An African Feminist analysis on the experiences of black African immigrant men in Cape Town, South Africa.

A minor dissertation in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Master of Social Science degree in Gender and Transformation

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Acknowledgments:

Do not fear [anything], for I am with you; Do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, be assured I will help you; I will certainly take hold of you with My righteous right hand [a hand of justice, of power, of victory, of salvation].'

Isaiah 41: 10 AMPC

To the creator of the heavens and the earth. To God, my Righteous father whose hand held me, and by His rod shepherded me through the experience of this research. Unto Him, I ascribe all Glory and admiration. In the moments where I could no longer hold it together, fearing the stench of failure, I am grateful to my heavenly father who took heed unto my desperate cry. During the nights when I could no longer shed tears but groaned in fear, unto Him I give praise for it is Him who hearkened my cries…

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Table of Contents

Abstract:

Practices of masculinities amongst migrant men are greatly dependent on the resources that these men can mobilize within a new national and cultural context. This research study provides a gendered perspective on migration studies that postulate the embedded impact of gender ideologies within migrant households, and communities, impacting African men as 'gendered' and 'sexual identities'. This research study argues against the homogenizing and essentialist notions of researching immigrants as ungendered subjects. It argues for the importance of utilizing Decolonial African Feminist theorizations in migration studies toward foregrounding and rendering visible men and masculinities in research on African mobilities. This research study focuses on deconstructing taken-for-granted assumptions of what it means to be a black African, and how these are embodied within migratory masculine identities in post-colonial South Africa. It provides the life stories of six African men, aiming to explore African masculinities within transnational migration studies and provides a nuanced understanding of how masculinities are made, remade, and maintained across geographies, and socio-economic and -cultural configurations of racialized masculine subjectivities. The findings and discussions of this research study reveal the gendered narratives of migration especially men's marginalization, vulnerabilities, performances of fathering, family ties, and religiosity in a more nuanced approach that embraces the critical insights into the inequalities that these men experience. Some of the key findings of this research study surface the negotiation of their masculine subjectivities as these men experience various forms of systematic and institutionalized violences and victimization. Moreover, the findings of this research study unpack the pathways of moving away and towards hegemonic masculine ideals as a form of repairing their manhood through embodying affective forms of masculinities as they navigate masculinities fathering, and fatherhood. Lastly, this study's findings unpack how immigrant men embody heteropatriarchal religious and cultural masculine ideologies in attempts to repair their lost masculine status.

Key Words: Blackness, African Masculinities, Transnational Migration, Decolonial African Feminism.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Introduction and Background

Migration particularly in this research, transnational migration offers to the current discourses on African men a nuanced understanding of the changing and shifting masculinities in Africa (Mangezvo, 2015). It provides insight into the active processes of deconstructing and re-imaginings of African masculinities across state borders into new cultures, societal norms, and contestations with the multiple 'hegemonic' masculinities evident in the host country (Moolman, 2017). Previous research on African men has been embedded in white, European hegemonic, and stereotypical connotations that position African men as a homogenous group. These conceptualizations of African men particularly from the Global North, have negatively equated African men to domination, promiscuity, irresponsibility, and violence (Ratele, 2008). However, in the recent past, conceptualizations and theorizations on masculinities in African feminist scholarship and discourses have covered much ground in understanding and unpacking the multiplicity and nuanced intricacies of men and masculinities in Africa. These researchers began to explore the role of culture and contextual traditions in the conceptions of masculinities (Mfecane, 2016); exploring how macro-environments -social institutions influence and engage men through their intersectional masculine subjectivities (Moolman, 2013). This scholarship continues to challenge and remedy the colonial rhetoric and single narrativization of black African masculinities. It provides a more nuanced and complex understanding of the stories, histories, and traumas of African masculinities beyond the popular feminist singular narrative about men, and Black men (Makama et al, 2021). These studies have noted how research on African boys and men has inadvertently intended to demonize and construct them as inherently problematic. They have played an imperative role in surfacing alternative narratives on African masculinities that challenge colonial and Apartheid racist discourses of Black men as barbaric, hypersexual, patriarchal, and hypermasculine (Langa et al, 2018; Ratele, 2018; Makama et al, 2021).

In denouncing and writing towards repairing the conceptualization of African men, authors have argued that African masculinities as performances of gender subjectivities are significantly changing, fluid, multiple, and shifting (Moolman, 2013). Within migration studies, feminist theorizations had preoccupied itself with answering the call to gendering migration in Africa (Cohen, 1995; Kofman, 1999). This call in the Global South aimed at challenging the "gender blindness of migration studies produced in the Global North" on African migrating persons (Christou and Kofman, 2022). Moving towards gendering migration, took the form of increased attention on the experiences of women, to which research advocating for the feminization of migration warned against the invisibility of women in migration studies (Christou and Kofman, 2022). However, the over-emphasis on the experiences of women inadvertently resulted in scholars undermining a gendered view of migration

that provides possibilities for understanding the transnational experiences of both men and women immigrants. Consequently, this resulted in the absence of men and masculinities as gendered subjects in migration studies. The absence of men and masculinities in migration needed to be rectified. To rectify the silencing and undermining of masculinities in transnational migration studies in the Global South and within African Feminist discourses this research seeks to visibilize and acknowledge the gendered experiences of mobile men, especially their marginalization, vulnerabilities, victimization, and resilience (Pasura and Christou, 2018).

1.2. Problem Statement

This research study acknowledges that the current discourses on migration have missed an imperative component of gender in its quest to "gendering migration". It has obscured and made the lives of migrant men "invisible". Moreover, this scholarship has not accounted for the complex interrelations between femininities with, and amongst masculinities that produce gender within the process of migration. In the Southern African context, scholars of migration have carried out work on masculine identities locating the experiences of these bodies through historical internal and cross-border migration (Levitt, 2010; Opara, 2020). However, little work has been done on investigating and understanding how transnational migration recreates and articulates masculinities amongst black African migrant men (Matshaka, 2009; Mangezvo, 2015). In South Africa, scholarship on migration seems to be stuck in the portrayal of transnational migration through a one-dimensional lens. While ground-breaking research has been conducted on the history of migration, conceptualizing and investigating cheap labor both from the perspective of men and women. There, has been and continues to be a high dependence on and conceptualizing transnational immigrants as economic and/or labor immigrants (Dodson, 1998; Kofman, 2018). These descriptive studies lack nuances on the complexity of transnational immigrants through a gendered perspective. In South Africa, the explicit focus on masculinities as gendered subjects in migration is a fairly new space of theorization (Mangezvo, 2015).

Post-Apartheid research on black African migration was largely invested in evoking and officiating the Apartheid rhetoric of black African immigrants by constructing these bodies as adversely primitive, morally bankrupt, and bearers of sickness (Neocosmos, 2006; Mangezvo, 2015). When this research finally picked up on the feminist project of gendering migration studies in South Africa, they equated the black African immigrant man to illegality and criminality. Scholars such as Neocosmos (2006) posited that such conceptualizations on immigrant men not only justified the dehumanization of black African immigrant men but also continued to personate the colonial and Apartheid narrative of the black African immigrant men. These men were described and articulated as criminals, gangsters, promoters of prostitution, and HIV/AIDS sufferers (Landau, 2004; Mangezvo, 2015). Holistically the

being of the black African immigrant man was cast into nothingness and therefore a perpetual '*Kwerekwere*'[1].

The concept of illegality is most often used in migration studies as a uniform label ascribed to African descendants who have immigrated to South Africa. Pelser (1998) in their work titled "*Heading for Canaan: A reflection on illegal migration in South Africa*", unpacks the concept 'illegal' which they use interchangeably with 'alien' to describe black African immigrants in South Africa. They state that "Illegal aliens in South Africa belong to two main categories, namely undocumented voluntary migrants and undocumented forced migrants (or refugees). The two categories are used synonymously by most South Africans and even officially little attempt has been made to distinguish between forced and voluntary migrants" (Minnar et al, 1995; Pelser, 1998). These authors allude that there is little known about illegal migrants such as who they are, how many there are, and whether or not they have the right to be in South Africa. While Minnar et al (1995) report that much is known about who these "illegal aliens" are, there seems to be little to no literature that positions men as gendered subjects in these discourses as both humans (not aliens) and while so providing insight into the experiences of undocumented immigrant men in South Africa. With the understanding that migration is both a gendered and racialized phenomenon. It is, therefore, the aim of this research to hone on the call to gender migration by locating black African undocumented immigrant men's experiences of resilience, marginality, victimization, and vulnerability within (South) African Feminist scholarship.

1.3. Rationale

As articulated previously, this research study locates itself within the current discourses of gendering migration. It aims to investigate the experiences of migrating masculinities in Africa and situating South Africa as the host country. It foregrounds the experiences of undocumented men as a layer into the conversation of intersecting migration and masculinity discourses. The attempts to write about black African immigrant men in research have been void of the complexities that experiences of undocumentation could provide. The dominant and homogenizing portrayal of international migrants has primarily been fixated on curating undocumented immigrant men as invisible subjects. In the times in which research 'wrote' about these men, it has been to cushion and rationalize the prejudiced sentiments of post-colonial and post-Apartheid South Africa on foreign men as the causal factors and forerunners of the prevalent social anxiety, unrest, and social instability in the country (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2001). This research study therefore seeks to engage the narratives of black African immigrant men providing a nuanced understanding of their experiences as men and immigrants that

[1] Within the scope of this research study the term "Kwerekwere" is understood as a vernacular-derived derogatory term that refers to black African immigrants. It is widely used to refer to "other" Africans whose primary language (apart from English) is nowhere near those spoken in South Africa (Matohane, 2022). This term is, however, not used in this research study due to the negative and dehumanizing connotations and meanings it evokes.

does not emulate the one-dimensional and singular depiction of black African immigrant men as problematic (Makama et al, 2019).

The presence of documented and undocumented immigrants in South African scholarship, public politics, and everyday discourses has largely been characterized and connotated as negativity. Pelser (1995) articulates that, illegal immigrants in South Africa have strong negative effects on the country's economy, affecting employment opportunities, health, education, and housing. Even decades after the abolishment of Apartheid, Pelser's (1995) sentiments still echo in the political and public forums. In 2015, King Goodwill Zwelithini and Edward Zuma, son of former president Jacob Zuma, likened African immigrants in South Africa to lice, ordering them to leave the country (Maphosa and Ntau, 2021). It is important to note that these remarks are mostly directed at black African immigrants largely and do not distinguish between gender and documentation. However, this research focuses on undocumented black African immigrant men because of their intersecting identities of race, nationality, and un-documentation which create multiple forms of vulnerabilities, subjecting these men to experiences of exploitation, targeted violence, and discrimination because of their 'illegal' status (Maphosa and Ntau, 2021).

1.4. Research Questions, Aims, and Objectives

How do black African undocumented immigrant men living in Cape Town negotiate the realities of their migration experiences?

1.4.1. Sub questions

1. What are the experienced realities that black African immigrant men had when journeying from "home" into the host country?
2. What does survival/ surviving (survivorship) mean for black African immigrant men in South Africa, Cape Town?
   2.1. How does this survivorship inform the performance of their masculinity?
3. What possibilities of theorization do African feminist and Decolonial theory offer in rehumanizing black African immigrant men in research?

1.4.2. Aim and Objectives

This research study aims to unpack and investigate the complex realities forged by un-documentation for black African immigrant men living in South Africa. It seeks to explore the various ways these men experience and configure their masculinities in host countries and how their state of undocumentation impacts the performance and embodiment of their masculinities. It also aims to explore the possibilities of denouncing the harmful narrativization of black African men through decolonial and feminist theorization. The objectives of the study are:

1. To explore migration from the perspective of and experiences of black African undocumented immigrant men living in South Africa.
2. To explore how black African immigrant men survive South Africa
3. To interrogate the experiences of black African immigrant men in South Africa through an African Feminist lens
4. To employ a Decolonial Feminist, method of studying black African immigrant men that seeks to re-member African men as human through their narrativization of themselves.

1.5. Organization of Chapters:

Chapter 1 of this research study provides the background and rationale of the study. This chapter also identifies the main research aims, objectives, and research questions. It also provides an understanding of the emergence and need for the research governing this study. This is done by foregrounding the current debates within migration scholarship by feminist researchers on the need to challenge the gender blindness of migration studies by rectifying the absence of men and masculinity as gendered subjects in migration studies.

Chapter 2 of this research study unpacks the conceptual framework. This chapter engages with key constitutive concepts of the research study such as black African and immigrant masculinities. This chapter also provides a comprehensive literature review that engages with and contextualizes the experiences of black African immigrant men by locating discourses on cross-border migration, the implicating of situational livelihoods, and the construction and reconfiguration of masculinities in the host country.

Chapter 3 examines and critically advocates for the chosen methodology and epistemological assumption that shape this research study. It also outlines the research design and research methods employed in this research. This chapter also unpacks the decisions made concerning informing data collection and analysis. It also provides a lengthy discussion on the issue of reflexivity in African Feminist and Gender Research.

Chapter 4: *Migrant Masculinities and Narratives of Victimhood;* explores the experiences of victimization of immigrant men as they encounter state violence through macro-systematic and institutionalized violence in South Africa. It also postulates ways in which black African immigrant men resist, survive, and succumb to the production of their personhood as pathological racialized excess in postcolonial South Africa

Chapter 5: *Migratory Masculinities and Fatherhood* unpacks immigrant men's experiences of fatherhood within the host country and transnationally. It engages how fatherhood, as one of the pillars of constructing manhood in Africa, is oftentimes in conflict with these men's undocumentation. This chapter also engages how fatherhood for immigrant men is a means to retain a higher masculine status that is subordinated in the host country.

Chapter 6: *Fractured Masculinities and Repair*; engages how migrant men actively attempt to reconfigure their 'hegemonic' status by embodying and assimilating with Religious and Cultural ideologies of gender to shed the marginal masculinities prescribed to them in the host country.

Chapter 7 of this research study is the concluding chapter. This chapter presents the synthesis of arguments, a synopsis of the major arguments, and a reflection on opportunities for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter is presented in two sections. The conceptual framework engages the social constructivism of identities and subjectivities, particularly blackness, Africanness, and masculinities. It engages how embodied ideologies of race and racialization inform black Africans men's experience of migration. It further positions its discussion of masculinities within post-structural feminist theorization of Critical Masculinities Studies unpacking the multiplicity of masculinities in Africa. Secondly, this chapter provides a comprehensive review of the literature on migrant masculinities in South Africa postulating how their migration experiences impact performances and embodiments of masculine selves in the host country.

2.1. Conceptual Framework

2.1.1. Race'ing', Race *in* Africa

Migration is negatively connotated to Africa. Scholars studying this phenomenon have depicted Africa as the "continent on the move". This has been greatly linked to the racist idea of Africa as a continent infested with poverty, conflict, and diseases. Mama (2001) proposes that to arrive at a singular conceptualization of the African experiences and African people should be contested. This is because being African is not a homogenous and universal cultural identity and/or experience. This proposes the dismissal of the uni-dimensional narrativization of the African experiences as it intersect with histories and present manifestations of race, class, gender, and religion amongst others. Scholars of migration have been adamant in conceptualizing migration in Africa as genderless and racialized as black. This singular conceptualization has made it legitimate for these scholars to construct black African immigrants in South Africa as morally bankrupt (Neocosmos, 2006).

Before Migration is gendered it is firstly racialized. Last and Jones (2021) argue that migration in Africa continues to demonize the black African as an unwanted immigrant while constructing the white migrant as a tourist. The demonization of the black African immigrant is legitimized by questions of race. Magubane (2007) argues that this phenomenon takes root from the era of slavery in America, through to colonialism in Africa and Apartheid in South Africa. It is implications of racial ideologies that legitimize the glamorizing and invisibility of white foreigners in South Africa conceptualizing them as tourists, investors, professionals, and potential employers (Mangezvo, 2015). It is the discourses of race that normalize the ideology of darker-skinned people across the globe as the un-human; unwanted kwerekwere thus legitimizing their dehumanization (Magubane, 2007). While Mbembe (2017) argues that the term Black has been generalized. There was a period in time in which the very term only referred to the condition imposed on people of African origin. As a product of the history of racism, enslavement, and colonization black was a badge of African sub-humanity and inferiority. It is for these reasons that this research study provides an argument on the convergence of the terms 'black' and 'African' (black

Africa) as it aims to address how inconspicuous racial ideologies continue to equate and imagine immigrant men in South Africa through racist and derogatory constructions.

2.1.2. black African?

Black African(ness) is a relational identity, that post-colonial feminists argue, is not a birthmark nor inherent to the body's ability to codify itself (Mama, 2001; 2008). It is a historical invention, a socially constructed 'truth' of representation that was deployed to service the colonial powers' assemblages of humans according to subcategories (Mbembe, 2017). It is an identity constructed for the descendants of Africa by those who aimed at alienating and pervasively legitimizing their dominance, instruction, and assembling of the continent. It can be argued that black(ness) is a representation of not a universal truth on the diagnoses of Africans but rather a situational knowledge hinged on colonialism and the colonial power's desire to diminish the humanity of 'Africans'. However, it is also important to understand that this situated knowledge has now morphed itself into representational knowledge that has through dominant narratives solidified itself into a 'truth'. Mudimbe (1988) notes that while the naming of Africa is a result of colonial anthropological science, it has also become a representational identity and embodied subjectivity that represents rather than silences or excludes Africans. This historical construction of the continent, has also had to contend and continues to battle the reversion of Africanness through race discourses and skin color racism as further weaponization.

In its attempt to engage and question the taken-for-granted assumptions of what it means to be black and/or African. This research study debates Tsri's (2015) contestation with the continued use of black to identify African people. In their journal titled "*Africans are not black: why the use of the term 'black' for Africans should be abandoned*", the author argues that the term "black" should be denounced as an identity ascribed to African bodies. They explain that the term black in classical antiquity is used to symbolize evil, deities with bad characters, dark deeds, and the goddess of death (Tsri, 2015). For the author, this same concept which was ascribed to symbolize evil, and death was also used to categorize, describe, and refer to African bodies (Tsri, 2015). This has had negative consequences invoking non-Africans to connotate and describe African bodies with negative symbolisms such as savageness, bad luck, disaster, and backward barbarians (Tsri, 2015). These classical relics contributed to the ideological systems that produced African bodies as inferior. The author states, "I argue that it is the categorical use of the term 'black' that should be abandoned. This is because if the symbolic use of the term 'black' remains…it contributes to the persistence of racial stereotypes that are informed by the idea of blackness" (Tsri, 2015). For the author, the continual reference to black when describing or referring to African people is an act that continues to degrade, insult, and dehumanize Africans. A continuation of this term not only re-enforces the dichotomy of superior European over inferior African bodies, but also perpetuates the homogenizing acts of slavery, colonialism, and imperialism that stripped Africans of their humanhood (Tsri, 2015).

While Tsri (2015) argues succulently for the abandonment of the term black when referring to African. The author does not provide an alternative to which the experiences of 'black' people in Africa can be accounted for, not only by history. They do not provide any conceptual framing in which we decode the embedded realities being created by coloniality in post-colonial Africa, through imperialism, capitalism, and other forms of dehumanization that racialized bodies in Africa are subjected to (Mbembe, 2017). To write migration in South Africa, this research is cognizant of the variation of mobile racialized and gendered bodies in Africa. It would be futile in this research to not make note nor account for the distinct and complex experiences embodied by those labeled as black in Africa. Therefore, this research acknowledges that "there is a connection between being black and Africa" (Mapokgole, 2014). The distinction of race in South Africa is more than a labeling to and of bodies. It has been used as a symbol to which oppression of a particular group of Africans is legitimized. For instance, enslavement, colonization, and Apartheid in South Africa are forms of political, systematic, and institutionalized violence that were acted out not only against the blacks but also the blacks who are considered African (Mapokgole, 2014; Mbembe, 2017). I argue therefore, that the 'abandonment' of this term [black] grants little to no solution nor account of the experiences and livelihoods of racialized persons created and reproduced through globalization and neo-colonization today. I suggest that rather than abandon the term, as decolonial feminist scholars we begin interrogating not only the labeling of African bodies as "black" which has reduced living beings to "matters of appearance, skin and color" (Mbembe, 2017). We also delve into the complexities and realities that could be reproduced by abandoning a label that history still yet needs to account for.

The ambiguities of representational labeling as subjective identities are not only produced in the discourses of race in Africa. It produces itself in the very naming and conceptualization of the continent. Who is African? What is Africa? Zeleza (2006; 2010) argues that the name Africa is an idea, a discursive concept with a historical genealogy and genealogies. To define and name Africa and by extension, the adjective of African is to be cognizant of the complex and multiple cultures, subjectivities, and nationalities. However, for Zeleza (2006) and Mama (2001), the risk of a definite definition of Africa tends to essentialize the African identity. These authors argue that to be African is not a universal and homogenous cultural identity. Mama (2001) makes a compelling point, to which they caution scholars who write about Africa, to not reproduce the homogeneity rhetoric colonialists imposed on Africa by homogenizing the continent into this singular landmass, infested with barbaric, primitive, sub-humans. The caution to not write about an African identity as a static, unchanging, not developing identity is important as this will reproduce the dangers of a single story. To homogenize Africa or the African identity is to strip it of its bewildering complexities.

