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EDUCATORS' DESCRIPTIONS OF ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR RECENT SUB-SAHARAN IMMIGRANTS.

by

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School of Public Service and Education

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Capella University

Month Year [of final school approval]

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between student engagement and outcome achievement for students is well documented in the higher education literature for students in the United States (U.S.) (Shappie & Debb, 2019). In the recent past, student engagement has gained significant attraction for immigrant students from sub-Saharan Africa in K-12 schools. Additionally, findings suggested that sub-Saharan immigrants are presented narrowly in terms of the frameworks and research designs used to examine their educational experiences, indicating a larger question of a single account concerning this group (Mwangi & English, 2017). The purpose of the study was to examine and comprehend instructional approaches among teachers who taught high school sub-Saharan immigrants in a coastal state located in the northeast region of the United States.

Racial and ethnic backgrounds associated with African immigrant students in the United States are considered a mainstream culture and remains overlooked and disregarded in immigrant scholarly literature. Recent studies have shown that sub-Saharan African students usually experience challenges when navigating through different and unfamiliar public-school systems in the United States (Ndemanu & Jordan, 2018). Yet, not enough research exits about their true academic performance and achievement in U.S. k-12 schools.

Many studies have explored factors that facilitate acculturation strategies and academic success of sub-Saharan African immigrant youth in urban schools. For instance, Kumi-Yeboah, et al.; (2019) investigated culturally responsive pedagogy for African immigrant students in the United States and the findings indicated that students from sub–Saharan Africa in U.S. schools continued to suffer from discontinuity in academic culture, language barriers as well as power relations associated with challenges encountered when undertaking education system in an unfamiliar country.

This study focused on Sub-Saharan African students; however, in this study, the students are referred to as recent African immigrant students. McHugh and Sugarman (2015) stated that African immigrant students are considered the first- and second-generation students whose families immigrated into the United States either to extricate themselves from political turmoil or pursue higher education studies. According to the United States Census Bureau (2014), African immigrants were considered the most educated immigrant group; however, recent sub-Saharan African students in the United States continued to experience incoherence in academic culture and communication.

# Background of the Study

Sub-Saharan students from African received an exceptional educational experience. However, recent research examined a different trend when these students received an education in the United States. The background of the study was based on the previous literature that supports the research questions. What are the experiences of teachers who have been successful in engaging recent Sub-Saharan African immigrants in learning? What instructional and learning activities do instructors design to engage recent sub-Saharan African immigrants in the learning content? What obstacles do teachers report when implementing teaching and learning strategies focused on student engagement?

Many schools struggled to address the different needs of individual students and minority language subgroups because English language proficiency of immigrant students varies with country of origin and language spoken at home (Nguyen & Kebede, 2017). Several studies highlighted the need for educational policymakers, administrators, and teachers who focused on African-immigrant learners by considering students distinctiveness, educational experiences, and educational needs (McHugh, Sugarman 2015; Roubeni et al., 2015). Racial and ethnic pattern formations, cultural adaptations, sociocultural modification, and language barriers affected recent sub-Saharan African students in the United States (Santoro Kennedy, 2016; Castillo, Donoso & Ortega, 2020).

 Immigrant students, especially those who had gone through traumas and hardships during and after their migration to the United States, often experienced a great deal of stress in adapting to a new culture (Adelman & Taylor, 2015). The most noticeable tendency was the uniqueness of recent African immigrants' ethnic and social backgrounds in the model of academic instructions and delivery. For instance, studies reported that the sub-Saharan students had experienced a dissimilar education system compared to the educational system administered in the United States. Njoh, et al. (2017) referred to the Saharan African education as a triple heritage or a bi-product of African indigenous tradition, European and Arab institutions. The lack of exposure to accurate and balanced information about Africa had often led to overgeneralizations, stereotypes, and misinformation about the continent and its people. In the absence of authentic knowledge about Africa, educators became influenced by the societal curriculum. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2014), the flow of immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa has led to an increase in the number of immigrants from countries like Nigeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Egypt. The Bureau projects that by 2060, 16.5% of the Black population will be immigrants. Therefore, with the continued growth in the migration of sub-Saharan African immigrants feeding U.S. urban schools with distinct learners, it had become urgent to explore the factors that account for this population's academic engagement. In a study that was conducted to examine the importance of educational structure when engaging students, Aydin et al., (2017), indicated that schools must change the structures for students’ engagement in order to achieve the needs among different students. In addition, Aydin et al., (2017) highlighted that modern classroom were increasingly multicultural, requiring educators to address the challenges of all-inclusive education.

# Need for the Study

The study is pertinent to educational research because there is gap in motivation and student engagement with sub-Saharan students. The problem addressed in this study was the perspective among educators concerning the academic engagement strategies for sub-Saharan immigrant students that recently arrived in the United States. Several research studies provided in-depth discussions and evaluations of immigrant adaptations based on cultural adjustments, sociocultural modification, and fights related to ethnic and racial discrimination (Ndemanu, 2018; McHugh & Sugarman, 2015). Also, research showed that student engagement had significantly impacted the outcome of many students from sub-Saharan Africa. Increased diversity among students from sub-Saharan Africa demonstrated that educators required knowledge and skills to design and modify learning strategies. Student diversity included cultural and linguistic multiplicity for those students that experienced a language barrier.

New findings of a study of black immigrants revealed that the literature was incomplete (Mwangi & English 2017). Therefore, the study found, the inadequate knowledge could lead to the reification of implicit bias within educational practices because it allowed the field to misrepresent sub-Saharan African students and their performance. The study on student engagement aimed at supplementing the limited information that had previously constrained educators’ understanding of their students, because what teachers believe about their students can impact student performance (Mwangi & English 2017).

The need for the study was to investigate learning experiences, abilities, and talents among the sub-group. Language and societal values were considered critical assets that promoted learning experiences among sub-Saharan African students. Recent immigrants were likely to struggle with adjustment challenges compounded with the curriculum that may not be modified to accommodate sub-Saharan African students with varying requirements (Dryden-Peterson 2015). Harbour et al., (2014) found that discrimination, language barrier, and cultural differences were among the challenges immigrant students from sub -Saharan Africa encountered while living in the United States. Sub-Saharan African students in the United States experienced challenges such as adapting to cultural aspects and language barriers when enrolling from one school to the other within the same country (Adair, 2015). In a study by Adair (2015), academic engagement among recent sub-Saharan African students significantly affected their academic success.

# Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the research study was to examine educators’ experiences with academic engagement strategies for the recent sub-Saharan immigrant students in K-12 schools in the United States. The research study examined how instructional approaches as demonstrated by educators had been successful in engaging recent sub-Saharan immigrants in an urban high school located in the Northeast of United States. Several studies investigating the academic engagement strategies had shown that immigrant students from sub-Saharan Africa had experienced challenges in educational institutions due to limited knowledge concerning public-school population in the United States (Saunders et al. 2017). Immigrant students from sub-Saharan African continued to suffer discontinuity in the academic culture, language barriers as well as power relations as a result of undertaking an unfamiliar system of education in the United States. One of the following research questions that guided the study was:

What instructional and learning activities do instructors design to engage recent sub-Saharan African immigrants in the learning content?

# Significance of the Study

Studies including research by Watson and Knight (2017), Kumi-Yeboah et al.; (2019), examined the context of educational conversations surrounding immigrant students. African-born immigrant youth mostly went unnoticed by educators, which added to their inconspicuousness. Kumi-Yeboa et al. (2019) showed that sub-Saharan immigrants may be seen as African Americans/Blacks in the U.S. mainstream culture and remained unobserved in the U.S. educational system due to their racial and ethnic backgrounds. Recent sub-Saharan immigrants were largely ignored in the immigrant scholarly literature (Rasmussen, 2015). The current African immigrant population is very diverse in its educational, economic, and English proficiency profile. African immigrant students brought into their classrooms a plethora of different experiences that were hitherto valued in their home countries until their immigration into the host country (Ndemanu, 2018). Sub-Saharan African immigrants came for a variety of reasons and at various times of the year. Many were refugees and large numbers were beneficiaries of the Diversity Visa Program aimed at boosting immigration from underrepresented nations. According to the U.S. Census Bureau 2004, many sub-Saharan African students originated from five countries: Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Ethiopia, and South Africa. Given the rapid increase of the population, Kolawole (2017) argued, there was an increasing need for visibility of the African immigrant population.

As public education increased the number of schools in the 20th century, students and conceptions of educational needs varied (Cohen et al., 2018). Therefore, meaningful reform in education accompanied changes in the instructional content taught by teachers as well as the instructional methods and information acquired. Aydin et al., (2017) recommended that schools change the structures, culture, and programs of curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of a diverse student body. Also, a study conducted by Groccia (2018) concluded that terms of ambiguity may account for some hitches when implementing educational policy to support student engagement. In the same discussion, teachers in diverse inclusive schools encouraged social participation in classroom activities and reflected on ways to engage all learners.

# Research Question

The goal of this research study was to describe the experiences of teachers who were successful in engaging recent Saharan African immigrants in urban high schools in a coastal state located in the northeast part of the country. Three questions guided this research:

**R1:** What were the experiences of teachers who were successful in engaging recent Sub-Saharan African immigrants in learning?

 **R2**: What instructional and learning activities did instructors design to engage recent

 sub-Saharan African immigrants in the learning content?

 **R3**: What obstacles did teachers report when implementing teaching and learning

 strategies focused on student engagement ?

# Definition of Terms

The following terms applied to this study:

**Academic engagement:** According to Al-Hendawi (2012), academic engagement comprises three dimensions:

**Behavioral academic engagement:** student’s behavioral effort in which he or she is involved in learning. Emotional academic engagement refers to students’ affect and interests and encompasses pleasant and unpleasant emotions that a student develops towards academic tasks, teachers, classmates, and self. Cognitive academic engagement is related to motivational goals, self-regulated learning, and students’ appraisal of the value of learning.

