Challenges of Adaptation and Integration for Nigerian Immigrant Men in Quebec: A Sociocultural Perspective

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STRUCTURE

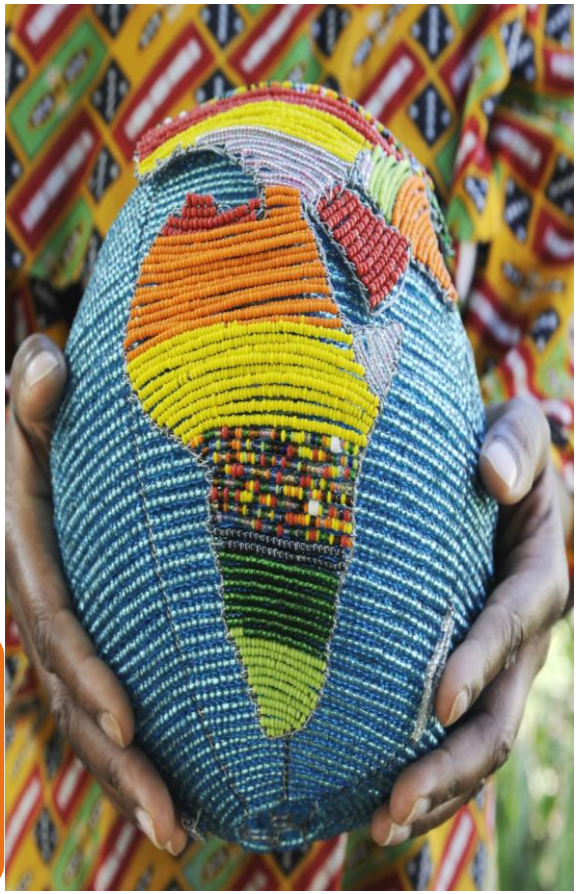
SUMMARY	**I. Introduction to the research topic**
PURPOSE	**II. Aim and objective of the research** **III. Inquiries and the research questions**
LITERATURE REVIEW	**IV. Studies done on the topic**
BODY OF THE WORK	**V. Methodology** **VI. Findings and Analysis** **VII. Conclusion**

INTRODUCTION

Migration is a complex phenomenon that entails a myriad of challenges and opportunities for individuals relocating to a new country (Hochschild and Mollenkopf, 2008).

Sociocultural and acculturation studies focus on the cultural and psychological transformations that immigrants undergo when integrating into a dominant culture as a minority group (Nkimbeng et al., 2021).

In their studies on immigrants' experiences as a minority, Covington-Ward et al. (2018) and Kyeremeh et al. (2021) highlighted factors, such as feelings of isolation, being separated from families back home, experiencing discrimination in housing and employment, encountering financial difficulties, language barriers, and variations in social norms.



RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the key challenges and factors that influence and facilitate the integration processes of Nigerian immigrant men in Quebec?

OBJECTIVES

Discover and pinpoint	Discover and pinpoint the adaptation and integration experiences of Nigerian immigrant men in Quebec in different domains, such as **job employment, education, social networks, and cultural integration.**
Investigate	Investigate the impact of sociocultural elements such as **language proficiency, cultural identity, and social support networks.**
Provide	Provide recommendations to **policymakers, service providers, and community organizations** on how to improve the integration and well-being of Nigerian immigrant men in Quebec.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS

- Lack of study on this topic
- Studies on African immigrant men focus on factors such as labor, transit, and irregular migration.
- Studies use themes and patterns such as acculturation, social status, transnationalism, and parenting (Alaazi et al., 2018; Ahmed & Rasmussen, 2020; Oppong, 2023).
- Studies have found some factors such as housing and job discrimination, language barriers, and a lack of credentials recognition or equivalence (Angeline et al., 2015; Ramdé et al., 2022).

LITARETURE REVIEW

- PsycINFO, MPI Web, the University of Montreal Library, Academic Search Complete, Google Scholars, and Psychotherapy.
- Researchers have examined immigrant communities' settlement experiences through various theoretical and conceptual frameworks, including acculturation, social identity theory, and family values (Sam, 2000; Smith, 1991). Other proposed models to understand how individuals and communities react to intergroup interactions, such as those by Berry (1984, 1997, 1998), Birman (1994), Bulhan (1985), and Tajfel (1981).
- Berry's (1997) model of acculturation and immigrant adaptation outlines four typical responses to intercultural contact: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- **Assimilation:** Ahmed et al. (2020) argue that immigrants undergo a rapid alteration in their sociocultural and economic standing due to the adverse impact of their mental health results.
- **The Role of Gender:** Muchomba and Kaushal (2022) found that first-generation immigrants and adult African immigrants exhibit a gender discrepancy in their participation in assimilation efforts. According to Joyce and Liamputtong (2017), immigrant men participate in more assimilation activities outside their main residence than women, which results in a faster assimilation process for men.
- **Mental Health Issues:** A significant number of African immigrants and refugees residing in Canada, the United States, Australia, and Europe encounter challenges in adapting to their new environments. These obstacles include language barriers, mental health issues, extreme cold weather, feelings of grief, and isolation, as well as a limited awareness of available mental health resources (Nkimbeng et al., 2020; 2021).

