A QUALITATIVE INQUIRY INTO THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF NIGERIAN IMMIGRANT FAMILIES IN CANADA

by

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ABSTRACT

Immigration has been used by governments to provide labour to resolve shortages in many occupations across many countries. The arrival of people, especially to high income countries like Canada and United States, has been largely regulated to accept applicants with the desired skills to meet the labor demand. Almost two-thirds of all immigrants to Canada are part of this "economic stream" of "selected" migrants. What these economic explanations fail to consider is that for immigrants, the imperative to migrate is not solely based on individual economic motives. Considering the needs of families is not only important for immigrants themselves but has been shown to improve general integration and reduce the chance of subsequent secondary migration. This thesis examines the socio-economic conditions of *recent* Nigerian immigrant families to Winnipeg, Canada. The study specifically explores immigrants' motivation for migration, lived experiences, expectations and challenges by examining the family as a unit of analysis. Most existing studies have been limited to focusing on quantitative methods in studying the experiences of individual immigrants without paying any attention to the important family contexts and outcomes of migration. This study uses a qualitative research design using interviews with eleven participants. The New Economic of Labour Migration theory is employed to study the households. Three themes emerged from the interviews: economic conditions are not the only reason for moving to Canada, life satisfaction, and future outlook. The study revealed that Nigerian immigrants' motivation for migration is primarily based on economic considerations for their families, but that other motives include better life for children, security and prospects for their future. Almost all immigrants settled for jobs which did not match their qualifications and experiences upon arrival. However, their situation improved as time in Canada increased. Most of the participants were optimistic about their future in Canada.

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CHAPTER 1-Introduction

1.1 Background

The word "immigration", in the broad sense, refers to the practice or phenomenon of people leaving their home countries and migrating to some other country for the purpose of leaving permanently, or at least for a prolonged period. In recent years, globalization and liberalization have encouraged significant movement of goods and capital across national borders, hence allowing for the growth of the global economy (SUNY Levin Institute, 2013). According to the World Bank (2002), however, most countries have largely resisted liberalizing migration policies despite their desire to increase global capital movement. Thus, many countries continue to uphold extensive legal barriers to stop migrants seeking work or residency from entering their national borders (World Bank, 2002). Despite the reluctance of governments to liberalize immigration policy, there remain opportunities for some people to migrate and their numbers continue to grow. In 2017, nearly four percent of the world's population was not living in the country they were born, amounting to over 257 million people on the move (IOM, 2018).

Many more people desire to relocate for non-economic reasons. A 2009 study conducted by Gallup Poll across 135 countries revealed that 16 percent of the world's adult population would like to move permanently to another country if they had the opportunity. The figures differ by region. According to the polls conducted from 2007 - 2009, 38 percent of sub-Saharan Africans want to migrate, whereas only 10 percent of Asians wish to permanently leave their home country (Esipova & Ray, 2009). Not surprisingly, the study further shows that the United States is the most popular destination country (Esipova & Ray, 2009), although this preference is changing. More recently, Canada has become a more desirable destination among some world migrants. Between 2006 and 2017, for instance, the numbers of immigrants entering Canada increased from 236,751

to 296,346 (IRCC, 2017), an increase of over 25 percent in just ten years. New estimates from Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada forecast between 305,000 and 340,000 newcomers per year for the next three years. Migration from Nigeria has seen significant increases alongside the larger global trends. According to the 2016 Census of Canada, 68,680 people reported a Nigerian ethnic origin with the majority being born outside of Canada (Statistics Canada, 2018). The number of Nigerians entering Canada under the Express Entry Class has increased tenfold, from 98 in 2015 to 1038 in 2016 (Kazeem, 2018). This is not the only route Nigerians are using to enter Canada. Currently, they represent the highest number of asylum seekers crossing from the United States to Canada (Orniston, 2017), accounting for 40 percent of all asylum seekers in 2017 and more than 50 percent in 2018 (Kazeem, 2018). Winnipeg is the third most popular Canadian destination for Nigerians (Statistics Canada, 2018).

Although there may be different reasons why individuals leave their home to settle in a foreign country, there are some common contributing factors and trends which can be observed in global immigration. The most common reason for immigration is economic (Abel & Sander, 2014; Kline, 2003; Martin &Reid, 2007; Mueller, 2013). People tend to migrate in search of better economic prospects, a higher quality of living, better amenities, and infrastructure such as schools, roads etc. Another significant share of immigration involves the movement of international students from developing nations (Aleinikoff & Klusmeyer, 2013). In 2016, 412,101 international students arrived in Canada, an increase of 77% since 1997 (IRCC, 2017). Research suggests that as many as 92% of these international students wish to remain in Canada after graduation (Mandal and Wilkinson, 2008). For many of these students, economic motivations are a primary reason for their decision to remain in Canada after their graduation.

To date, policy analysts, researchers and academics have made significant efforts to understand the macroeconomic benefits of migration to the receiving societies and to identify the factors that explain labor market success amongst immigrants. What research has largely ignored is the personal experience of economic success or failure and how this might affect the immigrant's family, as individuals very rarely migrate alone. How does the experience of unemployment or underemployment influence the settlement experiences of immigrant families? My research examines and interprets the socio-economic experiences of immigrants from a family perspective by examining the non-economic aspects of their migration experiences. I have selected Nigerian immigrants as they represent a significant number of newly arrived immigrants to Canada and to Manitoba. They rank number four in terms of recent arrivals and their numbers continue to grow. The research uses in-depth interviews to explore and analyze the socio-economic experiences and expectations of ten recent Nigerian immigrant families to Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

1.2 Research objective

The main objective of this study is to explore the settlement experience of economic immigrants from a family perspective and in so doing, to provide important context to better understand economic-based immigration, which involves more than just occupational decisions of a single-family member. The primary goal of immigration policies in Canada is to ensure a successful settlement and integration of immigrants. However, recent immigrants, particularly those who are parents, face financial challenges and are at greater risk of mental health problems which hinder their integration (Pederson, 2017). These obstacles and successes are examined among Nigerian immigrant families in Winnipeg, Manitoba in my study.

1.3 Research questions

The study is guided by the following research question and related sub-questions.

- How do recent Nigerian immigrant families perceive their current socio-economic status in Canada?

  (a) Have their experiences in Canada met the expectations they had prior to their arrival in Canada?

  (b) Are their economic conditions in Canada better than they were prior to immigrating?

  (c) How have their experiences influenced their families and resettlement to Canada?

One of the most prominent patterns in international immigration is that close to one third of all immigrants live in just twenty countries, among them: United States of America, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Germany, the United Kingdom and Canada. Canada is among the highly developed nations in the world. Canada's economy ranks tenth in the world in terms of nominal GDP and the country has one of the most flourishing industrial, as well as service sectors, globally (Gilpin, 2016). Canada's service sector alone employs more than one third of the total population and is also one of the primary drivers behind the large number of immigrants over the last few decades (Gilpin, 2016).

Immigrants to Canada can enter via one of three broad categories: economic class, family class, and refugees. Canada is a popular destination for economic immigrants, due to immigration policy that prefers this type of immigrant, along with good economic prospects and a better quality of living, which attracts people from all over the world. A prospective immigrant could apply to immigrate to Canada as a skilled worker, provided they meet a minimum qualification threshold. There is an express entry system that allows potential applicants to complete an online entry profile, which assesses their skills, work experience, language proficiency, education and other

details to determine their admissibility in a very speedy way (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2014).

Chapter Two offers an historical analysis of Canada's immigration system, along with the demography and socio-economic profile of Nigeria to identify the factors which compel so many Nigerians to immigrate to Canada in general, and to Winnipeg in particular. Chapter Three reviews relevant literature and presents reasons why people migrate, as well as obstacles they face in their new countries. The chapter also presents an overview of the theoretical perspective that informs the study. Chapter Four outlines the method and presents an overview of the qualitative research design employed. The fifth chapter presents the findings obtained from interviews with eleven participants in Winnipeg. Finally, Chapter Six summarizes findings and presents recommendations regarding how government and settlement service providers could improve the immigrant transition. It also concludes with the limitations of the study as well as providing suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2-Understanding the Canadian context in immigration

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a historical analysis of Canada's immigration policies. It examines the global immigration trends and their implication. The final part of the chapter presents a brief profile of Nigeria and identifies the factors that compel Nigerian immigration to Canada.

2.2 A brief history of immigration to Canada.

According to Li (2003), since Confederation, migration to Canada can be categorized into four phases. From 1867 to 1895, a "racially selective" policy dominated, in which immigrants with northern or western European origin were admitted working on farms, factories and non-agricultural sectors. Only those from north and west Europe were welcomed, to the exclusion of everyone else. When there was a need for labourers who could do dangerous work, such as the construction of Canada's national railway, Chinese, Sikh and other Asian labourers were allowed to temporarily enter the country. After the railroad was completed, public outcry led to a series of exclusionary legislation that totally shut out immigrants from Asia. Exclusionary policies were enforced against Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and other would-be non-European immigrants, policies that remained in place well into the 1960s.

Improvements in agricultural production and the expansion of economic activities from 1896 until the beginning of the First World War encouraged the large-scale arrival of farm labourers and female domestic workers from southern and eastern Europe, as well as the United States, during the second phase of immigration. This policy was known as the "Last Best West". The Canadian government was particularly concerned about an American invasion and wanted to populate the western prairies to prevent it from happening. Policies allowing the entry of immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe were passed during the third phase of immigration, 1900 to 1945. However, "non-white" immigrants were still unwelcome. According to Li (2003):

The purpose of the policy department at present is to encourage the immigration of farmers, farm labourers, and female domestic servants from the United States, the British Isles, and certain northern Europeans countries, namely France, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Iceland. On the other hand, it is the policy of the department to do all in its power to keep out of the country those belonging to nationalities unlikely to assimilate and who consequently prevent the building up of a united nation of people of similar customs and ideals (Li, 2003: 18-19).

Legislators, government bureaucrats, and citizens shared the false belief that racialized groups (such as Africans, Asians, and other non-whites) would be unable to assimilate into the Canadian society, a myth that persisted well into the 1960s. After World War Two, Canada slowly abrogated its *racial* immigration policy and moved toward a points-based economic preferential system, in which applicants were accepted based on their level of education, language proficiency, age, offer of employment, adaptability, and work experience – all presumed to meet labour market need (Mensah, 2005). This led to changes in the country of origins for immigrants with new immigrants now coming from Africa, Asia, Caribbean and Latin America (Opoku–Dapaah, 2006). This change, however, was not adapted until 1967 and not incorporated formally into the *Immigration Act* until 1976.

Until the late 1990s, the Canadian government focused on family reunification as the main immigration stream. It believed that united families were happier, more integrated and more successful than immigrants who arrived in Canada alone. Under the Liberal government in 1993, a shift toward prioritizing economic immigration occurred. At that time, the belief was those who had the skills and experience to fulfil labour shortages in the economy would have the easiest integration. Over the next 25 years, Canada maintained a preference for economic-factors as its main immigration strategy. Table 1 shows 2016 admission by immigration category. While in

2016, only 53 percent of all immigrants arrived under the economic class, it was an anomaly due to the arrival of large numbers of refugees and refugee claimants that year. Over the past 25 years, economic class migration has accounted for over two-thirds of all immigration to Canada.

Table 1: New permanent residents admitted in 2016.

Immigrant Category	Number Admitted	Percentage (%)
Economic Class	155,994	53
Family Class	78,004	26
Protected persons /Refugees	58,435	20
Humanitarian and Other	3,913	1
Total	**29,6346**	**100**

Source: IRCC, Permanent residents Data as of May 2017: adapted from Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration, 2017.

2.3 Global immigration patterns: implications for immigrants and host countries

Worldwide, immigration has increased considerably in the last few decades, owing to the economic, social and political factors in developed and developing countries. There has been, however, significant change in the pattern of flow of immigrants. Bowen and Wu (2013), among others, document a reversal of the trends of global immigration over the years. Before 1914, global immigration policies were mostly liberal or open, and immigration was viewed as one of the primary sources of labour for economic development in most countries. The pattern of immigration was mostly from the developed to the developing countries, as this was the time of greatest colonization. This period, was followed by a period of limited migration during the1920s and 1930s, which can be primarily attributed to the global economic depression which resulted in the deportation of migrants and the vast curtailment of other migration.

Emigration from developing countries to industrialized countries expanded rapidly after the Second World War (SUNY Levin Institute, 2013). The policies of immigration in industrialized countries remained relatively open, but more stringent entrance requirements began to appear as increasing numbers of refugees and other displaced persons were seeking to migrate to safer places after the war (Muste, 2013). Around the world today, societies are changing, and individuals are on the move. Just over four percent of the world's population is an immigrant (IOM, 2018). In short, migration is a very important aspect of world history and life today and Canada is one of the major sites of migration.

2.4 Immigration in Canada

Canada has experienced significant economic growth along with industrial and commercial prosperity over the last century, which in part can be attributed to newcomers. Over the last century, Canada has experienced considerable increase in the number of immigrants as seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Increase in immigration- Canada, 1871-2016.
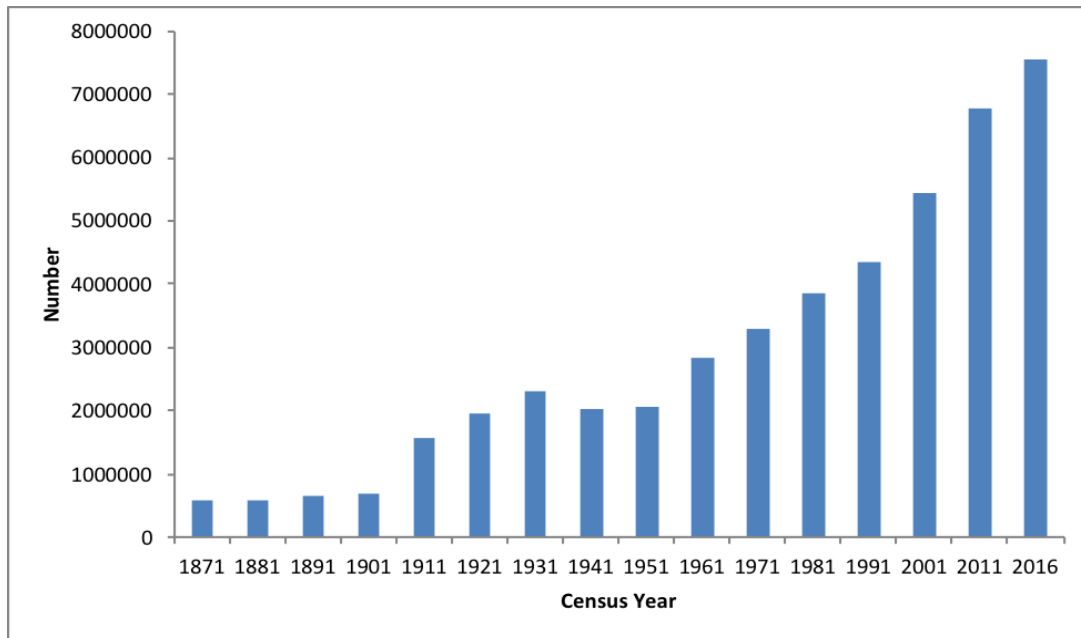
Source: Statistics Canada, 2018.

Figure 1 shows that immigration has increased considerably over the past few decades. In 1871, immigrants made up less than three percent of the population of Canada. By 2016, that figure had risen to 21.9 percent, making Canada the country with the fourth highest concentration of immigrants among OECD nations (OECD, 2018).

Figure 2 gives information about the category of immigrants who arrived in Canada between 2015

and 2017. Over 150,000 people annually enter Canada in an economic class, the category with the

consistently highest number of immigrants.