2.1.3. Why then "black African"?

"Black people from Africa were not only relocated to a different geographical environment but they were also relegated to the status of commodity, to be objectified and traded. Blackness has become an assigned identity by oppressors relegating black people from Africa to become the subaltern" (Mbembe 2017). Situating blackness in Africa as a discourse of race, situated knowledge, and embodied subjectivities in this research study allows for the project of decolonization to situate epistemologically the experiences of those disregarded as human beings, particularly the black that is African (Mbembe, 2001). To position blackness in Africa is by no way an attempt to produce an 'authentic' African representational identity/subjectivity. It is rather aimed at understanding the continued project of coloniality in producing racialized African subjectivities as "inherently imbued with social disorder" (Langa and Kiguwa, 2016). This research study uses the concept of black Africans as participating in the discourses that affirm and visualize native and indigenous Africans as human rather than subhuman and as definitive subjectivities rather than ambiguous terms that vilify Africa. The use of the terms black and African in this research study as constructed and embodied subjectivities by the men to whom the study seeks to write is not an oversimplification of the participant's personhood. To attempt to engage Africaness in isolation from the term black in this paper will be futile and problematic as it assumes a homogenous African identity and erases the very essence of an African identity that is a dynamic reality… that moves forward daily but knows no end (Mveng, 1985).

To postulate distinctly an African identity and experience that is embedded in the racial construction of blackness allows this research study to unpack how white racial ideology in Africa still implies invisibility, inferiority, and problematic. To justify the authors' conceptuality of black Africans this research study acknowledges the continuities of white Apartheid ideologies that still ascribe and relegate black people's assigned identity as sub-human and subaltern. It positions the inherent dehumanization of black people even in the post-colonial dispensation not treated equally as would be expected of fellow human beings (Mbembe, 2017). This research study postulates that the current manifestation of Negrophobic and Afrophobic violence in South Africa is an extension of the history which birthed a multi-racial African identity to which black Africans were marked based on their perceived skin color and physical features. These physical features included their "woolly hair and Negroid flat noses" (Tsri, 2015). It is through mobility and recently, globalization that black as a racial component becomes the prominent marker of a "particular" African identity, performed and embodied subjectivities. It would be instructive to seek a thorough understanding of how migrants negotiate their way through different identity markers in various diasporic spaces within and outside the continent.

While South Africa is alleged to be a democratic nation, the black identity, which was a result of an inhumane social construction of identity persists. For instance, Mapokgole (2014) states that the racial and oppressive colonial/apartheid system in South Africa through its anti-Black ideologies was successful in creating a tangible separation between white people and Black people while also

manifesting a clear separation between the black that is South African; and the black from the rest of Africa. These racist structures that existed under colonialism and apartheid continue to exist in post-apartheid South Africa. Locating blackness in Africa as a discourse of race and embodied subjectivities in this research study allows us to locate the "native African" through discourses of race in transnational migration studies. To define as black African in this research study positions an understanding of how through the sheer color of their black skin, accent, culture, and clothing; ethnic Africans are constructed and detected as being the black that does not belong in South Africa but rather Africa and therefore becomes subjected to mistreatment and dehumanization from Black South Africans (Mapokgole, 2014; Mangezvo, 2015).

2.2. Positioning black African men and masculinities.

2.2.1. Men and Masculinities through Critical Masculinities Studies

African feminist spaces of theorization, commonly known, as gender studies have in Africa been increasingly misunderstood as a scholarly space focused on and only for women. However, in recent years African feminist theorization(s) has increasingly come to incorporate critical analysis of masculinity and the study of masculinities (Gutmann, 2023; Bjarnesen, 2023). Still a space of contestation the concept of masculinity has been scrutinized. Mangezvo (2015) quotes Hearn (1996) who argues against the usefulness of the concept of masculinity as the author states that the "fuzziness of the concept undermines its usefulness as a category of theorization and debate". Hearn's (1996) understanding of masculinities is limited to the conflation of sex and gender as synonymous categories. For the author the male body automatically needs to assume its predestined cloak of being and performing as a man with no 'deviation' from the Eurocentric universalized standard of being a man.

However, contrary to Hearn's (1996) limited conceptuality of masculinity, Amadiume (1987) argues that conflating sex with gender "is to deny the social cultivation of "nature" or nature's capacity to become manifest through unlikely containers or categories" (Amadiume, 1987; Mangezvo, 2015). In this the author argues that gender and sex do not necessarily coincide making gender a socially constructed identity. Qambela (2016) in their journal entry titled "*When they found out I was a man, they became even more violent": Autoethnography and the rape of men",* concurs with Amadiume's argument on the social constructivism of gender. Qambela (2016) argues that recognizing gender as a social construction affirms the 'loosely' defined concept of masculinity, as a multifaceted variable concept that is not a natural occurrence or practice simply tied to the genitals that people inhabit. In rejecting the normative and essentialist notions of masculinities, Moolman (2017) acknowledges the numerous, contradictory, and several attributes of masculine identities and practices. This research study posits the concept of masculinities through the conceptualization of Bulter (1990), Mangezvo (2015); Moolman (2017). These authors' definition of masculinities complicates the essentialist notions of gender and sex as a naturalistic attribution by arguing that masculinities are fluid, plural, multiple, and

shifting. They provide an understanding that not all men are masculine and not everything that men do is masculine/masculinity (Mangezvo, 2015).

To unpack the use of the concept of men and masculinities in this research study the author posits the usefulness of Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities (CSM/CSMM). As a post-structuralist feminist space of theorization on men and masculinities, CSM provides insight into how men present themselves as gendered beings (Hearn, 2013). It is a scholarship that foregrounds the understanding that sex and sexual practices are consigned to the past. This framework positions the argument that the category of men in the same sense as that of women is social, socially, and societally constructed and therefore needs to be further interrogated (Howards and Hearn, 2019). CSM disrupts the dualism that insists on the distinction between females and males as biological entities. It ushers the acceptance of diversities of masculinities beyond the concept of the singular form of masculinity. It posits an understanding of manhood and masculinities as situational and thus male power as shifting and circumstantial following the material condition in which men find themselves (Mangezvo, 2015). This scholarship continues to pay significant attention to the role of men's agency in their engagement with socially and culturally constructed practices of manhood and masculinities.

The decision to focus on self-identified men migrants in this research study is taken on the understanding that gender and sex categories are plural and open to contestation and performativity (Butler, 1990; Mangezvo, 2015). By focusing on black African "male" migrants, the researcher is aware of the conceptual debates surrounding the tensions between the biological and the socio-cultural influences when it comes to such categories as "man", and "masculine". It is also imperative to note that the decision to focus on "male" migrants should not be misunderstood. This research study does not confine masculinities to a particular biological category – male, as that would limit the understanding of being and becoming masculine. However, this research understands masculinities as heterogenous, relational, and practiced by self-identified men (Moolman, 2013). By foregrounding CSM as a theoretical framework for understanding the social constructivism of masculinities, this research study argues that migrant men in South Africa do not embody a single masculinity but perform multiple masculinities that reflect the plurality of male subjects.

2.2.2. Positioning black African immigrant men and Masculinities

Connell's (2001) understanding of masculinities is that they are produced in social interactions in which social actors exploit the strategies and resources available to them in their specific social and spatial settings. Specific to the African context Ratele (2016) argues that masculinities in Africa are embedded in cultural practices. According to Ratele (2016) the construction and performance of masculinities in Africa are grounded on the ideological and socialized notions of "what it means to be a man?". This is embedded in the conceptuality of manhood being embedded in practices of fatherhood, and parenthood (Ratele, 2016). While there are multiple masculinities in Africa, the underlying

commonality for most black men is measured in the reality of these men having to survive vigorous competition for scarce resources. (Mangezvo, 2015; Mfecane, 2016).

As aforementioned, there are multiple images of masculinities that co-exist in Africa. African masculinities are plural and heterogeneous (Ratele, 2008; Moolman, 2011; 2017). This research study further posits the variation of masculinity in Africa by locating undocumented immigrant masculinities in CSM/CSMM. This research study discourses race as an obvious, but not the only factor that influences the experiences and construction of black African masculine subjectivities (Maziva, 2020). It brings forth the understanding that undocumented migration produces and reproduces the enactments of African masculinities. Through migration, men from other African countries in South Africa must continuously negotiate and re-create their 'traditional' identifications as men (Mangezvo, 2015). Pasura and Christou (2018) foreground the understanding that migration in Africa renders masculinities fluid as immigrant men consistently adapt and embody acquired forms of masculinity that are specific to their host country. In the South African context, immigrant men from other African countries are subjected to competitions of cultural conceptions and practices of masculinities that are derivative from geographical, cultural, and linguistic differences (Moolman, 2017).

At the intersection of these differences that construct masculinities in South Africa, Moolman (2017) argues that black African immigrant men as racialized masculinities in South Africa are reconstituted as 'the foreign other'. The author argues that nationality within South Africa situates South African men in positions of power while incapacitating African immigrant men from accessing societally acceptable and hegemonic forms of masculinity. Gqola (2008) and Mangezvo (2015) assert that "immigration is a perceived threat to the dominant constructions of masculinity in South African societies" (Gqola, 2008). In support of Gqola (2008), Langa and Kiguwa (2016) state that within South Africa, black heterosexual masculinity conflicts with other non-South African black masculinities in various ways that contest hegemonic masculinity that is inscribed in material wealth and sexual prowess as South African men claim that black African immigrant men are abusive and disrespectful towards '*their*' women and use their local girls as drug traders, prostitutes, strippers, and sex slaves. Xhosa men in October's (2020) study stated that black African immigrant men boost their manhood with magic and that they leverage and capitalize on their wealth to attract local girls. The author further elucidates the sentiments of Xhosa men towards black African immigrants by highlighting how South African men argued that migrant men treated them as animals, used English as a measure to demoralize them, and never listened to the rules of the community (October 2020).

2.2.3. Construction of African immigrant masculinities through family, class, and practices of religion in South Africa.

African Masculinities embedded in the performativity of manhood and parenthood by self-identified men is rooted in the understanding that hegemonic manhood is a standard by which other forms of masculinities are measured. It is perceived as an eternal intrinsic nature of men that society has constructed in practices and beliefs of culture and is historically shifting (Maziva, 2020). Manhood in South Africa has commonalities in the portrayal and performance of a man as the head of the family, provider, and protector of the family. Donaldson and Howson (2009) assert that there are significant aspects of the African man's sense of self and construction of what it is to be a man. To be a masculine man, the African man has to be a "man of power" in that he is successful, hardworking, independent, defends his own, and is honored by his family (Sekano, 2024).

Another indicator of masculinity is fatherhood. Fatherhood as a notion of gender performativity describes how gender is attained by displaying acts that create and express masculinities. Fatherhood, as a performance of masculinity, is a behavior that is shaped by aspects internalized as necessary for being a father. "Parenthood/Fatherhood is one of how men acquire and enact their masculine identity" (Maziva, 2020). The act of parenting/parenthood involves the complexities of raising, educating, and supporting a child or children from infancy until adulthood (Maziva, 2020; Sekano, 2024). In the same accord with the understanding of masculinity, manhood as a socially and culturally constructed concept, fatherhood changes depending on geographical contexts and time. The traditional and cultural image of what constitutes an African father is grounded in the values of respectability and high esteem in society in the same sense as manhood it is situated in the focus on authority, domination, and control of resources within the familial space (Mpaata, 2020).

Closely linked to the attributes of fatherhood and family as a marker of manhood in Africa, class positioning for African masculinities is an important contributing factor to the practices of immigrant masculinities. Moolman (2017) defines class as social practices that are informed by legal and social discourses that categorize people according to their relationship with the economic system, their proximity to wealth accumulation, financial assets, and level of education. For black African mobile men their manhood is measured through the performance of "respectable masculinity", such as getting married, fathering, and breadwinning. The acquisition of these primary markers of manhood is intrinsically intertwined with work and earning money. It allows these men to gain respect and status from their migration experience and the family back in their home country as they are required to send back home remittances which would cover the basic needs of the household left behind. The accumulation of wealth for immigrant men has a significant influence on their position and proximity to privilege and power for men. In addition, paid work becomes the essential element in their conceptualization and constructions of manhood and masculinity (Maziva, 2020). While paid work is an essential element in the construction of black African immigrants' manhood and masculinity, they

became susceptible to the problems that the country faces such as unemployment, hence having to compete with black South African men for precarious, exploitative, and lower wages (Nanivadekar, 2014).

Religion also plays an important role in shaping masculinities in Africa. It becomes integral in the generation and embodiment of dominant images of heterosexual acceptable forms of masculinity. It enables men to engage and embrace the socio-economic opportunities and exclusion in the diaspora (Chitando et al, 2024). Migrant men embrace religion and religious practices as a means to reconstruct, reaffirm, and renegotiate their masculinities in the host country. Matshaka (2009) states that African immigrant men in their host countries through religion negotiate and embrace transformative ideals of masculinities to maintain respectability. It is through their relationship with the 'church' that African masculinities seek new modes of respectability that afford them the ability to compensate for the marginal position that they are subjected to by achieving a respected male identity or hegemonic masculinity that is most often denied by discourses and practices of class, race, and nationality. Religion becomes prominent in the construction and negotiation of respectability, a moral black African immigrant man. It becomes a means that immigrant men utilize to regain their lost status of 'hegemonic' masculinity and their recognition as men in different geographies of institutions, values, and norms in host countries (Kanayo and Anjofui, 2021). For immigrant masculinities in Africa, religion and religiosity play an important role in the way in which they understand and portray independence, boldness, strength, and responsibility (Kanayo and Anjofui, 2021). Moreover, African immigrant men use religious teaching, rituals, and affiliation to frame their conceptions of fatherhood, providership, and family. Religion also informs the 'coping strategies' that immigrant masculinities adopt; these include the use of social networks such as religious groups and faith groups as a means to survive the more vulnerable measures of violence such as hunger, exclusion, and marginality (Marshall, 2017).

2.3. Migration; Locating Undocumented Men in Transnational Migration

2.3.1. Defining Transnational Migration

Migration is defined as the permanent movement of people across national boundaries (Shaw, 1975; Kok, 1999; Opara, 2020). It is an umbrella term in which persons or groups of persons move away from their place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, for a variety of reasons This research posits the study migration within the framework of transnational migration. Transnational migration is defined as a process in which immigrants forge and sustain simultaneous multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of "origin" and "settlement" or host countries (Schiller et al, 1995). They become incorporated into the political institutions, localities, economy, and the patterns of daily life in the "host" country

(Schiller et al, 1995). What distinguishes transnational immigrants is their ability to intentionally sustain a connection to their home or country of origin (Schiller et al, 1995). Transnationalism represents a high intensity of exchanges on the part of migrants between the host and home country. In this sense, immigrants can move across international borders, settle, and establish social relations in the host country while maintaining social connectedness through culture, and language, and sending remittances, to their home countries (Cohen and McDonalds, 2000).

Levitt (2010) provides an understanding of transnational migration that deviates from the overly static and rigid conceptions of the state as a geo-political space. The author unpacks transnational migration as the shared social relations, cultural exchanges, and social geographies among immigrants. Understanding migrants through the transnational migration perspective provided by Levitt (2010) allows a more comprehensive understanding of immigrants as "multi-layered and multi-dimensional" individuals or collectives that embody experiences shaped by the host country and their country of origin. Transnationalism provides an understanding that unpacks and describes migrants' multiple identities attained and performed through various modes of assimilation, methods of adjusting to new environments, adaption, and how migrants do not completely abandon their social and cultural practices from home countries but find ways to incorporate new influences informed by their society (Cohen and McDonalds, 2000).

2.3.2. Positing Apartheid and post-Apartheid South Africa in transnational migration and the 'state' of un-documented experiences

In South Africa the years of the Apartheid regime were a clear demonstration of the disregard for black African immigrants. Achille Mbembe's (2017) '*Scrap the borders that divide Africans'* acknowledges that African cultures, society, and cities are largely built on human mobility, with migration having played an instrumental role in shaping and constructing the state. The author unpacks pre-colonial South Africa as a borderless state from 1897. It was only in 1937 that the first border was erected, it was a fence purposed to control the immigration of black Africans into the Cape colony. This birthed a comprehensive migration law with formal borders that were set to police and control the mobility of the black African population. The policing of migration in this regard was actualized through the African pass law which permitted Africans to "freely" pass through and between the borders of the Natal and the Transvaal territories. During this time there were no administrative structures "at the edges of claimed territory that akin to the modern understanding of border control" (Klaaren, 2017). It was the 1937 border control legislation that resulted in the Apartheid regime (1947) implementing laws that "made foreigners out of black persons who were nonetheless imperative to the economic functioning of the country" (Klaaren, 2017). Through legislation such as the Native (Abolition of Pass and Co-ordination of Documents) Act of 1952, Africans (foreigners and by extension women) who were regarded as minor citizens were required to carry a "reference book" whenever they moved from the urban areas to the rural areas.

Through the legal framework of South Africa, it was evident that certain racialized bodies were to be policed and restricted from mobility. Laws such as the Union Regulation Act of 1955 solidified the need for black persons to carry a permit. This permit was "a document aimed at allowing South African citizens to leave the country, but not to return. Anyone who took an exit permit forfeited his/her citizenship" (Klaaren, 2017). To maintain white political dominance in South Africa was of great importance for the Apartheid regime to continually adjust and tweak the battery of laws. Through the so-called -Aliens Control Act and Bantu Amendment Act of 1963, the state was successful in tightening restrictions on the entry of Africans from Basutoland (Lesotho), Mozambique, Bechuanaland (Botswana), Nyasaland (Malawi), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) (Klaaren, 2017). Through the establishment, policing, and maintenance of borders, the enforcement of travel documents and residence consequentially turned protectorate Africans into foreigners and illegal aliens (Klaaren, 2017).

The end of South Africa's fortified borders both in geographical terms and in the symbolic sense of access to political power sought to create new opportunities for cross-border travel and the migration of foreigners from poor and rural areas seeking better economic opportunities (Visser & Kalitanyi, 2010). It was post-1994 when South Africa became a 'safe' place for black African immigrants coupled with the hope of new opportunities of economic prosperity and "new moving incentives". The country was thereafter duped as the largest economy on the African continent and one of the most developed countries. This opened the prospectus of new opportunities for both international and domestic incentives. It was during these early years that the dawn of democratic South Africa saw a significant increase in the number of immigrants and refugees since the democratic government was elected in 1994 (Gordon, 2015).

The formation of the 'new' South African state was marked by the end of the Apartheid era. It was anticipated to be a symbol of an end to racialized violence and the dehumanization of the historically 'non-white' persons. This not only fostered new hope for Black South Africans ushering in a utopic ideology of a harmonious existence of Black South Africans to which they ought not to be haunted by the socio-economic and political corporeal spirits of colonialism and Apartheid. The achievement of freedom, a free and democratic state, illuminated through the end of constitutionalized oppression and apartheid in South Africa solidified a narrative not only for Black South Africans but black Africans too. It articulated and inscribed that the lives of South Africans, and particularly those of Black people, are better off now than during the years of the white Apartheid governance (Modise and Mtshiselwa, 2013). However, the harsher reality of the post-colonial and post-Apartheid 'democratic' South Africa is that the fragments of anti-blackness nevertheless continue to manifest themselves through socioeconomic injustices, and legitimized hatred consolidated through perpetual oppression.

South Africa after the end of Apartheid solidified itself as a beacon of 'hope' and a place of greener pastures for other African countries. Sekona (2024) cites Ayontokun, (2018) who seemingly praises the African National Congress (ANC), the first Black post-Apartheid government for having sought to end the inhuman and white racist laws of the colonial project of Apartheid which discriminated against people based on their race, by aiming to promote genuine collaboration between the nation and other nations in Africa, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, and the international community. The author stipulates that what this meant was that in South Africa, black African immigrants were now entitled to the same universal human rights and fundamental freedoms which must be respected, protected, and always fulfilled (Sekano, 2024). This reality cannot be further from the truth. The accessibility of undocumented immigrants to these 'universalized' rights ceases to exist as they frequently encounter more obstacles and have less access to resources that could enable them to do so. Undocumented transnational immigrants in the South African political, public, and academic landscape have had to 'embrace' numerous derogatory terms such as 'illegal immigrants', 'illegal aliens', 'irregular migrants', or 'border jumpers' (Maphosa and Ntau, 2021). It is the conceptualization of black African undocumented immigrants as illegals that contradicts the 'glamorized' narratives of transnational immigrants in South Africa. It is through these discourses that the lives of undocumented migrant men increasingly become more vulnerated.

2.3.3. Premising un-documentation within Transnational existences in Post-Apartheid South Africa.

The end of Apartheid ushered in new opportunities for cross-border migration of black African foreigners from economically precarious and war-stricken African countries. South Africa has ever since experienced a significant increase in the number of immigrants from other African countries who enter South Africa, as mixed groups consisting of undocumented immigrants fleeing unstable political and poor economic conditions, and economic migrants seeking work (Sekano, 2024). While much has been studied on the history of migration and experiences of immigration into South Africa. This scholarship, however, seems to be void of understanding the transnational layer that shapes how men's mobilities and identities usually trans-locally situated are impacted by their un-documentation in the host countries. Current research on migrating masculinities offers multiple trajectories for understanding the experiences of immigrant men. These include economic, political, and multi-stranded social pathways and relations of a 'better' livelihood to which these immigrant men could co-join and co-exist linking their societies of origin with their new settlements across national borders (Mangezvo, 2015; Maziva, 2020; Sekona, 2024). These studies on transnational migration challenge the portrayal the first black government of South Africa as saviors of black African immigrants.

