ASSESSING THE IMPACTS OF CONFLICTING GENDER IDEOLOGIES ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: A CASE STUDY OF NIGERIAN-IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN CANADA

by

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B.Sc., Salem University, Nigeria, 2017

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
IN
GENDER STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

JUNE 2021

ABSTRACT

The thesis investigated how conflicting gender ideologies influenced Nigerian-immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence in Canada. Nigeria, the participants' country of heritage, practices patriarchal social stratification while Canada, the country of current residence, has egalitarian structures. Using a qualitative research orientation and non-probability purposive snowballing sampling procedures with ten (10) Nigerian immigrant women to Canada, data collection procedures involved electronic phone interviews. The data analysis process involved transcription, categorization, coding, and theme generation by the researcher. The nine major themes identified revealed that the study participants experienced a change or shift in gender ideologies towards more egalitarian ideologies while some of their partners did not experience the same change, thereby resulting in conflicting gender ideologies that influenced their experiences of domestic violence. The thesis concluded with recommendations for culturally sensitive services that combat domestic violence, and ease adjustment into Canadian communities for the study participants and immigrant women in general.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I acknowledge Dr. Jacqueline Holler, my thesis supervisor. When I talk about you behind your back, and I do often, it is always good things I say. Everyone who I have spoken to, who also knows you, agrees that you are amazing and brilliant. I am very grateful for your guidance and contributions to this thesis.

To my parents and siblings, especially Omari Ibu, my sister, thank you for your words of encouragement and your prayers.

Special thanks to the participants of this study for their time and invaluable contribution without which this study could not be completed.

To my committee members, Dr. Lantana Usman, and Dr. Angele Smith, I am very grateful for your commitment to the completion of this thesis, and for your support. I am also grateful to Anita Shaw for her assistance and encouragement especially at the beginning of this project.

My sincere gratitude to External Examiner Dr. Jonathan Alschech for your contribution to this work and to Dr. Fiona MacPhail for chairing the defence of this thesis.

To my friends, Confidence, Mobi, Kerri, Ola, Jibbs, Nnamdi, Emmanuel, and Fikayo, thank you for checking up on me, for free rides, and for free food.

Finally, to all my friends at the Northern Women's Centre, especially Sarah Boyd, thank you for your hospitality.

Chapter One

Introduction

The current study assesses the impacts of conflicting gender ideologies on domestic violence. It employed a sample of Nigerian-immigrant women in Canada and examined their attitudes and lived experiences of gender ideology differences and how they impacted domestic violence. The conceptual operational definitions of relevant terms follows.

Domestic violence (DV) is defined as physical, sexual, financial, and emotional violence used by one partner against another. It occurs within intimate relationships like marriage or common-law partnership, and will be considered as primarily female-experienced and male-perpetrated (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Henceforth, the terms violence against women (VAW), intimate-partner violence (IPV), and domestic violence (DV) will be used interchangeably to underscore specific terms commonly used in the literature and retain the same definition. However, women do experience violence outside their intimate partnerships. This thesis and the corresponding study adopted domestic violence as defined above—without discounting other types of domestic violence such as elder abuse and husband battery—as the term may be familiar to the study population.

"Nigerian-Immigrant Women" refers to immigrant women who were born in Nigeria and have permanently relocated to Canada through economic immigration, family reunification immigration. Furthermore, "Gender ideologies" refers collectively to gender roles and beliefs and perceptions about gender. While "gender roles" refers to the activities and responsibilities that are considered appropriate for men and women to engage in, beliefs and perceptions represent normative ideas about and the value given to men and women grounded in socio-economic, cultural, historical, and religious perspectives (Philips, 2001). In addition, "Egalitarian" gender

ideologies refer to beliefs and perceptions that favour equality between men and women and prescribe appropriate roles for men and women outside the "bread winner-housewife/mother" model. Lastly, "Traditional" gender ideologies, on the other hand, refer to beliefs and perceptions that view men as superior to women and prescribe that gender roles directly follow the "breadwinner-housewife/mother model".

The study assessed whether immigrant women experience a shift in their gender ideologies, i.e., from home-country ideology to new-country ideology. This thesis evaluated if such a shift in women's gender ideologies creates a conflict with men's more traditional views, and if such conflict could increase or intensify women's experiences of domestic violence. Using Nigerian-immigrant women as the study population, the study (a) assessed if there is a relationship between a change or shift in gender ideologies (from traditional to egalitarian ideology) and increased or decreased or same rate of domestic violence; and (b) highlighted Nigerian-immigrant women's specific experiences and knowledge of domestic violence as distinct from that of other immigrant populations.

This chapter briefly describes what is already known about domestic violence as the background of the study. Other contents of the chapter include; statement of the research problem, the research questions, aims and objectives of the study, significance of the study, and limitations of the study.

Background to the Study

The issue of violence against women (VAW) first gained traction when feminists began outlining issues that put women at a disadvantage relative to men and the impacts of such issues on women's quality of life. The valiant effort of many second-wave feminists and those who came after them yielded great successes (particularly as related to women's experiences of violence)

such as the four world conferences on women; the development and ratification of international treaties like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1979; the criminalization of rape within marriage in 1983 in Canada (1975-1993 in the United States); and, perhaps most importantly, highlighting the prevalence of VAW and the need to tackle this menace (Mann, 2012). These efforts of feminist scholars highlighted the prevalence and causes of VAW and have yielded many benefits such as creating a space where such issues can be investigated and defining the contexts in which such violence occurs. Scholars who have studied women's past and continued experiences of violence have found that women experience physical, sexual, psychological/ emotional, and financial violence in marriage, common-law partnerships, and dating relationships. Studies also show the overrepresentation of women as victims of violence—which is sustained and condoned by sexist social structures (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2015; Mann, 2012)—and emphasize that VAW is one of the major factors impeding gender equality because of the damages to physical and mental health and the disruption to socio-economic and political participation that violence creates (Kilpatrick, 2004). These negative impacts, while primarily affecting the individual, also bear costs for society (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2015; Kilpatrick, 2004; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998).

Perhaps these statistics are now well known, but as women's victimization remains the same (and likely worse in the current COVID-19 pandemic), it is important to restate these numbers and underscore the implications. Watts and Zimmerman (2002) differentiate between VAW and other forms of violence by noting that VAW is rooted in sex inequality and serves to perpetuate the subordination of women. They cited the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993), which defined VAW as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women"

(Watts & Zimmerman, 2002, p. 1232). The authors noted that the definition does not negate men's experiences of violence, yet highlights the gender-specific differences that require these issues to be handled separately. Likewise, this study does not negate the fact that men and other individuals regardless of gender identity and/or sexuality do experience domestic violence; rather, it aims to focus on the issue of VAW particularly because, as will be presented below, women are overrepresented as victims of domestic violence (DV).

Watts and Zimmerman (2002) investigated the magnitude and prevalence of VAW from a global perspective. Consequently, they reported various forms of VAW such rape, sex-selective abortions, and culturally specific forms such as honour killings. They also consider such violence along a woman's lifespan ranging from sex-selective abortions and female infanticide all the way to elder abuse (i.e., pre-birth, infancy, adolescence, reproductive years, and finally old age) (Watts & Zimmerman, 2002). Furthermore, the authors reported that the magnitude and prevalence of VAW is highly significant, although they noted great variations within the cross-sectional population surveys from which they draw data. Drawing from over 50 population-based studies on domestic violence, they found that between 10% and 50% of women who had ever had partners had experienced physical violence (Watts & Zimmerman, 2002, p.1233). Specific to an African population from a Zimbabwean cross-sectional household study, Watts and Zimmerman (2002) reported that 26% of the married women surveyed said they had experienced sexual assault. They also reported that 60-100 million women and girls are "missing" from the world population as a result of sex-selective abortion, female infanticide, and deliberate neglect of young girls. Although these numbers are alarming, the researchers argued that due to underreporting and research methods/ methodological disparities, the numbers they reported in their study represent the *minimum* estimates, which speaks to very significant magnitude and prevalence of the issue.

Recent studies continue to point out similar concerns. A report produced by the World Health Organization, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and South African Medical Research Council in 2013, focusing on the prevalence and health effects of violence and non-partner sexual violence, found that 35% of women all over the world have experienced intimate partner or non-partner physical and/or sexual violence. They estimated that worldwide 30% of women have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV). Yet when considering different regions, the percentage varies significantly (WHO, 2013, p.16). In South-East Asia, Eastern Mediterranean and Africa (identified as low- and middle-income regions) the number goes up to 37. 7%, 37% and 36.6% respectively, while in the high-income regions the number is slightly better at 23.2%. When these numbers are redistributed by age, younger women (15-44 years) are more likely to have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) and sexual violence (SV) (WHO, 2013, p.17). In the same study, worldwide estimates showed that 38% of murdered women were killed by their intimate partners (WHO, 2013, p.31).

According to the United Nations Women or UN Women (2021), approximately 30% of women worldwide have experienced sexual and/or physical violence from an intimate partner or sexual violence from a stranger. UN Women (2021) also reported that 50 % of the 87,000 women who were murdered in 2017 (across the world) were murdered by intimate partners or family members, at least 200 million women and girls between the ages of 15 and 49 have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM), and 72% of all human trafficking victims in the world are women and girls. They draw these statistics from multiple studies carried out by various United Nations bodies between 2013 and 2019.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was produced and adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in 1995. Following this, relevant trends and statistics that

monitor adherence to goals outlined in the declaration—a road map to achieving gender parity by 2030--have been gathered at 5-year intervals. The latest of such statistics produced by the Statistics Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 2020 present relevant information on global progress towards gender equality in the last five years and consider the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's lives. These statistics cover areas like women's access to education, economic empowerment, and asset ownership; power and decision-making; population and families; health; and violence against women and the girl child. In all areas examined, little progress had been made and the COVID-19 pandemic presented new barriers to progress. For instance, progress made as of 2019 in areas like violence against women and girls and economic empowerment have been removed or is at risk of being removed due to the current COVID-19 pandemic (UNSD, 2020a; UNSD, 2020b). Of interest here, the report estimated that 18% of women aged 15-49 experienced IPV in the last 12 months, that 58% of female homicides in the same period were perpetrated by intimate partners or family members, and that women made up 20% of homicide victims.

There is consensus that differing research methods and methodologies may produce inconsistencies in data and limit the confidence one may have in such data, but the similarities in the data produced by various studies are at least an indicator that such numbers are valid representations of the issue at hand--at least of the reported cases. Furthermore, it is important to note that the variations of figures by region may indicate that other factors are at play. The social inequalities present in the Global South due to poverty, war, political tensions, and the negative effects of globalization in these regions-- such as environmental degradation caused by activities of multinational corporations—may influence VAW in these regions. It is important to map out these realities, which are influenced by past and present conditions (e.g., colonialism and

globalization respectively) so that these statistics are not used to reinforce stereotypes of the "uncivilised" Global South and the "modern" Global North.

In Canada more specifically, the nature and extent of VAW have been examined beginning with the 1993 Violence Against Women Survey and the subsequent General Social Survey on Victimization (GSS) conducted at 5-year intervals by Statistics Canada. The results of these national prevalence surveys, coupled with police statistics, homicide surveys, transition home surveys, sentencing statistics, and victim services statistics, have uncovered valuable information about the prevalence of VAW in Canada (Johnson, 2005). For instance, it is estimated that in 2011, 8 in 10 victims of police-reported IPV were women, with the highest rates in Saskatchewan, followed by Manitoba, and the lowest in Ontario and Quebec. Seventy-three percent of these women reported being physically assaulted by their partners; 60% of assaults were of the lowest level, while 11% were aggravated assaults or assaults with a weapon. Statistics from the same year also highlighted that women were more than 2 times more likely than men to be sexually assaulted, and 76% of all police-reported cases of criminal harassment (stalking) were perpetrated against women. In 2009, Aboriginal women were 2.5 times more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be victimized, and between 2001 and 2011 Aboriginal women made up 8% of all murdered women—aged 15 and above—while they made up only 4% of the population (Sinha, 2013.p. 8-34).

Burczycka (2019) reported that out of the 99,000 victims of intimate partner violence, gathered from police-reported violent crime in 2018, women accounted for 79%. The author also reported that 45% of women aged 15-89 who reported a crime in 2018 reported incidences of intimate-partner violence. Police- reported cases of IPV had also increased by 2% from 2017, although they had dropped about 12% between 2009 and 2018 (Burczycka, 2019, para 1-4).

In Nigeria, Benebo, Schumann and Vaezghasemi (2018), using data drawn from the 2013 Nigerian Demographic Health Survey (2014), reported that about 1 in 4 Nigerian women reported experiencing violence in the period surveyed. The authors also reported that women's higher socio-economic status diminished their likelihood of experiencing violence, while community norms, i.e., attitudes that justify wife-beating, reversed the protective effect of their social status. Similarly, attitudes justifying wife-beating have been measured by various statistics and found to be supported by many—especially women. While the support for wife-beating among women has waned significantly, the latest figures from 2018 show that about 28% of Nigerian women compared to 21% of men supported wife-beating attitudes (Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 2019, p.385). These attitudes have also been noted to differ among regions in Nigeria where factors such as level of education, place of residence, and ethnic affiliation influence support for these attitudes although all major ethnic groups are patriarchal in nature.

Nigerian culture, as it relates to gender relations, marriage, and domestic violence, is still largely patriarchal and patrilineal (Igwe, 2015; Labeodan, 2005). Socio-cultural practices typically perpetuate women's subordination to men especially in the context of marriage; a gender value system where male progeny are favoured; and cultural norms that limit women's right to property. Consequently, it is common practice to ignore cases of domestic violence or justify it on the bases of women's inferiority to men; religious doctrine; and inconsistent legislation on the matter (arising because Nigerian law consists of a mix of common law, customary law, and sharia law) (Igwe, 2015; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2015). Some scholars also argued that while on the surface level there is legislation (domestic law and international treaties) that should protect women, there is lack of political will to dethrone patriarchy because governmental structures are male-dominated (Kalunta-Crumpton, 2015). The police force, which is also male-dominated, may perpetuate the

subordination of women especially because seeking help is not culturally supported (Kalunta-Crumpton, 2015). Women's support for wife-beating attitudes may also be seen as internalization of patriarchal socialization which is common among rural and uneducated women (Kalunta-Crumpton, 2015; Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 2019), nonetheless, IPV is prominent in both rural and urban areas in Nigeria (Kalunta-Crumpton, 2015; Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 2019; Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 2014; Oyediran & Isinugo-Abanihe, 2005).

Tanimu, Yohanna and Omeiza (2016), in their cross-sectional hospital-based study of the patterns and correlates of IPV in Kano state (Northern Nigerian) using 393 participants, reported that 42% of their participants had experienced domestic violence in the previous year. They also reported that based on life-time experience 46.6% had experienced emotional/psychological violence, 43.3% had experienced controlling and harassing behaviour, 29% had experienced physical violence, 21.9% had experienced sexual violence, and 37.9% of the participants had experienced severe combined abuse (Tanimu et al., 2016, p.1).

Okenwa, Lawako, and Jansson (2009), in their cross-sectional hospital-based study of the prevalence and predictors of IPV in women of reproductive age in Lagos state (Western Nigeria), found that of their 934 participants, 29% had experienced IPV in the previous year; 23% had experienced psychological violence; 9% had experienced physical violence; and 8% had experienced sexual violence (p.517).

Okemgbo, Omideyi and Odimegwu (2002), in their study of prevalence of IPV using 308 women from two areas—one rural and one urban—in Imo state (Eastern Nigeria), found that 78.8% of the women had experienced IPV from their partners. Of these women, 58.9% of these

women had experienced violence during pregnancy, and 21.3% had experienced sexual violence (p.101).

Itimi, Dienye, and Gbeneol (2014), in their study of the prevalence of IPV and associated coping strategies among women in Port Harcourt, Rivers state (Southern Nigeria) using 384 participants, found that 41.9% had experienced physical violence (p.193).

Overall, the 2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (2019) reported that 31% of women had experienced physical violence since age 15, while 14% had experienced physical violence in the previous year. Nine percent (9%) of women had experienced sexual violence since age 15, while 4% of women had experienced sexual violence in the previous year. Interestingly, the highest and lowest rate of spousal physical, sexual, or emotional violence were both in the Northern Nigeria with 10% in Jigawa state and 69% in Taraba state (Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 2019, p.433).

These studies show wide variations by region. While attitudes towards wife-beating, marital status, ethnic affiliation, and level of education (which is higher in the West, East & South and lower in the North) may influence such variation, the methodological approaches, sample population, and the time of study may also be relevant influences.

These statistics point to the fact that around the world women are significantly affected by gender-based violence. Additionally, the steady increase in global migration—whether forced or intentional—has different implications for VAW. Researchers have considered the extent to which immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence may differ from those of local women.

Studies conducted on intimate-partner or domestic violence against immigrant women usually suggest that immigrant women are much more vulnerable to such violence (Ahmad et al., 2005; Choi et al., 2012; Goncalves & Matos, 2016; Okeke-Ihejirika et al., 2018; Raj & Silverman,

2002). Some of the commonly identified factors that influence such increased vulnerability include language barriers; economic difficulty/conflict (usually arising from unemployment/underemployment); isolation; reluctance or inability to seek help; fear of immigration repercussions (usually arising from illegal/uncertain immigration status); and cultural barriers (Alaggia et al., 2009; Erez et al., 2009; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002).

Quantitative data showing the extent of violence against immigrant women are hard to gather because of reluctance of immigrant women to participate in such research in fear of their community being racially profiled (McDonald, 1999); and reluctance and/or inability to seek help due to language barriers, cultural barriers, and lack of culturally sensitive services (Alaggia et al., 2009; McDonald, 1999; White et al., 2012). However, some sources have been able to identify the extent and nature of immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence in smaller studies conducted with specific immigrant populations.

Erez et al. (2009) in their study with 137 immigrant women in the United States of America--originating from 35 different countries--reported that irrespective of participants' ethnic or national origin, certain factors increased their vulnerability to domestic violence. These factors were social pressure and outright compulsion to marry, economic difficulty, isolation from family, language barriers, and US immigration policies that made them dependent on their batterers to obtain or maintain legal status (pp. 38-50). The authors also reported that women were reluctant to seek help because within their individual cultural or national contexts domestic violence was either not criminalized or accepted. Consequently, they found that after arrival in the US, 50% of their participants noted increased abuse, 22% began facing abuse, 20% saw no change, 6% experienced less abuse, and only 2% stopped getting abused (Erez et al., 2009, p.44). According to Raj and Silverman (2002), 30% to 50% of Latina, South Asian, and Korean immigrants to the

USA reported that they had been sexually or physically abused by a male intimate partner, whereas data show that in general 35.6 % (1 in 3) of women in the United States have been victims of stalking, rape, and physical violence by an intimate partner (Black et al., 2011). Ahmed et al. (2005), in their secondary analysis using data set from the 1999 General Social Survey, reported that significant differences exist between Canadian-born women's incidence of emotional abuse (8.7%) and the incidence among their foreign-born counterparts (14.7%), whereas data from the 2009 General Social Survey show that 6% of women who were married or in common-law relationships had been physically and sexually assaulted by their partners in the prior five years (Johnson & Colpitts, 2013, p.6). While the data do not directly indicate so, it is expected that immigrant women make up part of the 35.6% (USA, lifetime prevalence) or 6% (Canada, five-year prevalence).

In Canada, studies of immigrant women's experiences of violence have mostly considered immigrant populations of Asian and Latin origin (Godoy-Ruiz et al.,2015; Guruge et al., 2012; Madden et al., 2015; Souto et al., 2016). These studies produce findings similar to what has already been discussed. On the other hand, there is little investigation into immigrant women of African origin--particularly Nigerian-immigrant women.

Nwosu (2006) investigated the experiences of domestic violence against Nigerian-immigrant women living in Toronto, Canada. The author interviewed ten (10) married women and two (2) key personnel from the Nigerian-Canadian Association in Toronto to understand their experiences of violence and migration and their opinions on what services could best help them. The findings of this study, while similar to those in other immigrant populations, produced some key differences. For instance, Nwosu (2006) noted that language barrier was not a major factor in

these women's decisions not to access services. A critical review of the study is outlined in Chapter Two.

Similar findings were reported from studies of Nigerian-immigrant women in the US and UK, where Nigerian-immigrant women's help-seeking practices were also influenced by factors like Nigerian socialization, immigration status, and acculturation to the host country (Ajao, 2018; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2013; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2015; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2016). Others claimed that patriarchal gender relations and economic-based role reversal increased women's vulnerability to domestic violence. Interpretations of and solutions to cases of domestic violence/IPV were also seen as influenced by dominant ideologies that permeate Nigerian culture (Ajao, 2018; Bui & Morash, 2018; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2013; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2016).

These studies highlighted that Nigeria's patriarchal ideologies, as earlier described, remain large influences on Nigerian women's lives even when they live abroad. Yet the conditions found in western countries may not be conducive to retain traditional gender roles even where that may be the preferred option of either or both partners. Accordingly, women's engagement in the workforce and increased independence may be perceived as threats if their partners maintain traditional ideologies. Similarly, this study theorized that Nigerian-immigrant women to Canada will experience a shift or change in their gender ideologies influenced by more egalitarian gender relations in Canada (Kalunta-Crumpton, 2013; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2016). Consequently, such change may increase their risk of experiencing violence and most likely influences their experiences of such violence.

In sum, it is arguable that findings on Nigerian immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence (Ajao, 2018; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2013; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2016; Nwosu, 2006) report the conflict between these women's shifting gender ideologies towards more

egalitarian views with Nigerian men on the other hand retaining more traditional/cultural views. In addition, immigration and certain economic and systemic consequences of immigration influence this as well. For example, Bui and Morash (2008) reported from their study of hegemonic masculinity and intimate-partner violence against immigrant women of Vietnamese origin in the United States. They found that there was a correlation among gender role reversal (which these men considered threatening), men's downward mobility, and men's increased violence against their wives. They lay emphasis on hegemonic masculinity within Vietnamese culture; as a result, the more women engaged in "traditionally masculine roles" such as breadwinning, the more likely they were to face physical, sexual, and verbal abuse (p. 202).

The current study assessed this connection within the Nigerian-immigrant population in Canada. The need to conduct such a study is presented below.

Statement of the Problem

Various literature suggests that immigrant women are more vulnerable to domestic violence than their local-born counterparts (Ahmed et al., 2005; Alaggia et al., 2009; Erez et al., 2009; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002; Raj & Silverman, 2002). Consequently, there is a need to consider all the possible factors that influence and shape such violence including possible variations across different immigrant populations.

Nigerian-immigrant women's experiences, especially in light of their cultural context, have received little attention in Canada. It may be safe to assume that there have been few or no services that adequately provide solutions to their problems. It is expected that immigration and immigrant status will have consequences on the Nigerian-immigrant population (like any other) that exceed economic and social boundaries and influence personal values and choices. This is typically referred to as the integration process. The importance of integration into the host culture and

system is perhaps the least contested aspect of immigration because individuals do not exist separately from their environment (Gallagher, 2018). This process of integration may be regarded as a two-way process, in which immigrants change over time after their arrival in the host country and the local-born population changes in response to immigration (Waters & Pineau, 2015, p.17). Although integration takes time, it is inevitable that the values of the host nation will influence immigrants.

The gendered organization of Canadian society, especially regarding family life, is different from that of Nigeria. Similarly, Canada's socio-economic structure, especially when coupled with implications of economic immigration, creates a new system that Nigerian immigrants (and arguably others) must navigate to ensure survival. One may argue that gendered distribution of labour and other perceptions on gender-appropriate activities are affected; consideration of such influences on the lives of the immigrants is focused in the study. Further studies suggest that domestic violence against Nigerian-immigrant women, in Canada and elsewhere, is heavily influenced by patriarchal ideals that are part of Nigerian culture (Ajao, 2018; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2013; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2016; Nwosu, 2006). Yet one may also consider that such violence may be increased because these women are less keen than they used to be to accept and abide by such cultural scripts. This reluctance to respect patriarchal ideals may be a consequence of integration into a society whose laws and norms favour more egalitarian ideals. This study investigated this problem and concluded with recommended viable solutions for policy inclusion at the local community, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as Immigrant and Multicultural Centers, provincial women assistance programs for immigrants, and federal programs under the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

The study is important because Nigerian women and their families continue to migrate to Canada till date and still experience culture shock and adjustment challenges with little or no solutions or programs introduced to mitigate the influences of immigration on women's and even men's lives. According to Statistics Canada (2019), there were over 41,415 people who identified Nigeria as their place of birth (i.e., Nigerian immigrants) in Canada's 2016 census of population; 48.4% of this population also identified as women. Considering Canada's modest population, this is a fairly significant number, especially as Nigerian immigrants represent the third-largest Black immigrant population in Canada. Furthermore, it is reasonable to assume that this number has increased since 2016, and that these figures may not account for women with illegal status who are even more vulnerable than those with legal status (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002; Raj & Silverman, 2002). Additionally, Carmen and Elash (2018) found that women seeking asylum in Canada from Nigeria accounted for half (the highest) of all gender-based violence claims (particularly domestic violence) between January 2013 to September 2017. About half of these claims were successful, but it is important to note that these women who have found safety in Canada will need rehabilitation that may be best provided through culturally specific services. Women seeking asylum from Nigeria who flee with their partners (and/or family) are also vulnerable, maybe more so, to domestic violence because their status in Canada is precarious, especially as they await adjudication of their claims.

In the effort to situate the Nigerian-immigrant population in Canada, it is perhaps prudent to acknowledge that population density and distribution (between major cities and smaller towns) may have significant impact on the identified problem. A significant percentage of Nigerian immigrants, about 50%, live in the five major census metropolitan areas: 16,400 in Toronto, 7,685 in Calgary, 1385 in Ottawa, 1205 in Vancouver, and 1140 in Montreal (Statistics Canada, 2019).

The implications of this are numerous. For instance, in these cities Nigerian-immigrant populations have a stronger sense of community built through ethnic cultural organizations, religious bodies and by a network of extended families. Consequently, isolation may not be as severe. While this may create an avenue for women who are experiencing violence to seek help from their community, it is also plausible that within this community, especially within families, cultural values that encourage silence may be highly protected.

On the other hand, multicultural influences and access to better services in such densely populated cities also mean that women's perceptions and views on gender relations and tolerating violence may be changing (Raj & Silverman, 2002). When considering smaller towns with smaller populations of Nigerian immigrants, we may consider that the community is much smaller, but the result of this is isolation. Such isolation may bar women's ability to seek help, and in addition women may feel ashamed to report cases of violence because within small, tight-knit communities they may feel very exposed. Finally, within smaller communities where Nigerian-immigrant women interrelate closely with other immigrant and non-immigrant cultures, change in perceptions about gender relations and the general organization cannot be ruled out either. While this is not exclusive to the Nigerian-immigrant community, it shows the complexity of the problem and the need to seek out solutions.

Therefore, the implications of not investigating and creating lasting solutions for Nigerian-immigrant women facing domestic violence will be dire consequences on their social, emotional, and physical well-being. Such consequences have been noted multiple times in the literature on domestic violence and IPV in both immigrant and non-immigrant populations. Consequences include but are not limited to physical, reproductive, sexual, and mental health deterioration (injury, depression, self-harm, drug and alcohol abuse, death); deterioration of emotional well-

being (poor self-esteem, self-doubt, inability to form healthy relationships); and even socio-economic ramifications (loss of employment, lack of access to opportunities, poverty, homelessness) (WHO, 2012).

Conscientious research into the specific influences of immigration and Nigerian cultural contexts on these women's experiences of domestic violence and statistical representation of the prevalence of such violence are required to build on the literature on Nigerian-immigrant women's experiences in Canada. This study is significant as it contributes to the gap in the literature on Nigerian-Canadian women and their experiences of conflicting gender ideologies and its impacts on domestic violence.

Research Objectives and Aims

With the research problem defined, this study addressed certain issues within the identified problem. Accordingly, the aims and objectives of the study included the following.

1. Identify how immigration lived experiences impact Nigerian-immigrant women's gender ideologies.

2. Provide better understanding of the causes of domestic violence against Nigerian-immigrant women in Canada.

3. Report relevant data and findings from the study participants that may influence culturally specific service provision to the study population at the community, provincial and possibly federal levels.

4. Contribute to the growing literature on domestic violence against immigrant women in general and in Canada in particular.

Research Questions

To achieve the stated aims and objectives of the study, the following questions served as a framework for the study and were answered in the course of data collection and analysis.

1. RQ-1 Are Nigerian-immigrant women's gender ideologies changing or shifting from traditional gender ideologies to more egalitarian ideologies in Canada?

2. RQ-2 How do Nigerian-immigrant women view the relationships between shifting gender ideologies and domestic violence?

3. RQ-3 What are the specific and distinctive experiences of Nigerian-immigrant women with regard to domestic violence?

Research Methods

The third chapter of this thesis delves deeper into the methodological principles that guided this research and the specific methods that were used in data gathering, management, and analysis. Overall, the study utilized a purposive non-probability sample of 10 Nigerian-immigrant women in Canada who were recruited through the snowballing technique. Data gathered from phone interviews were organized using Microsoft Excel. To ensure accuracy of the data analysis, member-checking process of validity was employed in the study considering the qualitative orientation of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The data gathered from the interviews were analysed using thematic analysis to highlight similar and recurring themes in the data that best answered the research questions. Finally, owing to the study's feminist methodology, a passage on the researcher's reflexivity is presented in the third chapter of the thesis.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this research study are significant based on the following.

1. Relevant findings on the issue of domestic violence against Nigerian-immigrant women in Canada produced by the study may influence policy changes and/or assist service providers in their application for funding.

2. Relevant data and findings that influence service provision produced by the study may help provide adequate protection for these women and possibly reduce incidences of such violence.

3. By measuring how study participants' gender ideologies may have changed, the study provided valuable information on what influences individuals' perceptions of gendered relations.

4. A clearer understanding of the relationship between changing gender ideologies and domestic violence against Nigerian immigrant women may encourage further inquiry into domestic violence against immigrant women as it relates to gender ideologies. It may also provide insights on populations with similar cultural backgrounds (for example, immigrant women of West African origin) and may inspire research into those populations.

5. The findings and recommendations of this study provided more information to increase the literature on domestic violence against Nigerian-immigrant women in Canada.

Limitations to the Study

This study was undertaken as a Master's Thesis Project and had the following limitations.

1. Time constraint. This study served as final requirement for a Master of Arts in Gender Studies degree. Consequently, timely completion of the thesis was essential to the attainment of the degree. This time constraint presented certain implications for the overall outcome of the study like restricting the time available for data collection, especially with

the current COVID-19 pandemic; in addition, participant recruitment was a major challenge.