**Acculturation** describes the process through which individuals learn to adapt to a new cultural situation. It is a change in values, beliefs, and behaviors that occur as a result of sustained contact between two or more cultures (Bastien et al., 2018).

**Cultural isolation:** A state or process in which persons, groups, or cultures lose or do not have communication or corporation with one another. It is usually involuntary.

**Ethnospaces:** A correlated group of people who are spread across nations (Yount-Andre, 2018).

**Eurocentric cultural values**: Interpreting the world based on Anglo-American and/or European customs and values (Alrashidi et al., 2016).

**Sub Saharan:** Sub-Saharan Africa is, geographically and ethnoculturally, the area of the continent of Africa that lies south of the Sahara. According to the United Nations, it consists of all African countries and territories that are fully or partially located south of the Sahara.

**Transnational**: extending or operating across national boundaries.

# Research Design

A basic qualitative case study was used for this research. Qualitative Case studies have been largely used in the social sciences and demonstrated a valuable practice in the management of education (Sari & Nayır, 2020), social work, and public administration (Ashworth, McDermott et al; 2019). Although case studies are considered part of qualitative research and methodology, the studies can be used as quantitative and may combine both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Brannen, 2017). Studies have indicated qualitative research is typically characterized by an interpretative paradigm which also highlights the subjective practices as well as the meaning they have for an individual. Interpretive paradigm recognizes that the truth is subjective because the researcher is part of the world under review and its organizations and institutions are viewed as a constructed social reality. Reality is constructed by people who live in different social worlds (Ngozwana, 2018).

The purpose of this study was to comprehend the instructional strategies described by teachers who successfully engaged recently arrived Sub-African immigrant students in urban high schools in a coastal state located in the northeast region of the United States. A Case study was the approach and methodology used in the study. The development of an in-depth, multi-dimensional survey concerning educators’ perspective of student engagement among the sub-Saharan African learners in the United States was used to gather data. The case study methodological approach was the most appropriate for this study because the research aimed to investigate real-life situations and phenomena affecting Sub-Saharan African students in the school environment. Case study methodology excluded the use of samples as a representation of the broader community or population in the research study. According to McManner (2015) case study methodology was part of the study that helped to investigate the phenomenon. In addition to creating a comprehensive data collection strategy through an academic search engine, previous research studies such as interviews were criteria used in the case study.

The use of a case study in investigating the perspective of educators concerning academic engagement for sub-Saharan African students was relevant and useful. The case study provided a detailed analysis within the field of research and evaluation of quantified and qualitative data available within the environment. There had been substantial methodological development across case study research to help improve and understand different capabilities concerning an application, flexibility in the approach mechanism, and stem a parallel influence to the researcher in the model of the application (Harrison et al., 2017). The use of the case study application created a simplified approach to the problem and the systematic development of a final solution within the environment of study.

There were assumptions related to the case study methodological approach that could prevent the achievement of the desired outcome in the study field. The hypotheses contained in the study employed facets of ontological, generalizations, and epistemological assumptions rooted in three sources of assumptions: general methodological assumptions, theoretical assumptions, and topic-specific assumptions. According to Martin and Martin (2018), some pertinent questions drive ontological assumptions: "What is there that can be known? What is knowable?''. Martin and Martin (2018) posited that ontology entails apprehensive concerns about the kind of world researchers investigate, with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality as such (Martin & Martin, 2018). Several studies have highlighted that, researchers should assume that the world they investigate as occupied by human beings who have their thoughts, interpretations, and meanings. The researcher’s investigation is manifested when different research methods and techniques of interpretive design, such as interviews to interpret the educator’s feelings and inner thoughts are employed. Participants' responses reflected on their subjective interpretations of lived experiences. Moreover, using the case study as a methodology of the present study focused on teachers' thoughts, feelings, experiences, and inner point of view.

Qualitative researchers assume the interviewer and interviewee mutually influence each other in their conversations. The epistemology examines the relationship between knowledge and the researcher where the assumption is that epistemological research tend to guide interview questions used to collect the data will be objective. It can also be useful knowledge in providing a better insight into instructional strategies as described by teachers who have been successful in engaging recent sub-Saharan immigrants. The study's findings might be disseminated to school leaders striving to engage recent African immigrants in some urban school districts.

 As posited in a study by Kadriye et al., generalization from the qualitative inquiry is not warranted, although there are some instances where qualitative research aspires to generalization. Similarly, Guenther and Falk (2019) argued that one can generalize legitimately from qualitative research since it is legitimate and useful as a generalization from quantitative analysis, given the conditions.

# Assumptions and Limitations

## Assumptions

*General methodological assumptions.*

The methodologies are thoughtful modes to discovering knowledge and methodological assumption concerns the procedure to discern knowledge (Killam, 2013). A case study methodology promotes qualitative analysis through a careful and complete analysis of a phenomenon that affects a specific social unit. However, either the researcher or the targeted audience can make assumptions after reading the dissertation that can be proven otherwise from detailed research. For instance, various studies have demonstrated that academic engagement strategies for sub-Saharan African immigrants, it can be assumed that all the immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa are not engaged from educational services by considering the level of poverty from their home country. However, the case study aims to place the different factors that account for the achievement of the research and create an interrelation across the data available for analysis (Kassab et al., 2019). Further, there is an importance to place recognition and determination of the phenomenon to be investigated as a measure of preventing assumptions based on human behavior and comprehensive study within the unit.

*Theoretical assumptions.*

Gagne's Conditions of Learning Theory (1978) was chosen as the theoretical foundation for this study to provide a framework and understand how the experiences of teachers who have been successful in engaging recent sub-Saharan African immigrants in learning. Gagne's theory indicates that there are five categories of learning outcomes and the nine events of instruction (Gagne, 1978). The themes in Gagne's Conditions of Learning theory provide a framework for developing practical instructional classes. Trainers, educators, and instructional designers use the approach to design strategies needed to initiate sustained growth and direction learners want to go. One theoretical assumption is that learning is an activity performed by the learner. Teachers cannot substitute their activity for the role of their students. However, educators can provide appropriate conditions for learners (including recent sub-Saharan immigrant students) to learn more and with ease.

*Topic-specific assumptions.*

The suppositions contained in this study are based on the theory that highlight knowledge as actively constructed rather than passively assimilated and that such constructions help researcher adapt rather than represent the world (Tay, 2017). In the study of student engagement of recent sub-Saharan students, the report indicated that researchers should understand their intellects and the frames of cultural and linguistic reference they bring to the classroom. In this regard, Ndemanu (2018) posited two main culturally responsive ways to acculturate students and their parents to the education system in the United States, which encompasses newcomer orientation and parental involvement in the learning process of their children (Nemanu, 2018).

Piątkowska and Strugielska (2017) posited that individuals construct meaning of intercultural competence based on cultural hypotheses. The culture and intercultural competence are both the result of the experience of social interaction. The use of the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives the African immigrant would be channels for teaching sub-Saharan more effectively. Cultural characteristic experience assumes that when academic knowledge and skills are situated within the lived experiences and frames of reference of immigrant students, they are more personally meaningful, have higher interest appeal, and learn more efficiently. As a result, the academic achievement of ethnically diverse students will improve when they are taught through their own cultural and experiential filters.

For this study, the general supposition was that the new African immigrant group was homogeneous. The assumption was that most of the immigrants were underprivileged were poor and under schooled. However, African immigrants span a wide array of cultures, races, socioeconomic levels, and academic experiences. There are growing numbers of African populations in pockets of the United States. Furthermore, it was not uncommon to find a variety of cultures, dialects, and races in any given ethnic group. Also, many of the families immigrated for professional reasons, and they were well-educated and economically established.

## Limitations

The study of sub-Saharan student engagement contains several limitations. COVID-19 restrictions portrayed a challenging situation since in-person interviews could not be conducted. The participants were interviewed via phone calls. Secondly, the recent sample was drawn from only one high school, thereby limited to one geographical area. Also, some studies had inadequate information to ascertain the findings. There were no interviews for students and parents to understand their perspectives concerning the abovementioned factors.

Inadequate data demonstrated a challenging aspect when examining students’ engagement. Although, there were various ways to evaluate student engagement, such as student self-report and observation. Examining the educational experiences of the sub-Saharan African students was a challenge especially from all 54 countries constituting the continent of Africa since sub-Saharan African students from West African countries are diverse and have different ethnic, language, religious, and geographic backgrounds.

# Organization of the Remainder of the Study

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

[Paragraph text is styled as Body Text. Each paragraph is double-spaced, with an indented first line. Chapter headings correspond to descriptions in the Dissertation Chapter Guide for Quantitative Studies. Headings match APA Level 1 (centered) and Level 2 (flush left), styled here as Heading 1 and Heading 2. Consult with your mentor about headings that might be necessary to enhance the organizational structure of your dissertation.]

# Methods of Searching

Capella University’s library was the main method used to obtain the information presented in this literature review. The researcher used databases, government websites and professional websites such as The US CENCUS BUREAU and USCIS. The researcher used databases A-Z, Summons, and journal and book locators. Other search engines included ProQuest, Eric, Education journal, the U.S. Census Bureau and professional practice standards, and Google Scholar. The key terms used in the literature were: academic engagement, sub-Saharan immigrants, learning styles, and flow.

 The centralizing review process was based on literature search strategies presented in the literature review. A comprehensive review of the current literature was conducted to examine the literature on the academic engagement strategies among sub-Saharan African students based on educators’ perspective in the literature review.