Meanwhile, discourses on the illegality of black African transnational immigrant men in South Africa populate the academic, political, and public landscapes. Contrary to the savior-mentality of

essentialist South Africans, undocumented immigrant men in South Africa continue to be portrayed as evocative of criminality or deviance. Portraying black African immigrant men as illegal and disposable, policy responses and public discourses have increasingly been focused on curbing the influx of 'illegal' migration through exclusionary and restrictive policy approaches that include militarised heavy-handed policing to rid the country of such criminal elements through arresting and banishing or deporting them back to their countries of origin (Machinya, 2019).

Kizito (2019) posits that "borders follow bodies, and the body comes to function as a border as well". The experiences of black African immigrant men in South Africa are shaped by the constant reminders of their foreignness and illegality. The border remains a haunting specter in the lives of immigrant men who daily must be reminded of their precarious existence. Undocumented black African immigrant men while living, breathing, and traveling are constantly reminded of the fact that they have crossed borders. Key to note is that the men in this research study while living as undocumented immigrants all premised the fact that they entered the country via legal channels and with the necessary paperwork. It was over time after numerous attempts to renew their asylum permits, educational certificates, and many other official documents and were denied that they succumbed to living undocumented in South Africa.

The researcher will not explicitly use the concept of illegality, and/or illegal due to the theoretical framework of this research that foregrounds the politics of the decoloniality of being and humanizing conceptualizations of historically and colonially constructed subjectivities, "illegality" has become engraved in the lives of undocumented immigrant men and therefore shapes their existential everyday experiences in South Africa. To move away from homogenizing, demeaning, and criminalizing concepts such as "illegal immigrants", "border jumpers" and "illegal aliens", this research study opts to use the term 'undocumented migrants/ immigrants' (MacDonald, 2000; Maphosa and Ntau, 2021).

2.2 Literature Review

This section unpacks the reasons that informed the decisions of black African men's migration to South Africa. It locates the multiple forms of violence including role of state violence, public intolerance, and intercultural violence(s) that contribute towards the victimization of immigrant men in South Africa. Lastly provides immigrant men's attempt to surviving their experiences of vulnerability in South Africa.

2.2.1 South Africa a "hot spot" for transnational immigrants

The 'easing' of immigration policies in post-Apartheid as a measure to create a pan-Africanist utopia rendered South Africa the "new destination" for African asylum-seekers, students, professions, cheap laborers, and long-distance traders. Presently, South Africa is home to African migrants who come from as far as Ghana, Uganda, Morocco, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Cameroon, Tanzania, Senegal,

Mali, Kenya, and Algeria" (Mukasa, 2012). These persons enter the country through legal means understood in migrant studies as (legal migrants) and/or illegally through trafficking and smuggling. The entry of international and cross-border immigrants into South Africa is connected to the country's ability to foster and "provide" better employment opportunities, cheap labor, and education (Bisrat, 2014). Post-Apartheid South Africa's position as the "economic pulse, economic hub" of Africa has become a new conduit for migrant communities to participate in social and economic spaces by recreating new histories and communities. These include business-friendly environments in which migrants can hone their entrepreneurial skills and create livelihoods (Gordon, 2016). Rugunanan and Xulu-Gama (2022) state that push factors for transnational immigration are a result of the negative effects of the Structural Adjustment programs, corruption, and poor governance by post-colonial ruling elites, spiraling population growth, poverty, violent contests for state power that has savagely produced genocides, civil wars and consequent dislocation of several affected persons in other African countries (Rugunanan and Xulu-Gama, 2022). These push factors have caused people to migrate and relocate in search of "mere survival or to escape political repression and ethnic cleansing or for better prospects of life for themselves, their families, and their posterity" (Rugunanan and Xulu, 2022). Conversely, Gordon (2016) states that the number of black African immigrants making their way into South Africa has grown steadily. This has been a result of pull factors, such as the allure of South Africa's progressive constitution, human rights policies, and laws.

2.2.2. Falsified Realities and Shattered Dreams

According to Kanayo and Anjofui (2021) black African immigrant men came to South Africa for "greener pastures" arriving with expectations and aspirations to get decent jobs and earn lots of money. While having acquired qualifications with the hopes of getting good jobs, many immigrants in South Africa fail to do so (Kanayo and Anjofui, 2021). Due to the unfavorable legislation towards cheap foreign labour in South Africa, these migrant men are exposed to multiple forms of exploitation and abuse. Some leave well-paid jobs back home to get better jobs only to be forced to settle for the available precarious workspaces such as waitressing, street vendors, and car-guard which is far from their expectations (Kanayo and Anjofui, 2021). Moreover, immigrant men who have traveled illegally into the host country face greater dire situations. The author states that these men are oftentimes forced to work in unbearable conditions such as sweatshops, mines, and farms or are even trafficked as prostitutes to pay their accumulated debts (Kanayo and Anjofui, 2021).

2.2.3. Internalized racism and racialized criminalization

"No one is attacking wealthy German, British, or French foreigners…anywhere else in South Africa. What makes attacks on some foreigners (white foreigners) unthinkable, has to do with how racialized South African stories about immigrants are… whiteness of the safe Europeans versus the disposability of and blackness of the brutalized African foreigner" (Gqola, 2008). Gqola (2016)

distinguishes the criminalizing of black African immigrant men as “racialized criminalization”. The author argues that black African immigrant men are prone to violence and victimization in South Africa because they are often stereotyped as criminals and parasites (Gqola, 2016). This victimization is because they are not wealthy, do not own property, and do not hold European and North American passports or citizenship (Gqola, 2016). Black African immigrant men are simply relegated to as criminals in South Africa because they are black, African, poor, working-class, and foreign. Within the South African conceptuality of masculinity and specifically migrant masculinity, “violence has taken on distinctly racialized connotations and has come to be seen, particularly, as a problem of black men” (Langa et al, 2020). This is often used to discourse black African immigrant men as masculinities in crisis which often depicts black African immigrant men as violent, and irresponsible criminals.

Alfaro-Velcamp & Shaw (2016) state that there is a widespread perception of black African immigrants as criminals who break state law by illegally crossing over sovereign borders thus being labeled as illegal foreigners in South Africa. These persons' presence in South Africa is portrayed as “destructive and destabilizing to the state and its citizens” (Alfaro-Velcamp & Shaw, 2016). The authors further state that the fact that these persons have entered the country without authorization has automatically earned them the identity of being portrayed and represented as “drug dealers, traffickers of children, squatters, facilitators/exploiters of an informal economy, and thieves stealing” (Alfaro-Velcamp & Shaw, 2016). Nkealah (2011) asserts that black African immigrant men in South Africa are not only portrayed by the state as violent. However, sentiments from black South Africans also position these men as morally bankrupt foreigners who encourage prostitution and conduct robberies such as house-break-in, hijacking, and drug trafficking (Nkealah, 2011).

Having endured oppression, psychological traumas, and violence, the result of Apartheid was the creation of a phobogenic, anti-black African immigrant. The South African population that relies on a false “haven” at the sight of white European ‘tourists’ while marking the black African immigrant men as a criminal threat (Mapokgole, 2014). The continuation of hostility that black South Africans are subjected to in post-Apartheid South Africa has manifested a “culture of violence and racism” that prevails in the country targeting not only persons who are not Black but also those sought out as the black that is African. Harris (2001) conceptualizes this culture of violence and racism as “internalized black racism”. This racism is a reaction to and a reflection of the unequal political and socio-economic-political structures in post-Apartheid South Africa. It is a type of racism directed specifically to ‘foreign’ Africans, who are perceived as threats and competition for scarce resources such as jobs and housing perpetuated through Afrophobia.

Addae and Quan-Baffour (2022), expand on Harris's (2002) concept of internalized black racism, by explaining the phenomenon of black-on-black prejudice as Afrophobia. The attacks on African immigrants are a representation of a “new racism’ that is perpetrated by local South Africans

on black African immigrants whom they perceived as culturally and socially inferior (Addae and Quan-Baffour, 2022). Afrophobia becomes new racism or "racism in disguise" as it is a form of prejudice that is systematically targeted towards a specific group of persons simply based on prevailing characteristics. Gqola (2008) differentiates xenophobia from Afrophobia on the basis that xenophobia is a hatred manifested along the basis of the "stranger", "foreigner" and "unknown" being from outside the borders of what can be classified as home. Afrophobia, on the other hand, is the mistrust, fear, and enactment of violence based on the "dislike of Africans and their culture" by black South Africans (Gqola, 2008). Afrophobia is defined as the enactment of violence targeting black African foreigners by black South Africans at the level of visible differences, and or otherness/othering. These visible differences are in terms of physical biological factors and cultural differences exhibited by black African foreigners (Harris, 2002). The violence that black South Africans perpetrate against black African immigrants is a result of the "inferiority complex that poor black South Africans struggle with which is manifested due to their socio-economic conditions" (Gqola, 2008). Gqola (2008) therefore defines Negrophobia as "a fear and dislike of Blacks…a psychological disease of the mind which harvests Black bodies every day" (Gqola, 2008). Negrophobia is as a result of the slavery torments, colonial tortures, and the abrasive violence of Apartheid inflicted on black South Africans (Mapokgole, 2014). The violence is Negrophobic because the identity of the criminals is marked in their skin pigmentation (Mapokgole, 2014)[2].

2.2.4 Surfacing African Immigrant Men's victimization and vulnerabilities

African masculinities have a harsh history of marginalization and displacement. Black African immigrant men experience rejections, abuses, harassment, extortions, xenophobic attacks, marginalization, and socioeconomic exclusion which can be expressed through rowdy practices of public officials and perceived institutionalized prejudice in South Africa (Mangezvo, 2015; Maziva, 2020). Much research theorizing the lived realities of black African immigrant men focuses on representing and portraying these individuals as masculinities in crisis, as instigators, perpetrators, and endorsers of violence, and as criminals. This research study seeks to move beyond the understanding of

[2] Mapokgole (2014), argues against the use of the terms Negrophobia and Afrophobia interchangeably. The author argues that the use of these terms interchangeably fails to recognize and appreciate that violence is not only against the black immigrant, however, the black immigrant that is considered African (Mapokgole, 2014). Negrophobic violence against black and African immigrant men is a result of the psychological traumas and oppressions that South Africans endured under the apartheid regime. It becomes negrophobic violence because the identity of the criminal is marked by their pigmentation, "being black". While Negrophobia is violence inherently caused by an external "causal factor" such as the brutal racialized violence of the Apartheid era, that results in an internalized hatred towards, black African bodies. Afrophobia on the other hand, is a type of violence that is deeply rooted in colonial construction and representation of black Africans, a construction of coloniality that forces the black men to hate themselves and anyone else's culture, language, and tradition that looks like theirs. Negrophobia is a violent reaction to an expression of pain and trauma, that is forcing black South Africans to be hostile to bodies that they consider "inferior". However, Afrophobia is violence that reacts to the internalized indoctrinated self-hatred that black South Africans impose on black African immigrant bodies.

marginalized black African immigrant men as failed and violent men. There is, however, alarming documentation and silence on the experience of victimization that black African immigrant men endure every day in South Africa. There is, however, an essentialist representation not interrogated through a gendered perspective that focuses on masculinity as recently provided by scholars such as (Mangezvo ,2015). Donaldson and Howson (2009) state men are the ones with the most likelihood to experience violence and discrimination as well as need welfare support in the host country.

Friebel et al. (2013) state that the black African man who in the familial space assumes a role as the head of the family who migrates to South Africa, sacrifices himself by facing violent risks to support his offspring and is willing to mitigate any experiences of violence in the host country. Mangezvo (2015) explains that black African immigrant men in South Africa and more in the context of their paper Cape Town and Stellenbosch, are constituted as an "amorphous group of outsiders who are perceived as threats to the well-being of South Africans by the state and citizens. The author further states that these persons pose a challenge to the economic and social stability of the country hence they are generally disliked and have become a group of persons that is difficult to "spatially exclude" (Mangezvo, 2015). Mangezvo (2015) states that even though these persons cannot be spatially excluded, they are still demonized and their presence in South Africa is relegated to the conceptuality of "demons within" through the state imagination.

2.2.4.1. State violence and the hatred of black African immigrant men

The South African state has enacted its disapproval and hatred of black African immigrant men in South Africa. South African Police Service (SAPS) is one of the nightmares of black African immigrant men in South Africa, not because they commit much crime in the country but as Gebre (2007) argues because of "arbitrary arrests by the police" Gebre (2007). These arbitrary arrests are often, unfounded, and illegal arrests. One of the ways in which police make arrests or identify illegal immigrants is "if an immigrant cannot pronounce one word in three local languages properly, then he is liable to arrest. In addition, an individual's complexion, dressing, and hairstyle are some of the factors that are considered" (Gebre, 2007). State violence enacted through the arrests, and deportations of "illegal" immigrants is a resource deployed by the state and non-state actors to disfranchise immigrants, to establish political control and spatial control over black African immigrants (Mangezvo, 2015).

State institutions and structures such as governmental departments, policies, and parliamentarians have and continue to reinforce what Neocosmos (2008) referred to as a "one-way message". In which the presence and existence of black African immigrant men and their families are denoted as an "invasion of illegal immigrants who are a threat to the national stability, development and very fabric of South Africa's society" (Dahlberg & Thapar-Björkert, 2023). In De Jong's (2017) paper one of the participants, identified as "Maurice, a Congolese male situated in Johannesburg" states that he has experienced harassment and discrimination from police in which the participant was threatened,

physically harmed, and forced to pay a bribe or face incarceration. De Jong (2017) explains that this is a way in which masculinity is displayed, in which rituals of display enable Maurice to "experience a new way of doing and being masculine" in the world and "escape its disciplining eyes".

2.2.4.2. Black on black men violence in South Africa

Foreign national men are considered adherent to submissive masculinities. The infantilization of African men links to and seeks to justify political domination by relegating Africans as a race of children (Gqola, 2008). Mangezvo (2015) elaborates on Gqola's (2009) point by stating that black African immigrant men are infantilized by the forms of hegemonic masculinity present in South Africa, more, so Xhosa men in Cape Town (Mangezvo, 2015; Moolman, 2017). The author states that migrant men are also the targets of violent attacks by Xhosa men who ridicule and infantilize them for being uncircumcised (Mangezvo, 2015). Xhosa's ideals of hegemonic masculinity such as circumcision are used to infantilize black African immigrant men as "boys" because of their uninitiated status (Mangezvo, 2015). In the Xhosa tradition 'manhood', an indicator of strength begins with a specific act of "inserting a cultural mark of manhood", through the process of *Ulwalukho* which is the cutting of the boy's foreskin, signifying his transition from boyhood into manhood (Mfecane, 2016).

Ubudoda and the status of manhood among the *amaXhosa* is grounded on the scarring and marking of the physical body (penis). The author states that not only does the "penis serve as a site for the symbolic location of manhood status", but it is also a medium through which men can "validate and defend their manhood status" (Mfecane, 2016). For uncircumcised males, the amaXhosa characterization of being men relegates these persons as "boys" and has been given derogative labels (Mfecane, 2016). The use of the word "boy" states that during colonial times this term was used to deny black men of their manhood, denoting them to servitude (Gqola, 2009). According to October (2020), Xhosa men have the perception that black African immigrant men are uninitiated "boys", who treat women disrespectfully, do not respect their culture of adhering to lobola practices, and get married to local women for citizenship and financial benefits (October 2020).

Black African immigrant men in South Africa, particularly in Cape Town, in a geo-political space where they co-exist largely with Xhosa men, are susceptible to the experiences of infantilization and subordination. The hegemonic masculinity in the Xhosa tradition and cultural identity is built on the rite of *Ukwaluka* which signifies the transition of the boy child into manhood. The experience of the black African immigrant man who is perceived as an uncircumcised 'boy' is one of subordination and denial of his manhood, regardless of his ability to reproduce and father children. This infantilization as a form of violence feeds into the South African exceptionalism embedded in colonial rhetoric of black men and their manhood.

2.2.5. Survivorship: Surviving migrancy as a black African immigrant man

Despite the experiences of most immigrants contradicting their expectations because of the challenges that they face in the host country. Black African undocumented immigrant men have found ways to adapt and survive the hostilities they endure in the host country, South Africa. For the participants in Kanayo and Anjofui's (2021) study, surviving included the implementation of coping strategies and resilience against adversity. The participants highlighted that "life in Cape Town is 'survival of the fittest'", in which the lack of identity papers posed an obstacle to attaining a sustainable livelihood, they have to survive by doing low-paid, piece jobs or temporary jobs in the informal economy (Kanayo and Anjofui, 2021).

These immigrants face numerous difficulties in their host countries including lack and denial of access to healthcare, housing, welfare, social exclusion, segregation from the labor market, and acts of violence. As a result, they adopt strategies in their host countries which enable them to survive the various challenges that they encounter (Okyere, 2018). While having to migrate from their home countries due to threats posed against their right to life, black African immigrant men living in South Africa are faced with the complexity of having to "survive" the dire living conditions and livelihood provided by a hostile, exclusionary, and xenophobic country. In this paper survivorship, survival is derived and interpreted through Abdi's (2011) understanding that "newcomers (immigrants) are not merely passive victims of the violence imposed on them, their surrounding and livelihoods, but rather they successfully engage in both the competition and collaboration to cement their presences during areas of hostilities, violence, and social exclusions (Abdi, 2011). Black African immigrants develop coping strategies in efforts to overcome adversities in the post-migration context. These 'coping strategies' include the use of social networks such as religious groups and faith groups as a means to survive the more vulnerable measures of violence such as hunger, exclusion, and marginality (Marshall, 2017).

Chapter 3: Research Design, Methods, and Theoretical Frameworks

This chapter situates the research within a reading of African feminist and Decolonial theorization actively holding accountable the biases, internalized prejudices, and the prevalent colonial negation of African men in gender work and Migration studies. By situating this research within Decolonial African Feminist thought, this chapter engages with and resists the singular, monolithic, essentialist, and binary narrative of the colonial logic that characterized the stories of black African immigrant men. It seeks to unpack and engage the complexities of African masculinities beyond the hierarchical division manifested through racist lines that render these men as non-human, inferiors, and primitives, which continues while reproducing epistemic violence.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

There has been a growing call and effort towards decolonizing knowledge in Africa. These efforts have been successful in foregrounding Global South and African epistemologies as a way of challenging and dismantling the current dominance of Global North scholarship in academia (Mfecane, 2018). Within the sub-field of Men and Masculinities decolonization has pushed back against the dependency of African researchers and activists on Global North theories and concepts (Mfecane, 2018). In addition to these attempts to decolonize Masculinities Studies in Africa, African Feminist scholars have questioned the usefulness and relevance of Western gender theories in diagnosing the experiences of African-gendered subjectivities. In so doing these scholars have conducted much work toward developing theories and concepts informed by localized African conditions and histories (Ratele, 2018, 2024; Mfecane, 2018; 2024). Moving away from blanketed diagnosis, conceptualization, and theorizations of African gender issues particularly the experiences of African masculinities. Critical Studies of Masculinities and Men is informed to unmake and remake the world of masculinities in Africa (Ratele, 2024). Situating Decolonial African Feminist thought within the study of African immigrant masculinities this research interrogates and challenges universalized epistemologies and narratives that render 'hegemonic' dehumanizing portrayals of black African men as "toxic masculinities" and entirely "subordinated masculinities" (Ratele, 2024). In positioning African immigrant masculinities through a Decolonial African Feminist framework situated within the Critical Study of Masculinities this research foregrounds the need for contextual interrogation and adapting of concepts and politics that engage men towards pro-feminist masculinities and gender relations. It most importantly drives toward centering epistemologically and politically the project of humanizing black African men in research.

African feminism is an epistemology actively theorizing, writing, and engaging in activism(s) that disrupts the normalization of specific notions of femininities and masculinities as a form of subjectivity. It is an epistemology and a form of rhetoric that continues to validate the experiences of women in Africa and those of African descent in the diaspora against the mainstream feminist discourses of the West (Goredema, 2010). It is argued, however, that African feminists thought, research and activism have been largely dominated by the "women's question" (Goredema, 2010; Dery, 2020). These scholars argue that while the dominant focal point of African Feminism thought is on the experiences of African women this could be a double-edged sword (Goredama, 2010). However, African Feminism has also begun to challenge the dominant Western framing of Feminist theory which perpetuates a singular narrative that harmfully envelops both men and women into essentialist categories. It provides heterogeneity of the multiple oppressions that racialized bodies in Africa (regardless of gender) are subjected to. In so doing, African feminist thought continues to play a central role in excavating gendered subjectivities. Moreover, Dery (2020) urges African Feminists to allow men to reflect on their experiences by listening to them and concurs on how such reflection might challenge men's resistance to gender equity which could be an important feminist method. To open and hold up space for black Africans in African Feminist thought is to defy the simple and homogenizing description of what 'doing gender work' is like on the African continent (Akihire, 2014). It is gender work that does not simply mean to empower women only, it does not exclude men, but it means to have men be brought on board as male champions and organizers of gender equity (Meer, 2011).

African feminist theory within Masculinities Studies has provided sensitivity to difference notwithstanding feminist work in the broad provenance of Africa's history. It has provided the basis for dismantling traditional, cultural, and structural biases of male privilege. In so doing African feminist theorization has continued to interrogate men's access to and control over resources legitimized by the hetero-patriarchal ideology of male dominance (Ratele, 2024). This research study foregrounds African feminism as a social theory for changing power relations and to unpack how black African immigrant men are shaped by and access patriarchy within various spaces and times. It uses African Feminism to rectify the absence of men's narratives of migration, writing on African men as gendered subjects in migration. It is a means to provide a key analytical space for theory-building and re-centering the historically marginalized narratives of black African men and epistemologies (Dery, 2020).