2. Selective population. The sample population is not representative of the total Nigerian-immigrant population in Canada and the findings from the purposive sample may not be generalizable. The participants mostly hailed from two major ethnic groups in Nigeria, which is home to hundreds of ethnic groups. Similarly, much of the information available in the literature is relative to certain immigrant populations, and was not always relevant in the analysis of the data gathered.

3. Method and Sampling. The sample size in this study is limited because the study used non-probability purposive snowball-sampling technique and the description of the sample population was restrictive. Consequently, the researcher was unable to recruit the desired number of participants. Similarly, all participants were permanent residents and the findings may not be relevant for those with other status such as asylum seekers.

Organization of the study

The final major results of this study are documented in this thesis. The thesis is organized in five chapters as follows.

Chapter One (Introduction). This chapter introduces and provides an overview of the subject matter under investigation. First, the background to the study explores the broad theme of domestic violence against women, then narrows down more specifically to the research topic. Second, the statement of the problem describes the research problem which gives room to introduce the research aims and objectives, the research questions, the research methodology and research methods used. Finally, the significance of the study; limitations to the study; and organization of the subsequent chapters close the introductory chapter.

Chapter Two (Literature Review). The second chapter reviews relevant literature that provides comprehensive knowledge of the major themes in the research topic. This also includes a review of related studies in the literature from a study by study and thematic review of quantitative and qualitative studies related to the research topic and questions.

Chapter Three (Research Methodology, Methods and Theoretical Framework). The third chapter describes the research methodology; the principles guiding the research design; and ethical consideration as researcher's reflexivity. The theoretical framework for the study is also defined in this chapter alongside an explanation of how the defined theories are applicable to the study. This chapter also includes a clear description of the methods used to recruit participants and gather data. This includes the definition of the sample population, sampling method, recruitment procedure, and data collection process.

Chapter Four (Data Interpretation and Analysis). The fourth chapter presents the collected data in readable format. The data is analysed and the results discussed and interpreted. In this chapter, thematic analysis is used to analyse the qualitative interview data.

Chapter Five (discussion). The fifth and final chapter includes a discussion that relates the analysed data and results back to the theoretical framework; to the research questions; and to the general literature. This chapter concludes the thesis by making recommendations based on the results found and highlighting gaps that remain as suggestions for further study.

The literature review, in Chapter Two, presents an in-depth analysis of the literature on domestic violence against immigrant women and lays more emphasis on the connection between changing gender ideologies and domestic violence.

<center>**Chapter Two**
Literature Review</center>

This chapter provides a critical and analytical review of the literature related to the thesis topic on the experiences of immigrant women and conflicting gender ideologies. The literature review is based on a study-by-study and thematic approach of qualitative and quantitative reports related to the topic (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This review organizes and examines relevant studies that are pertinent to the defined research questions and research problem to broaden knowledge on the research topic and establish the relevance of this study.

This review contains three sections. The first section examines gender ideologies and a possible relationship between gender ideologies and domestic violence. The second section explores domestic violence as it is experienced by immigrant women. Finally, the third section examines the limited literature on Nigerian-immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence in western host countries, particularly Canada, to identify any relationship with conflicting gender ideologies.

Gender Ideologies: Meaning, Scope and Consequences

Davis and Greenstein (2009) measured gender ideology in their study on the construction and consequences of gender ideology. They defined gender ideology as "the underlying concepts of an individual's support for division of paid work and family responsibilities based on the notion of separate spheres for men and women" (Davis & Greenstein, 2009, p.89). This definition is lacking because it does not reflect the influences of culture and history which are important for understanding the term gender ideology. The focus on gender-specific space and a distinction between women's and men's responsibilities (i.e., gendered division of labour) limits the scope of the term. A comprehensive definition is one that considers gender ideologies to be beliefs about appropriate roles and activities for men and women in many different life domains, including

family, politics, education, childcare, employment, and romantic relationships (Gibbons, Hamby & Dennis, 1997 as cited by Loyd, 2006). Another definition is put forth by Phillips (2001) who argues that "gender ideology is concerned with normative beliefs about the proper roles for and fundamental natures of women and men in human societies. The distinction between sex and gender is central to the concept of gender ideology" (p.6016). One may consider gender as a construct or tool that is designed and used by societies (in culturally distinct ways) to simplify human relations by teaching gender identity, ensure compliance to cultural norms, and eventually control gender dysphoria. Thus, while the binary gender (male or female) is consistent across societies, gender ideologies are culturally distinct notions on what is expected of and proper for each gender (Philips, 2001).

Some studies have set out to measure individuals' gender ideologies. For instance, in a study using previously prepared data from many longitudinal and cross-sectional national surveys, Davis and Greenstein (2009) measured changing or shifting gender ideologies in the USA. Drawing from their role-based definition of gender ideology, they measure gender ideology by rating individuals' opinions on role-sharing from traditional gender roles to a more egalitarian model of sharing roles. The authors in their study employed five parameters: primacy of breadwinner role; belief in gendered separate spheres; working women and relationship quality; wife/motherhood and the feminine self, and household utility (Davis & Greenstein, 2009, p.89). These parameters measured women's and men's opinion on how responsibilities in the home, at work, and in society at large are to be shared. The researchers reported that over the years individuals have become more egalitarian in their role-sharing and that the change was more significant for women and that socio-demographic influences of urbanization and feminist movements may have played a role in this change (Davis & Greenstein, 2009).

Loyd's (2006) comparison of gender ideology in the USA and Japan reflected on the culturally distinct nature of gender ideology. The author's comparative study adopted role-based parameters and draw data from the 2002 International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) module "Family and Changing Gender Roles III." The author noted difficulty in using a single set of measurements to determine the gender ideologies of individuals in both countries. This difficulty encountered points to the influence of culture and religion on gender ideology.

Although many post-colonial societies have been restructured to resemble societies with which they share colonial ties, the sum total of every society's socio-economic, political, and religious history is unique. This unique history influences how gender roles are created and maintained and how gender socialization takes place. These gender roles prescribe men and women's responsibilities within public and private spheres. History may also influence the ease or difficulty involved in restructuring or changing such ideas about gender. For instance, some studies have argued that countries with harsh colonial experiences were more likely to hold highly patriarchal views and reject egalitarian views, which they suspect to be invading. This is interesting when we consider that some have argued that colonial influence changed gender relations to disadvantage women in certain colonies (Fidan & Bui, 2016; Morrell et al., 2012). Furthermore, the intensity of religious affiliation in different societies also influences individuals and societies' gender ideologies. Decidedly Islamic and Christian societies tend to hold highly patriarchal views, while more secular societies are more likely to hold egalitarian views.

The impact of gender ideologies, which is closely related to one's identity and socio-economic structures, is nicely captured by Bui and Morash (2008), who argue that "gender identity, perceptions of oneself as appropriately masculine or feminine, is important in explaining how a person behaves. Individuals construct or actualize their gender identities through their actions,

though certain contexts and structural inequalities can limit their means to do so" (p.191) It is therefore plausible that changing socio-economic conditions can influence individuals' realities and incentivise a change or shift in their gender ideologies. Furthermore, it is arguable that immigration, which creates a change in socio-economic conditions, may lead to a change or shift in gender ideologies.

Following this description of gender ideologies, it is important to review some of the studies that have noted the link between changing or shifting gender ideologies (and gender relations) and domestic violence.

The Impacts of Gender Ideologies on Domestic Violence Against Immigrant Women

Husnu and Mertan (2017), in their study of the role of traditional gender myths in IPV (beating) with 205 Turkish and Turkish Cypriot students, note that Turkey's endorsement of traditional gender ideologies was strongly related to how male participants positively responded to traditional myths regarding women and beating. Citing Harris, Firestone, and Vega (2005), the researchers argue that "the national and social structural context of each culture with its patriarchal institutions, sexist norms, and historical legacy of male dominance socializes men and women to support, excuse, and legitimate men's violence toward women" (Husnu & Mertan, 2017, p. 3738). More importantly, they argue that sexism is ambivalent (i.e., both benevolent and hostile). Sexism is benevolent (i.e., subtle) when it rewards women for staying the course and respecting traditional gender ideologies. On the other hand, hostile sexism is used to punish women for transgressing these traditional gender ideologies. Husnu & Mertan (2017) note that men commonly endorse hostile sexism, but both men and women endorse benevolent sexism. It is thus plausible that when women become reluctant or unable to respect such traditional ideologies, they are at risk of facing violence from their partners. Furthermore, as noted by Bui and Morash (2008), the socio-economic

implications of immigration may create gender role reversal, which in turn may put immigrant women at risk for domestic violence.

Using in-depth interviews with 155 Vietnamese immigrant women to the USA, as well as interviews and a focus group with 13 service providers, Bui and Morash (2008) present a clear relationship between changing gender relations and the occurrence of domestic violence. The study sought to associate domestic violence against these Vietnamese immigrant women with men's (their partners') tendency to use violence to maintain power and masculine status when gender relations are reorganized post-migration. In support of this point, the authors cited a study by Song and Moon (1998) on South Korean immigrant men to the United States who felt that "their absolute dominance in the family was threatened because they could not find well-paying jobs, their wives had to work to provide adequate family income, and working wives challenged the assignment of all household and child-rearing tasks to women" (Bui & Morash, 2008, p. 193). They also note that the authors of the cited study found that these men were likely to resort to physically and verbally abusing their wives to maintain a balance (Bui & Morash, 2008).

Similarly, in their own study Bui and Morash (2008) reported that gender role reversal, men's downward mobility, loss of control over women's sexuality, and inability to oversee or control remittance of funds back home were factors increasing violence against the study's participants. These participants expressed that gender role reversal and its financial implications caused their partners to become abusive. This had significant impact on the participants, as 75% of them reported verbal abuse, 63% of them reported physical violence, 46% of them reported sexual violence, and 37% reported experiencing both physical and sexual abuse (Bui & Morash, 2008, pp.200-201). This study also provided relevant cultural context, as it highlighted specific aspects of Vietnamese perceptions of masculinity such as sexual prowess and total control over a

wife's sexuality. The study also reflected the impact of the war in Vietnam, noting that immigrant men who were in the military had less opportunities to use their skill in America and therefore were more likely to have experienced downward mobility. Overall, this study shows that women's transgression of traditional gender roles made them vulnerable to domestic violence (Bui & Morash, 2008).

In general, studies have shown that women in highly patriarchal societies are more likely to endorse violence against women, such as wife beating, and blame the victims rather than the abusers (Zaatut & Haj-Yahia, 2016). Furthermore, Fidan and Bui (2016), investigating intimate-partner violence against women in Zimbabwe, also consider how patriarchal gender ideologies in both men and women may impact women's experiences of domestic violence. Fidan and Bui (2016) identified Zimbabwean society as patriarchal and lay emphasis on the post-colonial manifestation of patriarchal beliefs. Their findings reported that men's patriarchal ideologies increased the likelihood of women's experiencing IPV. The literature has also suggested that protecting immigrant women from domestic violence will entail aiding and helping them adapt to their new country through entry into the labour market, utilising educational opportunities, and learning local laws and policies (Erez et al., 2009; McDonald, 1999; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002; Raj & Silverman, 2002). However, it is important to note that the process of adaptation may have significant impact on women's perceptions of gender relations and in turn may leave them at risk of domestic violence. It is therefore important to consider these implications when proposing viable solutions to immigrant women's vulnerability to domestic violence.

The following section reviews studies that have investigated domestic violence against immigrant women.

Domestic Violence Against Immigrant Women

Domestic violence, often used interchangeably with intimate partner violence, has become a common feature of feminist research. This is because many studies have found that women are disproportionately victimized by this form of violence, perpetrated mainly by their male partners (Berry, 1989; Husnu & Mertan, 2017; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). As a result, since domestic violence in general may refer to physical, emotional, or financial violence in any familial context, some researchers have used other terms such as wife-battering and wife-abuse in reference to domestic violence to express the distinctive gendered nature of such abuse. For instance, MacLeod (1987, p. 16), after interviewing shelter workers and victims of domestic violence, aptly defines wife-battering as

> …the loss of dignity, control, and safety as well as the feeling of powerlessness and entrapment experienced by women who are the direct victims of ongoing or repeated physical, psychological, economic, sexual and /or verbal violence or who are subjected to persistent threats or the witnessing of such violence against children, other relatives, friends, pets, and/or cherished possessions, by their boyfriends, husbands, live-in lovers, ex-husbands, or ex-lovers whether male or female…

As the literature on domestic violence continues to evolve, concerns have arisen about how using such terms (wife-battering, battered women) may present women as victims. The problem of using gender as the only model for explaining domestic violence and more has also been introduced into feminist scholarship (Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). The literature on domestic violence against immigrant women has been concerned with understanding how oppression based on other social characteristics, including but not limited to immigrant status race, age, sexual orientation, gender expression, and class, may intersect with gender-based violence to influence domestic violence against diverse women (McDonald, 1999; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). One may argue that the literature on domestic violence against immigrant women has been influenced by

considering marginalized women from diverse backgrounds, through the development of intersectional feminist theory and the steady increase in global migration.

The literature on domestic violence against immigrant women has also been concerned with understanding how immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence differ from the experiences of their local-born counterparts (Ahmed et al., 2005; Alaggia et al., 2009; Erez et al., 2009; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002; Raj & Silverman, 2002). As expected, one concern has been determining the prevalence of domestic violence cases against immigrant women. However, the attempts of researchers to highlight the prevalence of domestic violence against immigrant women have proved difficult for several reasons.

First, researchers and participants alike may be concerned that such information could easily be used to racially profile certain immigrant populations. In a review of Canadian literature on domestic violence against immigrant women, McDonald (1999) highlights how "studies that indicate the prevalence of domestic violence in immigrant communities may do harm by further stereotyping immigrant groups as poor, unemployed, and fraught with social problems such as alcoholism." (p.166) A similar issue was noted by Menjivar and Salcido (2002) who examined various case studies in the literature to highlight common experiences of immigrant women (to various western receiving countries) facing domestic violence. They found that "there has been a common tendency to stereotype domestic violence in some ethnic groups as an inherent part of their cultural repertoire" (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002, p.901). For this reason, results from prevalence studies among immigrant populations may be used to reinforce the stereotype that domestic violence is a way of life for these immigrant groups. Furthermore, this stereotype may also be used by policy makers to discourage state intervention in domestic violence cases within immigrant communities and encourage the perception that immigrants import domestic violence

into their new countries (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). Examining domestic violence through class, racial and gendered lenses, Sokoloff and Dupont (2005) also reported that this stereotype is used to blame immigrants' culture, and they point out the dangers of accepting "simplistic analyses of the role of culture in domestic violence" (p.46) Finally, due to the burden of high social and cultural capital required for and sensitivity of such research, any quantitative studies conducted into immigrant populations are restricted to small samples of specific ethnic groups. These studies may not always provide a fulsome picture of the issue (Erez et al., 2009).

Despite the difficulties, some researchers have been able to conduct quantitative studies into immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence. On the other hand, it has been far easier to conduct qualitative studies with immigrant women, and many studies have used these methods. Many of these studies have also been conducted with immigrant women to western host countries such as Canada, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Australia (Ajao, 2018; Alaggia et al., 2009; Erez et al., 2009; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2013; Kalunta-Crumpton; 2015; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002; Raj & Silverman, 2002). In Canada, studies consider the experiences of immigrant women from large immigrant populations such as Asian and Latin American populations. These studies have found much of what is common in the literature on domestic violence against immigrant women to be true for these groups yet also have significant findings that specifically concern these groups (Madden et al., 2015; Souto et al., 2016). Altogether these studies have mostly been concerned with highlighting the factors influencing immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence (Erez et al., 2009; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002; Raj & Silverman, 2002); prevalence of domestic violence against immigrant women (Ahmad et al., 2005; Halli & Brownridge, 2002; Hyman, et al., 2006; Yoshihama & Dabby, 2015;); help-seeking rates and attitudes among immigrant women (Choi et al., 2016; Latta & Goodman, 2005; Okeke-Ihejirika

& Yohani, 2017); and immigration policies and their effects on domestic violence against immigrant women (Alaggia et al., 2009; Okeke-Ihejirika et al., 2018). It is prudent to explore some of these studies to get a clearer understanding of immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence.

Factors Influencing Immigrant Women's Experiences of Domestic Violence

Across the literature, studies that have sought to understand immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence have noted that immigrant women are significantly more vulnerable to domestic violence than their local-born counterparts (Ahmad et al., 2005; Choi et al., 2012; Raj & Silverman, 2002). Most of them also identified similar factors that influence immigrant women's increased vulnerability to domestic violence, some of which include language barriers, social isolation, cultural barriers, immigration status, economic difficulty, and limited or no access to social and legal services (Erez et al., 2009; Menjivar and Salcido, 2002; Raj & Silverman, 2002; Alaggia et al., 2009). Similarly, **u**sing an intersectional framework, Erez et al. (2009) take it a step further by noting that immigrant women's experiences are shaped by the intersections of their race, gender, religion, and immigration status. They also note that all the aforementioned factors influencing domestic violence against immigrant women also intersect and rarely occur independently. These factors are examined below.

Language Barrier. This presents obstacles to immigrant women who are trying to acclimatize to their new countries. Menjivar and Salcido (2002) noted that one major risk factor for immigrant women's vulnerability to domestic violence is an inability to speak the receiving country's language. They argued that language barriers limit job opportunities, impede one's ability to increase social networks or resources and access social and legal services, and make immigrant women dependent on either their partners or community members to provide translation

services. Studies have also linked language inadequacies to social isolation, economic challenges, increased chances of domestic violence, and mental health challenges (Choi et al., 2012; Menjivar &Salcido, 2002; Okeke-Ihejirika, Salami & Karimi, 2018).

Social Isolation. This is a common consequence of immigration that may exacerbate immigrant women's vulnerability to domestic violence. Choi et al. (2012) study the impact of social isolation on spousal violence on local women and immigrant women using data from a household survey of 492 cross-border married couples and 379 local married couples in Hong Kong. The researchers found that female marriage migrants (immigrant women) were more vulnerable to spousal violence and more socially isolated than local married women. The researchers found a correlation between immigrant women's vulnerability to physical violence and the younger age of immigrant women as compared to local women. Psychological and sexual violence, on the other hand, were associated with not only immigrant women's network participation and level of social control but those of their husbands as well. The researchers also observed that the husbands of these marriage migrants themselves face isolation and thus exacerbate their wives' isolation to maintain control over them and keep them from filing for divorce (Choi et al., 2012). Husbands do this by "prohibiting their wives from learning the local language, visiting friends, going to school or leaving the house" (Choi et al., 2012, p. 445). Menjivar and Salcido (2002) make similar findings, noting that when immigrant women begin to build ties with their new community conflict usually arises at home. They note that immigrant women's dependency on their partners for legal, financial, and emotional support gives their partners power. Thus, abusive partners are unhappy when immigrant women begin to establish these links for themselves. In addition to this, isolation from friends and family in the home country who may have provided emotional and other forms of support presents challenges in coping with

stress that arises when abuse occurs in the settlement process (Okeke-Ihejirika et al., 2018). In other cases when women are surrounded by relatives (especially their partners' family), they may be unable to avoid or report abuse for the fear of being stigmatized within their immigrant communities (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). All these consequences of social isolation make immigrant women more susceptible to domestic violence.

Economic Conflict. This disadvantages immigrant women in different ways. On one hand, they may become dependent on their partners if they are unable to find jobs or are underemployed due to language barriers and unrecognized foreign credentials and experience. Okeke-Ihejirika et al. (2018) reviewed 16 relevant studies in the literature to extract the experiences of African immigrant women to western countries. One important discovery they made was that those immigrant women who attempt to enter the labour market face job market inequalities arising from racial and gender stereotypes. They argue that immigrant women are likely to face downward economic mobility. Even when women find jobs, they are still burdened with household duties, paid childcare, costly transportation, and deskilling. One the other hand, when immigrant women find gainful employment, which enhances women's bargaining power and control over resources, they may still be at risk if men feel their authority is threatened (Okeke-Ihejirika et al., 2018; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). Menjivar and Salcido (2002) cite a study of South Asian women in the United States conducted by Mehrotra (1999, 628) in which a participant named Mona explained,

> "During my marriage, the worst days were the days I would bring in the pay stub. I was getting yelled at so much. I would take my pay stub, go to my bedroom closet, close the closet and sit there and cry for two hours, three hours." (p. 907)

It is therefore plausible that economic conflict, which most immigrants arguably face at some point, is a major factor exacerbating immigrant women's vulnerability to and experiences of domestic violence.

Immigration Status. This is a major factor that shapes immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence because it can worsen their vulnerability and isolation (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002; Raj & Silverman, 2002). Erez et al. (2009) capture the interaction between immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence and their immigrant identity well in their study of 137 immigrant women (originating from 35 countries) in the USA. They clearly show how the process of immigration itself shaped these immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence and the impact of women's immigration status on their experiences of violence. Their findings, similar to findings from other studies, show that the struggle to maintain or attain legal immigration status puts immigrant women at risk for domestic violence. Immigration polices (especially family reunification laws) applicable to the USA, and arguably other western countries, make women dependent on their partners to maintain or attain legal status. In some cases, they have to be married for a certain number of years for their marriage to be legally recognised, and in other cases their residency applications are dependent on their partners, which means that they risk being deported with their partners if they file a claim against them (Erez et al., 2009; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). Erez et al. (2009, p. 47) argue that abusive partners can easily use women's dependency, illegal immigration status, and/or lack of local or legal knowledge as a weapon to threaten them. As a result, many women who experience such violence are reluctant to file criminal charges against their partners because they are afraid of losing their legal status or of having their illegal status exposed (Erez et. al., 2009; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002).

These identified factors have been commonly examined across the literature to highlight how immigrant women may be more vulnerable to domestic violence than their local counterparts. The next sub-heading reviews the few studies that have attempted to find the prevalence of experiences of domestic violence among immigrant women.

The Prevalence of Domestic Violence Against Immigrant Women

As earlier noted, there has been a difficulty in carrying out prevalence studies in immigrant communities because of the sensitivity of the matter and the capital-intensive nature of prevalence studies. Erez et al. (2009) note that any studies that have been carried out have been on small samples from specific ethnic groups. This means that such reports cannot be generalized without turning very diverse immigrant populations into a homogenized group termed "immigrants." However, some studies have been conducted in various immigrant populations within different host countries (typically western receiving countries such as the USA, Canada, the UK, and Australia). While some of the results of these studies have been inconsistent, Choi et al. (2012) attribute this inconsistency to the fact that these studies have used small convenience samples and were not designed to be measured against the general population. It is, however, important to examine a few studies that have produced relevant statistics regarding immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence.

Erez et al.'s (2009) study of 137 women from 35 countries who immigrated to the United States sought to highlight the common experiences of immigrant women in the USA to influence public policy. They provided many useful findings, for instance, their comparison of their participants' experiences of violence in their home country and in the United States (their receiving country). The researchers found that 50% of their participants reported that violence increased after arrival in the USA and 22% reported that violence began after arrival in the US. An additional 20% reported that the level of violence stayed the same after their arrival in the US. Finally, just 6% reported that the level of violence decreased after their arrival in the US, and only 2% reported that the violence stopped after their arrival in the USA. Their findings revealed that migration itself

is a significant risk factor in immigrant women's experiences of violence, at least for the participants of the study.

In the USA, some studies with specific immigrant populations have also found higher rates of domestic violence or IPV among immigrant communities. For instance, Murdaugh et al. (2004) study the prevalence rate of domestic violence against 309 Hispanic women in the Southeastern USA. In this sample, 279 (93%) were immigrant women, and their results showed 70% reported experiencing physical violence in the last 12 months, mostly from their current boyfriends or husbands (68%).

Yoshihama and Dabby (2015), using data from various relevant national studies, created a fact report measuring domestic violence against women within Asian and Pacific Islander communities. In general, they found that "21–55% of Asian women report experiencing intimate physical and/or sexual violence during their lifetime" (p. 2). They also produced these prevalence rates by country from various studies conducted in the USA. For example, in a survey of undocumented women in San Francisco, "20% of 54 Filipina women reported having experienced some form of domestic violence, including physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, either in their country of origin or in the U.S." (Yoshihama & Dabby, 2015, p.5). Similarly, the researchers reported on a study of 211 Japanese-immigrant women and Japanese-American women in Los Angeles county using face-to-face interviews, which found "51.7% reported having experienced physical violence, and 29.9%, sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner during their lifetime" (Yoshihama et al., 2015, p.6). Finally, other studies with small immigrant communities in the USA have also recorded high prevalence of domestic violence, for example 60% among Korean immigrant women and about 25 % among Arab Americans (Lee, 2003 citing Song, 1986; Kulwicki, Aswad, Carmona & Ballout, 2010).

In Canada, some studies have been conducted on the subject matter. Ahmad et al. (2005), using a sample of 3548 Canadian-born women and 313 Canadian-immigrant women who were married or in common-law relationships and aged 25 to 49, sought to compare the rates of self-reported experience of physical and emotional spousal abuse. They derived this dataset from the General Social Survey (GSS) of 1999 and conducted a secondary analysis. They found that 4.5% of Canadian-born women reported physical violence whereas 3.3% of Canadian-immigrant women reported physical violence, a difference which the researchers determined to be statistically insignificant. On the other hand, while only 8.7% of Canadian-born women reported emotional violence, 14.7% of Canadian-immigrant women reported emotional violence. This showed that Canadian-immigrant women experienced significantly higher levels of emotional violence compared to their local-born counterparts. Ahmad et al. (2005) also argued that while there was no significant difference in self-reported experience of physical violence between the two groups of women, consideration should be given to the limitations associated with gathering such data-- particularly low help-seeking attitudes among immigrant groups. One may also argue that, because until quite recently emotional violence was not really considered abuse, it is possible that immigrant women felt more comfortable speaking up about emotional violence because they didn't consider it as serious as physical violence.

Hyman et al. (2006) investigated the relationship between length of stay and risk of experiencing intimate-partner violence by comparing recent and non-recent immigrant women's reported experiences of intimate-partner violence. They drew their sample of 1596 immigrant women from the 1999 General Social Survey (GSS) and conducted a secondary analysis. Recent Canadian-immigrant women (RCIM) were those who had been in Canada for 9 years or less and non-recent Canadian-immigrant women (NRCIM) were those who had been in Canada for more

than 10 years. The total number of RCIM was 389 while the total number of NRCIM was 1207. The researchers found similar prevalence rates for various forms of intimate-partner violence in both groups of women. RCIM and NRCIM were likely to report having experienced emotional violence (15.3% and 17%), financial violence (2.5% and 3.3%), physical violence (5.5% and 6.5%), sexual violence (0.8% and 1.1%) and any IPV (17.4% and 18.8%), respectively (Hyman et al., 2006, p. 655). The authors compared both groups of women and found that the risk of experiencing any IPV by a current or ex-partner was lower among recent immigrant woman than among non-recent immigrant women (0.57:1.0, respectively). Thus, Hyman et al. (2006) established a relationship between length of stay and risk of experiencing IPV and they were also able to link risk of experiencing IPV to country of origin. They found women from North America and Europe were less likely to have report having experienced IPV than women from developing countries (1.0:1.57, respectively).

Similarly, Brownridge and Halli (2002) conducted a study that sought to identify prevalence and causes of domestic violence against immigrant women in Canada using a sample of 7115 women derived from the 1999 General Social Survey, where 5,737 were Canadian-born immigrant women, 844 were immigrant women from developed countries, and 534 were immigrant women from developing countries (p.458). The authors reported that prevalence was highest among immigrant women from developing countries (5.5%), followed by Canadian-born women (3.7%), and then immigrant women from developed countries (2.7%) (Brownridge & Halli, 2002, p.460).

The above studies have found higher levels of IPV or domestic violence among immigrant women, which supports the argument that immigrant women are more vulnerable to domestic violence. However, some studies have produced results to the contrary. For instance, Mont and

Forte (2012) conducted a study in which they compare immigrant women and Canadian-born women's self-reported experiences of physical and psychological consequences of intimate-partner violence. They drew their sample from the 2009 General Social Survey in which a total of 1480 women reported experiencing one or more forms of IPV. From this sample, where 218 were immigrant women and 1262 were Canadian-born women, they found that immigrant women were less likely than Canadian-born to report having experienced physical and/ sexual violence (5.1% and 6.9%, respectively). The same was the case of emotional violence (15.3% and 18.2%, respectively). This discrepancy may be caused by underreporting.

Similarly, when Mont et al. (2012) reproduced the Hyman et al. (2006) study, with an inclusion of Canadian-born women and drawing data from the 2009 General Social Survey (GSS), they found that 41.6% of recent immigrant women, 60.6% of non-recent immigrant women, and 61.5% of Canadian-born women reported having experienced IPV from a former partner in the last 5 years. Mont et al. (2012) also argue that recent immigrant women were less likely than Canadian-born women to report any form of IPV, but there was no statistically significant difference between non-recent immigrant women and Canadian-born women. These findings suggest that self-reported incidences of domestic violence may be limited among (recent) immigrant women. The next sub-heading reviews studies that address factors constraining immigrant women's ability and/or willingness to seek help.

In more recent literature, sources have considered a potential outcome of domestic violence: domestic homicide. Recorded cases of domestic homicide, where domestic homicide refers to death of an individual and/or their children caused by a current or former intimate partner, much like domestic violence, show that women are significantly more represented. These studies, particularly in Canada, have also noted certain risk factors that increase the vulnerability of

immigrant women and certain other groups like women in remote, rural, and northern regions, and Indigenous women. These risk factors are not unlike those already discussed, but when these factors remain unaddressed there is a tendency for domestic violence to be escalated to domestic homicide. Statistics from these studies show that between 2010 and 2018 there have been 662 cases of domestic homicide with a yearly average of 70 cases (Rodriguez, 2019, para.1). Data also show that 80% of the victims in adult cases were women and 59% of the victims in the children cases were girls. Similarly, the noted vulnerable populations, along with children, account for 343 cases (over 50%). Out of the 343 cases, 99 cases involved immigrant women (Rodriguez, 2019; Rossiter et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Kalaichandran (2018), in a study of the risk factors associated with domestic homicide within immigrant and Canadian-born populations using retrospective case analysis, made significant findings. The researcher found that, within the investigated homicide cases, murdered immigrant women were less likely to be separated or in common-law partnerships than murdered Canadian-born women; immigrant women were more likely to be socially isolated than Canadian-born women; and immigrant women were more likely to have language barriers than Canadian-born women. However, both groups were just as likely to utilize legal and social agencies and had similar employment rates. This study highlights the most relevant factors that influence domestic violence in both populations; inconsistencies with the literature may be caused by the limited study sample.