Figure 2: Trends in immigration- Canada, 2015-2017.
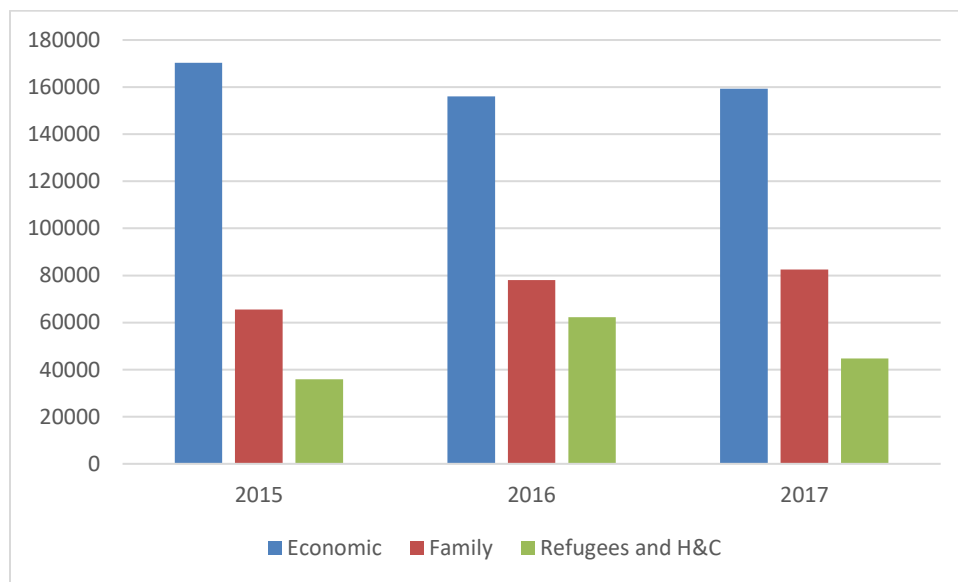
Source: IRCC, 2018.

Family class immigrants in Canada form the second largest group, numbering 65,000 -

83,000 individuals for the years under review. Members of the family class include the sponsor's

spouse or common-law partner, dependent child or children and not an aunt, cousin or other distant

relative.   Refugees are defined as those people who tend to escape from their home countries for

avoiding persecution or to escape unusual punishments and tortures. Between 35,000 - 63,000

refugees, protected persons and humanitarian admissions were made from 2015 to 2017.

Even refugees rarely arrive alone. Their accompanying family members are "counted" as part of the immigration stream that the principal applicant enters. As a result, Canada welcomed 61,646 sponsored spouses, partners and children out of 286,478 people who entered the country in 2017 (IRCC, 2018). In short, even in the "non-family" categories, family members tend to dominate. As such, it is perplexing that more research does not focus more on the family as a unit of analysis.

2.4.2 Immigrants by source country and pattern of settlement across Canada

According to Banting and Soroka (2012), immigrants from 190 countries live in Canada, with the numbers continually increasing. The countries that contribute most significantly to the immigrant population in Canada can be found on table 2.

Table 2: Immigrants by source country-Canada, 2017.

Rank	Country	Number	Percentage
1	Philippines	41,791	14
2	India	39,789	13
3	Syria	34,925	12
4	China, People's Republic of	26,852	9
5	Pakistan	11,337	4
6	United States of America	8,409	3
7	Iran	6,483	2
8	France	6,348	2
9	United Kingdom and Colonies	5,812	2
10	Eritrea	4,629	2
Total Top 10		186,375	63
All Other Source Countries		109,971	37
Total		**296,346**	**100**

Source: IRCC, Permanent Resident Data as of May 2017: adapted from Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration, 2017.

Table 2 shows that Philippines, India, Syria, China, Pakistan, United States of America, Iran, France, United Kingdom and Eritrea make up the top ten most popular countries of origin of immigrants to Canada. A significant share of the immigrant population also comes from Nigeria. In 2016, Nigeria was the twelve-source country, because of the large numbers of refugees arriving from Syria (which has never been in the top ten) and Eritrea (also not a regular top ten country) have displaced them.

Immigrants to Canada tend to settle in larger metropolitan areas in Ontario, Quebec, Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Figure 3 shows the provincial distribution of immigrants in 2017. We can note that Manitoba is over-represented by immigration. Although Manitobans make up only three percent of the Canadian population, nearly six percent of all immigrants to Canada come to this province (IRCC, 2017). This is largely due to the success of the Provincial Nominee Program—and their successful private refugee sponsorship program which regularly brings in 20 percent of Canada's refugees to this province.

Figure 3: Immigrants by pattern of settlement across Canada, 2017.
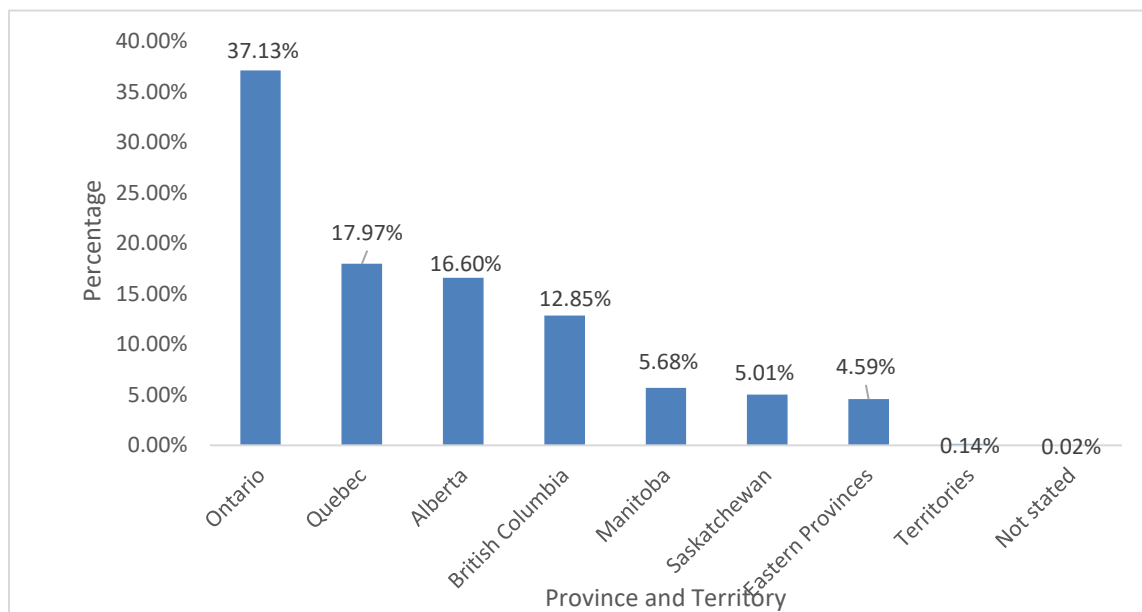
Source: IRCC, Permanent Resident Data as of July 31, 2017: adapted from Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration, 2017.

2.5 Nigeria- a country profile

Nigeria occupies 351,200 square miles on the southern coast of West Africa. It is bordered to the north by Niger, to the west by the Republic of Benin, and on the east by Chad and Cameroon. The country boasts 250 ethnic and linguistic groups with three forming the majority: Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo. Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa with an estimated population of 186 million (World Bank, 2016). The country has 36 states with each having its own political and judicial autonomy forming a federal republic. The northern part of Nigeria is predominantly Muslim, while the south is predominantly Christian (de Haas, 2006).

Despite the country's vast oil wealth and impressive economic growth, many Nigerians experience extreme poverty. The World Bank's 2017 *Atlas of Sustainable Development Goals* reports that 35 million more Nigerians were living in extreme poverty (living on less than US $1.90 a day) in 2013 than in 1990. The recession of 2016 drove more Nigerians into poverty (Kazeem, 2017). The *World Poverty Clock* estimates that approximately 87 million Nigerians live in extreme poverty, overtaking India as the country with the largest number of people living in extreme poverty in the world (Bukola, 2018). The report indicates that extreme poverty in Nigeria is growing by roughly six people every minute. It means that nearly half of all Nigerians currently live in extreme poverty.

2.5.1 Factors that compel Nigerian immigration

Migration is not a new to the African continent; for as long as communities have existed, there has been migration among ethnic groups within Africa mainly for economic reasons. However, with the arrival of globalization, migration from Africa towards the developed economies and more advanced polities of the world has intensified. There are debates as to what influences migration of the African people, however, we cannot attribute the phenomenon to just one event but rather must see a complex mix of factors that generate the desire to migrate.

Using a migration-based approach, one theory that explains why individuals leave their country is the "push" and "pull" theory developed by Ravenstein in the 1890s. "Push-Pull" theory summarizes the motivations for migration by considering how the relationship between two points (origin and destination) are affected by push factors and pull factors. Push and Pull factors are forces or elements that can either induce people to move to a new location or oblige them to leave old residences.

Using Ravenstein's theory, various studies (Takyi & Konadu-Agyemang, 2006; Yewah & Togunde, 2010) have highlighted issues such as political and civil instability which may lead to wars, famine, ecological disasters, unemployment, underemployment, low wage structures for professionals, fear of persecution, and deteriorating tertiary education as influencing migration outward from Nigeria. These are considered 'push factors'. Other scholars (Okome, 2003, 2006; Udogu, 2004) also attribute the migration phenomenon into broad category as 'pull factors'. They describe conditions in the host country that make it an attractive destination for African immigrants; including improved or better standards of living, opportunities for higher income, safe environments, and opportunities for professional development among others. In case of Nigeria, the primary push factors I discuss are poverty, lack of employment, terrorism and increasing social tension.

2.5.2 Poverty

Nigeria, in spite of its robust oil industry and other economic progress, remains one of the most poverty-stricken regions on the globe. In 2008, Nigeria had the highest poverty rate of all nations (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Poverty rates by developing nations, 1981 and 2008.
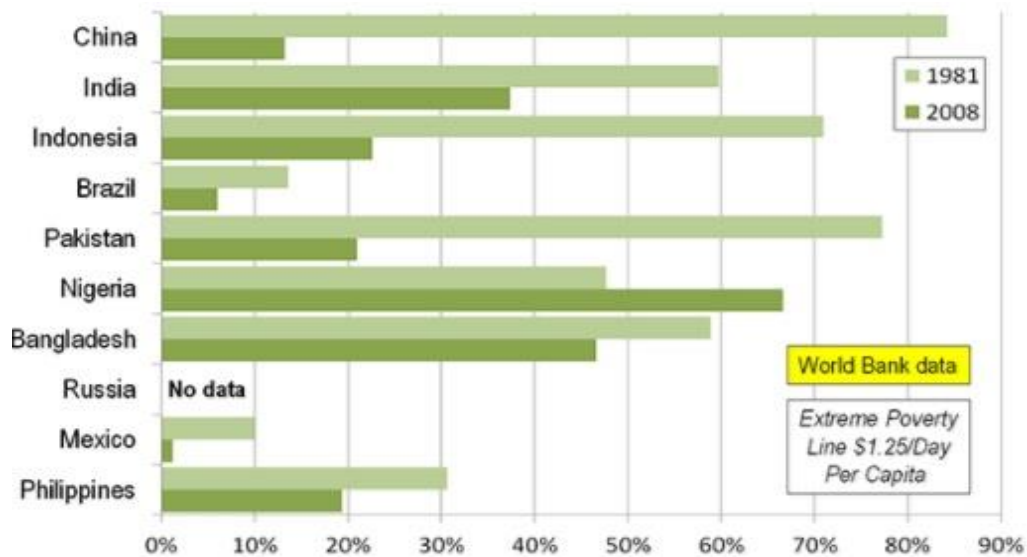
Source: New geography, 2018.

Figure 5 shows that Nigeria is one of the few developing countries where extreme poverty has increased, while almost all the other countries have decreased over that same period of time. Poverty is one of the major "push" factors influencing the high rates of migration from Nigeria.

2.5.3 Lack of employment

Asaju, Arome & Anyio (2014) suggest that the lack of sufficient employment opportunities is another factor contributing to the increasing poverty in the nation. Unemployment continues to increase in Nigeria. This, in turn, acts as a factor to induce immigration, as people try to move and settle in those countries where they can find jobs and better economic opportunities.

Figure 5: Unemployment rate in Nigeria, 2015-2017.

Source: Trading economics, 2018.

Unemployment is not shared equally throughout the nation. Recent statistics show that 33 percent of Nigeria youth population is currently unemployed (Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, 2018). Since over 50 percent of Africa's migrants migrate before their thirtieth birthday (United Nations, 2018), age and unemployment remain a factor in pushing people from Nigeria.

2.5.4 Terrorism and Social Tensions

Apart from the economic stagnation of the country, social tensions and various terrorist activities have also contributed to the destabilization of Nigeria. Joshua & Chidozie (2014) argues that Nigeria consistently faces hurdles in everyday lives due to fighting and terrorist attacks among militant groups and the government. This in turn leads to huge loss of lives as well as properties in the country, thereby hampering the socio-economic and political stability, which reduces the overall welfare of the citizens considerably.

Figure 6: Countries with highest number of deaths due to terrorism, 2016.
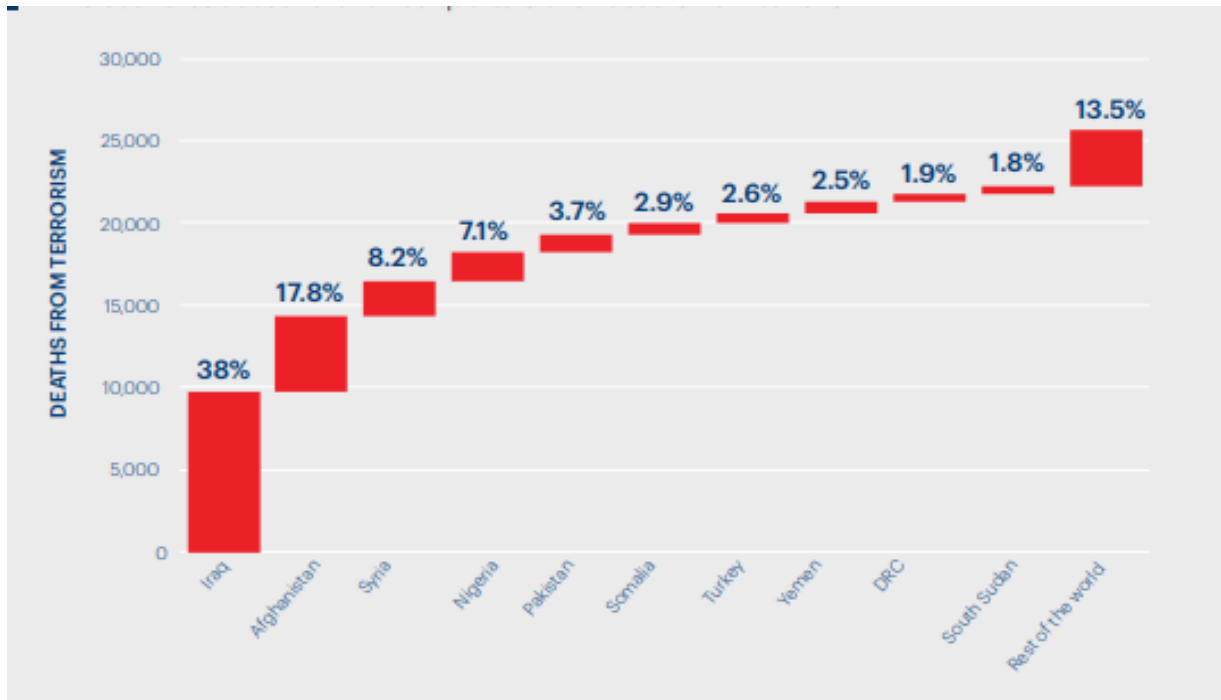
Source: Global terrorism index, 2017.

As can be seen in Figure 6, Nigeria ranks fourth after Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria in terms of proportion of persons dying due to terrorist related offenses. Nigeria is one of five countries which together account for 80 percent of all terrorism related casualties globally. This in turn decreases the economic and welfare of the people and also acts as a "Push Factor" (Okoli & Iortyer, 2014).

2.6 Immigration of Nigerian residents to Canada

The above-mentioned factors together compel a considerable number of people in the country to migrate to other countries, especially to developed and economically progressive ones, in search of a better life style, job, education and an overall increased welfare. Data from 2015

reveals that Canada is the destination for 33,000 Nigerians (IRCC, 2015)—making this country the fourth most popular developing country destination behind the US, Britain and Italy for immigrants in that year (*The Economist*, 2015). The UN suggests that 1.2 million Nigerians live abroad, accounting for about one percent of the total population.