METHODOLOGY

Research Type: The research is a descriptive phenomenological qualitative study.

Sampling Method: A snowball technique was used to recruit participants. Social media platforms such as Facebook, X, and Instagram were used to recruit additional individuals.

Interview: An in-depth interviews were conducted with to collect individual data. Each interview lasted for at least 48 minutes.

The sample and population: My sample consists of 6 Nigerian immigrant men living in Montreal. The respondents are 18 years of age and older.

Data Analysis: A thematic analysis was used to identify recurring patterns, themes, and narratives in the interview transcripts.

Ethic guardian: The names of the participants are anonymous. A code such as R1, R2, and R3 is used to describe the participants.

THORIES

- Vygotsky's sociocultural and Berry's acculturation theories were used to determine the phenomenological concepts of adaptation and integration in a new setting and environment.

TABLE 1

PARTICIPANTS	SEX	AGE	OCCUPATION	EDUCATION
R - 1	Male	28	Student	Bachelor's degree
R - 2	Male	22	Factory worker	Bachelor's degree
R - 3	Male	31	Factory worker	Professional Certificate
R - 4	Male	39	Uber driver	Master's degree
R - 5	Male	26	Factory worker	Professional Certificate
R - 6	Male	24	Uber driver	High School Diploma

TABLE 2

PARTICIPANTS	MARITAL STATUS	LENGTH OF STAY IN MONTREAL	STATUS IN CANADA
R - 1	Single	5 years	Working Permit
R - 2	Single	3 years	Student
R - 3	Married	11 years	Permanent Resident Permit
R - 4	Married	9 years	-
R - 5	Single	4 years	-
R - 6	Single	6 years	-

DATA AND ANALYSIS

Reasons for Migrating to Quebec: Job opportunities, education, multicultural environment.

Expectations: Quality life, economic stability, excellent opportunities in the tech industry and the vibrant cultural scene, a welcoming environment to pursue a career goals and experience a rich cultural life.

- *"I immigrated to Quebec to pursue better career opportunities and experience a new cultural environment. Upon arrival, my expectation was to find a diverse and dynamic city where I could build a fulfilling life for myself (**R-3, 31 years old**)."*
- *"I decided to moved to Quebec because of the excellent opportunities in the tech industry and the vibrant cultural scene. I expected to find a welcoming environment where I could pursue my career goals and experience a rich cultural life **(R-5, 26 years old)."***

DATA AND ANALYSIS

Adaptation Experiences: Language barrier, finding suitable employment and understanding cultural nuances, and navigating the healthcare and education systems.

- *"Adapting to life in Quebec was initially challenging, especially due to the language barrier. Finding suitable employment, understanding cultural nuances, finding a partner were also hurdles I had to overcome, and I am still struggling up to today (**R-1, 28 years old**)."*

Employment and Economic Integration: Difficulties of finding employment, high tuition fees, and lack of recognition of their foreign credentials.

*"Finding employment initially was challenging due to the lack of recognition of my foreign qualifications. However, networking, gaining local experience, and further professional education helped me secure a factory job (**R-4, 39 years old**)."*

*"My initial plan was to work and pay for my school fees, but unfortunately, things couldn't work out due to my initial lack of local job experience. Almost all the employees in Montreal demand local experience before they can employ you, which makes it difficult for us foreigners, especially Africans (**R-3, 31 years old**)."*

DATA AND ANALYSIS

Social Networks and Community Engagement: Isolation, lack of local support, lack of community engagements.

Cultural Identity and Belonging: Religion and ethnic affiliation, individualism vs. collectivism.

Coping Strategies and Resilience: Maintaining a positive mindset, seeking support from friends and family, and focusing on personal growth.

Reflections and Future Aspirations: Growing personal and professionally, blinding the two culture, bicultural comfort, seeking an opportunity elsewhere.

CONCLUSION

- The study results showed five themes and 12 subthemes manifested from 16 meaning units using Giorgi's phenomenology analysis.
- **Five key themes**: cultural shock, social isolation, unmatched expectations, self-efficacy, connectedness and belonging.
- **Identified keywords:** mental health issues, gender-based programs, asylum, racism, support systems, individualism vs. collectivism, African culture, customs, and beliefs.
- **Adaptation stages:** honeymoon, confrontation, adjustment, acceptance.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Limitations:** Lack of sufficient participants, lack of available resources, and lack of prior research studies on the topic.
- **Recommendation:** Creating a platform for quick integration. French language school, Mental health engagement, and social cohesion.
- **Future studies:** Discrimination, unemployment, racism, foreign credentials recognition, trauma, loneliness, and mental health.

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Q & A