As discussed earlier, there are inconsistencies in the findings of various researchers on the subject matter. These inconsistencies may be due to the methods employed, the size of sample available, or researchers' access to the population; however, one factor that definitely influences researchers' ability to accurately represent immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence

is these women's willingness, or otherwise, to report cases of domestic violence to relevant authorities. As some studies like Hyman et al. (2006) have argued, the General Social Survey of Canadian families, whence most of the reviewed studies have drawn their data, does not accurately represent domestic violence in immigrant and refugee families due to under-reporting (Okeke-Ihejirika & Yohani, 2017). For this reason, the help-seeking attitudes of immigrant women have also been a concern of many studies with some of them examined below.

Help-Seeking Attitudes of Immigrant Women Who Face Domestic Violence

The ability and/or willingness of immigrant women to seek help and utilize available social and legal recourse when they experience any form of domestic violence is associated with the ability of service workers to provide support to these women that may lead to reduction and/or elimination of such occurrences. However, studies have shown that immigrant women are often reluctant or unable to access social and legal services (Erez et al., 2009; Hadeed & Lee, 2009; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002).

In their critical review of the literature on Asian immigrants' help-seeking attitudes, use of available services, and health consequences, Hadeed and Lee (2009) reported that "abused Asian immigrant women often confront unique, multiple barriers to obtaining help that hinders [sic] them from receiving appropriate services and law enforcement protection" (p.145). In addition, Hadeed and Lee (2009) highlighted culture, country of origin, immigration status/history, adaptation level, perceptions of service provider, and prejudicial treatment women experience as factors influencing Asian-immigrant help-seeking attitudes (pp.157-158).

Raj and Silverman (2002), reviewing relevant literature using cultural context and legal status as a framework, also noted that culture, context, and legal status can all serve as barriers to help-seeking among immigrant women. Cultural barriers are identified as family and relative

nonchalance to abuse, stigmatization of divorced women and their children, and concern that services will not be culturally sensitive. Contextual barriers include language barriers, economic instability, housing concerns, lack of knowledge of available services, and lack of culturally sensitive services. Legal barriers include concern about deportation and limited access to protections as immigrant women (Alaggia et al., 2009; Okeke-Ihejirika & Yohani, 2017; Raj & Silverman, 2002).

Similarly, in an in-depth review of 30 relevant studies on domestic violence against immigrant women, Okeke-Ihejirika and Yohani (2017) reported in their study that women in different immigrant populations adopt different coping mechanisms from Canadian-born women. They noted that

> ...both Japanese and Tamil immigrant women often adopt passive/emotion-focused coping strategies over active/problem-focused ones. Emotion-focused coping involves strategies to reduce negative outcomes and psychological stress while problem-focused coping uses behaviors to change the circumstances that trigger stress. These strategies were generally perceived by immigrant women as strength-based approaches to stress management. (Okeke-Ihejirika & Yohani, 2017, p.4).

Furthermore, Okeke-Ihejirika and Yohani (2017) added that because these women are more interested in emotion-based coping strategies rather than active/problem-focused strategies, they do not engage in help-seeking, nor do they resort to legal recourses, even though they may be more effective.

In another study by Latta and Goodman (2005) using 15 qualitative interviews with relevant service providers, the cultural context influencing Haitian immigrant women's access to domestic violence services was examined. The findings suggest that the prevalence of domestic violence in Haiti, lack of police intervention in Haiti, lack of counselling and social services in Haiti (outside of those provided by family members), religious doctrines that implicitly support

abuse, fear of immigration repercussions, as well as culturally incompetent service provision greatly limit Haitian women's ability or willingness to report abuse.

Furthermore, even when immigrant women seek help, they are more likely to access non-formal resources like family members, relatives, community members or religious leaders (Choi et al., 2016; Dutton et al., 2000). One may argue that women engage in these informal methods because they perceive that such avenues may provide service that is culturally appropriate. Choi et al. (2016), examining the role of faith community on immigrant women's help-seeking attitudes, revealed that Asian and Latina immigrant women in the USA overwhelmingly sought help from their religious leaders or clergy members rather than from professionals. The authors reported from one study of Latino women that 16% of the participants sought help from religious leaders and 71% engaged in spiritual strategies to cope with abuse (Choi et al., 2016, p.5). In another study of 195 Korean immigrants, participants reported seeking help from friends first, from clergy members second, and only finally from professionals (Brabeck & Guzman, 2008; New Visions, 2004 as cited by Choi et al., 2016).

The concern over this pattern of reporting among immigrant women arises from the fact that researchers have found that these women may be met with denial, silence, lack of support or patriarchal/traditional ideologies that encourage staying with their abusers when they seek help from religious leaders (Bentley-Goodley & Fowler, 2006; Choi et.al., 2016; Ellison et al., 2007). Furthermore, Choi et al. (2016) noted that some studies show that some clergy members' attitudes towards solutions for IPV were problematic because they could create dangerous outcomes for abused women (p.6). These studies show that clergy and religious members were likely to offer counselling that encouraged women to pray more, avoid their husbands when the men were angry, and change their own attitudes, but discouraged women from separating or filling for divorce from

their abusers and accessing formal and external help, in some cases. Some other studies with Latinas have, however, shown that some clergy members have been non-judgmental when women chose to leave their abusers, and that women found religious activities, like praying and engaging in Bible studies, to be helpful when coping with abuse (Behnke, Ames & Hancock, 2012 as cited by Choi et al., 2016; Fuchsel, 2012).

Finally, immigrant women's help-seeking attitudes are also shaped by the influence of their culture and community members. In cases where women come from countries where domestic violence is either not recognised or not criminalized, they may be less likely to seek help. Similarly, if they settle in the receiving country with their family or within their ethnic community, they may be held to home-country standards by their family and community members (Erez et al., 2009; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). Furthermore, Erez et al. (2009) confirmed in their study report, where 65% of their participants reported that their home countries domestic policies were abuse-tolerant (p. 47). As a result, 54% of their participants did not seek help; 46% eventually had law enforcement involved, but of those women, 35% had not reported the abuse themselves (Erez et al., 2009, p.49).

Immigration policies have also been noted to have an impact on immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence. Several studies have considered the extent of such impacts. Some of these studies are briefly reviewed below.

The Impact of Immigration Policies on Immigrant Women's Experiences of Domestic Violence

Immigrants' legal status, or otherwise, has been identified as one of the factors that increase immigrant women's vulnerability to domestic violence (Alaggia et al., 2009; Erez et al., 2009; McDonald, 1999; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). The issue of maintaining or attaining legal status is complicated for women because immigration laws, which at first glance appear to be gender-

neutral, have dissimilar consequences for men and women (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). Erez et al. (2009, citing Bui & Morash, 1999) noted that "immigrant women arrive with disadvantages in social status and basic human capital resources relative to immigrant men" (p. 744). In addition, Erez et al. (2009) also highlighted that while laws are not intentionally gender biased, US immigration laws that are based on marital status further jeopardize women by giving control to their male counterparts (p.46). Sponsorship relationships are notorious for serving as a weapon that abusive partners have commonly used to threaten immigrant women (Raj & Silverman, 2002). US immigration laws and policies that create long processing times, require women to be married to their sponsors (or require extensive documentation in cases of abuse), and are generally perceived as hostile may influence women to stay with their abusers because they fear immigration repercussions such as deportation.

Alaggia et al. (2009) reported how Canadian immigration policies have either increased or mitigated immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence. Using a focus-group methodology with professionals providing services to immigrant women (like shelter workers, law enforcement, health care providers, and child welfare services) as well as interviews with 32 key informants, they found that Canadian immigration laws and policies still endanger immigrant women. Alaggia et al. (2009) note that while immigration laws in Canada have been reviewed and amended, many structural and systemic barriers still hinder immigrant women's self-agency. The factors already noted, such as economic hardships, cultural beliefs, reluctance to involve police intervention, language barriers, fear of losing children, and isolation, have adverse effects on requirements for establishing a claim that may enable abused women to apply on humanitarian and compassionate grounds (Alaggia et al., 2009, p. 5). For instance, women who are reluctant to involve the police cannot provide proper documentation of abuse. Similarly, women who are

isolated without jobs and cannot speak English or French will be unable to prove sufficient ties to Canada, which are important in Humanitarian and Compassionate (H&C) applications (Alaggia et al., 2009). Additionally, Okeke-Ihejirika and Yohani (2017) also noted this point by reiterating that until significant changes are made to Canadian immigration laws and policies, immigrant women will be forced to choose between their marriage (family) and their well-being.

The literature on domestic violence is still growing, but important themes have developed across most of the studies on this subject matter. They show that due to current migration trends and socio-economic issues, the number of immigrant women in western receiving countries such as Canada, the USA, the UK, and Australia continues to increase. Studies also show that until the factors identified as causing or increasing immigrant women's vulnerability to domestic violence are addressed, we continue to jeopardize immigrant women's physical, emotional, reproductive, and mental health, not to mention their lives. Such mental, physical, emotional, and reproductive health consequences and their link to experiences of domestic violence have also been examined in the literature. Some studies argue that IPV-related health consequences occur within the context of other traumatic life experiences which only serve to worsen immigrant women's health. Others have argued that poor physical and mental health outcomes associated with IPV have dire impacts on not just women but their children and even the society at large. This is because some of these poor health outcomes may extend across generations (Godoy-Ruiz et al., 2015; Guruge et al., 2012; Menon & Venketeshwara, 2020; Okeke-Ihejirika et al., 2018). The overarching recommendation across these studies is that the issue of domestic violence against immigrant women should be addressed through further research that can influence policy and produce change.

While reviewing the literature on domestic violence, the theme of cultural beliefs or patriarchal ideologies or traditional ideologies was encountered frequently. Such beliefs and

ideologies were usually cited when considering immigrant women's help-seeking attitudes or perception of domestic violence, but rarely as a factor that may influence women's experiences of violence. It is important to understand how women's beliefs about gendered society, which one may argue evolve after immigration, may increase their vulnerability to domestic violence. This perception and understanding of gender relations may be referred to as gender ideologies. Some studies have considered the relationship between changing gender relations and domestic violence against immigrant women. The following section reviews studies that have investigated domestic violence against Nigerian-immigrant women in western receiving countries and attempts to note any similarities within these immigrant populations.

Nigerian-Immigrant Women's Experiences of Domestic Violence

Several studies have investigated Nigerian women's experiences of domestic violence in their home country. There are commonalities within the reports of these studies which indicated that that domestic violence rates are high; that Nigerian women are unlikely to report such abuse; that such abuse has dire implications for women's health as well as that of their children; and that many women tend to support wife-beating and other violent attitudes towards women (Alonge, 2018; Izugbara, 2018; Oluremi, 2015; Oyediran & Isinugo-Abanihe, 2005). For instance, Oluremi (2015) reported that 50 % of Nigerian women report having experienced domestic abuse, but 97.2% of them were unwilling to report such cases to the police (p.25). While these numbers are startling, other studies reported similar numbers that have only slightly reduced in recent years. The 2003 Nigerian Demographic and Health Survey (2004) reported that between 42% and 48% of Nigerian women participants reported having experienced domestic violence. The 2018 NDHS reports that 36% of ever-married women report having experienced spousal physical, sexual, or emotional violence, while 40% of women (aged 15-49) report having experienced physical and/or

sexual violence (pp. 430-433). The 2018 NDHS also reports that 55% of these women have never sought help (2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 2019; 2003 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 2004; Oyediran & Isinugo-Abanihe, 2005).

Furthermore, it has also been noted that due to Nigeria's patriarchal system, many Nigerian women have shown support for wife-beating. Oyediran and Isinugo-Abanihe (2005), in their study of Nigerian women's perceptions on domestic violence, noted evidence from the 2003 NDHS reflecting such perceptions. They note that "66.4% and 50.4% of ever married and unmarried women respectively expressed consent for wife beating" (p.38). Recent figures, while much lower, show that women (28%) still hold such beliefs, even more so than men (21%) (2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 2019). Oyediran and Isinugo-Abanihe (2005) argue that "ethnic affiliation, level of education, place of residence, wealth index and even frequency of listening to radio" (p.38) were very important factors that shaped women's perception. This argument reveals the influence of Nigerian patriarchal culture.

On a similar note, sources have noted that one of the main reasons Nigerian women seek asylum in other countries (particularly in Canada) is gender-based persecution. It has also been noted that these women may face difficulties like poverty while they await adjudication of their cases in Canada or may have their claims denied (Ali & Skipsey, 2019; Carman & Elash, 2018; Hill & Maurachar, 2019). Furthermore, studies have shown that other Nigerian women who have migrated willingly to western receiving countries like the USA, UK and Canada have not always been free from domestic violence (Ajao, 2018; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2013; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2016; Nwosu, 2006).

Ajao (2018) conducted a study into the help-seeking practices of Nigerian-immigrant women to the UK, using interviews with 16 Nigerian-immigrant women, and found that there were

three main factors that shaped these women's help-seeking practices. She identified the factors to be acculturation to the new country (UK), immigration status, and socialization from the home country (Nigeria). As noted earlier, Nigerian culture does not encourage seeking help in cases of domestic violence, and many Nigerian women choose to suffer in silence rather than expose their "shame." The same was true for the participants of Ajao's study, who specifically describe that they felt the need to respect their cultural upbringing. The other identified factors, which have been extensively reviewed, only served as further limitation. Ajao (2018) noted that when these women sought help, it was from community and church members whom they believed could be trusted and whom they regarded as family. This behaviour is shared with many other immigrant populations, as detailed above. Similarly, Kalunta-Crumpton (2013) conducted a study on the murders of nine Nigerian-immigrant women to the US by their partners, using internet commentaries on the posts of these murders. She found that these murders were framed in the context of the tension of navigating economic gender-role reversal and Nigerian patriarchal ideology. In a later study, Kalunta-Crumpton (2016) investigated Nigerian-immigrant women's views on how to tackle the issue of IPV using focus-group discussions with 44 immigrant women. She also noted that participants expressed the difficulty in navigating between meeting cultural expectations and ensuring their well-being.

Nwosu (2006) investigated the experiences of domestic violence against Nigerian-immigrant women living in Toronto, Canada using interviews with 10 married women and 2 key personnel from the Nigerian-Canadian Association in Toronto. Some key differences from other studies' findings on violence against immigrant women arose in the study. Most importantly, Nwosu (2006) noted that language barrier was not a major factor in these women's decisions not to access services, whereas it is commonly noted in the literature in regard to other immigrant

populations. Rather, three primary factors influenced domestic violence against Nigerian-immigrant women. These factors included cultural factors, systemic factors, and reluctance to seek help.

Regarding systemic factors and reluctance to seek help, the participants of the study highlighted economic hardships, institutionalised racism, inadequate culturally competent services, and distrust in the Canadian justice system as the material constraints that shaped their experiences of domestic violence and often left them trapped in such situations (Nwosu, 2006).

Beyond these material constraints, cultural factors also greatly influenced some participants' experiences. The participants noted that Nigerian cultural values around parenting, marriage, gendered distribution of domestic and paid labour, and lack of male progeny still greatly affected their lives. For instance, one participant of the study reflected on how the Nigerian culture of valuing male children over female children influenced her experience of emotional violence from her husband and in-laws because she had no male children. Another participant spoke of the issue of men's ability to control women and the influence on Nigerian-Canadian women's experiences. The participant noted that

> Most of the Nigerian men want to check and control any such perceived excesses the women might indulge in. The conflict lies in the fact that when it comes to finances, 50/50, oh! But when it comes to power, it shouldn't be 50/50. It should be 100/0 or 80/20. Any decision has to come from the man clearly because of the cultural belief that a woman is under the authority and control of her husband. (Nwosu, 2006, p. 191)

Nwosu (2006) argued that these women's partners became easily agitated when women tried to exercise any newfound freedoms. The study revealed how Nigerian-immigrant women in Canada continue to be impacted by Nigerian cultural ideologies, yet does not show how women's increasing reluctance to accept such traditional ideologies may put them at risk of experiencing

increased violence. In sum, one may argue that the participants of this study may have expected to achieve some autonomy in Canada but may have found these unexpected socio-economic conditions to have limited their access to such autonomy.

Ilo (2015) also notes this point, citing Nwabah and Heitner (2009), who argued "that when Nigerian immigrant women come to an egalitarian society such as the USA, they have the opportunity to break away from such traditional gendered norms" (p. 36). Egalitarian societies provide educational opportunities that may lead to professional advancement, which Nigerian-immigrant women may conceptualize as affording them freedom. Ilo (2015) conducted a study to explore changing marital relations between Nigerian-immigrant couples in Canada using semi-structed interviews and non-formal interactions with 8 Nigerian-immigrant women in Lethbridge, Canada. She found that participants (3) who noted that they had already embraced egalitarian gender ideology in Nigeria, even while sharing roles along traditional lines, noticed that in Canada they began to share roles along more egalitarian lines. They also felt free to openly display this form of marital relations, unlike in Nigeria. On the other hand, Ilo (2015) argued that the participants who noted that they espoused traditional gender ideologies in their marriage, at least after migration, really had co-existing traditional and egalitarian ideologies. She pointed out that changing socio-economic realities afforded some of the participants more agency and power to make decisions in their marriages; however, for the sake of marital harmony they sometimes remained passive. She also noted that in some cases, the male partners tried to regain control by framing women's newfound agency as a gift extended by themselves (the partner) in the name of respect.

Drawing from this, it is evident that Nigerian-immigrant women have the capacity and the will to adopt egalitarian views given the appropriate conditions. While Ilo's (2015) study does not

consider domestic violence, it is plausible that if these women eventually decide to utilize their

agency in any way that threatens their partner they may be at risk of experiencing domestic

violence. For this reason, it is important to engage in further research to understand the subject

matter.

The subsequent chapter covers the theoretical framework and methodological approach

guiding the current study.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

This chapter covers the research methods and methodological approaches adopted in the thesis. First, it discussed the nature of feminist research and examined vital components of such research as this study employed a feminist qualitative research orientation. Second, it defined and examined the theories guiding the thesis. Third, ethical considerations are presented and I situate myself within the research process and define my roles and examine possible biases. Finally, the methods adopted and practical steps used in the study are clearly described.

Feminist Research

Research practices and approaches are guided by certain principles. Traditionally, research is guided by empirical principles with a focus on using objectivity to obtain a universal truth that explains or defines a phenomenon and can be retested to prove its validity (Hesse-Bibber, 2014; Kaur & Nagaich, 2019). Peake (2017) argues that "feminist methodology served initially to critique the epistemological claims of masculinist knowledge production" (p.8) Hence, feminist methodology has been interested in transforming traditional research scope, principles, and praxis from an androcentric focus towards the inclusion of women and gender as a lens through which research is conducted.

Peake (2017) continued by critiquing arguments within feminist scholarship about what feminist methodology truly entails. The author noted the assumption that feminist research requires qualitative methods—with little to no focus on praxis—and feminist researchers' preoccupation with concerns about reflexivity and positionality. This criticism, which is directed towards the ongoing debates on appropriate methods for conducting feminist research or defining a feminist method, has merit. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that various feminist researchers (Letherby, 2003; Oakley, 1998; Tomm, 1989) have noted that no feminist method exists; rather,

research is considered feminist when it abides by theoretical and methodological traditions that include an analysis of gender, an acknowledgement of subjugated knowledge, and the purpose of resolving any one or more forms of social inequalities.

These researchers and many others have long since insisted that the method selected only needs be relevant to the question and used responsibly. For instance, Stanley and Wise (1983 as cited by Letherby, 2003) argued that "methods themselves aren't innately anything" (p.87). Furthermore, questions about epistemology and the importance of reflexivity and positionality remain relevant to guide how any method (quantitative or qualitative) may be used responsibly. While it is important that such debates do not interrupt or overtake progress (engaging in research), it may not be appropriate to state that these debates limit the development of feminist methodologies. Therefore, Peake's (2017) assertion about the preoccupation of feminist methodologies does not fully represent the situation (although one may note that the author speaks particularly about feminist researchers in the field of Geography).

In sum, feminist research concerns itself with recognizing the power imbalance in research; accepting experience as a suitable source of knowledge; contesting the validity of a universal truth; and using a gendered lens in all research endeavours with the aim of encouraging social transformation (Hesse-Biber, 2014). At the same time, feminist methodology refers to analysing each stage in the research process and the research methods to determine its value as well as understand the outcomes and evaluating how these methods and processes relate to the results or findings (Letherby, 2003). The aim is to ensure that at each stage in the research process the overall principles of feminist research are being respected/observed and the goals are still attainable.

The current study adhered to the principles of feminist methodology by adopting appropriate feminist theories; maintaining ethical consciousness in the processes and procedures

of selected research methods; engaging in reflexivity to acknowledge biases; and recognizing subjugated forms of knowledge in the process of data interpretation and analysis. In the application of the selected methods and during other stages of the research process, there was conscious effort to evaluate how they influenced the thesis.

Furthermore, the subject matter under investigation—the impact of conflicting gender ideologies on Nigerian-immigrant women's experiences of domestic violence in Canada—was concerned with the women's lived experiences and considers the realities of a minority group (Nigerian-immigrant women in Canada). The interest was to understand how these women comprehend their experiences and factors that shape such experiences. The research problem and the corresponding research questions were selected in attempt to investigate a social issue that has specific ramifications based on gender and gender relations. The methods selected to investigate the subject matter and theoretical framework guiding it are geared towards unearthing substantial knowledge and discovering viable solutions to the issue to domestic violence against immigrant women.

As mentioned earlier, one of the main pillars in feminist research is the theoretical underpinning that frames the research problem and questions. In this study, the theories adopted were those that clearly explained the issue under investigation. This study adopted the theory of intersectionality (intersectional feminism). It also integrated select perspectives from African feminism (Motherism) and integration theory that were useful for explaining how these women make sense of their experiences.

Theory of Intersectionality

Intersectionality addresses concerns of feminist essentialism by bringing attention to the differences that exist between women and shape how various women experience gender

oppression. These differences arise out of one's social location by race, class, sexuality, ability, religion, etc. Intersectionality emphasizes that multiple forms of oppression occur simultaneously and create an interactive impact on women's lives. The argument is that one form of oppression cannot be ranked above the other, but rather that they exist all at once and actively define one's experience. The importance of highlighting this difference between women ensures that the experiences of nonprivileged women are considered and moved from the margins to the centre and their voices are not subjugated by those whose experiences do not reflect theirs (Mann, 2012).

Smooth (2013) describes intersectionality as "the assertion that social identity categories such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and ability are interconnected and operate simultaneously to produce experiences of both privilege and marginalization" (p.11). Bowleg (2012) notes that

> intersectionality is a theoretical framework that posits that multiple social categories (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status) intersect at the micro level of individual experience to reflect multiple interlocking systems of privilege and oppression at the macro, social-structural level (e.g. racism, sexism, heterosexism) (p.1267).

Nash (2008) defines intersectionality as a theoretical tool that emphasizes the mutual coexistence of race, gender, class, and sexuality in subjectivity that has been used to dismantle any notions of a homogeneous woman. The authors further refer to it as a way of theorizing identity and oppression. Within such understanding of the term Nash (2008) considers the shortcomings of intersectionality as a theory and noted that intersectionality has a vague definition, an indefinite methodological approach, and concerns about the empirical validity of intersectionality. Nonetheless, the author notes that by addressing these concerns, intersectionality can help explain complex issues surrounding identity and oppression and lend it more credibility (Nash, 2008).

The term intersectionality was founded by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 to reflect the position of African-American women in the United States, as one lodged between the Feminist

and Civil Rights (anti-racist) movements. African-American women were key players in both movements, yet their interests did not receive enough attention in either movement because they had a unique position that needed to be addressed by a convergence of both movements. However, because these movements were believed to be fighting for totally different causes with mutually exclusive goals (i.e., racial equality and gender equality) black women (and arguably other women of colour) were often confronted with opposing political agendas arising from both movements (Crenshaw, 1989; Crenshaw, 1994). The author summarized that black women were being excluded from feminist and anti-racist politics because each group relied on what she describes as a single-axis framework which fails to highlight the multiple dimensions that influence black women's experiences. She argued that without considering the interaction of race and gender black women's realities and concerns will continue to be ignored.

Similarly, on a structural level the experiences of black women and other women of colour in the United States have been and are shaped by a convergence of race, gender, class, and other aspects of their social identities. Crenshaw (1994) examined how women of colour's experiences of violence are influenced by the multiplicities of their social identity by noting that women of colour who experience battering and rape face barriers that can only be dismantled with strategies that address the intersection of gender discrimination, racial discrimination, and poverty that itself may also have a racial component. She goes on to explain how at the political level the same barriers arise when it comes to pursing justice for women of colour who have been battered or raped. The fear of encouraging racial profiling and diminishing the importance of fighting domestic violence makes it difficult to consider women of colour's experiences of domestic violence. This is because the strategies devised by anti-racist activists and feminists may be working in contradiction with one another. For instance, while the disparity in domestic violence

between minority communities of colour and upper class white communities is influenced by socio-economic factors rather than race, it is difficult to consider this issue without running into barriers set by anti-racist movements to protect the black and minority communities from discrimination. However, this stifles the efforts of feminists to address properly the issue of domestic violence.

Intersectionality as a theory has advanced in its application over time. Numerous authors have argued that intersectionality has been guiding womanist and Black feminist thoughts in western societies beginning in the first wave. This was born out of necessity to uplift their voices which had been silenced within the feminist movement (Mann, 2012). Some authors such as Luft and Ward (2009) have emphasized that intersectionality particularly originated from Black feminist race theorists. They trace the origins of the theoretical perspective to have been a critical race discourse, citing the works of early feminists such as Sojourner Truth, Anna Julia Cooper, and Mary Church Terrell that documented the inextricable relationship between race and gender. However, scholars have noted that this critical race discourse received more attention in feminist studies and developed within it (Luft & Ward, 2009; Mann, 2012).

Luft and Ward (2009) summarized that intersectional practice is aimed at sustainable social justice outcomes, and thus they argue that recent publications by feminists that erase the implications of race, class, sexuality, and more, do not satisfy the terms of adopting an intersectional lens in research and academics (p.17). This theory has transformed from being commonly used when considering issues around race, gender, and feminism to being introduced into larger discursive spaces. This development has occurred in various forms, including theoretical applications in research and teaching projects, debates about its methodological and theoretical merits, and adapting intersectional lenses to praxis (Cho et al., 2013). While numerous

debates remain about the topic of intersectionality, usually arising out of discrepancies between the conceptual definitions and intersectional practice, intersectionality as a theory continues to be an appropriate framework for exploring issues affecting women, especially those whose multiple identities position them as vulnerable.

The relevance of intersectional theory is highlighted when considering women whose identities do not automatically afford them privilege. Women who are socially located as 'other' due to race, class, sexuality, ability, age, and religion may not have access to privilege that is given to the dominant group(s). The implications of gender inequality do not occur separately or independently from other forms of discrimination, rather they collectively create different realities for women. Understanding the dynamics of these varying realities is important when considering immigrant women, especially with my study creating frameworks that fulsomely capture how my study participants may be disadvantaged.

When considering immigrant women in western societies, it is important to note how their past social identities and social conditions interact with their new realities as they adapt to their new homes and how these may redefine their experiences of gender oppression (Bui & Morash, 2008).

One of the key strategies that western feminists have employed to reduce gender oppression has been the struggle against gender-based violence, particularly domestic violence. The pervasive nature of domestic violence, particularly as it affects women, has been a major site of feminist concern for a long while. Some authors have called for a comprehensive and complex conceptualizing of the multiple oppressions faced by women of colour, women with disabilities, older women, lesbians, and immigrant women to be incorporated into how feminists theorize domestic violence (McDonald, 1999). To this end, some studies investigating the issue of domestic

violence against immigrant women have adapted the theory of intersectionality to illustrate the interaction of various factors that create a different experience for immigrant women. One such study was completed by Erez et al. (2009), who consider immigrant status as a separate identity and use such an analysis to identify the unique experiences of the participants in their study. Similarly, studies from Menijvar and Salcido (2002), Pyke and Johnson (2003), and Izugbara (2018), although not all explicitly rooted in an intersectional framework, clearly illustrate the convergence of racial, gender and class discrimination while they examine the issue of domestic violence against immigrant women.

As this study considered a single immigrant group (Nigerian-immigrant women) and aimed at highlighting experiences that are specific to them, intersectionality provided the best framework to understand how their experiences were shaped by the totality (intersection) of their identities as a group. On other hand, it is also suitable to examine intra-group differences and illustrate how women's experiences can be unique even when they exist at similar social locations where one may assume total uniformity. This is important to avoid limiting these women's experience to the factors investigated in the current study. Finally, by adopting intersectional theory this study aimed to assume the challenges put forth by Samuels and Ross-Sheriff (2008, p. 5) to "understand women as multidimensional, yet uniquely whole."

As the study was conducted with Nigerian-immigrant women, it was relevant to include some arguments from African feminist theories, particularly Motherism, to highlight the positions of women and create a fuller view of the issue.

African Feminist Theories

African feminist theories refer to feminist perspectives theorized by and for continental African women to address concerns specific to the experiences of such women particularly around the

convergence of gender inequality, colonialism, economic inequality, and political instability. These theories investigate African gender relations and produce knowledge that is distinctly African and feminist to highlight the problems faced by African women and how to resolve them (Ahikire, 2016; Arndt, 2002; Wang'ondu, 2019). African feminist theories are indigenous to grassroot movements and pre-colonial times, where women were empowered with political and traditional positions as queens and rulers of their tribal societies/nations (Barnes, 2006; Ojekunle, 2019). Additionally, African feminist movements and thoughts were instigated further by post World War II conditions which saw a rise of nationalism, anti-colonial, and anti-racist activism (Maerten, 2004). As a result, feminist thought and writings coming from Africa were primarily concerned with distancing themselves from western ideas of what feminism meant. They were skeptical and untrusting of what many referred to as Western feminism or White feminism, seeing it as an imposition and a neocolonial tool to regain a foothold in Africa.

This suspicion may also have been a result of the backlash that feminism typically receives from religious, cultural, and political ideological camps and the negative connotations of the word. Perhaps the most crucial difference between African feminism and Western feminism is that the latter (particularly liberal feminism) is concerned with achieving women's individual autonomy while the former envisions such freedoms with culturally linked alternatives. African feminism in its early foundation was concerned with dismantling colonialism, social injustice, and economic inequality within genders. Even womanist and Black feminist writings from the USA were criticized for essentializing all Black women's experiences, which did not reflect the true experiences of African women outside the United States. African feminists theorize their own challenges within relevant contexts rather than adopt white middle-class feminist values (Diop et al., 2017; Lewis, 2002; Maerten; 2004; Mann, 2012).