Figure 7: Nigerian permanent residents to Canada, 2006-2015.
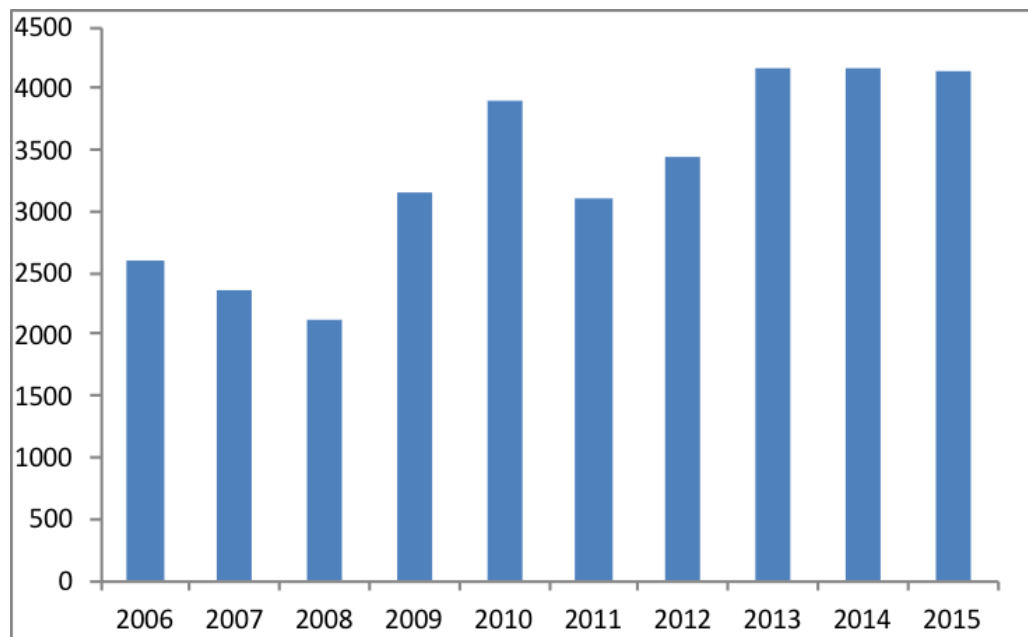
Source: IRCC, 2015.

Immigration from Nigeria to Canada has recently increased drastically. From 2006-2015, Nigeria was the tenth most common source country of immigrants to Canada (IRCC, 2015). Like other immigrants, Nigerians are not equally distributed across the country. They tend to move to three provinces: Ontario, Alberta and Manitoba. Between 2006 and 2015, about 33,142 Nigerians came to Canada as permanent residents (IRCC, 2015).

The next chapter provides an overview of the research on economic and non-economic factors of migration along with the theoretical framework that orients my thesis.

CHAPTER 3- Literature review and theoretical orientation

3.1 Introduction

Since most work on immigration focuses on economic outcomes, very little has examined how families experience migration in the economic context. This chapter examines the research literature on the topic and introduces the theoretical frameworks that shape this study.

3.2 Reasons behind immigration to Canada

People move for many reasons. According to Kerr and Kerr (2008), migrants frequently cite higher income levels, better personal safety, short distance to home countries, and established immigrant networks as the main reasons for choosing their new host countries. As a result, most research highlights economic, social and migration policy as dominant factors influencing the decision to migrate. According to Shackelford (2010), social and economic factors are motivations behind most migratory movements, including those pulled by opportunity or pushed by economic disadvantage. What the literature tends to omit, however, is a consideration of how family influences migration decisions and the impact of migration on family structure and functioning.

3.2.1 Economic decisions

Economic theory has connected immigration to economic security for decades. Hicks observed as early as 1932 that "differences in net economic advantages, chiefly differences in wages, are the main causes of migration" (Hicks, 1932, p. 76). A much earlier study by Ravenstein (1885; 1889), in which he formulated his "laws of migration" called the "push/pull theory of migration" saw migration as an inseparable part of development and he asserted that the major causes of migration were economic. Current econometric studies tend to support these conclusions, and the importance of income differentials is also evident in comparisons of income or GDP levels between host and source countries (OECD, 2000; Coppel et al., 2001; Munshi, 2003; Mandor, 2007; and Kerr, 2008).

According to Picot and Sweetman (2012), two economists, the primary motivation behind migration to Canada is economic. Conversely, Walton-Roberts (2012), a geographer, notes the economic factors present in Canada are primarily "Pull Factors," which attract people from all parts of the world. The primary "push factor" is regional tensions and inferior quality of life which force people out of their home countries, especially lower/medium income and politically unstable ones. Much of the research on economic issues is, not surprisingly, written by economists. What is interesting is that the sociologists, geographers and anthropologists have not built on the large scale quantitative research to examine the more real-life forces that 'push' immigrants to move— such as the ones I discussed in Chapter 2.

The vast majority of principal economic immigrants to Canada are men (Hou and Boniskowska, 2015). Women are more likely to be admitted under the family class or as a spouse or dependent of an economic applicant. For example, in 2016, of all principal economic applicants admitted to Canada, only 42 percent were females while 58 percent were males- a difference of 16 percentage points. However, in the last few years there has been some progress toward closing the gender gap. In the early 2010s, men were twenty percent more likely to be principal applicants than women. In the first decade of the 21st century, that gap was even wider, over 30 percent (IRCC, 2017).

3.2.2 Social welfare decisions

The classical explanation for the primacy of economic factors in the body of research is that wages and employment opportunities are the main driving factors of international migration. Other more recent explanations focus on the effects of the welfare state regimes. Peder, Mariola and Nina (2004) identified social networks, cultural and linguistic distance, and threat to own freedom and safety as some of the major factors that compel people to migrate. They further assert

that generous social services and benefit levels (which characterized many OECD countries) may also affect migration decisions in terms of choice of destination country (Peder, Mariola and Nina, 2004). Borjas (1999b) likewise focuses on the role of welfare programs as a pull factor for potential immigrants, and he introduces the concept of the 'welfare magnet': he too theorizes that immigrants are attracted to the 'generous' social safety net in some countries.

There is also the issue of network-effects on migration. For instance, if an ethnic group is already present in the destination country, it may induce further immigration given the propensity for people from similar backgrounds to want to live close together. Likewise, many students from developing economies migrate to advanced countries to study in the schools and universities of advanced countries and can be more attracted to schools with higher numbers of their compatriots (Borjas 2009).

According to Shackelford (2010), a key indicator of an immigrant's immediate socioeconomic level is education and skill, including English language capability. While employers recruit those with valuable education and training, those seeking to raise their subsistence minimum face difficult competition for jobs, especially if they have lower skills or qualifications attained outside of Canada. Newcomers have higher educational qualifications but decreasing labour market outcome when compared to Canadian born counterparts and are least to have job-education match (Abdul-Karim, 2018). Almost all economic outcomes are influenced by the language proficiency of individual migrant's in determining their economic integration. Those who speak little, or no English are at an increased and long-term disadvantage in the labour market (Derwing and Waugh, 2012; Picot and Sweetman, 2011; Chiswick and Miller, 2014).

3.2.3 Migration policy

Increasingly, migration and integration policy in high income nations has been shaped by human capital theory and neoliberalism. Any study of economic integration must acknowledge this link. Human capital theory assumes that personal assets such as skills, education, and physical abilities are fundamental "capitals" that boost economic production (De Hass, 2008). The policy is considered as the internal structure and segmentation of labour markets as well as the relevance of individual socio-economic characteristics and "capitals" in the migration decision (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998:99).

In Canada, the most cited economic aim of immigration policy is to meet occupational labour shortages (Picot,2013). This is how immigration is generally "sold" to the electorate. Picot's analysis suggests that the Canadian labour market is flawed because it does not educate or train people for jobs that are currently available in the short-term, while in the long-term, the problem is one of population numbers — there simply are not enough workers to provide the labour for a healthy economy and tax base. These two factors implicitly define Canada's migration policy. Without a substantial increase in the number of migrants to Canada, the economy is destined for recession at best and depression at worst. The Conference Board of Canada is one of many non-partisan organizations calling for increases in Canadian immigration to 400,000 per year, to alleviate labour market concerns (El-Assal and Fields, 2018). Canada is not alone. Almost all industrialized high-income nations are facing similar labour shortages and expect to fill these partially with the arrival of newcomers. Economically-selective immigration policies where immigrants are supposed to be highly skilled in order to enter are becoming the norm—a model that Canada and Australia have both used in recent decades. In short, although Canada's immigration policy has focused on economic outcomes of its immigrants since 1993, most other high-income countries are following suit.

<u>3.3 Socio-economic wellbeing research</u>

Much of the economic research focuses on the income and job outcomes of immigrants without considering the impact of migration on their health and wellbeing. In its annual assessment of migrant wellbeing, the Gallup Annual World Poll (2013) used objective data (income levels, shelter, nutrition and employment opportunities) as well as subjective data (such as life satisfaction, and positive and negative emotions) to assess the economic wellbeing of migrants in 150 countries (Esipova, Pugliese & Ray, 2013). With a background understanding of the north and the south divide representing high-income economies and middle-to low-income economies respectively, the survey findings indicate that where migrants come from, where they go, and how long they stay affects their wellbeing.

Migrants moving from north to other north countries had positive outcomes on life satisfaction, emotional positivity, personal and financial security, health and community attachment in their host countries. Migrants from South to other South destinations faced more significant challenges. They were least optimistic about their future and found it difficult to achieve a satisfactory standard of living. Furthermore, migration seems to make little difference to them financially. Personal safety was also of highest concern among such group of migrants. These South to South migrants also lacked confidence in their host countries and reported the least community attachment and most health concerns.

Those moving from middle-to low-income economy to high-income one (south to north) suffered economic disparity compared to the native-born- they struggled to make the transition but were nevertheless relatively better off financially for having migrated than those who did not migrate. While long-timers (who have been living in their current countries for at least five years) are most pessimistic about their future lives, newcomers (who have been living in their destination

countries for less than five years) are very optimistic about their future lives as native-born (Esipova, Pugliese & Ray, 2013).

Safi (2010) shows that on the average migrants are less happy than native-born populations when they come from the global south. This holds true in terms of income, employment status, relationship status, health, and more. It might be expected that happiness would increase over time as migrants assimilate into new societies, but this is not so, according to Safi's research. Immigrants in Europe from the global south are among the unhappiest and least satisfied on the planet (Safi, 2010).

Canada is the most tolerant and inclusive country when it comes to openness towards immigrants according to at least one Ipsos study on global inclusiveness (2018). In an effort to determine their social acceptance of diversity, over 20,000 people across 27 countries were asked whether a person's immigration status, origin country of parents, religion, sexual orientation, criminal background as well as extreme political views could define if they are "real" nationals of that country. For example, people in Australia were asked whether someone with immigrant parents is a real Australian, or people in Turkey were asked whether someone who is LGBT is a real Turk. It found that Canadians had the broadest acceptance of who was a "real Canadian" in terms of immigration, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity.

3.4 Obstacles immigrants experience in the labour market

While more than half of immigrants enter Canada with economic intentions since migration policy is largely economic, concerns have also been raised about the barriers faced by all immigrants in integrating into the country's labour force (Javdani, Jacks and Pendakur, 2012). There is clear evidence that immigrants face barriers in accessing employment and it is even more difficult to find employment that recognizes the skills, experience and knowledge gained prior to

entering Canada (Bevelander and Pendakur, 2012). In many cases, new immigrants experience multiple difficulties when seeking employment. Work experience is central, language barriers are another challenge, lack of acceptance of foreign qualifications, the importance of contacts and networks in the job market and lack of employment opportunities (Schellenberg and Maheux, 2007). Slade (2008) describes lack of Canadian experience as the "new head tax" levied on new immigrants to limit their participation in the labour force.

Existing literature also identifies sex and country of birth as key determinants to the economic experience of immigrants in Canada (Gilmore, 2008). Among the general population, Gilmore stipulates that Canadian-born employees earn more than immigrant employees and the gap in wage difference is reported to have increased most significantly since the beginning of the 21st century (Gilmore, 2008). With regards to sex, Chui (2011) report that more women than men occupy precarious employment conditions, she also indicates that generally racialized women are more likely to get part time jobs than racialized men.

Picot and Sweetman (2011) show that skills in an official language (English or French) significantly affect the economic integration of newcomers, including their employment levels and income. While language skill is not a major factor in determining employment, it relates directly to the *kind* and *quality* of jobs newcomers obtain and is a contributing factor to economic status. Immigrants with good official language skills have higher chances of landing their dream jobs than those without such skills (Picot and Sweetman, 2011).

Zaman (2010) also identifies the foreign credential recognition process in Canada and the difficulties that Pakistani immigrant women experience in trying to find work. There is a contradiction in Canadian immigration policy: points are awarded to immigrants with high levels

of education and work experience, but these same immigrants find that they are not "qualified" for jobs in their field once they enter Canada. Additionally, once the women arrive, they face other barriers such as racism, sexism, and xenophobia which limit their ability to find jobs relevant to their experience. Martin and Reid (2007) find that women whose husbands were not able to find jobs with good incomes struggle economically in their first two years and are not able to integrate into their new society.

There are important gender dynamics to consider within the family and influence economic integration. Zaman (2010) finds that when husbands were employed, and wives were less likely to be and that the couples were more likely to maintain "gendered" values from their own cultural background. Such unemployed women formed friendships with people from the same or similar cultural background and adapted less positively toward the economic, social, and political climate in Canada. She also finds, however, that some preservation of cultural and religious norms was helpful in the overall integration process. When women were able to wear their cultural or religious dress, get guidance from people who were from the same cultural background, and balance their roles like a mother and wife, it eased their transition into Canadian society. These women showed relatively less economic stress even though they considered their individual and household earnings as insufficient.

3.4.1 Labour force participation of immigrant women in Canada.
In most parts of the world, men are more likely than women to participate in the labour market. However, gender differences in participation have been decreasing significantly in recent decades as more women join the labour force (Engemann & Owyang, 2006). Women in high income countries tend to be more active in the workforce than those living in low and medium-income countries. As reported in the Canadian Labour Force Survey (2016), 82 percent of women

in the core working ages of 25 to 54 years (6 million) participated in the labour force in 2015 compared to 21.6 percent (563,000) of women in 1950 and 65.2 percent (3.3 million) in 1983 (Moyser, 2017).

According to Statistics Canada (2017), immigrants accounted for nearly one-quarter of the Canadian labour force in 2016. Immigrant women are more likely than Canadian-born women to have completed a university degree. For instance, in 2011, 27.2 percent of immigrant women aged 15 and above had attained a university degree, compared to Canadian-born women with 19.2 percent. Despite having these credentials, Hudon (2015) reports that recent immigrant women have a lower employment participation rate compared to Canadian-born women or immigrant men.

Morissette and Galarneau (2016), use the Labour Force Survey and World Bank indicators from 2006 to 2014 to examine how much of this gap is due to socio-economic factors. Their findings indicate that half of the difference is due to socio-economic characteristics. They note that family size is a contributory factor, with immigrant families being larger than non-immigrant families. As the family size increases, labour force participation decline for immigrant women due to child care.

A number of theories try to explain labour market outcome differentials between spouses in immigrant couples. These theories highlight that immigrant labour market outcome are better understood when looked at within the family and broader cultural context (Worswick, 1999). Using the family investment hypothesis as an example, a common assumption made is that recent immigrant families are more likely to be credit-constrained than either earlier immigrant cohort families, or those born in Canada. The hypothesis states that recent immigrant families are more likely to have credit card debt or be unable to borrow in the first years of migration. Secondary

workers (typically wives) sometimes respond by working longer hours in low-skilled jobs to support family consumption and the primary workers (usually husbands) invest in acquiring specific skills to meet the needs of the labour market. Once primary workers start assimilating and become established, secondary workers reduce work hours or totally withdraw from the labour force (Worswick, 1999). Since most principal applicants are men, the family investment hypothesis may help explain the gap in the labour market activity and earnings among immigrant women and Canadian born women.