# Theoretical Orientation for the Study

The research in this study used Gagne's Conditions of Learning Theory as the theoretical framework. Gagne’s learning theory comprised five categories that included learning outcomes which provided a framework for learning conditions. Gagne’s learning theory focused on purposeful learning that occurred in school programs. According to Gagne’s learning theory, events within an environment significantly influenced the learning process which included capabilities such as behavioral change. For instance, students who participated in situations that invoked appropriate learning conditions experienced learning outcomes that comprised human capabilities of cognitive strategies, intellectual skills, attitudes, and verbal information. In a similar study investigating learning theory, the findings of the research indicated that Gagne associate learning outcome with instructions of an event. Gagne's Conditions of Learning theory offered construction for developing useful instructional classes

# Review of the Literature

The United States currently hosts more than 1.1 million Black African immigrants, comprising at least 3 percent of the total U.S. foreign-born population. The flow of immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa includes skilled professionals, refugees, and persons seeking reunification with relatives (Ngwainmbi, 2014). A majority of immigrants from Africa originate from Nigeria, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Ghana, with Egypt being the only non-Sub-Saharan country on top of the list (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). Every education system supports the development of effective relationships between teachers and students as an essential strategy for improving the engagement of students in academic fields. Several studies have focused on immigrants' adaptation to a new culture (McHugh, Sugarman 2015). However, the literature on sub-Saharan immigrants' academic engagement had not been adequate. Although the research supported the potential of quality instruction in improving student engagement (Harbour et al., 2015; Quin, 2017), the literature on successful engagement strategies for recent sub-Saharan African immigrants was inadequate. African immigration represented the fastest-growing population in the U.S., with the population tripling in 2015 from 2010. Estimations show that by 2020, the Black immigrant population will hit 12% of American's Black population (Fredricks et al. 2016).

As the United States continues to receive an unprecedented number of immigrants from different places including Africa, the composition of the country, and by extension, the classroom is radically shifting (Chen, 2017). The population of young immigrants below 18 years also grew significantly over the past few years with about 1 in 5 children in the country being the child of an immigrant (Rothe & Pumariega, 2020). These immigrant students face multiple unique migration-related problems while adapting to their new learning environments. These stresses place them at educational risks compared with native students. Today, the stakes of school failure for immigrant children are greater than before and as the landscape of learning institutions continues to change, educators will have to play an instrumental role in facilitating not only successful transitions of these young immigrant learners but also their long-term academic engagement.

Studies have consistently identified engagement in the classroom, including peer interactions and general classroom experience as some of the most important factors that determine learning among immigrant children (Kuh et al., 2010; McCormick et al., 2013). Several other studies have also explored the role of classroom-level curricular interventions in improving the experience of immigrant learners (Arkoudis & Tran, 2010; Crose, 2011). Results from these studies showed that students from foreign countries can perform better if curricular interventions are put in place. For instance, clearly articulating learning goals and what students are expected to do can significantly enrich their learning experience. Other ways researchers have highlighted as potential ways to integrate immigrant students into new learning environments include the use of learning assessment and feedback in the early stages of the coursework (Arkoudis & Tran, 2010).

**Dimensions of Engagement**

Bond et al. (2020) describe student engagement as the energy and effort learners devote to relevant activities in the instructional environment and is often discernible through numerous behavioral, cognitive, and affective indicators. Engagement among students is influenced by structural and internal factors, comprising the complex interplay of learning activities, environment, and relationships too (Reeve et al., 2019). Deeper engagement and empowerment of students within their learning environments allows them to channel that energy back into classwork, which can likewise further increase engagement to ensure long-term positive outcomes. According to Ashwin and McVitty (2015), the continuum can be shaped by context. That context usually needs to intersect with the students’ own identities and previous education and life experiences (Ashwin & McVitty, 2015).

A study by Steen-Utheim and Foldnes (2017) identified three dimensions of engagement widely acknowledged by scholars. These include behavioral, cognitive, and affective dimensions that create a supportive environment for learning to satisfy students’ motivation academic progress. Most recent developments of learner engagement expand its understanding to a larger concept that takes into account the role of sociocultural context. Kahu (2013) explained that the socio-cultural context in which every learning activity occurs combines both behavioral and psychological perspectives of engagement. For the present study, empirical findings on student engagement as conceptualized by Gagne’s learning conditions are discussed. Exploring strategies to promote meaningful student engagement while considering the socio-cultural context for immigrants would be important.

Extensive analyses by Friedricks et al. (2004), Kahu (2013), and Lawson and Masyn (2015) also considered student engagement to revolve around these three interrelated dimensions. In a course, the authors view student behavioral engagement to be about participation in learning activities and the extent to which they comply with rules. Student emotional engagement describes their emotional reactions to those activities and norms, involvement of peers and teachers, and how much they perceive to belong to the course (Kahu, 2013). Lastly, cognitive engagement refers to students’ psychological investment in learning activities and is important for mastering complex knowledge. A summary by Christenson et al. (2012) indicates that engagement of students entails more than attending classes or achieving higher grades. Instead, engaged learners will demonstrate persistence, self-regulate behavior toward life goals, enjoy learning, and challenge themselves to exceed.

***Cognitive Factors***

Mubuuke et al. (2017) explained that cognitive factors as characteristics of a learner that affect his or her learning and include functions like attention, memory, and reasoning. Studies have shown that there are more specific cognitive factors that influence the ability of immigrants to engage in-class activities (Ndemanu & Jordan, 2018; Greene, 2015). For instance, language is an essential human capital resource among immigrant students and a necessary determinant of academic success (Ndemanu & Jordan, 2018). The host language's proficiency varies across different ethnic groups, with students from varied places showing different proficiency levels. According to Portes et al. (2010), language is a factor accounting for significant differences among ethnic groups, with some groups more advantaged than others in learning the host language. Many studies have identified language proficiency as a considerable impediment but failed to analyze the effects of a specific group of students, with students from Sub-Saharan countries primarily affected (Harbour et al., 2015; Allen et al., 2012).

The cognitive influence of peers is that it helps young students acquire new knowledge and skills from talking, sharing, playing, and quarreling together (Ciullo et al., 2015). According to the observational study, peers are important in providing emotional sustenance to support the development of meaningful psychological competencies in young newcomer learners (Ciullo et al., 2015). When immigrant learners can perceive that they are part of a team with peers, the effect is often relief from the anxiety that hinders learning. Moreover, Valero et al. (2017) explained that having immigrant children work in groups together will achieve desired academic outcomes and model certain academic behaviors suitable for classroom engagement. Peers can help establish positive ‘norms’ of academic involvement in many ways, such as by clarifying reading or lectures to immigrant learners and working together to complete homework as a group (Ciullo et al., 2015). Unfortunately, Valero et al. (2017) found that a majority of immigrant children attend highly segregated schools where they may not have access to the best network of knowledgeable peers to boost their academic engagement.

Another thematic barrier faced by immigrant children while attending school in the United States is limited psychological skills (Brenner & Kia-Keating, 2016). Newcomer adolescents are likely to experience mental health challenges as they adjust to the new environment post-migration. Good mental health in the classroom context refers to the absence of psychological trauma that could inhibit effective learning (Chen et al., 2015). Experiences of trauma, stress during the migration process, and hostilities in the host country such as discrimination could affect the academic involvement and achievement of immigrants. To promote psychological wellbeing and allow immigrant learners to cope, educators commonly introduce resiliency-based approaches. These interventions, as identified in a study by Steketee et al. (2021) enhance engagement by increasing resiliency in these learners. For instance, Zhang and Zhan (2014) explained that improving their English language skills and providing opportunities for family counseling, art-based therapies, and peer outreach can build self-confidence among immigrant students.

***Intellectual Skills***

Sub-Saharan students carry onboard varied educational experiences and cultures to a classroom setting (Roubeni et al., 2015). While most studies have investigated culture and discrimination, few researchers have explored the pedagogical and curricular procedures used by teachers. Mebuin (2017) conducted a study to explore the experiences of successful educators in engaging recent sub-Saharan African immigrants in learning. The outcomes of the study showed that instructional delivery and classroom engagement by teachers when handling Sub-Saharan African students and the challenges they face as they try to deliver vary. For instance, there was the need to understand the difference between the instructional process in Sub-Saharan Africa, where learners depended on teachers for knowledge without significant student participation, and the current system, where students must play an active role in the classroom setting (Karuppan & Barari, 2011). According to Kumi-Yeboah and Smith (2017), the majority of immigrant students have challenges navigating through school and class in a new cultural setting. Therefore, adjusting to such fundamental change when delivering pedagogical delivery proves challenging for teachers. Changes in students' experience in classroom design, including the way students respond to teaching patterns, school setting, and changes in lessons, timeframe affect students' ability to concentrate in class (Kumi-Yeboah & Smith, 2017). Similar strategic changes were also suggested by Roblain et al. (2016) who demonstrated that integrating immigrant children into American classrooms will improve the overall learning experience and subsequent engagement.

The ability to find and solve problems is one of the most widely researched cognitive variables that predict academic achievement and has a direct impact on retention although Chamorro‐Premuzic and Furnham (2006) indicate that with some variability. Since cognitive ability does not always predict motivation, researchers often discriminate the level of prediction of motivational variables beyond mere learners’ intellectual abilities (Veas et al., 2016). Therefore, Veas et al (2016) emphasize that educators should be tentative when conducting intelligence testing for immigrant learners because such tests can lead to serious misclassification until they begin to consider cultural factors. African immigrants have to navigate through an unfamiliar educational system in America to attain a satisfactory level of engagement. Roblain et al. (2016) agree that schools should not view immigrant children’s transitional period as a sign of intellectual inadequacy but as a process of improving classroom experience.

