclusion that "race just does not make up for". She states that a lot of her friends currently are West African, and it is a community that she feels safe in, as her mother encouraged her to so that she would not lose touch with her roots. However, on the sixth question on whether she feels integrated in South Africa, she states:

Not at all. I am South African, but I do not feel like it... sometimes I feel coloured like when I am around family, but to the world, I don't look it so I'm black, but my blackness clashes with this monolithic idea of blackness that is pervasive in this country. I guess a lot of it is by choice because to integrate you must decide to integrate... like if I decided to learn isiZulu it would be easier for me. But I am not sure that is fully true, as I have a lot of friends who have made that decision to integrate and it is like, your 'Nigerian-ness' is inescapable. It will never be enough.

Building on these sentiments, Adeola does not see herself permanently settling in South Africa, reasons being that she wants to be "somewhere that I feel like I belong, somewhere people do not get burned bi-monthly for their immigration status". Relating to instances on facing discrimination for being West African, she recounts an experience with a Home Affairs official that insinuated that her passport was fake and that she should not lie about being South African. She has both Nigerian and South African citizenship. The ability for different identities to intersect has limitations, as she sees the power dynamics in recognising one nationality over another.

Mary is 28, from Osun State in Nigeria, and moved to South Africa in 2013 to pursue her master's degree at Stellenbosch University. She is currently working. Before moving to South Africa, she received support from a family friend based in Johannesburg, who also supported her move to Stellenbosch. Initially, she was unable to communicate or speak to others, as she arrived before the start of the academic activities at her tertiary institution. Her first interactions started as students started coming back to campus, and through church activities. University provided a starting point for connection to other West Africans. Through the Association of Nigerian Students at Stellenbosch University (ANSSU), church, and classroom interactions, she was able to meet other Nigerians, and create new connections. However, she notes that she has had strong roots with home beforehand:

I think I'm someone who wouldn't forget my roots, so whether I joined the Association or not, I hold Nigeria in high esteem, so that's something very dear to me. However, joining ANSSU, reinforces that spirit in me, to be able to meet with other Nigerians, it is kind of mixed feelings, because you review things said about Nigerians overseas. You might get worried or frustrated, but it does

not change who we are. I believe coming together makes us more united, but it doesn't take away from the negative experiences about who we are.

According to Falicov (2005), a cultural attachment can be mediated through family, friends, and the communities one involves oneself in. The formation of student associations based on national identities helps to cultivate a sense of belonging and community amongst those in a new and unfamiliar environment. In most cases, the celebration of independence days, social outings, and sports matches are some activities that create linkages and sustain familiarity to home. It is also spaces in which home languages are spoken, as there is a high chance that other members from the society speak the same language. The linguistic benefits and reproduction of cultural modes of belonging are important aspects of identity being operationalised in new contexts. Moreover, those that would be considered outsiders (in Mary's case, South Africans, or non-Nigerians), may also have an interest in being part of the association. This is a form of soft power, whereby stereotypes or prejudices about the group may be disproven once they form part of the association or participate in their activities. However, there is the other side of the argument, where one's ethnic identity informs assumptions about one's culture. Mary delves into the nuances of her experiences of integration by pointing out that South Africans not only ask if she is Nigerian but also which ethnic grouping, she is part of. By doing so it creates a classification that pre-determines the type of person that you are:

When they are asking you which tribe you are from they are bringing in issues of...we are just trying to check that you are not a fraudster, you are not into this, are you sure you do not like money, oh you guys are the ones that like money, you're the ones who like books, then they begin to give classes and give strata's for each tribe, and... we know this for ourselves and in Nigeria, but to see people from other countries start to class us according to this, like they pick it up, it's really I don't know...

Perceptions of cultural and ethnic identity are intertwined when the latter can inform the former. The idea put forward by Keller (2014) of socio-cultural identity being more fluid than political and economic identities is challenged, as determining characteristic behaviour based on ethnicity is a limitation based on othering. The ability of South Africans to notice the different traits amongst Nigerian ethnic groupings, as pointed out by Mary, may be due to the commonality in Africa's political systems being developed according to Mamdani's definition of national and subnational citizenship. South Africa is not a stranger to treating its citizens as

outsiders, as ethnic groupings are markers of difference amongst the population. The creation of Apartheid's homelands was modelled on national territories but required overarching simplifications of ethnicity and race to subjugate certain populations of South Africans to designated areas (Klotz: 2016). As a result, complicated questions surrounding citizenship post-1994 arose, as the administrative existence of ethnic groupings carried over into a new non-racialised South Africa. Distinguishing between ethnic groupings within a foreigner's nationality functions is used to compartmentalise normative understandings of foreigners. Furthermore, it acts as a subconscious justification for making overgeneralised positive or negative assumptions about individuals. This reinforces similar exclusionary practices from national policies on an individual level.

When asked about whether she would settle permanently in South Africa, Mary mentions that change is inevitable and constant. However, at the end of the day, there is no place like home, but it seems like she would stay if she were occupied and has legitimate reasons to remain and work in the country. Mary points out that perceptions have an indirect impact on how people see an individual's identity, and this can present limitations. Concerning travel, she notes that although her Nigerian passport affects her mobility, a defining characteristic of Nigerian migrants is that movement plays a part in their identity.

Adwoa, 22, is a recent UCT Management Studies graduate and Ghanaian. She moved to South Africa in the 1990s, when her father came to Cape Town to pursue higher education. Although born in Ghana, she has lived in South Africa her whole life. She "didn't really find it difficult integrating to South Africa", as she had done all her schooling in South Africa. Identifying herself as being dark-skinned and tall, she noted that she did not see many people that looked like her, in addition to being one of the only foreigners within her classroom and schooling environment. In response to the third question asking about connections to other West African families in South Africa, she indicated that:

Many families from Ghana came to South Africa around the same time my parents did. Many of them went to university together back in Ghana. All the children grew up together, so it was always nice to have people to relate to and understand your life. There is always a sense of community.

A strong pull factor for other West Africans to come to South Africa is the existing population in the country. According to Petkou (2005), his research findings indicated that 61% of Cameroonians and 95% of Nigerians had friends and/or relatives in South Africa before

arriving (Petkou, 2005:111). Building on this, she said that for the most part, she feels integrated into South Africa, albeit people being able to tell that she is not from here and ask her where she is from. Additionally, she notes that she cannot speak any of the official languages fluently and does sometimes feel left out. Language is an important tool for integration, as it forms part of creating a common identity (Vertovec, 2001). The ability to speak the local language opens a different world of understanding that can create more positive opportunities for integration. An example of this is seen in Germany, where all refugees are required to take a compulsory integration course. They are taught not only German, but also aspects of German culture, including an overview of German geography, politics, and history (Federal Office for Immigrants and Refugees [BAMF], 2016).

Despite having lived in South Africa for nearly all of her life, Adwoa does not see herself settling in South Africa permanently. This is due to “the economy, corruption and crime” being the main factors. Her parents are looking to move back to Ghana soon, as they see South Africa is going down, in contrast to their positive perception of South Africa when they initially arrived. She has both Ghanaian and South African citizenship and points out that she makes it known to people when initially meeting them. From a cultural perspective, “both countries have had a huge impact on my life and have made me who I am today”.

Lionel, 22, is from Ghana and moved to South Africa to pursue an education. When faced with the first question of the initial experiences of integration in South Africa, he states that:

There is no such thing as integration when you are constantly alienated for having darker skin, ‘funny’ names, different accents, and ‘peculiar’ facial and body features.

Questioning the nature of integration from his personal experience, he expands further by saying that cultivating a shared sense of belonging in this space is not currently realistic. However, South Africa presents opportunities better than back home. He mentions a specific instance where he was arrested and falsely charged by a police officer after not responding in isiZulu, “a language I had no clue about even when it was spoken to me”. The police officer in Lionel’s recollection “did not care whether I understood or not and said demeaning things about foreigners”.

The interaction between law enforcement and foreigners in South Africa is a topic that is highly reported in media and academia. Incidents of xenophobia are spread out over a continuous

timeline, whereby predominately African migrants living in urban spaces in South Africa face overt forms of discrimination. It can vary from extreme forms of physical violence, with deliberated targeting resulting in property damage, to having tumultuous experiences at Home Affairs. Amnesty International (2019) reported on the systemic xenophobic violence still evident in South Africa:

Businesses belonging to Nigerians and other foreign nationals were targeted in two cities, Johannesburg, and Pretoria, with stock and possessions worth millions burnt to ashes. The violence escalated dramatically during the first week of September following confrontations between locals and foreigners, marked by horrific attacks and killings. The government has largely failed to address past xenophobic violent outbreaks across the country, instead often continuing to scapegoat foreign nationals by claiming they are responsible for high levels of crime, putting a strain on government services and operating illegal businesses.

Lionel remained succinct with his answers, as he answered the final question about what the impact of being South African would be on his identity. He notes that more doors will open if he were to obtain South African citizenship, but that he would still “be treated like every other foreigner”.

Donna, 23, is a Nigerian who grew up in South Africa for most of her life. She attended school in Johannesburg and is currently pursuing her master’s at UCT, after completing her undergraduate and honours degrees. Both her parents currently live in Nelspruit, Mpumalanga, and moved to South Africa to find better economic opportunities about 25 years ago. However, she was born in Swaziland since her parents moved through Southern Africa before arriving in South Africa. This was because the easiest point of entry for her father to South Africa was through Harare, and then to Swaziland. She has a Nigerian passport, a Swati Birth Certificate, and has South African permanent residence. In critiquing the South African citizenship application process, she states that in the global context, South African permanent residence is only valid for identification within the country. The default nationality is Nigerian when outside South Africa, yet South Africa is the country she has lived in the longest and has a deeper connection to. In making these points, she states that “...the process of naturalisation is as if you are in a state of being unnatural... where you now revoke your citizenship from your country of origin...”.

She points out nuances in her experiences as a humanities graduate and how her identity affects decisions surrounding her studies and prospects:

If you are not a doctor or an engineer, you need to go all the way to PhD so that they can consider you critical to staying in the country and be able to get a job... To get your permanent residence you basically must be on a critical skills visa. If I did not get my permanent residence before entering university, I do not know how my parents would have been able to pay international fees for my tuition. It's almost as if they (South African Home Affairs) use anything they can think of it to prevent anyone from staying here.

Prioritising the retention of international students with specific skills is not a new strategy. International students studying in South Africa and leaving thereafter is seen as a loss on the return of an investment from a state perspective. Furthermore, international students with critical skills are a way to close gaps in the domestic labour market. However, skills deemed favourable are those garnered from studies geared towards occupations needed by the South African economy. This is Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related fields, which are seen more than other fields as a direct form of transferable skills. In the 2017 White Paper on International Migration in South Africa (Department of Home Affairs, 2017), the ability for migrants to remain in the country relies less on constitutional rights, but on an exclusionary point-based framework under the guise of being a meritocracy:

In South Africa, there is a misconception that immigrants have a constitutional right to progress towards permanent residency or citizenship status (naturalisation). A sovereign state has the prerogative to determine who enters its territory, control migration patterns relating to the country and enact laws to regulate such migration. States also have the right to protect themselves from risks, such as the entry and stay of fugitives from justice who are linked to organised crime.

Those that are viewed as less desirable are limited in their ability to navigate spaces and opportunities within the country. This does little to facilitate a broader process of transnationalism. Selecting aspects of globalisation that are towards the betterment of national development create a schism between what is good for citizens versus what is good for non-

citizens. This oversimplifies the approach of migration policy in attempting to determine which migrants are beneficial for South African development, and which are detrimental.

Concerning reflections surrounding integration and community, Donna further expounds on overlapping identities used for designation to certain groups, where acknowledging privilege and marginalisation can overlap:

I've grown up here my entire life, this is my home, everything that I know...like you realise you don't mean anything to them, and it does not make sense. My parents literally gave me access to certain privileges, so I do not experience xenophobia in ways that other people have, and I have been dealing with a lot of guilt around that. If I didn't go to the public school I went to, if I didn't live in the area in Cape Town that I currently do, I didn't speak a certain way, if I weren't at UCT, I can see how I would be treated like other migrants facing ongoing violence. This is not your home. For a long time, I felt like I did belong, but over time and growing older I'm realising certain experiences are making me come to terms with realities...there is this othering that takes place socially that you can't hide from ...and it's strange.

Emily, 22, is an honours graduate from UCT, studying Gender and Transformation. She was born in Lagos, Nigeria, and moved to South Africa when she was seven years old. South Africa has been her home for 15 years, and she first moved to Johannesburg where a South African man provided her family with a place to stay, along with a school to go to (the school was part of a church). Throughout her primary and high school days, integration through assimilation into a place that did not want her affected her. She grew up detached to her cultural identity as a Nigerian, it was only as she got older that she started to lean more into it:

I've grown in a sense of who I am as a Nigerian person. I remember coming to university – like, I spent my whole high school not doing anything Nigerian, not listening to Nigerian music, it was just a foreign place to me. In fact, I remember being young trying to assimilate - you know how in Nigeria we wear Ankara dresses? So, we brought all that stuff to South Africa and I came here, and I just did not want to wear it because I knew I would be pointed out as being foreign. I knew part of the reason I was kind of looked at funny was because of the fact that I was from another African country.

Emily talks about the contribution's migrants make to South Africa, and addresses the idea of equating criminality to foreigners:

You know, when I think of this statement about foreigners committing crimes in South Africa, I think that statement just makes me uncomfortable. I am not trying to deny that foreign immigrants commit crimes, but I think it is just dishonest to frame it that way. I do not think South Africa has a problem of African immigrants coming to their countries to commit crimes, I think South Africa has a crime problem, full stop. And that is just what needs to be tackled instead of... And it's very disappointing when I see political figures use that.

She goes on to talk about her experiences as a foreign black woman living in South Africa:

I don't only feel unsafe because I'm an immigrant, I also feel unsafe because I'm Black and I'm a woman. Like today I was just thinking to myself, like, I have become so paranoid about my safety, it is crazy. I feel so so so unsafe. Like with what happened with the girl who's missing right now, and I read through the tweets about her name and I remembered a story of another girl, her name was Karabo, who also went missing last year and she hasn't been found. And I have noticed it has become... I am picking up on the fact that a lot of young Black women are going missing and nothing is happening. I went to bed last night feeling so unsafe, feeling so down, thinking I need to leave this place because this place-, it's actually damaged me because I've become so paranoid about my safety and security.

The experience of being simultaneously black and a woman in South Africa raises the issue that foreign black women sit at the nexus of two important issues. The link between gender and the experience of xenophobia is evident, where Emily's safety could be targeted for either her gender or nationality or both. Women remain vulnerable in South African society, due in part the lack of infrastructural response to gender-based violence. Emily's concluding remarks during the interview shows her contemplating whether she would ever return to Nigeria. She talks about giving back to the country through women empowerment and providing safe spaces for young women. Acknowledging that an idealistic part of her wants to complete the Nigerian

Youth Service Corps (NYSC¹). She is still not sure if this is what she wants once she finishes her studies in South Africa.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an interpretative overview of the historical legacy of othering in the South African context, regarding contemporary examples of racialisation. This set the background for the research methodology, which explained the qualitative methods of data collection. Demographic details of the respondents were provided, along with preliminary data analysis based on the transcription of the interviewee's responses. In the next chapter, a detailed discussion of the interview responses will be provided utilising transnationalism as the analytical framework. Additionally, detailed research findings will be discovered through thematic discussions on identity to provide answers to the dissertation research objectives.

¹ The NYSC is a programme set up by the Nigerian government that requires recent graduates under the age of thirty to be trained for non-combative service. Once they complete their training, they are deployed to one of the thirty-six states to utilise their training and education to serve the country through civic duties. Source available: <https://www.nysc.gov.ng/>

CHAPTER 4: CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide the analysis required to interpret the qualitative data from the interviews conducted. The impact of COVID-19 limited the sample size of the study to six respondents. The analysis will be divided into three main thematic discussions derived from the theoretical and conceptual framework discussed in Chapter 2: the tenets of identity, integration versus assimilation, and transnationalism versus West-a-phobia.

The first part of the analysis will examine the respondent's interviews relevant to the three different types of identity: political, economic, and cultural. Vertovec (2001) states that the underpinning value of identity relates to people's participation in multiple forms of exchange. This means that individuals reflect the markers of each respective identity through their decisions to be involved in different social worlds. The second discussion will look at features of othering, breaking it down through concepts such as integration and racialisation. The theorisations of integration and othering will be highlighted, as this will set the precedent for the comparative analysis of the respondent's experiences. The third section will analyse the relationship between West-a-phobia and transnationalism, by highlighting theoretical similarities and gaps in each of the socio-economic phenomena. This theoretical breakdown will be framed by the second research objective, which is to re-examine conceptualisations of integration within a nation-state.