The source-country of the immigrant family is also an important factor. Previous studies (Levitt, 2005; Xue, 2008) on female labour force participation show a strong correlation between source country and immigrant women's labour market activity in host countries. Women who worked in their country of origin were more likely to work in Canada (Levitt, 2005). Xue's (2008) study on the employment experiences of recent immigrants to Canada shows that female immigrants from Asia were the least likely to participate in the labour force due to their cultural expectation that they remain at home, and also perceptions that it was difficult for them to access well-paid jobs. She also finds that even after four years in Canada, immigrant women participated at lower rate than Canadian-born women and immigrant men (Xue, 2008).

Gilmore's (2008) study into the labour market integration of recent immigrant to Canada provides some insight into immigrant women's labour experiences post-migration. He finds that no matter where an immigrant was born or how many years since migration, the employment rate remains lower for women compared to men. While there are many more economic studies, what is absent from this research is sustained consideration of the family in migration and economic decisions. Despite the fact that most migrants come to Canada in various types of family units,

their experiences are almost completely absent in the recent research. My research attempts to address this gap.

3.5 Theoretical frameworks

Attempts at understanding immigrants in view of their economic pursuits have largely focused on two key areas: the neo–classical economic studies (Todaro, 1969) which focuses on the economic aspirations of the individual migrant and the New Economics of Labor Migration (NELM) framework (Stark, 1991; De Haas, 2010) which understands the economically induced immigrant in a family context. Both theories agree that the promise of better economic opportunities is vital in both individual and household decisions regarding migration. The New Economics of Labour Migration Theory, however, is more suited to contemporary migration in Canada. It is, however, essential to recognize and describe the neoclassical perspective because this is the basis on which Canadian immigration policy has historically been designed.

3.5.1 The neo-classical economic approach

The Neo-classical economic approach understands migration as a 'rational' decision made by an individual seeking a better life, which might include better job opportunities, job security and/or higher wages. The migrant's decision is based on an assessment of the factors which require them to leave their home country as well as the factors that draw them to the destination country. This reflects the micro-level understanding of migration, in which De Haas (2008) describes migrants as individual rational actors who decide to move on the basis of cost-benefit calculation. Assuming free choice and full access to all the information required to make an informed decision, migrants are expected to go where they can be the most productive and are able to earn the highest wages. This capacity depends on the specific skills a person possesses and the specific structure of labour markets. Borjas (1999) postulated the idea of an international immigration market, in which

potential migrants base the choice of destination on individual and cost-benefit calculations. His work remains central to the work of migration economists today.

At the macro-level, neo-classical economic theory explains migration by geographical differences in the supply and demand for labour. The resulting differentials in wages cause workers to move from low-wage, labour-surplus regions to high-wage, labour scarce regions (De Haas, 2008). As mentioned earlier, Ravenstein (1885) identified two sets of factors usually referred to as "push and pull" factors of migration. The pull factors prevail in reality or are perceived to exist in the destination country and the push factors manifest in the country of origin. The theory considers each migrant to be a rational actor who chooses from a range of destinations, the one that involves the least cost (the travel costs, the cost of living while looking for work, the cost of finding a new home) and gives the most net gain (income).

Later models such as one put forward by (Lee, 1966) identified other obstacles and opportunities encountered during the migration process to the pull-push factors of the earlier model. These neoclassical models have been criticized for their narrow focus on wage disparities between departure country and receiving country, and on the economic motivations of potential migrants (De Haas, 2008), plus their almost exclusive focus on econometrics and ignorance of personal experience and social context. These ideas fit nicely with the neoliberal approach to migration that dominates the entry qualifications of immigrants who come to Canada.

These models, however, ignore the fact that people migrate for reasons other than income maximization, e.g., family reunification, seeking refuge or political asylum, a more attractive culture, and religious beliefs (Bodvarsson and Van den Berg, 2013). Another weakness of the neo-classical theory is that it focuses so much on receiving-country demand factors, and generally ignores how origin-country factors such as labour market structure, income levels and inequalities,

social security, conflict, states and public policies, affect migration. Furthermore, it assumes the labour market is based on meritocracy—that all experiences, skills and education are adequately evaluated without prejudice. We know this is not the case—not for Canadians and certainly not for immigrants. However, this is how the Canadian government likes to imagine their economy and so it is important to acknowledge this as this perception has greatly influenced the design and function of the Canadian immigration system even if it cannot describe the unequal outcomes experienced by immigrants.

3.5.2 The new economics of labour migration

The New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) perspective (sometimes known as the family investment hypothesis) was developed in the 1980s by Stark and Bloom (1985). This model understands migration as a family rather than an individual survival strategy. The model views immigrants in the context of their social networks and see them and their family as a single, unified entity with altruistic members who cooperate for the common good of the whole family. The new economics of labour migration (NELM), hypothesizes that migration, particularly under conditions of poverty and risk, is difficult to explain within a neo-classical framework. NELM conceptualizes migration as a collective household strategy to overcome market failures and spread income risks rather than a mere response of income-maximizing individuals to expected wage differentials (Stark 1991; Stark and Bloom 1985). This gives considerable room to explain migration in the absence of significant wage differentials. NELM also argues that income inequality and relative deprivation within sending societies are major drivers of migration (Skeldon 2002).

A key assumption of the NELM perspective is that in a family, individual interests are subordinated in the interest of family goals. The theory identifies key members of the family as decision makers on who should migrate and who should stay in the interest of the larger group. If extra income is needed in the household, the choice about who should migrate will be made based on the potential earnings of that individual at the destination country. Critiques of the NELM approach like Chant (1998) point to the fact that families are better conceptualised as an "uneasy aggregate of individual survival strategies", or a "locus of competing interests, rights, obligations and resources" (Chant 1998: 8). In his recognition of the fact that social relations within a family shape decision-making, understanding the family as a unitary model rejects examination of individual opportunities and motivations and ignores often conflicting aspirations within the family.

Both theories have their strengths and weakness. The neo-classical economic approach overlooks the interests of migration to the family as a unit and focuses on individual interests and has the same numerous criticisms of human capital theory, but the NELM theory also overlooks the interests of individuals and treats the interests of migration from a family perspective. Critiques highlight that economic advantage is not the only motivation for migration and even this cannot be reduced to simple differentials in wages and employment (Chant, 1998; De Haas, 2008).

Most immigrants do not have complete information on the alternatives of potential immigration targets and often they perform only limited search. One possible way to reach relatively good and safe decisions in the case of uncertainty and imperfect information is to decide on the basis of migration network's information. Massey et al. (1993) define migration networks as "…sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin".

For the purpose of this study, although it examines individual economic motivations, the researcher focuses on the NELM theory. The NELM perspective broadens the theoretical understanding in ways that draw in family correlates of actions and lived experiences that are related to social and economic life of newcomers. The research question of perception examines factors that shape newcomer's insight on their economic and social wellbeing in Canada.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed some of the literature on economic outcomes among migrants. It identified an obvious omission—that almost all economic research simply ignores how migration, even for economic purposes, affects families and individuals beyond simply getting a job and a reasonable income. That human capital theory and NELM are competing theories in helping us understand economic outcomes among migrations but that the NELM is much better positioned to provide a framework for understanding the personal and familial experiences of economic migration.

CHAPTER 4- Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a detailed description of the procedures used in conducting this study. It includes the description of the study group, research design, participant recruitment techniques, data collection instruments, data analysis and ethical considerations.

4.2 Study area and participants

Winnipeg, the capital and largest city of the province of Manitoba, is the study area. Winnipeg was chosen because it has one of the most diverse economies of any major city in Canada (Immigration Manitoba, 2014) and is home to a sizable number of newcomers. The presence of a large number of recently arrived immigrants makes Winnipeg the ideal place for the study when compared to other parts of the province. In a typical year, over 80 percent of migrants to Manitoba settle in Winnipeg. Additionally, the city is a good example of the "average" Canadian city in terms of immigrants. Here, 23percent of the population was born outside of Canada, compared to the national average of 22.8 percent (Statistics Canada, 2017). Furthermore, the province was the key player in the development of the Provincial Nominee program, a model to bring immigrants to the province which was subsequently adopted by all other provinces. From its inception in 1998, more than two-thirds of all immigrants entering Canada under the PN program were destined for Manitoba (IRCC, 2017). Table 3 shows that Winnipeg is the sixth census metropolitan destination for all immigrants to Canada, outpacing Ottawa and Hamilton, both bigger cities.

Table 3: Canada-admission of permanent residents by census metropolitan area, 2015.

Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)	Number	Rank
Toronto	82,110	1
Montreal	39,365	2
Vancouver	28,385	3
Calgary	21,700	4
Edmonton	16,745	5
Winnipeg	12,390	6
Ottawa	6,245	7
Saskatoon	4,445	8
Regina	3,975	9
Hamilton	3,020	10
TOTAL TOP TEN	218,380	
OTHER	53,465	
TOTAL	**271,845**	

Source: IRCC, May 31, 2016.

Participants for the study are Nigerian migrants living with immediate family members (i.e. spouses, partners and children) in Winnipeg. The reason for selecting this group is that Nigeria is among the top ten source countries for immigrants to Manitoba (Manitoba Labour and Immigration, 2014). Nigeria is ranked fourth, making up 4.1 per cent of newcomers to Manitoba (Manitoba Labour and Immigration, 2014). They are also the fastest growing group of immigrants in Canada (IRCC, 2017). There are many pressures in Nigeria that push them out of the country,

as discussed in Chapter 2, and Canada has many pull factors which make it an interesting country to study. Since Nigerians are not currently coming as refugees or asylum seekers in large numbers, they are more likely to be arriving in partial or full family units—which also makes migration discussions more interesting given the lack of consideration of family concerns in the decision to migrate.

Participants selected for my study have been in Canada for between six months and five years. This timeframe was selected because previous studies have shown that the longer immigrants remain in their host countries; the more economically successful they tend to become (Grant, 1999) and as time advances, individuals are less likely to accurately recall events. I am interested in the experiences of recent immigrants, hence the maximum of five years of Canadian residency.

4.3 Research design
Yin (2003) identified three conditions that determine research design; these include the type of research questions asked, the researcher's control over actual behavior, and the focus on current events. The aim of research design is to guide the researcher through the process of collecting; analyzing and interpreting data (Yin, 2009).

The current research follows an exploratory framework with some descriptive elements, because the primary objective of the research is to explore the perceptions and socio-economic dynamics in Canada to which recent Nigerian immigrant families are subjected. The perceptions of participants I collected are mainly levels of satisfaction in different spheres of their lives in Canada, a comparison with the levels of satisfaction they used to enjoy in Nigeria, and the challenges they face in their new environment as they try to adjust. Since these attributes are highly abstract and subjective, descriptive and qualitative method of research approach is required to

comprehensively incorporate all the opinions of the participants and to analyze them effectively.

4.4 Research method

A qualitative research design was selected for this study to obtain in-depth understanding and direct information from the experiences, perceptions and opinions of participants as it relates to the research question (Patton, 2002). The rationale for this design is that it takes an interpretive and naturalistic approach to the subject matter. Using qualitative design, the researcher explores a social or human problem, builds a complex holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in natural settings (Creswell, 1998: 15). The significance of qualitative design for this study is that it values the experience of research participants and therefore allows them to tell their life experiences personally, in natural settings, with the aim of obtaining distinctive accounts of participants' stories without generalization (Patton, 2002).

4.5 Research strategy

Within the qualitative research design, the narrative approach was used to examine immigrants and their families' economic wellbeing as part of the larger process of integration. This is one of the most widely used qualitative research methods where the researcher looks for ways to understand and weave together real-life experiences of research participants to form a cohesive story (Connelly and Clandinin,1990). Narrative inquiry augments experiences that may have otherwise remained silent. It uses story-telling as a way of communicating the participants stories to a larger audience (Wang and Geale, 2015).

4.6 Recruitment technique and study population

Target population for this study is Nigerian immigrants residing in Winnipeg. Participants are adults (18 years of age or older) who have come with or joined a family already in Canada and who were born in Nigeria and identifies as Nigerian.

The study employed snowball techniques to recruit participants. According to Vogt (1999), snowball sampling is an approach to finding research participants whereby one subject recommends another subject, who in turn refers another, and so on. It is used where potential participants are hard to find (Vogt, 1999). In applying the snowball sampling technique, I began through advertising with three newcomer settlement organizations in Winnipeg after obtaining ethical approval from Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba.

The Nigerian Association of Manitoba Incorporation (NAMI), Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM), and Newcomer Employment Education Development Services (NEEDS) were contacted to help recruit participants. These organizations advertised the study by posting flyers around their locations. NAMI assisted by identifying two potential families who were interested in the study and had giving their consent to be contacted. The researcher planned with both families and they were interviewed. The original intention was that every adult in each family would became a participant and is to be interviewed individually after meeting the inclusion criteria: a) An adult who is a participant must be 18 years and above, b) must be related to the family by birth, blood or adoption, and c) Must be a Nigerian Immigrant.

Interviews were recorded using a digital audio recorder with participant's permission and salient points were recorded as key observation during the interview.

I experienced a major difficulty early into the research. Although the first family agreed to be interviewed as a unit (two married persons), subsequent families would not provide this kind of access. Instead, family members deferred the entire interview to a single member. So, in only one case do I have information about the entire family. Information for the family rests with a single interview with only one family member. Unfortunately, seven women entrusted their

partners (all men) to represent them. Four of the women were of the view that, their partners had a comprehensive understanding of what they had been going through since their immigration to Canada and could speak for their families. The remaining three were not interested.

In retrospect, I could have done a better job of explaining the importance of having two persons per household to participate. I suspect that the main reason for their disinterest in this technique is that they did not fully understand the intentions of the study, and more importantly, they were very busy people with highly regimented time schedules. I was lucky enough to have access to a single-family member. I take this as a learning exercise and will adjust future research accordingly.

4.7 Interview guide

Data for the study was collected through semi-structured interviews. It is an appropriate method because it helps the researcher to explore detailed information about the perspective, experiences and expectations of study participants and also allow the participants to provide new direction to the line of investigation (Boyce and Neale, 2006). Classic ethnographers such as Malinowski have stressed on the significance of talking to people face-to-face to get their point of view (Burgess, 1982). A semi-structured interview in this study therefore produces a fundamental process where knowledge about the social world of participants is constructed through normal human interactions (Rorty, 1980). An interview guide was used to collect data from all study participants. The question guide is divided into two parts. Part one includes a few short demographic questions mainly to understand the family unit and its components. Part two captures the socio-economic experiences of participants prior to migrating to Canada and their post-arrival experiences. The content of the interview ranged from participant's perceptions about Canada's economic prospects, their employment pursuit in Canada and memorable experience(s),

perceptions about immigrant employment opportunities in Canada among others. The questions were designed to explore their experiences in accessing the Canadian labour market and the events that led them to opt for a career change and to explore career options and possibilities in Canada. And lastly, the questions had the objective of assessing the outcomes of their choice. In what ways had their choice changed their lives, how has the change of career impacted their lives in Canada? Would they still choose anything given other opportunities? Probing these issues was very pertinent in understanding their socio-economic experiences prior to migrating to Canada and their post-arrival experiences.

4.8 Interview procedures

Before the interviews began, I explained the study and also provided each participant with a consent form to review and sign. I reviewed each section in the consent form with the participants and offered explanations if required. An unsigned copy of the consent form was left with all participants. Six of the interviews took place in participants' homes, three at their work places and two at University of Manitoba campus. All interviews were conducted in English and those who needed further clarification on the interview questions were given necessary support.

On average, the interview lasted between 45 minutes to 1 hour and the questions were in two sections. All the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher. During the interview, the researcher took notes of all salient points made by participants which were not captured in the question guide. After each interview, participants were appreciated for their time and willingness to be part of the study. In total, *eleven* participants were interviewed between June and August 2017. Their ages ranges from 25-54. There were eight males and three females; ten of the participants were married and one was a single mother (See Table 4).