In addition, African feminist scholars began to theorize cultural and traditional realities of their environment by partnering with grassroot womanist movements with the aim of producing relevant and compatible collectivist nature of many African societies. Alkali et al. (2013) identified African feminist theories.

> Womanism, Stiwanism, Motherism, and Nego-feminism have emerged in successive sequence – all at the turn of the century. Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi… (1980s), Molara Ogundipe-Leslie, (1994), Catherine Obianuju Acholonu (1995), and Obioma Nnaemeka (1999) in that order. (p.238)

Womanism, founded by Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi, focuses on the dilemma of racial and sexist oppression meted upon African women and propose that womanism rather than feminism is a more relevant term that highlights African women's engagement and dedication to social transform. The theorist notes that social transformation must incorporate issues relevant to African women at the local and global levels along with concerns of gender inequality ("African feminisms", n.d).

African feminist theories of Stiwanism and Nego-feminism provide fresh perspectives relevant to the African setting. Stiwanism African theory addresses the colonial and neo-colonial structures that created unfair social strata and promoted patriarchy within African societies which is considered the root of gender inequality and seeks to promote the social transformation of women in the African rural and urban contexts (Alkali et al, 2013). On the other hand, Nego-feminist African theory recognizes the rigid patriarchal traditional structures that requires women to negotiate their upward mobility and position themselves in the social and economic spaces that will create parity and equity between men and women because negotiations are practised by many African communities (Nnaemeka, 2004). Much like other African feminist theories, it endorses

cooperation and complementarity between African men and women to achieve gender justice (Alkali et al, 2013).

The focus in this thesis is on the African feminist theory of Motherism founded by Catherine Obianuju Acholonu in 1995. The theorist captures the essence of motherhood as being central when discussing the autonomy of African women as well as arguing that it is impossible to separate Motherist concerns or traditional gender roles of nurturing and respecting the mother/child space from women's subjugation to patriarchal society. According to Acholonu (1995), African women form the spiritual base of every family, community, and nation, and she emphasises the notions of matriarchal powers from which women's true power is sourced (Alkali et al., 2013).

African Motherism theory presents a more relatable conception of feminist ideals in African settings- and perhaps particularly the Nigerian setting. This is because it may serve as a middle ground between 'white feminism' and 'womanism' and is more popular than other relevant African feminisms which allow African women to negotiate between their traditions and gendered concerns.

Not without exception, some African women in the West and African women living within the continent view "white feminism" as irrelevant to the African context of tradition and culture that Motherism and other African feminist theorizations acknowledge. Motherism and other African feminist theorizations serve African women to an extent, but also present some issues that challenge the position of patriarchy that relates to gender ideologies and roles embedded in traditions and culture.

The study employed African Motherism theory because Stiwanism and Nego-feminism African theories may not be as popular within African societies (particularly Nigeria) where the

ideals of Motherism are far more common and may influence how Nigerian women understand their power, relevance, and gender discourses. This study considered the discourse of Motherism because of its relevance to the study population. This discourse was theorized by a Nigerian woman and the arguments produced hold meaning within Nigerian society. Speaking as a Nigerian woman, elements from the discourse of Motherism rule the day in almost any conversation about women's rights that I have encountered. This drives my interest in considering Motherist ideas when engaging in research with Nigerian-immigrant women. The premise here is that Nigerian-immigrant women's ideas about feminism and women's autonomy may be bound to ideals represented in Motherism. By highlighting this discourse, we may better understand how the study participants understand their experiences.

Integration Theory

Sociologist Emile Durkheim's writings on maintaining social integration beyond the bond of family ties common in simple societies to the need for cooperation in more complex societies with sophisticated economic relations are often regarded as the basis upon which ideas about social integration begin to take form. Durkheim described a collective consciousness that is formed by a group of people's values, norms, and belief systems that simultaneously guides and has significant influence on the members of society itself and is responsible for creating social cohesion. He differentiates between connection shared between kinsmen and family in small and simple societies that maintains peace and unity (mechanical solidarity) and the cooperation that is necessary when society begins to develop more complex economic relations and the need for division of labour becomes apparent (organic solidarity). The idea he puts forth is that as people become less self-sufficient and begin to need others for survival, cooperation and interdependence

become necessary, and such organic solidarity creates a collective consciousness that finally produces social integration ("Durkheim and Social Integration", 2020).

As societies (countries) are becoming more multicultural due to migration, maintaining social cohesion becomes more complex because this setting brings various groups of people with different values and beliefs together. Jennotte (2008) contends that social integration refers to a term which describes the aim "…to foster societies that are stable, safe, just and tolerant, and respect diversity, equality of opportunity and participation of all people" (p.1).

Irrespective of what policies are adopted, understanding how multicultural societies like Canada can achieve social cohesion is critically important as the world becomes increasingly multicultural. For this reason, it is important to briefly consider social integration because it may prove relevant to understanding how Nigerian immigrant women in Canada adapt to their new society and how they may experience and relate to this change.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2019) defines integration as

> The two-way process of mutual adaptation between migrants and the societies in which they live, whereby migrants are incorporated into the social, economic, cultural, and political life of the receiving community. It entails a set of joint responsibilities or migrants and communities, and incorporates other related notions such as social inclusion and social cohesion (p.106).

The integration process influences both the migrants (as individuals and groups) and the host country and typically requires consideration and definition of the rights and obligations, socio-economic liberties and common values that signify unity between migrants and their host communities (International organization for Migration, IOM, 2011).

According to Evanoff (2003),

> integration concerns itself both with the psychological process by which individuals begin to incorporate values from the host culture into their own system of values and with the process by which the host culture may also be influenced by the values of sojourners (p.423).

The author continues by underlining the importance of integration in multicultural society as opposed to assimilation, separation, or marginalization (citing from Berry's model of acculturation) because it leads to less acculturative stress by creating mutual accommodation for immigrants and locals to adapt comfortably to the host culture and imbibe aspects of the foreign culture, respectively. Evanoff (2003) emphasized designing and encouraging ethical policies that enable various cultures in multicultural settings to combine the best aspects of their respective cultures, collectively practise this new culture, and view life from multiple frames of reference.

From this, one may argue that Nigerian-immigrant women in Canada, like other immigrants, at some point will begin to interact with Canadian culture especially as they navigate the economic sector/job market, housing systems and more socio-cultural terms and eventually will become accustomed to Canadian culture both individually and as a group (Penninx, 2003). If this is so, the notion that Nigerian- immigrant women in Canada may experience a shift or change in their gender ideologies has merit. By investigating their experiences, one may find out how Nigerian-immigrant women's ideologies are reshaped and furthermore identify how such a change ultimately influences their experiences of domestic violence in any of its forms.

In conclusion, integration theory establishes grounds for interrogating the research problem and is a necessary guide for answering the research questions.

Ethical Consideration

Owing to its feminist methodology, the contributions of the participants and the data gathered in this study are considered invaluable and a privilege given to the researcher. Utmost respect goes to the Nigerian-immigrant women participants who shared their experiences and views. All proposed privacy and security protocols were followed. Similarly, no real names are

published in this thesis; rather, pseudonyms are adopted. The participants of this study were provided consent forms, which were electronically signed and emailed to the researcher before any data was collected. Finally, a passage on the researcher's reflexivity is presented below to highlight any possible biases.

Researcher's Reflexivity

By positioning myself within this body of work I attempt to recognize any biases that may influence my work in this thesis. First and foremost, I argue that this is not a completely objective study. As argued by feminist researchers, the idea of separating one's self from the research process (especially research involving human participants) is not just unachievable but also reduces the credibility of research by ignoring important variables that influence the final product of research. To avoid discrediting this body of work I situate myself within the research process and outline any researcher bias that may have influence on the findings of the research.

As a Nigerian woman currently residing in Canada, I find personal value in the subject matter under investigation, to some extent, because it highlights experiences that are common to Nigerian immigrants in Canada and presented an opportunity to make sense of my own journey since arrival in Canada. This means that I considered the responsibility of undertaking this research as both interesting and important. Beyond this, being a Nigerian immigrant in Canada means that I have insider status with the study population, which afforded me certain benefits as I conducted the research; yet I also believed it would pose some barriers. For instance, one concern was that I would be heartily accepted among certain ethnic groups but my interaction with other groups would be limited if they did not consider me an ally or member of their group and believed that I would invade their privacy. However, I found that all participants who agreed to the study were very cooperative and respectful regardless of ethnicity or religion. Another issue arising out of my

insider status was that my pre-existing opinions about issues like early marriage and whether divorce is immoral or not, both of which are relevant to the subject matter of this study, may have influenced how I approached discussions on these issues. Finally, my insider perspective did bring a clearer understanding of findings derived from participants, and more importantly, I was motivated to present these findings clearly and properly without damaging the reputation of the population under investigation.

I also believed that I would be viewed as an outsider within the study population because I am young and have never been married, which means that I do not have any direct experience of domestic conflict or violence. Also, by taking on the name of researcher I believed that I would be considered as an intruder, and this would deter participants from being completely honest. Again, these concerns did not prove to be of any significance because no participant asked about my marital status, and as the interviews were carried out through phone calls some may not have even known that I am young. Similarly, participants spoke freely and offered insights where they could.

Finally, this study initially proposed utilizing quantitative and qualitative orientation using feminist mixed methods which would have provided very important findings that presented a clearer picture of the issue at hand. However, due to a lack of research participants, the research method was amended to a completely qualitative study orientation (though with the retention of several questions drawn from a scale used in quantitative research). The process of changing the study method was disheartening but did not disrupt the goals of the research study. While the research questions were restructured to fit the current qualitative research method they are essentially connected to the identified research problem. The participants' lived experiences provided a very good grasp of the research problem and sufficiently answered the research

questions. The following section describes the research method and procedures used for collecting data.

Method

The current study collected qualitative data from the study population using electronic phone interviews. The participants were recruited using a non-probability purposive snowballing technique. The principal participants, accessed from personal contacts, were contacted by email and were provided the recruitment poster to circulate to persons they believed were eligible. Women who were interested contacted me or provided contact details for me to contact them. All participants were recruited between September 10, 2020 and December 18, 2020. A total of ten (10) participants consented to be part of the study and were interviewed. The interviews took place between September 26, 2020 and January 10, 2021. All interviews were conducted via phone calls and they ranged between 20 and 60 minutes in length. These were in-depth semi-structured interviews that followed an interview guide. The questions outlined in the interview guide related to the research problem and research questions. These questions were sometimes modified for different participants to suit the discussion and some questions were skipped if they were irrelevant for the participant or if they were already answered. Each interview was recorded and transcribed by me, the researcher, and sent to each participant for member-checking. All participants received a transcript of their interview to ensure that their information was properly represented and confirm the validity of the data. Each participant was given a transcript of the interview between a few days to three weeks after the completion of the interview. Nine out of ten participants approved the first drafts of the transcripts and no revisions or corrections were made to any transcript.

Sample Population

A total of ten (10) participants were interviewed by phone. The participants were first-generation Nigerian-immigrant women who were at least 21 years of age, were permanent residents who had been in Canada for at least three years with nine (9) participants currently married and one (1) previously married.

Recruitment

Following the revision of the research method, the recruitment style was updated to the snowballing technique. This study, including amendments to the method, received approval from the applicable Research Ethics Board (see Appendix A). The approved procedures for the study centred ethical consideration for participants' privacy, confidentiality, and consent. As detailed in the information and consent form, no personal information of any participant has been shared in this document. The names used in the presentation of the findings and the discussion, in Chapter Four and Chapter Five, are pseudonyms. Information and interview data were stored on a password-protected computer, and six months after the defence of the thesis these materials will be destroyed by deleting all digital files and shredding any paper copies.

The first principal participants were accessed through personal connections. These principal participants were Nigerian immigrants with established connections to other Nigerian-immigrant women across Canada. I contacted them via email (see appendix B) and attached the recruitment poster (see appendix C) for them to pass on to their contacts who fit the participant criteria. The interested participants reached me by email, phone call, or text message to indicate their interest in participating in the study and clarify any confusion they had. Some provided their contacts and I called or emailed them. The information and consent form (see Appendix D) was

then emailed to them and interview dates were scheduled based on availability. All interviews were conducted after a signed and dated information and consent form was sent to me by email.

Interview Design

The interviews were in-depth semi-structured phone interviews with questions that aimed to interrogate the research problem and find answers to the research questions. The interviews used an interview guide (see Appendix E) to create a framework for the discussion. In the guide, five statements were drawn from a short form version of the Sex-Role Egalitarianism Scale (SRES-KK) developed by King and King (1990) (see Appendix F) and a short-form version (10-item) of the Gender Role Beliefs Scale (GRBS)(see Appendix G) developed by Brown and Gladstone (2012) to measure individuals gender ideologies. One statement was drawn from the GRBS and four were drawn from the SRES-KK. to measure participants' attitudes towards gender relations and their overall perceptions. The questions outlined in the interview guide explored themes relevant to the research problem and defined research questions. These questions were sometimes modified for different participants to suit the discussion and some questions were skipped if they were irrelevant for the participant or if they were already answered. Some of the questions were answered extensively and others sparingly. Each interviewee provided new areas of discussion (that were not initially included in the interview design), which speaks to the usefulness of the semi-structured design of the interview. The interviews lasted between 20 and 60 minutes and were recorded using an audio recorder. The participants later received interview data transcripts, and the member-checking procedure is presented below.

Member-Checking Procedure

Member-checking was employed to ensure the validity of collected interview data. The transcripts of the interview data were typed and stored in PDF files. The transcripts of each interview were

sent to each corresponding interviewee, between a few days to three weeks after the interview, to clarify with the participants that their views were properly represented and the data were not biased. The procedure considered participant safety and utilized password-protected PDFs to transmit these transcripts. Only the participants had access to these passwords that were provided during the interview. The password-protected PDFs were then sent to the private and safe email addresses provided by the participants. Nine out of ten participants gave approvals for the first drafts of transcripts through text message or phone calls. One participant could not be reached to get the approval. After participants gave approval for the transcripts, the data were considered ready for coding and analysis. The following section describes the data analysis procedure.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected from the interviews were first transcribed verbatim from the audio recordings and sent to the participants for member-checking. After participants gave their approvals for the transcript data the data were transferred manually into Microsoft Excel and arranged by questions. The data were then coded using primary and secondary cycles that generated descriptive and in-vivo codes. An inductive approach was used to develop codes from the chunks of data. These codes were revised multiple times as I read the data over and over again. Twenty-six codes were developed under five categories relevant/in response to the research questions. After another round of reading the data and revising codes, twelve codes were identified under the same five categories by the end of the first cycle of coding. The second cycle of coding entailed more rigorous analysis of the data to locate emerging themes. The five identified categories were whittled down to three broad categories within which nine themes were identified. These identified themes responded to the research questions and were supported with existing literature for similarities.

After analysing the data, locating emergent themes, and comparing for relevance to the research questions the results of the study were compiled. Chapter Four details these findings.

Brief Description of Participants

A total of ten participants were interviewed. This study used non-probability purposive snowball sampling, and the identified criteria defined that eligible participants were first-generation Nigerian-immigrant women residing in Canada for at least three years and with permanent residency, naturalized citizenship, or refugee status. They also had to be either currently or previously married or in a common-law partnership and at least 21 years of age. Each participant was either directly informed of the eligibility criteria or received an eligibility criteria list (provided through the recruitment poster) for self-screening. As this study investigated sensitive subject matter, no further identifiers were requested directly from the participants so as to maintain the anonymity of the participants. Irrespective of these constraints I believe that the data are reliable (and that the participants fit the criteria) because about seven potential participants self-screened out of the study for various reasons including ineligibility.

Nevertheless, in the course of the interview participants divulged information that support most of the eligibility criteria. Based on this information given in the interview the following description fits the participants and maintains anonymity.

Marital Status. Nine out of the ten participants were currently married. One was previously married.

Origin of Partner/Ex-partner. All of the participants' partners/ex-partners were Nigerians.

Religion. Six out of the ten participants were Christians. Four of the ten participants were Muslims.

Place of Residence. Each of the participants lived in one of the ten provinces and there were no participants recruited from the territories. Seven out of ten participants live in larger cities. The remaining three live in medium- sized cities.

Residence Status. All participants were permanent residents.

Restating the Research Questions

The current study sought to assess if there is a relationship between a change or shift in gender ideologies (from traditional to egalitarian ideology) and increased domestic violence; and to highlight Nigerian-immigrant women's specific experience of domestic violence as distinct from that of other immigrant populations using qualitative interviews. The following research questions were defined to investigate the subject matter.

RQ-I Are Nigerian-immigrant women's gender ideologies changing or shifting from traditional gender ideologies to more egalitarian ideologies in Canada?

RQ-2 How do Nigerian-immigrant women view the relationships between shifting gender ideologies and domestic violence?

RQ-3 What are the specific and distinctive experiences of Nigerian-immigrant women with regard to domestic violence?

The findings of this study are presented in the subsequent chapter.

<p style="text-align:center">Chapter Four</p>

<p style="text-align:center">Findings and Discussions</p>

This chapter outlines the results of the current study. The findings of the study are presented by discussing the emergent themes from the data.

Findings

Nine major themes were identified under three broad categories from the data analysis. The first three themes relate to gender ideologies and their impact on domestic violence; the next four themes relate to the distinctive experiences of Nigerian immigrant women in Canada as they relate to domestic violence, and the last two themes relate to the experiences of Nigerian immigrant women in Canada in general. These themes and relevant codes are illustrated in Figure 1.1 and are discussed below in relations to corresponding and dissimilar arguments in the literature.

Gender ideologies in Nigeria are typically traditional although things are shifting.	•GI (N/C)- Gender ideologies in Nigeria vs-Canada –G.I are traditional in Nigeria(and Egalitarian in Canada).
Nigerian-immigrant women's gender ideologies are shifting in Canada (but not all men are changing)	GI-P- Participant Gender Ideologies- where either egalitarian or modified gender ideologies GI-M(P)- Participant's Partner Gender Ideologies – some egalitarian, some traditional. Some did not want to lose control and superiority afforded in Nigeria. (GI(N/C)) Some participants partners were comfortable with change; some were not GI-P- Participant Gender Ideologies- where either egalitarian or modified gender ideologies •GI-C-M- Men (including participants' partner) gender ideologies changing or not in Canada
While conflicting gender ideologies may increase violence increased protections for women in Canada serves as a deterrent	DV-IC- Domestic violence increased or may increase dur to conflicting gender ideologies. Few participants experienced this DV-NIC- domestic violence may not increase because of increased respect and protections for women. Most participants did not experience this but some had heard stories.
Men are held accountable for their actions	NCE-DV-HAS- In Nigeria women usually keep quit about abuse so cases are rarely reported. NCE-DV-HAS- - In Nigeria women are pressured to stay in their marriages regardless of the situation and work it out so men are rarely reported •GI (N/C)- traditional gender ideologies in Nigeria protects men despite their actions while egalitarian gender ideologies in Canada offers women more protections and holds men accountable. •DV-NIC- women's increased independence makes them more likely to seek help in Canada •NCE-DV-SER- useful , accessible and affordable needed for services for NIG-CAN women •NCE-GEN- accessible and
Absence of affordable paid help to manage responsibilities increases stress	•NCE-DV- Nigerian-Canadian specific experiences that may impact domestic violence . Cheap labour is available in Nigeria and widely utilized. Those who cannot afford it can use family assistance to manage responsibilities whereas labour is very expensive in Canada and women's responsibilities have increased .(from initial codes: EXPENSIVE LABOUR & DECLINING SOCIAL SUPPORT)
Help seeking attitudes are influenced by Nigerian socialization and culture.	•NCE-DV-HAS- Help seeking attitudes are influences by Nigerian socialization which prioritizes keeping private matter private to preserve a good name and avoiding shame and stigmatization. •NCE-DV-SOL(possible solutions)that are useful for Nigerian-immigrant women to maintain harmonious marriage like faith-based counselling; internal conflict resolution; communication and compromise.
Accessible and Sensitive services	•NCE-DV-SER- Ideal services for Nigerian immigrant women in Canada. Culturally sensitive services are needed to help Nigerian immigrant women facing violence like financial empowerment; support groups; counselling; normalizing seeking help through conversations in Nigerian associations in Canada
Factors influencing acclimatization integration into Canadian culture.	•ACC-POS-positive acclimatization- usually relating to having social support available; minimal culture shock; and enjoying the new environment. •ACC-NEG- Negative Acclimatization- usually relating to not having any social support; experiencing culture shock; racism/microaggressions – from family, strangers and colleagues; difficulty adjusting to the new environment •COMM-INV- Involved in community particularly through churches, mosques; ethno-specific organizations; Nigerian associations or by maintaining friendships •COMM=N/INV-less involved in community by choice but still had Nigerian friends; some lost access to community by moving; or did not have access to community.
Career and educational opportunities define Nigerian immigrant women's priorities	•NCE-GEN- Nigerian-Canadian general experiences relating to positive impacts of living in Canada. Career and educational opportunities free from various forms of discrimination are major pull factors for Nigerian- immigrant women •NCE-GEN- Nigerian Canadian general experiences relating to services need for new immigrants. Oorientation and support services are needed to foster integration and for easier access to the educational and career opportunities.

Fig. 1.1- Schematic diagram showing relevant codes and development of themes. (Source: The author.)

Traditional Gender Ideologies Remain Hegemonic in Nigeria, But Things Are Changing

There is compelling evidence that gender ideologies in Nigeria as a whole are traditional. Sources such as the 2013 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (2014), a nationally representative sample of men and women, reported that Nigerian women are significantly limited in terms of education and earning potential than men; women get married much younger than men; married women participate significantly less in decision-making even in regards to their own health and more so with regard to household decisions; domestic violence is common practice in Nigeria; and women were more likely to endorse wife-beating (35% compared to 25% for women and men respectively). Similarly, more recent findings from 2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (2019), which also used a nationally representative sample of men and women, showed that domestic violence is still common with 36% of ever-married Nigerian women experiencing spousal violence. Attitudes endorsing wife-beating are still higher among women although lower than in the previous survey (28% and 21 % for women and men respectively); and although Nigerian women are now more likely to work they are still more likely to be paid less than men; they own less property, and their participation in household decision-making is not significantly better than in the previous survey.

Still, it is interesting to see how Nigerian women themselves understand and describe gender ideologies in Nigeria. All participants agreed that gender ideologies are more traditional in Nigeria unlike in Canada. In response to the question "When you think about marriage and gender relations (how men and women interact in society) would you say there is any difference between Canada and Nigeria? Or is it the same?" all participants noted confidently that there is a clear difference in gender relations within marriage in Nigeria as compared to Canada. For instance, Feyi began her response as follows:

> I think there is a huge… there is a huge world of differences between… gender relations in regards to marriage in Canada and compared to Nigeria…

Overall, participants' responses point to the popularity of traditional gender roles as well as beliefs and perspectives in Nigeria while more egalitarian roles and beliefs are common in Canada.

Participants noted that in Nigeria, men are still perceived as superior to women; gender roles are still traditional (i.e., man as provider for the family and women as the carer and nurturer in the family); women are still pressured to get married early as compared to men; women are expected to respect men while there is no commensurate expectation for men to respect women; socio-cultural practices like prioritizing and valuing male children as compared to female children still exist; and perhaps more importantly, women are socialized to accept these conditions and are viewed as good wives (or women) when they live within these boundaries. Uduak remarked as follows:

> actually there is a difference between Canada and Nigeria. Back home in Nigeria … there is an air of superiority for Nigerian men with their women as compared to what you find here. There is more gender equality here. I mean they haven't gotten there in totality but there is more gender equality here as compared to Nigeria. So if I… my interactions with colleagues here or people I have come to know here who are not Nigerians who have probably lived here all their lives it's more like umm… there is more respect in that relationship. Now the person doesn't see you as being less of a person and there is more equality, there is more respect… they expect things from you that a Nigerian man will not expect from you. They know that you have a voice and that you should be able to use your voice. You know? But in my relations with an average Nigerian man there is a superiority that he is the man and you are a woman and you are supposed to bow and cower when he is there but I am assuming that is probably changing or if it is not the bottom line is there is a difference in the relations.

Rukevwe, when asked whether she sees a difference in gender relations in Canada compared to Nigeria, observed as follows:

> There is a lot of differences. Like ah … one major difference is in terms of communication and partnership in a home, right? In Nigeria we… we were brought up to understand that the man is the head of the home. He provides all the basic needs in the house and then the woman, her responsibility is to take care of the home, bring up children, and stuffs like that. But well, coming to Canada gave me a different orientation as per how it is more like a 50/50 umm… relationship right? You also support in terms of taking care of the house in

terms of providing for the home bills, paying bills and the stuff like that and the man also supports you with the house chores, grocery shopping, taking care of the children, so it's a complete difference between what we have in Nigeria and what we have here in Canada. So that's what I've realized.

In the responses above it is clear that both gender roles and beliefs and perceptions about gender are considered to be more traditional in Nigeria. While it is true that gender roles influence beliefs and perspectives about gender and vice versa, "gender ideologies," which encapsulates the relationships between roles and beliefs, is best suited to underscore the situation rather than just roles or beliefs (Phillip, 2001; Brewster & Padavic, 2004). For this reason, although only a few of the participants specifically use the term gender ideologies, the term is used to properly address the points made by the participants.

Participants agreed that in comparison to Nigeria, gender ideologies in Canada are more egalitarian. Within the wider societal context, this means that women are respected and while gender equality has not been completely attained there are more apparent strides towards it. In the context of marriage, participants equally agreed that in Canada the relationship between men and women is fair and marriage is considered more of a partnership. For instance, Uduak described her experiences of relating with people (arguably more so men) in Canada who do not automatically regard her as inferior and engage in more respectful and meaningful conversations because there is an understanding that she is intellectually capable of having such conversations. She acknowledged that women are afforded more respect in Canada and their voices are heard. This refers to the relationship between men and women in the wider societal context. Rukevwe acknowledged that gender roles are not strictly traditional within the context of marriage. She noted that responsibilities are often shared equally between partners, and participants recognise that marriages in Canada are more likely to be based on fairness or partnership. Consider the

following responses that compare how participants view gender relations within the context of

marriage in Nigeria and Canada. Tolulope remarked as follows:

> Ah, there is a big difference. Yeah… Umm, in Nigeria there is the expectation that the men are kings basically. They don't do anything. But in Canada it's almost fair… although they are very conservative like the U.S. …umm, you still find families that still follow the whole, you know, that the wife's role and the husband's role is different. But for the most part a lot of, at least the couples I've met, it's a union. So then you have to do everything together. It's not just 'this [is] my job and this is your job.' Whereas in Nigeria it's… you're the wife and you belong in the kitchen and taking care of the kids, and the husband goes out to make money. But here… it's not like that here.

Ifeoma remarked as follows:

> If I was talking personally, my marriage, I would say it's the same. Umm, I married into a very progressive family so I don't see any difference, but looking at just the general public how… or even comparing my husband to other Nigerian men and men in Canada in general, I would say there is a lot of difference… like a huge difference. There is that gender gap that we have in Nigeria that doesn't exist here, where people feel like they have to be pretty much scared of their husband or worship him, or that respect that you are supposed to reserve for God or the gods. That's the huge difference I noticed between just men or marriages... let's not just isolate it to men, let us just say marriages in general in Nigeria and marriages here. The way I see people working here as a team and you know as partners as against being husband and wife, it's more like partnership here… that's something that we do not have in Nigeria from what I've experienced, even growing up in a, you know… in a home, just relating it [to] my own home, and I am seeing, oh this is different, this is not what I'm used to, right? Sometimes my friends laugh about it and they would say 'oh your husband is a white man'; that's just our joke (laughs). So yeah, there is that difference, you can't miss it.

Tolulope and Ifeoma consider both beliefs and perception about gender and gender roles

in marriages where they both assert that in Nigeria women are expected to respect men almost to

the point of worshipping them. They also pointed out that women and men are often expected to

engage in different kinds of work or responsibilities within the home usually following the

traditional model where men are the breadwinners who provide money and women are caretakers

who support the man and raise their children. In contrast, they note that a majority of marriages in

Canada follow the egalitarian model where partnership is the focus and roles are often not divided

according to the traditional model and responsibilities are not tied to a certain gender. Often in this

type of relationship both partners are regarded as equal and the superiority usually attached to men is not present.

Finally, Adanaya ties it all together by considering gender ideologies within and outside the context of marriage in Canada as compared to Nigeria when she noted as follows:

> Now when I came to Canada I worked at [employer] and I saw a different trend. It's not that men don't hit women in Canada and not that patriarchy doesn't exist in Canada but I see that umm... the relationships here are more egalitarian. I would also say that things are shifting a little bit in Nigeria but I would say that gender roles are the same, right? like Nigeria is still more traditional sets of gender roles where women are…there are certain things women don't do, like I don't see women driving buses in Nigeria. In fact if a woman drives a bus in Nigeria it makes headlines whereas. its the norm here for women to drive buses. It's not a big deal for women to drive buses. I see women do jobs that will ordinarily be classified as male jobs, you know? But it is not the case in Nigeria, right? so that's the differences that I would … so, if you are asking me about gender roles and if you are asking me about umm you know? I will say that this are the differences having lived in Canada that I would say exist; you know… yeah.

Adanaya detailed how beliefs and perceptions about gender that often drive the traditional gender roles are also present in the wider societal context. She discussed how women in Nigeria even when they work outside the home are still expected to do "women's jobs" and there are rarely any exceptions, whereas in Canada because many families now favour egalitarian ideologies it is common to see women break gender stereotypes.

Of course, the issue is not so clearly cut as that gender ideologies in Nigeria are completely traditional and gender ideologies in Canada are completely egalitarian. Uduak, Rukevwe, and Adanaya noted that while gender ideologies in Canada are more favourable to women, it does not mean that there is complete gender equality. Participants also believed that these egalitarian gender ideologies that are more popular in Canada are not the reality of every couple in Canada nor has gender equality been completely achieved. It was clear that most participants had a nuanced understanding of gender ideologies even if they did not directly use the word. As Adanaya highlighted in her previous comment, while egalitarian ideologies are the norm in Canada this does

not mean that patriarchy has been eliminated. The other participants also pointed out that while these ideologies are dominant they are not all-encompassing. Furthermore, participants seemed to conceptualize both gender roles and beliefs and perceptions about gender separately but also highlight the relationship between them. For instance, while describing the fact that things are changing or shifting in Nigeria as well, Maimuna's remark particularly highlighted this point.