4.2 The Tenets of Identity: Intersecting or Isolated?

4.2.1 Political Identity

As established in Chapter 1, national identity is construed as belonging to a certain group and feeling a particular connection to a geographic area (Xiaomei & Shimin, 2014). Political identity, however, is a confirmation of an individual's political legitimacy, as their interests are systematically represented. This is recognised as being quantifiable through political participation and homogenous value consciousness. However, the relationship between the political sphere and identity is often set with the assumption of discussions surrounding citizenship and the population belonging to the national body. Those that are categorised as being on the outskirts of the national discussion create questions surrounding the identifiable markers of being included. Proactively engaging in civic discourse and interacting with the state can cultivate a positive or negative political will.

The six respondents are from Nigeria and Ghana, with four (Donna, Mary, Emily and Adeola) from Nigeria and two (Adwoa and Lionel) from Ghana. Adeola is both South African and Nigerian, with her father being Nigerian and her mother being South African. Three of the respondents have south African citizenship either through naturalisation (Emily and Adwoa) or through birth right (Adeola). National identity is expressed through an individual's ability to participate in political systems and cultural institutions that represent their identification with the nation-state (Xiaomei & Shimin, 2014). Despite some respondents attaining South African citizenship, their political will to identify with the country remains low. The evidence shows that although the individual can legitimately identify as a South African, there are reservations about seeing the country as a home. Respondent Emily discusses her internal conflict of identifying with South Africa. She was born in Lagos, Nigeria, and has been a naturalised South African citizen for 15 years. Regardless of being South African, she feels disconnected from identifying as such, due to the negativity by which African migrants are viewed and treated in South Africa:

I feel like every time I've grown comfortable with calling this country my home, something happens, and I'm just shaken to the core (and reminded) that this is not your home, and I'm just reminded and saddened at the fact that I can't even go back home [Nigeria], you know? If anything happens here, I'm a naturalised citizen, I have a South African ID (Identity Document), but I just don't feel safe, and it's sad because I can't go back home because home is literally going down the drain. And it just makes me sad because a lot of the times, maybe because they're unaware of just how hard life is for the African immigrants who have left their country, that is why I feel it's easy for some of them to make certain comments.

Emily's reflection on attitudes towards African foreigners in South Africa corroborates with media depictions. Tewolde (2020) wrote a piece titled "Does legal citizenship actually make one a South African?" and highlights the disjuncture between how citizenship is viewed socially, and how it is legally defined. Although there is an entitlement to certain rights and privileges, there is not a guarantee of being a South African due to visible differentiation through factors such as physicality, language, accent, and clothing attire. In the political sphere, the representation of foreigners is framed according to their potential contribution to the economy, or their negative impact on national development. Politicians claim that foreigners

are to blame for high crime rates and the hardships experienced by poor South Africans (Heleta, 2019). A transnational migrant's ability to have a political identity based on the country of relocation becomes limited due to negative interactions with citizens and the state. National political integration through anti-immigrant rhetoric fails to include those that fall at the nexus of insider and outsider dynamics.

Comparatively, respondent Adwoa was born in Ghana but has spent most of her life in South Africa since the early 1990s. Through the process of naturalisation, Adwoa received South African citizenship, and she highlights positive aspects of representing both Ghana and South Africa. She expresses this by saying:

I am already a South African citizen. When meeting people, I always make it known that I am both Ghanaian and South African. Both countries and cultures have had a huge impact on my life and have made me who I am today.

National identity in South Africa contains inherent contradictions within the politics of recognition and representation (Nyamnjoh, 2006). However, in the case of Adwoa, her South African identity is seen as complementary to her Ghanaian heritage. The question of representation is through the individual's choice. Emily and Adwoa highlight that there is a multi-dimensional approach to transnational migrants' political identity.

4.2.2 Economic Identity

Different economic factors influence a person's decision to migrate and these factors contribute to shaping the identity of migrants. The role of remittances, transnational monetary flows, and the differentiation in skill level influences economic identity for a migrant. This is due to global integration becoming a central tenet in defining the movement of goods and services (Hollifield, 2004). For the movement of people, the labour market is an economic area where migrants are in demand. This, in turn, influences a migrant's decision to move to a different country and assess the benefits of accessing opportunities. The proposition put forward by transnationalism highlights that the economic activities surrounding migration are associated with development and internationalisation on a macro level. Yet, the decisions that highlight economic identity pertains to a migrant's pre-determined value. Factors such as the type of migration (forced or voluntary), skills, and the intention of being either temporarily or permanently residing, can influence the capacity for economic identity to be an enabler or hindrance for the integration of migrants within a society.

Economic factors influenced the respondents' motivations to move to South Africa. For instance, Lionel's motivation for moving to South Africa was for the chance to pursue quality education. Similarly, for Mary, the opportunity to receive a quality higher level of education was a major impetus to study at Stellenbosch University:

Coming here to study was fascinating because its different from what you get back home and that's what people need to know about Nigeria. There are a lot of things failing us back home and that's why people step out of the country to get a better version of what they probably don't have access to. There's worth and value and something they are searching for that they find here, that helps you as a student. You don't have to own a laptop to survive [here in South Africa], there are computer labs, and resources.

For many transnational migrants, higher levels of education are a major determinant for transnational migrants looking to improve their quality of life. Africa's youth have high levels of unemployment, with dire socioeconomic conditions triggering the emigration of skilled and unskilled people (Oyebamiji & Asuelime, 2018). Despite having better infrastructure than most African countries, South Africa's low prospects for development already set the precedent for how foreign nationals create linkages through an economic identity. The correlation between African migrants being a hindrance towards national economic development has a polarising effect on who is allowed access to economic benefits and who deserves to receive it. Receiving university-level education in South Africa is a form of upskilling West African migrants, like Mary, who intends to leverage this to access better resources for her socioeconomic development without being dependent on unavailable resources from the state.

4.2.3 Cultural and Ethnic Identity

Poignant aspects of cultural identity are brought up by the respondents. The definition provided in Chapter 1 looked at the role of ethnic identity in influencing political spheres and failed to expound on specifics. Through a transnational lens, socio-cultural connections and values are re-circulated and re-invigorated in new spaces. Donna talks about the importance of cultural identity through clothing attire:

Nigeria has a rich history of traditional clothing that is passed down, and there is distinct clothing from each tribe that has a dress code and cultural significance. My friends will always comment on "you always look like you

put so much effort into your appearance”. When it comes to dress sense and fashion, Nigeria and South Africa are inherently different. Tie and dye originated from my mum’s area in Nigeria that we taught to the English, and we have the culture of making clothing, buying material, and sewing. It’s a sad thing, because South Africans don’t have much they maintain from their culture through clothing. It is not something that is worn on only one specific day, like Heritage Day here in South Africa, traditional Nigerian clothing is worn as a means of everyday expression. The only time you’ll really see Nigerians wearing Western clothing is to assimilate into South African society, and to not stand out as much. That is the extent to which colonialism and Apartheid have erased a certain aspect of cultural identity. There are cultural modes of expression pumped into mainstream media, and you see my traditional clothing as a costume, wearing certain items the wrong way.

Donna’s interpretation of cultural identity through clothing presents a comparison between South Africa and Nigeria. There is a distinction between Nigerian attire being a normalised representation of cultural awareness, while South African cultural attire is seen as something for a specific occasion. Due to Nigerian attire being easily identifiable as such, the visible association could be negative for migrants living in South Africa that choose to wear cultural attire from home. Such sentiments are captured in Banda and Adetomokun’s 2015 study on the cultural identities of Nigerian students living in Cape Town. Cultural identities in South Africa are not fixed in a monolithic representation directly from Nigeria. Cultural identity can transform over time due to re-interpretations of past narratives surrounding its own history. Such narratives adapted by young Nigerians can reveal perspectives and their expectations for the future, their beliefs, and personal philosophy (Banda & Adetomokun, 2015:88). By people choosing to express their cultural identity, a process of negotiation takes place between West African migrants and their home of origin, in what cultural representations are legitimised or challenged.

Emily also provided examples of how cultural identity was a complex space of navigation for her living in South Africa. She acknowledges differentiation in clothing between the two countries, and how it affected her ability to assimilate:

I come from Kempton Park, and there are a lot of Nigerians in Kempton Park.
I don’t think there were a lot of us in my area, but I don’t think we formed a

society. It's not as though my parents tried to detach us, 'because you know sometimes parents make their kids assimilate by trying to distance themselves from...it wasn't like that with us. My parents, they were even irritated at the fact that we were not trying to wear our Ankara, my mum will still dress in her traditional clothing when she's going to church on Sunday, and my dad also. And I'm thinking, "Guys, this is South Africa, it's not Nigeria where you have to show up and show out every Sunday. Just wear jeans, wear a t-shirt, wear flip flops, go to church!" And they still dress up, so it's not like they're trying to hide it. So, with them, there's nothing that they're trying to make us do to make us connect to back home, however, they have told us that they're disappointed that we don't know how to speak our language [Yoruba], and I'm thinking, "Well, whose fault is that?"

Donna and Emily's experience of language and clothing as markers of cultural identity highlights the differing value placed on certain cultural ideals. Where clothing is a point of pride and distinction from other South Africans for Donna, the ability to assimilate is more important for Emily. Their viewpoints cannot be considered a moralistic debate between which is right and wrong, but a question of how to embrace certain cultural aspects into their identity, and which are appropriated or disregarded. This can be regarded as a tenet of transnationalism, termed 'cultural hybridity', whereby their experiences of being both Nigerian and South African influences their decision to adopt specific cultural characteristics according to external influential factors such as their environment. Hybridity "encompasses partial identities, multiple roles, and pluralistic selves", whereby exposure to globalised ways of living and cultural remnants create a hybrid identity (Nyongesa, 2018:5). A combination of choice and obligation can inform the decision to include parts of their culture into their overarching identity.

4.3 Integration versus Assimilation: Paradoxical Contrivances of Belonging and Othering

A critical examination of migrants' integration status in South Africa shows that 'racialised othering' is an ongoing process. Dahinden (2010) argued that this phenomenon positions the idea of mobility and locality. The author defines mobility as the physical movement across borders, and locality is the ability to be socially, economically, or politically rooted in the country of immigration. Remaining mobile as a migrant is linked directly to how adjusted countries are in their migration policies towards the integration of foreigners, and future

possibilities for transnational movement. The work of Sheth (2009) and Boccagni, Lafleur & Levitt (2016) highlight the features of the state that choose to stratify or mobilise the population according to their definition of citizens and non-citizens. Supporting this argument within the African context is the work of Fourchard and Segatti (2015), whose discussion on the manufacturing of difference in the political landscape influences all different key actors, from the state apparatus to civil society and its organisations in the African political landscape. In the South African context, the selection of immigrants allowed to integrate is tied to criteria of productivity, class, wealth, and potential skills (Peberdy, 2001). Despite legal processes of acquiring citizenship, permanent residence, or visas as a point of entry into South Africa, negative consequences of othering and systemic discrimination towards African foreigners are enabled through the same system.

Adeola talks about being South African, and how being of West African descent is as a negator to feeling fully integrated:

I don't think I'll ever be integrated and for me, it's difficult because like one part of your identity is silenced in public discourse and the other part is always talked about negatively. Sometimes I wonder what integration even looks like, because I can clearly point to my roots... my mother's township, my grandfather's experiences of forced removals, my great grandmother's experiences of migrant labour. All of that is where I come from but it's not enough only because my father is Nigerian and my name is Nigerian, so there's no way to look around it.

Adeola's experience of feeling like a foreigner in her home country ties in with previous scholars' work, Chandia and Hart (2016). This article followed Chandia's journey of being a South African citizen with Ugandan origins. Despite being born in South Africa and growing up in the Transkei, her identity was devalued due to her being visibly identifiable as an African foreigner. Integrating was not easy, as she had fears of being denied Constitutional rights as a citizen. However, integration as a concept can be challenged, as its meaning in traditional and contemporary understandings of transnational migration are two different things. The former denotes a linear process of arriving and settling permanently. The latter, however, may have less to do the physical process of integrating and more about belonging to a political community that represents your interests. Moreover, the respondents' answers show their idea of being integrated in South Africa as the ability to navigate different social fields effectively. Evidence

shows although one has the tools to navigate different social fields, there are still barriers to claiming space due to othering behavioural patterns exhibited from South Africans. Donna discussed her schooling experience in South Africa, and the challenges she faced attempting to assimilate at a young age.

In school, I felt like I always had to defend myself and my brother because we were being reprimanded for having an attitude. When a lot of it related to how we stood out from everyone else. We were being bullied in school, being made fun of...we went to school at a time when Africa Magic [a television channel with Nigerian movies] was popular. When people were watching Aki and Pawpaw, and South Africans were really into it, their notions of Nigeria were highly influenced by what they would see through these media representations. We would go to school and kids would comment and say, "Oh, we watched this movie, and we know what you guys eat in your house". We [my brother and I] were very big boned. The physicality was different, South African kids were small and grew differently. South Africans would have the stature of a 6-year-old but are nine years old. When you stand next to them, you will have a bigger frame than most people...in Grade 5 that was when I noticed my growth spurt and became tall. I will never forget I got stretch marks on my knees and I was taller than everyone...I was taller than most guys and my friends.

Donna's experience as being visibly identifiable as an outsider correlates with Adeola's own, in how their names and physicality made them stand out. Sheth's conceptualisation of othering touches on this through what is termed as 'racialisation' of a population. There is an indication of this theorisation when Donna touches on how media representation can create a certain caricature that ascribes certain behaviours seen on television shows to an entire group. By using broad characteristics to define a group, certain features that were selected for entertainment value when showcasing Nigerians in media end up excluding historical context. What is shown is then used to enact what Sheth calls de-alienation, and inadvertently creates fallible discrepancies when categorising different groups of people.

Mary, having grown up in Nigeria much longer than the other respondents, provides her perspective on understanding racialisation in the South African context:

So, what I think about the issue of race is that it does not only affect South Africans, and they've sort of extended it to those of us who are foreigners

because we didn't have that kind of conception. So, when we arrive, they say that because you are black you cannot go to these areas, you cannot do this, even though we aren't in Apartheid, it's there and it stays with you... yeah, I don't know if it does a lot of good or if there's any aim or purpose but it just... I think it can kill the spirit of a person who is not confident or having an identity crisis... if you have got an inferiority complex it might be difficult to stand up for yourself. For example, if you are a student you might say this particular thing is for those people, then I cannot get it. It takes a lot of confidence and courage for people who are said to be black to be able to go for things that other races go for. Because if you use that reasoning that because you are black you cannot go for it, you will not be able to compete and have that ambitious spirit that you generally find in most West African citizens. It might be affected.

Mary, through assimilating into South African society over time, understands how earlier barriers of entry for South Africans still play a role for the previously disadvantaged, and how that framework is also applied to non-South Africans. Institutional dimensions affect individual choices to belong to a certain group and supply a larger backdrop to discovering how othering is a layered progression influenced by the context in which it takes place. The fourth proposition of transnationalism in South Africa reiterates that migration is a process that changes over time (Crush & MacDonald, 2000). As migration shifts, so does the state apparatus, whether it is reactionary or fluid to adapt to changing needs and issues. Emily ponders on whether being in another country would have affected how she integrated into a host country and the ability to find a community:

You know, I've asked myself, like, why didn't my dad move to London? Because if he moved to England, by now I would have my blue passport or whatever colour it is [laughs]. I just connect with the place, and it's not that there's no racism there, it's not that there's no xenophobia there – there is. I'm aware of it. But I just feel like the community there is just different. I, as a Nigerian, I would never feel isolated or out of place, you know? So, on Twitter, I follow a lot of Nigerian Americans, Nigerian British, and I follow a lot of Nigerians too (on social media), so I get Nigerian news first. And sometimes I feel so bad for the non-Nigerian people that follow me because that's just what I'm constantly retweeting on Twitter.

Emily creating her own transnational space on the internet is not a unique phenomenon, as studies have shown how the internet is a tool for the advancement of migrant networks and activities driven by globalisation. Online activities can be spheres of interaction and can be a mode for expressing one's identity by bridging national and cultural borders (Kissau & Hunger, 2010). The construction of a shared space helps transnational migrants discover diasporic cultures that stay connected to their country of origin through online chat groups, blogs, and social media. Through online communities, people like Emily are not only gain a sense of belonging, but also the validity of their identity through visibility in online public spaces, and not see structures such as the state as the only source of legitimisation. This is a form of transnationalism, as technologies of transnational connection become a part of border-crossing consciousness that constructs a social world without the limitations of distance or proximity (Robertson, 2013:139).