Another important intellectual skill that takes a central role in students’ engagement is reading development. A systematic review of longitudinal studies by Chyl (2021) identified that the pace of reading development among young learners in America can be overwhelming to immigrant students from the sub-Sahara. In their home countries, most of these African children approach reading in-depth only at a later grade level rather than right from their kindergarten stages (Chyl, 2021). Besides, most sub-Saharan African countries’ education systems are not designed to emphasize leisure reading and children’s literature (Tauriac & Liem, 2013). Their systems barely focus on issues such as reading speed. Therefore, terms like literacy station and reading below or above grade level tend to be uncommon in the school setting. These contrasts between Africa and the United States approach to reading development do not necessarily have an impact because many immigrant kids still end up acquiring sufficient and thoughtful reading skills. However, a good number of these newcomer learners often need remedial lessons to improve their fluency compared to their American counterparts (Tauriac & Liem, 2013).

***Verbal or Linguistic Skills***

Rogde et al. (2016) describe verbal skills as a student’s ability to use language to convey information. Among the challenges educators face in their efforts to engage immigrant students in the United States are gaps in education and language barriers (Tauriac & Liem, 2013). Davila (2018) conducted a qualitative study that looked at language as a challenge for a sub-set of sub-Saharan immigrants from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Outcomes of the study showed that immigrant learners and their teachers adopt, impose, and defend their identity positions as they engage in everyday classroom interactions. Therefore, the authors recommend that educators should change their approach to engaging these learners by moving away from learning discrete language skills in just a single language to promoting complex language together with content learning fluidity across different languages purposely to affirm these learners’ identities (Davila, 2018). The reason behind their argument is that the intersection between language barriers, gaps in education, and other variables raises critical concerns around equality of learning opportunity and educational outcomes in both high schools and colleges.

Currently, only a limited number of studies have investigated how African immigrant youth identities relate to their language learning and overall engagement in K-12 contexts. An analysis by Shirdon (2014) showcased the dynamic interplay between immigrants’ language, race, and religion regarding how it shaped students’ experiences in most American schools. Another study by Davila (2015) had earlier assessed language and literacy practices of Somali and Congolese learners from one high school and revealed that the identities of learners shape their overall engagement in the curriculum at large.

Secondary education in sub-Saharan Africa abounds in prominent similarities and contrasts among each other and with the education system in the United States (Ndemanu & Jordan, 2017). An analysis by Davila (2018) reported that over 70% of African countries use English or French as an instructional medium in school systems. Also, another important factor to consider is that most African children in their school-age know at least one European language and at least another one or multiple local languages. To attain a culturally responsive instructional practice, educators need to understand this linguistic diversity as one of the obstacles that African immigrant students have to overcome (Harbour et al. 2015). Ndemanu and Jordan (2017) further feel that the mere fact that a majority of these immigrant students are either bilingual or multilingual should diminish potential concerns about African children’s academic potentials.

Considering that native and European languages have a profound influence on how African children speak English across the different English-speaking countries, educators in the United States need to anticipate noticeable levels of difference in vocabulary, semantics, and accent (Davila, 2015). Therefore, with the understanding of this backdrop of their diverse linguistic backgrounds, the English language proficiency of these African students will vary depending on the specific language they interact with back in their home country. Based on these prominent variations, American teachers need to employ a range of linguistic supports to identify what is effective for a particular type of immigrant students (Harbour et al. 2015). For example, the English language learner (ELL) support for students who have not had prior classes on the language would be important. At the same time, learners who have taken classes on the language but in another English dialect can receive support for instructions in academic American English to complete their transition into the classroom.

***Motor Skills***

Motor skills are the precise, smooth, and accurately timed execution of movements involving the use of muscles (Mabry, & Bhavnagri, 2012). They are a distinct type of learning outcome and necessary to the understanding of the range of possible human performances. Learning situations that involve motor skills are learning to write, playing a musical instrument, playing sports, and driving a car. The timing and smoothness of executing motor skills indicate that these performances have a high degree of internal organization. A study by Miller (2013) showed that motor skills do not differ significantly between immigrant learners and their native-born counterparts.

For full participation in extracurricular activities, immigrant children also need to develop fine motor skills. Whether it is drawing, writing, coloring, or scribbling, learners use their fine motor skills in almost all academic activity sessions (Miller, 2013). For immigrant students, their education is often holistic. This means that a single game or classroom activity might be critical for their social interactions, listening skills, artistic development, and motor skills. Studies have shown that when students improve their fine motor skills, they can build concentration, actively engage their peers in learning, improve autonomy, and acquire an ability to switch between mental and physical learning (Chow & Louie, 2013). With fewer hours teachers spend helping immigrant students with some of the tasks that require motor skills, the more time they will have to focus on developing other areas of these children’s development.

While researchers view writing as an important component of literacy development, achieving proficiency levels remains a complicated process that makes it difficult for immigrant bilingual students to adjust (Griva & Chostelidou, 2013). Without the writing skills to participate in learning, immigrant children may struggle to keep up with their peers born in the country. The cause of these challenges is described by Griva et al. (2009) who identified that the first language writing process relies on a student’s ability to master numerous subskills such as idea generation and drafting, the writing itself, and revising it. When students have to learn a second language, they need to mix it with first language competence issues, which makes the process of improving writing skills more overwhelming for young immigrant learners.

***Attitudes toward education in Immigrant Students***

Greenman (2013) defines attitude as a learned predisposition to portray a positive or negative response towards particular triggers in the environment. Students develop attitudes from their experiences, environment, and expectations of others such as teachers and parents (Nayir, 2015). An immigrant student from Africa will face challenges in school and these barriers could lead to negative feelings towards learning in America and subsequent decline in engagement. Measuring the perceptions and feelings of learners towards their education are important because they form the foundation for improving long-term involvement in academic work (Stevens, 2011). Previous studies such as Oikonomidoy (2015) identified that children of immigrant parents tend to have positive attitudes and behaviors toward American education. However, these positive orientations are often reported to decline across immigrant generations particularly due to negative impacts of acculturation, which is thought to increase from the second immigrant generation onward (Oikonomidoy (2015). Negative perceptions and beliefs often dwindle even though educators understand that students’ engagement levels are directly related to their attitude toward school (Nayir, 2015). The relational research study by Nayir (2015) revealed that attitude and student engagement are important predictors of academic involvement. Therefore, strategies to address disengagement in the population being studied should involve modification of immigrant learners’ attitudes.

Another recent evaluation by Greenman (2013) used data on immigrant students from Asia and Mexico to examine how attitudes and behaviors related to four unique educational outcomes. The authors examined the relationship between generational changes in attitudes and declining academic engagement over a specific period. They also tested whether such generational attitude changes toward school were due to school peer context in which the learners acculturate. Their analysis showed that although educational attitudes of immigrant children decline across generations, the changes are insignificant and may not necessarily be the only reasons for academic disengagement. Similar outcomes were also reported by McCloud (2015) who found that in schools with more negative peer cultures, immigrant students report declining attitudes from the second generation.

Other researchers have found that when immigrant students receive enough parental support, they exhibit better attitudes toward learning (Ismail, 2019). In all countries including the United States where a substantial proportion of the population is immigrant families, support from parents relates strongly with involvement in the academic process. A study on OECD countries reported that if immigrant children speak the language of instruction and they possess competent reading skills, they develop a better perception of learning compared to those who speak a different language (Gabrielli et al., 2021). Further, educational experts contend that teacher support plays an important role in shaping the attitude and overall involvement in school (Croninger & Lee, 2001).

Analyses by McCloud (2015) and Oikonomidoy (2015) indicated that the average Latino immigrant student had a positive attitude toward education too. One study of a sub-Saharan immigrant learner in Europe (Finland) found that the educational performance of immigrant students does not depend on their attitude towards education alone, but also on the attitude of the majority of society and how the receiving country’s education system responds to it (Ismail, 2019). However, their data suggest that immigrant learners in the United States have to deal with countless external and internal factors that limit involvement in optimal academic success. Currently, no data is available on the attitudes of immigrant students from sub-Saharan Africa in the U.S. As Nayir (2015) pointed out, some students might show positive attitudes toward education while others may perceive learning negatively. All these depend on the context of the learner and their academic experiences within school systems. Therefore, future research could look into the perceptions of different immigrant groups across the country.

***Cultural Competency of Immigrant Students***

Many international students face challenges regardless of race, language, and place of origin. Among these trials are issues of homesickness, language barriers, inability to adjust to cultural differences, and discrimination (Karuppan & Barari, 2011). The challenges affect learners' classroom concentration and ability to engage in cognitive tasks, directly affecting their academic success. Classrooms being diverse, recent immigrant learners in the U.S. operate in cultural isolation. In several ways, the racial, ethnic, and cultural differences of the new immigrants seclude them from the mainstream. While the school serves as a non-neutral ground to permit cultural transmission for the minority students and new immigrants, ethnic minority students face classroom and school norms that lean mainly toward Eurocentric cultural values (Alrashidi *et al.,* 2016).

Allen et al. (2012) explained that culturally responsive teaching entails many instructional elements expected of educators dealing with ethnically diverse learners. Some of these critical elements encompass attitudes, knowledge about students’ cultures by teachers, relevant cross-cultural communication skills, and incorporating a cultural perspective in instructional delivery (Ndemanu & Jordan, 2017). Lawson and Masyn (2015) recommended that American educators should apply the concepts of culturally sensitive teaching by gathering pre-immigration information about the origins of immigrant families for them to be more effective in teaching African immigrant kids. Taking that approach allows teachers to understand why learners may speak, read, write, comprehend, and engage differently, but not necessarily deficiently from native-born students.