> I think there is a difference between Canada and Nigeria because typically, well not in most houses... not in every household even back home in Nigeria the gender ideologies are beginning to shift; even gender roles are beginning to shift. More women are beginning to work; they're also breadwinners of their families and umm in many cases both men and women… women actually work so I think even from Nigeria those gender roles, those gender ideologies are shifting…

Similarly, other participants identified that they personally favoured egalitarian ideologies before coming to Canada and some also argue the same about their partners. For instance, Ifeoma specifically noted that she married into a progressive family where traditional ideologies were not favoured. Tolulope, Nafisat, and Uduak also described more egalitarian gender ideologies in their personal lives (marriages) but agree that they noticed that the broader Nigerian society favours traditional gender ideologies. Another participant, Chizoba, adds more substance to the argument that things are indeed shifting in Nigeria, although there is much work to be done, when she described that the same protections that are given women who leave marriages like alimony and child support are indeed available in Nigeria. Yet she described that the nature of the court system, in which such cases are drawn out, makes it harder for women to access these protections. Therefore, it is clear that even in Nigeria egalitarian ideologies exist (and perhaps are becoming more popular) even though traditional ideologies are popular, just as traditional ideologies exist in Canada although egalitarian ideologies are more popular.

The notion that Nigerian society tends to favour traditional ideologies remains valid. The two most common points brought up by the participants were the perceived superiority of men and

traditional gender roles. Some of the responses resonate with the points analysed within the literature that socio-cultural and religious influences continue to drive this belief that women are inferior to men. Religious views that argue that women are mere companions designed by God for men and by design are made to cater to men's needs influence this perception. Similarly, some cultural practices (and customary laws) that disentitle married women from inheriting property from their husbands and those that argue that they themselves are property of their husband (to be allocated to someone else—usually a relative—upon his death) are used as excuses to legitimize women's subordination. This also drives the gender value system where male children are more valued than female children (Igwe, 2015). This issue was also present in the data, although not significantly. Only Adanaya described how her mother was desperate to have a male child. She explained as follows:

> ...in my own family, my mother bore five daughters, she never had a son. And growing up I saw my mother battle with wanting to have a son right? I didn't see my father complain about us girls, I think my father adored us and didn't care…And I chanced upon a letter my aunty had written telling her what to do to have a son. So, it was a big deal for my mother to have a son, she really wanted to have a son. And later she adopted a boy because she couldn't have a son eventually. And so this shaped my ideas you know seeing all of these things you know?
>
> Yet Igwe (2015) also argues that in many cases those citing these cultural and religious

values as a reason for women's subordination are merely using these as excuses because other aspects of religious texts and even customary laws that highlight women's importance are hardly mentioned. In essence, while religious views are important influences on how women are perceived and treated, more often than not the impetus to subordinate women is a function of a person's character than it is about obeying religious texts. Igwe (2015) continues by noting that some of these practices have been ruled against by federal or state laws and international treaties which have been ratified by the Nigerian state. Such contentions are also relevant in the context of migration where host countries may be quick to assign blame to "culture" and follow a hands-off

approach when dealing with the domestic violence against immigrant women. This issue has also been criticized by researchers investigating the issue of VAW from different immigrant backgrounds (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002; Sokoloff & Dupont 2005). Some participants in the present study clearly negotiated their understanding of gender ideologies with religious and cultural beliefs, but they all still highlighted women's value within those frameworks. This issue is considered further in the subsequent theme.

Since all participants agreed that there are differences in terms of gender relations between Nigeria and Canada, the subsequent theme highlights how women feel about these differences and how they are impacted by now living in a society that favours egalitarian ideologies over traditional ideologies.

Nigerian-Immigrant Women's Gender Ideologies Are Shifting in Canada (But Not All Men Are Changing)

It is important to reiterate here that while not all participants used the term gender ideologies in explaining their experiences, they discuss issues regarding gender roles and perceptions and beliefs about gender, both of which are connected and yet somewhat different and are best understood together as gender ideologies. Here, "egalitarian" gender ideologies refer to beliefs and perceptions that favour equality between men and women and prescribe appropriate roles for men and women outside the "bread winner-housewife/mother" model. "Traditional" ideologies, on the other hand, refer to beliefs and perceptions that view men as superior to women and prescribe that gender roles directly follow the "breadwinner-housewife/mother model". Another category arose when coding the data to show some form of combination of both ideologies- usually the coexistence of non-traditional gender roles and somewhat traditional beliefs and perceptions. This is defined here as "modified gender ideologies" but is perhaps only relevant

here to discuss how gender ideologies maybe shifting. While gender roles refer to the activities and responsibilities that are considered appropriate for men and women to engage in, beliefs and perceptions here represent normative ideas about and the value given to men and women grounded in socio-economic, cultural, historical, and religious perspectives. In this case, the socio-economic, cultural, and religious perspectives are those of Nigeria (and later Canada). This working definition of gender ideologies derives from Phillips (2001).

The participants responded to five statements drawn from a short form version of the Sex-Role Egalitarianism Scale (SRES-KK) developed by King and King (1990) and a short-form version (10-item) of the Gender Role Beliefs Scale (GRBS) developed by Brown and Gladstone (2012) and to measure individuals' gender ideologies. One question was drawn from the GRBS and four were drawn from the SRES-KK. Two statements concern roles while the other three statements consider beliefs and perceptions. These statements are identified below.

a. Women with children should not work outside the home if they do not have to financially (GBRS; roles).

b. Women ought to have the same chances as men to be leaders at work (SRES-KK; beliefs and perceptions).

c. Both the husband's and wife's earnings should be controlled by the husband. (SRES-KK; beliefs and perceptions).

d. When both husband-and-wife work outside the home, housework should be equally shared (SRES-KK; roles).

e. A marriage will be more successful if the husband's needs are considered first (SRES-KK; beliefs and perceptions).

Participants were able to disagree or agree with the statements and give more information on why they agreed or disagreed with the statements if they wanted to. Their responses were coded as traditional, modified. or egalitarian gender roles as illustrated in figure 1.2.
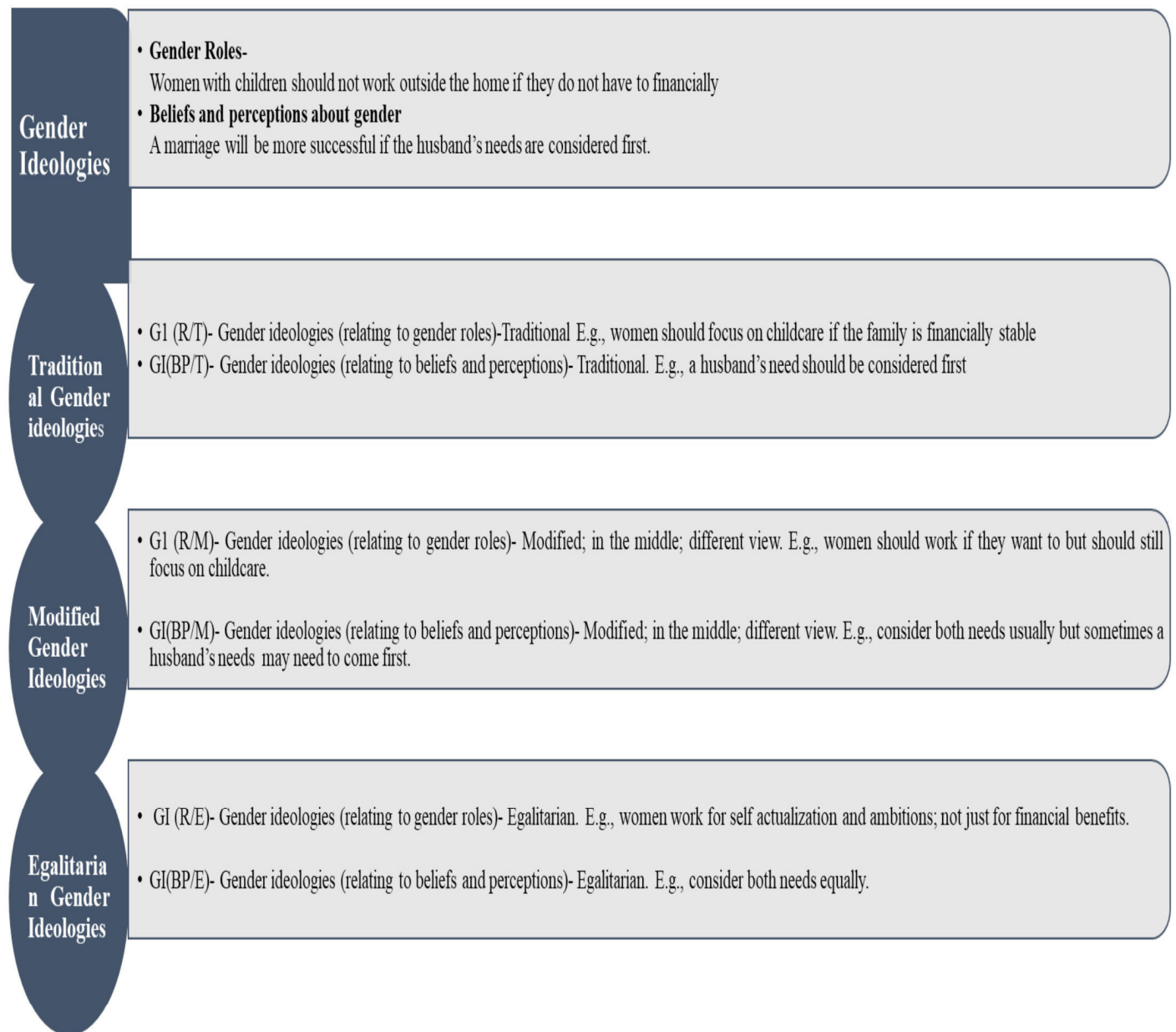
Gender Ideologies
- **Gender Roles-**
  Women with children should not work outside the home if they do not have to financially
- **Beliefs and perceptions about gender**
  A marriage will be more successful if the husband's needs are considered first.

Traditional Gender ideologies
- G1 (R/T)- Gender ideologies (relating to gender roles)-Traditional E.g., women should focus on childcare if the family is financially stable
- GI(BP/T)- Gender ideologies (relating to beliefs and perceptions)- Traditional. E.g., a husband's need should be considered first

Modified Gender Ideologies
- G1 (R/M)- Gender ideologies (relating to gender roles)- Modified; in the middle; different view. E.g., women should work if they want to but should still focus on childcare.
- GI(BP/M)- Gender ideologies (relating to beliefs and perceptions)- Modified; in the middle; different view. E.g., consider both needs usually but sometimes a husband's needs may need to come first.

Egalitarian Gender Ideologies
- GI (R/E)- Gender ideologies (relating to gender roles)- Egalitarian. E.g., women work for self actualization and ambitions; not just for financial benefits.
- GI(BP/E)- Gender ideologies (relating to beliefs and perceptions)- Egalitarian. E.g., consider both needs equally.

Fig. 1.2. Schematic diagram showing relevant codes that describe participants' gender ideologies. (Source: The author.)

Overall, participants mostly favoured egalitarian gender ideologies based on their responses to the statements made. Seven of the ten participants unambiguously hold egalitarian gender ideologies both in terms of gender roles and beliefs and perceptions. For instance, when asked to give their opinion on the statement "A marriage will be more successful if the husband's needs are considered first" Ifeoma replied as follows:

> I disagree again. I don't think there is one person's need that trumps the other. If the man's needs are considered first then where does that leave the woman. Now are we back to the stone age where the woman is the unimportant human in the house?... I think everybody's needs are equally important even the kids. We all have needs and they all have to be met for there to be peace and happiness in a home, right? So no I don't agree with that statement one bit. (laughs)

Chizoba replied as follows:

> Both parties' needs should be considered first. Which one of the husband's needs should be considered first? Considered first how? Both parties should be considered. See marriage is… I come fifty for you to come fifty do you understand? Like I give up a couple of things and you give up a couple of things.

Feyi replied as follows:

> False… Before I actually got married I actually had seen a number of marriages back in Nigeria and… I was displeased so to say with the marriage system in Nigeria... sometimes I would tell myself I don't think I'm going to get married anyway because there are some things that for me... they were just not right... for instance, this aspect that you just have to bow about needs. I believe that the woman has needs and the man has needs and the needs of both parties should be given umm attention… In Nigeria they make it look like marriage has to be to the advantage of the man whereas a woman has come to the marriage to just pay the price. Do you understand?... and as if marriage is doing a woman a favour... a woman has needs, she has dreams, she has goals, she has identity so all these things should actually be acknowledged. So the idea that marriage is about meeting just the needs of the man and throwing that of the woman to wherever is not for me. I don't agree with that.

Again, when asked to consider the statement "Women with children should not work outside the home if they do not have to financially," Ifeoma replied as follows:

> I disagree and the reason I disagree is that having children doesn't mean you do not have you know ambition or that you do not have anything you need to achieve anymore. It could be not working for money but working for the community, something that gives you personal fulfillment, right? I don't think having children should stop you from working or doing things that make you feel fulfilled so I totally disagree with that statement.

Chizoba replied as follows:

> I would say that is very personal, really. Like that would be very personal and it's left to the woman and what her and her partner decide. And if I want to personalize down to myself, I mean even if I was married to Dangote (richest man in Africa) I know I will have a side hustle. Like I probably will not do a nine to five because I never really been a nine-to-fiver but I will definitely want something that comes from my own hard work. Even if he is going to be giving me monthly allowance that can probably take me to Dubai I will have to make something up for myself because I've always been that person, right?

Feyi replied as follows:

> Well I would say false to that…because I think that why a woman would work or would want to work doesn't just have to do with benefits or wanting to make more money. I think it also has to do with that pride of place as a person. That self-identity that I am also doing something and I can improve myself. I can contribute to society and all of that. So it goes beyond just wanting to make money.

All of Feyi's, Chizoba's, and Ifeoma's responses were consistent and favoured egalitarian roles and beliefs. This also applied to Uduak, Nafisat, and Tolulope although they did not always expand their responses beyond agreeing or disagreeing. Adanaya directly noted that she held egalitarian ideologies and her responses to other questions proved this to be true.

For the remaining three participants, there were some variations. Of these three participants, Adejumoke noted that mothers should not have to work without financial motive, signaling that she may favour childcare as being primarily a woman's responsibility, but her other responses suggest that she holds egalitarian beliefs and perceptions. Maimuna holds similar views in terms of mothers' not working (or working less) to focus on childcare to protect children from negative values in the society. She also believed that while men should support with housework it should not be shared equally with the woman, although she later mentioned that more is expected from the man if both partners work full-time. Maimuna's other responses favoured egalitarian gender roles and beliefs. Rukevwe's responses sometimes favoured egalitarian gender roles and beliefs but she modifies them (especially regarding beliefs about gender) to balance religious

beliefs. While she generally agreed that gender roles do not need to directly follow the "breadwinner-housewife/mother" model she personally still believed that men and women should primarily perform traditional roles and support their partners as needed; yet she agrees that mothers (and women in general) should work because they also have dreams and ambitions. She replied to the statement "Women with children should not work outside the home if they do not have to financially" as follows:

> I don't agree. Now the reason why I said I don't agree is that in as much as we are women I believe that to a very large extent we also have our goals and careers. Most of us went to school not for the reason of being "housewives." I know you understand what I mean. but in order to pursue our dreams. Now it's not basically… we don't pursue our dreams just because of the financial benefits we get for pursuing our dreams but the purpose we build from it right? the self-actualization and being outside increases our ability to socialize the more and learn more because when you are at home and you're in your inner circle you're unable to explore. And given this present situation given these present circumstances, no man literally wants to marry a woman that is "just housewife". Right? he should be able to engage in some intellectual communication with his wife you know? learn some things from her and she can also contribute to him intellectually not only financially. So I don't agree with that.

Similarly, she held more traditional views about what women need and what men need in a relationship and favours men having more control in a marriage for things to work. She understands this to be compromise based on the belief that men love to feel respected whereas women love to be loved. She replied to the statement "A marriage will be more successful if the husband's needs are considered first" as follows:

> False. I don't agree... I believe one thing about marriage is it's all about concession, it's all about communication, it's all about understanding and compromise. Now… I understand people may say you have to…if you respect your husband then he will love you. But if we look at the biblical aspect of the whole thing the Bible first of all said, well man love your wife before he said what... women submit unto your husband. Now I'm not saying the man has to love his wife for a marriage to work first. I'm not saying that, but what I'm trying to say is both needs of the man and the woman run concurrently. For a marriage to work, the man's needs should be met as much as the woman's needs should be met. Now the man's need in every marriage is respect. That is what the man values more than money. And what the woman values more than money is love. So if a man is well respected… the man has no choice but to respect the woman. If the woman is loved unconditionally by the husband the woman has no choice but to respect the husband. So no one person's needs come first.

But when people make the statement of one person's needs should come first its... it comes in the area of compromise because you can't have two captains on a boat for that boat to move right? so one person has to… you know to mellow down… use that word for the other person to rise you know for the other person to rise and feel in control. That's why they said that for a marriage to work a man has to have the control, a man's needs has to be met first. But the truth is there are times women actually have to calm down and respect the man so things can work out. But if you look at the undertone of it as the woman is respecting the man…if she does that effortlessly she gets the love back from the man almost immediately…

These three are cited here as having "modified gender ideologies" because they do not exactly fit either the egalitarian ideologies or traditional ideologies. As noted, the term "modified gender ideologies" perhaps best describes how gender ideologies may be shifting. Deutsch and Saxon's (1998) study is relevant here. Although studying a vastly different population–working class American couples (mostly White and a few Hispanic couples) who engaged in alternating shift work and sharing childcare responsibilities—Deutsch and Saxon found that even when family dynamics follow non-traditional gender roles, there is a tendency to hold on to certain beliefs to affirm traditional gender identities. For instance, in their findings, irrespective of how important the wife's salary was for the family or how much time the husband spent on childcare, in these dual-earner homes the couples still maintained that the man is the primary breadwinner, the woman is the primary caregiver and the women only worked due to their financial situations even when it was clear that many of the women were not only in it for the money (Deutsch & Saxon, 1998). While the nature and sample of their study are different from this study, there are some similarities. Some of this study's participants' families became dual-earner homes on arrival in Canada (and even some of those that were dual-earner homes in Nigeria had paid help or family support so the men did not have to engage in housework or childcare), and couples may default to maintaining certain traditional beliefs about gender as a strategy to reduce tension or navigate changes. Deutsch and Saxon (1998) also maintained that among the couples they studied the husband's childcare

activities were considered a support to the woman while the women's workforce activities were considered support to the man. The participants with modified gender ideologies generally made similar comments. Whatever strategies were employed it seems that these participants were trying to balance some traditional and/or religious views with their new realities.

Seven out of the ten participants agreed that their gender ideologies had changed since coming Canada, while three believed that their ideologies had not changed since coming to Canada. Participants had quite different feelings and opinions about this change.

Maimuna, Chizoba, and Ifeoma did not believe that their gender ideologies have changed since coming to Canada. Maimuna described that coming to Canada did not change her beliefs but changing realities require changing behaviours. She described as follows:

> …when I got married the reality was different because for me I wasn't working of course it didn't make sense to me that my husband will go out and work and with the stress of Lagos traffic and everything he will come back home and maybe do the things that I'm expected to do… no I wouldn't… that wouldn't be reasonable. So then those roles and those expectations began to be apparent. When I was single of course I took care of myself, I went to work and all that. I did everything but when we were married and someone else was taking care of me then of course those roles changed. If he is doing this I also need to be able to support him somehow. But yeah my idea before marriage was quite different from my idea after marriage because the reality just changed and so coming here to Canada I don't really think it changed significantly… I don't think it had anything to do with Canada… it just had to do with conflict and then you know maybe growing up or just seeing things differently. It didn't necessarily have to do with Canada.
> She was not so fond of the differences here in Canada, citing the frequent breakdown of

marriage as her main concern, although she liked the option it provided for women in abusive situations. Chizoba noted that she always had egalitarian gender ideologies, but is not very sure she likes the differences in Canada because of the reports of marriages breaking down. Ifeoma noted that she always had egalitarian gender ideologies and also married into a progressive family. She noted that she liked how more people in Canada favoured egalitarian ideologies.

Adanaya, Uduak, Adejumoke, Nafisat, Tolulope, Rukevwe, and Feyi agreed that their gender ideologies had changed since coming to Canada, Adanaya and Uduak favoured egalitarian ideologies before coming to Canada. They both noted that their beliefs were strengthened by living in a society that favours those same beliefs and were particularly happy about the fact that women's voices are heard (rather than women just being seen). Rukevwe noted that she likes that women have a voice, are more protected from domestic violence, and receive support from their husbands, but does not like having to share responsibilities almost equally with her partner putting more pressure on her. Tolulope said that she liked some of the changes here in Canada and has adopted some Canadian values but has maintained some Nigerian values to keep a balance that works for her. Adejumoke noted that she liked that men are not shamed for helping around the home. Nafisat noted that she has not found anything to like and actually preferred her life in Nigeria. On the other hand, Feyi decidedly likes the changes here in Canada because there are more protections for and recognition of women and that women are encouraged to be productive. She described the importance of these changes for her when she noted.

> …I mean it has changed in the sense that umm even if I go back to Nigeria today I mean there are some things that I just wouldn't bring myself to accept.

Conversely, participants had different opinions about whether men's gender ideologies are changing as well in Canada. In response to the question "Do you believe Nigerian men are changing as well or reacting well to such changes?", some held that men were changing as well or reacting well to the changes while some others did not think that men are changing or reacting well to these changes and others believe that some men are changing while others are not.

Participants' answers varied, as some spoke of their partner in particular, some speculated about other men, and some compared their partners to other men. Across the data, women also

spoke about how they perceived men's attitudes both in Nigeria and in Canada. Overall, two sub-themes arise from the participants' comments. Both subthemes are summarized below.

Men Do Not Want to Lose Control. Rukevwe noted her belief that men are controlling by nature. Whether or not this assertion is true, participants overall described that men in Nigeria often expect to be treated as superior to women and societal values often give room for men to have control. Most participants described that men in Nigeria are treated as (or at least expect to be treated as) superior to women. Uduak spoke directly to this point when she stated as follows:

> …there is an air of superiority for Nigerian men with their women as compared to what you find here…

Similarly, other participants made comments that highlighted the point that men in Nigeria are often treated like they are superior to women. Adejumoke described as follows:

> …like we know in Nigeria umm for a man what they usually say is they are the head of the family and in Nigeria… what I know is that some men they don't really do much at home, everything will go to the wife…

Tolulope stated as follows:

> …umm in Nigeria there is the expectation that the men are kings basically. They don't do anything…

Rukevwe described as follows:

> In Nigeria we… we were brought up to understand that the man is the head of the home.

Ifeoma described as follow:

> …people feel like they have to be pretty much scared of their husband or worship him or that respect that you are supposed to reserve for God or the gods. That's the huge difference I noticed between just men or marriages… let's not just isolate it to men let's us just say marriages in general in Nigeria and marriages here…

And Chizoba explained as follows:

> I do know that unlike Nigeria that the man is like the alpha and the omega, you know the man can cheat on you and make you leave the house right? with your kids... In Canada, it's definitely not the same.

As noted earlier by some participants, gender roles are shifting in Nigeria and many Nigerian women now have to or want to join the labour market. Yet some participants also

identified that women's increased participation in the workforce (and in some cases financially supporting the household) has not led to men's increasing their participation in housework, and in general has not shifted their position as head of household and as superior compared to women. Maimuna described that women in Nigeria often put up with this because of the societal values, fear of stigmatization, and underemployment (that is, they do not get paid enough to support themselves and possibly their children). Adanaya described that her partner grew up in such circumstances, where his parents' dynamic followed traditional patterns with the man as the head of the family and the woman under his authority. Additionally, participants noted that paid help allows Nigerian couples to maintain this unequal dynamic. Consequently, it is arguable that men still hold more control in Nigeria.

By contrast, women's changing gender ideologies, likely influenced by the fact that egalitarian ideologies are popular in Canada coupled with available protections for women, has led to men's losing such control and superiority over women. Participants described across the data how they believe men feel about this loss of control. Some participants described that their partners or men in general did not like losing this control that was usually guaranteed to them in Nigeria. Tolulope noted that men do not like this loss of control, and it can create issues if women do not handle it diplomatically; Maimuna noted that this loss of control made her partner feel uncomfortable; Ifeoma noted that some men become frustrated and withdrawn; and Adanaya noted that this frustration actually contributed to her partner becoming violent. She also noted earlier that even in Nigeria she had experienced physical violence because of her assertive nature.

Participants also described their particular experiences with their partners and how their partners responded to this change (that is, the change or shift in participants' gender ideologies and the differences encountered by moving to Canada). Their experiences are described below.

Partners' Reaction to Changes. Uduak and Nafisat, speaking specifically about their partners, noted that their spouses were changing as well or reacting well to the changes here in Canada. They both noted that they cannot speak about other men or other marriages, and one of them notes that communication has been very important in navigating these changes.

Adejumoke and Feyi hold that men in general are changing, but Feyi described that the new realities and circumstances men face in Canada as well as their interactions with other non-Nigerian men compels them to change, although it takes a while. She also notes that her partner was unhappy with the changes at first but changed over time.

The participants who hold that men are not changing or reacting well to changes have opposing reasons as to why they think so. Maimuna believes that men are not reacting well because they still try to hold on to traditional ideologies about men as the head of the home and refuse to participate in housework even when the women support by providing financially. This participant's argument was echoed by other participants who stated that they knew of men in Canada who were unwilling to support their wives with house chores but expected them to support the family financially (it was not clear whether participants meant as sole breadwinners). Usually, participants stated, this caused problems for such couples. However, Ifeoma noted that men are struggling with these changes and women were not helping matters. She noted that women who continue against all odds to fulfill traditional gender roles do not let their partners grow and hence the men continue to struggle. This again indicates that some women continue to shoulder all the housework and childcare responsibilities and some financial responsibilities, but in this case do so of their own accord.

Adanaya, Tolulope, and Rukevwe noted that some men are changing while others are not. All noted that each man's reaction is dependent on the kind of man he is. They noted that they had

heard of men who were changing easily and others who were not changing or were constantly complaining. For Adanaya, while she knew of men who adjusted easily and reacted well, in her case her partner did not react well and things got worse.

Overall, there is no conclusive answer if Nigerian immigrant men to Canada are changing, and participants themselves almost all agreed that change is hard and specifically noted that they could not generalize about all men from the few they know or from their partners alone. This is line of reasoning is logical, and it may not be possible to clearly understand how or if Nigerian immigrant men's gender ideologies are changing in Canada without hearing directly from them.

While Conflicting Gender Ideologies May Increase Violence, Increased Protections for Women in Canada Serve as a Deterrent

Studies have made connections between gender ideologies and domestic violence as detailed in Chapter Two. Husnu and Mertan (2017) investigated how endorsement of traditional gender myths, high ambivalent sexism and positive attitudes towards wife-beating influenced self-reported partner violence. They found that self-reported partner abuse was common in men who endorsed traditional gender myths about women which created positive attitudes towards wife beating. Their study population was from Turkish society, which they identified to be patriarchal. Bui and Morash (2008), investigating domestic violence against Vietnamese immigrant women to the United States (US), consider the impacts of immigration stressors, gender role reversal, and men's loss of power and status (as a result of downward mobility), which result in men's use of aggression against their partner to reassert their lost position. They also identified Vietnamese culture to be patriarchal in nature. Fidan and Bui (2016), investigating IPV against women in Zimbabwe, also consider how patriarchal gender ideologies in both men and women may impact women's experiences of domestic violence. Again, Fidan and Bui identified Zimbabwean society

as patriarchal and lay emphasis on the post-colonial manifestation of patriarchal beliefs. Clearly considering the impacts of gender ideologies on domestic violence within populations belonging to patriarchal societies has some merit and may provide a clearer understanding of the issue.

The previous themes have identified that Nigerian society typically favours traditional gender ideologies signalling that it is a patriarchal society. Participants and other cited sources portray that in general men are valued more than women within Nigerian society and have access to more privileges. In contrast, Canada is more egalitarian and provides more liberties and value to women which creates gender equality (though not completely, as noted by the participants). The participants, who are Nigerian immigrant women to Canada, have also mostly identified that upon coming to Canada their gender ideologies have changed and they have moved towards more egalitarian gender ideologies or embraced them even more, if participants already had egalitarian ideologies. While it was inconclusive if Nigerian immigrant men to Canada were changing as well in Canada (especially at the same rate as women), participants shared their own specific situations with their partners, giving some context to the subject matter. Having identified all these changes, this theme covers how the participants view the relationships between changing gender ideologies and domestic violence.

Participants shared their views on how conflicting gender ideologies may or may not influence or increase domestic violence against women. Some participants agreed that changing gender ideologies may lead to increased violence against Nigerian immigrant women in Canada, especially when change is one-sided (i.e., one person maintains traditional ideologies and the other shifts towards egalitarian ideologies leading to conflicting gender ideologies). Participants spoke about hearing stories about friends and acquaintances who began to experience violence in their marriages because of conflicting gender ideologies; some heard stories about Nigerians' marriages

being dissolved upon moving to Canada for the same reasons. Feyi believed that any Nigerian couple that moves to Canada will experience tension and a good shaking if they are not prepared to handle the differences here in Canada. She went on to say that violence may occur depending on the people involved, for instance, if the woman is unaware of the protections available for women in Canada. Conversely, some participants did not believe that changing gender ideologies would increase domestic violence against immigrant women in Canada but rather noted that women's increased contribution to the family (financial contribution) leads to increased respect, and increased protections for women also serve as a deterrent to men's violence.

The following paragraphs narrate the experiences of participants in this study. Some participants spoke about experiencing some tensions in their marriage ranging from disagreement to physical violence. Adejumoke described having non-violent disagreements with her partner that were easily resolved by talking it out. She identified with many egalitarian ideologies, except that she favoured mothers' not working to focus on childcare. She particularly liked that men are not shamed for engaging in housework in Canada where egalitarian gender roles are more common. She noted that she used to work in Nigeria and depended on family support to manage paid employment and housework. She was also confident that men are changing in Canada and described that her partner did not react negatively to changes in her behaviour, which suggests that she and her partner are in accord in regard to changing ideologies and navigating these new realities.

Feyi described some violent outbursts between herself and her partner. She identifies unambiguously with egalitarian gender ideologies both in terms of roles and beliefs and perceptions. She noted that since she came to Canada her gender ideologies have changed. In terms of gender roles, although she worked in Nigeria, when she came to Canada she had to work, go to

school, and conduct other activities, making it impossible to manage all of the housework by herself. She also noted the influence of seeing other couples' dynamics that favoured more egalitarian gender ideologies. She detailed that her partner had not been happy with the changes in Canada at first because it was hard to let go of the privileges he had in Nigeria but over time accepted these changes with exposure to the new realities they were facing. This suggests that her ideologies changed after coming to Canada along with changing circumstances and due to interaction with the society, while her partner did not change as quickly resulting in some period during which they had conflicting gender ideologies.