4.4 Transnationalism versus West-a-phobia: Limitations of the Nation-state

There are inconsistent theorisations of the state and its aims surrounding issues of migration. Transnationalism and West-a-phobia are both constructions that displace the other in their origins. Transnationalism is a theory that works on the assumption that there is more than one type of political, economic, and social exchange taking place in different countries. Identity-conditioning factors are part of the process, yet they do not solely define the phenomena, as transnationalism shifts according to multiple contexts and overlapping engagement by individuals and communities. However, defining West-a-phobia solely in relation to an identity, as the descriptor of difference in the word itself highlights the antagonistic nature of the process. Juxtaposed against the functions and the nature of the state, this becomes a complex space to navigate for the West African migrants in South Africa.

Despite widespread antagonistic views of African migrants, respondents perceived South Africa as a favourable place within Africa to live in. Emily noted that the comparatively better conditions in South Africa are the underlying reason for staying, despite still wanting to go back home:

I want to go back [to Nigeria]. I just want to see my grandmother because I know she's old, and she's probably going to pass on very soon, so I just want to... But then at the same time, I want to go and make sure she is comfortable, but I am not at that position yet because I am just a student. So, I just hope she is alive until I am something. I do not even mean something big and great; I

just want her to be alive when I become something. Because of the way she is living right now is just not ideal. And then also her living in a country where there's not good access to healthcare, and her being by herself – because my mother has siblings that just do not care that their mother is...you know? So, whenever I think about her, I am just worried about her safety, health. So, my mum is considering bringing her here and I think it would even be better, honestly.

Pondering on the possibility of whether Nigeria would be a safe space for Emily's family in the long run becomes an influencing factor in determining whether to remain or stay in South Africa. Additionally, the aspiration of an improved quality of life underpins the reasons for migrants to move around – the welfare of their family being a particularly motivating factor. Falicov (2007) posits that there are emotional costs of transnationalism to consider, where the stress of separation between relatives across different countries takes a toll on communal structures. The transformation of the family structure often means that remittances and transferring resources are inadequate in giving needed support. As a result, family reunification is a solution to giving structural capital. In Emily's case, this means giving her grandmother access to consistent long-term healthcare, as opposed to occasional medicinal resources. However, she mentions that being a student is a limitation to giving her family the support she would prefer. Scholars such as Robertson (2013) say that due to an education-migration nexus, there are complexities within the experience of those studying whilst being a foreigner. There are different types of transnational migrants, where some are more flexible in their ability to move and give more resources. Student migrants face limitations in their ability to give back, however, as mentioned before, Emily is both South African and Nigerian through naturalisation and birth, respectively. Despite her dual citizenship, Emily's negative experience of being a transnational migrant is clear in the limited flexibility of integrating into more than one space. Mary pointed out the distinctive feelings of being Nigerian in South Africa and how negative feelings of Nigerians affected her mobility. According to Mary, these feelings and associated attitudes towards Nigeria have indirect impacts on how people see and treat individual Nigerians living in South Africa:

There is scrutiny when Nigerians travel; to make sure that you're not bringing in trouble, that everything is safe and that the coast is clear. When you as a person, that your hands are clean, you're going to study or for a conference,

and you also have to pass through; that's scrutiny because you're Nigerian, and it's something to be aware of.

The state enables this attitude, by aggrandising a suspicious, protectionist nature through its various officials that work for branches of government service. This includes institutions such as Home Affairs and South African Police Service (SAPS), and they are not fully accounted for when discussing the reasons as to why there is no clear direction on state-led integration policies. South Africa's White Paper on International Migration notes that "South Africa has not adopted a clear and coherent integration policy for the integration of foreign nationals into the country's value system and population" (Department of Home Affairs, 2017). Consequently, there is a lack of common vision in the value of international migration, and South Africa still being "a nation in formation" (Department of Home Affairs, 2017). However, this is a covert correlation between migrants entering the country and the potential for unmitigated risks when discussing the creation of integration policies. Underlying biases and assumptions about foreigners showcase the limitations of the state in taking responsibility to establish inclusive institutional mechanisms. Disguising West-a-phobia under problem statements of migrants posing security and economic risks shows how the state prioritises an exclusionary form of nationalism that does not re-imagine an inclusive South African state. With multiple realities existing for transnational migrants that belong to more than one country, there are inconsistencies in how certain groups of the population are treated in national policy. As a result, West African migrants that are in South Africa due to voluntary migration are presented with limited opportunities and reasons to stay and work or live in the country.

4.5 Conclusions and Future Prospects

One key finding from this dissertation is that the identities of each of the respondents cannot be neatly categorised. Overall, their ability to identify with South Africa remains a negative experience due to several barriers to integration. Community-based networks were reliant mainly on their circle of friends, or their immediate family (for those that were raised in South Africa). For those that arrived later in South Africa, formation of community was found through existing structures as church and university. Antagonistic portrayals of their West African origins hindered the ability to integrate into the nation-state on a micro and macro level. The ability to use their understanding of a transnational migrant influences how they interact with and navigate certain spaces. The enmeshment of transnational practices within national spaces, shows an ability to transform spaces designed for other purposes (Crush & MacDonald, 2000). Alternatively, technological advancements that make it easier to connect

with others has enabled the rise of a digital transnationalist space, for socio-economic and cultural discourse to take place across time zones and in different formats. However, all respondents to the interview showed that they have an interest in leaving South Africa for different reasons. The major reason is to seek greener pastures not only in socioeconomic opportunities but for the chance to escape the negative limitations placed on them. This corroborates with South African migration policy frameworks, which create legal barriers for foreigners to gain long-term opportunities of staying by gaining employment, housing, ID, etc. Additionally, prior research done on the experience of West African migrants living in South Africa has similar anecdotal evidence given by the respondents of this dissertation. As a result, new strategies for adaptation are paramount for West African migrants, as immigration and settlement on a larger scale are the precedent for defining transnationalism in the 21st century.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This dissertation has examined the multiple ways in which West African migrants living in South Africa contemplate their identities. A comprehensive literature review dissected the definition of ‘migration’ from a theoretical and historical perspective, historical context, in addition to a contextual analysis of migration in South Africa. West-a-phobia, coined by Petkou (2005) in his Ph.D. dissertation on West African migrants, refers to the struggles West Africans face and the economic strategies they employ. This term was used to explore the nuances and ask questions relating to the identity of West African migrants who have lived in South Africa for two years or more. Transnationalism theory analysis made it possible to deepen the understanding of the identity concept. I have addressed my primary research objectives by analysing the intersecting identities, from a theoretical standpoint and applying them in the South African context. The use of secondary sources and excerpts from the respondents’ answers confirmed existing theorisations of transnationalism but also created more nuanced ways of applying it due to everchanging discourse.

5.2 Research Findings

The research question asked: How do West African migrants’ identity interplay with transnational migration in the South African context?

Set against a conservative, yet broadly unspecific national migration policy, the prioritisation of migrants according to only their contribution to the economy creates limitations in expanding South African conceptualisations of citizenship. This dissertation has highlighted, through examples in legislation and the historical formation of the nation-state in South Africa, that othering as a process reframed the designation of insiders and outsiders changing according to shifts in group power dynamics. Furthermore, there have been examples in how the state inhibits identity, as the respondents felt a lack of cohesion and integration into South African society. First-hand negative experiences of being a foreigner, through physical identifiers (darker, taller, bigger, language barrier), played a role in how they felt othered. Other examples include covert forms of division where their name, notably seen as West African, would cast them in a negative light.

There is also evidence that there are layered discrepancies amongst the respondents. West African migrants experience transnationalism in different ways compared to those arriving in South Africa later in life. King and Christou (2010) talk about second-generation returnees having an idealised view of their homeland, where visits back to their country of origin reinforced a heightened sense of their identity formed in the country they grew acclimatised to. Homeland politics become a point of contention for migrants that are unsure of their intentions to return. Despite these contradicting feelings, respondents indicated through their anecdotal examples that there was a strong connection to their country of origin. This connection to the country of origin was expressed by wearing West African clothing, traveling back to visit family, communal activities amongst fellow West Africans within their networks, and online community engagement. The respondents indicated a need to leave South Africa, but not necessarily the need to return to their home country. The idea of belonging to a country that is foreign to them is not necessarily predicated on a strong alliance to the political, economic, and cultural identity of South Africa in its entirety. Instead, it is about taking different aspects that they relate to or strongly identify with and having the ability to incorporate them into their own conceptualisations of themselves and who they are. By doing so, this gives them leverage to navigate the wider scope of opportunities available to them by accepting different markers of identity according to their own benefit through a transnationalism perspective.

However, to take this further one must consider the possibility that the theoretical framework is limited in explaining exactly how identity intersects with transnationalism. To unpack transnationalism in the South African context the dimensions put forward by Crush and MacDonald (2000) need to be reframed; the juxtaposition of state-enforced exclusion needs to be taken into consideration whilst embracing the benefits of a global economy through a one-dimensional scope. Forming an identity against the backdrop of transnationalism whilst experiencing instances of West-a-phobia creates nuances and problems. Different layers of stratification expand citizenship beyond the idea of state-sanctioned nationality, West-a-phobia beyond face value discrimination, and transnationalism beyond physical movement. This is further complicated by the notion that identities are not monolithic, and the respondents use heterogenic ways to identify with being West African to navigate contextual situations. Countries like South Africa, which seemingly represent the better of the Global South in terms of development and opportunities in Africa, fail to capitalise on their hegemonic power for collaborative efforts of national integration. Consolidating migration policies would require a systematic rethinking of attitudes towards foreigners that remove covert forms of

stigmatisation and criminalisation. Respondent Lionel's experience with SAPS reflects this bigger issue whereby othering is legitimised through official state business. Transnationalism poses a threat to the idea that identity can solely be based on nationality. A symbiotic relationship between the different channels involved can facilitate the easier movement of people and create a holistic approach.

Many of the respondents indicated that they are highly cognisant of societal issues in South Africa. This is not only due to their individual experiences of West-a-phobia but through awareness of underlying complex problems within the country. The impact of Apartheid and colonisation had ramifications on the socialisation and integration of people, particularly in how groups of people viewed each other. Muposta and Kruetzfeldt (2016) discuss the techniques of difference used by the state. This creates overt and covert forms of othering to which foreigners feel excluded from being able to contribute to the national identity. Furthermore, it impacts the identity of where they came from; the need to assimilate takes a higher priority to survive and navigate different contextual spaces. Then an internal familial process of displacement occurs for migrants, whilst simultaneously taking on challenges in their personal capacity by choosing to work and study in South Africa. This becomes more complex for the West African migrants who have a South African heritage and have lived here for a longer period.

In his article on the fiction and reality of mobility in Africa, Nyamnjoh (2012:675) concludes that "how we make sense of the world and of one another depends on how we mediate mobility...any one's mobility can be accommodated to the extent that it is accommodating." The crux of this dissertation was to address whether transnationalism could effectively theorise the transnational lives of West African migrants that have lived in South Africa. By using key conceptualisations by Petkou, Crush, and MacDonald, and various other scholars, I believe that I have built further explorations of transnationalism through the nuanced experiences of the respondents. Without their input, the concepts would lack substance in their ability to question the legitimacy of the nation-state, explain the patterns and behaviours of transnationalism amongst migrants, and reimagine the world that they wish to live in.

5.3 Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

The scope of this dissertation looked at West African migrants' experiences of identity through the lens of transnationalism. Not only did I investigate transnationalism as a theory, but the qualitative data provided by the respondents enhanced its understanding and applicability. This dissertation also explored the under-researched topic of West-a-phobia and contributed to earlier findings on the everyday experiences of a specific demographic of migrants living in South Africa. The listed research objectives have been achieved:

- Conduct a literature review on key concepts such as 'migration', 'migrants', 'othering', and 'transnationalism' to create a theoretical framework for analysis.
- Interview West African migrants living in South Africa.
- Contribute to the studies conducted on West-a-phobia, building on the term coined by Petkou's research done in 2005 on West African migrants living in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The legitimacy of the literature review conducted was supported by the experience of the six respondents, who provided a wide range of insights and thoughts on the research topic.

From a research perspective, there are a couple of recommendations to the study that could aid in extrapolating deeper insights into the research question. Firstly, increasing the number of respondents would have helped to make clearer theorisations regarding the behaviours and experiences of an entire region, and to note whether there were differences. Moreover, the component of language could have been further explored, as all respondents were fluent in English, and from Anglophone countries. Incorporating the experiences of West African migrants from Francophone countries could have provided another dimension to understanding how they integrated into South Africa. Another recommendation and potential area for further research would be to take into consideration the current global context the world finds itself in. The influence of COVID-19 in every sector reveals that there is a possibility to explore the link between health pandemics and the movement of people. There is a chance to look at how and at different levels (individually, socially, nationally, globally), a virus outbreak can impact migration and the choices afforded to individuals that live their lives beyond borders. The respondents' answers about whether they decide to stay in South Africa short or long term may have changed due to this change in this environment.

From a national perspective, there are areas for improvement in South African society and its government in ensuring the accommodating and acceptance of migrants living in the country.

Policy recommendations for the government include acknowledging constructive contributions migrants bring to the country, and less so from a national security approach that covertly dehumanises and mythologises African foreigners. Probing deeper into this would require the state and South African citizens alike to look deeper into how legacies of colonialism and Apartheid affected their inability to relate to others from an institutional, to a personal level. Beyond a change in attitude, policy and legislative changes should include supporting the informal economy and creating easier access to legal documentation to facilitate smoother migration processes are key recommendations that can ensure socio-economic cohesion. Seeing the benefits of transnationalism, the country could reap benefits for all. This means relooking at the existing legislation and amending it to include these changes.

The final recommendation would be the demographic of the respondents. All the respondents were under the age of 30, and this added a dimension whereby their experiences as young people are still transitioning. Intergenerational experiences can be looked at comparatively to see whether there may or may not be differing views amongst different age groups of people, as priorities end up shifting over time. This could have added another complex layer to understanding transnationalism as it was experienced in different periods.

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APPENDIX A: COVER LETTER



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

Faculty of Humanities

Department of Political Studies

COVER LETTER AND STATEMENT

Good day. My name is Ijeoma Opara. I am from the University of Cape Town. I do not represent the government or any political party. I am doing this research for my Research project, which is part of fulfilling the requirements for my Masters in International Relations. This research is being conducted by myself, with the support of my academic supervisor, Professor John Akokpari, from the University of Cape Town.

This research will be looking how West African migrants find navigate challenges of integration in South Africa, and their experiences of citizenship and feeling 'othered' or discriminated against in different environments.

I would like to discuss these issues with you in an interview. They will be put together with approximately 20-30 other people I am talking to, to get an overall picture. This interview will take about 30-40 minutes.

Please remember there is no penalty for not participating. Your answers may remain anonymous if you feel like may compromise your personal interests. If you choose to take part, you may stop at any time or skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.

Thank you for your time.

Here are my contact details below if you have any follow up questions or issues:

Email: ijeomaopara@gmail.com or alternatively OPRIJE001@myuct.ac.za

Cell phone number: +27 788 482 894

APPENDIX B: TEMPLATE OF CONSENT FORM AND SIGNATURES OF RESPONDENTS



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

Faculty of Humanities

Department of Political Studies

CONSENT FORM

Name of researcher:

Ijeoma Opara

Title of research project:

‘Deconstructing the ‘Other’; A critical analysis of West African migrant’s integration in post-Apartheid South Africa.’

By answering the questions put to me:

- I agree to participate in this research project.
- I have read this consent form and the information it contains and had the opportunity to ask questions about them.
- I understand that I was selected to participate in this research due to my position.
- I agree to my responses being used for education and research on condition my privacy is respected. I understand that my responses will be used in aggregate form only, so that I will not be personally identifiable.
- I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in this project.
- I understand I have the right to withdraw from this project at any stage.

- I understand that this research might be published in a research journal or book. In the case of dissertation research, the document will be available to readers in a university library in printed form, and possibly in electronic form as well.

Name of Participant : _____

Signature of Participant : _____

Date : _____

The researcher must supply you with an *Information sheet* which provides his / her contact details, outlines the nature of the research and how the information will be used and explains what your participation in the research involves (e.g. how long it will take, respondents' roles and rights (including the right to skip questions or withdraw without penalty at any time), any anticipated risks/benefits which may arise as a result of participating, any costs or payment involved (even if none, these should be stated)

Has this been provided?	Yes		No	
Have you received verbal confirmation/explanations where needed?	Yes		No	

- I understand that this research might be published in a research journal or book. In the case of dissertation research, the document will be available to readers in a university library in printed form, and possibly in electronic form as well.

Name of Participant : “EMILY”

Signature of Participant : Electronic Approval

Date : 02/11/19

The researcher must supply you with an **Information sheet** which provides his / her contact details, outlines the nature of the research and how the information will be used and explains what your participation in the research involves (e.g. how long it will take, respondents’ roles and rights (including the right to skip questions or withdraw without penalty at any time), any anticipated risks/benefits which may arise as a result of participating, any costs or payment involved (even if none, these should be stated)

Has this been provided?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	
Have you received verbal confirmation/explanations where needed?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	

I understand that this research might be published in a research journal or book. In the case of dissertation research, the document will be available to readers in a university library in printed form, and possibly in electronic form as well.