Castillo et al. (2020) argued for the redesign of classrooms and schools to model a culturally diverse society. Although many countries had dealt with the inclusion of migrants into different areas of society, in the case of education, the incorporation of these students into the system should provoke a shift to multicultural education (Castillo et al., 2020). Gorski (2016) posited that educators strive to be effective and equitable by comprehending and responding to students' cultures and their families. Cultural knowledge, according to Yehoah (2020) aids teachers in building authentic connections with their students and shaping curriculum and instructional practices to match the needs of their students. Culturally conscious programs may also fasten the acquisition of intercultural competencies that enable learners to transition to the new environment and mitigate the challenges of academic involvement caused by culture shock.

**Recent Development on Effective Academic Engagement Strategies**

Over the past few years, the popularity of student engagement in research has increased because of its significance in addressing persistent educational problems such as low academic achievement and high rates of student alienation (Fredricks et al., 2016). As Christenson et al. (2012) pointed out, engagement is often studied in multiple nested contexts such as classrooms and learning activities. The increased focus on engagement in research and educational policy is driven by numerous factors. First, Fredricks et al. (2016) identified engagement as a major contributor to learning and students’ academic success. Second, engagement presents an appeal to researchers because it is a ‘meta-construct’ that entails not only internal cognitions but also emotions and observable behaviors (Friedricks et al., 2016). Third, practitioners easily understand engagement and disengagement, with many teachers affirming that student disengagement is one of the biggest challenges they face in the classroom today (Davila, 2015). And lastly, exploring student engagement appeals to researchers because there is evidence showing that it is malleable and responsive to practice changes that teachers and schools undertake.

While exploring the colonial impact on overall engagement in education in the sub-Sahara, Feldmann (2016) argued that the characteristics of foreign educations left an indelible mark on learning in those African countries. In all three ex-colonies (Spanish, British and French), many continued long after independence. Therefore, the historical literature on colonial education to include Spanish, French, or British, consistently highlights the persistence. Feldmann (2016) argued, among other things, that the adverse effects of both the Spanish and the French colonial legacy were particularly influential on females. As a result of adverse effects, Spanish colonial education neglected girls' education, and because of the elitist nature of French colonial culture, it is also likely to have disadvantaged females (Feldmann, 2016). Therefore, within the context of educational conversations surrounding immigrant students, the unique background of African-born immigrant youth warrants further analysis. Currently, studies have failed to address the learning resources, activities, or policies.to ensure that sub-Saharan immigrants fit the current academic systems.

Despite many studies documenting theoretical and empirical evidence on student engagement, most studies focused on math and reading assignments (Lo & Hew, 2021). Most studies link effective instruction to relevant content and instruction delivery, thus ignoring student attention and active participation. One study used semi-structured interviews as the focus group while other studies focused on 'initial transition in academic, social, and psychological experiences (Steketee et al., 2021). Steketee et al. (2021) established that interacting with students from other ethnicities in class, determined the level of interaction, with language causing a significant obstacle. Most international students indicated that their new environment is a source of problems, as domestic students are not willing to make them adapt. Therefore, it might be appropriate to reevaluate the pedagogy of culturally diverse learners by exploring cultural competency. Educators are obliged to understand and respond to the exceptional amalgamation of cultural variables and the array of dimensions of diversity that the professionals and students bring to interactions.

School engagement entails a learner’s affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses directly linked to attachment, the ultimate sense of belonging to a school, and overall involvement in academic work (Ben-Eliyahu et al., 2018). An example as illustrated by Gilboy et al. (2015) is the explanation that students are undoubtedly disengaged from learning when they have higher rates of absenteeism such as receiving unexcused absences. Engagement essentially requires a stable and predictable state of emotional well-being, which for immigrant learners may be negatively affected by internal factors and environmental issues such as safety in the neighborhood (Davila, 2018). In today’s struggling economy, if a student drops out in high school, their life prospects decline significantly. Meanwhile, researchers have identified that aspects of school engagement including problem behavior and effect are relevant for immigrants’ academic achievement (Njie-Carr et al., 2017). For instance, Davila (2015) explained that when immigrant children experience social relationship problems, they are more likely to portray academic disengagement. Educators seeking to help improve immigrant students’ conscious, intentional, active, and interested involvement in academic work should work alongside parents and their communities. These variables demonstrate the need for teachers to gain a better understanding of environmental and social agents that shape school engagement for immigrant adolescents in American high schools.

Several approaches have been used to improve student engagement in the classroom. Gilboy et al. (2015) investigated how effective the implementation of a flipped classroom as an innovative pedagogical approach would be for improving students’ engagement. Although the study involved undergraduate students, their findings showed that the majority of learners preferred the flipped method instead of the traditional pedagogical strategies because it consistently encouraged active student engagement.

Although they do not focus on immigrant students, a growing body of evidence suggests that educational technology has a great potential in enhancing engagement (Schindler et al., 2017; Henrie et al., 2015). Furthermore, those previous studies have focused on higher education and specifically on STEM subjects (Nikou & Economides, 2018; Henrie et al., 2015). One of the common engagement strategies is flipped classroom. When teachers use social media, mobile learning, or other technology-based systems to enhance engagement, reviews have found only small positive impacts (Kaliisa & Picard, 2017; Hunsu et al., 2016). After narrowing down the scope of their review to flipped learning, findings showed mixed results for student engagement (Njie-Carr et al., 2017), suggesting the need for further research using rigorous study designs (Ward et al., 2018). Most of the existing studies and reviews did not involve immigrant students.

Autonomy-supportive teaching has also been researched as one of the effective classroom engagement strategies.A longitudinal study by Reeve et al. (2019) found that when teachers become more autonomy-supportive and reduce controlling attitudes toward learners, their students demonstrate numerous educationally important benefits. Key benefits of such autonomy-supportive intervention programs for high school students include increased engagement and reduced disengagement (Reeve et al., 2019).

Also on the list of engagement strategies is reconceptualization. Analysis by Wang and Hofkens (2019) shifted focus from the traditional academic engagement to non-academic related activities. Even though academic engagement remains a critical part of adolescents’ education, high schools present a complex developmental context where young learners have to engage in social interactions too. As they explore their interests and acquire new competencies, the characteristics of the multi-contextual construct provide them with opportunities to engage in both social interactions and academic learning. Their findings suggest that schools need to re-conceptualize student engagement by incorporating the social and academic complexities associated with engagement and disengagement as this would enable them to identify underlying processes that create significant differences between learners (Wang & Hofkens, 2019). This research explored the internal and external learning conditions for immigrant students from sub-Saharan Africa that are needed to facilitate each type of learning.

1. ***Establishing connections with teachers, parents, and peers***

Immigrant students’ successful adaptation in the classroom in America has been linked to the quality of relationships they create in a school setting (George Mwangi & English, 2017). Researchers have constantly implicated social support within learning institutions in rapid academic adaptation of immigrant students (Yeh et al., 2008). In an extensive analysis of immigrant children’s adaptation, Wang and Eccles (2012) identified that social relations are recommended because they provide numerous protective functions. For instance, they introduce a sense of belonging, provide emotional support, offer cognitive guidance, and give positive feedback. Furthermore, the literature suggests that when quality relationships are forged between these immigrant learners and their peers, socially competent behaviors become more prominent in the classroom, which, in turn, foster academic engagement and achievement (Yeh et al., 2008).

Keeping learners involved in academic work requires strong connections between them and teachers, coaches, parents, and other adults in schools because these people are important to the social adaptation of young students (Shirdon, 2014)). The role of these individuals is more pronounced for immigrant students (Wang & Eccles, 2012). Children of immigrant families are undergoing major shifts in their sense of self and they have to negotiate those changing life circumstances in relationship with their peers and new teachers. Therefore, protective relationships with all these groups of people have been shown to create room for the pursuit of social integration, psychosocial functioning, and overall academic engagement (George Mwangi & English, 2017).

Researchers have emphasized the role of community, school, familial, and individual involvement in enhancing engagement among young learners (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). Since immigrants are a highly diverse population, they face substantially dissimilar risk and protective factors as they join the American education system. Some of these learners are children of highly educated professionals while others are born to parents without formal education. Their social differences mean that they will experience individual challenges, family context challenges, and community-level problems that educators need to consider. As Mwangi and English (2017) pointed out, teaching diverse groups of students can be a challenge for educators who seek to keep learners engaged and active in their academic work. Therefore, the authors recommend that future studies should highlight the significance of students’ early years of schooling back in their countries of origin, particularly in pre-K to 8th-grade years. Teachers have very little understanding of the learners’ educational background even though it informs their later academic years. Strategies to improve learner engagement under these differences need to provide a well-rounded picture of how Black immigrants engage in crucial parts of the education pipeline and where they may experience difficulties and the level of support they may need during their k-12 studies.

1. ***Cognitive strategies for improving engagement***

Cognitive strategies focus on improving the degree to which learners are interested in what they are studying (Ben-Eliyahu et al., 2018).They are pedagogical ways that enable learners to manage their own learning and facilitate the transition from teaching to student learning. The shifting demographics of the American classrooms entail novel approaches in addressing culturally and linguistically dissimilar student populations, among whom are sub-Saharan African immigrants (Wambu et al., 2017). According to an analysis by Wambu et al. (2017), schools require strategic interventions for helping this population navigate career choice and determination.

Some cognitive strategies have been proven to be successful with all students including minority students. According to Germain‐Rutherford et al. (2021), intellectual engagement leads to in-depth and sustainable learning and develops when students work on assignments that are relevant, interesting, and linked to their aspirations. According to these authors, teaching strategies that foster effective and in-depth learning include problem-solving strategies, contextualizing learning, and expertise to make it relevant, working on real-life issues that can make a difference, and engaging in collaborative projects with peers and communities, such as experiential learning opportunities through community engagement strategies.