Decolonial frameworks in the post-colonial dispensation have become the canonical and seminal pathway toward theorizing about the Black condition. In Africa this work has called for the need for an analysis and diagnosis of the African experience and ontologies that depart from the Euro-American and hegemonic exemplarities of knowledge. This scholarship has begun to encapsulate a thorough engagement with African histories, and present that are aimed towards championing the pursuit of its liberated futures. In this decolonization proposes the liberation of African humanity, rationale, and knowledge from the shackles of Eurocentric worldviews that have held it, hostage, while

diminishing the quality of its people with all their differences (Mpofu and Steyn, 2021). In foregrounding decoloniality in this research study we come to understand the continuities prevalent in post-Apartheid South Africa that still exacerbate the dehumanization of poor black Africans in the country. This research study positions decolonial praxis to interrogate the embedded mechanism of coloniality of power and knowledge which reproduces the conditions of colonization and Apartheid rendering black people as deficit and inadequate sub-humans (Mpofu and Steyn, 2021). In positioning decoloniality this research study argues that the legal end of colonialism and Apartheid in South Africa did not evaporate coloniality. Rather "its oppressions and exploitations remain stubbornly durable and haunting to its victims" (Steyn and Mpofu, 2021). It argues that the dawn and welcoming of democracy in South Africa saw minimal complete systematic and structural changes to its racist and white homonationalist ideologies. Moreover, these serve as extensions and functionaries of oppression unto which blacks are constructed as ungrievable, disposable, and dispensable victims of the process of racialization even today (Mbembe, 2017).

Intertwined with the continued construction of blackness as sub-human in South Africa. This research study positions decolonization as a viable framework for understanding how the current technologies of South Africa's democracy still perceive the bodies of African immigrants as "undesirable and are meant to be immobilized if not shattered" (Mbembe, 2017). We discuss through decolonization the colonial legacies of securitization, elimination, and neutralization which conceives the black African immigrant as a risk and threat to South Africa's project of 'borderizing' bodies (Mbembe, 2017). This research study postulates that decolonization is not only a useful theoretical tool to challenge Eurocentrism. Moreover, it argues that decolonial thought becomes integral in diagnosing and resisting the current consequences of national security, citizenship, national belonging, sovereignty, and territorial integrity discourses that continue to expose black African bodies to political and existential danger (Kizito, 2019). This study engages decoloniality as an expression to resist the "metaphysical catastrophe that overwhelms former slaves and the former colonized of the Global South" (Mpofu and Steyn, 2021). This research study postulates decolonial humanism as a critique of the coloniality of being and knowledge that contributes to the making and remaking of invisible structures of power and privilege in post-colonial South Africa constructing undocumented immigrants as border subjects and thus subjectifying them to relive the dual experience of war and terror (Kizito, 2019).

In conversation with decoloniality this research study surfaces the importance of African Feminist theorization toward understanding the complex influences of imperialism in producing and reproducing the experiences of race, gender, and class subjectivities. Decolonization and African Feminism propels this research study to reflect on how coloniality shapes "how men, in particular men who were once regarded as not quite human, continue to experience dehumanization or infrahumanization" (Ratele, 2021). It premises this study to engage how not only epistemologically but

also ontologically the experiences of racialized masculinities are perpetually shaped by coloniality. Decolonial thought and praxis in this research study not only provide a nuanced interpretation of how colonization, colonialism, and Apartheid crudely shape the experiences and humanhood of black masculinities. It also exposes the slavish and imperialist contemporary colonial/modern conditions that subject immigrant African masculinities as unhuman subjects/objects (Ratele, 2021). Moreover, African Feminist theorization in this research seeks to comprehend how through border encounters black men through white supremacy and political work are constructed as "the colonized black man who has no place, no rights, in a white man's world" (Ratele, 2021). This research study utilizes decoloniality and African Feminist theorization to understand further how post-colonial South Africa, reaffirms black life as universally conditioned by violence. Therefore, the need to decolonize the material condition of Afro-diasporic life and the embedded corporeality of bodies impacting the existence of racialized bodies remains (Kizito, 2019; Mbembe, 2017).

3.2 Research Methods

3.2.1 Interpretivist paradigm

The interpretive paradigm in research aims to understand the contextual and subjective world of human experience (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). It understands how humans construct the meaning of their lived experiences in a socially constituted reality. Guba and Lincoln (1989) define this as "getting into the head of the research participant" by allowing research participants the space and respecting their agency. This paradigm positions participants as co-creators of their subjective perception of the habitual context in which they embody self and co-exist. This enables the researcher to understand the historical and cultural setting in which their participants exist, as it shapes the participant's understanding of their world (Ormston et al, 2014). With this understanding, Guba (1981) argues that because interpretivist research deals with human behavior which in its nature is contextual, continuously variable, and subject to multiple interpretations of reality, replication is impossible (Guba, 1981). In this study, interpretivism emphasizes understanding men's decision-making processes, their subjective feelings, and how they understand events throughout their migratory journeys (Maziva, 2020). It enables this research to embody the subjective meaning-making and relationality of migration without imposing the researcher's experiential insight(s) and "knowledge" on the experiences and perceptions of the subjective social and collective realities of these men.

3.2.2 Qualitative Inquiry

This research study adopted Qualitative Inquiry which stresses the importance of research participants as 'agents' of knowledge. This constitutes the participant's freedom to involve the "naturalistic, interpretative approach of their subjective understanding of their everyday realities" (Punch, 2014). Qualitative research allows the participant to tell their stories, personal experiences, and

life stories allowing the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of the cultural, political, and social context (Punch, 2014). Qualitative Inquiry enabled this research study to intrinsically and minutely examine how African immigrant men constructed their masculine identities and the meanings that they attached to their experiences as undocumented immigrant men. It was, therefore, crucial for the researcher to apply a mode of inquiry that actively allows for the non-essentialist description of the experiences and realities of these men studied (Kinoti, 2009). By utilizing qualitative research methods, the researcher was therefore able to give a platform to these men for them to speak in their own voice, to be heard, and listened to by someone (Kinoti, 2009).

3.2.3. Narrative Method: "Histories from below"

The life history approach is the most authentic means of "understanding how motives and practices reflect the intimate intersection of institutional and individual experiences in the postmodern world" (Dhunpath, 2000). The author's argument here is premised on the method's ability to enable research to capture raw, personal, and in-depth, subjective narratives of participants' lived experiences as a significant part of the research. This research advocates for the use of life histories as a pedagogical tool in research because telling our stories can be cathartic and liberating. Utilizing life histories as a narrative feminist research tool challenges the Eurocentrism and white patriarchal-masculinist gaze that oftentimes marginalizes black African men's experiences and accounts. It capacitates this research study with the ability to collect data within foregrounding and centering African-centered decolonial politics. It not only does not treat African persons as sites to excavate data. However, it also allows for the act of telling the story to be a process of recording how the teller of the tale sees his position concerning the subject [migration] being discussed (Ratele, 2021). It rejects dominant colonial research methods and models that tend to treat African persons as objects of research and never as humans and de-centres the toxic residue of coloniality in research processes that ontologically, epistemologically, and theoretically dismember African masculinities and the place of their stories in Critical Masculinities Studies and Migration Studies.

Bhattacharya (1983) conceptualizes narrative research as a methodology through storytelling and life histories as "history from below". Narrative research through the conceptuality of "history from below" offers researchers a tool by which the ordinary person can be written into history, those whose lives are not accompanied by heroic acts or erected monuments for valiant tribes (Bhattacharya, 1983). By researching the "*historyless*", we do not leave a mass of people out of history and without history. Narrative research provided the researcher with the ability to link the personal lives (daily activities, routines) of participants with the political times (context) in which they find themselves (Fraser, 2004). This is important as the stories and experiences of participants provide the researcher with links to how social problems affect them in ways that do not denigrate or pathologize the people who experience them (Fraser, 2004). It allows research to capture stories about one's life encapsulating reflective engagement with the past, future, and the present (Chita and Kamanga, 2024). It is through the life

history method that this research was able to allow its participants to reflexively engage with the stories of their experiences of migrancy. These encapsulated stories of violence, trauma, and resilience. It is through this research method that this study was enabled to "transform gaps and misunderstandings in mainstream research created by the absence of the standpoints of marginalized", black African immigrant men (Atkison, 1998).

3.3 Study setting

This research study was conducted in Cape Town. The City of Cape Town which is located in the Western Cape province of South Africa and comprises of 190 suburbs. It alongside Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal houses the most African migrants in South Africa. According to Scalabrini's research on migrant and refugee populations in Cape Town, there are close to four hundred thousand (400,000) African immigrants in Cape Town. A large population of these immigrants are men between the ages 20 to 30 years, clustered across Cape Town living around the Southern Suburbs, Bellville, Dunoon, Joe Slovo, and the Cape Flats. Moreover, 17.23% of these immigrants are undocumented (Scalabrini, 2021). The data collection process was conducted with participants who lived in the townships of KwaLanga and eMfuleni. Townships in South Africa have a long history of violence that was legitimized through the colonial and anti-black racist legislations of spatial segregation and spatial planning (Titi, 2021). These townships are a physical manifestation of the apartheid's oppressive political containment and control of black people. Townships, however, can also be characterized as sites of resistance of the black people who occupied these spaces, solidifying their refusal against the colonial and Apartheid anti-black laws that relegated their bodies to disposal 'waste'. Both townships are characterized by high population densities, informal shacks, burst sewerage pipes, and informal businesses. KwaLanga and eMfuleni are host "homes" to several black African immigrant men of whom are Malawian, Ghanaian, and Nigerian. Chapter Two of this research locates and historicizes transnational migration into South Africa from other African countries and unpacks townships as host homes and the experiences of black African immigrant men in Cape Town. KwaLanga and eMfuleni were locations for the fieldwork as these spaces embody immigrant men's everyday lives in Cape Town. The actual interviews happened in different settings in these townships, like their workplaces, parks, and taxi ranks. In addition to this, alternative spaces for data collection were organized by the researcher when participants cited an inability to meet KwaLanga and/or eMfuleni and these were conducted at Cavendish Mall, Claremont.

3.4. Sampling

Five (5) of the participants were from KwaLanga and one (1) was from eMfuleni. The choice of setting was by no means deliberate but that of convenience and accessibility to participants. I gained access to participants through snowballing, as I was referred to Mr. Mujeeb (the initial participant) (Kabir, 2016). He then helped me access his brothers who had agreed to speak to me. In my brief to Mr.

Mujeeb outlining the objectives of the study, and demographics of the sample of men, I sought to visit. I remember a pause and a slight laugh. This was understandable as all of the men I spoke to were undocumented immigrant men. They were hesitant to be surveilled by my foreignness and black South African researcher gaze (Wejnert & Heckathorn, 2011). Purposive sampling also commonly known as judgmental sampling is defined as a sampling method in which the researcher seeks to identify and specifically select "information-rich cases", who are knowledgeable about or have experienced the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002). Judgmental sampling is where the researcher includes participants in the sample because they believe that they warrant inclusion (Patton, 2002).

3.4.1. Study Participants

A small sample size of six (6) African immigrant men was fundamental to assess in detail the subjective understandings and experiences of these men. While age, class, and sexuality were not explicit markers for the inclusion criteria in this research study. The participants ranged between the ages of 35-59 years. They all had noted being in heterosexual monogamous relationships and/or marriages. Key to also note was because of the study field this research study in terms of class engaged with African immigrant men who had uniformly cited to be informally employed as street vendors or unemployed. Below is the inclusion, and exclusion criteria, and the demographic sheet of the participants summarized.

3.4.1.1. Inclusion Criteria

- Black African immigrant men living in Cape Town, which was further enclosed to black Townships (particularly KwaLanga and eMfuleni).
- Black African immigrant men who were both (documented and undocumented) living in the townships of KwaLanga and eMfuleni.
- Black African immigrant men living in black Townships, documented or undocumented, and have provided consent were considered to participate.
- Participants after the initial interview (deductions made by the researcher) had to have lived in South Africa for five years and above.

3.4.1.2. Exclusion Criteria

- Black African immigrant men documented or undocumented, who had not been living in South Africa or Cape Town for more than five years.

3.4.1.3 Participant demographic sheet summarised

Name	Country of Origin	No. of years in SA	Occupation	Township
Papa Fourie	Ghana	11 years	Shoemaker	KwaLanga
Pastor Miracle	Nigeria	5 years	Pastor/ fridge fixer	eMfuleni
Mr. Mujeeb	Ghana	16 years	Street Vendor	KwaLanga
Mr. Ali	Malawi	11 years	Furniture repairs person	KwaLanga
Mr. Edson	Malawi	11 years	Dressmaker/ clothes repairer	KwaLanga
Mr. Ishmael	Malawi	14 years	Dressmaker	KwaLanga

Table 1. *Basic demographic information of African immigrant men who participated in this research*.

3.5. 'Talk' as a method– *unstructured interviews*

Qualitative data is non-numerical data that is usually descriptive and nominal. It is collected in the form of words, and or sentences. It captures the emotions, feelings, and subjective perceptions of the researched subjects. Due to the main objective of this paper which seeks to document lived experiences, primary data as "first-hand experience" is an imperative component of this study. This is data that has not been analyzed, published, or altered by human beings thus making it more reliable, authentic, and objective (Kabir, 2016). This research study used an in-depth interview method to gather data. Interviews are defined as a "face-to-face" conversation between the participant and researcher (Kabir, 2016). These face-to-face interviews were conducted as unstructured interviews through open-ended question(s). The researcher conducted a series of interviews divided into three (3) interviews per participant, equating to eighteen (18) interviews.

Since humans are naturally narrative, having "someone to talk to" [as one of the participants said] was enough as it presented the space to tell and recount events of life that were relegated to the 'past' through storytelling and narration. The prompts in these interviews varied following the last interview or the mood in which the interviewee was presenting at that time. One of the common questions I asked was "*If you are talking to a stranger, what would you tell them about life in South Africa*". In this question, I deliberately removed the 'stranger-danger' alert. I did not position myself as a stranger, this way conversations with my participants were flowing as this located the stranger as a third person "not in the room". A follow-up question would be "*What would you tell them about life in South Africa as a black African immigrant man?"*. To many in the first interview, the second question was met with hesitance to answer, and I did not probe, nor did I change the question. This sometimes

resulted in uncomfortable long silences. However, with one of the participants who had his radio on it became karaoke, where he would listen to the radio as I shallowly sang along or hummed to any song playing. This method was suitable for this research as it allowed room for the men to find ways of expression that worked for them and gave them control over how they directed their stories (Kabir, 2016). Allowing these men control over their stories positioned them as the knowers, this was useful in allowing the participants to open up or even enclose parts of their stories that they did not want to share.

3.6. Revisiting Narratives and Analysis

A central part of data analysis in this research study began with transcription. This afforded the researcher access to the human experience, realities, order, and changes through the stories of the immigrant men interviewed. The transcription of the interviews obliged the researcher to listen to the human impulses, tones, and textures in which the participants told their stories and, in some instances, relived some events (Moreton-Robinson, 2000). Narrative approaches have a long and rich history of using storytelling as a tool for making sense of the world in which people live (Fraser and MacDougall, 2017). It is concerned with an experience, an event, or the entire life of the participant. This according to Fraser and MacDougall (2017) may be presented as linear stories (which have a beginning, middle, and end) or circular (ending back to where the story began without any sense of resolution), or thematically through themes as the participant teases out important or key events about their lived experiences. Narrative analysis gave the research study findings a focus on understanding that stories are central to human experience and thus through storytelling, human subjects create their meanings, and construct their own identities, values, and beliefs.

Utilizing thematic narrative analysis method enabled the researcher to examine the stories of the participants providing valuable insight into the individual's perspectives and experiences (Rashid, 2023). This study used patterns and themes to demonstrate variations and similarities in the stories of the participants' lived experiences. These shared commonalities helped the researcher identify the cultural and historical context in which participants are situated by connecting themes across lived realities and/or in literature (Rashid, 2023). According to Fraser and MacDougall (2017) through narrative analysis, the researcher searches and highlights narratives with similar events, plots, or even characters which will be clustered together for the analysis as themes (Fraser and MacDougall, 2017). By drawing out themes and patterns from the stories told by participants' the researcher is, therefore, able to 'co-create' stories which they reproduce through analysis, synthesis, and interpretations through codes and categories while seeking to preserve the salience of the participant's stories attained through interviews or visual text (DeAnne et al, 2004).

3.7. Ethical Considerations

Ethics in African Feminism are aimed towards delegitimizing the colonial, Euro-scientific method of writing about Africans. They guide research studies towards actively pushing back from the oppressive, dehumanizing nature of how Africa has been written. It is through Decolonial and African feminist research ethics that researchers are made to understand that oppression involves the ignoring and silencing of marginalized populations, their experiences, and perspectives. Through the various approaches to feminist theory and ethics, the researcher binds themselves to the commitment to better understand the experiences of their participants as human subjects.

3.7.1. Do No Harm

What makes research feminist is the underlying research ethic of integrity and responsibility to which the researcher is held accountable throughout the research process (McCormick, 2012). African feminist research should be cognizant of the vulnerabilities that migrant populations are subjected to such as lived experiences of volatile settings following the war, disasters, and environmental displacement. It is argued that the trauma of such experiences can hinder and delay research with participants who lived or still live in areas that are prone to violence (Akesson et al, 2018). Akesson et al (2018) argue that this can strip research participants of their voice to share their stories with the rest of the world hindering more research from being conducted. It is for these reasons that researchers studying immigrants should adhere to procedural and practical safeguarding steps (Akesson et al, 2018). Throughout the participant recruitment, data collection, and analysis stages of this research study, the researcher needed to uphold reflexive ethical practices from a micro-ethical perspective which demands that the researcher be attentive and be able to manage boundaries of harm, affective encounters, and zones of dis/comfort (Akesson et al, 2018).

3.7.2. Informed Consent

Informed consent is the agency to which research subjects are provided information by the researcher explaining in a comprehensible manner what the research is about, why it is being conducted, and how it will be disseminated and used (Mc Cormick, 2014). Informed Consent in feminist research is grounded on the principle that research participants are humans and should be treated with respect and be allowed to make rational and logical decisions choosing what shall and/or shall not happen to them (Mc Cormick, 2012). Potential Participants in this research were made aware of my coming by Mr. Mujeeb. The initial interviews were our space which I would consider as being “sussed out”. What this means is that my presence in the personal and workspaces of these men was met with suspicion and many of the questions asked by the participants were like an interrogation. Where do you live? Where is your school? I answered these, as rapport was a mutual project, and trust needed to be established. From this interrogation I was then allowed to introduce my research, this was an opportunity for me to clearly outline my intentions and the objectives of the research. It was key to this research that I, upon

request by participants, repeat and clarify certain concepts that are articulated in the research question, objectives, and methods of this study. Mc Cormick (2012) states that informed consent works intrinsically with voluntariness (Mc Cormick, 2012). In the proceedings of this study participants were made aware and conscientious of the objectives of the study and were given space to decide whether they wanted to participate without coercion or manipulation. The period that the participants were given to make an informed decision whether to participate or not was a week and throughout the series of interviews, participants repetitively remained informed of their right to withdraw from the research without any consequences (Maziva, 2020).

3.7.3. Confidentiality

Governed by Decolonial African Feminist methodology this research aims to write black African immigrant men's narratives as real-life stories that are experiences of humans who have personalities. To erase the names of these men was greatly uncomfortable for me and the politik embodied by this research. The politics of confronting the illegitimization of black African men by the colonial rhetoric and logic that has for years written these men as sub-human and relegated them to nothingness. And so, I asked permission to use their first names in the write-up and retracted their surnames. The latter was done to protect the participants from any form of harm and/or embarrassment that may result because of the moments of vulnerability that were evoked in the data collection process of this paper (Maziva, 2020). However, to keep their first names [that they used to introduce themselves] is to actively reject the politics of black South African essentialism and the coloniality embedded in defining and labeling black African immigrant men as foreigners, fence jumpers', illegal aliens [everything else but humans]. While the identity of the participants in this paper is crucial to the research, other components of their lives such as their second names, maiden names, street names, and family members' names are anonymized (Maziva, 2020).

3.7.4. Reciprocity

What benefit will this research be to its participants? Answering this question assists feminist inquirers in not replicating the white masculinist and racist mannerism of colonial research which was characterized by extractivism. Cognizant of the lived reality that characterizes the life stories of my participants which are heavily stereotyped with the notion of their bodies being labeled as "thieves and parasites" who have infiltrated South Africa to loot the economy of its growth. The question of financial compensation held opposing arguments. On one hand, financial compensation could perpetuate harmful stereotypes furthering the rhetoric of dependency thus normalizing the violence that has ensued thus far against black African immigrant men in South Africa. While on the other hand, financial compensation is a token of appreciation, or an expression of thanks (Head, 2009). The amount of R500 that was 'compensation' as remuneration for participation in this study was not payment, but rather a means to a way in which the researcher begins to "equalize the uneven power relationships that exist between the

interviewer and interviewee" (Thompson, 1996). I was receiving from the participants a part of them that no amount of money could 'pay' for [their stories and experiences]. In return, it was only fair that I compensated them for the time wasted and taken away from their work. These men are informal business owners and workers, so spending hours with each interview meant that they were losing money which would affect their livelihood in some way. I witnessed customers being angry that their requests and grievances were not attended to because my participants were focused on conversing with me.