Table 4: Demographic and socio-economic profile of participants

Name*	Gender**	Age	Marital status***	Level of education	Entrance category	Family unit composition
Alaka	M	35-44	M	Bachelor's	Economic	Two parents with two children
Adebisi	F	25-34	M	Bachelor's	Family	Two married people
Bisola	F	45-54	S	Bachelor's	Economic	Single mother with four children
Emeka	M	45-54	M	Diploma	Economic	Two parents with three children
Ganiru	M	35-44	M	Bachelor's	Student	Two parents with three children
Moses	M	35-44	M	Bachelor's	Economic	Two parents with two children
Adaeze	F	25-34	M	Bachelor's	Family	Two parents with two children
Oluwa	M	25-34	M	Bachelor's	Economic	Two parents with two children
Paul	M	45-54	M	Master's	Economic	Two parents with three children
Peter	M	45-54	M	Bachelor's	Economic	Two parents with three children
Samuel	M	35-44	M	Master's	Economic	Two parents with one child

* Pseudonym: **M: male; F: female; ***M: Married; S: single mother.

Name*	Ages of children ****	Occupation prior to migration	Current occupation	Duration of employment
Alaka	Two teens	Banker	Disability support worker	3 years
Adebisi	-	I.T personnel	Disability support worker	6 months
Bisola	Four teens	Teacher	Disability support worker	3 years
Emeka	Two grade-schoolers and one teen	Electrician	Electrician	2 years
Ganiru	Three Preschoolers	Banker	Student	-
Moses	Two grade-schoolers	Administrative assistant	Customer service	1 year
Adaeze	Two Toddlers	Teacher	Customer service	1 year
Oluwa	Two toddlers	I.T personnel	Disability support worker	2 years
Paul	One grade-schooler, one teen and one young adult	Public servant	student	-
Peter	Three preschoolers	Accountant	Educational assistant	1 year
Samuel	One baby	School clerk	Security guard	3 years

****Ages of children: Baby: 0-12 months, Toddler: 1-3years,

Preschooler:3-5 years, Grade-schooler: 5-12 years, Teen: 12- 18 years, Young adults: 18-21 years.

4.9 Validity, reliability and accuracy of research instruments and data

      Both validity and reliability are essential component of any research whether quantitative or qualitative in nature and are the two most important and fundamental characteristics of any measurement procedure. Validity is defined as the degree to which a measuring instrument measures what is designed to measure (Neuman, 2006). A research design is said to be valid, authentic, credible and trustworthy, if it enables the researcher to elicit the correct responses from the sampled subjects, otherwise, it will be faulty in design and may lead to misleading findings.

      Blanche and Durrheim (1999) defined reliability as the dependability of a measurement instrument, that is, the extent to which the instrument yields the same results on repeated trials. The researcher took the following measures to ensure the interview guide was valid and reliable. The interview questions were pre-tested to make sure all questions could be understood, and that useful information could be retrieved. Feedback from three colleague students helped deal with any ambiguity and confusion with the interview questions. An audio-recording of the interview ensured accurate oral data in their original form. The researcher also used direct quotations (low level descriptors) to help readers experience the participants' world (Ary et al., 2006, p. 506). The researcher also ensured that the right target population was identified and interviewed, i.e. Nigerian migrants residing in Winnipeg-Manitoba.

      Qualitative researchers consider *credibility* as one of the trustworthiness criteria to ensure the accuracy of qualitative findings (Schwandt, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007). Credibility involves establishing that the results of the research is believable. To ensure there was no internal conflict or inconsistencies in the collected data, the researcher sent the analyzed and interpreted data back to participants for them to evaluate. Participants were also given the chance to suggest changes to their transcripts if they were unhappy or had been misreported.

<u>4.10 Data analysis</u>

Data from in-depth interviews was captured during the discussions and processed manually based on recurrent themes and patterns. The data was coded over a number of times to identify significant themes for the study. Analysis of the qualitative data focused on categorizing the data with simple codes in order to uncover common themes in participants' answers. The analysis proceeded from preset categories which the researcher wanted to know and went on to identify other themes which emerged from the narratives of the participants.

Altride-Stirling's (2001) thematic network approach is used to extract themes from the data for analysis. Themes are explained as patterns across data sets that are essential to the description of the phenomenon been studied or associated to a specific research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic networks thus aim to explore the understanding of an idea and seek to extract the relevant themes in a text at different levels for analysis (Altride-Stirling, 2001). Altride-Stirling presents three classes of themes required in the analysis process:

Basic theme: This refers to the first and most basic theme derived from the recorded data. It represents the characteristic of the data in the initial stages of the analysis and presents very little about the data sets. In order for the basic theme to make sense to the readership, it needs to be read within the context of other similar basic themes which come together to form an organizing theme.

Organizing theme: The organizing theme group main ideas proposed by several basic themes, and identify the main assumptions underlying these broader themes that are significant in the text as a whole. This involves sorting the different codes from the basic themes to form one potential theme rather than just the codes in the initial step.

Global theme: These are groups of organizing themes combined to form a global theme to present an argument, or position about a given issue been studied. A global theme conveys to the readership what the text as a whole is about through the presentation of thematic networks within the context of a particular analysis.

Figure 8: Structure of a thematic network.
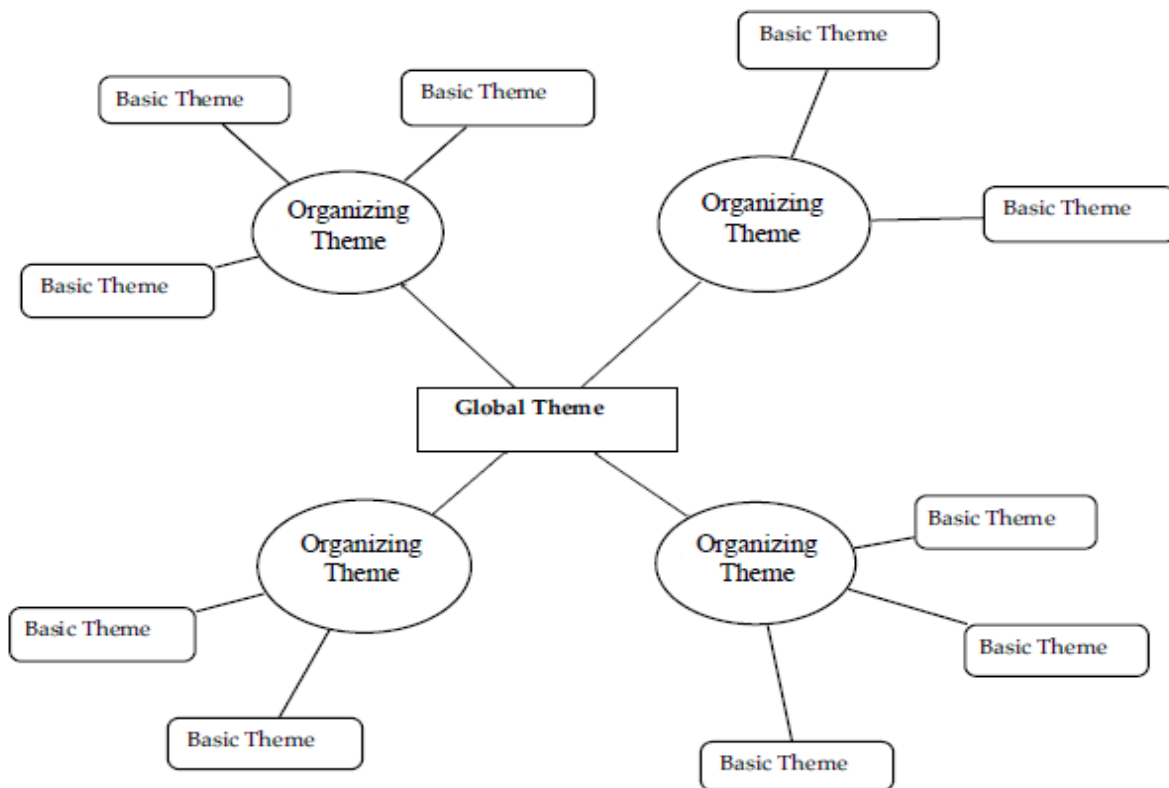
Source: Thematic networks: an analytical tool for qualitative research (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

In analyzing an interview question such as "*why you migrated to Canada*", basic themes (also referred as codes) that emerge from the data set for instance, for employment, job satisfaction, opportunity for career advancement, desire for higher wages or salaries and similar codes are grouped under one common organizing theme such as *economic consideration* for migrating to

Canada. Subsequently, all the organizing themes come together to form a Global theme, for example *migration intentions*, which is used to form a thematic network for the analysis.

Finally, the descriptive information about the participants as well as each of the codes are described whereby sample quotes from the transcripts are made available in the analysis.

4.11 Research ethics approval and considerations

Respecting the rights of research participants is an important step recognized by the research community (Corti, Day & Backhouse, 2000). Ethical clearance was obtained from Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board (included as an appendix III) at the University of Manitoba. The researcher explained fully and meaningfully about the nature of the study, participants' role, identity of researcher, relevance of the study and how the information obtained will be disseminated and used. Participants were made aware of their rights to participate or refuse to answer any question without penalty. They were also assured of their personal information not to be shared with anyone without their knowledge and permission. In order to protect the identity and anonymity of participants, pseudonyms are used in all records and notes, including tape recordings.

In summary, rights, anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents were respected in all phases of the study. Informed verbal consent with participants was taken before data collection. The purpose of the study, issues of anonymity and confidentiality, voluntary participation and freedom to discontinue the interview at any stage, and absence of any known risk or benefit for participating in the study was explained beforehand. To preserve anonymity, all findings are presented with pseudonym without any identifiable personal description.

4.12 Research challenges and limitations

As with all research, I experienced several challenges. The first, regarding the reluctance of all family members to be interviewed, was already discussed. Other challenges are related to the qualitative methods themselves. Firstly, critics of the qualitative approach argue that generalizing the findings of such studies is difficult because of their limited coverage (Creswell, 1998). The intention of qualitative research is to understand contextual and situational information, not to generalize it, so although the findings cannot be extended to populations within or outside Winnipeg, the findings do help us understand some of the context behind family-related migration decisions (Creswell, 1998).

The second challenge of this research has to do with its limitation to only Winnipeg; this geographic location may influence the study's results. The small sample, though descriptive, limits the extent to which participants can be representative and findings generalized. The relatively defined sample might not be large enough to generalize the results to other immigrants of Canada or to other countries in the world more generally because it's limited to a single ethnic group.

Another challenge the research faced was during the data collection stages as most of the interviewees were constrained by time and their busy work schedule. Eventually when the researcher was able to locate participants who matched the sample, their busy schedules made it incredibly difficult to set an interview time. On several occasions the researcher had gone to some participants' homes after an appointment to find they had completely forgotten about the interview and were not home. On a number of times appointments had to be cancelled or rescheduled due to unforeseen circumstances. This situation extended the duration allocated for the collection of the interview data.

4.13 Conclusion

This chapter described the methodology used for this study. The study results and thematic analysis of the collected data is discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5-Findings and discussion

5.1 Introduction

      Immigration is an issue both for high income countries as well as those people who leave their home countries for temporary or permanent settlement. There is no doubt that migration can contribute to positive and sustainable economic growth and development in both host and source countries when supported by appropriate policies (United Nations, 2017). However, despite the significant benefits of migration, many migrants meet challenges in host countries which they never expected. Using in-depth interviews with eleven recently arrived Nigerian immigrants, three organizing themes emerge from accounts of socio-economic conditions in Canada: 1) pre-arrival economic situations and reasons for migration; 2) post migration life and job satisfaction of participants and their families; and 3) hope for the future. This chapter presents these findings and discusses the data which informs the qualitative analysis.

Figure 9: Perceptions of Nigerian immigrant family's pre and post migration

Global theme
Perception of Nigerian immigrant families about their socio-economic status and situations pre and post migration in Canada.

Pre-arrival economic situations and reasons for migration

Basic themes: the economic reasons to migrate to Canada, work history, first job in Canada, their current jobs and also the socio-economic status of the immigrants in the host country.

Post migration life and job satisfaction of participants and their families

Basic themes: waiting time for their first job in Canada, the reason for choosing or not choosing Canada as the first choice for migrating, satisfaction with the first job as well as the current job in Canada and similar themes.

Hope for the future

Basic themes: Outlook of participant's quality of life, economic prospects and career, educational opportunities among others in the coming years.

5.2 Pre-arrival economic situations and reasons for migration

One theme revolves around the economic reasons for which families migrate from Nigeria to Canada and the economic situations they experience in Canada. Familial worry about their economic stability is the most often mentioned aspect of the integration experience both in my study and in other studies. This theme includes the following: work history, reasons for migrating to Canada, first job in Canada and current job in Canada.

5.2.1 Work history

To start the interview, I ask participants to talk about their previous employment history in Nigeria. Ten of the participants were employed immediately prior to their arrival in Canada and one was unemployed. Their professions before immigration include banking, academics, teaching, technical and IT, accounting and manufacturing. Ten of the participants cite job insecurity and one mentions job loss as major reasons that encouraged them to leave Nigeria for Canada. Alaka's story of job loss in Nigeria is representative. When I ask him why he came to Canada, he said:

> I read banking and finance so after my graduation, I started working at a bank but later due to the economic situation of the country, most banks were going down. The staffs were being laid off, so eventually I lost my job. I decided to do my personal business, thus setting up a small company but at the same time, you can't really project what would come out of it because it wasn't something I planned for anyway, but just for me not to be idle. So as soon as the Canada opportunity came, I grabbed it. (*Alaka, male, married with two children, former banker, and now disability support worker*).

From my observations, it appears that the women in my study had more "stable" economic futures in Nigeria. A teacher who arrived in 2013 described her account as follows:

Back home in Nigeria I actually studied education; I studied African literature and educational administration. So, I was teaching back home, and I thought for 25 years before relocating to Canada. (*Bisola, single mother with four children, former teacher and now disability support worker*).

After the passing of her husband, Bisola explained that she and her children needed a new life. She was motivated by her niece who already lives in Winnipeg to migrate to Canada because of the job opportunities, quality health care and education Canada offered. Living in Winnipeg would mean she will be close to other family members.

Another woman had this to say:

I used to work as an I.T professional with the government back home. I was indifferent about coming and wasn't that crazy about coming. I just migrated to join my husband who lives here in Winnipeg. It was for marital considerations. (*Adebisi, female, married, former IT manager, and now a disability support worker*).

5.2.2 Reasons for migrating to Canada

Almost all of my participants are economic migrants, which is to be expected given that about two-thirds of immigrants to Canada arrive in this category (IRCC,2017). But there were other reasons that push Nigerians to Canada. Safety is a major concern for both males and females, along with better educational and career prospects for their children. As Ganiru tells me:

I left mainly for economic reasons and some other reasons like safety in terms of security. We were doing very well in Nigeria before we moved here, but the security situation in Nigeria was terrible. As you may know, we are from north-eastern Nigeria where life is

not that normal because of Boko Haram. We were living in constant fear for our lives, so

we decided to come to Canada (*Ganiru, male, married with three children, former banker,*

now pursuing a master's degree).

Others, like Alaka, mention economic and educational reasons for leaving Nigeria.

I came here for economic reasons and also for my children's education. I cannot compare

the education back home to what is available here in Canada. Back home teachers regularly

go on strike, there is strike today and strike tomorrow, which is completely opposite of how

teachers are in Canada. So basically, I will say number one is about economic and two for

my children's education. (*Alaka, male, married with two children, former banker, and now*

disability support worker).

My observations match those made by Shackelford (2010) who finds that parents' concern over

their children's social and educational needs most often compel people to migrate from one

country to another. Other participants highlight the presence of better socio-political conditions

and increased safety in Canada compared to Nigeria as primary reasons for immigrating.

5.2.3 First job in Canada

In response to questions about their first job in Canada, most participants explained they were part-

time or basic jobs, which in the initial days of their settlement in Canada did little more than make

ends meet. As one participant remembered:

When I landed here in Canada, actually my first job was working in a retirement home as

an elderly care provider. Working in a retirement home was something very new to me

because I have never really worked with seniors before. It was really very difficult and also

communication was my major problem. They didn't seem to understand my accent and I

kept repeating myself over and over which made me feel very frustrated. I felt like going back home, I said to myself what am I doing here to work that kind of job compared to what I was doing back home. They are two different things, having to work with old people and teaching young adults. (*Bisola, single mother with four children, a former teacher, and now a disability support worker*).