**Behavior Management**

Flower et al. (2016) describes behavior management as a critically important plan used within the classroom to control unwanted learning disruption and ensure that students will stick to expected procedures. It may not be about punishing bad behavior, but it is designed to ensure students understand the negative impacts of their actions. Miller et al. (2020) believed that a positive learning relationship and ensuring intrinsic motivation to children as they learn are necessary to manage their behaviors in the classroom. Despite distinct strategies employed by teachers to encourage student engagement, both instructional and behavioral strategies are significant in improving student engagement towards all activities. For instance, teachers using adequate classroom behavior management safeguard against the loss of learning time, making every minute of classwork count (van Kuijik & Doolaard, 2016), leading to increased academic achievement. Contrarily, instructional strategies establish patterns of student behavior in a class-leading to high response rates, brisk pacing for instructions, and modifying complexities of learning behaviors based on a student's skill levels. For instance, elementary school teachers may employ gestures that help sub-Saharan immigrant students refocus on the lesson when they are distracted.

Another important aspect would include regular break up into small groups for discussion, where the teachers would ask immigrants, sub-Saharan students, to lead certain activities. However, a standard gap among the studies includes ignoring the examination of social behaviors in a classroom, which majorly determined ethnic backgrounds of the immigrants’ sub-Saharan African students (Ukpokodu, 2018). Taking into account social behaviors is crucial in the study because social behaviors rely on culture, and since teachers are handling students from diverse cultures, it is essential to understand effective ways to influence social behavior in a class setting. The result will be ensuring distinct domains regarding behavior management and instructional strategies remain functionally related to one another and have a positive correlation with student academic engagement.

***Behavior Management Strategies***

According to Korpershoek et al. (2016), behavior management strategies include approaches teachers employed to ensure students comply with tasks and meet the set behavioral expectations, among them antecedent and consequence strategies. Antecedent strategies include behaviors accomplished by a teacher before a student behaves in a certain way, while consequences included actions taken by teachers when responding to student behavior (Harbour et al. 2015). The broad categories of behavior management strategies can involve classroom-based, individual-based intervention, and school-wide measures. Research has demonstrated the efficacy of these different approaches to behavior management could lead to a positive and functional learning environment for higher levels of engagement and achievement (Korpershoek et al., 2016).

In a systematic review by Quin (2017) that investigated antecedent management, the outcomes demonstrated that teachers had various approaches to manage antecedent behaviors through evidence-based practices, and the effects it had on student academic engagement. Quin (2017) restated the importance of understanding the precursors of engagement to foster it. For instance, behavioral management strategies included directives, physical proximity to enhance engagement, and limiting off-task behavior. However, the studies reviewed in the publication had been generalized to a population with diverse ethnic groupings.

**Maintaining simple and consistent rule.** To achieve an effective and positively functioning classroom, educators need to ensure that disruptive behaviors are minimized through consistent planning. The key factors which researchers have found to discourage disruptive behavior in the classroom are discussed in a literature review by (Wang and Eccles (2012). Maintaining clean and simple rules that teachers can apply consistently and fairly can be effective for all types of students. However, newcomer learners such as immigrants may require additional behavior management strategies such as predictability of evens and establishment of routines and cues about important transitions.

**Class-wide incentives.** Class-wide incentives have also been important, especially when disruption is endemic and stress-inducing. When the behaviors are more problematic, McCloud (2015) explained that targeting the whole class instead of an individual would be recommended. Research literature has demonstrated the effectiveness of token economies, prize draws and praises to increase appropriate behaviors (Reinke et al., 2007). For immigrants, some of these behavior management strategies might not be relevant due to the unique barriers the learners encounter in the classroom. One alternative approach that has been widely studied is peer support (Messiou & Azaola, 2017). In their analysis, Messiou and Azaola (2017) found that the use of professionally-led peer groups supports the ability of learners to take responsibility for themselves and revolve around the context of these students’ backgrounds. Incentives that involve entire classes can allow immigrant students to evaluate the quality of their work and gauge their involvement in deeper academic work.

The link between high-quality behavior and student academic engagement had significant research problems in analyzing consequence strategies. Examples include praising a student for encouraging desired behaviors (Reinke et al., 2007). Using such behavioral management strategies helps in ending disruptive behaviors among students while using ineffective approaches leads to increase disruptive student behaviors, a comparison this study intends to achieve.

***Instructional Strategies***

Lekwa et al. (2019) indicated that teachers can improve student academic engagement using effective instructional strategies by presenting the content of concepts, offering students opportunities for practice, and giving academic feedback to encourage improvement (Lekwa et al., 2019). Instructional strategies aim at enhancing the acquisition of academic knowledge and skills, with teachers required to differentiate among learning materials and give students a chance to respond to provided instructional questions (Harbour et al. 2015; Lekwa et al. 2019). Additionally, classroom strategy assessment indicated that higher quality of instructions as well as behavior management was associated with higher student engagement (O’Neal et al., 2018).

Changing the way educators elicit answers to questions in the classrooms to encourage wide participation is also important in facilitating involvement in classwork and wider participation in key components of curriculum (O’Neal et al., 2018). A study by Böheim et al (2020) that assessed the differences between hand-raising and response approaches to answering questions in class using a response card where students write their response to the question revealed a 14-fold increase in active student involvement when they used response cards. Although these findings did not directly address immigrant learners, teachers can use more of these strategies to increase immigrant student engagement and encourage appropriate behavior in classrooms.

***Institutional and Organizational Limitations***

More specific interventions through counseling learners from foreign countries have gained the interest of researchers as well (Bertram et al., 2014). These authors have drawn attention to the role of counselors in improving student experiences. Current literature suggests that models of adjustment and adaptation these counselors use can ensure success in school when they are implemented along with the development of other competencies. At the individual level, Grabke (2013) identified that such institutional strategies can help immigrant learners overcome some barriers related to the learning environment and efficient cooperation between teachers, academic departments, and learners.

The mechanisms American schools use to gauge student educational outcomes are elusive (Quin, 2017). Variations in family structure and stable parenting may influence how students interact with teachers and peers in schools. For example, Watson and Knight-Manuel (2017) asserted that some immigrants without access to adequate resources at home may rely on schools to supplement their academic work and sometimes even replace entirely learning that goes on at home.

Apart from the individual-level and cultural factors, institutional and school systems play a significant role in explaining inequality that affects immigrant student engagement in school and their subsequent academic performance (Quin, 2017). For instance, significant factors leading to differentiation, as identified in sociology education, include tracking and school ownership, either public or private (Watson & Knight-Manuel, 2017). Empirical studies have provided evidence that students joining private universities adopt fast and have high student engagement levels compared to those joining public institutions (Lekwa et al., 2019); Van De Werfhorst & Mijs, 2010). High school engagement levels could indicate that choosing a particular institution is never random but linked to family background. Following the revelation, the research will illuminate the role school-type differentiation plays in mediating the relationship between immigrant experience and educational outcomes. It is crucial to understand if students from Sub-Saharan Africa fail or succeed in adapting to class settings concerning positive engagement because of the type of institution selected. Additionally, adequate knowledge about the education system and accessibility to the required information and appropriate channels before joining a university is essential. In this research study, the strength of the theoretical framework was based on numerous previous studies on academic engagement among recent immigrant students from African. On the other hand, the weakness was that most of the previous studies did not have adequate information and some were outdated.

**Critique of Previous Research Methods**

Previous studies offered an incomplete single-story construct and failed to adequately capture the educational experience of the sub-Saharan immigrant which often gets lost in the single-story construct of an inaccurate homogeneous black story Mwangi & English (2017). Kumi-Yeboah and Smith (2017) posited that participation and performance, as well as class activity of sub-Saharan immigrant students compared to native-born American students, remain heterogeneous. Their analysis investigated if immigrant students from Africa would integrate progressively into the mainstream education system as they adopted multiple assimilation channels to achieve different education levels. Other studies revealed that many African immigrants in U.S. k-12 schools were struggling academically, experiencing academic disengagement and failure, eventually dropping out of school (Ukpokodu, 2018). However, the gaps in achievement of immigrant student academic engagement contradict the assimilation rationality that predicts immigrant students assimilate progressively to the mainstream. Waters and Jiménez (2015) argued that the size of access into the USA might also influence immigrant assimilation. Many of the new immigrant entryways were rural towns. Social isolation did not exist as in larger urban centers, where immigrants often live in enclaves, and children attended schools with large immigrant and minority populations. In these areas, immigrants and native-born residents in smaller gateways frequently interact.

In the past, literature reviews concerning students’ academic engagement failed to review the scope of the exceptionality of recent sub-Saharan African immigrants in U.S. k-12 schools. Additionally, several studies in the past focused on cultural identity, psychological adaptation, and academic achievement in addition to racial-ethnic patterns, cultural transformations, and sociocultural modifications as well as linguistic challenges (Schotte et al., 2018). A study on acculturation by Bastien et al. (2018) on the assimilation of sociocultural component of cultural adjustment focused on students from culturally distant regions. Critical deliberations are necessary on the Sub-Saharan African students about their cross-cultural educational experiences and challenges as well as how assessments affect their ability to engage in a classroom setting. Furthermore, many teachers, educators, and policymakers in the United States educational systems could not comprehend educational experience as well as challenges associated with educating sub-Saharan African students in the United States. However, most educators debated about the rich experiences that sub-Saharan African students contributed to schools (Kumi-Yeboah et al., 2018).

**Summary**

Overall, recent studies have underscored the significance of purposefully designed engagement opportunities for immigrant students. Since these learners find it challenging to engage both inside and outside the classroom, interventions to improve their involvement in k-12 education need to target activities inside and outside the school setting. This section has explored the concept of student academic engagement from multiple perspectives. However, the literature in this respect did not offer any precise analysis of the achievement gap in recent sub-Sharan immigrants.