3.8. Positionality and Reflexivity: Surfacing power dynamics

In its attempt to understand the phenomenon of migration in South Africa. This research study positioned itself within the intersectional nexus of the experiences of gendered and racialized subjectivities. It comes to make sense of the tangible consequences of embodied border violence, racialized discrimination, and dehumanization as continuous consequences of colonialization and Apartheid in South Africa. It had begun to make sense of the distinct experiences of racialized African subjectivities as they attempted to embody a new masculine self in South Africa. It has contended with the multiple forms of decapacitation that black African immigrants face in their attempts towards self-realization in South Africa. My positionality within the research study was explicitly engaged throughout the research study's conceptualization, data collection, and write-up processes. In the earlier stages (conceptualization stages), the dilemmas of the insider/outsider dynamics presented by my embodied and performed subjectivities were not apparent to me. In this stage, I positioned and presented myself as a student researcher assuming to be vastly indifferent and distant from the experiences of the people I was intending to engage as research subjects. At this point, I approached this research study as an explicit outsider who tasked herself to obtain an unbiased insider perspective of their migration realities (Maziva, 2020). It was not until I contended with decolonial scholarship that I was made known of the embodied self-colonialization that made me assume I was not a part of the racialized African experience. This was an evident performance of South African essentialism. As a citizen of South Africa, my 'unrestricted' sometimes limited access to citizenship privileges had grossly affected how I read and understood my role as a researcher. In parts of my engagement with the research question, the literature was indifferent until I began contending with decolonial scholarship; a much rude and needed awakening. It shifted my perspectives and outlook on personal involvement, partiality, and empathic understanding role of researchers.

While preparing for the field, I consulted with various researchers in the study of migration and some of them worked closely with African men. To my surprise majority of the feedback in consultation with these scholars manifested a deep sense of fear, anxiety, and insecurity. The immigrant men I was seeking to engage were codified as objects of anxiety. I was cautioned of how dangerous these men

were, and how unsafe I was to be engaging with black undocumented men who could not be detected by the state if anything were to happen to me. Having internalized these rhetoric, experiences, and narratives, I approached my supervisor in an attempt to learn possible measures of protecting myself. While preparing me for the spaces in which interviews can take place in, some of the cues[3] to look out for, Associate Professor Benita then stated, "*If this is the attitude you are going to the field with, then why do you not change your research topic*?" This question made me realize that my internal biases were harmful to the project of decolonizing African masculinities (Ratele, 2016; 2018; Mfecane, 2024) that was embedded not only in humanizing men but also in engaging the attempts of African masculinities and towards repair and redemption (Chitando et al, 2024).

In the field, my multiple positionalities were made apparent, I had to negotiate the different and shifting identities that were ascribed to me throughout my interactions with different immigrant men. I alternated within my positions as a woman, and a shared African 'identity' status that presented me as 'one of them' (Maziva, 2020). As a black woman, socio-cultural ideologies of gender performances were reinforced as I was situated in a position of 'doing' femininity. This was reinforced through stereotypical gender discourses that proposed being an empathetic and respectful facilitator for men's narratives is a woman's role in conversations (Maziva, 2020). As a woman researcher, I was therefore perceived as a container of emotional confession. I was required to listen sympathetically as they displayed feelings of rage, bafflement, and to some extent disgust toward South Africans. The only plausible thing I could do was sit through those emotions even when I felt wronged by the statement lashed out of anger. To the point that one of the respondents expressed great gratitude and relief from participating in the interviews. While the release of his anger was healing him. It was greatly harming me and at this point, I could not talk back.

On other occasions, as a younger black girl and 'woman' in a male-dominated space, I was moved in between the positions of being a 'potential' girlfriend and researcher. There were continuous instances in which these men would communicate their desires of marriage to a South African woman, and this was followed by compliments of my looks, intense attempts to flirt, and uncomfortable piercing looks that felt like I was being stripped naked in their mind. My 'soft spoken-ness', I was told was a desirable trait for marriageable women. I was not like all the other Xhosa women who were loud. The one incident that I had to cut the interview short was when I was objectified as the equivalent of store-bought chocolate that needed to be savored and devoured. *Undiphathele ichocolate, undiphathele wena, Ingase ndikutye*[4] proclaimed my potential participant as he stared me down. These sentiments were then accompanied by a random hand stroke. As I retraced my hand, I remained calm and concluded the

[3] language, mannerisms, and social symbol
[4] When you come for more interviews, please bring me chocolate, and bring yourself to me. I wish to devour you.

interview. I never felt obligated to follow his advances as a few meters from the container we were in, Mr. Mujeeb was waiting for me. I felt assured that if anything happened, I would be heard.

On another occasion, I was caught in between a brawl of vulgar words and aggression between my participant and his friend as my participant had introduced me as his girlfriend. To his suspecting friend, I was a Xhosa woman and could not date a Ghanaian foreign boy. Throughout this ordeal I sat there, the only mechanism I could embody was simply to smile, internally I was battling with the fear of unfathomable possibilities if this word brawl would escalate. These two men were in tug as an expression of their masculine selves. The friend could not fathom a Xhosa girl dating a foreign man whom he referred to as *Inkwenkwe*[5] while he was a better suitor. However, I sat pondering that the only proactive response was to sit and smile as a safety net against any possible backlash. Even in this occurrence, I knew Mr. Mujeeb was a few meters from where I was. After this I had the only chance to sit and reflect, I guess I was a bit shaken this time around. I realized that at any instance of vulnerability during the research collection process, I relied on my male gatekeeper not only for access but also as a guarantee and assurance of safety. Any form of emotional response from my side would have been scrutinized, as "emotionality" is constructed counter to the conduct of good researchers which was measured against the binary to rationality, professionalism, and intellectual work. These occurrences emphasized the increasing realization of the researcher's experiences and emotions as data. Through my silences and uneasy smiles, I was allowed to encounter how masculinities attempt to embody, perform, and assert their dominance over persons it has assumed as weaker.

In some instances, I encountered masculine performances that were closely linked to these men's need to assert dominance as a means to showcase and affirm their masculine status. In other cases, I was exposed to the desire for masculinities to repair itself by positioning themselves as caring man and fathers. As we were conducting our interview outside of his workspace, we were approached by locally known 'Maphara' – young men who rely on petty theft to get money for their next drug score. I had to use my jersey to cover the recording tool that I was using. These two men as they were approaching us intending to sell us a stolen cell phone were met with restiveness and a defensive man who positioned themselves as father mainly resisting any advances of potential harm to me. Throughout this research experience, I contended with the reality of how fluid, fragile, and porous masculinities are. In attempts to assert their dominance and prove themselves superior these men would adopt a condescending instructional mode. The liminality of my researcher's 'authority' was diffused by the masculine powers I encountered in the field. However, this exacerbated my vulnerability as a female researcher in the field (Mugge, 2013).

[5] Uncircumcised boy

Chapter 4: Migrant Masculinities and Narratives of Vulnerability

4.1. Introduction

The findings and discussions in this chapter engage with undocumented black African immigrant men's narratives of vulnerability and victimization through macro-systematic and institutionalized violence in South Africa. It postulates ways in which black African immigrant men attempt to survive and how they succumb to the production of their personhood as pathological racialized excess in postcolonial South Africa. This chapter references Achille Mbembe's Necropolitics (2017, 2019) in an attempt to engage the urgent socio-political questions around racialized migration, border violence, and precarity within post-colonial South Africa. It engages how state apparatuses are integral in the contemporary reconfiguration and construction of black African(ness) through the life narratives of immigrant men. It engages how state institutions such as the South African Police Services (SAPS) and Department of Home Affairs (DHA) position immigrant men as the gendered, racial, and undocumented Other. These constructions are utilized as a measure to maintain South African homonationalist and racial purity ideologies which are evident continuities of the colonial and Apartheid racialization project.

4.2. Role of the State: Targets of Xenophobic Violence?

The post-colonial state of South Africa is an evident construction of the continuities of colonialization and Apartheid. Still plagued with homonationalist racial ideals that are embedded in Apartheid politics of racial purity. South Africa struggles within an interregnum between the old and the new struggling to be formed (Mapokgole, 2014). This interregnum manifests itself clearly in the resistance of the 'new' South Africa in shedding its severe restrictions on blacks producing and participating in markets located in white areas, continued gatekeeping of black residence in white spaces, the control of urban influx, and, more intensely the denial of personhood and legitimated existence of Africans (Mbembe, 2003). Mapokgole (2014) argues that radical change in South Africa is yet to begin solidify and marking the post-Apartheid era. Heavily ingrained in the socio-political landscape of the new and democratic South Africa is the evident "Othering" of Black Africanness, particularly within the scope of this research study of, black immigrants. This othering is mainly targeted towards Black immigrants who are sought out as the Black that is African (Mapokgole, 2014). Constructing itself as an anti-Black racist world, South Africa presents black African immigrant men as completely objectifiable and inferior subjects who through macro-systemic and institutionalized Afrophobia are built to perform as the unfree. In this these men face harsh economic conditions that explicitly deny their access to surviving as part of the 'human' race in South Africa. Due to their

undocumented status, immigrant men's livelihoods in South Africa are characterized by the reality of denialism in which access to certain schools, places, hospitals, and workplaces is unattainable. Therefore, black immigrant men in South Africa lack the advantage of being able to accomplish existing not only as Black but as a man (Fanon, 2008; Ratele, 2021).

Mapokgole (2014) postulates this denialism and embodied objecthood through the conceptual framework of Fanon (2008) as the zone of non-being. Fanon (2008) conceptualizes the zone of non-being as 'an extraordinarily sterile and arid region, an utterly naked declivity where an authentic upheaval can be born' (2008; 2015). In his definition Fanon (2008) provides an understanding of the zone of non-being as the psycho-spiritual, socio-cultural, political, and epistemological construction of the African immigrant man as a sense of unreality. Embedded in coloniality-induced alienation the zone of non-being positions black African immigrant men as below humanity, as a sub-ontology in comparison to superior white South Africa and black South Africa (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). The zone of non-being for black African immigrant men is manifested through South Africa's contemporary power relations that serve to materially and discursively invisibilize them. It is characterized by the continuation of colonial racist processes of dehumanization and inferioritization that delegitimizes the daily experiences of these individuals as unimportant and socially irrelevant. A decolonial reading of the contemporary post-colonial South African state helps make sense of the implications that characterize the livelihoods of black African immigrant men as they contend with their personhood being constructed as an oppositional foreign "other" thus being denied access to personhood and the achievement of manhood (Mbembe, 2003; Ratele, 2021).

The construction of immigrant men in South Africa as the damnes (inhabitants of the zone of non-being) is integral and entangled into the very method of 'good' governance. State apparatuses and agents communicate and maintain good governance as a political end through the language of violence (Kizito, 2019; Fanon, 2008). This violence is pursued as the states attempt to maintain and uphold not only national identity but also citizen subjectivities and accessibilities. In this racialized immigrant men in South Africa are produced as an illegitimate occupant and enmity against the state and its resources and thus are subjected to 'being tracked, captured, and dispensed of' (Mbembe, 2019). The control of vulnerable, unwanted, and surplus racialized people is exercised through a combination of tactics, chief among which is 'modulated blockade' (Mbembe, 2019). This blockade in post-colonial- Apartheid South Africa is characterized by migration policies, exclusionary political discourses, and socio-economic precarity that not only prohibits who and what can enter the country but also aims to obstruct and limit the flourishing livelihoods of African immigrant men. As a result, social and physical death embodies a peculiar 'detention space' in which black African immigrant men portrayed as the surplus, unwanted, or illegal are governed through abdication of any responsibility for their lives and their welfare (Mbembe, 2019).

This is Mr. Edson's Story…

This is Edson from Malawi…I arrived here in South Africa; it was in August 2013. So, I have been here, maybe now about six years. But first I was in Rustenburg but after that, I moved here (Cape Town). In Rustenburg, I only stayed some time, for five years, and I moved here because my friend invited me here as I was interested to be here in Cape Town. I see that here in Cape Town a lot of things are better, including its weather (laughs), yeah as long as you know. These cops, it's easier to move here rather than Rustenburg, in Rustenburg we cannot move, waka waka… Moving like everybody is difficult… just moving around up and down. A lot of cops, it's too difficult man. Here I feel free to move any place without any problem with the police. Once the people there see the police, they get scared because the police have taken them and asked for some money to leave them. I have seen it; I have seen it happen to my friends. It was the day after I arrived (here) in South Africa, I was with my uncle and we had gone to the shop to buy something, so when we got to some tuckshop we saw, people running, and we asked why. What is happening? Then they said, these are the cops…

We are running from them. They only chase and catch them, because they are foreigners. But those police were not Home Affairs. They were just cops; they were just cops. That is why it was difficult for me to live there. But here in Cape Town, we get paid enough and walk without fearing the police. But also, violence is everywhere here in Cape Town. Violence is everywhere. In my country, I have never seen a dead person. I have never seen a dead person, but in Cape Town, I have seen, a dead person. One was shot there (pointing at the not-so-far taxi rank, 2 minutes away from where we were sitting). There at the taxi rank. It means that there is a lot of violence here. I had a lot of fear, and that month I did not live it well. I was so scared, mainly that it would happen to me. The violence I have just accepted is because we are here, so just endure it. I have also seen someone being killed at the taxi rank, and I see it with my own eyes. I have seen that guy being killed. It is common… He was Malawian also.

Researcher: So, do you feel as if this 'common' violence is targeted towards black African foreign men?

Mr Edson: Yes, and this is because… I do not know, maybe they hate us, because how can they kill only foreigners? You see, this cannot happen to them, for South African men it is not easy to kill each other. Maybe you know also.

Researcher: I, actually, do not know.

Mr. Edson: you cannot answer, but in your heart, I hope you know this. These are my words, it shocks me…

Black African immigrants in South Africa live in constant fear of unwarranted arrests, threats of deportation, and economic extortion from bribe-seeking police officers. Roberts (2008) writes that human-engineered institutions such as the police whose main function is to shield and protect people from violence and threats in themselves become the causal factor of human insecurity. They have become particularly notorious for misusing their power to raid, attack, and beat up immigrant men. Mr. Edson's narrative postulates the role of colonial processes characterized by exploitation and dispossession enacted by state police violence against immigrant men who have been constructed as phobogenic. It raises questions about the intersectional vulnerabilities that immigrant men endure, including financial extortion, physical, and emotional violation to the point of being displaced in search of a sense of security fearing for their lives. This narrative speaks to the multiple and intersecting forms of oppression due to lack of citizenship, and ethnic-racial discrimination which has created layered risks of extreme suffering (Dahlberg and Thapar-Björkert, 2023).

Conversely, Mr. Mujeeb's narrative provides an understanding of how post-colonial South Africa through racial stereotyping produces and solidifies the imagery of immigrant men as the fictionalized enemy (Mbembe, 2003). Through racial stereotyping, immigrant men based on the color of their skin, 'darker' features, and 'dense' accents are more likely to be arrested as foreigners and/or asked for identification. It is these bodily markers of difference that justify the systematic Afrophobia that black African immigrant men experience in their contact with state authorities particularly the Police, Home Affairs officials, and Lindela employees (Neocosmos, 2006). Encounters between South African state agents and black African immigrant men are commonly characterized by experiences of illegal searches, unwarranted arrests, corruption, extortion, gratuitous violence, and torture (Neocosmos, 2006; Mangezvo, 2015). The racialization of black African men renders them highly visible to authorities and thus potentially deportability. Due to their fear of deportability and unwarranted illegal arrests, undocumented men resort to self-surveil and embody reclusive masculinities (Mangezvo, 2015). Constructed as the criminal and illegal other, black African immigrant men like Mr. Mujeeb experience multiple intersecting forms of policing in South Africa, which oftentimes determines where these men can go and what they can do (Mangezvo, 2015).

This is Mujeeb's story…

My name is Mujeeb… Coming to South Africa, I applied for a visa, for a visitor visa, and I got the visa, I flew from Ghana in 2008, 2nd February and I landed 3rd February 2008. Within three months or four months then that Xenophobia started. It was the 2008 Xenophobia attacks, so I felt very devastated, really because I am new and this xenophobia because… my purpose of coming to see the same black South Africans fighting us foreign nationals. So, it was very disturbing, by then I was staying in Khayelitsha. So, I had to leave Khayelitsha for Cape Town (CBD), I was sleeping on the street for almost a month. We used to beg for food just like the

street guys, whilst we had a room that we were paying rent. You see we left all our things, our properties there not knowing what will happen with our properties. So we were just on the street, moving up and down like a criminal, which was bad. So since then, I felt bad about the way the blacks are treating their fellow blacks in the country it was very bad, very, very bad. I will not say it is targeted violence against black immigrant men, but it is somehow like that. What was happening, because anytime we went back home, in Khayelitsha… not like my country, but in Khayelitsha, people would be shouting "They are coming, they are coming", and who were the people that were coming? It is not the police, if it were the police, it would have been better. But it was the area boys, and you do not know what is going to happen to you. Are they coming to kill you, even if they are coming to us to steal, to take our properties then it's cool but…I feared for my life, you see if it is the property that they are coming for at least… but we may be killed, we may be injured… Because they are discriminating. They want to tell us that this is not our country… Here is different, like how they attack people, eish… too much experience. I do not even know how to put it. And, like where we are living, if we leave our stuff at home by the time we come out it is gone, you see. Anytime we leave our foodstuff and by the time we come back from the shop it is gone, who are those that are doing those things? So it was a bad experience the time I arrived here. However, now I am used to that because I know how they live although they are my brothers, we just have to cope with it.

We have applied for a permit for more than 5 years now but since… the permit is pending. But they are moving around, arresting us, why is it so? And then you are calling us illegal immigrants, meanwhile are documents are in there with you, and have paid. When we came in the permit was around R400 – R500 and then they increased to, I think R700- R800, and now it is almost R1750 aside from the R1750, what they are doing now is before you submit you need to see the immigration lawyer and you have to pay R5000 or R10000 depending on the permit you want to apply for. So, know home affairs are killing us… But you are still calling us illegal migrants, you hate foreign nations even though we are paying more than R10000. It is affecting everybody emotionally. It's fine…You see, actually being a man moving around South Africa, I am a person who does not like outings because of the situation of the country, because of robbery, killing, and other stuff. I am someone who does not move out. If I close my shop, if I get to my house, it is hard to see me outside, never. Because I am scared of the country, because of what is happening, you get killed just like that. You just get killed.

Kizito (2019) posits that "borders follow bodies, and the body comes to function as a border as well". In this, the author argues that the experiences of black African immigrant men in Africa and its diaspora are shaped by the constant reminders of their un-belonging. The border remains a haunting specter in the lives of many immigrant men who daily must be reminded of their precarious existence. He postulates that undocumented black African immigrant men while living, breathing, and traveling

are constantly reminded of the fact that they have crossed borders. Their bodies on a daily are subjected to the precarity of un-belonging and *"Alienhood"* that is characterized by severe border enforcement mechanisms that seek to expel, eject, and deport them (Kizito, 2019). The migratory subjectivities of immigrant men are subject to the inherent racialized violence embodied and ideologically grounded in socio-cultural differences. It is the status of un-documentation coupled with the blackness of these men that has normalized the disposability and brutalization of African foreign men in South Africa. It is the process of making a 'raced' body that has been utilized to unravel the black man's immigrant body into an object of anxiety. This anxiety is built on gender and racial stereotypes that play in false assumptions of danger and criminality, in ways that the black man's body becomes a moving target because they are pronounced to be toxic and threatening (Kizito, 2019). Therefore, Mr. Edson's and Mr. Mujeeb's narrative points to the consensus of South Africa's political and public discourses and practices that construct African immigrant men's lives as worthless and undesirable.

Broadly, Mr. Edson's and Mr. Mujeeb's narratives engage the contemporary forms of postcolonial perspectives on the role of the state apparatuses in enacting extreme forms of border violence as a control of 'alien' populations from flourishing in the country. Due to engrained racialized stereotypes regarding immigrant men including the way they dress, and look, as well as the presence of an accent, they are often targets of subjectification. African immigrant men whose subjectivities are constructed by the post-colonial South African, as the 'other strangers' (Mbembe 2003) or 'strange others' (Gqola, 2016) become perpetual citizens of the "world of undesirables" and their existence is viscously subjected to the creation of death worlds. Mbembe (2003) argues, that these worlds are 'new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of living-dead'. In this, the author states that the nation-state legitimizes its vengeance on immigrant men by cheapening the prices of their lives while subjecting them to a habitual loss of selfhood.

Mbembe's, Necropolitics (2003; 2017) provides an understanding of immigrant men's experiences in South Africa. The author postulates that post-colonial states' imagery of foreign immigrant men as terrifying objects incites the desire for death and fantasy of extermination as a viable solution to resolve the "problem" discoursed as the presence of excess populations. As surfaced in the narratives above, South Africa's resolve to this 'problem', is embedded in the origin of situations of unbearable suffering, in which immigrant men are subjected to dire physical and political marginalization, exclusion, and very real bodily violence. Ambiguously this response is enacted by state apparatuses, institutions, and agents geared toward upholding human rights. However, foreign men in contemporary post-colonial moment South Africa are forced to contend with the everyday violence of not only exclusion but the harsh reality of being confiscated of their personhood and stripped of their manhood, rendering them disposable. Moreover, this attritional violence by the state is never perceived as violence at all. It is rather deduced as the most intelligent way employed by nation-states to resolve

and eliminate the 'foreigners' crises that threaten their borders, sovereignty, national identity, and citizen subjectivities.