Maimuna described experiencing some disagreements with her partner as well. She described that before getting married (and before coming to Canada) she never really gave much thought to gender roles. Her family dynamics followed the traditional "breadwinner- housewife model" because of specific circumstances. She noted that when she got married, she was still in school, and that combined with having a difficult pregnancy resulted in her husband's being the breadwinner in Nigeria. When she came to Canada, she went back to school again and although she works part-time, her partner still mainly provides for the home. She described that her gender ideologies had not changed in Canada but rather the family's circumstances had changed and she therefore expected a change in behaviour. For instance, she noted that while her partner worked very long hours and had to deal with the frustrating Lagos traffic in Nigeria, here his hours are more regular and he does not come home as late as he did in Nigeria. This means that when he is home, he should be able to help with house chores if she needs it while she did not expect that of him in Nigeria because of the circumstances. She generally favoured egalitarian ideologies, particularly beliefs and perceptions. In terms of gender roles, she clearly relied on circumstances as the measure for how family dynamic plays out. She believed that one person should spend more

time at home with the children rather than work to ensure that they are brought up with the values and ethics that are important to the family, which usually clashes with the values and morals of society (it is not clear if this refers to Canada alone or Nigeria as well). She noted that since in most cases mothers are default nurturers, this often falls to them. She also did not think housework should be shared equally with the man but later noted that if she and her husband both worked full-time, then she would expect him to do more housework. This again speaks to her view of circumstances being the main factor of how gender roles should play out. She described her partner's reaction to her changing expectations and changing gender ideologies in Canada as not unhappy but a little uneasy with how women have more power in Canada, usually reflected through jokes. She also described her partner's feeling disrespected when she would ask him to do something for her that typically would not be "his job". However, she also noted that he is quite helpful around the house and that while disagreement occurred, it did not lead to any significant issues within her marriage and these disagreements were resolved.

Adanaya describes experiencing worsened physical violence (and perhaps emotional violence as well, although this was not explicitly stated) from her now ex-partner after moving to Canada. She described that she always experienced conflict in her marriage even before coming to Canada. She attributed some of these conflicts to her own beliefs, which were egalitarian even before coming to Canada. She narrates as follows:

> Ok, even in my own personal relationship with my ex-husband, my ex-husband used to hit me a lot in Nigeria. This was because I wasn't like his mother who his father married at maybe 14 or 16-ish and like trained her through school and he probably would tell her to jump and she will say 'how high,' you know? I was the more assertive woman who when you said jump, I would say 'why should I jump?' So that made him hit me, right? So, I always… And the funny thing is that when he hit me, church folks, even my mother, would say, 'what did you say? what did you do?' So, I have always questioned why that inequality? Why? why does a man get away with this?...

Upon coming to Canada, she described embracing these views further and finding her voice through education, where she learned the right words and tools to name and understand her experiences. She also had the unique experience of working with women facing similar issues. Her gender ideologies did not particularly change in Canada, because she always had those views, but they became strengthened in Canada, and moving to Canada also allowed her to join the labour market after facing difficulties getting a job in Nigeria. She described other factors that led to worsened violence, such as declining family support on her part while her partner became closer to his family rather than her (i.e., one-sided family support) and other immigration stressors; but ultimately, she believed that the rift came with her strengthened egalitarian gender ideologies while her ex-partner did not change or react well to her changing. She described the situation as follows:

> So, there are cases where the men have changed. But in my own case, no it didn't change. It became worse. You know? Because he uhm… I will say that it is gender thing that contributes, so maybe my newfound strength… threatened his manhood, you know? But he can win too. You know? He can win too… he can stay on his lane and be the best he can be and I stay on my lane and be the best I can be. Because we are two individuals, and I am not going to… because what the problem really is in our relationship is that he wants me to be less so that he is happy. But I am not going to be less so that he is happy. I am just going to be all of myself… so to answer that question I would say different people... you know with these experiences that I have told you about friends… but in my own case, no it didn't change him. He became worse you know…

This suggests that conflicting gender ideologies intensified or increased her experiences of domestic violence in Canada. Of course this did not occur independently of other factors widely described in the literature as increasing immigrant women's vulnerability to domestic violence. Adanaya described having to work multiple jobs while in school and taking care of her three children. She also described dealing with declining family support because the only family she had in Canada lived very far away. Interestingly, she also eventually had to cut off certain relationships with family members in Nigeria because they pressured her to stay in the marriage even when she

knew she should not stay any longer, causing her to second guess her choices and return to the marriage after a separation (before eventually getting divorced).

This suggests that along with dealing with immigration stressors, Nigerian immigrant women's experiences of adapting or shifting towards egalitarian ideologies may present an additional factor that increases their vulnerability, especially when their partners do not embrace such changes themselves or take a longer to adapt to these changes. This is a pertinent issue because for most families who have moved to Canada, gender roles will often change by necessity and adopting non-traditional gender roles will most likely influence beliefs and perception about gender, especially as women integrate with the society.

However, most participants did not report experiencing any violence in their marriages, although some of them reported that they had heard stories. Most women were usually not keen on drawing conclusions based on the few cases they had heard of. Similarly, some participants noted that in their opinion, women's increased participation in providing for the family increases men's respect for them and thus acts to reduce incidences of domestic violence. Furthermore, they noted that protections afforded to women in such situations in Canada and the accompanying retribution for the perpetrators of such acts serve as a deterrent to men's acts of violence. The experiences of these participants are narrated below.

Uduak described her partner fondly as follows:

My husband has always been pro-me (laughs). He has always been that before we came here so it's not something that is new to him so I can't really see a difference in him because he has always been the kind of man who respects…so the kind of man who respects his woman and allows my voice to be heard. He has never been the type who wants to put me down or hide me behind, so I haven't really seen much of a difference in him. Yeah, I would say that for me… nothing much has changed for me.

In her case both she and her partner favoured egalitarian ideologies before coming to Canada. She described coming to Canada with her children to join her husband, signalling that she came under family sponsorship class. She identified that coming to Canada strengthened her beliefs, and she particularly likes that women's voices were heard. As suggested in her comment above, her partner also felt the same way, signalling that their gender ideologies were compatible. She did not report any incidence of violence or tension between them. She noted, however, that she had heard stories of others whose marriages suffered due to conflicting ideologies, although not within her close circles, so it was difficult to make any conclusions.

Nafisat, who identifies strongly with egalitarian gender ideologies, described that communication and compromise have played an important role in navigating changes in Canada. Perhaps more significantly, Nafisat explained that after getting married she and her partner had lived in the United Kingdom (UK) for about a year before moving back to Nigeria and eventually moving to Canada. She does not explicitly state that her husband favoured egalitarian ideologies but narrates as follows:

> Hmm… my own partner oh… I can only talk about my partner he is very okay. I can say …before I got married, before I got married to my partner, I actually told him what I like doing and what I not like doing. And we have been married for 5 years and I can say all through that period I have never washed the bathroom…which means he knows what I like and what I do not like. I do not like washing the bathroom. And then when I moved here, immediately we moved here, he started again. In Nigeria he didn't have to do it because we had someone doing it. And then when I got… when we got here he started again. So I think he is adjusting well too…as long as we are communicating about it.

This suggests that she and her partner amicably negotiated gender roles and their experiences were tailored differently based on where they lived. In the UK, they adopted non-traditional roles and were fine with it. In Nigeria, where they could afford help, they reverted to more traditional roles (although it is not clear if she was involved in housework in Nigeria or if they had enough help to cover it all); and when they moved to Canada they once again adopted non-traditional roles. This

ability to navigate these changes peacefully suggests that they have compatible ideologies but also that having previous experience made the new transition easier.

Tolulope, who also identifies with egalitarian ideologies, specified that she adopted some Canadian values and maintained some Nigerian values to create a balance. She had a similar experience of living in the United States before coming to Canada, and also did not report any incidences of violence. While she does not talk much about her partner, she generally referenced communication and compromise with dealing with these changes. She noted that changing gender ideologies and differences in Canada may negatively impact Nigerian immigrant women's marriages if they are unable to compromise with their partners, especially because she believed that while men's gender ideologies are changing, not all of them are doing it willingly and they complain all the time about it. She remarked as follows:

> Yes. Yes. Umm… if the woman is not able to know how to handle the situation. And what I mean by that is, yes, there is all of these changes that the men don't necessarily want to happen and umm… so it is left for the woman to know how to deal with it diplomatically for you to one get what you need, get what you want and also not cause any risk between the marriage.

She also notes that she knows of one case where conflicting gender ideologies have led to domestic violence but remarks that this is the only case she has heard of.

Rukevwe, who generally identifies with some egalitarian ideas of gender roles as well as some traditional beliefs and perceptions (coded here as "modified gender ideologies"), also did not report any incidences of violence. She noted that she did experience some changes in her ideologies in Canada, like realising that men should help out with housework especially when women support in providing for the family. She also notes that she is not too fond of the increased responsibilities on women and in general she balances her beliefs with religious views; but she did not agree that these changes will lead to increased domestic violence. In fact, she thought the

opposite because she believed that women's increased participation will make the men respect women more and that the protections available in Canada will hold men accountable for any acts of violence, as opposed to Nigeria where many men get away with such things. It is also important to note that based on other comments, it seems this participant got married after coming to Canada, so her experiences within marriage have all been within Canada. This suggests that she may have had an advantage of adapting to the changes here before getting married and her partner may very well have done the same.

Chizoba who described herself as always having a western mindset in terms of gender relations.

> … I've always had the western mindset of gender relations even when I was in Nigeria, right? I always believed in equality. My husband used to… in fact he still calls me a feminist till now like I always believed in equality between men and women and I was very very open with my husband about it from day one. I think that was the reason me and him never really had issues because he knew that… I was not one to get married and have that person stress me to the point that I'm looking old and wrinkled. So he was… he understood that about me so I don't think anything has changed I've always been an equality kind of person from day one. I've always been assertive as to what I want. I can always tell my husband this is my opinion this is my viewpoint always always always. So its basically the same because I've always had this western mindset even before we came so. so no it hasn't. it hasn't changed… yeah.

She noted that she has not changed since coming to Canada because she already had egalitarian gender ideologies and was upfront with her partner before marriage about these beliefs. She pointedly described that her partner always understood and respected her beliefs even before leaving Nigeria. She did not report any incidences of violence. She noted some concerns with the differences in Canada because of the high divorce rate among Nigerian immigrants to Canada. While she believed that conflicting gender ideologies will lead to strain in marriages, she noted that her husband was well aware of who she is and there was no change in her behaviour since

coming to Canada. It is also important to note here that while she lives in Canada her husband is still based in Nigeria.

Finally, Ifeoma, who along with her partner always identified strongly with egalitarian ideologies even before coming to Canada, did not report any incidences of violence. She remarked as follows when asked if her husband was unhappy with changes in her behaviour.

> My husband is more progressive than myself-- I have to give it to him. Umm my husband is... even when we were in Nigeria as one of the men even he would say "no if a man hits you, you should end the marriage. If you were my sister, my advice to you" … and my husband actually told me one time when we were in Nigeria, "it doesn't matter even if I am drunk and I hit you mistakenly, end the marriage. I'm giving you that advice as a wife and as a sister. I don't think any woman should ever accept that from a man". So no, I don't think there is anything that is different with us, because like even back in Nigeria he is the one that would do the kitchen chores, he would be the one to cook, and it still carried over to Canada. Like he does the cooking more than I do, like he cleans the washrooms… so I don't think… if anything I'm even more helpful than I was in Nigeria just knowing that it is just the two of us here now and there is no external help. Umm, so I think that he appreciates that I'm able to even help him more than I was in Nigeria. So I think it's more like a positive impact for him like 'oh you're actually able to do more, actually contribute more physically' because… trust me, I have evolved (laughs)… so my case is the total opposite to many people's stories… so yeah…

This suggests that their family dynamics never followed the traditional pattern, even in Nigeria, and that their gender ideologies have always been compatible. For instance, she notes that even when she was not working in Nigeria (after giving birth) and her husband provided for the family, he still conferred with her on how to spend money. In general, she noted that she likes how Canada allows more women to have the same freedom as men, but noted that some men are struggling with the changes here because rather than let the man grow some women against all odds try to continue to fulfill duties traditionally expected of them even when they are working in Canada so they can be considered a good wife. In her opinion, changing gender ideologies will not lead to increased domestic violence because protections for women serve as a deterrent to men's violence although it may be more about fear of negative repercussions.

Overall, participants draw many important points as to how changing gender ideologies (of individuals and the society) may influence domestic violence. The subsequent themes draw more general experiences specific to Nigerian immigrant women with regards to domestic violence.

In Canada, Men Are Held Accountable for Their Actions

Participants acknowledged that the issue of domestic violence is one that is now gaining interest in Nigeria, but this has not always been the case. As noted earlier, numerous sources have highlighted the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Nigeria and some of the conditions that encourage the issue such as large support for wife-beating attitudes, especially among women (Igwe, 2015; 2013 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 2014; 2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 2019; Sunmola et al., 2020). One of the major symptoms of this attitude is that men are rarely ever held accountable for their acts of domestic violence even when they are reported to the appropriate authorities.

Participants described that a major distinction between Nigeria and Canada in regard to domestic violence is that women receive far more protection in Canada than in Nigeria against violence, and as a result man are held accountable if they commit violent acts against their partners. Most participants referred to this as a difference in Canada that they liked and appreciated because it deters or at least reduces women's experiences of violence. It was also common for participants to comment that women's voices are heard or that women are recognised. This often was equated with being acknowledged as one's own person rather than the property of the man and perhaps also refers to women being believed and taken seriously when they face such violence rather being automatically blamed for violence perpetrated against them. Feyi commented that:

> The gender relations in Canada is different in terms that it gives the woman that recognition. And again there are a lot of… there are a number of umm initiatives or legal

frameworks or platforms I would say… legal platforms that are actually... that are actually to the advantage of a woman. In the sense that for instance, if as a woman you are having issues in your gender relations, maybe your partner is maltreating you or there are some things that you are having some emotional ummm… what's it called… I mean you're being oppressed emotionally for instance, maybe in your marriage or your common law relationship, you-- there are those platforms you know where you can report to and they can actually tackle this. So the society is actually alert to or is actually open to like helping women to actually sort out some of this umm-- issues if they occur. But back in Nigeria I don't think… except for probably some NGOs and how many people even know them? I don't think the government actually is open to like umm… helping women who are actually being traumatized in relationships whether they are married or not married. I mean there are no such platforms in Nigeria and then you see that men a number of times-- men get away with a lot of things in Nigeria… a lot of things… a lot of atrocities.

Rukevwe describing what she likes about the differences in Canada, explained as follows:

Now starting with the ones I like. I will say one, being in a society like this it gives women a voice. There is no… umm… there is minimal domestic violence… incidences of domestic violence, there is minimal discrimination of women in workplaces, there is minimal extended family…umm you know umm… inclusion in a family dispute and stuff like that so those are the differences I enjoy, which we know we don't really have the access to it completely back in Nigeria.

She remarked later on again on the same issue when she stated the following:

…because of the system of government we have in terms of the protection women have umm against domestic violence and the umm the likely problems that the men might face if they decide to umm be violent towards their spouses, it's kind of reduced the frequency of such occurrences as compared to what we have back in our country prior to this time, because I think right now we have a lot of female activists, but you know back to our… from our country we had the mindset of… the man had the mindset of 'I own the woman, she is my property, I can whatever I wish to do with her, the day she doesn't respect me I can throw her out of the house,' you know? and stuffs like that but the country we found ourselves in, Canada, has given women a voice and they have given us a little bit of confidence that we are kind of safe from violent men because we can lay complaints and our complaints are adequately umm… addressed and listened to. So that helps a lot yeah.

This accountability for men's actions was best described by Adanaya who was able to lay

complaints when she experienced violence in Canada but had a very different experience in

Nigeria. She commented as follows:

I would say yes that while my ex-husband was hitting me in Nigeria, I couldn't go to the police but when I came to Canada and he hit me I called the cops. And we were given a no-contact order, you know, which was… you know, what ultimately broke the marriage,

you know? yeah… because in Nigeria nobody could hold him accountable, here people could hold him accountable. You know? He almost went to jail actually.

In contrast she reports, when she did come forward in Nigeria to report her husband's abuse, she was asked what she had done wrong or told to submit to her husband by church members.

Participants also noted that these protections that hold men accountable for their actions, although not perfect, also provide options for women and give them better chances of leaving abusive relationships. Participants also noted that women's increased workforce engagement which reduces financial dependence and being far away from family members that pressure women to stay in these relationships can make it a little easier to escape abusive situations. Adanaya's quote above also refers briefly to this issue.

Some participants also presented an interesting point. They noted that sometimes women's newfound access to independence may cause men to feel insecure. And in some cases, where gender roles change but perceptions and beliefs do not, men may continue to expect women to perform traditional roles like doing household chores and childcare but also expect them to contribute financially to the family. One particular contributor to such situations is that many women who work in Nigeria—and most women do work or at least want to work but may not be able to find a job—typically continue to be responsible for traditional duties but delegate them to paid help or receive assistance from family members. The succeeding theme describes why this is not feasible in Canada.

Absence of Affordable Paid Help to Manage Responsibilities Increases Stress

Almost every participant in this study in some capacity commented on the use of paid labour in many Nigerian families, highlighting the importance of this resource to Nigerians. Furthermore, the popularity of using paid help to manage responsibilities within the home like

house chores and childcare is encouraged by the fact that labour is cheap in Nigeria and thus domestic help is affordable and accessible to many. Even those who may not have the resources to hire paid help very often do have family assistance, which is cheaper or may not even be paid in cash but rather in kind (for instance, providing a place to stay and free food to a family member in exchange for domestic assistance). Perhaps many Nigerian families' reliance on paid help or family assistance is also fueled by women's increasing entry into the workforce, either by choice or necessity, to make up for increasing costs of living. By contrast, participants note that in Canada labour is very expensive and so is childcare. This means that most families cannot afford to hire help to manage their responsibilities, and where they may have been able to access family assistance in Nigeria many of these connections have been cut off by immigration. Some participants spoke to this issue as follows:

> …but here in Canada I think sometimes like 50/50 we need to like help each other based on what is happening here…because like in Nigeria we have maids… like we have people that help us to take care of …even if I am at work we have people that can help us to take care of our child but here in Canada there is nowhere you can keep your child except you have... like you have to pay… (Adejumoke)

> And you know back in Nigeria people can afford to get a house maid or I mean get a family member to come and help and do something, but you know you don't have that kind of luxury here. So it's just the two of you so everything has to be done and shared and you can't leave just one person to do all the… there is no fairness in that. (Feyi)

> So that's where you had situations where a wife would have to bring in a housemaid… or bring a family relation to help out with the chores. But coming here to Canada I realised that it is steady impossible for you to bring your relations to help you out or to get a house maid because it's closely unaffordable here right? (Rukevwe)

> When I was in Nigeria I had a driver, I had two house helps, you know? but we can't afford those things here, right? You know we can't afford those things here. Labour is cheaper in Nigeria. (Adanaya)

Adejumoke, Feyi, Rukevwe and Adanaya discuss the issue of unaffordable paid help in Canada in various dimensions in their comments above. These women point to the availability and accessibility of paid help or family assistance to manage domestic responsibilities while engaging

in paid work in Nigeria. This issue is further complicated by the fact that Nigerian immigrant women may have even more responsibilities when they come to Canada versus when they are in Nigeria. For instance, seven out of ten participants noted that they were or currently are in school. All seven were also working either full-time or part time and at least four out of the seven disclosed at some point in the interview that they were mothers as well. Chizoba described this issue directly when she noted as follows:

> …a lot of people, me for instance, when I was in Nigeria I had a strong support system. So I had a nanny, my husband, my mom, right? So there was always… There was a point in my life where I was losing weight, I was exhausted, I was working, my daughter was like a handful, you know? My mumsy actually took my daughter away and told me 'see babes, just, you know, work and sleep for two weeks,' so that support system is there. But you are coming to Canada and sorry, the support system is no longer there, and if you don't have a husband that is already active in the house… and the guy doesn't understand that—ok, some of them do, some of them are just outrightly stupid—that you are actually exhausted, you wake up in the morning, you bathe the kids, you're trying to find what to eat, you take the kids to…to school... you're probably working, you come back, you pick the kids back, you are trying to fix… you will get tired. So sometimes, some women out of respect that, ok, oh it's their duty, keep quiet, but they are burning inside, they're breaking, they are getting to their breaking point, and then everything just becomes irritating.

While it is very likely that Nigerian immigrant men in Canada are engaged in many activities as well, the problem arises when some still expect women to carry the burden of housework and childcare as described by Chizoba in her comment above. This may be excused by the fact that many women who work in Nigeria still perform traditional duties, yet as noted by these participants the external assistance that makes that possible is unavailable or inaccessible in Canada. For instance, in her comment above, Feyi described the unfairness in being expected to figure out all the household chores after working, going to school, and engaging in other activities outside the home. She went on to say that she had to throw away that orientation because it was virtually impossible for her to do it all.

There are several accounts of issues that concern managing domestic responsibilities without paid help that leads to stress, and stress may worsen situations that were already tense or unstable. For instance, Adanaya continued from her pervious comment as follows:

> Right now my sink is leaking but I'm adjusting it because I don't know where I am going to find a plumber. But in Nigeria you can get a plumber to do it for five hundred naira. You know but if I do get someone to fix it maybe the least that person is going to charge me to fix that thing will be fifty dollars and I probably will have to go buy materials to fix that. So its different. But people don't realize the difference and they come here and they still expect that the woman who has done four jobs would be at their beck and call like they were in Nigeria, you know? But in Nigeria these things weren't an issue because I had maids to help but here we don't have all of those things so…

This comment highlights how expensive labour is in Canada in comparison to Nigeria and this disparity produces two outcomes relevant to the issue at hand. One, because labour is expensive—as is the cost of living in Canada—women must engage in paid work outside the home to cover the increased costs of basic necessities like housing or minor issues like a leaking sink. Two, for the same reason, hiring domestic help to cover outstanding household responsibilities is unaffordable. If men expect that women continue to shoulder the responsibility of housework and childcare solely it will require that women overextend themselves which will certainly cause stress. Adanaya's comment highlights the frustration of working (multiple jobs in her case) and still being expected to be at her ex-partner's beck and call. She particularly described how having maids in Nigeria meant that this was not an issue for her before. Chizoba, in the comment above, also highlights this frustration. She noted that when women overextend themselves to manage housework, childcare, and paid employment they become easily irritable because of the stress from managing so many responsibilities alone. Minor disagreements may escalate beyond what is expected because women are stressed and this may increase tensions between couples.

Equally, negotiating how to share household responsibilities with men may not be easy especially if men consider this a threat to their authority or that men should not get involved in

housework. For instance, Maimuna noted that her partner considered it disrespectful when she asked for help with certain things (she does not specify what these things are but it is described as something that should not be "his job"). For Maimuna, this issue did not escalate into significant problems for them, but Tolulope noted that similar concerns led to domestic violence for a couple she knows. As described earlier this may stem from the fact that women who work in Nigeria still maintain these duties. Maimuna described key differences (aside from affordable labour) between women working in Nigeria versus in Canada and why tensions arise in Canada when she commented as follows:

> The difference is when people are in Canada here... in most families both partners work so I think that's where tension usually comes in. Women in Nigeria because of the society, because of the fear of stigma, [and] because sometimes even though they make money they may not make enough to take care of their families they may still take a lot of BS from their spouses and you know just manage… They just keep, you know, putting up with all sorts of things because of, you know, societal pressures because they feel they cannot do it on their own. But when they come here to Canada and they see that "ah come I can live my life on my own…if you're not being normal I can… basically live my life on my own" … I think that's what causes tensions in most families the fact that men come here and their wives are also working they're all working... sometimes the same jobs and then the woman is also expected to come home and do those same jobs [chores] again without the man helping and then it becomes frustrating for the woman. Why do I have to do all of these?… So yeah… I think that is the source of most tensions in most families.

While Maimuna does not speak about paid help in her comment, she highlights the point that managing household responsibilities alone along with paid work is frustrating for women and creates tensions between couples as noted by other participants.

The issue becomes even more difficult if men still expect women to contribute financially while maintaining these duties. Nafisat detailed that this is some women's reality when she commented as follows:

> …I have friends whose husbands do not still want to help with house chores even though both of them are busy, right? They still want to behave like typical Nigerian men what they do. 'You have to do this, you have to clean the house, you have to take care of the kids,' whereas the both of them are working right? And you know how Canada is? Everybody is busy right? But still they want the women to do all the chores. And then at the end of the

day, they still have to split the bill, which is not like that in Nigeria mostly. Because in Nigeria, most of the time, Nigerian men, they pay for everything right? But when they come here, they have to split the bill right? The men are working, the women are working, but then the men are still expecting the women to do everything in the house, which is which is not fair.

Indeed, the comments presented above underscore this issue clearly, but this comment from Adanaya sums it up properly.

There was a time in Canada where I was working four jobs, Esther. I was working four jobs, going to school full-time, raising three children, and having all A's in school. You know? So… as I am speaking to you right now I am at work…I am at work, I am just at my downtime; that's why I am able to do this interview with you. You know? So before you called, I was writing… I had already started working on my paper for this semester, I was just reading through it. So, every chance I get, I just have to do what I have to do. You know? And then here somebody is breathing down your neck and telling you what to do. It's hard, you know.

Help-Seeking Attitudes Are Influenced by Nigerian Socialization and Culture

When violence occurs, an individual's decision to seek help may be affected by the availability or lack thereof of the "helps" to be had and/or their willingness to report the perpetrator of such violence. The willingness to report is usually also influenced by other factors. In Nigeria where many of these incidences of violence may not be recognised as such, where protections for women are few and far between, and where a troubling number of Nigerians support wife-beating, seeking help when violence occurs may not be encouraged. Both women and men are likely encouraged to overlook violence (Igwe, 2015; Sunmola et al., 2020; Dim & Olayinka, 2019).

Responses from participants in this study suggest that help-seeking attitudes among Nigerian-immigrant women to Canada are still influenced by Nigerian socialization and culture. The main reason why this may be surprising is that participants acknowledged and highlighted that in Canada protections for women are more common and men are often held accountable for their actions; in fact, some participants specifically noted that this is one major difference that they like about Canada.

Some participants noted that dealing with incidences of domestic violence quietly is common among Nigerian women, and that women tend to cover for men in order to preserve a good name and to avoid shame and stigmatization. Some participants also note that Nigerian women are often counselled by elders to keep any such matters private and not to involve a third party; similarly, women are encouraged to do anything to keep their marriages intact. Usually what this means is that women may be encouraged to cover up men's acts of violence and manage it. Nafisat described this point as follows:

> … I know about a particular one and then you know how Nigerians are... they would be like 'oh, you will be a bad person if you report your husband. He is your husband, he will always be your husband'… you know, things like that right? And then at the end of the day, the women will have to cover up for the men.

If women disclose abuse at all it is usually kept within the extended family, but this is not always the case. Ifeoma described that even her sister, whom she considers her closest friend, did not disclose to her when she experienced spousal violence because she was worried about stigmatization. This fear of stigmatization often influences women's decision to seek help, but as Feyi noted, seeking help is also dependent on knowledge of available services and accessibility of such services. Chizoba also described that knowing the right people to speak to when facing such situations may also impact help-seeking attitudes. She noted that speaking to friends who are knowledgeable on the protections available to women in Canada will yield different results than speaking to friends and family in Nigeria who do not know anything about such services.

Adanaya, who did not feel the need to remain quiet about her experiences, described the impact of societal and family pressures that come from disregarding the advice to keep quiet and manage it. She explained that because she chose to speak out on her experience, she faced pressure from close family members (even those who do not live here in Canada) who insisted that she remain in the marriage and consider the effects of divorce on her children. She noted that the fear

of being judged caused her to second-guess her decision. She previously identified that religious

arguments and sentiments about how she had dealt with the same issue in Nigeria and managed it

were used against her. She described the impact of all this as follows:

> I would say, umm… that culture of 'stay irrespective, stay irrespective' influences people to stay longer than they want to, influences decisions people make. Not so much so… ummm the silence, but you are afraid that you will be judged. What it did for me wasn't … it didn't make me hide it. But what it did for me was it made me second-guess my decision… to leave this man.

Maimuna reiterates the points already made and agrees that Nigerian immigrant women living

within communities that typically favour patriarchal ideals and perpetuate all these attitudes

already discussed may choose not to disclose what they are going through if they know that many

people within their community hold such views.

Overall, all participants in this study agreed that while these constraints remain for Nigerian

immigrant women in Canada, women still need to get help when such issues arise. Therefore,

services that will be useful for Nigerian immigrant women need to be culturally sensitive and

accessible to them. The subsequent theme covers the current state of available services and

describes services that may better serve the Nigerian immigrant population.

Accessible and Sensitive Services

Only one participant, Adanaya, had accessed services and protection available to women

experiencing domestic violence in Canada. More to the point, many participants did not know the

specifics of services that are available to women in Canada because most did not need them.

However, as participants themselves pointed out, knowledge of the services available to women,

how to access such services, and even what constitutes violence (participants identified various

forms of violence like emotional and verbal violence) impacts how women may be liberated from

abusive situations. Perhaps one concern that arises about the current state of available services is

that not enough women know about them and how to go about accessing them. While, as Ifeoma

noted, a simple Google search can provide some information on these services, one may argue that

the emotional toll of experiencing violence may not make it convenient to explore options when

violence has occurred. Chizoba shared this concern and noted:

> Umm I don't know. Both ways… I think it all depends on individuals, right? but I think it all depends on individuals and who they are talking to. Right? if you talk to someone that is exposed that would tell you that ok, oh, umm you know what's the word? If you talk to someone that is exposed that will tell you ok, you can actually get help here, here. here… me, for example: you can imagine if something starts happening between me and my husband, I mean, I don't know who to talk to, right? So I'll most likely be talking to my mom that is in Nigeria, right? I don't really know all this health workers or health care or mental health or association of abused women kind of thing, and I don't know if I would look for, right? I may … I won't know how I would react until I'm in that "situation." So it's…it's all still based on exposure. Do you get? Do the women know what is available to them… the resources? You know, do they have friends that can tell them 'you can have legal aid, this, this, this, this"… And I believe that they would be willing to seek help. If they don't know, they will be talking to the wrong people, which is their friends in Nigeria that can't actually help. So yeah…

Chizoba, while considering a hypothetical incidence of violence or conflict with her

partner, acknowledges that she does not know what her response would be until she faces such a

situation. One may argue that such uncertainty may very well deter women from searching for

resources that could help them or figuring out how to access them. Therefore, it may be better to

have such resources prominently and frequently advertised so that women do not have to search

for them, but see them repeatedly and know how to access them before any problems ever arise (if

at all). Additionally, these resources may assist women to notice early signs of violence or identify

stressors that could instigate violence and provide tools and tips to avoid violence in the first place.