The literature reviewed in this section indicates that young children immigrating into the United States come with different intellectual skills, motor skills, cognitive abilities, and attitudes toward learning. All these variables determine overall academic engagement and subsequent outcomes in the classroom (Veas et al., 2016). Research on academic engagement had focused recently on multicultural education but very often fell short of its expectations. Multicultural education itself is not inclusive enough because teachers are short of balanced information about the minority cultures represented in their schools. The lack of exposure to accurate and fair information about the sub-Saharan educational system had often led to overgeneralizations, stereotypes, and misinformation about the continent and its people. Until the early 1990s, empirical research on the achievement gap had tended to focus mostly on generic Black and White. Depending on their academic levels and their countries of origin, sub-Saharan African immigrant students bring into their classrooms a plethora of diverse experiences that were hitherto valued in their home countries until their immigration into the host country. According to Ndemanu (2018), these experiences are valuable assets as the learners enter a new classroom.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Merrian and Tisdell (2016) stated that the most common type of qualitative inquiry in applied fields of practice such as education, administration, health, social work, counseling, business is a basic interpretive study. The authors backed the definition of qualitative research as a cover phrase for an array of interpretive skills aimed at describing, decrypting and translating or explaining certain natural happenings in the world around us.

Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) found that most qualitative research focuses on process, understanding, and meaning. The leading method of collecting and analyzing data is the investigator: it is a purely inductive practice: and the outcome is abundantly vivid.

The study aimed at gathering rich descriptive experiences from teachers who had successfully engaged recent sub-Saharan immigrants academically. The objective was to understand the experiences of academic engagement as described by these participants.

The case study qualitative inquiry research method was used to explore how teachers described academic engagement strategies for recent sub-Saharan immigrants. This chapter examined how the present study was conducted. In doing so, it addressed the (a) purpose of the study, (b) research questions, (c) research design, (d) target population and sample, (e)procedures, (f) instruments, and (g) ethical considerations.

# Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore instructional strategies as described by teachers who had been successful in engaging recent African immigrants in urban high schools in a coastal state located in the [northeast region](https://www.bing.com/search?q=Northeastern+United+States&filters=sid%3a6ed71c45-4329-5eee-5977-904773e5a5ad&form=ENTLNK). Additionally, the study aimed at unraveling the apparent ambiguity surrounding student engagement among researchers. According to Groccia, (2018) student engagement takes many forms; since the term is used to refer to so many different things, it is difficult to know what people mean by the concept. There are more questions raised by the subject as evidenced by Buskist & Groccia (2018) who raised the question of the existence of universal principles of instilling student engagement that apply across students, disciplines, and institutional settings. The study also questioned if these principles are similar or different in the domains of doing, feeling, and thinking. In this vein, Buskist, & Groccia ( 2018) raised the following question: What are the most effective methods of keeping students engaged? The current study seeks to elucidate these concepts. The findings from the study might be disseminated to school leaders striving to engage recent African immigrants in some urban school districts.

 Several studies investigating the academic engagement strategies have shown that immigrant students from African sub-Saharan experienced challenges in education institution due to limited knowledge concerning public-school population in the United States (Saunders et al. 2017). Immigrant students from sub-Saharan continued to suffer discontinuity in the academic culture, language barriers as well as power relations as a result of undertaking different as well as unfamiliar system of education in the United States. The following research question served as the guide of the study.

# Research Question

 This study described the experiences of successful educators in engaging recent African immigrants in urban high schools in Northern east. Three questions were used to guide this research.

R1: What are the experiences of successful educators in engaging recent sub-Saharan African immigrants in learning

R2: What instructional and learning activities do instructors design to engage recent

sub-Saharan African immigrants in the learning content?

R3: What obstacles do teachers report when implementing teaching and learning

strategies focused on student engagement.

# Research Design

Research design – descriptive case study

The approach delivered by case study methodology allowed the development of an in-depth, multi-dimensional survey of the theme is academic engagement across and within the real-life setting. The case study methodological approach aimed to investigate real-life concerns and phenomena across its environmental context. The Case study methodology avoided the use of samples as a representation of the larger community or population in the research study. The application of case study methodology was directly related to the interest of investigating the case because of the impact it had on the field of study and the desire to alter the existing phenomenon.

Creating a detailed data collection strategy through interviews, and observations were used to triangulate relevant information for the study. The research in this study used descriptive case study as the research design. The case study described successful educators in engaging recent sub-Saharan African students in learning was undertaken to understand the successful measures that could be employed in order to mitigate the challenges immigrant students encountered when navigating public education in the United States. The case study qualitative inquiry was suitable for this study since the interpretation and construct of the participants was based on their experience as educators regarding successful academic engagement that has enabled recent students from African sub-Saharan navigate public school in the United States without experiencing challenging situation such as language barrier as well as school culture. This study explored educator perception and their high school environment that has impacted their success in academic engagement. The first part of the study employed a series of well-structured interviews. The researcher in this study used open-ended question to examine educators’ successful approaches employed towards academic engagement among recent African sub-Saharan students.

 The research in this study used interviews to gain educators perception concerning immigrant students from African sub-Saharan not interested in academic engagement. The method used in this study helped in data collection from a wider range of participants concerning successful strategies used in academic engagement that enables immigrant students from sub-Saharan African navigate public school in the United States. An in-depth interviewing enabled intensive individual interview with small population of educators in order to explore their perspective concerning successful academic engagement strategies among recent immigrant students.

# Target Population and Sample

The research in this study identified the population in addition to sample size in this segment. In the study, the aim of the target population was to provide a familiar as well as binding experience similar to educator’s perception concerning successful academic engagement. All participants in the study met the requirements and participate in the research study to provide credible and reliable data. The target population and samples size in the study included.

## Population

The investigator in the research study recruited participants from public schools in Northern East in the United States. The participants were educators in public school with an experience from 6 years to 15 years teaching immigrants students from sub-Saharan African. The research in this study had 10 participants both men and women, where 6 were men educators and 4 women educators from Northern East in the United States. The participants were selected based on their experience on the education and successful academic engagement with recent immigrant students from sub-Saharan African studying in public school in Northern east in the United States. The target population is secondary school teachers in the coastal northeast region of the United States.

The sample is urban high school teachers who have successful experience teaching recent sub-Saharan African immigrants in public schools. The staff of the school of which participants were selected employs 120 teachers. The staff is diverse in age, gender and race.

During the research period, the staff will be invited to participate in a survey focused on how much experience they had teaching sub-Saharan immigrants. They will also be asked their level of comfort sharing their experiences. They will also be asked if they have been successful in engaging sub-Saharan youths.

The desired sample for this study is 10-12 experienced teachers of diverse backgrounds who were versed in the subject. The criteria developed for those teachers participating in this study will be adhered to.

 First, teachers must currently work in an urban, high school setting. Second, teachers needed to be experienced in teaching recent African immigrants.

Additionally, those teachers would have had success in student engagement strategies.

## Sample

# Procedures

Several procedures were used in this research study to obtain information. They included, seeking permission to conduct the study, selecting participants, protecting privacy of the participants, collecting data, analysis of the data, instruments used, researcher’s role as well as guiding questions.

## Participant Selection

Data collection in this study started after the Capella University’s IRB permitted the study. An electronic mail was sent to participants where a recruitment process was conducted in 10 high school in the northern east region of the United States. The recruitment email sent contained critical information such as statement of the permitted study as well as participant’s requirements. Information concerning the research location and how to contact the research was provided in the recruitment email. The researcher inquired the prequalification question after the participants showed interest by contacting. The prequalification question was to ensure participants are qualified to join the study. Participants were invited to join the research study after answering three question appropriately, in case they did not meet the criteria required, the researcher explained criteria used and reasons for not qualifying.

## Protection of Participants

Conflict of interest in any study tend to pose problem for both professional as well as researchers. Ethics entails the appropriate rules of conduct required when conducting a research, and it include moral accountability to safeguard participants from harm (Wilmer et al., 2021). In this regard, participant’s protection should be the foremost focus of all investigators. Concept of confidentiality, privacy as well as anonymity in a study, requires researchers to not only consider aspect best for the research, but also what is appropriate for the participants making the study possible. Effective measures were used in this study to identify as well as manage conflict of interest to enable project validity and reliability. It is important to mention that researchers should obtain the consent of the participants (Wilmer et al., 2021). Practically, this implies that it is not satisfactory to find a prospective participant say “yes”. The participants need to understand aspect they are agreeing to. The research in this study outlined the significance of the research and after understanding. The researcher asked participants to sign informed consent to join the study before the interview started. All identities were kept anonymous by inspiring participants to keep their individualities as secret. The participants were assigned random numbers in order to correspond to safeguard confidentiality. Audio recording was used to enhance participant’s reliability of data collection. In addition, member-checking was a technique used in this study to improve validity, accuracy, credibility as well as transferability of the study.

The research in this study protected validity and integrity of the study. The researcher ensure the study was not conducted within the investigators place of work to avoid incidences of bias with the participants and subjects. The research in this study was not conducted in person as a result of government measures such as COVID-19 restriction. Participants names were kept confidential and their data were locked to avoid sharing with other participants. The vulnerability of the population was protected throughout data collection, analyzing and after storage to ensure no data skewed due to the sensitivity of the studied population

## Data Collection

The research in this study employed semi-structured interviews. Open-ended questions encouraged research discussion rather than question- and-answer format. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), semi-structured interviews in qualitative research study are combined. This study used semi-structured interviews to obtain information using guided questions. The interviews lasted between 12-25 minutes for each participants in the study. The semi-structured interviews were used in this study since the questions were prepared ahead of time thereby enabling the researcher’s preparedness and competence throughout the interviews. Several studies examining the importance of semi-structured interviews have found that, the semi-structured interview typically enables participants the freedom to express their opinion on their terms. Participants in this study had to qualify the criteria and provide informed consent. After that, the research would schedule an interview session with the participants where before the interview begin, the research would inform participants they had option to stop the interview without any penalty by stating they wish not to continue with the interview. The research in this study used non-participants to practice the interview question to ensure the researcher was prepared and proficient to begin the interviews. This study conducted all interview through mobile phone and recorded. The researcher employed follow up activity using questions to avoid ambiguity in aspect that participants provided contradicting information.