Necropolitics enables these research findings to make meaning of how post-Apartheid South Africa's political economy actively engages in the construction of racialized assemblages, subjugating African immigrant men into the subcategory of nonhumans and not-quite-men (Mbembe, 2019; Ratele, 2021). It further provokes the need to understand how the state's socio-political response to migrant men as 'non-subjects' has contributed to their social death. The narratives of Mr. Edson and Mr. Mujeeb postulate the experiences of immigrant men who have been systematically marked for death which is reinforced by the state institution's enactment of slow violence conferring upon 'unlawful' and 'illegitimate' immigrant population the status of living dead while still meeting its human rights commitments to persons it has constructed and perceives as full humans and lawful citizen (Mbembe, 2003; 2017; 2019). Moreover, Necropolitics provides insight into how state agents such as SAPS and DHA contribute towards exacerbating the deterioration and devastation of immigrant men as modes of governance and engagement. It provides possibilities for understanding how the social and physical death of immigrant men in South Africa is linked to the distribution of resources which are fundamental in negro-political negotiation.

4. 3. "*Even these protection fees it's only for us who are paying, it's only the foreigners who are paying*".

Curry (2017) provides a diagnosis of the active witch hunt against black men in the United States. The author argues that black males always find themselves at the junction of being perceived as a source of terror, as a dangerous man in the wrong place and at the wrong time, and this in many regards has resulted in their death. In South Africa the same diagnosis is applicable with severe possibilities of violence, strife, and death characterizing the lives of black masculinities. Moreover, gendered Negrophobic violence in South Africa continues to be exacerbated with higher death tolls recorded against black African immigrant men in provinces such as the Western Cape, Gauteng, and Limpopo and most heightened in KwaZulu Natal (Olofinbiyi, 2022). Gqola (2016) states that the experiences of victimization enacted through xenophobic violence in South Africa are usually embodied as enacted by and on Black men. Black African immigrant men living in South Africa are prone to the vulnerable experiences that render their bodies either exploitable, disposable, and dispensable as forms of symbolic or literal death (Mbembe, 2003; 2017). Kizito (2015) states that for immigrant men surviving death at the entry points in their immigration journey does not eliminate the cruelty of borders after they have settled in the host country. In very tangible and symbolic ways the death of black African immigrant men in South Africa prevents these men from being fully 'alive', as each day of their lives is characterized by a fear of physical death, deportation, and social expulsion (incarceration). The narrative of Mr. Ishmael provides an understanding of the world of compulsion to

pay for protection that immigrant men in South Africa are subjected to. His narrative postulates the paradox of compulsion to pay for safety, while the inherent and unavoidable consequence for the existence of black African immigrant men in South Africa is death, loss, and pain.

This is Mr. Ishmael's story…

My name is Ishmael, I am from Malawi. I came here to South Africa, and that will be the year 2010… based on that I also went home in 2012, and I came back again, and that was in 2014. From then I have been in South Africa since 2014. I was looking for the green pasture, so I came here like, when I was home, I was doing something, but the competition was like no. Sometimes when you are at the home ground, the competitors you fail because you are in the ground of the family, so sometimes when you try to hustle everything like it is drained, because the moment you look there, you look there, so you can give them excuse because they already give your eyes that no. So, I was no, I rather go out of my country and the other side to weigh the living of people on the other side… Even here in South Africa, it's very far from our country in development, so we say no, I rather just ask why these people come here. So, I spoke to them because we were sharing the same house, the same pot and everything. So, he said, no when you travel, you will learn, you open your mind, your brain, your everything, your eyes will open that I am in another country, the living is different. They told me how life is there and how life is here. They say here is tough. I say, how come life here is tough? You guys say life here is not tough it's better, is nice but how come now it's tough, so I say no, let me go and see for myself…

Sometimes I remember, back in 2019 I was at gunpoint in the shop (his container where he does his sewing business), likely they just collected the phones. They could not manage to get money because at that moment I did not have money in my shop because I had not done any business because it was a little early, So, they came with a gun and pointed at me, they wanted to shoot but only God. After that gunpoint, it affected me a lot, very. I end up leaving my business to go and start working. I was very afraid of sitting in the shop alone because I was just thinking that any person that came to the door when I was alone, there is nothing they come and finish what they started because they say not that person, we did not do anything there so let's go back…It happened twice, the second it was not with gunpoint, but they just came and robbed me but the third one when I saw the gun I was frightened because I was shocked that I might lose my life, so let me shift and come to another a place where it is open and there are many people. So I came here, here (Langa) I also faced the same thing, but that was another kind of robbery it was another way. (Whispering) Of course, in this period we are in the process of paying the gangsters, a protection fee…Even these protection fees are only for us who are paying, it's only the foreigners who are paying. It's only the foreign shop because even my neighbor here is a citizen, they pass him, but whenever even if it's a vegetable or fruit stand that is owned by a

foreigner they will go there and collect. So, it is affecting us mentally, but we have to accept it because we do not have a choice. These people when you do not have money and you try to run, follow you to your house. So, they can do any shit in front of your family, and sometimes it is very hard, and it is very stressful when you do not have money because when you are paying them you are like protecting yourself and your family, and it's very hard. Once I remember in 2020, when the lockdown was in the process, I lost my friend we were doing the same business or sewing business there at Gugulethu. He got gunpointed and shot in the shop, it was very traumatic. It was very painful. He was my closest friend... He was the one, if I needed advice sometimes, I would go to him. Because here, I only have him as a brother, (inaudible), so he was like my family.

Mr. Ishmael's narrative not only positions the physical violence and brutality that immigrant men experience as an extension of the state's attempts to control excess populations through the "nocturnal body" of democracy (Mbembe, 2003; Fanon, 2001, Kizito, 2015). His narrative also positions the use of violence by black South African citizens as an attempt to survive the brunt of neo-liberal and racial capitalist corporeal spirits that continuously exclude them from citizenship privileges that are embedded in materiality. While state institutions embody necropower as a central project toward achieving an instrumentalization of human existence and the material destruction of African immigrants (Mbembe, 2003). Black South Africans also construct immigrant men as the oppositional other. In which the existence of these men is perceived as competition against the livelihoods of black South African men and their families. Faced with the harsh reality of having to compete for state resources and employability, black South Africans as an attempt to securitization construct immigrant men as an outlet to which they channel their aggression (Fanon, 2001). Due to the violence of poverty, hunger, perpetual terror, and denigration that characterizes black townships, black South Africans resort to the incitement of Afrophobic and Negrophobic violence to deal with the economic injustices they face every day (Fanon, 2001; Mngxitama and Gibson, 2008).

In an attempt to secure their accessibility to the already non-existent economic and job opportunities and informal market, black South African men living in townships participate in organized crime through the new phenomenon of protection fees that plagues South Africa today (Netshikulwe et al, 2022). This phenomenon is characterized by 'street gangs' demanding payment from business owners by violent and coercive means. The prominent victims of these acts of violence have increasingly been black African immigrant men who are vendors and street sellers. Mapokgole's (2014) reading of Fanon in contemporary South Africa provides an understanding that this act of violence is the response of poor black South African men who not only experience their humanhood being stripped by the engrained poverty in townships. Moreover, they also experience the rejection of their manhood as they are excluded from economic benefits (Mapokgole, 2014).

Due to the rage and inferiority complex that they embody, black South African men channel their anger towards immigrant men as a means to assert their citizen subjectivity and manhood. Moreover, “The type of Black man we have today has lost his manhood and being reduced to an obliging shell he looks at the white power structure with awe…Deep inside his anger, he mounts at the accumulating insult, but he vents it in the wrong direction- on his fellow man in the township, on the property of Black people” (Biko, 2004). Biko (2024) concurs with Fanon's (2001) sentiments that as a result of the socio-economic disparities that are manifested through government neo-liberal policies that maintain apartheid racist structures further alienating black South Africans. The “natives” fight against each other to release their rage regarding the poor socio-economic conditions they face because they cannot fight the real enemy”. To keep immigrant men who are perceived as a threat to their livelihoods from “stealing their jobs”, black South African men have resorted to extensive forms of extortion as a response to the systemic and economic exclusion that they face.

Due to the reality that they exist as a racialized immigrant, particularly of African descent their bodies are the cause of heated sentiments and emotions over their threat to the nation (Kizito, 2015). They are therefore subjected to the dual realities that once assigned the burden of political contingency. As the racialized Other, black African immigrant men's bodies oscillate between the possibility of death and uncertain hopefulness (Kizito, 2015). Mr. Ishmael’s narrative surfaces how death presents itself as an inevitable pre-existing condition. It consumes the black African and immigrant body as though it looms in the spaces in which these men occupy waiting to erupt and manifest itself. However, key to note as postulated by Mbembe (2003; 2017) and Fanon (2002) Black African immigrant men are never random victims of violence. They are rather constructed by nation-state's homonationalist policies and excluded citizens as victims of violence that are aimed at enforcing border control and upholding South African national identity (Kizito, 2019). It is as though citizens and patriots are ready to celebrate the death and the end of their foreign enemies as these men are perceived to be stealing from poor Black South Africans what is rightly theirs. The lives of black African immigrant men are faced with the daunting reality of undignified, unfavorable, and life-threatening conditions that force these men to negotiate several methods of survival and search for a new chance at life. As a measure towards assurance of protection, and safety, and to reconfigure a ‘naturalized’ existence, immigrant men are forced to purchase and compensate for their right to life. However, at any opportunity to eliminate an enmity constructed as the foreign other, nation-states and citizens resort to extreme forms of dehumanization and violence unto which the death of the victimized will by no means be felt as a loss (Mbembe, 2019).

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter engaged the experiences of black African immigrant men shaped by state institutions and public civil society. It has positioned through the narratives of these men their experiences of victimization as they encounter macro-systemic and institutionalized forms of violence

embedded in governmental policies and apparatuses such as the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). This chapter makes sense of how the state and civil population continue to be geared towards arresting, detaining, and deporting undocumented migrants. It unpacked how the rhetoric of constructing African immigrant men as the problem has rendered their bodies deportable and thus continuously subjected to the threat/ or possibility of deportation (Machinya, 2019). It further engaged the continuities of epidermal borders in justifying and enforcing the structural violences, obscure processes of law, and institutional inequalities that black African immigrant men are subjected to. Moreover, this chapter discussed the current understudied phenomenon of protection fees that plague South Africa. It attempted to engage the tangible repercussions of violence on the livelihood and personhood of immigrant men, as they succumb to the production and representation of their personhood as pathological racialized excess in postcolonial South Africa (Netshikulwe et al, 2022).

Chapter 5: Undocumented Migratory Masculinities and Fatherhood

5.1. Introduction

Scholarship researching the intersections of migration and masculinities has only recently been occupied with unpacking and providing a nuanced understanding of transnational masculinities (Mpaata, 2020). Several themes emerge in this scholarship, my interest is in specifically interrogating African immigrant men's experiences of fatherhood and fathering and contributing to an understudied focused area on transnational migrant masculinities in Africa (Mpaata, 2020; Sekona, 2024). In unpacking the gendered role of men through fatherhood in migration studies this chapter moves beyond their absenteeism in the family's well-being or their sole responsiveness to economic contribution (remittances) (Mangezvo, 2015). This chapter unpacks the complexities embedded in the performance of migrant masculinities entangled with fatherhood seeking to understand how migration ruptures traditional hegemonic forms of embodied fatherhoods. By situating Mr. Ali's narrative this chapter presents and engages the unconventional pathways to fathering and fatherhood that transnational migration presents in the migratory narratives of black African immigrant fathers' (Chitando et al, 2024). It engages with immigrant men's response to fatherhood as a means of self-representation and embodying a portrayal of 'successful' manhood due to their inability to attain socio-culturally hegemonic forms of masculinity in the host country. This response and alternate representation are embedded in affective masculinities to acquire ideal masculinities.

In Africa fatherhood remains one of the most important roles for black African men. This is because fatherhood provides African men with the opportunity to recoup and acquire access to a socio-culturally successful masculine status that is embedded in and defined culturally through hetero-patriarchal ideals of male breadwinner masculinity (Moolman, 2011; Sekano, 2024). Through cultural practices of heteronormative gender ideals fatherhood in Africa bestows unto men an instant upgrade to successful manhood in which these men work themselves as the exemplar of masculine ideals through providing, protecting, and maintaining a homestead (Sekano, 2024). Transnational migration in Africa offers an understanding of the complexities of masculinities and fatherhood. Recent Euro-American representations of fatherhood emerge as emotionally responsive, involved, and nurturing. As with Western theory, this universalization of this Eurocentric image of fatherhood is not reflective of the realities and values of fatherhood in other parts of the world particularly the localities of sub-Saharan African countries (Nsamenang, 2009). This Eurocentric image embedded in normative Western nuclear families has however been utilized to conceptualize and represent African immigrant fathers as absent, missing, effeminate, and deviant (Chitando et al, 2024).

Fatherhood in Africa is an embodied symbol and performance of societally and culturally acceptable, dominant, and hegemonic forms of 'ideal' masculinities. Traditional hegemonic heterosexual fatherhood (through biological categorization) is embedded in the act of breadwinning, solely characterized by wealth accumulation and provision. In most African societies, fatherhood is closely associated with being the provider, protector, disciplinarian, and head of the household (Mpaata, 2020). It is, however, also performed, attained, and defined beyond the biological act. Fatherhood, in Africa, is also embedded and co-constituted through deeply ingrained notions of customs and culture which challenge Eurocentric heteropatriarchal ways of 'doing' family/ and fatherhood (Sekona, 2024). This is because the sociocultural configurations of fatherhood in Africa, emanate from the dominant representations of a good father; as one who raises his children with discipline, teaches them life lessons, and invests in their futures (Moolman, 2011; Mpaata, 2020).

Recent studies on migration have documented how migrant families are reformed and reconstructed through relocation (Ncayiyane and Nel, 2024). These studies have particularly unpacked how the migration of men from their home societies challenges the "traditional" and nuclear family structure by undermining traditional fathering practices which include the father being able to balance caring, earning, and head of the household responsibilities (Mpaata, 2020; Sekona, 2024). Mpaata (2020) postulates that migration in search of employment opportunities affirms immigrant masculinities of their manhood and ascribes to them their acquired status and authority as men in their families and societies. The author further opines that relocation for African men is done to search for better employment opportunities that will provide an appraisal for the man as a "good" father. Contrary, for many scholars, it has been understood as a justifier of their absenteeism (Chereni, 2015). These scholars argue that due to relocation immigrant men miss out on their children's daily lives. By not being physically present, these men rely on their wives and extended family members to discipline and mentor their children, thus reworking the father's traditional role (Sekona, 2024). These, however, representations of African masculinities fail to engage in the productive realities of immigrant fathers in Africa.

Premising of Mr. Ali's narrative this chapter engages how immigrant men's masculine subjectivities perceived as unfinished and partial, are potentially attainable through the locus of fatherhood. This narrative situates the agency of immigrant masculinities as he narrates fatherhood as a locus of self-assembling and re-production of 'ideal masculinities' through affect and relativity. Moolman (2011) reaffirms the openness and multiplicity of masculine subjectivities. The author states that reworked forms of masculinities are continuously constructed through social influences of manhood which are inextricably linked to performances and practices of fatherhood. In this the author provides an understanding of fatherhood as a product of both internal and social processes. For, immigrant men fatherhood becomes the praxis in which they are enabled to 'work on' and seek to 'accomplish' establishing their masculine credentials. For Mr. Ali, fatherhood is positioned as a social

and biographical, discursive, and defensive understanding of masculinity (Robb, 2004). In his narrative, he postulates fatherhood as a defence against the internalized anxiety and tensions about his own identity as a father and as a migrant man. He presents his masculine identity within the hierarchy of masculinities as denied by the public political and economic sphere, yet reaffirmed, negotiated, and established through their relations with family, particularly his roles as a father.

5.2. "*So how is that child going to grow up like? She does not even have papers?"*

This is Mr. Ali's Story

My name is Ali. I am from Malawi, I came to South Africa because of the problems in my country. I came in 2018…As you know our country does not have money and some people do not have any mothers so I thought to myself how I am going to live here, why should I not start looking for money so I can get a passport, maybe then my life can be better in another place. So that is why am I here. It's better here than at home in Malawi. Here are the things I never had at home, here I can at least get these and even support my mom and sisters. Before I moved to Cape Town I used to live in Johannesburg, and I went to Pretoria. I came to choose South Africa to work and to get a life easy because you do not need to steal it. We chose South Africa because we want to work, any work you can find. Like me, I have my hands, and I make and fix the couch. I cannot go to work to sweep, it's not my style. I got my hands and so I learned how to work the couch. The problem with South Africa you do not get work you will not survive. But without paper or documents, life is more difficult. I do have a passport, but I do not have a permit, I am also in search of papers, but I keep asking myself how I will get them. There is what they do, you need to make an exchange. When you are applying for your permit the home affairs officials will say to leave behind your permit and they will give you a document that you can temporarily use as an identity paper. However, that paper is fraud because it expires, and you cannot renew it and when you go back, they chase you away. My passport is still at the home affairs in Johannesburg, they never gave it back to me and the paper they gave me expired a long time ago. So, when I arrived here, I had no identification paper or my passport that is why. But here, now I have a daughter born in South Africa but does not have a document. You stay in the country without permission, so you cannot be treated like other people, even in the hospital to be treated like other people and so my daughter can get a grant, but she is every time treated like a foreigner. So how is that child going to grow up like? She does not even have papers, she does not even have a certificate, how is she going to get work? She can't, she is going to suffer because what? because that land you stay in people do not like you. We are here to work, other people do not like working but we try to work hard, and we go to work to get something, but the problem is you will never get it… People who come from different countries

do not come here to steal it, they come here to work… to make life easy… South Africa is very difficult. You need to pay for everything, food, rent, water, and even the land you live on. We do not have brothers, sisters, or family so we must live alone and try to survive by ourselves. South Africa's problem is that it does not like foreign people.

Traditional conceptions of fatherhood are constituted through set hegemonic and normative masculine ideologies. It is embedded in masculine ties to heteropatriarchy which are characterized by men's tendencies towards alienation from nature and people, self-control, self-regulation, lack of emotional attachment, and dominance. These are constituted through the rigid imagery of fathers as the assumed protector of both mother and child, providing them with the necessities of life and fighting for their safety against dangers from the outside world if necessary (Khunou, 2006). Mr. Ali's narrative on experiences of fathering, positions the alterations of traditional men's roles, as tenets of masculinity, as these men contend with new structural changes in the host country. Mr. Ali's narrative engages with the experience of undocumented parents (fathers) who work informally and often have unstable employment situations that hinder their ability to provide financial support for their families. Sekano (2024) postulates that undocumented fathers oftentimes feel as if they have failed to be good fathers as they are unable to send as much money home as they would like. If they are separated from their children in their birth country, they may be unable to see them for an extended period. In addition, parents who are without documentation and give birth to children in the host country, the children are prone to systemic ostracism resulting in them struggling to receive proper medical care and education and they may even end up growing up working without documentation themselves (Sekona, 2024).

Mr. Ali embraces fatherhood even in the adverse socio-economic conditions that he is faced with due to his undocumentation. Regardless of the precarious situation oftentimes fraught with numerous challenges that breed anxiety he states that he has had to and continues to work as a cheap, casual laborer, and as a street vendor to try and survive. He attempts to be a good father as one who hustles on the streets to make ends meet to provide for his family (Musariri, 2021). His narrative unearths the realities of the multigenerational punishment of undocumented parents on children. Enriquez (2015) defines multigenerational punishment as the state's "legal violence" that systematically excludes undocumented parents and their inherited consequences on immigrant children. The author argues that the undocumentation of parents has dire and direct repercussions for their children as they are most likely to experience the same restrictions on employment, education, and travel as a daily ritual to avoid deportation. Mr. Ali's narrative is engrossed by his fear concerning his child's future. He states that the undocumentation of both his girlfriend (mother of his daughter) and him delegitimizes his daughter from being recognized as a South African citizen even though she was born in South Africa. While the South African constitution affords all children the right to adequate protection and care (Republic of South Africa 1996, art. 28). There are still disparities in the institutionalization and practice of these rights, as children of undocumented parents in the country struggle to access these provisions.

These children as their parents become victims of the effects of a deficient legal framework that justifies Xenophobic exclusion of vulnerable children as they are represented as parasites that drain the health care system and other state resources (Opfermann, 2020).

Therefore, the ejection of Mr. Ali's attempts at masculinity through fatherhood by the South African political economy details how immigrant men are structurally ostracised from performing hetero-patriarchal gender ideologies that are entrenched in the embodiment of masculinities through economic provision and wealth acquisition. His narratives open up the possibilities of unpacking how immigrant men's experience of income insecurity limits their sense of masculine being and self-worth (Khunou, 2006). Moreover, it also positions the need to navigate the alternative and 'new' ways in which these men resort to, as a measure to perform their masculine being, embedded in affective masculinities as an unconventional form of fathering. This narrative provides an understanding of how immigrant men embody affective masculinities which becomes integral in crafting alternative scripts of masculinities that are often contradictory to traditional and hegemonic masculine ideologies. By reinforcing and continuously premising his emotions of worry and fear – which explicitly and implicitly speaks to affect (Allan, 2017). Mr. Ali's emotive reaction to his inability to be a 'man', policed by his failure to regulate and acquire financial resources that secure the future of his daughter, provides pathways to understanding how affective masculinities not only embody experiences regulated by gendered emotions regimes but are also the action potential of human bodies (Reeser and Gottzen, 2018). His inability to provide and secure a future for his daughter as a 'fixed' feature of masculinities forces Mr. Ali to resort to affect attachment and allows emotions that define his subjectivity (Reeser and Gottzen, 2018).