Although Adebisi was well educated and had work as an I.T professional, she was unable to convert her human capital into appreciable economic benefit and ended up as a disability support worker on arrival to Canada. She asserted that:

Am not as happy as I thought I would be in Canada now. I was thinking that at worst I should get like an administrative assistant position or maybe a secretary or something like that. (*Adebisi, female, married, former IT manager, and now a disability support worker*).

Others discussed the extremely difficult process of seeking their professional credentials recognized in Canada. Peter exemplified the frustrations many immigrants experience in trying to ensure their credentials are recognized. To make ends meet, he was forced to give up his career as an accountant and take on labour for which he was vastly overqualified. Peter currently works as an educational assistant in Winnipeg and is also pursuing a program to return to his previous profession.

Back home I was trained as an accountant. I was a supervisor working at executive levels with a multi-national company. But when I came here, I found out that switching over to my profession was not that simple or easy. To join the professional bodies and take exams to be certified would have taken me four years but I had a family already who were fully dependent on me. I thought going for that full program or certification in Canada could

bring economic constraints on me, so I had to look for options that were not time consuming. I first worked at a manufacturing factory as laborer while at the same time trying to get admission to upgrade my credentials and also have a Canadian experience. (*Peter, male, married with three children, former accountant, and now an educational assistant*).

In summary, all of my participants indicate they worked at jobs for which they were vastly overqualified — mainly in support or care roles. This is common occurrence among immigrants from many countries.

 5.2.4 Current job in Canada
Ten of the eleven participants had worked at two different jobs since their arrival to Canada. Almost all of them had changed jobs for more amenities and better economic prospects. With each job change, the Nigerian immigrants found better work for better pay. Some managed to find their way back into their former profession. For instance, Emeka who was trained as an electrician back in Nigeria first worked as a security guard in Canada. He was excited to land his dream job with Manitoba Hydro after training in Canada. However, most other participants were not so lucky, having to settle for basic jobs compared to what they had been doing in Nigeria. For instance, one participant who had been an IT professional in Nigeria had to settle for a much lower paying, with lower status job as a disability support worker in Canada.

Yea, before you come to Canada you will hear all stories like…. yes, Canada is a good place to be, lots of jobs, lots of opportunities for one to easily settle down but the reality on the ground is a bit different supposed to what I was thinking. Because you have to do jobs which are not in your field and also not your first choice. (*Adebisi, female, married, former IT manager, and now a disability support worker).*

Whether permanent or temporary, voluntary or forced, migration is a complex process. Individual migrants may experience obstacles in the settlement, adaptation, and integration process in host countries before they may later call home. For Adebisi, not getting a job in her field left her frustrated and conflicted, questioning whether to return to Nigeria or to stay in Winnipeg. Family considerations were very significant in her ultimate decision to stay in Canada. She is currently taking courses at the university and hope to become a nurse.

Upon their arrival to Canada, all participants experienced job status decline and had to settle (at least temporarily) for jobs for which they were over-qualified. A recent study shows that about two-thirds of all immigrants experience a significant decline in their job status as their credentials, even though they contribute to the points needed to enter Canada, yet are not recognized by employers (Wilkinson, et al., 2016). As a result, five of the participants (four males and one female) had to retrain before they could be recognized by Canadian regulatory bodies.

5.3 Post-migration life and job satisfaction of participants and their families
Job and overall satisfaction after immigration, pre and post-immigration, are also important themes. I examine life satisfaction among Nigerian immigrants before they arrived in Canada, as well as through the settlement process. The basic findings in this section shed light on: Canada as first choice for immigrating, waiting time for first job, satisfaction in first job, satisfaction with current job and satisfaction with work-life balance.

 5.3.1 Canada as first choice for immigrating
I ask participants whether "Canada was their first choice for immigration". There were mixed responses. While *five* of the participants (two females and three males) declared that Canada was their first choice, *six* (five males and one female) said otherwise.

Canada was my first choice, with the reason been that my elder brother was already here, so he sponsored me and my family to migrate here. I thought Canada was a place that gives great opportunity to enable someone does better in life. I considered Canada to be even better than USA in terms of free health care provision. (*Peter, male, married with three children, former accountant and now an educational assistant*).

Another participant also had this to say: "Canada was my first choice, and I chose Canada because it's one of the best countries in the world". (*Emeka, male, married with three children, former security guard and currently works as an electrician with Manitoba Hydro*).

 In short, rather than deciding based on solely economic "return," these families selected Canada for family reasons.

For other participants, Canada was not their first choice. I asked them about that.

I moved to the U.K first and spent eleven years there before migrating to Canada finally. U.K has a very tight economy. It's a strong economy but ummmm for migrants' job opportunities are limited even if you are educated there, which is quite different from Canada. Here is more flexible which I've come to notice within the past two years. (*Moses, male, married with two children, former administrative assistant, now a customer experience associate).*

Paul said this:

The United States was my first choice. I chose Canada because, errrm basically U. S was tougher to get to and I didn't want to be illegal immigrant anywhere. With Canada, you can do a legitimate program and gain permanent residence and your citizenship. I thought about Canada as same as US, both developed countries, though US offer more

opportunities to migrants than Canada. (*Paul, male, married with three children, former public servant, and currently pursuing a nursing degree*).

It is worthwhile noting that these interviews took place just prior to the immigration restrictions and anti-immigration rhetoric introduced by the Americans in the past 12 months.

5.3.2 Waiting time for first job

Most participants took about two to three months to find their first job. Among the participants, Moses spent the longest time unemployed. He explains "It just took me a little over three months. The reason was that I was been selective to find the right job". Peter, in contrast, found a job in just six weeks. Their overall perception regarding the average waiting time, barring several exceptions, were negative as some of them believed that waiting to find work pushed them into spending their savings.

> We were not happy at all because we were dipping into our savings. We were paying house rent, you know! We had in our plans that, in two to three weeks from what we were told we should be able to find something doing but it took us three months. I remember we were dipping into our savings, so it was tough with the kids. We pay our rent through our savings and run the whole house through our savings. (*Ganiru, male, married with three children, former banker and now pursuing a master's degree).*

Spending their savings caused great stress among family members. It, in combination with the stress of finding a job in a new country, can lead to family dysfunction and additional distress, findings which are discussed later in the chapter.

5.3.3 Satisfaction in first job

The participants had mixed reports on their satisfaction with their first job in Canada. Some were unhappy or only partially happy with their first job in Canada. The discounting of foreign

credentials was a major factor which affected most participants in their job pursuit. Working at jobs for which a person is overqualified is frustrating for almost all study participants. Despite having four years of experience in I.T field, Adebisi could not find a job that was commensurate with her credentials as an I.T manager and as a result, she ended up as a disability support worker.

> I feel that I have so much potential which I'm not utilizing. With support worker job, you don't really have to do much. It's like what you do on day-to-day basis for yourself and you do that for another person. Your potentials are not being maximized. There is a lot more I believe and know I can do, which am not doing. It's like I have been redundant. (*Adebisi, female, married, former I.T manager and now a disability support worker*).

Bisola, a single parent who moved to Winnipeg in 2013 was also unhappy with her first job as an elderly care provider. She was further displeased that she had to work multiple jobs to make ends meet. She had to spend more time at work than with her family.

> I wasn't really satisfied because what I was been paid could not even pay my rent. I had to work extra hours, so I started looking for another job because first and foremost, I had rent to pay and four mouths to feed. So altogether, I had five mouths to feed and what I was getting was relatively small. (*Bisola, female, single mother with four children, a former teacher and now disability support worker).*

Other participants cited other reasons for their partial or low job satisfaction. Of these reasons, the primary concern was the low economic benefits and lack of prospects in their first job in terms of low salary, inferior working conditions and lack of job security as many of such jobs were temporary and casual in nature. Alaka, who arrived in 2015 as a banker, narrates his story this way:

I worked with a window framing and glass manufacturing company as a casual staff when I first arrived. I worked there for four to five months. It was a very difficult job, you have to stand on your feet for eight hours a day which is something I've never done before. It got to a stage where I was asking myself, is this the job I will be doing for the rest of my life in Canada? So eventually I started looking for another job. (*Alaka, male, married with two children, former banker, and now disability support worker*).

5.3.4 Satisfaction with current job

From the accounts of the participants, it appears that most of the men were satisfied with their current jobs than women. Seven (six males and one female) out of eleven participants asserted that they were considerably happy and satisfied with their current job, which was at least a second position they have held since migrating to Canada. Subsequent jobs made participants happier because they reported greater economic stability and higher income, along with increased job satisfaction. One woman states:

"I am satisfied, you know! I will say the benefits, the working environment and the atmosphere in general. You know, if your work place feels like home, definitely you will be happy". (*Adaeze, female, married with two children, former teacher, now a customer service associate*).

Alaka had this to say after changing jobs:

I am happy and satisfied because I realized that this job is not that difficult, and it affords me an opportunity to meet another set of people that need our help, people that are challenged. So, it's another kind of experience for me, you know, I've never

had that kind of experience so am very satisfied with that. (*Alaka, male, married*

with two children, former banker, and now disability support worker)

One major motivation for participants like Moses is income. While Moses is not satisfied with his

current job, he now has more time for his family, especially his children, due to his work flexibility:

Well, in terms of remuneration, that is the pay, I might not be hundred percent satisfied

because as an economic being you want more. However, both jobs fit into my family's

program at the moment. My wife works a full-time job and I have kids that go to school. I

have to take them to school in the morning, and I need to pick them up, you know. I need

to also go to work, so the two jobs fit into my schedule that is why at the moment am stuck

with them. However, I know I have the potential to grow. (*Moses, male, married with two*

children, former administrative assistant, now a customer experience associate).

Bisola also expressed the desire to help and support her children through school as the motivation

that keeps her going even though she is not satisfied with her current job:

I am not really satisfied with my current occupation because this is not what I intend to do.

It's just the situation or the condition that made me result in doing this job. Like I said, my

kids are still in school, so I am just waiting for the opportunity maybe in the next two years

when they are done. I might decide to go back to school myself if am not too old to get into

my teaching profession or go back to Nigeria. (*Bisola, female, single mother with four*

children, a former teacher and now disability support worker).

While there is legislation to protect people from being discriminated against because of their race

both in and outside the workplace, Emeka shared this experience at his current job:

Now am happy and satisfied because it's what I was looking forward to do just that there is racism. Some white people do not want to work with black people. They don't want it, even though everybody is working to get their own money, but they don't want it. They are always looking for what is not necessary to blame it on you. They will be doing things which they can't even do to their sons but because you are black, they will be doing it to you. That's the only thing I can say is a problem at my current job (*Emeka, male, married with three children, former security guard and currently works as an electrician with Manitoba Hydro*)**.**

Sadly, workplace racism exists. This is a topic that arose in my research and which is also reported in published studies. Although racism was not explicitly asked about in my interview guide, Emeka raised it. His sentiments are supported by a recent article done by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). According to the article, the working environment at a northern Manitoba hydro construction site was highly discriminative (CBC, 2018). The article was based on a report done in 2017 which sought to assess the working environment at the hydro site. Based on the findings from the report, it was established that the culture of discrimination was strongly embedded amongst the workers. For instance, issues of racial slurs and derogatory comments were very common with high levels of tension amongst the indigenous and non-indigenous workers. Some of the respondents featured in the report stated that they had pre-conceived notions of racial profiling and the lack of awareness on native culture amongst the non-indigenous labourers aggravated the situation with high levels of mistrust, resentment, and misunderstandings (CBC, 2018).

5.4 Effects of job struggles on family functioning

It was evident from the narratives of this study that despite having increasing level of education and a wealth of experience, most participants worked in low paying jobs which affected their family functioning. Paul expressed his unhappiness for leaving his family behind and returning to school in Thunder Bay to get a "good" paying job despite already earning a master's degree in Nigeria.

> I was already a manager in agriculture back in Nigeria, but I was a labourer here. Well, they don't call it labourer, but I was loading trains, I was receiving grains and working in a warehouse. Even if you have not gone to school, you can do it. You don't need a degree to do the job. And I was not paid for my degree too. I left my job and am back to school. I try to keep my relationship with my family alive. The little time I have, I try to spend with them and I thank God they understand the situation. Like now am about to go away, I have gone away for almost the whole of last year for my first year in school. By September, I am going away too, and it might be the whole year. So, I only come in and visit maybe once in a while until I finish my course. So where is the family time? I am home for summer now, but I cannot even stay home because am looking for money to pay my tuition. (*Paul, male, married with three children, former public servant, and now studying nursing*).

Working longer hours was the second issue which affected a significant number of participants of this study. The narratives which came from work and family life balance revealed that most participants, i.e., eight of the eleven (six males and two females) spent more time at work than with their families. The need for a greater income was reported to be a major reason behind the longer working hours. Samuel details his experience of jumping in-between jobs and how it affected his family:

I get less time for my family here, that's the lifestyle here compared to Nigeria. In Nigeria, I would say you can spend hundred per cent time with family because you just work during the day and come back home in the evening. But here, if you want to have that same situation, that means you have to get a very good job with a good pay. That is working one job. But, if you are in the average side, then you have to balance two jobs. You may work in the morning; come home to your family for few hours and go back to work at night which is quite difficult (*Samuel, male, married with one child, former school clerk and now a security guard*).

Another participant, stated:

I only worked 8 hours back home. Eight hours a day, five days a week. But in Canada, we are jumping at every opportunity to work. In my previous work, because of the amount of money I made and the fact that I wanted to meet the needs of my family, I jumped at every opportunity to work and left my family behind. I have worked 22 hours per day before. If there is any opportunity for over time, I will be the first person to say 'yes' because we needed money to survive here. (*Paul, male, married with three children, former public servant, and now studying nursing*).

Bisola also had this to say:

We used to have family dinner back home, but it is not so anymore. Before I get home my kids are already in bed, where is the time for family dinner? We don't really have time to communicate as a family because sometimes my kids, there is one who does a part-time job and he is also most of the time out of the house. It's either he is in school or at his place of work. So, the only time we meet most of the time is on Sunday's when we have to go to

church or when we have a public holiday which you know, is sad. (*Bisola, female, single mother with four children, a former teacher and now disability support worker*)

In most African cultures, parenting is a shared responsibility, much like it is in Canada. Families in Nigeria, however, usually get help and support from extended family members including grandparents, an uncle, an aunt, a cousin and others in raising children which sometimes paves way for parents to pursue their respective careers. In economic sense, households with two full-time working parents are better off when compared to those with single working parents.

Based on the interviews, it was evident that the families were faced with major challenges in trying to strike a balance between work and home, but most had a way out of this. As expected, the presence of a child or children had a great influence on the career development of the parent, but variations were apparent across different age groups of the children. For instance, most of the families having teens in the household could take care of themselves and help looking after their younger siblings while families with toddlers and elementary school aged children required their parents or an elderly person to take care of them. Except for Bisola and Adaeze families, participants with older children were more likely to be satisfied with their jobs than those with younger ones.

Peter's experience details the difficulties some immigrants go through in choosing between raising children especially preschoolers and pursuing their careers in Canada when they have left other family members behind.

Back home I had a lot of family support to help out with the kids but here it's not that easy. The three children I have now really constraints my availability to work and same with my wife. It's either I stay home to watch over the kids for my wife to go to work or she stays

home for me to go. So, we have now decided that, my wife stays home and take care of the children whiles I work. This was not the case back home where we both worked full-time. (*Peter, male, married with three children, former accountant and now an educational assistant).*

Samuel, who worked as a security guard at the time of the interview is the only participant who has the same experience as Peter. He is married, and his wife is a stay-at-home mom taking care of their baby. Oluwa and Adaeze, a married couple with two toddlers, were lucky enough to have one grandparent in Canada taking care of their children while they are both at work. It is important to note here that the prevailing assumption in the immigration literature is that the problem occurs in the exact opposite way. Immigrant women are more likely to have difficulties adjusting to live in Canada because they have to work—whereas they did not in their former country. This sexist assumption is clearly incorrect, at least when we consider the lives of Nigerian families.