The researcher transcribed the notes of the interviews collected to gather any additional information. Participants in this study were asked to review their responses for accuracy through electronic mail. Confidentiality clause was served to the participants after interview in protect information collected, and results locked in a file cabinet and only the investigator had the keys. The collected data was reviewed for accuracy and name of participants numerically encoded to guard their confidentiality.

## Data Analysis

This study transcribed all interviews conducted to familiarize the researcher with the collected data. All collected data in this study was reviewed and note taking process began in order to make preliminary ideas regarding codes related with the content of the educator’s perception regarding academic engagement among the recent immigrant sub-Saharan students from African navigating public education in the United States. Thematic analysis was initiated to analyze the qualitative data. Although analysis of theme did not present complete research design, it provided analysis of data particularly in different approaches such as generic analysis

**Preliminary Code**

Familiarizing with collected data in research through thematic analysis is vital. The data collected was transcribed from the interviews to the word document. Assigning preliminary code was an important aspect after transcribing the data. It is imperative to understand that reviewing important terms such as sequence of events are considered vital part of analysis that can be used to unpacked data collected in order to derive the various themes for code list. The data outside the code list was marked using identifier as not suitable for reviewing. The research in this study reviewed the data to identify whether there was any participant’s response that was not categorized as valid. This study searched for theme possible the code interpreted.

**Reviewing themes**

This section reviewed and categorized data collected. The data was extracted to determine its reliability and usefulness. This study compared and contrasted collected data to determine any related themes. Emerging themes were grouped based on the experience and perception of participants. In the fifth phase, the data was name and define to provide comprehensible meaning thereby avoiding misguiding information.

# Instruments

This study employed semi-structured qualitative interviews as well as empirical materials. Electronic-mail was used recruit participants to join the study. Mobile phone enabled the success of interviews of both questions as well as response that were recorded based on a standard procedure. The research asked question regarding successful academic engagement strategies and challenges such as school culture and language barrier facing recent immigrant students from sub-Saharan African navigating public school in the United States. The semi-structured questions were asked through phone. Cassette tape and microphone were used to record the phone interview and transcribed the recorded audio into word document

## The Role of the Researcher

The researcher in the study was accountable for guiding the study. The primary role of the researcher was to collect reliable information through methods such as open-ended conversation and interview. It is important to mention that the research in this study enhanced trust worthiness through employing own words from the participants as well as asking participants to adapt to the understanding of their practice throughout the interviews. Reflectivity was employed in this research study in order to avoid bias as well as impartial and practical analysis. In addition, the researcher in the study set aside personal experiences, notion as well as bias concerning the research study such as successful educators in engaging recent immigrant students from sub-Saharan African are African American in the United States.

Additionally, the researcher defined academic engagement and recent immigrant students at the start of the interview in order to avoid misunderstanding. It is important to define academic engagement and recent immigrant’s students due to both internal as well as external factors such as school culture and language barrier that impacted recent immigrant students from sub-Saharan African (Osokpo et al, 2021).

## Guiding Interview Questions

This study employed semi-structured interviews collected. The interview established a conducive environment that sufficiently encouraged participants to share about their successful academic engagement when interacting with recent immigrant students from sub-Saharan African while navigating public school in the United States. In this study, participants were asked the following questions:

According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), asking good questions is key to getting meaningful data. The beginning of the interview was be structured for gathering the same demographic data from all particcipants.

**Part 1**

1. How long have you taught in this setting?
2. Have you noticed a surge in the sub- Saharan immigrant student population?
3. Do you agree with my definition of these learners as students from the black African countries (such as Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Congo, Ghana, Guinea, Gabon, Liberia, etc.) who have been in the country for less than a year and have been enrolled in the school system?

*Rationale for 1-3*

The beginning of a semi-structured interview could be structured. Here I am trying to get basic data from all respondents.

1. Please tell me, in detail, whatever you can about your experiences teaching recent sub-Saharan immigrant children.

*Rationale:*

Since the respondent has been carefully selected by the investigator on purpose, it can be assumed that the respondent has something to offer, has had an experience worth talking about. (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016)

1. Tell me if and how you have experienced any differences in the teaching and learning strategies for this population.

*Rationale:* This is a lead discussion question that will be followed by prompts depending on what the response is. Ndemanu & Jordan (2018) suggested that African immigrant children often encounter challenges with developing focused concentration when attending public schools.

**Part 2**

1. If you have experienced some specific features in getting these learners focus on tasks and participate clearly during, how have you handled them?

*Rationale:*

Brophy (1988) claimed that there is limited research on the relationships between specific instructional practices and student achievement.

An interviewer should assume neutrality with regard to the respondent’s knowledge (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016).

1. What has been your experience regarding how teachers feel when they try to get these

learners intellectually respond to appropriate instructional incentives or motivations?

*Rationale*

1. Some research has suggested that teachers of African recent sub-Saharan American immigrants have been successful with their engagement approach. But I notice that you did not describe that as part of your experience. I wonder if you would mind sharing your thoughts on this aspect.

*Rationale*

This is probe following an open-ended question to shed more light on the subject

1. Some people argue that recent sub-Saharan African immigrants respond differently to teaching strategies when engaging in the learning content. For instance, there is a belief that they should be provided with specific tools to learn.

*Rationale:*

This is another probe following an open-ended question to shed more light on the subject

1. Please describe what you perceive these engagement strategies with this population

*Rationale:*

Open-ended question aimed at gathering the experiences of the respondent

# Ethical Considerations

 The research in this study sought permission from the Capella University IRB to start the study. Participants were briefed about the purpose of the survey through electronic-mail and encouraged to sign an informed consent. Also, participants were encouraged to keep confidentiality throughout the study. Recent studies have indicated that bias in the research study can provide distortion in the results (Gyawali et al., 2021). Participants were encouraged to respond based on their perspective. Participants were assigned numerical code that protected their confidentiality thereby ensuring personal information remained protected. Additionally, the interview questions will be destroyed after seven years.

Patton (2015) pointed out that the interviewer is neither a judge nor a therapist unresponsive to learning about great suffering and pain that may be reported and even re-experienced during an interview. Painful, debilitating memories may surface in an interview, even if the topic appears routine or benign. However, an interview may improve the condition of the respondents. Therefore, Patton (2015) recommended being able to make referrals to resources for assistance
(Merriam and Tisdell, 2016).

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), researcher biasness remains a major ethical limitation of many studies. This was an issue in the research by Kumi-Yeboah and Smith (2017), where the two authors were more cognizant of their own backgrounds of Black immigrants. This reflected a conflict of interest because research participants included immigrant students from Sub-Saharan Africa. The first author Kumi-yeboah was a former K-12 teacher and African immigrant from the Caribbean. The authors acknowledged their shared cultural and educational experiences from the British educational system where they study. With the authors teaching in the US, they could easily access contacts, recruits and participants in their research, thus opening avenues for biasness. Creswell and Plano Clark mention that researcher biasness occurs when a researcher fails to differentiate own assumptions and study findings.

However, the solution involves contextualization of discussions within the questionnaires or interviews provided. Ethical implications arise when subjects emanate from similar backgrounds of the researchers, which has a negative influence on study findings and analysis. In such cases, researchers must consider using peer reviewers, reflective journals and books to limit individual social constructions, ethnic identities and their past educational experiences (Conrad, 2008). Other limitations included studies having limited qualitative and quantitative sample size, which they use to generalize cross-cultural educational occurrences, academic success and student engagements (Alrashidi, Phan & Ngu, 2016). The same small samples are used to generalize challenges and positive factors immigrant students face when they join universities at the host nation.

# Summary

Chapter 3 started with a discussion of the purpose of research in this study. The chapter 3 of this study discussed the target population as well as sample. Also, the chapter discussed information regarding procedure as well as participation selection and instruments used to gather data. Semi-structured interviews, data collection method and thematic data analysis. In regard to the above, chapter four include presentation as well as data analysis.

CHAPTER 4. PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

[Paragraph text is styled as Body Text. Each paragraph is double-spaced, with an indented first line. Chapter headings correspond to descriptions in the Dissertation Chapter Guide for Quantitative Studies. Headings match APA Level 1 (centered) and Level 2 (flush left), styled here as Heading 1 and Heading 2. Consult with your mentor about headings that might be necessary to enhance the organizational structure of your dissertation.]

# Introduction: The Study and the Researcher

# Description of the Sample

# Research Methodology Applied to the Data Analysis

# Presentation of Data and Results of the Analysis

# Summary

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CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

[Paragraph text is styled as Body Text. Each paragraph is double-spaced, with an indented first line. Chapter headings correspond to descriptions in the Dissertation Chapter Guide for Quantitative Studies. Headings match APA Level 1 (centered) and Level 2 (flush left), styled here as Heading 1 and Heading 2. Consult with your mentor about headings that might be necessary to enhance the organizational structure of your dissertation.]

# Summary of the Results

# Discussion of the Results

# Conclusions Based on the Results

# Comparison of Findings with Theoretical Frameworkand Previous Literature

# Interpretation of the Findings

# Limitations

# Implications for Practice

# Recommendations for Further Research

# Conclusion

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APPENDIX A. [TITLE]

APPENDIX B. [TITLE]