The expression of these emotions even through a retrospective manner throughout the data collection process speaks to the current state of Mr. Ali as he positions his undocumentation as the current cause of his loss of masculine status. According to Reeser and Gottzen (2018) and Reeser (2020) affect can be understood as an "active discharge of emotion". Within the study of masculinities, it enables researchers to understand the relationship between masculinities and emotions. In this narrative, affective masculinities, are encapsulated through embodied and expressed counter-hegemonic emotions such as fear and worry which are unacceptable for men to express as these are coded as feminine (Reeser, 2020). Affect—alone or along with emotion— produces transformed forms of masculine subjectivities that challenge normative or hegemonic masculinity. The fear and worry that Mr. Ali surfaces throughout his narrative reveals his internal reaction to the ongoing and incremental loss of 'control'. However, instead of reverting to conservative modes of masculine stasis that express fatherhood as phlegmatic and stoic. Immigrant men through an expression of emotions embody a form of affect subjectivities allowing them to engage with new ways of performing masculine ideals that challenge dominant ideologies.

With the understanding that immigrant men's masculine subjectivities can be affected and reconfigured by external forces such as their undocumentation and precarious economic situations. Mr. Ali's narrative provided an understanding of how affect dismantles normative and hegemonic constructions of masculinities. While he, as an immigrant man is positioned as a marginal and absent masculinity. He through embodying an affective masculine subjectivity self-valorizes, instead of expressing extreme masculinity, thus recuperating his perceived lack of masculinity. It can be understood that Mr. Ali's narrative embodies affective masculine subjectivity as a means to potentially liberate himself from, among other things, the hetero-patriarchal masculinities that are oftentimes stoic. Moreover, his narrative also provides possibilities of acknowledging the affective side of fathering even amongst African fathers who are constantly represented as men who resort to violence, and emotionlessness strong hegemonic norms of father-provider attempting to generate an acceptable idealized masculinity.

This narrative enables contemporary research on African masculinities to position affect as an analytical tool aiding towards understanding how African fathers embodying affective subjectivities challenges and questions dominant discourses and stereotypes that characterize African fathers as distant, authoritarian, and violent patriarchs. Positioning affective subjectivity in the study of African Masculinities through the locus of fatherhood also provides the tools to better engage narratives of black African fathers who do not embody gendered power, masculine control, and violence as an escape from the structural, and social pressures and expectations of providing for their families while reclaiming and attempting to what it is to be a man (Ratele, 2010). Studying African masculinities through the analytical lenses of affective subjectivities provides a nuanced understanding of African fathers in South Africa. It enables contemporary research to challenge the unidimensional and 'blaming' dominant discourses of fatherhood, overlapping those of masculinity discourse on fathers by documenting the multiple ways in which fathers and father figures do care and play a role in young people's lives despite the institutional and structural barriers that they contend with in attempts to fathering (Malose, 2010; Ratele, 2012).

5.3. Conclusion

This chapter engages migrant men's narratives embedded with the reconstruction, refashioning, and negotiation of 'failed' masculinities through discourses of fatherhood. The chapter engaged with the concept of subjectivity discoursing African masculinities as multiple and constituted through intersecting experiences of histories, cultures, and gender ideologies. This chapter positions fatherhood in Africa as a 'ladder' in which African immigrant men climb to fulfill and attain closer proximity to manhood and hegemonic masculinities. These men provided ways in which they attempted to resurrect and reinstate their adult masculine status by displacing their marginal status through fatherhood. However, the findings of this chapter encapsulate that the desire to achieve masculinity in itself is an

obstacle to the flourishing of immigrant men not only as masculine subjects but also as just subjects (Allan, 2017).

Chapter 6: Fractured Masculinities and Repair

6.1. Introduction

This chapter engages the changes and shifts in the embodiment of masculine subjectivities as immigrant men move across national borders and socio-cultural contexts. It discusses how immigrant men in their pursuit of acceptable ideals of masculine status oftentimes move from hegemonic masculinities to embody marginalized forms of masculinities. In so doing, it unpacks how transnational migration fractures hegemonic embodiments of masculinities. In addition, this chapter discusses central to the findings of this research, immigrant men's narratives of self-valorization as a means by which they 'fix' their marginalized, "Othered" and fractured masculinities in attempts to recast their masculine status through religiosity and relationality.

Sweet (2019; 2022) theorizes masculinities as relational, mobile, contextual, intersectional, and oftentimes fracturing and or fractured. In this, the author premises the understanding of masculinities as a continuum closely linked to the concept of subjectivities. The author argues that masculinities are not static representations or stable identity markers of men but rather should be understood as a continuous process of seeking to and becoming 'men' (Sweet, 2019). To understand masculinities as subjectivities, it is imperative to foreground masculinities as co-constructed relational exchanges that occur amongst material and individuals within time and space (Sweet, 2022). Moreover, as masculinities are constantly in circulation and formation they exist within institutions and societal gender ideologies that are engrossed with monolithic structures embedded in "traditional" masculine identity markers. These structures therefore qualify themselves as determining powers that are aimed at maintaining hegemonic heterosexual embodiments and performances of masculinities within set contexts, space, and time. In so doing, these powers pin masculinities against fixed archetypes of hegemonic masculinity, and anything deviant from this becomes excluded from the continual struggle for power and is rather subjected to the one privileged masculine type (Sweet, 2019). Therefore, Othered forms of masculinity are 'subjected to ongoing dialogues among these various masculine ideologies producing new ideologies that likewise negotiate their position in masculinities' discourse' (Sweet, 2019; 2022).

Fractured masculinities are understood as the unstable, permeable, and porous state of masculine subjectivities undergoing a rupture, or pixilation, and are in a continuous circular process in which they exist as a slippage from the hegemonic masculine ideologies. Sweet (2019) positions and discourses fractured masculinities as masculine subjectivities that are "always in formation, never stable, are always already incomplete embarked in a process of embodying masculinities where new

possibilities are always underway". This chapter engages Sweet's (2019; 2022) theorization on fractured masculinities in attempts to make sense of how transnational migration ruptures immigrant men's embodiment of hegemonic masculine ideals. It responds to the subordination of migrant masculinities in the host country as an ongoing fracturing in which these masculine statuses can only exist within a set surrounding materiality and relationalities. Moreover, this chapter discourses immigrant men's embodiment of fractured masculinities as a production of processes by which they are always already manifesting among perception, sensation, and relational materiality, and individuals are always in the process of becoming and repairing being 'man enough' (Sweet, 2019; 2022).

6.2. *I have to go home, to settle. I have wasted my time here*

Migration, as prepositioned by some feminist geographers who have emphasized the spatial embeddedness of masculinity, shapes how male identities vary over space and across time (Christou, 2016). Moving within various geographical locations influences and impacts how migrant masculinities are socially and culturally constructed and embodied. Pre-migration masculinities are shaped by the aspirations of prospectus immigrant men, to leave 'home' in search of material possessions that are aimed at increasing their manhood status. Migrating to South Africa for black African immigrant men is the principal motivation for leaving their home countries in search of economic and material possessions that construct them as successful and respectable men, and the desire to go back home enables them to engage in conspicuous consumption showing that they have been to the diaspora (Mangezvo, 2015). However, due to their lack of citizenship, and cultural configurations of manhood that perpetuate and legitimize the ostracism of men who do not have the mark of manhood, immigrant men contend with perpetual forms of decapacitation which hinder them from accumulating the key to buy their manhood in the host country.

> *This is Papa Fourie's story…*
>
> *My name is Fouire from Ghana. I have been here since 2013 and trying my best at least to get the permit to stay in this country or at least to continue our journey… It's been 8 years now. So, we try now to get a permit, but the government does not allow foreigners to get a permit… Yeah in the first place, we came here. I was here in Johannesburg, so I went to Pretoria for the refugee permit. After three months I tried to go and renew it, they will give you three months for the first place and then after that, you go and renew it, and after 3 months you go and renew it. But because I was issued everything in Pretoria, I went to Cape Town, I joined the queue, and I got that they checked everything. They told me, they cannot renew it for me unless I go back to Pretoria, but everything is on the system it is the same country. Why can they not allow it to be renewed for me? They are refusing me; I must go back there. So, I say no, let me live and work through anything, what must happen can happen. Even if they arrest me, it's fine. But I stay, I stay here, by the Grace of God, nobody or no immigration officer ask me anything. But here in*

South Africa, they say we are taking their jobs… Which jobs? I came here to learn this work (shoe repairing). Look at me I am doing this dirty work, they just come a throw their shoes here. I throw all their old shoes, that is why it is empty here, look at all this shelf it was full of old shoes more than ten years ago. They just saying we are going to fetch the bank card, but they go and buy another one. In Ghana, I am an… I am not going to do this work. A small, small boy who does not have anything, their families do not take care of them that do this work, shoe work. I am grown, I am old. I cannot do this work. But here if you not going to do, what are you going to do?

Researcher: you said something along the lines of if you were in Ghana, you would not be doing this work. Do you feel as if…

Papa Fourie: no, no, I am told this is a small, small, small boys' work. Those whose mothers cannot take care of them and do their things like Shoemaker. They would not stay in one place. They would have a small box to buy their polish and brush and this thing, this pin. And put it in their handbag or the box and go around polishing people and stitching their shoes. You, see? So, I am old and I cannot do this work. I cannot do this work. In Ghana nobody old like me that can do this work. If you have a business, you can do your business or you can get work to do also, or you can sell your stuff and open a shop, but to do this work, in Ghana old man like me, never.

Researcher: Is it humiliating to you?

Papa Fourie: Yeah, I am ashamed to do this work seriously…I am ashamed to do this work. Here if you are not doing this what are you doing? You do not have anything to do, to survive, to support yourself. It's dirty work, some of them when they come to your shop talk rubbish, they talk nonsense. They do not care about your age. They do not care…

Papa Fourie: So, do you have any family here?

No, no. No all my wife and my children, my children they grow up. As you can see, I am very old, but you see me as a little boy. Even my last born the one that I am speaking about in the UK now, is 24 years a boy. And my daughters are all married, the first one is 36 and the second one is 28. All of them are in Ghana. My third born was also traveling to China, for her to do her medical, but she also came back to Ghana because she also got married, by the second one is 28 years old, she was married in 2018 and has 2 children, one boy and one girl.

Researcher: How is it living far from your family?

Yeah, every month I send them money… every month I send them. I am happy for them, that they got married, because they sent me some pictures. I am happy for them that my children got

married. I try to call them, to check them… If I go there the money to come back Yoh. I never went to their marriage. But if I leave this country for good, I am never coming back here. I will have to prepare myself so maybe in 2025 I have to go home because I am old now. I can see that I have wasted my time because there is no improvement. Still the same, still the same. Why am I still here, you leave your family there. Not that every woman can stay with their husband while they are not there… No, it's not easy. I have to go. It's been a long time. 10 years. You leave your wife, it's too much. At least if things are good, you can invite her, and she can go back. Next year, I will be 60 years old. I have to go home. I have to go home. To settle.

Researcher: you have to go home?

Papa Fourie: Yes, I have to go home, to settle. I have wasted my time here, I have spent so many years here, but it does not result in anything. Mxm… I have to go home. My wife is still there, she is still there waiting for me. But in our culture, Ghana is a different country. If you are married, you are married. I trust my wife, she will not… I know that she is a woman I chose to marry. She fears God and is faithful to me. She will never do that; she will never do that. Even she is a Christian… I know my wife. I have to go back to her.

Researcher: You said South Africans are wicked, what happened?

They can kill you; they can kill you. They do not care, who you are, they do not care. Matters even if you are a friend. So that is why I do not like friends. Even this guy who was standing here, Saturday he took a knife, and he wanted to stab me. You see I was sitting with him, and we were having a conversation with him. So, a lady who lives across his container took her rubbish from the house to the bin I was sitting opposite and this man told her to leave the rubbish. This man then told me to go and pick up this rubbish and throw it in the bin. How do you think I am? Do you think I am your child, or your son, or you whatever? I am older than him, if he cannot take it, why must he tell the woman to leave it there? I am your messenger or your maid. What do you take me for? He does not know how to play, why must he chase me with a knife… It's not fair, I have entertained this person as my friend…Mxm.

Researcher: Did you feel disrespected but what he did?

Yeah, why must I pick up that rubbish from someone else house? I never ate that food. He should not have said leave the rubbish there and then tell me to do it. What does he take me for? Am I your child? Or your houseboy? Then he was angry with me… We are the same age why should you send me to go and pick up that rubbish? Even when I was passing there sometimes to go somewhere, he would call me from the street and tell me to go buy something for him from the Somalian shop. I am not his child or one of his subjects. Why must he take chances, it's fine to send me to the shop if I am also going to the shop but when I am going my way to other places

why must he stop me to send me to the shop to go and buy something for him? He has family who sits there with him why must he send me, is it because I am a Kwerekwere, and he wants to take a chance with me? I am his child. I do not like that, I do not like that. I have warned him several times, but he won't listen to me.

Mangezvo (2015) states that for immigrant men participating in the diaspora offers the possibility to acquire social markers of adulthood and manhood. These are often characterized by the accumulation of wealth to meet the requirements of provider masculinities for their conjugal families who are left behind (Mangezvo, 2015). However, Papa Fourie's narrative highlights how the very experience of migration can often make immigrant men feel stripped of their manliness. Due to the fracturing of the aspirations of returning home as "men" respected for their wealth, immigrant men like Papa Fourie assume a reclusive position in which they are subjected to subordinate and marginal masculinities in South Africa. The de-masculinization of these men is embedded in their supposed inability to acquire and meet the criteria to perform a traditional form of acceptable and revered socio-cultural masculine status in the host country. These are constituted in the 'failure' to build and maintain a home in the diaspora successfully. These men therefore desire to go back home as a measure to access and retain their masculine selves (Howson, 2013). Moreover, the urgency to return home is embedded in the inability to embody and perform idealized hegemonic masculine ideals in the diaspora (Maziva, 2020).

As discussed above, migrant men construct their masculine subjectivities as an interdependent socio-cultural factor that is co-constituted through the experience of migration. However, Papa Fourie's narrative reveals the relational, embodied materiality and processual experiences of immigrant men's masculine subjectivities. From the aspiration of attaining masculine status through wealth acquisition, Papa Fourie in the host country contends with the reality that due to his current social position, there is a possibility that he might never achieve his masculinity (Reeser and Gottzen, 2018). His economic vulnerability and the cultural delegitimization of his manhood render his masculinity fractured. His attempts to manifest and embody hegemonic masculine tenets embedded in materiality, acceptability from, and relationality with Xhosa men seem to be futile. This is because the anticipated relational exchanges supposedly needed among materials and individuals in time-space to being a 'proper'/ 'real' man are nullified. These men attempt to become, always reaching toward, and always in the making of an ideal masculine status is fragile and thus fractured.

The un-documentation of immigrant men further places them on the outskirts of the socially accepted forms of manhood as they are subordinated to the localized hegemonic conceptions of masculinity which often extends to physical violence. Localized construction of masculinity particularly in KwaLanga has perpetuated and concealed the denial of migrant men's manhood through their infantilization. This is because immigrant men like Papa Fourie are perceived as subordinate to the

cultural meaning of successful manhood as constructed through the 'hegemonic' Xhosa constructions and the performing of masculinity. Mfecane (2016) states for Xhosa men the notions of masculinity are embedded in the concept of *indoda* which is conceptualized as a traditionally circumcised male person. This rigid conceptualization of manhood in the Xhosa culture manifests itself even in heterogenous spaces such as Cape Town where there is an evident amalgamation of cultures and traditions. What this means is that men in Cape Town who are situated in parts of black Townships where the prevalence of Xhosa culture is, if they do not undergo the rite of passage of *Ulwalukho* [circumcision] regardless of their age and social status embody subordinated forms of masculinity. They are therefore viewed as inferior to the traditionally circumcised Xhosa men (Mfecane, 2016).

Circumcision, amongst Cape Town Xhosa men, is an idealized transition into manhood that is used to boundary Xhosa's hegemonic masculinity. The cutting of the penile foreskin is a symbolic location of their manhood status, a medium through which they are enabled to defend and validate their manhood status (Gqola, 2007; Mfecane, 2016). Therefore, the assumed *absence* of this mark for immigrant men is used to mobilize the boundary between 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. Ulwalukho is therefore used to delegitimize and render unauthentic the masculinities of black African immigrant men. The process of transnational migration for black African immigrant men is further complicated by the resistance of cultural notions of masculinities in the spaces in which they settle. Their transition and integration in their host countries are further denigrated by the new gender orders and hierarchies embedded in their host countries. In the case of the men interviewed in this research study, they have cited and recounted experiences of infantilization by Xhosa men who have ridiculed them for not being able to achieve the culturally acceptable form of masculinity dictated by the Xhosa culture.

The mark on manhood in the Xhosa culture amongst Xhosa-speaking men in Cape Town broadened the criteria of 'outsider' vs 'insider'. It was used to justify and perpetuate the infantilization of black African immigrant men that was laced with Afrophobic sentiments. In their discussions of findings chapters, Mangezvo (2015) positions accounts of male migrants who had experienced infantilization by their Xhosa counterparts based on their un/circumcision status. He argues that the uncircumcision of black African immigrant men supposedly marked their incompleteness and difference making them liable to be constructed as outsiders (Mangezvo, 2015). It was, therefore, Ulwalukho of Xhosa men, which was used as a means to qualify and justify their Afrophobic exclusion, hatred discourses, and the delegitimizing of black African immigrant men's masculinities through infantilization acts. Moreover, beyond the act of Ulwalukho, these men also cited the use of derogative language to infantilize them to the extent to which their manhood was denied through infantilization acts such as being sent to pick up rubbish (Mangezvo, 2015).

Returning home, therefore, appears to be a coping mechanism enforced to develop and reaffirm a sense of masculine selfhood entangled with access to patriarchal power, especially for men who have

wives and children in their country of origin. Due to the prevalence of the adversities against the expression and performances of their masculinities and manhood, these men desire to return home to reconnect with their masculine traditions. The return home encapsulates the need to be disseminated of the disappointments and anxieties emanating from the fear of the failure to fulfill promises, expectations, and gendered obligations of manhood and parenthood (Maziva, 2020). Being expelled from the diaspora for Papa Fourie will seemingly reposition his masculine subjectivity closer to a higher masculine status in Ghana which he 'acquires' due to cultural power, and domination over other subordinated men and women in his family's embedded cultural conceptions of masculinities. He positions his domestic home as a private site in which his relationality to his wife and children provides a center stage of reproducing and maintains dominant and embodied self-representations of masculine subjectivities.

As a means of rectifying his fractured masculinity Papa Fourie narrates that going back home situates the possibilities of imagining and creating an ideal masculine subjectivity that is accessible to him. Through the experiences of infantilization Papa Fourie recalls feeling shame as his masculinity was being perceived as incomplete (Allan, 2016). However, he also notes that Ghana consists of relational and material spaces in which his incomplete and 'failed' masculinity could be reconfigured. This narrative postulate the optimism of acquiring masculinity embedded in the utopia of returning home as an opportunity to recoup their perceived loss of culturally defined heteropatriarchal male breadwinner masculinity due to their masculinities being killed by poverty and distress and rejected by Xhosa men (Krukeja, 2021). Ghana constitutes a futuristic time and space in which Papa Fourie could shed their failed masculinity tag through access to a higher masculine status achievable with marriage and parenthood as the entry point into the idealized heterosexual masculine sorority.

However, for Allan (2018), Papa Fourie's aspirations of embodying an ideal masculinity constituted through relationality can be understood as cruel optimism. The author positions that men's paranoia about not achieving a successful masculine status perpetually subjectifies them to the condition of attachment to the problematic object of masculinity (Allan, 2018). Contained in the fear of failure and dread linked to shame, men's aspiration towards embodying reproduced and refashioned ideal forms of masculinity portrays the fragility and desperation of masculinity. And because men are not ready to give up their masculinity, Allan (2018) argues that they most likely turn to spaces in which they can easily access, embody, and exert patriarchal power such as 'home'. Papa Fourie's belief that he will attain a higher masculine status after having continuously 'failed' objectifies him to a cycle of repetitive compulsion in which he does not learn from his old experiences of 'chasing after manhood' rather it only leads him to displeasure within himself. The desire to attain masculinity 'is an obstacle to men flourishing' even in their role as fathers and husbands as their relationality with these spaces and individuals is influenced by their hegemonic masculinity.

6. 3. Reconfiguring Religious Masculinities

Presented in the narrative of Pastor Miracle are the dual, complex, complementary, and yet contradictory ideals and norms of masculinities. He presents an understanding of socio-economic, cultural, and religious configurations of masculinity as both different and similar. As an African immigrant working-class man who is a Pentecostal Christian and Pastor his narrative provides insight into the duality of socio-cultural configurations of masculinities in relation to religious ideologies of gender and heteropatriarchy. Due to his inability to attain economic security to provide for himself, and his household, establish a homestead, and engage in conspicuous spending he becomes marginalized from the ideal concepts of hegemonic masculinities present in South Africa. However, contradictory to this, through Pentecostal Christian gender ideologies and standards of hetero-patriarchy, Pastor Miracle is portrayed as the ideal and dominant image of masculinity. His economic incapabilities are not the dominant measure of his masculine status. His manhood is relatively conceptualized through his ability to follow and adhere to God's prescripts: being married to one wife, having children, and going to South Africa to preach the Gospel (Mwale, 2024). On the one hand, Pastor Miracle is societally configured as a marginal and subordinated masculinity. On the other, he is positioned and portrayed as the standard of dominant religious masculinities. This narrative, therefore, provides understanding and insight into how religiosity provides African immigrant men with pathways to repairing their fractured masculinities and attaining idealized forms of masculine status.