Name of Participant : "ADWOA"

Signature of Participant : Signature Removed

Date : 24 - 08 - 2019

The researcher must supply you with an <i>Information sheet</i> which provides his / her contact details, outlines the nature of the research and how the information will be used and explains what your participation in the research involves (e.g. how long it will take, participants' roles and rights (including the right to skip questions or withdraw without penalty at any time), any anticipated risks/benefits which may arise as a result of participating, any costs or payment involved (even if none, these should be stated))			
Has this been provided?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No
Have you received verbal confirmation/explanations where needed?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No

- I understand I have the right to withdraw from this project at any stage.
- I understand that this research might be published in a research journal or book. In the case of dissertation research, the document will be available to readers in a university library in printed form, and possibly in electronic form as well.

Name of Participant : "MARY"

Signature of Participant : Signature Removed

Date : 28/10/2019

The researcher must supply you with an *Information sheet* which provides his / her contact details, outlines the nature of the research and how the information will be used and explains what your participation in the research involves (e.g. how long it will take, participants' roles and rights (including the right to skip questions or withdraw without penalty at any time), any anticipated risks/benefits which may arise as a result of participating, any costs or payment involved (even if none, these should be stated))

Has this been provided?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you received verbal confirmation/explanations where needed?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- I understand I have the right to withdraw from this project at any stage.
- I understand that this research might be published in a research journal or book. In the case of dissertation research, the document will be available to readers in a university library in printed form, and possibly in electronic form as well.

Name of Participant : "LIONEL"

Signature of Participant : Signature Removed

Date : 26/05/2019.

<p>The researcher must supply you with an <i>Information sheet</i> which provides his / her contact details, outlines the nature of the research and how the information will be used and explains what your participation in the research involves (e.g. how long it will take, participants' roles and rights (including the right to skip questions or withdraw without penalty at any time), any anticipated risks/benefits which may arise as a result of participating, any costs or payment involved (even if none, these should be stated))</p>				
Has this been provided?	Yes	X	No	
Have you received verbal confirmation/explanations where needed?	Yes	X	No	

- I understand I have the right to withdraw from this project at any stage.
- I understand that this research might be published in a research journal or book. In the case of dissertation research, the document will be available to readers in a university library in printed form, and possibly in electronic form as well.

Name of Participant : "DONNA"

Signature of Participant : Signature Removed

Date : 3rd November 2019

The researcher must supply you with an *Information sheet* which provides his / her contact details, outlines the nature of the research and how the information will be used and explains what your participation in the research involves (e.g. how long it will take, participants' roles and rights (including the right to skip questions or withdraw without penalty at any time), any anticipated risks/benefits which may arise as a result of participating, any costs or payment involved (even if none, these should be stated))

Has this been provided?	Yes	✓	No	
Have your received verbal confirmation/explanations where needed?	Yes	✓	No	

- I understand I have the right to withdraw from this project at any stage.
- I understand that this research might be published in a research journal or book. In the case of dissertation research, the document will be available to readers in a university library in printed form, and possibly in electronic form as well.

Name of Participant : "ADEOLA"

Signature of Participant : Signature Removed

Date : 26/08/2019.

<p>The researcher must supply you with an <i>Information sheet</i> which provides his / her contact details, outlines the nature of the research and how the information will be used and explains what your participation in the research involves (e.g. how long it will take, participants' roles and rights (including the right to skip questions or withdraw without penalty at any time), any anticipated risks/benefits which may arise as a result of participating, any costs or payment involved (even if none, these should be stated))</p>			
Has this been provided?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No
Have you received verbal confirmation/explanations where needed?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No

APPENDIX C: INFORMATION SHEET



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Political Studies

Information Sheet for Research Respondents

Title of research project:

‘Deconstructing the ‘Other’; A critical analysis of West African migrant’s integration in post-Apartheid South Africa.’

Nature of the research:

Qualitative research done in the form of conducting interviews with key informants, in order to fulfill the requirements of the mini-dissertation component of a Masters of Arts in International Relations.

Name of researcher:

Ijeoma Opara

Telephone +27788482894

Email OPRIJE001@myuct.ac.za

Name of researcher’s dissertation supervisor / course lecturer:

Professor John Akokpari

Telephone +27216503385

Email john.akokpari@uct.ac.za

Department address details:

Room 5.33, Leslie Social Science Building, Upper Campus, Rondebosch, Cape Town, 7701

Telephone (021) 6503381 / 3916

What are the implications of your involvement in this interview / project?

*** The researcher may explain these to you verbally in more detail, if needed ***

For the sake of this research, I may need to know information regarding personal details such as: duration of stay in South Africa, legal status (whether on a visa or permanent resident), area of residence and potential affiliations with organizations and/or institutions. The interview process should not take longer than 30-40 minutes, however this depends on the

length of the participant's answers, and the potential for follow up questions. Respondents have the right to withdraw completely from the interview process if they feel uncomfortable or if they believe there is a breach of consent. Respondents have the right to remain anonymous and may skip questions that they feel uncomfortable with.

The information provided will be used purely for academic reasons, as it is be used for analysis to fulfill my research objectives, as well as for potential publication in an academic journal. Disclaimer for justification is not needed on their part, if it is deemed it a personal conflict of interest. Anticipated costs may be transport for face to face interviews, access to internet may also be required to correspond via email or telephone. A copy of the final project may be sent to the respondents on request.

Information should include how long it will take, how the information will be used, respondents' roles and rights (including the right to skip questions or withdraw without penalty at any time), any anticipated risks/benefits which may arise as a result of participating, any costs or payment involved (stipulate, even if none).

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW QUESTION RESPONSE SHEETS

Adeola



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IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

Faculty of Humanities

Department of Political Studies

Questions for Interviews

Please do answer in the best way you can and what you deem applicable to your own experiences. There are no “wrong” or “right” answers.

Can you tell me a bit about yourself (name, age and country of origin)?

My name is *Adeola (name changed)*, I’m 21 and I am Nigerian – South African. My father being the Nigerian one.

Why did you move to South Africa?

I moved to South Africa after primary school, grade 6 in Nigeria. because my parents split up and my mom being the South African one wanted to come home.

What was your experience of initially integrating to South Africa like?

It was difficult as I spoke in a heavy Lagos accent. I had a lot of Nigerian mannerisms and I wasn't used to being around white people. I think language was the biggest barrier, I would try and make friend's but black South Africans tend to speak in their home language in social settings, although my mom is South African she is colored so I didn't share that. Initially I made friends with white kids, but that was so culturally strange and I felt like I was the token black person although at the time I didn't have the words for these feelings but I always felt weird. The schools I went to didn't really have a lot of colored people but they did have loads of immigrants because I went to school in central Pretoria near all the main embassies, so I just gravitated to people who were not South African I guess I needed friends who just spoke English all the time and didn't expect me to know their kwaito references or watch generations, there's an inclusion in language that race just doesn't make up for. So, in the one year of Primary School I spent here my friends were Zimbabwean, Tanzanian, British and we had one Afrikaans girl. I guess I never outgrew this thinking because when I went to high school, I replicated the same behavior, most of my friends were immigrants.

Do you have relationships or connections with other West Africans in South Africa?

Yes, a lot of my friends are West African. It's a sort of community I feel safe in. my mom always encouraged it so I wouldn't lose touch with my roots.

What are some of the first thoughts that come to mind when you think of the term 'community'?

I feel safe in a community, I can be myself, really myself without all the useless stereotypes. If I want to listen to queen I can. I'm never too black to do something or too Nigerian I'm just accepted as Nike. Fully myself with my airs and crappy sense of humor. I guess its belonging in a non-artificial manner

Do you feel integrated into South Africa?

Not at all. I'm South African but I don't feel it, sometimes I feel colored like when I'm around my family but to the world I don't look it so I'm black but my blackness clashes with this monolithic idea of blackness that is pervasive in this country. I guess a lot of it is by choice because to integrate you must make the decision to integrate like if I made the decision to learn Isizulu it would be easier for me. But I'm not sure that's fully true I have a lot of friends who have made that decision to integrate and it's like your nigerianess is inescapable because you still look it you still have to contend with stereotypes. It will never be enough my friend who has been here since he was one fluently speaks it, most of his friends are South African but when we honestly talk about his experiences the expectations women have of him due to fetishization its so clear to me that it all seems useless. I don't think I'll ever feel integrated and for me it's difficult because like one part of your identity is silenced in public discourse and the other part is always talked about negatively. Sometimes I wonder what integration even looks like, I can clearly point to my roots my mother's township, my grandfather's experiences of forced removals, my great grandmothers experience of migrant labour. All of that is where I come from but its not enough only because my father is Nigerian, my name is Nigerian there's no way to look around it.

Would permanently settling in South Africa be a viable option for you? If not, how so? What would be motivating reasons to leave?

No, I want to be somewhere that I feel like I belong, somewhere people don't get burned bi-monthly for their immigration status. If I have children, they will be Nigerian too, depending on who I marry but it's still inescapable for them. I can't imagine them having the experience of being othered straight through childhood.

Are there any specific instances where you faced discrimination for being West African/from a West African country? If so, how?

The little things, my father still stays in Nigeria, every time I fly in with a Ghana must go bag on the 6am SAA flight from Lagos to Johannesburg I get stopped. But also bigger things like the one time a home affairs official asked me how I got my passport and told me I shouldn't lie about being South African. There are also snide comments people make, like when we took my grandmother to the hospital the nurse said to my face there weren't enough beds cause all of the immigrants. Nothing too big though because I have citizenship

If you were granted South African citizenship, what effect would being 'South African' have on your identity?

I have citizenship, it hasn't had an effect

Thank you for your time and responses.

Lionel



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Questions for Interviews

Please do answer in the best way you can and what you deem applicable to your own experiences. There are no “wrong” or “right” answers.

Can you tell me a bit about yourself (name, age and country of origin)?

I'm *Lionel* (name changed), 22yrs old and from Ghana

Why did you move to South Africa?

To pursue an education

What was your experience of initially integrating to South Africa like?

Theres no such thing as integration when you're constantly alienated for having darker skin, 'funny' names, different accents and 'peculiar' facial and body features

Do you have relationships or connections with other West Africans in South Africa?

a lot

What are some of the first thoughts that come to mind when you think of the term 'community'?

a population of people with a shared sense of belonging to a space

Do you feel integrated into South Africa?

L O L (no)
Hopefully in the near future

Would permanently settling in South Africa be a viable option for you? If not, how so? What would be motivating reasons to leave?

yes. Despite the hostile attitude of the people, it presents opportunities better than back home

Are there any specific instances where you faced discrimination for being West African/from a West African country? If so, how?

i got arrested and was falsely charged after i couldnt respond to a cop who asked me questions in Zulu, a language i have no clue about even it was signed to me. He bluntly said he didnt care whether I understood or not and said demeaning things about foreigners

If you were granted South African citizenship, what effect would being 'South African' have on your identity?

More doors will open, however, id be treated like every other foreigner

Thank you for your time and responses.

Adwoa



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Questions for Interviews

Please do answer in the best way you can and what you deem applicable to your own experiences. There are no “wrong” or “right” answers.

Can you tell me a bit about yourself (name, age and country of origin)?

My name is Adwoa (*name changed*). I am 22 years old and I am Ghanaian. I am a recent UCT management Studies graduate.

Why did you move to South Africa?

My dad is a Medical Doctor and came to UCT to do his specialization in Obstetrics and Gynecology in the early 90's. Ever since then my family has lived in South Africa. I was however born in Ghana.

What was your experience of initially integrating to South Africa like?

As I have lived most of my life here, I didn't really find it difficult integrating to SA. I have done all my schooling here. I think one thing that was evident is probably being one of the only few 'foreigners' so to speak. I was the awkward tall dark-skinned girl. I really didn't see many people that looked like me. Family life was different. I could say that my parents were strict then because I couldn't always do what the other kids were doing. But it all came from a good place and I am grateful for the way they raised me.

Do you have relationships or connections with other West Africans in South Africa?

Yes I do. Many families from Ghana came to SA around the same time my parents did. Many of them all went to Uni together back in Ghana. All the children grew up together so it was always nice to have people to relate to and understand your life. There is always a sense of community. In recent times, to speak of UCT specifically, some of the people we grew up with, most went to UCT as well so it was good to have that little family away from home. Also, with the likes of Ghana Soc and the other West African societies at UCT, It provides a space for people to belong when they feel homesick.

What are some of the first thoughts that come to mind when you think of the term 'community'?

I think of a sense of belonging, support and care is what comes to mind. Being able to rely on each other for things.

Do you feel integrated into South Africa?

For the most part I do, apart from when people look at me and they can tell that I am not from South Africa and proceed to ask where I am from and so on. It sometimes makes me still feel like I don't belong or 'other'. Another thing is that because I cannot speak any of the official languages properly, I do sometimes feel left out.

Would permanently settling in South Africa be a viable option for you? If not, how so? What would be motivating reasons to leave?

No it would not be. For the most part, the economy, corruption and crime are some of the main factors. My parents are looking to move back to Ghana in the near future and they see that SA is going down. When they came here, it was booming and a good place for them to live and work. Nowadays it is not the same.

Are there any specific instances where you faced discrimination for being West African/from a West African country? If so, how?

Not necessarily. If anything, people may be ignorant about things and don't know how to ask questions about what they don't know.

If you were granted South African citizenship, what effect would being 'South African' have on your identity?

I am already a SA citizen. When meeting people I always make it known that I am both Ghanaian and South African. Both countries and cultures have had a huge impact on my life and have made me who I am today.

Thank you for your time and responses.

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS

Emily

Ijeoma: Thank you so much, Emily, for agreeing and consenting to be part of my research. The main topic or outline of my research is about deconstructing the other, so looking at the experience of West African migrants' integration in post-Apartheid South Africa. It's less focusing about frameworks of citizenship and "belonging", but just more about the bigger backdrop of understanding the dynamics of transnational migration, and how communities and people fit into their host communities while also maintaining links with their home countries. So, I really just wanted to get an understanding of the complexities that West African migrants face being in South Africa, or in the specific spaces that they are in, and just get a deeper understanding of politico-social identities and how they play out.

The first question was just meant to be a general background question, so this relates to personal details as well. These things can also be omitted if you wish to remain anonymous, but just your name, your age, what you study - if you're a student- or your occupation, where you're from, and also your ethnic grouping if you want to include that.

Emily: My name is Emily, I'm 22 years old, and I am an honours student at UCT studying Gender and Transformation. I was born in Nigeria; I'm Yoruba, I was born in Lagos, and I moved to South Africa when I was 7 years old and I've been here ever since, like, I've not even travelled back, so this has been my home for 15 years. Is there anything else I missed?

Ijeoma: [02:10] So, you've never been to Nigeria since you left. Is there anything you remember prior to living here about Nigeria?

Emily: A lot. I can still remember driving into the street of my house, I can still remember turning-- I don't remember a lot of school experiences, but I still remember my mum coming in for Mother's day during the short little time she could get off work; I remember going to church every Sunday; I remember eating rice every Sunday after church [laughs].

Ijeoma: Is it, like, a fond memory that you have of...

Emily: Yeah. Life was good then, because I was less than 6 years old and I was surrounded by things that I've known all my life. And I just remember my dad making the decision to move. And talking about it with my mum right now, we were so excited— 'we' being the kids. I have two brothers; an older brother and a younger brother. My older brother is older than me by two years, I think, and the younger brother, I'm older than him by 3 years. So, we were all still little kids and we were so excited to travel, and my mum was just a bit unsure about it because she had the better-paying job, and my mum is very ambitious so she just didn't want to drop everything to follow my dad to a country she's never been to before with no guarantee of job or anything... And then we moved here. Do you just want me to continue?

Ijeoma: [04:13] Yeah, please. I think it's all important because one of the things I want to identify are, like, what does community mean to you, and what is it about what you remember of your home country that can be replicated, or that you see...For lack of better terms, do you feel that sense of community that you felt, even within your family dynamics, is it extended within the South African context? So, that's what I kind of want to extract from your answers, that's why it's not as structured.

Emily: [04:51] You know as you were talking I just remembered one thing; growing up I lived with my mother's mum, she lived with us, and because my parents were at work during the day, and Nigerian traffic - so they leave the house 5am, come back home 9pm - so my grandmother was the one who took care of us during the day. She can't speak English, so I can just imagine the way we communicated with each other, but we just understood each other, you know? And it was just so much fun living with my grandmother, like watching Super Stories at 4 in the afternoon, and watching all sorts of Nigerian films, and when it was time to leave, she couldn't come with, and it was just so hard.

Ijeoma: Is she your mother's mum?

Emily: Ya, my mother's mum was a more...

[Crying]

Emily: Just thinking about her... I haven't seen her for 15 years. I haven't video called - I mean, we've spoken on the phone, which is hard because she's the one who literally raised us.