With regards to Alaka, Bisola, Emeka and Paul's families, their eldest child undertakes care duties whenever the parents are at work. Ganiru and Moses, who are both male participants, in contrast, have part time and flexible working hours which allow them to send their grade-schoolers to school in the morning and pick them up after work while their partners work full time. Societies are changing and so are gender roles. Women are no longer seen as being solely responsible for taking care of the home and children. The findings show that men share more child care responsibilities in Canada than they did back in Nigeria even though the overall responsibility remains with women. When older children become capable, they too undertake child care roles. Like Canadian families, Nigerian families have adapted to gender role changes and economic conditions that necessitate that childcare becomes a family endeavor.

In summary, four of the participant families gets support from their elderly children, two participants combine childcare with their work schedules, a couple gets help from a grandparent, two other participants have no help which force their partners to be stay-at-home mothers and one did not have a child. The sacrifices these newcomers have made to give their families economic security is an issue that is almost completely ignored in the vast research on economic integration among immigrants. It is clear from my interviews that working families pay a big price in terms of time they can spend with their families, but that older siblings and other family members do undertake significant childcare responsibilities if both parents are working.

5.5 Strategies to deal with troubles pertaining to work

One strategy that most participants believe could help them overcome the struggle of working outside their field of study was to return to school to earn a "Canadian" credential. After struggling for nearly a year to make use of her existing credentials in Canada, Adebisi decided to upgrade her education to get a different and better paying job.

> At the moment am going back to school. Then from observation and from findings, I would say that when you have a Canadian degree and then you have an education in a sector or area where there are needs and demand. I am trying to get into nursing and from what I have heard from friends and family, there is a high demand for nurses here in Canada because I met a couple of people who even before their graduation, they already had jobs. Aside that, in the nursing area I've noticed that if people have degree from here, then it's easier for them integrating into the system and get better jobs or would I say jobs they prefer to do (*Adebisi, female, married, former I.T Manager and now a disability support worker*).

Paul also had this to say:

> Well, now, I should say am optimistic because I left my job and am back to school. So, my optimism is on what I am doing now. I am in a nursing school at a university and am hoping that when I graduate I will be able to get into nursing profession which I heard pays well. (*Paul, male, married with 3 children, former public servant, and currently pursuing a nursing degree*).

Bisola shares the same sentiment of going back school but to her the most important concern was to see her children through school first.

> If all of us were to go to school at the same, who is going to now bring food to the table? So, I had to make a choice, which one was more important? Is it my children's education or mine? So, I decided to allow my children go whiles I do the job. (*Bisola, female, single mother with four children, a former teacher and now disability support worker)*

In summary, it appears that some women delay their retraining to allow their children to pursue post-secondary education while for some men, they are able to return to school with the help of their working spouses.

Confidence and self-esteem may gradually erode after years of trials and failures to find meaningful employment in a new country. This experience may affect newcomer job seeker's emotions and destroy their family arrangements. To participant like Moses, the most important thing to keep in mind is to not lose confidence in the job search.

> In Canada, I think I've tried as much as possible to adjust to life despite all the hurdles and as my late father used to tell me, what is worth doing is worth doing well. It's like being in

a relationship, having a family, whatever you have to do, you have to give your best and have confidence that one day things are going get better. Same as looking for a dream job, you have to give your best and leave the rest because you've done your best. *(Moses, male, married with two children, works as a customer experience associate)*.

Moses further explained that participating actively with the Nigerian community in Winnipeg and volunteering with other non-governmental agencies has helped him adjust well regardless of his job struggles. Having a strong community is also helpful in aiding successful integration.

5.6 Hope for the future
Most of my participants have a very positive outlook for their future, despite the troubles they have experienced.

5.6.1 Outlook regarding future in Canada
When asked about their perceptions regarding their economic future in Canada, all of the participants were highly optimistic. Several factors were observed behind this optimism, the primary one being job and income security, which can be seen from their narratives:

I know Canada is a good place for the future because here you can save but actually you have to work for it. If you work for something and you get it, it's better than to work and never getting it. You understand what I mean? Like in Nigeria, you can work for six months and never get paid but here if you work for one minute, they will give you your money. So, it gives you a rest of mind that this is a good place you can stay while you can also work. *(Emeka, male, married with three children, former security guard and currently works as electrician with Manitoba Hydro)*.

In short, there is more job security and the knowledge that work ensures a regular monthly pay cheque. This is not the condition in Nigeria. Apart from the economic stability and the job

satisfaction, the existence of social programs such as benefits for family, education, training and housing were also behind the optimism of many participants regarding their future in Canada:

> I am very optimistic of course. The system in Canada is designed to give you chances to explore and there are not many restrictions. You can be what you want to become so far as it's done rightfully or not against the laws of the land. You can go back to school to improve on your education and you have good government financial backup system. You can easily get student loans, bursaries etc. I mean it's just there. (*Moses, male, married with two children, former administrative assistant, and now a customer experience associate*).

This sentiment indicates that many Nigerians remain optimistic about their future in Canada despite their initial challenges and setbacks. Most are more optimistic about their future in Canada, more optimistic than if they had stayed in Nigeria. A male participant, Alaka explained,

> "I am very optimistic because I realized my job is much secured, I have two full-time jobs which are all secured. I also realized that in Canada you don't have to get large savings to achieve whatever you want to achieve. Once you have good credit history and you lay out your plans and strategize, you will surely succeed." (*Alaka, male, married with two children, former banker, and now disability support worker*).

However, despite the optimism, one participant expresses a negative sentiment about life in Canada.

> In Canada, people don't care about you; you don't even know who your next neighbor is. You might be in your room dying of depression, but nobody will know, and you just rot away. Even when you say "hi" to some people, they find it difficult to greet back. Compared to what we have back home, that communal love is not in Canada. It's more of

self, self, and self. They don't show love to their neighbours. What I see here is I, me and myself. They are self-centered people, which is not good at all. (*Bisola, female, single mother with four children, a former teacher and now disability support worker*).

Bisola explained further that she doesn't feel a sense of belonging in his neighbourhood because of this experience and finds it difficult to make friends here in Canada compared to Nigeria. This is a common sentiment that Canadian culture is very individual-centered, and it can be difficult to make friends, particularly among those born in Canada.

5.7 Global Theme: perception of socio-economic status of participants
The overall perceptions of participants regarding their socio-economic situation is positive, as can be shown with the help of the following optimistic statements found from the narrations of the selected participants: "I mean there are jobs, you can get work here. We have different types of jobs here; you don't have to get only white-collar jobs, there are many jobs like cleaning, maintenance and much more. So, I think the economy is better than in Nigeria". (*Emeka, male, married with three children, formerly and currently work as electrician with Manitoba Hydro*).

Another participant said this:

I like the government policies. At least they pay more with regards to having a family. When you come to Canada and you have a family, it's better off than when you are here as a single person. When you are here as a family, the economy really cares for you because there are sectors that as a family you will turn to benefit. And with that one I think Canada is a place to stay. (*Samuel, male, married with one child, former school clerk, now a security guard in Canada*).

Moses agrees that Canada is a good place to raise a family and that there are many government's supports to help.

> For my family, I always emphasize on my family because of my kids. You know for them, education is the best thing for me to give them and I think my kids will excel here because of the quality of education Canada offers. For me too, I know am going to pursue some few programs in the future here in Canada. With the structures I've seen in Canada, you know, whatever support you need, it's just the matter of researching and finding the organizations that are in tune with it. You also get so much support from the government to achieve your aims in life; it's a pleasant place to be apart from the harsh weather in Winnipeg. (*Moses, male, married two children, former administrative assistant, and now a customer experience associate*).

Bisola also expressed her optimism this way: "I think my kids like it here because they are in school and when they leave school by the special grace of God there is hope for them, the future is bright for them which is a good thing". (*Bisola, female, single mother with four children, former teacher and now disability support work).*

From the above narratives, it can be asserted that the perceptions of the Nigerian immigrants are largely positive about their overall socio-economic status in Canada and this matches the narrative of other studies (Adeniran & Ikuteyijo, 2017).

5.8 Discussion

The main objective of this research is to study the overall perceptions of recent Nigerian immigrants about why they decided to migrate from Nigeria to Canada, how satisfied they are with their new life in Canada, and their views on their prospects in the host country. I also wanted to understand the challenges and hurdles they faced during their settlement period and their sense of the future regarding life in Canada. This is all shaped by family.

Some of my research findings relate to factors which motivate Nigerian immigrants to migrate to Canada. Most were moving to Canada for economic reasons. After recording a negative GDP growth rates (-0.36 and -2.6) in the first and second quarters of 2016, Nigeria's economy was declared to be in a technical recession (Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics, 2016a). Since then, the country's interest rates, inflation, employment prospects and other microeconomic indicators have worsened.

Currently, Nigeria is exiting recession due to recent rise in oil prices, but according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2018), the country needs to do more in order to reduce unemployment and address poverty. This is in spite of its massive oil reserves and recent economic growth. Continued inequality could primarily be attributed to the disproportionate population growth among the impoverished sections of the population and the failure of the economy to keep up with the production of goods and services. For instance, in 2017, Nigeria's population increased by approximately 2.6 percent, however its economy recorded an annual growth rate of only 0.82 percent (Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics, 2018). It could also be due to the well documented misappropriation of profit on the part of governments and owners and the infiltration of profiteers and terrorists. Fraud and decades of control over profits have meant that the poor are becoming even more poor while the rich are becoming richer. A recent report by the United Kingdom's

Department for International Development (DFID) found out that Nigeria lost US$32 billion to corruption during the six-year administration of the past government who left office in 2015. The misappropriation of funds represented 16 percent of the state's resources at the time (Ikpefan, 2017).

Conversely, Canada ranks among the top 10 countries in the world in terms of economic development with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of $1.6 trillion in 2015 and which is expected to hit the $1.8 trillion by 2022. In addition, and according to the World Bank, the GDP per capita in Nigeria lags behind at *$93.0 and* $1,970 between 1960 and 2017 compared to Canada that increased from *$2,294.6* to $ 45,032.12 during the same period (World Bank, 2018). The current projections also show a potential economic growth in the country over the coming years. Additionally, democracy and rules protecting workers make Canada a more enviable choice of migration countries. As a result, Canada has better economic opportunities when compared to Nigeria, which remains a low/medium income country. As such, it is not surprising that more and more Nigerians continue to be attracted to Canada to seize these economic opportunities. We see this in the increased numbers of Nigerians arriving to Canada in the past ten years. During this time, Nigeria has remained in the top ten countries of origin for all newcomers to Canada. Even more recently, Nigerians make up the largest number of would-be migrants crossing the border from the US to Canada and bypassing the Safe Third Country Agreement.

Research by economists tend to attribute migration mainly to economic reasons. Abel and Sander (2014), along with Picot and Sweetman (2012) among other economists, find in their research that the primary reason immigrants come to Canada is the perceived higher economic stability and welfare offered by the country when compared to their home countries. The participants in my study are no exception. The Neo-Classical Economic Theory, which is also the

basis of Canada's immigration system, supports this finding. According to the theory, individuals mainly decide to emigrate from one place to another depending on the perception of presence or absence of job opportunities, wage structure and job securities in the home countries and in the countries to which they immigrate (Castles, De Haas & Miller, 2013). The theory suggests that people usually emigrate from countries having less opportunity in these aspects to those with comparatively better prospects. This is the case within the Canadian-Nigerian context considering the increasing cases of unemployment and underemployment in Nigeria as cited previously. Since 1980, 20 million *more* Nigerians lived below the poverty line as compared to 2010. It means that more than 100 million Nigerians are experiencing extreme poverty (National Bureau of Statistics of Nigeria, 2018). As the economic polarization of Nigeria has increased, so has the propensity for Nigerians to move away to look for more stable economic futures. From the Canadian perspective, steady economic growth has continued to create job opportunities that require both skilled and unskilled labour. Moreover, Canadian workers are aging and leaving the labour force (Fields et. al. 2017) as such, the country is generally happy to welcome immigrants who fill shortages in the labour market. As evident from the findings of the current study, the largest proportion of the participants expressed their satisfaction with the job security in Canada compared with Nigeria and hence found Canada to be more fulfilling in terms of advancing their economic stability through the available job opportunities and the social safety net.

Thus, it can be said that the Nigerian immigrants generally make their immigration decision based on the cost benefit analysis between Canada and Nigeria, which generally supports the Neo-Classical theory of an international migration market (De Haas, 2008). But it would be a mistake to attribute all the migration motivation to economic conditions alone. Hidden behind the

economic reasons, however, are three other important reasons and these include; *safety*, *better life for their children and family reunification*.

According to the responses obtained from the participants, their family well-being was an important motivator for migrating. Both the men and the women in my study told me that was very important to better job opportunities and eventual improved living standards for their family and for their children. According to all the participants, the education system in Canada was far better for their children when compared to that of Nigeria, which was characterized by frequent teacher strikes among other shortfalls. Men and women were no different in this regard.

According to the United Nations, Canada leads Nigeria in all three dimensions of The Human Development index (HDI) report for 2016. The report contains estimates for 188 out of 193-member countries of the United Nations based on life expectancy, average educational attainment and average income. Canada is in an impressive 10th place while Nigeria dropped to 152nd. The findings of my study support this observation that indeed life might be a bit better in Canada compared to Nigeria and more importantly, that economics alone cannot explain migration decisions.

My findings also support the work of Maheux and Schellenberg (2007), where new immigrants to Canada indicated that safety, prospects for their children's future, and peaceful socio-political environment as primary motivators pulling them to the country. Again, these parameters cannot effectively be addressed by the neoclassical theory, yet they remain highly pertinent to this study as they influence the migration decisions of most Nigerians into Canada because migration may seem to be superficially related to individual economic gain, is in fact a family decision. In macro sense, the Neo-Classical theory tries to explain international

immigration as a phenomenon guided solely by the geographic-based economic disparities in the demand-supply condition in the labor market, which gives rise to a difference in wages, thereby inducing people to migrate from low wage countries to high wage ones (King, 2012). Because of its failure to include other motivators of migration (such as family) and to consider that the receiving society often does not recognize the work histories or experience of newcomers, this theory is only partially relevant to my study. Overall, it does a very poor job of explaining the reasons Nigerian immigrants come to Canada.

The New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) helps explain some of the gaps left by the previous conceptual framework (Mueller, 2013). It highlights the aspects of immigrants in the perspective of household survival strategy instead of the survival strategy of an individual immigrant. According to the theory, the decision to migrate is not merely an individual decision, but it is a collective decision of households or families to maximize income and employment opportunities for all members, particularly for children. In an attempt to overcome market failures in unstable economies, households may send migrants out as part of a strategy to diversify income sources and to minimize risks such as unemployment (Stark, 1991). NELM further pays attention to structural conditions that affect families, and not just the labour market, which supports the view of the participants in my study.

The NELM theory is more relevant in this study because it takes into account the actual unit that is migrating—which is most often the entire family. It also incorporates the pertinent non-monetary aspects of migration such as safety, security, prospects for children among others which were evident from the study's findings.

In addition to providing support to the NELM over neo-classical theory of immigration, my findings support existing research on the difficulties many immigrants face as they integrate into the Canadian economy. Most of the Nigerians in my study found it highly challenging to integrate into the labour market especially during their initial stages of integration. My study confirms the findings of Javdani, Jacks and Pendakur (2012) that there exist major challenges faced by immigrants when trying to access suitable employment in most high -income countries but it also confirms other studies that suggest that economic conditions are not the only problems newcomers face when they arrive in Canada.

Most newcomers struggled to find work. On average, it took them 2 to 3 months before landing their first job in Canada. Eventually, this would require the new immigrants to "feed" on their savings, before they could find their first job in the country. Moreover, my research finds that their first job is largely unsatisfying (Gilmore, 2008; Picot and Sweetman, 2011; Schellenberg, Grant and Maheux 2007). This is primarily because they their qualifications are not recognized in the Canadian labour market. As a result, they end up working in jobs that are unpleasant and low paying. In the longer term, many Nigerians were more satisfied, but it did not make them immune from the foreign credential recognition problems that plague so many newcomers. My findings are supportive of the foreign credential recognition research conducted by Javdani, Jacks and Pendakur, (2012), Schmidt (2010), Zaman (2010) and Wilkinson and her colleagues (2016) where lack of acceptance for foreign credentials and work experience place recent immigrants into precarious economic conditions.