This is Pastor Miracle's story…

My name is Miracle, ordained and consecrated as Justice of Peace. I have been in South Africa for four years and…It is not that easy, but we give God praise, for the fact that no life was lost. I never planned to come to South Africa, it is something that just happened it is divine because if it was for me alone, I wouldn't lie to come to South Africa, I wouldn't like it, my dream was America, the US, or London. So it is a big, big thing and a testimony also. Just like, you imagine yourself, entering a country where you do not know anybody or the person that you know later disappoints you. So, it's like you starting afresh and that is why I say it is not easy. And sometimes you alone stay in the dark, with no one to comfort you, no one to say "Have you eaten" or whatever but you have to push. In these days when we were at school, one of my lecturers normally said, "If everybody is running and you do not have the feet to run, what you do is you have a bum, you can also use your bum and walk or crawl until you get to where you are going". When I moved to South Africa, I moved alone, just me. I remember the very fateful day I came to South Africa I was carrying a big bible in my hand. So when the immigration officers saw me, that time I came to South Africa, they looked at me and said "Where are you packing, where are you packing to", I was just like I am going for a ministerial journey, so I got my passport and I found myself in South Africa. So since that day, it has been up and down. When I left (Nigeria), one of my friends like that was a Pastor. He is a Pastor, but he is also

into fixing TVs also. But later there was this kind of work that he introduced me to doing, I said I would not do this kind of work. Later, I say let me go into fixing of fridges. Maybe I am doing it for survival. I started staying in a hoki, let's say for a year and… for a year, and… that was during winter. Sometimes, there may not be food, sometimes whatever I see I eat. I still move on I still crawl. That is why living in South Africa is not easy, especially when you are not a South African. Till I met this where I am working now, she is a kind woman, she is a South African. Should I say a kind woman or a kind mother? She loved me and she did so many things for me so that is where I have been now. Before that, you see in the streets you will see a lot of things… Like Nigerians in South Africa, they sell drugs, many of them. Instead of suffering, they come and sell drugs, they will give you as many as you want, and when you sell, you bring money, and they will give you more. It is not that I cannot do the business, I can do but… Am I going to feel like killing other people's children? I am going to feel like killing other people's children, watching them die collecting their money, and watching them die. Anything you do, you are sowing a seed a good or a bad one. The Bible says a good father keeps an inheritance for the children's children, but a bad one keeps a curse. He keeps so many tragedies for his children, so for me, I say to myself "Let me suffer now, let me suffer now… because I know the future will be better rather than yesterday. When I call my daughter now or my son, the first thing they will ask is "When are you coming back, daddy come back now, daddy I miss you" all that, so all I have been saying is I will come back soon. They will say "Daddy, no come ck tomorrow", but because they do know how it takes or how it is from South Africa to Nigeria… the journey. "Come back now", shows you the level they miss their father… So you easy that, it is not easy, it is not easy but I have to push, I believe that one thing is sure, if God tarries I will meet them one day, then I will meet them one day. At least we talk on the phone, I also correct them. I will not be there when the time it happens. Sometimes I shout at them so that they will know they have a father, their father is still alive. Sometimes, something that does not require me to shout, I will have to shout, so they can know I am their father. So that they can have this fear, "Oh my father shouted at me". So I have to like it. Sometimes I call the elder ones "Like come on stop that", shout. Any father who does not shout will see what the children will become. The Bible says spoil the rod and spare the child, spare the child and spoil the rod, so when you spoil the rod and spare the child you want to spoil the rod and spoil the child.

Researcher: So, takes me through your journey of, living in South Africa…

Yeah, living in South Africa just like I said, is not easy. It was never easy; it was never easy. There are so many times I think of doing wrong things, and sometimes I also see myself doing wrong things but what has kept me pushing is… I did one wrong thing today, but may I not remain in that wrong thing? There are some circumstances or there are some tight corners that

you find yourself like you want to do this… that does not matter, what you find yourself doing. There is someone that said, there are things that I do not like doing but I see myself doing it.

Researcher: Do you want to expand, what do you mean by wrong things "doing wrong things"?

Miracle: (laughing) It's too big when I say the wrong thing, it's wrong thing… like I do not know how to say this. Because for me I have to, I like being realistic and open. Sometimes we are in South Africa, and South Africans believe in one thing or whatever. there will be times when I will be at home and they will ask you… ahh Miracle "Why you did not go out today, Let go… masambeni, car wash". I say where the car wash was and one day, the ladies decided to take me to the car wash. What did they do in the car wash, they drink they whatever, but that day I could not stay… because that is not where I had planned to be or prayed to be… they drank they smoked they danced there and they did so many things which I know I am at the wrong place at the right time, that is a wrong thing. Sometimes they will ask you "awunayo I cherrie (do you not have a girlfriend). I will say I do not have a girl, this to South Africa is like… if you do not have a girlfriend, you are lacking something, you are lacking behind, some will even say so many things. It is because of such things that you discover that if you cannot beat them join them. So, after the wrong thing, after you do the wrong thing you stand up and shake out the dust… South African ladies, once you are single and they notice that you are single, why will like coming, they will like, like to come around. There are where I normally stay… like the first girlfriend I have here in South Africa, she is a Xhosa lady, would I say Xhosa girl. She sleeps in the car wash; she likes the car wash… From Wednesday to Sunday, if you want to make her happy, take her to the car wash. I said no, I cannot continue this way… because sometimes she is the one helping me… coming back from work, she cooks for me and sometimes we even go to church also till, I told her to stop we cannot continue this way. So that is it, sometimes my Nigerian friend where I work, would bring like some ladies and say this one is looking for a boyfriend and she got a house, can you befriend, can you date her so that you can be living in her house in her apartment….

Mbiti (1969) foregrounds the understanding that Africans are notoriously religious. In this, the author argues that religion permeates all parts of life for some Africans with little to no possible ways of isolating it. It is deeply embedded in the cultural, traditional, economic, and social fabrics of African life. Chitando et al (2024) concur with Mbiti (1969) as the author argues that religion plays a major role in African life. It is therefore not surprising that religious expectations and norms are ingrained in the social constructivism of masculinities, in what men say and do to be men. It is the embedded institutionalization and embodiment of religions in Africa that provide African men with pathways to generating dominant and "acceptable" images of masculinities. Religions in Africa continue to

contribute to the social construction of masculine ideologies and practices of manhood in Africa (Chitando et al, 2024).

Research on Migratory Masculinities has largely focused on religion from the unidimensional prism of resilience and as a coping mechanism. Scholars such as Marshall (2017) discuss the intersection of religiosity and resilience among immigrants of African origin. This author states that the positioning of God in life stories of immigrants provides an understanding of religion as a form of resilience amongst immigrants, in the narration of Miracle, this intersection is evident. For him, his reliance on God has helped him overcome the days he had to sleep without having eaten anything and rather used this experience of hunger as "fasting" [a spiritual activity that is believed to bring man closer to God by surrendering their plates]. The active acts of having faith, and prayer for Miracle, from his narration can be conceptualized as coping mechanisms that have enabled him to overcome the mental and physical distress he was facing (Marshall, 2017). Religion also becomes a means by which social support for African immigrant men is fostered. Through the narrative of Miracle, he shares a brief story on his 'South African family' that God had handed over to him. For Miracle, religion is an integral component in shaping his migrancy experience, it becomes a meta-physical manifestation of resilience that shapes the decision he makes as he believes that his fate is in the hands of God.

However, beyond this understanding of religion and religiosity as a coping mechanism, recent research on religion and masculinities has begun to explore the self-representation of religious men through ideologies of gender within religious institutions (Mwale, 2024). Moreover, this research study builds on this existing scholarship by prefacing Pastor Miracles' narrative in understanding how African immigrant men construct self-representation of masculinities that closely resonate with discourses of Pentecostal masculinities. Pastor Miracle's narrative provides insight into how religious traditions, particularly Pentecostal Christianity in South Africa influence how African immigrant men construct, embody, and perform their masculinities. Moreover, this narrative provides an understanding of how Christian religious ideals and religiosity produce African immigrants' respectable masculinities. Surfaced from Pastor Miracle's narrative is the experience of subordination and marginality that black African immigrant men in South Africa contend with. It is the practices of material exclusion and the saturation of African immigrant men in menial work that structurally produce them as sites of subservience. In relation to other masculinities in South Africa, Pastor Miracle's intersecting identities; as a migrant, working class, and black man disposition him from hegemonic forms of masculinities that he would have embodied in his home country; as a father, husband, and majority ethnic group in Nigeria.

Migration is understood to be a signifier of one's initiation and rite of passage into manhood. This is because migration opens possibilities for financial capital which marks the success of male migration. This success is portrayed through the acquisition of wealth that enables them to provide for their families, engage in conspicuous consumption, and invest in properties (Mangezvo, 2015).

However, in South Africa Pastor Miracle due to his experience of socio-political and economic marginalization is subjected to significant alteration to his socio-economic and cultural position within the hierarchy of masculinities. Immigration for black African immigrant men reflects a subordinated masculinity but this is not fixed. The men in this study navigate multiple pathways toward an aspirational and ideal masculinity. For Pastor Miracle, his narration situates an adherence to religion and religiosity, particularly to Pentecostal Christianity as a means to creating, embodying, and maintaining an ideal form of masculinity. The embodiment of a Pentecostal Christian subjectivity is for Pastor Miracle embedded in hegemonic masculine ideologies of gender and heteropatriarchy within Christian Pentecostalism that are represented by notions of surrender to God's prescripts and directives (Chitando and Chirongoma, 2013).

In the case of Miracle, he had to leave his wife and children behind to preach the Gospel in South Africa. This through Christian Pentecostal ideologies of gender is widely perceived as the most desirable reinforcement of hegemonic masculinity (Chitando and Chirongoma, 2013). Meanwhile, Pentecostal religious ideologies affirm Miracle's hegemonic masculinity, as a pastor with humble beginnings, a husband to one wife, and a father to his children (Mwale, 2024). These notions of ideal manhood propagated by religious institutions are rather complicated by the socio-economic position and political exclusion of Miracle as a result of migrating to South Africa. While according to Pentecostal Christian gender ideologies, Pastor Miracle subscribes to a hegemonic embodiment of masculinities. He through societal constructions of acceptable and ideal forms of masculinity, is conceived differently. The challenges that he faces as an undocumented immigrant man struggling to live up to the expectations of being a breadwinner and household head; his inability to provide for his family and sustain his household renders him subordinate. His male power and proximity to ideal masculinities as per religious standards are rather shifted in accordance with his material conditions. In navigating the fluidity, displacement, and dislocation from dominant conceptions of masculinities as an immigrant man, Pastor Miracle uses religiosity as a means to re-present himself in South Africa (Mangezvo, 2015).

Moreover, Christian Pentecostalism becomes prominent in reconstructing and repairing immigrant men's self-realizations and self-understandings of manhood in everyday life. In the construction and negotiation of respectability, a moral black African immigrant man. It becomes a means that immigrant men utilize to regain their lost status of 'hegemonic' masculinity and their recognition as men in different geographies of institutions, values, and norms in host countries (Kanayo and Anjofui, 2021). To be subjected to the status and reality of subordinated masculinity, black African immigrants in the host country are positioned and prejudiced through the everyday colloquial conversation(s), labeling, and academic discourse on migration as hypermasculinised men (Opara, 2017).

Miracle as a response to being subjected to subordinated masculinity throughout his narrative reaffirms his religious identity. He, beyond the financial incapabilities, sexual deviancy, and material exclusions uses religious institutions to construct avenues in which he realizes himself as a moral subject. Miracle throughout his narrative speaks to the configuration of black African immigrant masculinities in South Africa through narratives of religion as a respectable masculinity. He, however, creates a binary and/or dichotomous conceptualization of 'other' Nigerian men in South Africa in which he isolates himself from their criminality, as bad men. He associates his choice of not resorting to drug dealing and theft as a representation of a "good" type of Nigerian immigrant man in South Africa. However, engaging with Miracle's narrative this 'good' and respectable characterization of himself is met with complexities as he then shares that in order for him to survive, he has had to adapt into dating multiple Xhosa women as a married man, for shelter and/or food. However, Miracle's narrative underlined with traits of respectable masculinities constructed through religious discourses of manhood instituted through practices of fatherhood and husbands becomes complicated as he alludes to accounts of survival dating. While he had demonized other Nigerian men as criminals Miracle's atonement and repenting for his survival dating 'sin' as a married man seems to keep his respectability and morally good man imagery intact. Miracles' self-valorization should be understood as a compensatory masculine strategy in which through religious discourses he performs to fend off his presumed 'failed' masculinity tag (Krukeja, 2021).

6.4. Conclusion:

Black African immigrant men in South Africa often experience structural prejudices and difficulties. Due to the economic exclusion and marginalization that they face in the host country, they are unable to meet the socially expected criteria of manhood in South Africa. It is because of this that they become subordinated in relation to other masculinities present in South Africa. However, to challenge this marginal position African immigrant men in South Africa regain their dignity as men by embodying and acclaiming religiosity as a means to reinvent themselves as men. Christian Pentecostal and Cultural ideologies of gender subjectivity and performativity of masculinities are constructed through traditionalist norms related to heterosexual desires, marrying one woman, and having children. Therefore, for African immigrant men religion and the home become spaces in which they reconfigure and adopt ideal forms of masculinity. This chapter unpacked the possibilities religion and relationality provide as a pathway in which black African immigrant men re-find their respectability within societal construction and performances of ideal masculinities. It engaged with Pastor Miracle and Papa Fourie's positionalities in attempting to explain how notions of heteropatriarchy embedded in family and religiosity reaffirm immigrant masculinities' self-representation as "good" men and acceptable masculinities; as men who are responsible and loving husbands and fathers (Mwase, 2024).

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This research has engaged the intersection of migration, gender, and race in Africa. It attempted to discourse and "question the taken-for-granted assumptions of what it means to be black, to be an African, and also inhabit a masculine identity" (Scott, 2024). It argued for the positioning of plural, multiple, and oftentimes contradictory meanings of these concepts as subjectivities rather than as static identity markers assumed to be acquired from birth. This research study argues that blackness, and Africanness in the same sense of masculinities is not a birthmark. These are not universal and homogenous cultural identities but rather should be understood as multilayered subjectivities that are constantly rotating and shifting in response to historical, global, contextual, and contemporary socio-economic, cultural, and political influences. This research, therefore, uses African Feminist and Decolonial theorizations on race and gender discourses to critique the homogenized narrative of black African migrant men's realities. In so doing, it premises African Feminist theorization on gender subjectivities to provide depth and nuances into understanding the complexities of gendered migration in Africa. The attempt of this research study to contribute to feminist work within migration focuses on immigrant men's lived realities through the locus of undocumentation. It provides complex contributions toward understanding how undocumented migration influences the making, remaking, unmaking, and sustaining of African masculinities over periods of time (Mangezvo, 2015; Scott, 2024).

This research study positioned South Africa as a geographical location and as a nation-state entity in which its social process has a very explicit and direct impact on how we perceive and comprehend immigrant masculinities. In so doing, this study engages the complexities of those processes in attempts to make sense of how South Africa's histories have "set up a perfect storm for racialized and gendered violence which entails a protracted history of colonialism and apartheid which colludes simultaneously with the de-masculinization and hardening of African men through state violence, and their fight against that violence" (Scott, 2024). This research engages the multiple situatedness of transnational migratory masculinities. It positions how migrant men intricately negotiate their masculinities in conversation with other multiple and intersecting identities such as race and class in post-colonial South Africa. Here this study investigated how state apparatuses uphold nation-state integrity through border surveillances that position immigrant men as the racial, gendered, and undocumented Other. It engaged how post-Apartheid South Africa's anti-black Africaness construct representation of immigrant men that "come to justify enactments of violence against bodies categorized as 'outside' of legitimate membership" (Langa and Kiguwa, 2016).

In studying the intersectional locus of migration, masculinities, and undocumentation in post-colonial South Africa. The findings of this study postulate that South Africa's homonationalist and racial purity ideologies maintain the construction of black African immigrant men as ungrievable damnes (Fanon, 2002). It also engaged the contemporary impact of colonial racial projects that are subjectifying

these men into the zone of non-being (Fanon, 2002) and not-quite-men (Ratele, 2021). Through Mbembe's (2003; 2017; 2019) conceptualization of Necropolitics, this study engaged the consequences of South Africa's good governance on unwanted and racialized surplus populations. It engaged how South Africa's use of violence to control and dispense African migrants affects not only the livelihoods of these men but also denies them access to personhood and the achievement of manhood.

Contrary to the belief that migration provides black African immigrant men the tools needed to negotiate forms of masculinity that are socio-culturally approved (Mangezvo, 2015). The findings of this research suggested that these men in the host country face tremendous experiences of marginality that subject them to embody fractured, fracturing, and "Othered" forms of masculinities. It revealed how the continued colonial spatial temporalities and racism embedded in the political economy of South Africa impact and disrupt traditional embodiments of African masculinities. Migration and subsequently the un-documentation of these men resulted in financial constraints in which these men were forced into vicious cycles of economic precarity that fractured their ability to possess social control over the performances and construction of their *new* masculinities. It is the financial/ economic marginality of African immigrant men post-migration that dismantles their access to revered forms of 'traditional' African heteropatriarchy while further excluding them from localized conceptions of hegemonic manhood in the townships. The oversaturation of black African un-documented immigrant men in townships informal sector in precarious jobs, street vending, and street hustling makes it very hard for them to achieve local forms of hegemonic masculinity that are founded on intersecting 'masculine' roles such as fatherhood, breadwinning, marriage, and the establishment of households and families (Dery and Amoah, 2024). These men's inability to refashion nor perform hegemonic masculinities in the host country embodied pre-migration, deprives them of symbols that underpin respectable masculinities.

Moreover, beyond the post-migration construction of failed masculinity that characterizes the lives of black African immigrant men. These men provided narratives that demonstrated attempts to repair their marginalized, and "Othered" masculinities. They provided an understanding of how embodying religious ideologies of gender becomes a vantage point in which they construct, maintain, and challenge Eurocentric hegemonic masculine ideals imposed on African men. They engaged how religion, particularly migrant Christian Pentecostalism in South Africa provides them with pathways towards resurrecting and reinstating their adult masculine status by displacing their marginal status. Through the denial of individual aspiration and self-sacrificing some of these men have had the opportunity to circulate an ideal of heroic masculinity to their transnational families (Kukreja, 2021). Additionally, immigrant men also turn to fervent religiosity as a claim of higher masculine status. Based on their self-righteousness and piety black African men reconstruct and reconfigure new masculine modalities of exclusion and inclusion. Moreover, in their narratives, these men asserted how religion

becomes a space in which they regain a sense of control over their lives amidst contradictory cultural conceptions and survival strategies employed by other immigrant men.

Furthermore, in attempts to repair and redeem their subordinated masculine status, immigrant men resort to embodying affective masculinities as performances of unconventional fatherhood that disrupt the traditional image of African men in familial systems. These men engaged in affective fatherhood as a response to the incompleteness and fracturing of their breadwinner masculinities. They resorted to non-normative ways of fathering and fatherhood that challenged the outdated stereotypes of African fathers and masculinities. Allan (2018) positions that affective fatherhood becomes a defense against the anxieties within themselves about their own identities as fathers and migrant men. The findings of this research study provided alternative ways to critically think about African masculinities that go beyond the Eurocentric typologies of fatherhood that render African masculinities as incapable, absent, and violent fathers. As an analytical tool, Allan's (2018) concept of affective subjectivities provided the findings of this research study with the complexity of understanding the relationship between masculinities and emotions. In attempts to understand redemptive African masculinities, this research study located affective masculinities as counter-hegemonic expressions of emotions integral to understanding how African masculinities challenge phlegmatic and stoic expressions of masculinities as a result of their fracturing masculinities.

In contrast to Sweet's (2019) theorization of masculinities as fracturing with possibilities of repairing. This research study also foregrounded Allan's (2018) concept of Cruel Optimism to unpack how African masculinities are constantly reproduced and likewise negotiated to position themselves into acceptable masculine ideals. This theory enabled this study's findings to position how transnational migration ruptures immigrant men's embodiment of hegemonic masculinities in the host country. Moreover, it provided an understanding even with the various pathways towards recouping the perceived loss of heteropatriarchal breadwinner masculinity, these men are therefore projected into perpetual paranoia that subjectifies them to the condition of attachment to the problematic object of masculinity. This research therefore positions that not achieving a successful masculine status reproduces and exposes the fragility and desperation of masculinity. And because men are not ready to give up their masculinity, they turn to spaces in which they can easily access and exert patriarchal power such as 'home'. These men therefore continuously objectify themselves to continuous cycles of repetitive compulsion they 'chase after manhood' rather it only leads them to displeasure within themselves. Therefore, the desire to attain masculinity 'is an obstacle to men flourishing' even in their role as fathers and husbands as their relationality with these spaces and individuals is influenced by their hegemonic masculinity.

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