[Pause]

But yeah, I got here when I was 7, and thankfully my dad knew somebody who knew somebody here, and that person was the one who picked us up at the airport. It was a White person - I mean, I came here at 7, I didn't know the history...

Ijeoma: [06:42] [Crosstalk] In Cape Town?

Emily: It was in Johannesburg. Actually, Johannesburg is my home for 15 years, and this White man - he was a wealthy White man - he had a church, a school inside this village in Boksburg, and that was where he housed us. So, he gave us a place to stay and we could go into a school. It was a private school and it was a good private school, you know? It used this funky American system called ACE. It was a Christian school, so we used these books called PACEs and the reason I actually didn't stay in the school was because my father realised that it's not applicable when applying for universities and stuff like that. And he didn't want a situation where Grade 12 happens and we're stuck because we didn't know, you know? So, I moved when I was seven, I got to South Africa, and normally at seven years old you start in Grade 1 but because of Nigeria's school system and how we start much earlier, at seven I already knew how to talk, how to write, how to do all this stuff, so they moved me up a grade. So, I'm 22 right now and I'm supposed to be doing my honours, but I should've actually done it last year, so I'm actually a year behind. So, I just remember being in this new environment, seeing so many White people, seeing this dynamic of races in South Africa...

Ijeoma: [08:31] So, you noticed it at a young age already would you say?

Emily: Mmm. And I kind of remember the first few days of school I realised that there was tension from the Black students, and it was the White kids who welcomed me first. And I think when I speak to other immigrant friends, they also pick up on the fact that they always feel tension from the Black students when they move into these new schools and everything. So, my first friends were White, but then again, I went to a predominantly White school in a predominantly White area, so it kind of made sense, however I just didn't understand why the

Black kids were just very off with me. In fact, I think maybe a year or two after, I actually fought with one and we both got Saturday detention [laughs]. But as I grew older, I just started gravitating to Black students, like the girl I fought with ended up becoming my friend.

Ijeoma: [09:45] Wait, so just to go back so I can get a timeline, you changed schools from Grade 10/11 I'm assuming? Because the last understanding I had was that you were at the Christian private school.

Emily: I was at a Christian private school from Grade 2 to Grade... I have this in my CV but I can't remember now. So, basically during my school career I attended two different schools, and I went to both schools twice. So, during primary school I moved from East Rand to another private Christian school called Maranatha, but when we got to Maranatha, kind of same incident with Black students and tension. And it's funny, my older brother actually had this bullying incident with this one huge White boy, and I think that was the reason my dad moved us back to East Rand. Well, it was one of the reasons. I think the price of the private school was the other reason, because we've been kind of struggling financially for a long time. So, we moved back to the cheaper private school which was the school I first attended, so by the time we got to Grade 7 I was in the first private school. So, by Grade 7 I started in East Rand, I moved to Maranatha, and I moved back to East Rand. And by Grade 7 my father noticed that the curriculum is just not...you know, if you want to go to university in South Africa that's not the best route to take. So, we decided to go back to Maranatha.

By the time I got to 13 years old, spending primary school in a South African context... Like, I've never really had racist experiences and all, but I feel like I kind of got an understanding of just how it is in this country, but at the same time, I feel like I was still very sheltered. So, I had White friends, I had Black friends, I had Coloured friends. I wasn't the most social person though, but my friendship circles were very dispersed. And honestly looking back, I really appreciated it, but we'll get onto that later.

So, high school I'm back in Maranatha again because they use the NSE, and that was the school I've been in till I finished matric. I just remember the first day walking in so nervous, the race dynamics, the racial make-up of the school was a bit different. There were a few more Black people, but it was still kind of a White majority and I just remember walking in - it was break time - and I just saw this Black girl and I just walked up to her and her Indian friend and I was

like, "Hi, can I please be your friend?" And she was just like, "Sure, no problem!" And that was my first Black friend that I made in high school that was actually my friend until the end of university. And as the grades started adding I just got more and more Black friends.

And it's funny because looking at my experience in primary school and my experience in high school, it's so different because I feel like I began to understand why a lot of Black South Africans kind of side eye new Black kids coming in. 'Cause I feel like I entered into South Africa being looked at, and when I was in high school, I was with the Black girls who were checking out the new Black girls to see, like, where to place her. And it's just so interesting however...I mean, there were certain incidents, for example, my older brother, he was like, not bullied, but a few Black girls were just constantly on his case, and he had majority White guy friends. And I just remember being in high school and thinking, "Boy, you're such a coon, these friends aren't checking for you the way you're checking for them", you know? Like, why don't you have Black guy friends? And I understand in his class there weren't a lot of Black boys but talking to him after high school I just remember chatting with him and beginning to understand why he was just so surrounded with White friends compared to me who was a few grades below him but only had Black friends. I feel like I'm just going off topic...

Ijeoma: [14:58] No, it all relates, because the one thing I wanted to lead up to that I think is important is that there's also that gendered aspect to experiences, you know? And one thing I do want to look into is- there's this term called "West-a-phobia" that I read about in a PhD that was written in 2005, so I'm using that as one of the terms for my conceptual framework. So, this was a term that this person coined to refer to the specific forms of discrimination that West African migrants face, and he was writing from the South African context with the backdrop as xenophobia, and I think it's interesting relating to what you brought up about your brother because even within a gendered sphere, we see the xenophobic rhetoric of these West African/Nigerian, "They're taking our women, they're taking our resources". So, there's this idea of this hypermasculinised African migrant that seems to permeate the prejudice that exists. So, that's why I'd be interested to know, maybe just sharing a little bit about your brother-, not necessarily speaking on his behalf, but what you observed. But then also from your own experiences as a woman, how that also played into your own experiences.

Emily: [16:26] It's so funny, maybe it's just a way I've tried to cope with things being here, but I can't remember a lot of...When I try to think back on my feelings and experiences

of xenophobia from when I arrived, I just can't remember. Maybe because growing up here and being exposed to it, the way I chose to cope was just to try to not think about or focus on it as much because it was scary. And it was sad because I'm trying to assimilate into a place that does not want me. And I still feel like that today. In 5... I feel like today, my feelings are very strong about it, like, I just feel really detached 'cause I feel like as I've grown older, I've grown in a sense of who I am as a Nigerian person. I remember coming to university- like, I spent my whole high school not doing anything Nigerian, not listening to Nigerian music, it was just a foreign place to me. In fact, I remember being young trying to assimilate - you know how in Nigeria we wear Ankara dresses, you know? So, we brought all that stuff to South Africa and I came here, and I just didn't wanna wear it because I knew...

Ijeoma: [Crosstalk] You could be pointed out visually.

Emily: Exactly. I mean, I couldn't exactly say what it was but I knew part of the reason I was kind of looked at funny was because of the fact that I was from another African country, especially Nigeria because as I was actually doing my research for my mini dissertation, I read that xenophobia in South Africa didn't start in 2000s - in fact, it started in the '90s during apartheid. So, that means they already... It's not a new thing that started when I just got here in 2004. So, I feel like I can't remember a lot of incidents, however I do know seeing a news headline, breaking news about xenophobic attacks and my dad just being extra careful. I think there was even a day we didn't go to school because my dad is reading this on the news and he's scared to drive us, thinking that we might get attacked or something on the way to school, or me and my siblings might get attacked in school. So, it's been such a great fear for my parents especially. My brother goes to university in North West, and for him to get to school he has to take a Gautrain to Park Station and from Park Station catch a bus, and my parents - in fact, me too - I'm just constantly worried because xenophobic attacks have become an annual thing, and I just don't want a situation where he's in a space that is predominantly South African men for something to happen and he gets...It's, like, my worst fear.

I just remember thinking about how, I mean, I've had all these Black friends from primary school and I've never felt comfortable enough to talk about how I feel about issues like that when they come up, like xenophobia. I've never felt that they've made a friendship space feel safe enough for me to just talk about how I just feel unsafe and everything. And finishing high school there was a girl from Tanzania who went to the same school, she was a grade below me

but we lived in the same complex. So, we were friends, not really in school, but we'd walk back home together, she'd come to my house, and her being from Tanzania and her being dark-skinned - and she's very dark-skinned so a lot of the time people kind of assume...they already know from the fact that she's darker-skinned that she's not from South Africa because they just assume that if you're darker skinned then you just can't be from here. So, she doesn't even have to talk for people to assume that she's a foreigner. And I think because we relate on so many... we have so many things in common; being immigrants' being dark in these spaces; and her mum went to Redeem, so she kind of also has that little Nigerian element thing, so we connected and that was just who I felt safe with to talk about xenophobia, to talk about colourism, and just things that affected us. And I think just thinking about it this year as I was thinking of my mini dissertation, I just thought about how I just never felt safe enough to talk about it, and I guess that was why I decided to do the mini dissertation on that topic. If I have to do any work on anything, that is probably the first thing that I would choose because nobody ever speaks to young people about their struggles with coping and adjusting and assimilating in a space that is violent towards them.

And you spoke about my brother; there weren't a lot of Black people in his class, especially a lot of Black boys. I think there was one Black guy, and the Black guy was friends with the Black girls that used to pick issues with my brother. So, I remember just asking him, "Okay, in entering into this school, how did you pick your friends? Because this is our second time being in this school". So, he saw a boy that he remembered back when we were little and he was like, "Hey, I know you", and the dude was like, "Come over", and the guy was White, so my brother became friends again with the guy, and the guy introduced him to his other friends, and I mean, he's White so he's most likely gonna have White friends, and that was how he had that group. And I think the Black girls seeing him immediately run to White friends, they probably felt, "Ah, he's a coon, these Nigerians..." So, that was why he just felt like he was always a target, and his White friends would then defend him by going back at the Black girls, and I was just thinking, I mean, I get the position you were in but- and this is my thing with my experience from growing up and now- is the fact that as a Black immigrant, I've always had to contend with xenophobia and racism. Every day I wake up thinking, "Which one am I gonna face today, xenophobia from the Blacks, or racism from the Whites?" And that's just something I've always had to deal with being in racially mixed spaces my whole life. So, it makes sense as to why a lot of immigrants move here, and I've even heard about this from Black African immigrants

moving into America or even UK, they also have similar experiences with facing tension from the Black people that they met, so that's just always what I've had to deal with.

I feel like as I started forming my identity, which was around Matric, I think getting to know me as a Nigerian person living here, when I re-fell in love with where I come from again, that was when the xenophobia stuff started hitting me hard, you know? And I feel like every time I've grown comfortable with calling this country my home, something happens, and I'm just shaken to the core that this is not your home, and then I'm just reminded and saddened at the fact that I can't even go back home, you know? If anything happens here, I'm a naturalised citizen, I have a South African ID but I just still don't feel safe, and it's sad because I can't go back home because home is literally just going down the drain. And it just makes me sad the fact that... 'Cause a lot of the times, maybe because they're unaware of just how hard life is for the African immigrants who have left their country, that is why I feel it's easy for some of them to make certain comments.

Ijeoma: [26:01] Or do you even feel at times like it's kind of an oppression Olympics where- or what I found from my personal experiences- talking about the experiences that African foreigners here and how bad it is, there always seems to be this underlying justification for the covert and overt forms of violence due to the fact that Black people were disenfranchised during apartheid?

Emily: I don't see the oppression Olympics aspect as much as I see the ignorance because they're just not aware of the reality, you know? I rarely see them talking about, "Well, we suffered in apartheid-", I don't hear that. I always see the justification of xenophobia because of the actions of African immigrants, like "Why don't they go back to their country, why don't they go and fix their country?" And I just think it comes from a place of ignorance because... I don't think that they would survive in a lot of African countries where the majority... you know? I mean, as much as these xenophobic attacks happen multiple times during the year, I still think the fact that so many people are still here just goes to show you just how safe and better this country is compared to where we're coming from, and that's just my thing. If people actually knew the realities of a lot what other African countries are dealing with...you know?

Ijeoma: [27:56] And I think it also ties into this idea of- I'm also interested in unpacking this idea of Pan-Africanism, and when we talk about continental unity and we talk about

framing, or even on a state level, these frameworks - I mean, the theme for the AU this year, if I'm not mistaken, is looking at migration and understanding that we have always been seeing an influx of movements of people between people and nations, regardless of whether the borders are porous or not, you know? And so, how does that translate to that idea of the experiences that other Africans have in other African countries?

Emily: I think with the whole Pan-Africanism thing in South Africa, lemme just talk about that because I thought about it a few weeks ago. My dad sent me a video of, was it Julius Malema? Talking about... 'cause I think the EFF party whenever xenophobic attacks happen they're probably the first ones to condemn it, and they're very into Pan Africanism and unity in African countries. And I actually feel like that probably even lost them votes because citizens don't wanna hear that, that's not what they want. They don't want that. I think a lot of African countries do not want Pan-Africanism, you know?

Ijeoma: Or even, I think there was a story I read in the paper the other day about how even on an economic level, Shoprite is looking to expand the microbusiness side of their supermarkets by setting up basically gentrified spaza tuck shops in townships.

Emily: Is Shoprite South African?

Ijeoma: Yes, it is.

Emily: I saw that and it's funny-

Ijeoma: [Crosstalk] And people were saying, "Well, it's a good thing because now the Somalis and the Pakistanis can leave", and it's like a disjuncture between understanding the loss of opportunities and the contributions that migrants actually make or contribute to the informal sectors of the country's economy.

Emily: Can I just say something?

Ijeoma: Sure, please.

Emily: You know, when I think of this statement about foreigners committing crimes in South Africa, I think that statement just makes me uncomfortable. I'm not trying to deny that foreign immigrants commit crimes, but I think it's just dishonest to frame it that way. I don't think South Africa has a problem of African immigrants coming to their countries to commit crimes, I think South Africa has a crime problem, full stop. And that's just what needs to be tackled instead of... And it's very disappointing when I see political figures use that. I was so disappointed during the election campaign when Cyril Ramaphosa came out to talk about, I think, immigrant-owned businesses in settlements. And it's funny because when he spoke about it, a few days later xenophobic attacks started. And then I think he then came out to-, it's not even that he apologised for what he said, he just came out to tell people to stop being violent, blah blah blah. And I'm thinking to myself, did you know what was gonna happen? Every time a political figure has come out to speak about immigrants, a few days later, shit pops off. Are you not aware of the power that your words have? I just...

Ijeoma: [32:11] And it's kind of like it repeats itself consistently. We saw it in the '90's with the IFP, we see it in legislature with the Aliens Control Act...

Emily: I didn't even know all of this.

Ijeoma: [32:32] And it's still in place! So, these terms that we see, or we characterise as the South African leaders, whether it was Mbeki's being the African Renaissance, or Mandela representing democracy, it's still a consistent culture that permeates throughout that just has not been tackled or addressed. And I really like that point that you made about that there's a lack of discernment between the nature in which the state is crime-ridden versus the scapegoating of foreigners as being the direct cause.

Emily: I don't know if you were in South Africa at the time, but there was a period where ATM cash heists, cash-in-transit heists...

Ijeoma: [33:22] I don't recall.

Emily: There was a phase where robberies of cash-in-transit vehicles, like on the road you'd find people coming out shooting to steal money from cash-in-transit vehicles. It was very horrific, just crazy the fact that criminals have become so brazen to actually do armed robbery

during the day in vans that are meant to be secured, with security guards having guns and stuff. The fact that these crimes were still able to be committed... I think for months it would happen so frequently, and I then started hearing about, "These crimes are done by African immigrants", and I was like, "Come on, guys". I don't think crimes that are so brazen are being committed by African immigrants, honestly. I don't know why, but I mean, if it's fraud, drugs, you know, stuff that-, but like armed robbery? Brazen daylight armed robbery where automatic rifles... I just felt like it's easy to just scapegoat the crime, and it's just so dishonest.

I think we need to just start being honest about crime in South Africa. I would have loved for a political party to use crime as one of the main points, because it's such a big issue, but I didn't hear that. I didn't hear that during the elections. I think maybe even during that period, I watched a video of a hijacking on a road in daylight, and I'm thinking, the country's become such a perfect safe haven for people to commit crimes and you're just blaming it on foreign immigrants, like how would that even help? Fine, if we all leave you will still have the crime problem because...

[sigh]

I don't know. Lately...I know for a while my parents have been telling me, "Emily, Canada, Canada Canada! Go abroad", and I've always just said "Nah, I like this country, this is where I've grown up all my life", but maybe because I'm more grown up now and my eyes have opened, especially the past two years I've just felt...I've found myself researching how to get out, because I mean, as a Black woman, I'm exposed to racism, but then as a Nigerian person too. The fact that I'm not even from Ghana or whatever, I'm from Nigeria which is probably the country that they hate the most, I just don't feel safe here. I've had moments where if I'm in an Uber or Taxify and they ask where I'm from, I just lie and I say I'm from somewhere else because I don't know how they'll react. 'Cause some of them aren't immigrants, not all Uber and Taxify drivers are immigrants, so I feel like to protect myself lately I've had to hide my identity and stuff like that, because I know that they have a deep hatred for Nigerian immigrants.