Additionally, responses obtained from my study show that many Nigerians experienced challenges in the process of attaining certification for work in the regulated professions. Recent research conducted by my colleague, Abdul-Karim (2018) finds that even among immigrants who

receive their education in Canada, they are less likely to find work in the regulated professions than their colleagues who are born in Canada. In my research I found that for those immigrating to Canada with their degrees attained in Nigeria, their prospects are even slimmer; they are very unlikely to find work for which they were trained, even though they were awarded "points" for this experience when they migrated to Canada. This gives further proof that the neo-classical argument does not apply to newcomers in Canada. (Gilmore, 2008; Liu, 2006; Slade, 2008; Zaman, 2010).

Despite their recent struggles, most of the participants were satisfied with their current jobs even though the Nigerians remained vastly overqualified for the jobs they were currently working. Their satisfaction was mainly due to scheduling flexibility and higher income. The presence of a better working environment and higher job security were also reported to contribute to participants' job satisfaction. Most, however, would prefer to be working in a job for which they had trained.

To be sure, almost all the Nigerians still experience some difficulties. To make ends meet, many of my participants had to work more than one job or at 'off hours' so that they could manage childcare obligations (Bodvarsson & Van den Berg, 2013). It means working longer hours in Canada and spending less time with their families—a condition that was not part of their lives in Nigeria. Many find themselves in totally different job environments and engagements that require a combination of new skills. For instance, one participant who was previously working as a teacher and currently working in an elderly support facility encountered challenges with language barriers since her clients did not understand her accent. Another participant (Emeka) also experienced racism at the workplace.

In short, while there tends to be greater satisfaction with their work as time in Canada increases, there remain significant challenges and barriers for most Nigerians.

As expected, my study also established that economic integration is also influenced by forces outside the labour market. One woman (Bisola) felt alienated and unsupported here. For instance, according to her, the Canadian culture promotes introversion and individuality as opposed to their home culture which is highly extroverted and collective. The promotion of the "mind your own business" concept in Canada implies that the Nigerian immigrants are vulnerable to leading solitary lives which they are not used to, and which eventually influence their sense of wellbeing considering that they were used to increased social interactions back in their home country before emigrating to Canada.

Additionally, my study established that the economic challenge of finding the first job as well as the issues they experienced had far reaching implications on the social well-being of the family. For instance, some of the first jobs required extensive hours whereby many of the participants had to work extra hours because their wages were so low. It means that they have little time for their families and this was cited as being highly challenging. For two-parent households, the challenge of working extra hours in addition to learning a new culture and way of life can create strains on the family. It is even worse for single-parent headed households as they had to balance between their job engagements and attending to their children in addition to adapting to life in a new country. It was also challenging in the sense that it derailed their career progression, preventing them from returning to school to upgrade their qualifications, thereby decreasing their job satisfaction and eventually negatively affecting their overall social lives due to increased work stressors, a finding that is supported by other research (Grant and Maheux, 2007; Picot and Sweetman, 2011).

Although most of them did not have all the time to be with their children, it was apparent that their financial position, which is core to bring up a healthy family, was a pressing issue. As such, they had to attend to their jobs but were well organized to create a balance between work and their family life. In the case where both partners were working, they always ensured that one of them or someone was responsible to temporarily take charge- for instance, in the case of Adaeze and Oluwa. This was the same experience in families that had single parent, for example, Bisola. In other family settings, one of the partner took up the job while the other parent- typically the mother stays home to take up childcare as was the case with Peter's family. This experience however, negatively affected the labour market involvement of these stay-at-home mothers.

It is also evident that in most cases, the parents had to take jobs that were far below their qualifications while others had to let go their dreams in order to take care of the needs of their families, primarily the children. For instance, Bisola dropped her educational ambitions for the sake of her children. Other parents had to take up lower paying jobs to sustain their families while other family members were upgrading their education. This demonstrates high levels of sacrifice across the gender divide when family and particularly children are involved.

On strategies to overcome struggles pertaining to work, three participants (Adebisi, Paul and Ganiru) indicated that they were already back in school, with other three (Bisola, Peter and Moses) planning to enroll later because of family obligations. To them, upgrading their education in Canada is beneficial to gain a meaningful job. This finding supports Gilmore and Le Petit (2008) studies which found` that labour market participation is higher for immigrants who completed their post-secondary education in Canada rather than abroad. Other participant like Moses notes that, joining events of the Nigerian community in Winnipeg, volunteering with agencies and having confidence that things will turn around helped him cope with daily work struggles.

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With reference to their prospects, all the participants cited high optimistic expectations owing to the wide range of the "pull" factors relative to their "push" factors that forced their emigration from Nigeria. For instance, as established previously in this discussion, Nigeria has been experiencing consistently high rates of poverty, underemployment and unemployment. In addition, it is also largely prone to terrorism and civil unrests emanating from the two major religious groups, Islam and Christianity. These findings conform to those by Takyi and Konadu-Agyemang (2006) and Yewah and Togunde (2010) who note that there are major "push" factors for the increased emigration in Africa and other developing countries. According to the authors, some of these factors include low wage structures, high rates of underemployment and unemployment, precarious political status, poor education systems, famine, disasters, and civil wars among others. As a result, high income countries, including Canada, continue to enjoy better living standards, job opportunities, better pay, increased GDP, more opportunities for professional development, and better education opportunities among others. In view of these reasons, the participants in the current study were highly optimistic that they were better placed living in Canada than in Nigeria. The result is that although not all the participants rated Canada as their first-choice destination, the country remains a favorite immigration destination among many Nigerians primarily due to the favourable economic opportunities it offers to immigrants.

CHAPTER 6-Conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for future research

6.1 Introduction

In this concluding chapter, the main themes, issues and findings of the study are reviewed. It offers recommendations on the roles stakeholders can play in supporting immigrant families, as well as suggestions for future research.

6.2 Review of Objectives

The primary objective of this study was to understand the settlement experiences of economic immigrants in Canada from Nigeria using a family perspective. Undoubtedly, migration represents a means to escape from an improved standard of living for migrants and their families. Migration is not easy, however. There are many barriers and obstacles to a new life and many of them are not easily measured. Very few studies examine the familial aspects to migration.

To make the research more focused I examine one large and growing group of migrants: Nigerian immigrants in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The study used a qualitative approach to document in-depth experiences of ten families. Three themes emerged from the interviews: pre-arrival economic conditions in Nigeria, post-migration life satisfaction and well-being, and hopes for the future. The study revealed that although most cited that the primary reason behind their migration to Canada was economic, other motives were equally important including a better life for children, links to existing family members already here, increased security and better prospects for their future. With regards to job satisfaction in Canada, most of the participants were not satisfied with their first placement and had to settle for menial jobs when they arrived. However, many stated they were satisfied with their current jobs in terms of pay and work flexibility. Some remain unhappy that they are having difficulty having their foreign credentials recognized and almost half had returned to school. Despite the challenges, however, many of the participants, were also optimistic about their family's future in Canada despite their initial difficulties settling here.

6.2 Recommendations

First, prospective immigrant families should note that life in Canada might be different from their home countries- they may not find support with childcare, daycare might be costly and family relationships might change. It is imperative that a free or subsidized childcare policy for preschoolers be introduced in both Canada and in Manitoba. This will ensure a balance between parental and work-related responsibilities especially for newly arrived families with children, particularly for newcomers. Often parents have to work two or more jobs each and must balance their work and child care schedules without the benefit of having friends and family near to help. This will have a positive influence on women's labour force participation and wellbeing as my research shows that although men help with the child rearing, women are more likely to sacrifice training to deal with child care. Quebec is the only Canadian province to have a province-wide policy in place (Lefebvre and Merrigan, 2008) shows that the presence of a fully publicly funded childcare strategy has increased the labour force participation of all mothers with at least one pre-school aged child.

Furthermore, immigrants should not be over-optimistic while immigrating to Canada with regards to finding work in their field. Although they are awarded "points" for their skills, education and work experience prior to arrival, almost none will be able to work in a job for which they are qualified. Knowing this ahead of time might help alleviate the anxiety and depression associated with being overqualified for their work. It is the responsibility of the Canadian government to inform all prospective immigrants of these labour market problems. Moreover, since majority of immigrants are economic migrants (over 60 percent of all immigrants to Canada) the system that admits professionals should require credentials be assessed prior to their arrival to Canada. This would reduce the uncertainty many migrants face in waiting to have their skills assessed while using their precious savings. It would also provide would-be migrants with information to make

an informed decision about migrating to Canada in the first place. Australia is already doing this (Australian Government, 2018) in a systematic way for all immigrants and appears to be having positive results. This way, there would be less uncertainty among newcomers about their employment prospects and they would have more fulsome information about their ability to work in their profession after arrival.

This study recommends faster foreign credential recognition by regulatory bodies to ensure newcomers obtain work in their field and to obtain work faster when they are not assessed overseas. As evidenced from my research, the Nigerian immigrants struggled with major delays before they could secure their first jobs. And their first jobs, however, were not related to their field of study. The Canadian government and other stakeholders should give more financial support to relevant settlement agencies so that these organizations can enhance employment services for newcomers upon their arrival. This would mean increased investments in employment programs among settlement agencies to help newcomers find work. Governments should also work to ensure that the professional associations are required to honestly assess the credentials which immigrants bring with them to Canada. To date, there is very little government oversight in ensuring the regulatory bodies introduce equitable credential assessments. Without government intervention, professional bodies will continue to reject credentials obtained outside of Canada and newcomers are left with little or no recourse to continue work in their field. This, as my thesis shows, leads to difficulties with relationships and precarity of financial status within the family.

Most importantly, however, is reinforcing the idea that migration, even if it is for economic reasons, is largely a family act. Too many of the settlement programs focus their attention on individuals and their problems in integrating. The reality is that the family migrates, and the family suffers when its members cannot find work or cannot find work that is commensurate with their

prior educational and work experiences. Treating the family as the unit requesting assistance would help service providers develop programs to assist them as a single unit. While we still need individualized programs to help newcomers find work, their families may need support as well. Understanding that migration is not purely economic or individually driven may create environments more conducive to successful integration. While some settlement organizations do have programs for families, the economic programs only focus on individuals.

6.3 Suggestions for future research

The current research provides an opportunity from which further studies can be carried out to have a better understanding of the current topic. Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions for future research are made, recognizing that with a small sample that is limited to a single city, that more research needs to be conducted to confirm the findings.

First, the current study leaves an opportunity for a comparative study on recent immigrant families from nationalities and ethnic backgrounds beyond Nigerian-Canadian context. Studying immigrants from other countries and the factors compelling them to migrate to Canada will help establish as to whether the findings align or differ with the current findings as well as those in the existing literature.

Second, it sets a good foundation from which future research can focus on using the qualitative research designs in studying the experiences of recent immigrant families to Canada rather than solely relying on the quantitative methods with regard to economic integration. It is also important noting that there is a need to undertake future comparative studies of Canadian-born families and those of immigrant families in order to determine as to whether there are differences within the context of the currently studied social and economic parameters.

Third, one shortfall of the research was that only ten immigrant families in Winnipeg made up of the sample due to lack of budget and the limited time. Future research should increase the sample size to ensure more representation of the newcomer population. I had difficulty interviewing family members in pairs, a future project could insist that at least two 'breadwinners' from each household (if applicable) would be interviewed to get a better understanding of how family dynamics are affected when one or more family members experiences economic integration difficulties. Most importantly, economic research rarely uses the family as a unit of analysis. It is clear from my research that although economics may seem to be the main driver of migration to Canada, it is not the only, nor the most important consideration. Until qualitative and quantitative studies are conducted using the family as a unit of analysis, we will continue to miss the very important factors that influence successful economic and social integration among newcomers.

Finally, the study provides an opportunity for future researchers to critically investigate all other factors that influence emigration and immigration, and what stakeholders are doing differently to solve any possible underlying challenges facing immigrant families in Canada and around the world.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Thematic interview schedule
When did you come to Canada?

Was Canada your first choice? Why or why not?

1. What were your perceptions about Canada's economic prospects prior to migration?

2. What were the reasons why you migrated to Canada? 4a) did you migrate for economic reasons? 4b) were these reasons focused on the career or income of a particular individual within your family?

3. Tell me a bit about your work history? Pre and post arrival.

4. Please tell me a bit about your first job in Canada? What was it? How long did it take you to get it? Were you happy or satisfied with the working conditions?

5. Are you happy or satisfied with your current occupation and why?

6. Are you pessimistic or optimistic about your economic future in Canada? Why?

7. Given the opportunity, would you consider returning to work in your country of origin? If "yes", where and in which occupation would you prefer to work? If "No" please tell me why?

8. Do you feel moving to Canada was good for you? For your family?

9. How do you balance work and family life? Do you spend enough time together with your spouse? Your family? Your children? (If applicable)

Has your relationship with your………………spouse, mom/dad, siblings changed as a result of your experience in Canada? If so, how has it changed?

Appendix II: Socio-demographic survey
These demographic questions will assist me with the analysis of your economic conditions. Recall that all information will be kept confidential.

1. What is you date of birth? ………………………………….

2. What is your marital status? ....

3. What is your country of birth? ………………………………

4. What is your highest level of education and area of studies? ....

5. Which country did you get your education? ………………………………………….

6. What is your current employment status? E.g. Employed, self-employed, seeking employment, student etc. ……………………………………………………………

7. What was your occupation prior to your migration? …………………………………………

   For those not currently working, please skip questions 8 and 9.

8. What is your current occupation? ……………………………………………………

9. How long have you been in that occupation? …………………………………………..

Which family members came with you to Canada? .... (All at same time or joined later?) …………………………….. Anyone born here or joined your family later?...

Appendix III: research ethics approval and renewal

University of Manitoba — Research Ethics and Compliance

Human Ethics
208-194 Dafoe Road
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Canada R3T 2N2
Phone +204-474-7122
E-mail: humanethics@umanitoba.ca

PROTOCOL APPROVAL

TO: **Cosmos Domfeh** (Advisor: Lori Wilkinson)
Principal Investigator

FROM: **Kelley Main, Chair**
Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board (PSREB)

Re: **Protocol #P2017:037 (HS20684)**
"A qualitative Inquiry into the socio-economic conditions of Nigerian Immigrant' families in Canada"

Effective: April 5, 2017   Expiry: April 5, 2018

Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board (PSREB) has reviewed and approved the above research. PSREB is constituted and operates in accordance with the current *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans.*

This approval is subject to the following conditions:
1. Approval is granted only for the research and purposes described in the application.
2. Any modification to the research must be submitted to PSREB for approval before implementation.
3. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be submitted to PSREB as soon as possible.
4. This approval is valid for one year only and a Renewal Request must be submitted and approved by the above expiry date.
5. A Study Closure form must be submitted to PSREB when the research is complete or terminated.
6. The University of Manitoba may request to review research documentation from this project to demonstrate compliance with this approved protocol and the University of Manitoba *Ethics of Research Involving Humans.*

Funded Protocols:
- **Please mail/e-mail a copy of this Approval, identifying the related UM Project Number, to the Research Grants Officer in ORS.**

Research Ethics and Compliance is a part of the Office of the Vice-President (Research and International)
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UNIVERSITY
of MANITOBA

Research Ethics
and Compliance

RENEWAL APPROVAL

Date: March 20, 2018   **New Expiry: April 5, 2019**

TO: **Cosmos Domfeh**   **(Advisor: Lori Wilkinson)**
            Principal Investigator

FROM: **Kelley Main, Chair**
            Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board (PSREB)

Re: **Protocol #P2017:037 (HS20684)**
            "A Qualitative Inquiry into the Socio-economic Conditions of Nigerian
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This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Any modification to the research must be submitted to PSREB for approval before
   implementation.
2. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be submitted to PSREB as soon
   as possible.
3. This renewal is valid for one year only and a Renewal Request must be submitted and
   approved by the above expiry date.
4. A Study Closure form must be submitted to PSREB when the research is complete or
   terminated.

Funded Protocols:
- **Please mail/e-mail a copy of this Renewal Approval, identifying the related UM**
  Project Number, to the Research Grants Officer in ORS.

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