Adanaya described the imperfections of available services and explains that many women

fall through the cracks because of these imperfections. She noted that while the law and police

system hold men accountable for their actions, the finality, and complications of seeking legal

recourse have their own negative effects. Within such systems, the woman has no control over the

situation, and often the kind of justice offered by police and law does not benefit the woman and may even worsen her situation. She spoke particularly of financial dependence and childcare support. Since many partners share the responsibilities of paying rent and taking care of their children together, losing that support could complicate a woman's life. She spoke about wanting someone to tell her partner to stop hurting her but not wanting him to go to jail because she would have suffered too. She described that services available to cover these concerns like shelters or rent assistance could only go so far. She noted that shelters are not always safe, and she would not feel comfortable to take her children there. She noted other inadequacies like lack of efficient transportation services, especially for women who are new to Canada and do not have a licence yet and need to attend meetings or run simple errands—especially where a woman's responsibilities have doubled without the help of a partner. Based on her experiences, she summarized some services that are needed to properly help women or at least to reduce the burden on them. Required services include good (and affordable) housing; transportation services; support groups; and most importantly, financial empowerment for women. She discussed the emotional turmoil she experienced when she did not have anyone to talk to, hence the need for support groups. She noted that financial dependency makes many women stay in abusive relationships for all the reasons outlined above and that financial empowerment for women may drastically improve the situation.

Other participants contributed by citing services that they believe would be useful for women experiencing violence. Rukevwe noted the importance of first attempting internal conflict resolution when less severe issues occur to prevent conflict from escalating. As many other participants agreed, this requires open communication and compromise from both parties. She described conflict resolution as follows.

Umm if another couple is experiencing a strain in their relationship, because of this the first step is to handle it internally first of all. And this is not based on their identity being Nigerian or being Caribbean or being… white... Umm I would say it is just based on maturity number one, understanding, and just taking responsibilities for your actions, because no one knows how much it hurts better than who wears the shoes right? So no one can actually… I have come to realize something in marriage. No third party can actually solve your problem better than both of you can. So I believe solving your problems internally, telling yourselves the truth about what is happening, helps a lot in conflict resolution, [more] than involving a third party irrespective of cultural background or your ethnicity.

Interestingly, while Uduak noted that relying on close friends or relatives that you can trust to actually help you is a good solution, Rukevwe disagreed and noted that a neutral third party is better in such situations. Her reasoning is represented as follows:

Definitely. When it comes to… When it comes to domestic violence, whether physical or verbal or emotional, I always tell people, 'if you can't help yourself please seek help because only someone that is alive can cry out.' Because…one thing I tell people is before it gets to that point there could have… there would have been signs of that something like that coming up I mean you would've tried to take care of it internally, right? Before the outburst of violence? But when it gets to that point please seek help. At that point you can no longer handle it by yourself and not just seeking help but seeking help from the right sources, because there are times you seek help from the wrong sources and it makes it more difficult for you. So I always advise people to seek help from a neutral source. Not a family member, not a close relative, but a third neutral to both parties.

Others suggested professional counselling services, support groups; seeking assistance from community and religious leaders; accessing available services (like shelters); and an online support service for mothers that is accessible through Facebook (by location) that provides free services from counsellors and lawyers for mothers in need. Nafisat described this online service as follows:

There are different services available. And what I try to advise women, whenever you go to Facebook, whichever area you are on Facebook, just Google (search).. whether you are in Calgary, whether you are in Toronto, whether you are in (indecipherable) just Google (search) 'Calgary Mom' and then life is easy. 'Toronto Mom,' 'Mississauga Mom'—there you see different moms living in that environment where they talk about different things, but even if you are going through any issue, whether you need a lawyer, a divorce lawyer or anything, whether you need a counsellor, those moms are there to help. So I think that Facebook this thing… page where you can meet and connect with other moms… is a very good one that I have noticed, right?

Maimuna emphasizes an important point. She notes that first seeking help has to be normalized within the Nigerian-immigrant community, and she envisions this being possible by engaging and enlightening people on this topic within Nigerian-Canadian associations (in the different provinces) and other ethno-specific groups like Umunna Igbo and Egbe Omo Yoruba. She suggested that these association meetings could be safe spaces for not just women but men to work through issues together for better outcomes. She continued that the suggested marital counselling services need to consider the impact of immigration stressors and also need to be culturally sensitive and possibly led by someone from the community who understands traditional and religious influences on the subject matter. Participants also noted the need to involve the police when violence escalates and life is threatened. This suggestion is often described as one to take when the issue is severe, as described by Tolulope below.

> Umm I mean it depends on the seriousness or severity of the case... No.. Absolutely no violence should be tolerated or withstood in my opinion and if it has gotten severe then you go straight to the cops, but if not, then find, you know, counselling.

Participants also indicate other solutions to ensure and maintain marital harmony. Adanaya suggests regarding marriage as a partnership rather than a lord-servant relationship and shifting to more equitable divisions of roles and responsibilities. Others call for a reorientation of men and women upon arrival in Canada to understand and accept the changing dynamics here and to highlight what ideologies and roles are applicable here. Participants particularly encouraged proper and open communication between partners as a key strategy to promote marital harmony. They agreed that this will ensure that each partner's needs are known and can be met using compromise. This is very important because as Ifeoma notes, communication between spouses is one area that needs work because there are cultural influences that may hinder open communication.

> I think we need to learn to communicate more. Umm, if I had to think of anything just off my head, lack of communication would be the number one culprit, and the reason I say that

is, I'm sure if you are Nigerian as I am, there is not a lot of communication between umm you know, spouses. Again, I think it's a cultural problem. There is this huge gap between a husband and wife usually in Nigeria, where the man has this so much power a woman is like a subordinate, which shouldn't really be so. So sometimes I've seen cases where women are actually afraid to talk to their husbands about things. Umm, so, I think to achieve harmony it's communicating more... the ability to communicate your needs and your concerns and talk about them. Even as far as talking about your sexual needs, it's important. You can't achieve harmony if the man doesn't know how you feel or what your body needs or even what your heart needs. I mean vice versa, it's not just the men. There are cases where the man is the victim in a home; it's not just women that are victims of violence, right? So I say the ability to communicate more would help greatly. That way they can actually start to see themselves as friends… because if you can talk to somebody that means you regard the person as your friend, right? So yeah…

Other suggestions include learning proper time management to allow time for each other; normalizing seeking help when needed; adapting practices and values that can help families survive their new environment; joining support groups to share experiences and receive emotional support when needed; and seeking preventative counselling. Again, another participant rightly emphasises that any support group for such women will need to adopt very tight confidentiality policies and use settings that ensure privacy. Furthermore, the call to reorientate men on the values applicable here is emphasized by participants to even out the shifting ideologies in Canada. Participants are also cognisant of the difficulty in achieving this change but still consider it necessary. Uduak's response highlights this point.

Oh I think education. A whole lot of sensitization and education. The Nigerian men who want to relegate their wives or treat them as unequal cannot have a better understanding. They don't know better. They were taught so they saw that growing up; that's all that they know. So they need reorientation and they need education. They need to desensitize what they know and be…get sensitized to what is applicable. That is what is, what should be. So they need a lot of education and that would take time. That would take long… it is easier to teach a child or teach a kid than a grown adult so it would take time. It is not going to happen overnight, but I would say they need education and sensitization for that to happen.

   The preceding themes identified have discussed Nigerian-immigrant women's experience in Canada with regard to domestic violence and changing gender ideologies. Both of these are defined by how women integrate into Canadian society and how they navigate these new systems

which arguably may influence how these women adopt new views and ideologies. The subsequent themes briefly describe Nigerian-immigrant women's general experiences in Canada.

Factors Influencing Integration into Canadian Culture

Participants' initial experiences in Canada varied generally depending on where they departed from; what resources where available to them on arrival as well as when and where they arrived. Overall, participants described their initial experiences as positive when they had family members they could stay with on arrival in Canada; when they were reuniting with family members; when they met welcoming and pleasant Canadians; when they had transitioned or had experiences from other countries that are similar to Canada; when they were pleased with the province they choose to settle in; when they were excited about seeing and learning new things or meeting like-minded people; when they felt prepared for their new life here in Canada; when they were generally excited about coming to Canada and when they noticed structural and social differences in Canada that were beneficial and likely not available in Nigeria. Clearly these positive experiences were related to having social support, not experiencing severe culture shock, and finding new opportunities and people that made their lives better. These factors are usually related to positive acclimatization to the new environment and arguably will create easier transitions to life in the new country and facilitate smooth integration.

Conversely, participants described their initial experiences as negative when they did not have any family support or poor/one-sided support; when they had trouble finding accommodation; when they struggled with cultural differences and did not enjoy the food, social life, or environment; when they moved to an extremely cold province or during their first transition to winter, when they were uncertain about what to expect here in Canada; and when they experienced racism and/ or microaggression. These negative experiences also generally related to

declining social support, culture shock, and dealing with discrimination which are usually related to negative acclimatization to the new environment and influences how one integrates into the new society.

However, participant experiences were not always one-dimensional but usually comprised both negative and positive experiences. For instance, Ifeoma, who had transitioned from a holiday in the UK, did not find the weather to be too bad because of where she was coming from, and initially met very welcoming people. However, she also describes having experienced microaggression and found the situation to be frustrating:

> I would say, umm, what I found the most different would be the culture difference. I think it was more of a culture shock for me when I came in when I started to really meet people outside just the agent. It's the inability for them to understand me. And I kept asking myself, 'but you are speaking English!' because I come from an English-speaking country; but they kept asking me, 'Sorry please say that again, pardon me, pardon my'… so umm if you are not careful that gets to you. You start to become a little more silent than usual. That happened to me. I noticed I was a lot quieter which is not me I'm very outgoing and very talkative. I started to keep quiet more because I got really frustrated with people not understanding what I was saying. I think it can take a toll on your self-confidence for sure. Umm… you have to work kind of extra not to let that bother you as a human; but we are humans... it gets to you, right?

> Maimuna described how seeing dirty snow on her ride from the airport to a family's home was "underwhelming" and did not meet her expectations and later explains that while she likes the opportunities for self-development that Canada offers, she is not particularly fond of cultural differences in the environment, social life, or the food, and would prefer to live in Nigeria. She also discussed struggling with the cold because she lives in a particularly cold province.

Chizoba described her initial experience in Canada as depressing. She particularly blames this on the cold because she arrived right in the middle of winter and it also happened to be her first experience with winter. Unfortunately, her experiences did not get much better because she described really struggling with the cultural differences here, especially with how strangers relate

with each other. She described meeting standoffish people, which was very different than typical Nigerians who are jovial and tend to be more connected with others even when they are strangers. She also described not being connected to a Nigerian community in her city, although she had a few Nigerian friends and a few other acquaintances. It seems that she would like to be connected to a larger community, especially because she missed the jovial attitude common with Nigerians.

Adanaya moved with her family, was excited to come to Canada, and was welcomed by her partner's family; however, her experience was not entirely positive as one may expect. She describes struggling with the cold and worse, reports experiencing racism from her brother-in-law's wife. For her the family support was one-sided because she did not get along very well with her partner's family. She later describes facing similar discrimination in the workplace from a colleague. While it seemed that she was initially surrounded by conditions that would have created positive experiences and smooth integration into Canadian society, in reality she had to navigate many negative experiences as she integrated into society. She describes finding a sense of community at church where she met other Nigerians who showed her around and helped her feel more settled. While she has since left the church, she noted that she is still tied to the community in other ways.

Other participants also described that they were connected to the Nigerian-immigrant community in their city through churches, mosques, and ethno-specific organizations/Nigerian associations or by maintaining friendships. Those who were more involved with the community were connected through religious gatherings or organizations. Some noted that these relationships grounded them or made them feel united. Yet even these connections were not equal across the board. For instance, Ifeoma expressed gratitude to the Nigerian community in the city in which she first lived for their incredible support which enabled her to go to school while being in Canada

alone with two children (her partner had not yet joined them). She also described, however, that after moving to a different province she has not made those same connections, although she had one Nigerian friend. While one participant who had few friends would have preferred to be connected to a larger community, other participants described choosing to be less involved with the Nigerian-immigrant community and rather maintain few Nigerian friends. Factors like location and personality often influenced women's decisions or ability to be part of the Nigerian community. Where some loved or longed for the outgoing, vibrant nature of larger Nigerian communities (usually found in larger cities) and support that come from them, others did not engage with these kind of communities because they just were not outgoing people. Others who moved to new provinces had lost connections to their old communities and had not found or did not want the same type of community in their new province. Again, location created different experiences for different participants because it determined what kind of people (non-Nigerians) that participants were surrounded by:

> And what I found most umm… Let me just say... I don't know if it's that I liked the most or the most interesting is just how accommodating some folks were… you know it's not very easy coming from a totally different country across many oceans and having to have people that just want to make you feel at home. I'm glad I went to BC first. I have to… I keep reminding myself of that because I'm in Ontario now, I see the difference, right? So BC was a very welcome first experience it was really… like the people are really warm, nice, helpful... yeah. (Ifeoma)

> One's decisions around being connected to the Nigerian immigrant community or not may

also influence how they integrate with their new society; yet this is dependent on the individual and at least in this study does not clearly define whether access to a large Nigerian community is a significant factor for reducing culture shock and fostering smoother integration.

While it is clear that certain factors or conditions may increase the likelihood of acclimatizing positively or negatively to the host countries, in the end integration is a long process

that may not follow a specified path, and individuals experience it very differently. No one or more factors identified here unequivocally led to easier integration process. Overall, participants generally described that they like certain things about Canada, but no one expressed liking everything about Canada. Perhaps where we may find similarities is what these women considered important to them. When asked to describe the positives of living in Canada and what they were grateful to have here, participants were significantly interested in career and educational opportunities.

Career and Educational Opportunities Define Nigerian Immigrant Women's Priorities

Almost all participants defined educational or career opportunities available in Canada for them and their children as positive impacts of immigration to Canada. They cited access to higher standards of education; socio-economic benefits; opportunities for career advancement and career change; equal opportunities for all free from gender-based discrimination and tribalism or nepotism for them and their children; experiencing new world views, interacting with new people, and learning to accept different people; and independence as things they were grateful to have in Canada. For most participants, educational and career opportunities and their role in increasing and affirming self-development, self-identity, self-value, and independence were of great importance. Some noted that the value of their work was evident because their pay was commensurate to how much they worked and was regular, their work was not invalidated because they are women, their efforts are acknowledged and rewarded with advancement, and this is not hindered by nepotism and tribalism. They were also grateful that such conditions foster productivity and independence and that the same are available for their children. For other women, access to quality education opened doors to career change and advancement and enabled them to expand their horizons. As Adanaya noted, education was a powerful tool that helped her

understand her experiences and realities, and this is especially important because these women were experiencing significant life changes.

> Oh my goodness what Canada gave to me was education. I tell everybody that cares, once I walk into (names university) I feel as if I'm at home. The other day I went to (mentions university) to do something, just breathing the air of that university, you know? I just loved it. I tell anyone that cares to hear that (mention university) is my safest place in Canada. you know? It gave me a voice, I loved the professors there, when I'm there I think I'm with the people who think like I think. So it's like the issues we discuss is like preaching to the choir because all of us know, right? The problem is now bringing it out to the world is about when we talk about First Nations issues… All of the issues we talk about. All of us in class we know it right? You know? So I think the greatest thing Canada gave me is education. In fact if I would have a fund one day to educate people… I have received so many funds and bursaries from (mentions university) and one day it would be my turn to pay back all that I have received. Because I think that the greatest gift Canada gave me was going back to school and being educated and education gave me a different lens to see life and yeah. And it is the education that has given me a voice and it is all of those things that have made me the woman I have become today. So I think that's it.

As Adanaya also noted, socio-economic benefits provided to her and others as students (like student loans and related benefits), as parents (like childcare benefits), and as individuals (like free healthcare) were also useful to them especially as they navigated new systems in Canada.

Participants also identify services that may be beneficial for Nigerian-immigrant women who are newcomers to Canada which also reflect these identified priorities and perhaps are services that they would have appreciated upon arrival in Canada. Perhaps because these women were interested in career and educational opportunities, they noted the importance of career counselling and employment services to enable newcomers to enter the job market more easily, realize gainful employment, and distill good advice from the noise. Participants also believed that career counselling will provide women the appropriate information on how to transfer skills and work experience gained in Nigeria as appropriate for various industries, which will also guide women as they change careers and attain further education. They were also interested in support groups for Nigerian-immigrant women and other like-minded people where these women could share their

experiences and problems and collectively find solutions. They agreed that such support groups, either government-initiated or privately organized, would also provide a safe place where women can work through the challenges they face in both their personal and work life. Feyi followed by noting that an orientation is needed for all Nigerian immigrants, both married and single, that will educate them on all facets of life in Canada and provide relevant information on how to navigate systems in Canada like how to find good accommodation as well as access various services and benefits. She continued that this orientation can be organized by Nigerian immigrant associations in Canada or by another neutral stakeholder. Rukevwe suggested that community members in religious and non-religious settings should provide support to newcomers to reduce the impacts of culture shock. And as has been identified before, Maimuna calls for both culturally sensitive marital and parental counselling because, as she stated, conflict is bound to happen, but if these culturally sensitive counselling services are available and accessible and the community can normalize seeking help, such conflict can be easily resolved. She further described that since the values of a family may be at odds with the values of the society in which the family find themselves, parental counselling can help women (who are often default nurturers) to navigate parenting consciously to raise children who respect the ethics, morals, and values of their family.

The findings presented through the themes discussed above respond well to the identified research questions and provide a clearer picture of the subject matter under investigation. The next chapter covers a discussion of the findings, recommendations, and questions for further research.

<center>**Chapter Five**</center>

<center>**Discussion and Recommendations**</center>

This chapter begins with a discussion of the findings of this study using the identified theoretical frameworks. It proposes relevant recommendations and identifies gaps and questions arising from the findings that may be grounds for further research and concludes the current study.

Discussion

Nine themes were derived from the interviews conducted with ten Nigerian immigrant women to Canada to assess the impacts of conflicting gender ideologies on domestic violence against immigrant women in Canada. These nine themes generally related to three broad categories. The first category considers the relationship between gender ideologies and domestic violence, and three themes derived from the data fall within this category. The second considers the specific experiences of Nigerian immigrant women to Canada regarding domestic violence, and four themes derived from the data fall within this category. The third considers the specific experiences of Nigerian-immigrant women to Canada in general, and two themes derived from the data fall under this category. These findings adequately respond to the research questions and the discussion that follows addresses relevant points. First, the themes relating to the relationship between gender ideologies and domestic violence are discussed separately. Second, the themes relating to Nigerian-immigrant women's specific experiences regarding domestic violence and general experiences are discussed collectively to highlight important interrelated points.

The Relationship between Gender Ideologies and Domestic Violence

The first theme suggests that traditional gender ideologies remain hegemonic in Nigeria, but things are changing. Participants unanimously agreed that the Nigerian society favours traditional gender ideologies that equate to the focus on the traditional definition of the family as

one comprising a husband, wife, and children. This family structure also favours a gender specific division of labour in which the husband is the provider, and the wife is the homemaker and caretaker. In Nigeria, power dynamics in the family are patriarchal and patrilineal, meaning that the husband is the head of the family and the ultimate authority, the wife supports the husband but remains under his authority, and the children are under the authority of the parents. This patriarchal power structure is also present in society where men are regarded with more respect, are more likely to own property, and hold political power, whereas women are expected to cater to the affairs of the domestic sphere and sometimes associated activities available in the public sphere. Depending on cultural and religious affiliations family structures may include extended family members and polygamous families (Labeodan, 2005).

While the Nigerian society mostly values such structures, the realities of an ever-increasing cost of living and no commensurate increase in wages have necessitated the influx of women into the public sphere. Additionally, the popularization of gender equality struggles has led to the increase of educated women and girls in Nigeria, although some argue that this increase is only occurring in the upper class, while educational levels of girls are declining in the lower classes and these disparities are more prominent by region (Enfield, 2019). Still, this means that women are no longer completely relegated to the home. Many Nigerian women, like most participants of this study, now engage in paid work. According to the International Labour Organization (2019), 49.3% of Nigerian women participate in the labour force and "45.5% of the Nigerian workforce is female" (World Bank Group, 2019, as cited by Enfield, 2019, p.5). Yet the power structure that is upheld by traditional ideologies, religious, and customary beliefs has not been removed from the public sphere and is still the rule of the day in many households in Nigeria.

Even when some conditions that typically create such power structures—like gendered division of labour-- are not in place or are reversed, many Nigerian families follow this pattern. This means that even when women work and financially support the household equally (or almost equally) they still consider their husbands the head of the family and the authority. Even when women make more money than their partners or financially support the household almost completely, this power structure is likely to still be in place. For instance, data from the 2018 Nigerian Demographic and Health Survey (2019) show that only 34% of married women participated in making decisions about their own health, visiting family and relatives, or making major household purchases, although 74% of the women were employed at some point in the 12-month period surveyed. The participants in this study speak to the accuracy of this report.

Similarly, studies have found that these patriarchal ideologies embedded within the Nigerian society have not only legitimized Nigerian women's subordination but also ignore or even facilitate acts of violence against women (Kalunta-Crumpton, 2013; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2015). The institutionalization of male dominance existing in cultural patriarchal structures in Africa, particularly in Nigeria, is perceived as normal or the Nigerian way and continues to shape socio-cultural, legal, and religious structures despite Nigeria's purported commitment to gender parity and the elimination of gender-based violence (Igwe, 2015; Kalunta-Crumpton, 2015; Labeodan, 2005; Okemgbo et. al, 2002; Oyediran & Isinugo-Abanihe, 2005; Sunmola et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, many participants also admit that more recently these situations are changing as the call for gender equality makes its way across Nigeria influencing women and men. As noted in Chapter Four, some participants described having egalitarian ideologies even before coming to Canada. Similarly, most participants were appreciative of the conditions in Canada and all embraced the opportunities for self-development, education, and career advancement showing

that their priorities lay beyond only performing traditional gender roles like caring for their husbands and children. Participants also held positive attitudes towards engaging in such activities. This means that they were not only engaged in such activities because of the higher cost of living in Canada. Generally, participants spoke positively of access to such opportunities free from gender-based discrimination, nepotism, and payment delay, which are obstacles common in Nigeria. This suggests that they were already interested in engaging with these activities and the self-fulfillment that comes with it and perhaps were only hindered by the limitations found in Nigeria.

One may argue that the conditions that are applicable in Canada present Nigerian-immigrant women with access to opportunities that enable self-determination and increase their chances of embracing egalitarian ideologies. Yet those who can afford to relocate to Canada are middle- to upper-class women and perhaps those who married into such statuses. These women are also likely to have accessed education and engaged in the workforce prior to relocating to Canada, and most participants signaled this during the interviews. This is relevant because women's access to quality education in Nigeria is heavily dependent on their class status (Enfield, 2019). This means that although many of the participants noted that they had changed after coming to Canada, they may have already had such ideas prior to coming to Canada where the conditions made it possible for them to fully realize this change. This may equally suggest that these women's social locations made it easier for them to accept egalitarian ideologies. Furthermore, as all the participants were permanent residents, they had access to more opportunities than, say, a person with refugee status or international students. Consequently, different results might have been found if women who had no prior education or work experience in Nigeria had been those examined for the study.

The second theme suggests that Nigerian-immigrant women's gender ideologies are shifting in Canada (but not all men are changing). When asked if they believed that their personal beliefs about gender relations in marriage had changed since coming to Canada, almost all participants said yes. Those who did not say yes described that they already had egalitarian ideologies before coming to Canada. Amongst those who changed, some also described having egalitarian gender ideologies before moving to Canada but noted that their beliefs were strengthened here. There was only one participant who felt differently because she believed that circumstances determined what family dynamics should look like and she did not view things differently in Canada, but since the realities of living in Canada are different then her behaviour also had to be different.

Overall, participants mostly favoured egalitarian ideologies. Some favoured what is coded in this study as modified gender ideologies, which usually referred to a combination of some egalitarian gender roles and some more traditional perceptions about gender. This may be a result of their simply holding on to aspects of their Nigerian culture. As Tolulope noted, creating a balance by maintaining some Nigerian values and adopting some Canadian values may be a good way to navigate a transition period. Participants often emphasized that they were speaking about their personal views, leaving room to understand why other women may choose differently. However, there was an understanding that adhering strictly to traditional gender roles was unrealistic in Canada because of the cost of living. Beyond this, questions regarding engaging in paid work were usually answered citing women's abilities and ambitions as comparable with men's. Therefore, most participants agreed that men and women should have the same opportunities at work, which will require equal participation at home. Some participants did not support equal participation in house chores. Ifeoma noted that ability was a better yardstick to

divide housework to achieve efficiency. It was clear that her interest was not to align with traditional roles but rather to reduce time spent on doing chores. Rukevwe stated that each partner should primarily perform their traditional duties and the other should support by covering any outstanding responsibilities. Maimuna held similar views, but noted that even if men are breadwinners they should still support around the house. Participants who identified with modified gender ideologies usually tried to balance religious views on the matter, usually conceding what was biblically acceptable. In general, only Rukevwe identified closely with modified ideologies, although she noted repeatedly that individual choice and decisions made by couples would really determine what was appropriate. Some women also felt this way about women's decisions to stay home or to work if they were mothers and were comfortable without a second income. Yet most identified that they would choose to work even if they did not need the money because work was tied to their self-identity, ambitions, and personal goals.

As earlier discussed, women's educational and class backgrounds may have influenced how women shifted towards or embraced egalitarian gender ideologies more. For instance, some women identified having lived in other western countries like the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US). Ifeoma described arriving in Canada from a vacation in the UK, signalling that she likely belonged to the middle or upper class. These participants who identified being exposed to a country with similarities to Canada (less patriarchal) all favoured egalitarian gender ideologies. Ifeoma described being married to a progressive partner who shared those views even before coming to Canada. Nafisat and Tolulope, along with their partners, clearly favoured egalitarian ideologies. This is likely because they had experiences of living in other western countries where the realities of life are different from Nigeria. These women often spoke about the usefulness of communication in making their partnership work. This is relevant because Ifeoma

rightly ascertains that typically power structures between Nigerian couples who follow traditional ideologies do not allow for effective communication. Yet for these women past experiences likely made them aware that communication was necessary and taught them how to discuss such challenging issues.

Although the study participants comprised six Christians and four Muslims, there was no significant consideration of religious arguments on the subject matter. Interestingly, only Rukevwe directly considers religion when negotiating her views of gender relations in marriage. She referred to the primacy of biblical instructions on gender ideologies. She described, when talking about women's capabilities to be leaders at work, that women are just as capable to be leaders because of the leadership skill used in managing (not heading) a home; yet she specifies that we are not to be compared with men biblically, which was a little contradictory. Again, when discussing what partner's need should be met first, she describes a more traditional view of what men's and women's needs are. She noted that men need respect and women need love. She cites the biblical instruction for men to love their wives and women to respect their husbands and notes that the compromise was for women to "mellow down" and respect their husbands who would love them in return so that both needs can be met concurrently. No other participant really considered religion. In fact, the only other time that the influence of religion on the subject matter arose was when Adanaya described that she was often chastised with religious arguments. This was used to pressure her to stay in her abusive marriage and submit to her ex-partner. However, she noted instead that while she is a Bible student she did not have the same understanding of submission. This is interesting because Nigerians are typically very religious and even participants discussed being involved with their community through churches and mosques. Nevertheless, for

the one participant who held religious views on marriage, there was a clear effort to balance religious beliefs and the influence of changing ideologies around her.

In the same vein, participants discussed how their integration with Canadian society influenced their changing gender ideologies. As discussed in Chapter Four, most participants were either currently or previously in school after coming to Canada. Some participants described their experiences of getting an education in Canada. Participants also identified that they were working, signifying that they had constant communication with colleagues at work and at school.

Adanaya described how getting an education and meeting likeminded people with similar experiences at school informed how her own personal views changed. She described gaining her voice by learning the vocabulary that helped her make sense of her experiences. She described how her relationship with classmates and other women in the school environment was a safe space to commune with others who either had similar experiences or were willing to listen. Her work also gave her better perspective of her own experiences. She noted that while she always had more egalitarian gender ideologies, she embraced them more in Canada. One may argue that these experiences from work and communication with likeminded women at school were major factors in this shift.

Feyi described an interaction with another woman who told her how she and her husband shared household responsibilities. Feyi noted that this interaction influenced her view on how partners should share housework rather than doing it alone. She specifically stated that she liked that multicultural Canada has given her a new worldview and enabled her to shed her own prejudices. She also noted that her gender ideologies are changed since coming to Canada and indicated that it was permanent. One may argue that such interactions may have influenced the change towards more egalitarian gender ideologies.

Maimuna described that what she enjoyed the most in Canada was her education. She particularly liked having discussions with classmates and getting to know their point of view on different subject matters.

Tolulope was very interested in getting into the fold of things in Canada. She described loving the province she decided to settle in and encouraged that new immigrants put in effort to get to know different parts of Canada and interact more with people outside the Nigerian immigrant community to improve their understanding of their new country. She described creating a balance between Nigerian values and Canadian values and overall favoured more egalitarian ideologies. It is not possible to directly link her willingness to learn the new ways of the land to her changing gender ideologies, but it is very likely that this willingness to learn would have made it easier for her to navigate new realities in Canada. It is also worth noting that she explained that she had lived in the USA prior to moving to Canada and perhaps she drew from past experiences to navigate new ones.

We may also note that on the other hand some participants noted that they were not particularly fond of their new environment. This usually included disliking the food, the cold, and the social life, although participants unanimously agreed that the career and educational opportunities were a positive change in Canada. As described in Chapter Four, no single identified factor translated into smooth integration process for the participants; likewise, it is unlikely that participants' gender ideologies changed because of any single interaction with their new environment.

Furthermore, two subthemes were also identified under this second theme, where one suggests that men do not want to lose control and the other describes how participants felt about their partners' reaction to the change in their ideologies. Overall, participants described that men

did not find it easy to give up the control that they typically had in Nigeria when they moved to Canada, and some felt uncomfortable, frustrated, and withdrawn. Participants' description of their partners' response to the change in gender ideologies varied. For some there was no difference because there was no change. For others, their partners were a little uncomfortable, liking some aspects of the change, but were not happy about losing control; others were unhappy at first but eventually understood the need for it or were fine with it. Overall, participants whose partners did not react negatively were those who held egalitarian gender ideologies before coming to Canada and those who had lived abroad with their partners before. On the other hand, those whose ideologies had changed in Canada reported varying outcomes with their partners such as frustration or disagreements.