Ijeoma: [37:24] Mmm. We still have a bit of time, but I think we addressed a lot of overlapping themes as well in you sharing your experiences, but something I'd also be interested in knowing as well are sort of the cultural ties. 'Cause you mentioned feeling as you

grew up, in matric, this idea of coming into yourself and into your identity and being more proud of it, and paradoxed with this fear for your safety and security in this identity or the overt forms of it. So, have there been any attempts from you, within your family or as an individual, to find-, I know there's a thing like Hometown Associations that people are part of, there's the Nigerian Society on campus...

Emily: So, with the family, I don't think there's stuff like that. Well, I come from Kempton Park which is like [inaudible]. There are a lot of Nigerians in Kempton Park, there weren't a lot in my area, but there were so many of us and I don't think we formed-, I don't think there's a Nigerian Society of Kempton Park around. It's not as though my parents try to detach us, 'cause you know sometimes parents make their kids assimilate by trying to distance themselves from... It wasn't like that with us. My parents, they were even irritated at the fact that we were not trying to wear our Ankara, my mum will still dress in her traditional clothing when she's going to church on Sunday, and my dad also. And I'm thinking, "Guys, this is South Africa, it's not Nigeria where you have to show up and show out every Sunday. Just wear jeans, wear a t-shirt, wear flip flops, go to church!" And they still dress up, so it's not like they're trying to hide it. So, with them, there's nothing that they're trying to make us do to make us connect to back home, however they have told us that they're disappointed that we don't know how to speak our language, and I'm thinking, "Well, whose fault is that?" [laughs].

Ijeoma: [39:48] So, both of your parents are Nigerian?

Emily: Yes. With myself though, I've found myself just always gravitating towards everything Nigerian. Oh yes, another thing with this whole conversation, because I didn't feel comfortable in Black South African spaces; I've noticed that on my social media I probably know more about things happening in Britain, America, other countries that [inaudible 40:20], especially pop culture-wise. I'm completely detached from that. I don't really listen to a lot of South African music, I don't know any of their lingo, I don't know a lot of that because I've just felt safer connecting with Black British people in England.

Ijeoma: I wanna go to London so bad [laughs].

Emily: Me too! You know, I've asked myself like, why didn't my dad move to London? Because if he moved to England, by now I would have my blue passport or whatever colour it

is [laughs]. I just connect with the place, and it's not that there's no racism there, it's not that there's no xenophobia there - there is. I'm aware of it. But I just feel like community there is just different. I, as a Nigerian, I would never feel isolated or out of place, you know? So, on Twitter I follow a lot of Nigerian Americans, Nigerian British, and I follow a lot of Nigerians too, so I get Nigerian news first. And sometimes I feel so bad for the non-Nigerian people I follow and follow me, because that's just what I'm constantly retweeting [laughs].

Ijeoma: Same here. And it's interesting because I met someone literally through a podcast I was listening to, I don't know if you know it, with Oloni?

Emily: I know Oloni but I haven't listened to her podcast yet.

Ijeoma: [41:55] But I notice podcasts are a common way to have conversations overlapping in the diaspora. And there was a South African girl that has a podcast called 'I Said What I Said', and she had a friend on there who was Nigerian British, and I literally just reached out to this person 'cause they happened to be in the same area as I was, and there was nothing in particular...I mean, obviously I was interested in the topic they were talking about, which was social media and this disconnection, but I was so interested to know what his experience was as a British Nigerian growing up in London, or he grew up in another area of the UK and now lives in London. And when he came to South Africa as well I was almost excited 'cause it's just like, I'm able to talk to someone that maybe it's a bit more normal for them, if that makes sense? Even us meeting up now almost feels like a rare occasion because, like what you mentioned earlier of just not having the space for these conversations. And it's a sense of grounding and validity and knowing that it's not in your head, you know?

Emily: I actually joined UCT Nigeria Society when I was in first year, in fact I even joined late but I joined anyway. And I just remember going for their parties-, no, actually I joined on time, it was actually second year, I didn't join in first year. It was second year I joined, and I went with a friend of mine for the opening party, and firstly I felt like there were a lot of non-Nigerians there which I heard was a thing?

Ijeoma: [laughs] They come for the food.

Emily: So, there were a lot of non-Nigerians there firstly, secondly, I heard that the head of the society was not even Nigerian but was from Zimbabwe.

Ijeoma: That's hilarious.

Emily: Exactly! And I just found that funny because it just made me feel uncomfortable, honestly, like, how badly is it run that somebody that's not Nigerian would...
[laughs]

Ijeoma: [44:04] And it's almost like a paradox where we see this almost fear and hatred, but there's a love for the culture, the food, the people.

Emily: Exactly. That's probably my main problem with it, because I know that animosity towards Nigerians is not just a South African thing, it's a lot of other African countries' thing. So, I just thought to myself, they would never accept that. They would never accept a Nigerian being the leader of their society, so why are we accepting these things? And my experience from the opening party, I just didn't feel comfortable, so I didn't go back. I just cut off from it. And it's funny because a few months later, I met somebody who was actually really involved in the society who told me the way it's being run right now, she doesn't like it. That was my final decision-maker of me not being interested in Naija Soc.

And you spoke about the hatred and fear for Nigerians yet loving... I still see that a lot with the way they talk about Nigerian men, especially the women. The men even wearing Nigerian-inspired attire, like I saw this year in the Durban July, I think, some of them wore you know the casual Nigerian thing with the pants, the two piece? And I'm thinking, you got this from us and you're not even gonna give credit. Before even, there was a woman who came in gele, and I'm thinking we all know-, fine I understand Nigerians aren't the only ones in West Africa who wear gele but it was just so infuriating. They just don't give credit, and it's just sad that you feel so comfortable, enough to be inspired by certain aspects of our culture, but when it's time for you to speak out against xenophobic attacks then you're quiet. It's just weird, it makes me feel so uncomfortable. It's like a betrayal almost.

Ijeoma: [46:19] Yeah, it's something I noticed as well where when people find out I'm from Nigeria, or the bad reaction and then there's the "good" reaction where, "Oh, your names

Ijeoma! Nollywood!" Then they start making a caricature accent, "I love plantain" blah blah, you know?

Emily: And egusi... [laughing], it's so annoying.

Ijeoma: And it's like, there's almost a bitter taste in your mouth because you know that they can say those things to your face knowing very well that there will be complete silence when there are vigilante groups going out and killing Nigerians or West Africans.

Emily: I don't know if maybe because I'm just spending more time on social media, but I just feel as though the justifications for the attacks and the violence is just becoming more brazen. I actually screen-captured something a few weeks ago because I wanted to make it my status but I follow some South Africans, so I was like, nah let me not.

Ijeoma: [47:35] Mmm, because you always have to be aware of what you're sharing.

Emily: Exactly. I didn't wanna anger anybody but at the same time, this is an issue that's affecting me. So, from the way the person even wrote the tweet, I could tell that this was an educated person, because for a long time I thought the reason political figures use xenophobia to get votes is because they're trying to attract the "uneducated" and ignorant, but it's not only them. This guy actually tweeted, "You guys don't even want to know what's happening in the Sandton CBD. These people aren't here to make South Africa a better place, I'm afraid xenophobia might be our only hope, it's already too late". I was like, what?!

Ijeoma: I saw that tweet. I know someone else, I have a personal friend that ironically during the student protests in 2015 we worked very closely together, and it was very interesting, there were quite a few West African students that were involved in student protests...

Emily: [Crosstalk] I'm surprised. Honestly speaking, I didn't, and my dad was like, "You better stay in your room".

Ijeoma: Yeah, because it was those fears as well, you're not getting arrested, you're not...

Emily: [Crosstalk] Exactly, because I mean, I'm coming from over there in the West, right? Like, we know how protests are because protest in university is a frequent thing over there. So, I think my parents were actually just even afraid of their view of how protests are.

Ijeoma: [49:35] It's a very specific culture, South African protesting.

Emily: Exactly, and it's funny because my parents assumed that it would be this violent place where you could get harmed. That's actually what happened though because private security and policemen were shooting at kids and arresting kids. So, honestly speaking I did not participate in the protests, however I did understand and I kind of stood in solidarity but from my room. And I also kind of felt a disconnect, I felt like it wasn't an inclusive protest. So, imagine I'm marching with you, I don't even understand the struggle songs that you're singing, how do I feel connected to it? So, I didn't feel the connection.

Ijeoma: [50:24] And it's funny because on my end of the experience, I felt connected in ways that... similar to the ethos we see in EFF now where they say that they condemn the acts of violence, "We are pan African with our brothers and sisters...". And the person that I shared that space with when the xenophobic attacks or what happened in Joburg CBD and foreigners were accused, like with the ATM heists you mentioned, the cause was foreigners.

Emily: And it's so funny, like the Joburg incident that happened a few weeks ago, like how did you know? You just looked at people and thought...

Ijeoma: [Crosstalk] Someone said it's FIFA players, you can see on top of their head that they're foreigners. And it was a friend of mine that was involved, I was just like-

Emily: [Crosstalk] It's very disappointing, and thankfully I've not seen from the few friends I have that are from here, I've not seen such negative and hateful comments so I've not had to check them, but that's something I will cut you off for doing. Simple. Ugh, man it's... [sigh] I don't know.

I don't only feel unsafe because I'm an immigrant, I also then feel unsafe because I'm Black and I'm a woman. Like today I was just thinking to myself, like, I've become so paranoid about my safety, it's crazy. I feel so so so unsafe. Like with what happened with the girl who's missing

right now, and I read through the tweets about her name and I remembered a story of another girl, her name was Karabo, who also went missing last year and she hasn't been found. And I've noticed it's become... I'm picking up on the fact that a lot of Black young women are going missing and nothing is happening. I went to bed last night feeling so unsafe, feeling so down, thinking I need to leave this place because this place-, it's actually damaged me because I've become so paranoid about my safety and security. It's crazy because I can bet you when I go somewhere else, I would probably think, wow- [inaudible]

Ijeoma: [Crosstalk] The baggage will lift off your shoulders. Like, other South Africans say that when they go to other countries, it's just like, "Wow, I can actually walk in the street-".

Emily: [Crosstalk] I remember watching a video, I didn't actually finish the video because I kind of knew that I would probably find subtle racism, but it was a White woman coming into South Africa and seeing all the electric fences, you know? And when I watch videos of other countries I'm just like, "Why don't you have fences in your house? How can you just park your car outside your door?"

Ijeoma: Women are walking at 10pm at night in the street...

Emily: From yesterday's incident with Uyinene who's missing, it's obvious I can't walk during the night, and I also can't walk during the day; I shouldn't walk at all. I can't walk during the night; I can't walk during the day; I'm also unsafe if I drive my own car because a few weeks ago, a woman was found murdered and her car was in possession of men that the car was not supposed in possession with. So, we also can't drive cars. I feel unsafe when I use Ubers and Taxifys. In fact, I was talking to a friend and I said I would feel safer being driven by a woman and they were like, "Well, it doesn't really help because the woman might be working with human trafficking", but I mean, can we just try it out? I don't feel safe. I don't feel safe any longer, I feel like I wanna leave. In fact, I wanna even apply as a refugee, like I'm not only unsafe as a Black person, I'm unsafe because I'm Nigerian in a country that is very anti-Nigerian.

Ijeoma: [54:14] And it's difficult sometimes to quantify, even in the literature, this discernment between refugee and migrant where in the literature it says migrants often leave

due to economic conditions or justifications of a better life; occupation; work; and the UN CHR definition still only includes, sort of, political conflicts or reasons as justifications. So, there's no middle ground between discerning the extremities of violence or conflict in African countries versus this idea that maybe you're not living in direct violence or fear in Nigeria, but it's also choosing to go into another form of it in the country you go into, especially in South Africa.

Emily: Man, you know every time these things happen, this year particularly, when there has been an incident, the thing that I think of immediately is just the fact that African leaders, Nigerian leaders, they failed. They failed us. To the point that I'm going through this here, like going back is not an option. It's so sad. And I think it's something that a lot of Nigerians face in a lot of countries. We are literally being oppressed and we are being violated but we take it because it's better than being at home. It's just so sad. I'm always just disappointed and I'm angry. Whenever these things happen, I'm angry because our leaders have failed us, our leaders are part of the reason we're treated without dignity in other countries. I don't know. My dad wants me to do NYC next year.

Ijeoma: [56:24] Interesting. How do you feel about that?

Emily: The idealistic part of me wants to-, has this vision of doing my part to better Nigeria. So, I'm like, "Hmm, if I do this NYC thing for one year then I can go back and help and just..." you know? But then the realistic part of me is thinking, "Sis, this ship is sinking. Like, the first half is already inside the water, there's no hope any longer, you're just gonna waste your time". And by the way, I don't even feel comfortable with the whole NYC program, so I'm on the fence. Sometimes I think to myself I might consider it, and then something happens and I'm like, "You know what? F that country, I want nothing to do with it". But it's a funky relationship because as much as I'm trying to distance myself, there's just something inside of me that just draws me back, you know? And it's not even the food, or Nollywood, or what [57:34 inaudible] is doing. It's not that. It's just something I can't explain. I will just forever be interested in the madness going on there because that's who I am, that's where I come from. I can't ever forget about it, I can't distance myself from it as much as I want to, you know?

And I know this might seem very dark and just full of hate and stuff, but sometimes when I see how this country is progressing I'm just thinking to myself, very soon you'll know what other African countries are going through and you better hope it doesn't get to a level where you feel like running away, you feel like moving. Because when you move to other African countries that are doing better, how do you expect them to welcome you when you've had a tradition-, when it's part of you now? A lot of Africans associate South Africa with xenophobia so how do you expect to be welcomed and treated? And it's funny because I've seen them use stuff like, "Well, Nigeria did it to Ghana", and I'm thinking, so because somebody did something bad then is that justification? Also, look at what it's caused between Nigerians and Ghanaians. We might laugh together but there's still that thing. It's still there, you know? It just never works. So, it's very funny when people bring that up, "Well you did it..." Okay. It wasn't right, it's caused problems that are still evident today. I don't understand. In my head though, 'cause I remember last week when my dad sent me the video of Julius Malema talking about uniting the borders I was like, stop talking about these things, firstly, because you're even losing votes because they don't wanna hear that at all. Rather, lets focus on fixing the country, education and economic empowerment. With that...

Ijeoma: [59:45] With that education point you can address the root of the issues that the country is facing and see it as a collaborative process as opposed to a punitive one, but it's almost like embedded into - and I'm not saying all South Africans are like this - but it almost feels like it's embedded into the psyche of insider/outsider dynamics; who belongs, who doesn't? Who gets to participate equally, who doesn't? And it feels like one big rat race, at times, living here to have a piece of this pie that is South Africa. And people spend their lives aspiring to either have a slither of it - whether it's economic empowerment, better jobs, moving to better areas - but it almost feels like a zero-sum game at certain points when you see the discourse around, say like, the redistribution of land, which is a very conscientious issue, or we're talking about just topics that come up in South African politics that we see in the headlines. It almost feels like a back and forth that... There's too much grey matter. There's too much grey matter for us to constantly play into these binaries of the oppressed/the oppressor, you know? There's a lot more going on underneath, but as a foreigner, you can't-, that's the first thing anyone will shoot you down for. And it's sad because you can live here forever but on what grounds are you making this analysis?

Emily: Mmm. So, there are certain things I stay out of because even, honestly speaking, I don't see it as my place, I just kind of stay out of it. And I think that's maybe also coming from a place of me feeling that I'm not gonna be permanently here.

Ijeoma: So, it's kind of like mental deuces.

Emily: Exactly. I feel as though when I probably get back home, I'll probably have more things to say, which is just really horrible. It always happens [laughs].

Ijeoma: 'Cause it's opened up now, and it's in the air.

Emily: I'll probably be on the bus discussing with myself thinking, "I should have said this, I should have said that..." But I feel like that's all I've touched on.

Ijeoma: Well thank you so much for taking the time to talk to me and share these very personal-

Emily: I didn't expect it to go the way it started, like, I never thought for a moment that I would cry but I think I was just thinking... it's just... yeah.

Ijeoma: It's a story that a lot of people relate to as well.

Emily: [1:02:40] That's why I wanna go back. I just wanna see my grandmother 'cause I know she's old, and she's probably gonna pass on very soon so I just wanna... But then at the same time, I wanna go and make sure she's comfortable, but I'm not at that position yet 'cause I'm just a student. So, I just hope she's alive until I'm something. I don't even mean something big and great, I just want her to be alive when I become something. 'Cause the way she's living right now is just not ideal. And then also her being exposed to a country where there's not good access to healthcare, and her being by herself - because my mother has siblings that just don't give a shit that their mother is... you know? So, whenever I think about her, I'm just worried about her safety, health. So, my mum is considering bringing her here and I think it would even be better, honestly.

I do wanna go back, I have so many plans, you know? I wanna go back, and I think this is probably one big dream of mine, but if I ever have access to the funds, if I'm ever wealthy enough - and this is why I was even considering studying a postgraduate diploma in teaching - I want to start an all-girls school in Nigeria where girl students don't have to shave their hair; where they're not beaten; where they're taught tools for empowerment, and history. I feel as though Nigerians do not know history, and sometimes when I just hear wild statements from them about race and ethnicity I'm just like, come on. Like, a part of me doesn't blame them because you're a product of this broken, stupid, silly system with a horrible, useless education... you know? And then another thing that I want to do - I always share these ideas with my mum - but I would love to have an old age home, a place where old people are safe and are being properly taken care of, because I know there are a lot of Africans, of Nigerians, who have left home and could not take their grandmothers and grandfathers with them. So, what happens to these people who have spent so many years of their life living with you and taking care of you as kids? You then have to say goodbye to them and then they're on their own, like, what happens? So, that's just what I'm really passionate about. Yes, I'm here but my heart is still there no matter what, and I can't do anything about it.

Ijeoma: [1:05:37] It's not that you can't do anything about it, it's that the stage that you're at now in your journey is building up to it. When I think about my dad- so, my dad is Nigerian and my mum is from New Zealand so I'm half Nigerian in some ways, but moving to South Africa has obviously put me more in touch with my Nigerian side, or maybe at least think about it, and so when I see also my dad's plans to renovate the house in the village-. We had a ceremony four years ago for his late brother that passed away in a motorcycle accident on his way back to get his university results, and he was gonna be the first graduate in the family. And he influenced my father so much in terms of pursuing an education that I think he also feels this social and moral responsibility to give back. Because then what is the point of all this? What is the point of leaving your home country and everything that you know? 'Cause you can take a man out of the village but he will always, one way or another, everyone wants to go back. It's just difficult. And I think we're also seeing this rebirth from a generational point of view as you said, like young people in diaspora considering going on the youth service program, I've also considered it as well.

Emily: I think a lot of us are.

Ijeoma: It's not just Nigerians living in Nigeria, it's like the diaspora, it's that collective... You must follow Nneka on Instagram. She has a podcast called passing through, so she's like a travel blogger...

Emily: Oh, I follow her on Instagram!

[General chatter]

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Mary

Ijeoma: Thank you for participating in my interview for my research... interested in interviewing people that have lived in South Africa from West Africa. Can you tell me a bit about yourself?

Mary: Hi Ijeoma, my name is Mary, I'm from Nigeria. Been in South Africa for 5 years now? I got into the country December 2013, and I am 28 years old. I'm from the South-West, Osun state, but I don't reside there, but I happen to be from there. I am female. Not a student, I am working at Stellenbosch University, but before that I did my Masters here at Stellenbosch University which I started in 2014 in Agricultural Economics, graduated in 2016. Now I am a staff member.

Ijeoma: So, was your studies the reason you came to Stellenbosch?

Mary: Yes, absolutely, that is the reason I came here...

Ijeoma: Why was South Africa the attractive option for you to study here?

Mary: The UK was the first option when I completed my first degree in Nigeria, interestingly I got admission, however SA was the second option when I didn't secure the funding that I wanted in the UK. As a result, I had to "settle" for South Africa, as Masters in the UK was not possible.

Ijeoma: So, did you come to South Africa because there were no funding options in the UK?

Mary: Not necessarily, as when I came to South Africa, I did not have funding secured for my Masters immediately. SO I came in with no funding, I only secured a bursary during the course of my studies. If you think about it, the UK is a bit... costly in terms of education, so South Africa was an option because at least it was affordable for me and my family as opposed to the UK.

Ijeoma: Did you have any connection to SA prior to coming?

Mary: No, I did not have any connections. I think that question should be yes and no. What happened was, a now family friend, a friend of my dad told him about SA, who has been living here with his family and has a business here; told him they have good schools, and that they should give it a try since I wanted to study further outside of Nigeria.

Ijeoma: And when you came to Stellenbosch in December in 2014, what was it like integrating here? Your first experiences coming off the plane and going to Stellenbosch?

Mary: Thank you for that question. It brings a lot of memories... I flew in through Johannesburg, it was nothing bad, only strange thing was that I didn't know South Africa drives on the opposite sides. I came with my dad's friend, so I wasn't alone, so I had a guide once I arrived and I stayed with them for a few weeks after Christmas, and in the beginning in the new year they brought me to Stellenbosch. It was a bit off, it was really quiet, and everything I could hear around me was Afrikaans and I could hardly understand what was written on the maps and buildings when I arrived. I had to call a friend that I knew from home so I could find my way around. There were differences in terms of languages, and also the space was quite quiet.

Ijeoma: And when the term started and you started meeting people, with South Africans and non-South Africans, how did the social formations happen in the classrooms and outside?

Mary: As quiet as it was, it got to me badly. I was staying in open res, and there was no one to speak or talk to, my phone was flat, and Nigeria and South Africa didn't have the same chargers, so I was in a space all by myself and no one to speak to. I was crying, I wanted to go home and felt really alone, and it was really not nice to be alone. However, I saw a South African lady, after being alone, I decided to speak to her after being alone for so long, and it was a good experience to come out of my shell. Afterwards, I went and spoke to my lecturers and discussing my courses. So even though the environment was a bit aloof, the first interactions with the people was really pleasant.

Ijeoma: Do you have relationships or connections with other West Africans in South Africa, and what were some of the communities you formed while you were here? What were the social spaces that you entered so you could maintain connections with others?

Mary: Firstly, with a religious body – this particular lady I spoke to (at open res) actually showed me a church, and through that channel I was able to meet people from different parts of the world. I met Nigerians, other West Africans, as well as South Africans and other people. I also found myself in societies and student bodies that were based on my nationality, and extra-curricular activities; an example of this was ANSSU (Association of Nigerian Students at Stellenbosch). They really were the only space where I could speak and interact with people from the same place with me. The third space was maybe the classroom; when I started my coursework, there were people from everywhere, and I was able to interact with people not necessarily from the space as me.

Ijeoma: If I can go back to you describing ANSSU, did you feel a stronger sense of national identity and form community with other Nigerians?

Mary: I think I'm someone who wouldn't forget my roots, so whether I joined the association or not, I hold Nigeria in high esteem, so that's something very dear to me. However, joining ANSSU, reinforces that spirit in me, to be able to meet with other Nigerians, it's kind of mixed feelings, because you review things said about Nigerians overseas. You might get worried or frustrated, but it doesn't change who we are. I believe coming together makes us more united, but it doesn't take away from the negative experiences about who we are. Being a Nigerian has limited me in some ways, in terms of travelling, getting a visa, all sorts. And then you hear of atrocities of Nigerians, when people begin to give you an identity based on an minorities' sects, it is displeasing, but what doesn't kill you make you stronger. At the end of the day there is this strong resilience in being Nigerian that comes to bear when you find yourself in those situations.

Ijeoma: Were there limitations to being Nigerians and assumptions that people make, expanding on this phenomenon. How your identity influences your perceptions and relationship to home as well?

Mary: When a Nigerian has to embark on a trip outside of South Africa, having this green passport could have a "delay" on your travels, and also several checks are done to make sure that it's safe for people to come to the country. The Nigerian identity is associated with being a criminal, even if it doesn't affect Nigerians directly, it still has an indirect impact –

when you say you are Nigerian, there are several thoughts that could be going through people's minds. The image needs a lot of rebranding, there are also many voices that have not come out to speak, and a lot of people have a lot on their mind when they hear that you're from Nigeria. When you tell people that you're from Nigeria, the first two questions people ask you is: well, are you Yoruba, Igbo? When they are asking you which tribe you are from they are bringing in issues of...we're just trying to check that you're not a fraudster, you're not into this, are you sure you don't like money, oh you guys are the ones that like money, you're the ones who like books, then they begin to give classes and give strata's for each tribe, and... we know this for ourselves and in Nigeria, but to see people from other countries start to class us according to this, like they pick it up, it's really I don't know... but yeah like I said it can limit you sometimes. Say a Nigerian and a South African are both travelling to the UK, a Nigerian will get lesser length on their visa because they travel everywhere. There's practically a Nigerian in every country on the face of the earth... I can't say for sure but there's no place you can go where you won't find a Nigerian everywhere you go. As opposed to South Africans who don't travel as much... But there is scrutiny when Nigerians travel to make sure that you're not bringing in trouble, that everything is safe and that the coast is fine. When you as a person that your hands are clean, you're going to study or for a conference, and you also have to pass through that's scrutiny because you're Nigerian, and it's something to be aware of.

Ijeoma: [30:27] You've been here for 5 years, so would permanently settling in South Africa be a viable option or you, and if not, how so and would-be motivating reasons for you to leave or to stay?

Mary: This is a difficult question... permanently settling in South Africa... at this point I believe change is constant. But for the time being, and for the purpose of this interview, do I want to stay here permanently? No. At the end of the day, there's no place like home...although at the moment I've been here for so many years, and the reason to make me leave...the only reason I'm still here is because I'm occupied and I'm busy. The last thing I'd want to be is in South Africa and idle – if I'm not busy doing anything, and by anything, I mean legitimate, then I'd rather go back home.

Ijeoma: What if you find a South African partner while you're here?

Mary: *laughs* For me that is not an option, an average south African would not really go for a West African woman, but it's the "in" thing now, we'll see a South African lady settling for a West African man, but to see the tables turned around is...no that's not an option for me.

Ijeoma: I've been talking about it with some friends, especially with this fetishization of West African men, but when tables are turned, there's a different story for West African women, where West African women are masculinized and not seen as a feminine standard.

Mary: You pointed it out rightly, that fact that we're based on Stellenbosch campus, we really cannot compare ourselves to people from the very worst areas of South Africa. So, when we hear about rapes, killings, murders, and all of that, even though one has happened close to us in Claremont... I don't have a personal experience, and it hasn't happened to me. The issue of rape in South Africa something is serious, so I would say my perspective on this issue is it makes women feel unsafe...when you walk home at night. When the rape of Uyinene happened, even during the day ladies in general did not feel safe at all. Stellenbosch campus felt unsafe, and I'm sure a lot of us had people calling to see if we were safe. But often people don't take the time to check if it's happening in your area...they'll just see the headline "rape in South Africa" or "Xenophobic killings in South Africa"...they'll call to make sure you're okay and ask why you don't come back home. I think that it did more damage than the actual xenophobic attacks, for people like us that aren't necessarily in the crime scene, or in precarious areas, so the issue of gender and rape and xenophobia, I think they can't be separated from the issue of apartheid in South Africa. As much as we are in a post-Apartheid regime, the memories of apartheid still linger in the nation, and I think that is somewhat responsible for the vices that we see...the bunch of issues that we see happening in the country still tie strongly to that feeling of being unequal or feeling cheated or taken advantage of. I think that's my two cents of that issue, so I don't know if that helps to answer your question...

Ijeoma: I'm interested to know your experience of racial relations in South Africa, and what that was like for you?

Mary: So, when I arrived in South Africa, the issue of being black, white coloured, was really new to me. A few days ago, someone asked me the question of what do I fill in on forms when it asks for my race, and my first reaction is that I fill in 'African', and she was like "really? Do you say African or black?" ... I mean I paused and thought what it is about being

black or being called black...I'm not dark-skinned really...we have people who are called black, but I am not dark-skinned. I mean I went into this conversation with her about colour. Ghanaians on the average are known to be black, there are countries of the world where people are black, in Nigeria too...when I say black, I mean the skin colour. So, it was quite strange because I would readily think of myself as African until I came to South Africa and realised that there's this deconstruction of "you're black, you're coloured, you're white", and it took me a long time to be able to see someone was (for example) coloured when I would see them. I mean that was quite a struggle to be able to tell "okay you're coloured, you're not white". So, I think if unaddressed it something that will continue to be in the South African system... and somehow it has a ripple effect on foreigners. There is a song by Beyoncé called "Brown skinned girl" and then I was like... she says brown skinned girl, and this was part of what I told the girl who asked me about being black or African...I was like you'll hear people say those who are dark skinned, those who are fair in complexion, they'll all claim brown skinned. So, who came up with the race black, and who came up with this classification that you're black as long as you're from Africa? It's weird because when the topic of skin colour comes up it becomes confusing. I had that convo with my friend because her daughter told her that "mummy you're this colour and I'm this colour", so in a family there's like people with different colours but we all come back to say that we're in the same category...it kind of messes with the human mind. So, what I think about the issue of race is that it does not only affect South Africans, and they've sort of extended it to those of us who are foreigners because we didn't have that kind of conception. So, when we arrive, they say that because you are black you cannot go to these areas, you cannot do this, even though we aren't in apartheid, it's there and it stays with you... yeah, I don't know if it does a lot of good or if there's any aim or purpose but it just... I think it can kill the spirit of a person who is not confident or having identity crisis... if you have got an inferiority complex it might be difficult to stand up for yourself. For example, if you are a student you might say this particular thing is for those people, then I cannot get it. It takes a lot of confidence and courage for people who are said to be black to be able to go for things that other races go for. Because if you use that reasoning that because you are black you cannot go for it, you won't be able to compete and have that ambitious spirit that you generally find in most West African citizens. It might be affected...

Ijeoma: Do you feel integrated into South Africa?

Mary: In a way yes, I have been able to walk in the same environment for 4 years and counting right from the day of being a student assistant, an intern...so in terms of work life I feel I have yes. Education system I have integrated yes, coming here to study was fascinating because its different from what you get back home and that's what people need to know about Nigeria. There are a lot of things failing us back home and that's why people step out of the country out get a better version to what they probably don't have access to. There's worth and value and something they're searching for that they find here, that helps you as a student. You don't have to own a laptop to survive, there are computer labs, and resources. I've really integrated and at postgrad level, the issue of Afrikaans isn't as bad. At undergraduate level it happens more frequently but at postgrad level you study in English so it's easier to study and present. Integration was not a problem in that area. I think relating with people I have come to know a number of South African friends because I can speak and sing in some languages, so I would say I have integrated well. I don't know what would happen if I moved to the bigger cities like Joburg, but I don't think I'd do that bad... the question of integration is two-fold because you begin to speak with people who seem patriotic, that you speak in English, but they won't respond in such and will expect you to speak their language. I travelled to some province and in the taxi and there was such an issue, and the driver didn't want to communicate in English with me. Some South Africans and mainly in the rural areas compared to urban areas that...they'd rather speak their own language. It shouldn't be difficult to meet people halfway but often it doesn't happen. But in general, with colleagues and fellow students it's not really an issue.

Ijeoma: Thank you so much for making the time to speak to me.

Mary: It's a pleasure, I'm glad to help.

----- END OF RECORDING -----

Donna

[Introduction and general chatter]

Ijeoma: [2:30] Did a lot of people you went to school with end up in the same department as you?

Donna: In the same faculty not department...

Ijeoma: When were you in first year?

Donna: 2016. And I have a younger brother that's in first year and has his last exam tomorrow.

Ijeoma: What is he studying?

Donna: Ummm...BSocSci and Politics.

Ijeoma: I've always wondered what the differences between a BA and a BSocSci were...

Donna: So, the entry requirements are the same as a BA, but I don't know if you've seen the Humanities breakdown and how they breakdown BA... BA is more artsy, and BSocSci is more social work, psychology, politics, environmental sciences. We've even had this conversation in classes but they're just different type of sciences. Your majors determine whether it's a SocSci or a BA, based on the subjects that you choose. The only programme that's really structured is the PPE programme. I started English and French for first year courses, which is BA and then an elective course of Gender Studies which is SocSci. The Gender studies Department at UCT is amazing, I really enjoyed it.

Ijeoma: They don't have Gender studies at Stellenbosch (University)...

Donna: Yeah, UCT is the only South African university with a Gender Studies department...and we have pretty cool subjects all round in humanities...Do you have English name?

Ijeoma: No all my names are Igbo. I think its deliberate, my dad is changing his English name to his Igbo ones even on official documents and publications. So he's phasing out his English one eventually. In the beginning that I didn't like that I had a name people struggled with

Donna: Dude, teachers in school would just buckle with my Nigerian name.

Ijeoma: So, what is your Nigerian name?

Donna: Ireoluwa.

Ijeoma: When was the last time you used it?