The third theme suggests that while conflicting gender ideologies may increase violence, increased protections for women in Canada serve as a deterrent. Those participants whose ideologies changed in Canada reported having no violence at all, non-violent disagreements, violent outbursts, and physical violence. Some participants agreed that conflicting gender ideologies would lead to domestic violence, while some did not agree, citing that women's new protections against domestic violence will discourage men from being violent whether or not it was motivated by fear.

As discussed above, women's social location may have also influenced these outcomes. None of the participants who had previous experience of living in another western country before coming to Canada reported any violence. However, women who noted getting an education and joining the workforce in Canada and learning from their colleagues reported experiencing non-violent disagreements, violent outbursts, and physical violence. Perhaps what differs between them was their partners' reception of these changes, which was positive for the first set of women but

not so positive for the second set of women. Rukevwe, who identified more with modified ideologies, did not report any violence. It is possible that by respecting some traditional values she has been able to keep the peace. Chizoba and Uduak, who along with their partners held egalitarian ideologies, did not report any violence. Chizoba also noted that her husband is still based in Nigeria.

Nigerian Immigrant Women's Specific Experiences Relating to Domestic Violence

The remaining six themes identified related specifically to the Nigerian immigrant population. Whereas the presiding themes highlight intragroup differences based on individual social location, the following themes highlight peculiarities of the Nigerian immigrant population (particularly women) in Canada. These themes suggest that men are held accountable for their actions in Canada; that there is an absence of affordable paid help to manage responsibilities which creates stress; that help seeking attitudes are influenced by Nigerian socialization and culture; that there is a need for accessible and sensitive services; that career and educational opportunities define Nigerian-immigrant women's priorities.; and finally examines the factors that influence Nigerian- immigrant women's integration into Canadian society.

As some participants noted, protections against domestic violence often deter men from being violent. This also means that they can be held to account for any such actions. Participants described this as a positive aspect of being in Canada because it would reduce violence against women. Although most of them were not personally concerned about experiencing violence they appreciated the availability of these protections for those women who need them. Some participants described worries about these protections for women and the "power" it gives them which may cause rapid breakdown of the family, increased divorces, and by extension the breakdown of the society. Participants also described that women were not always the victims of

domestic violence but sometimes were the instigators, highlighting that they had a good understanding of the subject matter. Perhaps what is more important here is that the same participants believed that regardless of those concerns, the options women have are positive changes.

The availability of these protections for women and the understanding that the issue is taken more seriously here may improve the likelihood of seeking help. Yet as Adanaya explained, economic constraints and reliance on partner for residency status among other things, may create other barriers for women. Other participants also identified that Nigerian socialization still influences women's decisions to seek help or not to seek help. These factors are not unfamiliar as they have been identified in the literature on domestic violence against women--including local and immigrant women (Erez et al, 2009; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002). Although all the participants in this study are permanent residents, many Nigerian women in Canada are not permanent residents and that may limit their usage of the available legal protections and related services. Women who are being sponsored by their partners, for instance, may be reluctant to seek help, fearing that it may jeopardise their sponsorship process. This is relevant because many women are not aware of what provisions are available in such situations. Although participants were very interested in career opportunities and the more favourable conditions available in Canada, some still agreed that Nigerian-immigrant women are often faced with underemployment, uncertainty around accessing gainful employment, and translating foreign credentials to the Canadian market, especially earlier on after immigrating. The implication of such concerns is financial constraints. Consequently, partners will often have to rely on each other in terms of paying bills and childcare. This means that it may be very difficult for women to carry all these burdens on their own in the event of separation or divorce. Underemployment, financial constraints, and stress from managing

increased responsibilities without family support are immigration-related stressors which, as noted by Maimuna, increase the likelihood of conflict; yet these factors may equally influence women's decisions to seek help.

Similarly, all of these issues are coupled with the fact that many women still hold on to traditional values that encourage women to see marriage as an unescapable lifelong commitment. Participants also described the direct influence of other Nigerians, whether those in Nigeria or within larger Nigerian communities in Canada, who still hold patriarchal views. The message usually sent from all these sources is that divorce or separation is shameful, exposing a husbands' deeds to any third parties is wrong because such issues should be dealt with privately and moreover will lead to stigmatization, and women's submission to their husbands will deter violence. Overall, women's decisions are impacted by many factors besides the availability of services. For instance, where Adanaya did access services available to women, she described second-guessing her decisions and going back to her ex-partner due to external influence from her family back in Nigeria. This means that she did not have family support when she eventually left. This caused emotional turmoil and yet, ironically, the distance between her and her family also made it possible to leave. She noted that if she were still in Nigeria she would probably still be in the relationship even though she would have been unhappy.

Furthermore, even when women decide to seek help it may not be without consequences. As earlier noted, pursuing legal avenues may lead to the removal of abusive partners but often women's situations are complicated because they have more responsibilities on them. Although there may be some relief programs available to help women, accessibility becomes another issue. While one major factor identified in the literature as a barrier to women seeking help is language barrier, in this population language barrier does not pose an issue because Nigerian-immigrant

women are English speakers. For instance, all participants in this study spoke English and all interviews were conducted in English. Yet what may pose a barrier to these women's access is knowledge of such services. Most participants in the study knew that there are services available to support women experiencing violence, but most did not know any specific services. Chizoba speaks to this fact when she notes that she herself was unaware of the relevant services and further explained that when women do not know the right people who can point them in the right direction or if they speak to the wrong people (i.e., others who do not know about the available services either) they are less likely to seek help. This was a reality for Adanaya, who explained that she had been informed of services by a neighbour whom she didn't know and only had contact with because she had no one else to turn to. Perhaps if she had never spoken to that neighbour she would not have learned about rent assistance which she later accessed. Again, the issue of residency status comes up here, as Adanaya describes that she was only able to access these services because she is a permanent resident.

Other concerns about services include the cultural sensitivity of the available services. When the participants described services they would like to see, they noted the usefulness of marital and parental counselling services, orientation for newcomers to inform them on the realities of life in Canada, financial empowerment, support groups for emotional support and counselling, safe housing, reliable transportation services, and career counseling. What is peculiar here is that participants agreed that these services need to be culturally sensitive. For instance, the marital counselling and arguably other forms of counselling need to be conducted by persons with knowledge of the Nigerian culture and of the Christian and Muslim faiths. Such counselling, preferably from someone with similar background, must consider how religious beliefs are not compromised by seeking help. Counselling and support group sessions must maintain the utmost

level of privacy and consider new measures that create confidence in Nigerian-immigrant women clients that their privacy and confidentiality are maintained. Financial empowerment may be provided through relief programs but more importantly by improving women's access to the Canadian workforce. This would include free and continuous career counseling that explains how to transfer foreign credentials and experience in various industries and what educational programs may efficiently support such transition into the Canadian workforce. Free workshops facilitated for and by Nigerian-immigrant women may also provide expert insights as to how to overcome challenges within various industries especially those that are particularly relevant to Nigerians (i.e., based on what we are accustomed to in the Nigerian workforce). As identified earlier, since these women's priorities are focused on career and educational opportunities, this may prove very useful for them.

Similarly, sessions or orientation for new immigrants should be provided by Nigerian organizations or ethno-specific organizations to address the signs and stressors that instigate violence, provide relevant information on culturally sensitive services and how to access such services, and perhaps more importantly drive discussion on why it is normal and advisable to seek help for marital conflict early. This will provide a safe space for these issues to be aired from both sides and to facilitate proper and useful communication skills that can facilitate internal conflict resolution or serve as preventive counselling. Such sessions may also serve as a space for newcomers to find support and reduce isolation. This may also create avenues for educating women on basic activities like getting a drivers' licence, finding affordable cars, making good investments on home purchases or rentals, and more.

Services for women who have already experienced violence need also to be culturally sensitive. Going on the assumption that information sessions have provided women with relevant

resources for such cases, when services are accessed providers need to be cognisant of the need for privacy and confidentiality. For instance, can the women access services under pseudonyms; how are cases involving women with children handled in respect to shelter access; and are there faith-based counselling services that provide emotional support to relieve possible guilt associated with leaving such situations?

Similarly, since women have also identified the importance of learning about their new home, new cultures and peoples, support groups that welcome various immigrant groups where common problems and solutions can be shared may also be favourable to women. The constraints that impede women's integration into Canadian society such as racism and microaggressions may be overcome by sharing information about cultural identity and values within and outside such groups. Women may also be able to create community from such avenues and form stronger connections to diverse populations in Canada.

Women's socio-economic statuses have already been examined earlier when considering how women's gender ideologies may be shifting or changing in Canada. Sources claim that most Nigerians who move to Canada are from the middle class (Egbejule, 2020; Kazeem, 2020). While it was determined that most women who can afford to migrate to Canada likely have some class advantage, it is important to note that this may not always be the case. For instance, women who marry into wealth and later move to Canada may not have been educated in Nigeria due to their more modest upbringings; and, as noted by some participants, many Nigerian women are socialized into patriarchal beliefs. This is perhaps an overgeneralization, but such beliefs are held more widely among non-educated women. For instance, Adanaya spoke about women who married into wealthier homes and are trained by their husbands, who may be exposed to problems if they become well-to-do, especially if more so than their husbands. Similarly, women fleeing the

violence that has ravaged certain parts of Nigeria for almost a decade may be admitted into Canada under humanitarian programs which may have different financial implications. Yet asylum-seeking women, especially those waiting for judgment on their cases, may face barriers to getting jobs and accessing protections for women, especially if they are uninformed about their rights and may face even more vulnerability. This is relevant because records show that women from Nigeria seeking asylum are usually fleeing domestic violence (Carmen & Elash, 2018).

Beyond socio-economic class, Nigeria's ethnic and religious diversity creates another point at which women's experiences may differ. Amongst hundreds of ethnic groups each with their own language, customs and beliefs, perceptions about marriage may differ even if only slightly. Beliefs about how one should relate with one's husband and responsibilities may be influenced by personal convictions and customs peculiar to different groups. Religious affiliation also plays into this. For instance, while divorce is an undesirable option, it is not considered a sin within the Muslim faith (Jawad, 1998) whereas Christians typically consider divorce as sin (Robertson,1984). Beyond this, many Nigerian women who have lived and/or been schooled abroad (particularly in western countries); who lived in larger Nigerian cities; who have advanced to tertiary education; and are engaged in the workforce may have been exposed to the topic of gender equality and may even have more egalitarian views as was seen in this study. All these factors may influence women's gender ideologies as well as women's decisions to seek help and leave abusive situations.

Various factors may influence how one adapts to a new country. In the case of Nigerian immigrants to Canada, some advantages and disadvantages are present. For instance, both countries have English as an official language, which makes Canadian adaptation more flexible. Yet major differences also exist. For instance, where Nigeria is a very tropical country, Canada is ranked one of the coldest countries in the world. Participants in this study described some of their

struggles with settling into Canada such as extreme cold, cultural differences around food, social life, and more grim realities like racism and microaggressions. Yet some others who were fortunate to have good social support from family members, enjoyed the improved social structures like the educational system and the work environment, and loved their new environment also described more positive experiences. Some were able to build connections with few Nigerian friends whereas others sought to be part of larger communities and were able to find a sense of support within such settings. Most described that they were pleased with some differences in Canada and displeased with others. Whatever their experiences settling into Canada, several participants also discussed how they were influenced by their new environment either through the educational system, through colleagues at school, or through colleagues at work. These influences are likely to have shaped how women's perception and beliefs about gender and appropriate gender roles have changed or shifted from what they held to be true in Nigeria.

Relevance of Selected Theories

Integration theory and intersectionality are useful for understanding the realities of Nigerian-immigrant women in Canada as a whole and how their gender ideologies may be changing or shifting in Canada. Intersectionality, which prioritizes considering multiple axes of analysis and the influence of women social locations, perhaps explains why most participants held egalitarian views and why it was easy for them to adopt those views in Canada. Their social class, educational background, and religious affiliations, as discussed earlier, proved to be most influential to participants' reception of egalitarian ideologies in Canada. Integration theory is significant where, as discussed earlier, women's interactions with external influences in Canada like education, colleagues, and protections for women available in Canada informed women's changing ideologies.

African Motherism theory is relevant because some participants considered their roles as mothers to be important and held on to cultural identities of motherhood. Some participants also described their need to nurture their children according to family and traditional values. Additionally, most participants prioritized women's choices in performing strictly traditional duties, although some highlighted the necessity of engaging in paid work due to new realities in Canada and to promote women's empowerment. There are abundant clues in the data that show that these women are educated in general but also have knowledge on the topics of gender equality and women's experiences of domestic violence. Similarly, Nigerian women, both at home and abroad, are exercising their agency in efforts to end gender inequality in Nigeria. The participants all show interest in carrying men along in this change and educating them to embrace gender equality as well. This represents how these women still prioritize community and collaboration for social transformation, which is very important to African feminist discourse. As this study used a nonprobability purposive snowballing technique, one may wonder if participants only represent one group of Nigerian women (middle-class and educated) or if only such women were interested in participating in the study?

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and participant contributions the following recommendations may be useful for service provisions to Nigerian immigrant communities.

1. *Culturally sensitive services*: participants outlined the necessity of culturally sensitive services and what these services would look like. They advocated for faith-conscious marital and parenting counselling services; increased privacy and confidentiality in support groups and counselling sessions directed at women experiencing domestic violence; encouraging members of the Nigerian community (who understand the socio-cultural influences of Nigerian identity on marital issues)

to lead these sessions through training and empowerment; and provision of safe shelters or affordable housing for women in crisis and their children. One participant also described online support groups where women can receive assistance or services from counsellors, lawyers, and other service providers who can offer free or subsidized services for women.

2. *Driving relevant conversations within various Nigerian ethno-specific organizations*: one participant described the importance of creating a safe space for men and women to discuss the impacts of changing realities in Canada and how to amicably resolve tensions. It is also important to use these forums to normalize seeking external help; encourage effective communications skills as well as providing tips and tools for effective internal conflict resolution. These can be ongoing sessions that consider developing issues and how to solve them. This service is very important because such conversations can serve as preventative measures.

3. *Orientation to Canada*: participants echoed the need for formal orientation of both men and women whether single or married to introduce them to the way of life in Canada through subjects ranging from laws, duties, nature of social and government structures, to common etiquette.

4. *Ongoing career workshops*: are needed to provide support for Nigerian women trying to navigate the Canadian workforce. Having identified that Nigerian-immigrant women to Canada are very interested in the career and educational opportunities available to women, it is necessary to provide free and ongoing career workshops that educate Nigerian women on how to transfer foreign credential and work experience into various industries and what educational programs may best support the transition. These workshops may also serve as major form of financial empowerment for women by aiding their access to well-paying jobs in desired industries. These sessions may also serve as a space to consider labour relations and rights that are most relevant to Nigerian-

immigrant women. These workshops may be sponsored by Nigerian associations in various provinces and territories or other relevant stakeholders.

5. *Information sessions on rights of Canadian citizens, permanent residents, and refugees as they change to inform women on their rights especially for women with unstable residence statuses.* These information sessions should also describe the nature of protections available for women experiencing domestic violence and other forms of discrimination against women and how women can access those services especially relevant to women's residence statuses.

6. *Multicultural support groups* are also useful for Nigerian-immigrant women to share experiences and solutions with other immigrant (and non-immigrant) groups. Participants described their interest in learning about new cultures and peoples from different parts of the world and new worldviews. This can promote understanding within groups and reduce racism and intolerance amongst groups.

7. *Women's empowerment through relief programs* is also important in cases where women are unemployed or underemployed to provide options to leave abusive situations and access support to manage increased responsibilities and expenses brought on by broken partnerships.

8. *Community support through community-led welcome programs and sessions for newcomers to reduce culture shock and isolation*. These programs may be spaces to create personal connections with community members that provide relevant information on accessing good housing and other community-based resources.

9. *Nigerian embassies and consulates in Canada* may also serve the Nigerian community in Canada by advocating for immigrants at the federal level for issues such as acknowledging foreign (Nigerian) credentials as valid within the Canadian job market. Nigerian embassies and consulates

may also assist, financially and otherwise, Nigerian community organizations across Canada in achieving community-based initiatives.

Questions for further research

While the topic under investigation was useful for understanding the relationship between changing gender ideologies and domestic violence, it has only scratched the surface. It is necessary to continue interrogating the issue within Nigerian immigrant populations and afterwards. Some questions arising out of these study for further research are as follows.

1. Will conducting the same study with newcomers (under one year) and comparing to those who have lived in Canada for three years and above show a better view of how gender ideologies are changing in Canada?

2. Will conducting the same study with men explore how men's gender ideologies are changing?

3. Do education and socio-economic status alone influence Nigerian-immigrant women's gender ideologies?

4. If women maintained traditional gender ideologies in Canada, would domestic violence be reduced or non-existent?

5. Do women exploit the protective conditions available in Canada at the expense of their partners?

6. Is there any difference between Nigerian-immigrant women living in smaller cities with smaller Nigerian-immigrant communities or larger cities with larger Nigerian-immigrant communities in terms of help-seeking attitudes?

7. Will conducting the same study with women seeking asylum produce the same findings?

8. Will a similar study into immigrants from another West African country produce the same findings?

Conclusion

This study assessed the impacts of conflicting gender ideologies on domestic violence with focus on Nigerian-immigrant women in Canada. Using in-depth interviews with 10 Nigerian-Canadian women, the study found that changing and shifting gender ideologies create new difficulties for couples and may intensify experiences of violence especially if they were already present before coming to Canada. As discussed earlier, these findings may not be generalizable to all Nigerian immigrant women in Canada yet provide insights that may be useful for the Nigerian-immigrant population, and potentially other groups, in Canada.

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RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD

MEMORANDUM

To:	Esther Ibu
CC:	Jacqueline Holler
From:	Chelsea Pelletier, Vice-Chair
	Research Ethics Board
Date:	September 9, 2020
Re:	**E2020.0311.016.00(a)**
	Assessing the Impacts of Conflicting Gender Ideologies on Domestic Violence: A Case Study of Nigerian-immigrant Women in Canada

Thank you for submitting amendments to the above-noted proposal to the Research Ethics Board (REB).

The amendments have been approved until the date as provided in the original protocol approval for this project (i.e. April 30, 2021). Continuation beyond that date will require further review and renewal of REB approval. Any further changes or amendments to the protocol or consent form must be approved by the REB.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, no *in-person* interactions with participants are permitted.

Please refer to the Chair Bulletins found on the webpage at:
https://www.unbc.ca/research/research-ethics-safety-human-participants for further details. If questions remain, please do not hesitate to contact Isobel Hartley, Research Ethics Officer at Isobel.hartley@unbc.ca or reb@unbc.ca.

Good luck with continuation of your research.

Sincerely,

Dr. Chelsea Pelletier,

Vice-Chair, Research Ethics Board

3333 University Way, Prince George, BC, V2N 4Z9, Telephone (250) 960-6735

Appendix B

Dear Ma,

Request for assistance with participant recruitment

My name is Esther Ibu and I am a candidate of the Masters of Gender Studies Program at the University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George, BC. With the approval of the Research Ethics Board and as a final requirement for a Master of Arts in Gender Studies, I am undertaking a research study on the impacts of conflicting gender ideologies on domestic violence. My research focuses on investigating the experiences of Nigerian-immigrant women in Canada. As an international student from Nigeria, I am genuinely interested in understanding how Nigerian immigrants adapt to their new home (Canada) and would love to further the study into our growing community. You are receiving this email because of your status as a Nigerian-Canadian woman who has substantial connections with other Nigerian-Canadian women who may be interested in participating in my research project.

You may be of assistance by sending the attached poster to any contacts who may be interested in participating, advising them to contact me directly if they wish to participate or need further information. To ensure participant confidentiality, please ensure that your involvement in recruitment is limited to sending out the poster.

I am available to be contacted at ibu@unbc.ca or (+1)778-281-2096.

Thank you for your assistance.

Best regards,

Esther Ibu

Appendix C

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH

Topic: Assessing the Impacts of Conflicting Gender Ideologies on Domestic Violence

We are looking for Nigerian-immigrant women volunteers to take part in a study on changing gender ideologies among Nigerian immigrant women in Canada and resulting impacts in home life.
You are eligible to participate if:

a) *You are a first-generation Nigerian immigrant woman living in Canada*
b) *You are a naturalized citizen, a permanent resident of Canada or have refugee status and have been in Canada for at least three years*
c) *You are currently married/in a common-law partnership or you were previously married/in a common-law partnership.*
d) *You are at least 21 years of age.*

As a participant in this study, you will be asked to partake in an interview. Your participation is **entirely voluntary** and would take up approximately 60-90 minutes of your time.

To learn more about this study, or to participate in this study,

please contact:

Principal Investigator: **Supervisor:**

Esther Ibu   **Dr Jacqueline Holler**

ibu@unbc.ca   **holler@unbc.ca**

This study has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Board of UNBC.

Information and consent for Interview procedure

Project Title: Assessing the Impacts of Conflicting Gender Ideologies on Domestic Violence:

A Case Study of Nigerian-Immigrant Women in Canada

Who is conducting this study?

Student Researcher

Esther Ibu

Masters of Gender Studies

University of Northern British Columbia

Prince George, BC V2N 4Z9

ibu@unbc.ca

778-281-2096

Project Supervisor

Dr. Jacqueline Holler. Chair, Gender Studies

University of Northern British Columbia

Prince George, BC V2N 4Z9

Jacqueline.Holler@unbc.ca

Why have I been selected for this interview?

You have been selected to be interviewed to investigate the issue of domestic violence against Nigerian-immigrant women in Canada. The interview will provide relevant information on the subject matter. This interview will provide a clearer and full picture of the issue. After the interview, you may choose to withdraw your information on or before 31st of October 2020. All information collected by the time you decide to withdraw will be safely destroyed**, unless you**

consent to such information being retained and analyzed. You do not have to provide a reason before withdrawing.

How will the interviews be conducted?

You may decide to have the interview by Zoom or by phone call. We advice that you choose a safe and private location to make this phone or Zoom call and a suitable time to complete the interview. This interview may take about 60-90 minutes to be completed. **Please Note**: if you agree to participate in the interview you will be recorded on audio to enable us to revisit data when necessary. These recordings will be handled appropriately (more on this below).

During the interview, you will be asked questions about the subject matter and your responses will be recorded and a transcript of this data will be created. The transcript of the data will be provided to you within two weeks of the interview to make sure that the data is reliable and your opinions are properly represented. To make sure that your privacy and safety is protected the data will be sent to your email as a password protected PDF document. This password will be provided during the interview. It will be simple and easy to remember. We advice that you do not share this password with anyone. This password will give access to the transcript of the data which you can review. If you wish for any changes to be made you can email these suggestions to the student researcher.

How will your privacy be maintained?

If you decide to participate in the interview, some information, such as name and contact information, may be required to set-up an interview date and location. However, **no real names** will be used in the public document. A voice recorder will be used to collect audio records. A back-up of the audio recordings will be saved on the password protected computer. The researcher's notes on the information you share with us will be typed and stored on a password

protected computer. All paper copies (of the notes) and the audio recorder will also be kept in a locked box in a secure room..This information can only be accessed by the student researcher and her project supervisor. The information that you share in the interview will be saved until the final product is published. This may take approximately 1 year. After this time, all audio recordings will be destroyed by deleting audio files from the recorder, shredding all paper copies and deleting digital copies from the computer. All other personal information of participants will be deleted at this time.

Please Note: At any point in the study, if you reveal that there has been an incident that involves abuse and/or neglect of a child or of yourself (or that there is a risk of such occurring) please be advised that the researcher may, by law, be required to report this information to the appropriate authorities.

Is there any way that participating in this study could harm you?

Some of the questions asked during the interview may seem sensitive or personal. You do not have to answer any question if you do not want to. You may also consider erasing phone or Zoom call logs after the interview.

If you need counselling and/or other services you may contact women's shelter around you or any of the following organizations.

Please find a list of support hotlines for the various provinces and territories at this link

http://endingviolencecanada.org/getting-help/.

If you are in immediate danger, Call 911
Or Call

Northern BC Crisis Line 1-888-562-1214 (British Columbia)

Victim Link BC- 1-800-563-0808 (British Columbia)

Dragonfly Counselling and Support Centre (Bonnyville) - 780 812 3174 (Alberta)

Wellspring Family Resource and Crisis Centre – 1 800 467 4049 (Alberta)

Interval House of Hamilton (Crisis line) - 905.387.8881(Ontario)

Immigrant Women Services Ottawa- 613-729-3145 (Ontario)

Battlefords Victim Services - (306) 446-1720 (Saskatchewan)

 Piwapan Women's Centre Crisis Line 1-306-425-4090 (Saskatchewan)

Toll-Free Province Wide Domestic Abuse Crisis Line (24 hours) - 1-877-977-0007 (Manitoba)

Interlake Women's Resource Centre - 1 204-642-8264 (Manitoba)

SOS violence Conjugale -1-800-363-9010 (Quebec)

Le Havres de Femmes – 418- 247-7622 (Quebec)

Women's Network - 902-368-5040 (Prince Edward Island)

East Prince Family Prevention Services 902-436-0517 (Prince Edward Island)

Naomi Society for Victims of Family Violence – (902) 863-3807 (Nova Scotia)

Autumn House Crisis Line - 902-667-1200 (Nova Scotia)

Women in Transition House Crisis Line - (506) 459-2300 (New Brunswick)

L'Escale MadaVic -506 739-6265 – (New Brunswick)

Newfoundland and Labrador sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre - 1-800-726-2743 (Newfoundland and Labrador).

Cara Transition House - 1-877-800-2272 (Newfoundland and Labrador)

As an immigrant woman in Canada you have certain rights and protections. Please visit this link to learn more about these protections.

http://onlinetraining.learningtoendabuse.ca/sites/default/files/lessons/CLEO%20Immigrant%20and%20Refugee%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf

<u>How will I get the study results?</u>

The results of this study will be published in a graduate thesis. A summary of the findings will also be provided. The final product and a summary of the findings will be made available through a customized link. There are three options through which you may access it. You can:

- ☐ Provide a safe and private email address into which the link and final product will be mailed electronically.

- ☐ Seek updates from the website "unbcgenderrelationsstudy2020.wordpress.com"

- ☐ Access the final product through the University of Northern British Columbia.

Who can I contact for more information?

If you have any questions about what we are asking of you, please contact the student researcher, Esther Ibu at ibu@unbc.ca or 778-281-2096. or the Project Supervisor, Dr. Jacqueline Holler at Jacqueline.Holler@unbc.ca or 250-960-6343. If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the UNBC Office of Research at 250 960 6735 or by e-mail at reb@unbc.ca.

I have read the information provided above and consent to participate in this study

_____   _____

Participant Name   Signature & Date

Appendix E

Interview Guide

Interview questions may be adjusted to respond to meaningful themes arising from the participants' response.

1) Do you remember the day before your arrival in Canada or your first week in Canada? What was it like?

2) What did you find most different here in Canada? (For instance, the weather, the food, the work environment, the political climate) What do you like best?

3) Do you have a Nigerian community where you live? What is it like?

4) When you think about marriage and gender relations (how men and women interact in society) would you say there is any difference between Canada and Nigeria? Or is it the same?

5) On the topic of gender relations, I would like your opinion on the following statements:

   a. Women with children should not work outside the home if they do not have to financially.

   b. Women ought to have the same chances as men to be leaders at work.

   c. Both the husband's and wife's earnings should be controlled by the husband.

   d. When both husband-and-wife work outside the home, housework should be equally shared.

   e. A marriage will be more successful if the husband's needs are considered first.

6) Would you say you like any difference you have noticed (How has it affected you)? Or if it is the same is that good or bad?

7) Have your beliefs about gender relations in marriage or relationships in general changed since you came to Canada?

8) Do you believe Nigerian men are changing as well or reacting well to such changes?

9) Do you think it these changes are related to an increase in domestic violence in marriages?

10) Do you believe that marriages or relationships, particularly those of Nigerian women in Canada, suffer because of these differences?

11) Would you say your partner or ex-partner was unhappy with a possible change in your behavior or thinking?

12) Did (has) this cause(d) any strain in your marriage or relationship such as violent outbursts and increased marital conflict?

13) Did (do) you ever feel handling this matter quietly was (is) important because of your Nigerian identity?

14) Did you seek help? What services were helpful?

15) How do you think we can achieve marital harmony for Nigerian-immigrant women in Canada?

16) What services would you like to see available for Nigerian women who are newcomers to Canada?

17) What is one thing that moving to Canada gave you that you are most grateful for?

Appendix F

Sex Role Egalitarianism scale (SRES- KK)

1. Women should have as much right as men to go to a bar alone.

2. Clubs for students in nursing should admit only women.

3. Industrial training schools ought to admit more qualified women.

4. Women ought to have the same chances as men to be leaders at work.

5. Keeping track of a child's activities should be mostly the mother's task.

6. Things work out best in a marriage if the husband stays away from housekeeping tasks.

7. Both the husband's and wife's earnings should be controlled by the husband.

8. A woman should not be the president/prime minister of a country.

9. Women should feel as free to "drop in" on a male friend as vice versa.

10. Males should be given first choice to take courses that train people as school principals.

11. When both husband and wife work outside the home, housework should be equally shared.

12. Women can handle job pressure as well as men can.

13. Male managers are more valuable to a business than female managers.

14. A woman should have as much right to ask a man for a date as a man has to ask a woman for a date.

15. The father, rather than the mother, should give teenage children permission to use the family car.

16. Sons and daughters ought to have an equal chance for higher education.

17. A marriage will be more successful if the husband's needs are considered first.

18. Fathers are better able than mothers to decide the amount of a child's allowance.

19. The mother should be in charge of getting children to after-school activities.

20. A person should be more polite to a woman than a man.

21. Women should feel as free as men to express their honest opinion.

22. Fathers are not as able to care for their sick children as mothers are.

23. An applicant's sex should be important in job screening.

24. Wives are better able than husbands to send thank you notes for gifts.

25. Choice of college is not as important for women as for men.

Appendix G

10-Item Gender Role Belief Scale

1. It is disrespectful to swear in the presence of a lady.

2. The initiative in courtship should usually come from the man.

3. Women should have as much sexual freedom as men.

4. Women with children should not work outside the home if they don't have to financially.

5. The husband should be regarded as the legal representative of the family group in all matters of law.

6. Except perhaps in very special circumstances, a man should never allow a woman to pay the taxi, buy the tickets, or pay the check.

7. Men should continue to show courtesies to women such as holding open the door or helping them on with their coats.

8. It is ridiculous for a woman to run a train and a man to sew clothes.

9. Women should be concerned with their duties of childbearing and housetending, rather than with the desires for professional and business careers.

10. Swearing and obscenity is more repulsive in the speech of a woman than a man.