Donna: At first, I didn't like it, because why would my name give me this name. So, when I sign things its everywhere, and it's a decision you have to make, Because at the conference I went to in August...its every year of media study kids. So, I presented my research at it, and there was this woman who published under her maiden name and then when she got married, she changed her surname. So, when she finished her PhD, she struggled to change it back. I said to her keep your maiden name ... and even for me my Yoruba name is not on social media. My middle name (Donna) is what everyone knows me by and what my family calls me. Ummm... the only identification I have to being Nigerian or Yoruba is my name. and so, I think to myself when I get married that's it. I think I'd keep my maiden name, especially if I make a name for myself. But my kids would take their dad's name. It's weird, its identity politics, what women have to go through... but anyway you said you're finishing your masters now, you thinking of a PhD?

Ijeoma: That's what everyone was asking me at the conference I was just at. And everyone was telling me I should, but honestly the idea of it is lucrative, and getting the qualification before I'm 30. But I know it's a whole different mental journey. I've been doing

IR since undergraduate, but the main subjects I enjoyed were history and anthropology...
[General chatter about universities and academic journeys]

Donna: [15:00] I have two friends that were part of my programme, and recently they had to drop out due to mental health issues. Its black kids that are suffering , struggling to complete their courses and taking 7 years to complete a 3-year degree. White kids do what they need to do, and they bounce. And I don't know if there is a spiritual aspect to it, like black and coloured bodies that died building UCT and the space is quite dark. This dark environment all in the name of a degree...but when you attend conferences you see what universities are producing and contributing to the space of academia you will be shocked. I presented in a room full of PhD students, I was the only honours kids. Like students from the University of Ghana and people were coming from all over. And I was shaking, because the quality was almost like matric level stuff! The research was whack, questions were whack, you cannot even...and if this is the standard outside then no wonder UCT is the best in Africa.

Ijeoma: And it's not even a classist thing, because at the conference I was at there was someone from the University of Zululand that was presenting on a similar topic to me, and just got up there starting talking randomly about (Donald) Trump, bringing up irrelevant statistics and then he started saying "Me myself as a Nigerian" and using their personal opinion as the basis for their entire research... you can research whatever you liked, but I'm mad that it's not academically grounded. That's what differentiates your research, and how do you place it and here you are for 30 minutes not linking it to important questions. So, what are meant to do with this research? [continued discussion about academia]

You told me already about you being born in living in South Africa earlier, wait so how old are you?

Donna: 22, I just turned 22 on Wednesday.

Ijeoma: You're young!! Very young and accomplished!!

Donna: Thank you...even my lecturers and professors say this because I'm the youngest in my class amongst my other classmates lol.

Ijeoma: I turned 21 also during my honours, at the time. But that's because I was placed in Grade 9 when I was meant to be placed in Grade 8.

[general discussion about schooling and school subjects, 21:00-22:31]

Donna: You are very lucky you didn't have to take Afrikaans as a subject. There are so many foreigner kids, and Nigerian kids struggling because they have to take it. It's so bad, my brother took it throughout primary and high school...and even with all help and support he still graduated with a 51%. Afrikaans is one of those languages that can miss me. English is Home Language, more difficult compared to First Additional, but now everyone has to take Home Language English along with a First and Second Additional Language. For me we grew up here and they said were Nigerian so we can't have an exemption, so we had to take additional languages. So, I took AP Zulu, and Second Additional French...it was a lot.

Ijeoma: [26:25] So are your parents still based in South Africa? In Johannesburg?

Donna: They're in Nelspruit.

Ijeoma: Ah yeah, it's where that Zebra stadium is!

Donna: [laughs] So yeah, I live about 5 minutes away from that stadium. Its dry, hot, Safari desert vibes.

Ijeoma: So, what do they do there?

Donna: So, my parents work together, they have a brand consulting company, so companies will send their employees to us for training and we have workshops for like a week or two and then they have training. And then by the end of the course, they get some sort of certification saying they've completed a course in teaching and education training. It's for businesses and adults, and clients have included...and my dad has developed these courses and have been doing this since 2002. In the beginning they were losing a lot of business because the companies would get accommodation elsewhere, so my mum said let's just have our own Guesthouse so they can stay on-site during their training. So, she runs the hospitality side, and my dad does the training.

Ijeoma: Ah that's awesome.

Donna: So, it's okay, it's one of those businesses that are seasonal, where they can get a contract but then nothing for around 4 months. And it's always season specific, if the company funded it, or there's also the whole xenophobia thing where people are scared to come to SA. But a lot of South Africans don't really know Nelspruit is far from Johannesburg which is like a 4-hour drive. So, we've had to find other ways to support the family because it's not consistent. There are a lot of similar businesses in Cape Town and Joburg, and then they want to go somewhere different quieter, they'll be interested. And they're also Pastors, but we don't make any money from that.

Ijeoma: [31:04] So they like have their own church?

Donna: Yeah.

Ijeoma: Oh wow.

Donna: Yeah, they have their own Ministry. So, with religion with spirituality and being Nigerian, there's a lot to unpack. There's a lot of politics in the church, people having their own interests. Full-time and part-time pastors have their own divisions. We were doing Ministry without receiving any financial support. When you have Christianity shoved down your throat and you don't have space to grow your own spirituality it becomes difficult. So, when I left home, I knew I had personal faith so time away gave me the space to think independently and not have my parents tell me what to do. When I'm home I'm at church like 4 times a week just because of all the different activities taking place. So as a child it's not nice, people are super judgmental, Nigerians are judgemental especially. So, I'd just feel exhausted in my soul, and currently I don't have the energy to like to pray, or any of that and I'm over it. So, I'll only go to church really when I'm at home, but not when I'm here (Cape Town).

Ijeoma: [40:01] So another question I want to ask you, do you have South African citizenship?

Donna: [Laughs] No. So my parents have lived here for 25 years, and so they got married in 1995. Then a month after they got married, my dad...

Ijeoma: Wait, so how did they end up in South Africa though?

Donna: [40:25] Whew, so I have to go all the way back! [laughs]. My dad got his masters then couldn't get a job in his field, so he started working for the Nigerian Sports Commission as an officer. And uhm, so he would travel with the athletes and testing them before they left. So the one time the Nigerian Sports came to Durban in 1993 for an Athletics meet. And this was during Apartheid and it was a weird space for him, and he always said the money that they gave him to come on the trips and the allowances that they gave him, that was the money he used for his wedding. Uhm, and my mum was a teacher in Lagos at the time, and he was just like, Nigeria was so bad then and no opportunities and my mum couldn't imagine having kids in the country because of how things were. So, my dad left, and first went to Harare, and at the time the only country that was giving Nigerians free visas was Swaziland. So you could buy your ticket to Swaziland without a visa, so he went there.

Ijeoma: That's where you were born right?

Donna. Yes. So at the time when my dad arrived for the first few months, he didn't have a mailbox. So, my dad was writing letters to this guy's mailbox, so that it would get to my mum back in Nigeria. And at the time this was happening, there was a wave of Nigerian guys getting married and then leaving their wives behind in Nigeria. And never coming back. I mean they'd do this and have whole families. So, my mum said she nearly died, lost so much weight, losing her mind, and then it was revealed that this guy had kept all these letters from my dad, because he didn't know if he'd be coming back. They (her parents) both still hate him. Because it was very traumatic, and they regained contact and then after 4 months she joined him in Swaziland. Uhm, ya my dad worked for a Swazi company, and had me in 1997, had my brother in 2000. And then we moved to Nelspruit in 2002, and my sister was born in 2003.

Ijeoma: So, you technically have Swazi-

Donna: Yeah, birth certificate is a Swazi birth certificate which is unabridged of all things. Because they have their own system and politics and whatever. But I do have free entry in and out of Swaziland for the rest of my life because they have this thing where regardless of you are Swazi. And then my citizenship is Nigerian, and I have a South African PR (Permanent

Residence) and ID number but a non-South African one. So, it's a very messed up system, because any other country would say that you'd have qualified for citizenship by now. And my brother's born in Johannesburg, but he's not a system. So that ID number you have, someone explained it to me that you have the same rights and privileges as a South African right, so anything they can do you can do. In terms of owning a car, opening a bank account, getting a cell phone contract, owning property. So you have the same privileges as a South African inside South Africa, but once you are outside you default to your country of origin. So basically, in the global context, your global citizenship, I'm seen as Nigerian not as South African. And from when you receive your PR, only from then that it takes another 10 years before you qualify for South African citizenship. The process is naturalisation-

Ijeoma: Almost as if you're in a state of being 'unnatural'.

Donna: Exactly. You understand what I'm saying and the problem? So now you revoke your citizenship of origin...

Ijeoma: And it's like the legislation is deliberately made to be difficult to stay and work here as a foreigner. Employers aren't going to support foreigners.

Donna: [48:22] Yes, and there's that whole thing surrounding 'critical skills. If you are not a doctor, or an engineer, or an Actuarial Scientist, you need to go all the way to PhD so that they can consider you 'critical' in that field so you can stay in the country and be able to get a job... To get your permanent residence you basically must be on a critical skills visa. If I did not get my permanent residence before entering university during my Matric, I do not know how my parents would have been able to pay international fees for my tuition. It's a lot, anything they can think of to make sure that these people don't want to stay here.

Ijeoma: And it's like there's completely different understandings of what foreigners are actually doing here in South Africa, and it's like suddenly people support the police state, suddenly people support violent structures...

Donna: I was reading this reply to your tweet, where this guy was like "Xenophobia is a term you guys came up with to guilt us into accepting lawlessness for foreigners" and I was thinking, you're talking about refugees...

Ijeoma: And it's like they can't see it all how it ties in together.

Donna: [50:39] But you know the older you get, the more...I don't know it's like this painful realisation or epiphany that I've grown up here my entire life, this is home-

Ijeoma: And I mean you speak Zulu.

Donna: But that doesn't mean anything to them. It's my entire existence, my entire life has been here. This is my home, everything that I know...and like you realise you don't mean anything to them, and it does not make sense. And because my parents put me in certain spaces and gave me access to certain privileges, so I do not experience xenophobia in ways that other people have, and I have been dealing with a lot of guilt around that. Especially been feeling that with what happened on Wednesday, with the refugees in town. I was just thinking about it. If I didn't go to the public school I went to, if I didn't live in the area in Cape Town that I currently do, I didn't speak a certain way, if I wasn't at UCT, I can see how I would be treated like other migrants facing police brutality. Having money to be removed from that and not being exposed, and it's hard to reconcile in my brain, and that, this is not your home. For the longest time, I felt like I did belong, but over time and as I'm growing older, I'm on my own and being exposed to more, and weird things to come to terms with. And it's like, how is it that your own home is so hostile, so unaccommodating, so difficult... there's this othering that takes place socially and you can't describe it. And it's strange to know that...you know I think about how everyone knows that my family is Nigerian. And thinking about how my dad as a Nigerian businessman in South Africa, that at any moment my parents could be attacked, or they could attack our business... you understand? That his employers could turn on him at any moment, that his driver could...God forbid his driver is mad one day and does something to him. All those things are possibilities because...and that's the thing that pisses me off about South Africa is that in an era of globalisation, of deep globalisation, how can choosing to live in another country be seen as such a crime? Like people move and resettle all the time, and it's literally black people, but because whiteness is seen as this holy grail no one attacks white foreigners no one attacks them. So now I'm in the process of thinking where my new home will be, or slowly thinking about where I'm going to go. My parents have lived here for so long, that they are established here so they'll definitely do the naturalisation thing because they're old and it's what they want to do. But yeah, for young people...

Ijeoma: And I mean, that's also traumatizing in of itself that when you're thinking of future plans of where you'll be, because of this othering that you'll feel, there'll be an uphill battle. It's different if you've settled like your parents, and you learn to navigate around it as opposed to the onset of foundation of our adult life.

Donna: And that's what I was saying to my parents as well...explaining racism to Nigeria they don't understand it. In school I felt like I always had to defend myself and my brother because we were being reprimanded for having an attitude. When I was in Grade 2 my teacher asked me if my dad was drug dealer. Imagine asking an 8-year-old that, I was just like, "What?". And imagine you know, you wake up every day, and see your dad go to work, to go earn a good living, and then someone, a person in authority for that matter is asking if your dad is dealing drugs. And I went home crying, and my mum just told me "No, it's okay don't cry ignore it". It's because for Nigerians, they genuinely do not experience racism like South Africans, in their heads it's like a concept that doesn't exist.

Ijeoma: It's like they see it as someone being rude, and racism is South Africa's problem not our own-

Donna: [57: 47] But you know we're talking about grown adults that chose to migrate at a grown-up age where they don't have any recollection of racist teachers or xenophobic experiences as an adult. Because they moved here as a married couple, and they already have friends. And growing up here was a different experience, we were being bullied in school and they didn't understand that. We were being bullied in school, being made fun of relentlessly...we went to school at a time when Africa Magic [a television channel with Nigerian movies] was popular. When people were watching Aki and Pawpaw, and South Africans were really into it, their notions of Nigeria and everything they knew was highly influenced by what they would see through these media representations. We would go to school and kids would comment and say, "Oh, we watched this movie, and we know what you guys eat in your house, so we don't want to come to your house". All these weird things. So teachers would report my attitude, saying I did well, but that I would talk back. So, my parents would reprimand me, and I would have to explain that the only reason I'm like this is to defend me and my brother Uh, also we were big boned. So, the physicality was different, South African kids were small and grew differently. South Africans would have the stature of a 6-year-old but be 9 years old. When you stand next to them, you will have a bigger frame than most people...in Grade 5

that was when I noticed my growth spurt and I just became tall. I will never forget I got stretch marks on my knees from growing, and I was taller than everyone and I hated it. I only became comfortable with my height quite recently because I was taller than all my friends and taller than most guys and everyone would say “Oh wow, she’s so tall”.

[Discussion about beauty standards and difference between Nigerian and South African women]

Donna: [1:05:001] When it comes down to appearance and it comes to dressing, West African women in terms of culture, it’s a thing. And something my friends would always say “You always put so much effort into your appearance”. You have to come to dress sense and culture; Nigeria and South Africa are not on the same page. South Africans don’t inherently have a dress culture, and before the introduction of Western clothing for the most part their traditional clothing was beads, and cloths. And that was how they covered themselves, or covered themselves in loincloths, and there were differences depending on the tribe. But Nigeria has a distinct, dress code, different types of attire, and a rich history of traditional clothing that is passed down, and there is distinct clothing from each tribe that has a dress code and cultural significance. My friends will always comment on “you always look like you put so much effort into your appearance”. When it comes to dress sense and fashion, Nigeria and South Africa are inherently different. The idea of tie and dye originates from my mum’s area in Nigeria, that we taught to the English, and we have different types of clothes for different occasions, the culture of making clothing and buying material and sewing. The idea that you can buy material, take it somewhere to get it made and it is cheaper in some cases than just buying clothes. It’s such a sad thing, because South Africans don’t have anything they maintain from their culture through clothing. For Nigerians it’s not something that is worn on only one specific day, like Heritage Day here in South Africa, traditional Nigerian clothing is worn as a means of everyday expression. The only time you’ll really see Nigerians wearing Western clothing is to assimilate into South African society, and to not stand out as much. Nobody in Nigeria waits for one day to wear their traditional clothing, and that just shows the effects of colonisation in South Africa, that there’s this complete and total erasure, that they think it’s okay to wear Western clothing all day every single day and no one is investigating that. South Africans really need to sit down and introspect about how they’re living and what constructs they put into their society, so that’s it. Yoruba are extra and dramatic, and I was raised by a Yoruba woman that taught me to not leave the house looking

any type of way. Especially here in Cape Town, I mean in Johannesburg the dress style is a bit more elevated. But here the dress style here is very [casual], there are literally people in sweats and leggings the whole time, which is fine but it's not my vibe every single day. SO that has a lot to do with how I was raised, and how people take pride in their appearance regardless of where they are. Like church, people take it very seriously. So for people don't have cultural attire, they can't wear it out because of erasure and modernism-

Ijeoma: I don't know what your thoughts are on Afro-Dandyism, being an African gentleman...

Donna: That started in the 1960s in Sophiatown, where a bunch of scholars...I don't know if you know about the Drum boys...a bunch of young black men in 1950s South African who were writing literature, books, poetry, about what the urban black South African man should look and dress like. And a lot of jazz music, partying, getting high, and writing these amazing pieces, and doing these things to perform black South African masculinity in a certain way, and they would their rural areas, and to fit in you need to look a certain way. Button up down suit, slick back hair, and that is the vibe that is still carried on and being reproduced. That needs to be unpacked, what it means to be a black South African man. And their motto was "live fast die young and have a good-looking corpse". And also, black women also had to look a certain way, the skirts, the colloquial idea of a black couple during Apartheid South Africa...and all of their culture and heritage has been erased already from that point already. That is the extent to which colonialism and Apartheid have erased a certain aspect of cultural identity. But at the same time there are cultural modes of expression pumped into mainstream media, and you are seeing my traditional clothing and outfit as a costume, wearing certain items the wrong way. Someone thinks if they stick a headwrap on that they're representing something from Africa.

[Discussion about the history of the Doek and Afrikaans cuisine in South Africa]

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