

Why We Do What We Do: Reflections of Educated Nigerian Immigrants on their Changing Parenting Attitudes and Practices

Chinwe Onwujuba and Loren Marks

Louisiana State University

Olena Nesteruk

Montclair State University

ABSTRACT. This study contributes to the limited literature on African immigrants in the United States, by examining the experiences of Nigerian immigrant parents. A qualitative, phenomenological approach was used to extract the meanings underlying parenting practices and attitudes related to raising children in a new environment. Based on in-depth personal interviews with 30 Nigerian immigrant parents, three themes emerged: 1) parents' socio-cultural adaptation, 2) issues of parent-child interaction, and 3) limited community support for child-rearing. This study provides a knowledge base for relevant human and social service providers to understand the motivations behind Nigerian immigrants' parenting behaviors, so that there is neither a pathology-focused approach to this group's practices, nor the assumption of complete assimilation into American parenting ideology and practices.

Keywords: Nigerian immigrants; parenting practices; acculturation; immigrant children,

Direct correspondence to Chinwe Onwujuba at chynwe122@yahoo.com.

Why We Do What We Do: Reflections of Educated Nigerian Immigrants on Their Changing Parenting Attitudes and Practices

Research in the area of immigrant adaptation indicates that immigrant families experience a substantive acculturative change in the new culture (Yaman, Mesman, & van IJzendoorn, 2010; Kim & Hong, 2007; Rasmussen, Akinsulure-Smith, Chu, & Keatley, 2012). Most of the empirical research on immigrant family adjustment has been done with Latino or Asian families as the subject population (Cheah, Leung, & Zhou, 2013; Dillon, de la Rosa & Ibanez, 2013; Farver & Yoolim, 2000). Comparatively fewer studies have been done on the growing population of African immigrants in the United States (Ademariam, 2007; Takugang & Tidjani, 2009; Tarlebba, 2010).

The American Community Survey (ACS) estimates that as of 2013, the foreign born population in the U.S. was over 41.3 million, constituting about 13% of the total population (Zong & Batalova, 2015). As of 2012 estimates, African immigrants comprise one of the smaller immigrant groups at 4% of the total immigrant population, which comes to 1.6 million (Gambino, Trevelyan, & Fitzwater, 2014). As with other immigrant groups, African immigrant flow increased after the 1965 passage of the Nationality Act which discontinued the low caps on national quotas from non-European nations. African immigrants are more likely to be admitted under the family re-unification provision or the Diversity program, which allows an increase in immigrants from less represented nations (Capps, McCabe, & Fix, 2011; Logan & Thomas, 2012). Amongst this group, Nigerian immigrants make up 12.8% of the total African immigrant population (Zong & Batalova, 2015).

The present study targets the research gap created by limited studies with the less highlighted population of Nigerian immigrants. Particular attention will be paid to the adaptation processes employed by Nigerian immigrant parents in the United States as they raise their children within the influences of two cultural worlds. A phenomenological approach will be used to understand parents' lived experiences, and how they affect parenting decisions and practices.

Nigerian Immigrants

Nigerian immigrants in the United States are generally well educated: 60.5% of Nigerian immigrants hold Bachelor's degrees or higher; more than twice the number for other foreign-born (27.1%) and native-born (27.8%) adults (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). Nigerian immigrant professionals are mostly concentrated in the education, health, and social assistance sectors of industry. Immigration policies in the United States and United Kingdom continue to attract more highly educated Nigerians. Following independence from colonial rule in 1960, the more educated and affluent citizens emigrated to the UK and the U.S. for educational advancement, professional opportunities or to take up administrative positions (Mberu & Pongou, 2010).

As with other African immigrants in diaspora, Nigerian immigrants strive to maintain connections with the 'homeland' (Baffoe, 2010). One way this is accomplished is by becoming

members of ethnic group associations within the new country. Within the United States there are over 100 registered associations of Nigerians (Motherland Nigeria, 2013). Members get together regularly to celebrate Nigerian holidays such as Independence Day or the New Yam Festival, to organize fundraisers for charitable and humanitarian projects back home that assist individual members in cases of family loss or illness, and to organize language learning classes or play groups for members' children (Reynolds, 2009; Ukaoma, 2011). Such interactions help to maintain heritage culture and socialize children into traditional Nigerian values.

Nigerian cultural values, child-rearing, and family traditions

Overall, Nigerian families tend to be large and extended, per cultural expectations and for economic and social prestige reasons. On average, a Nigerian woman will have five children during her childbearing years (UNICEF, 2013). Traditionalists (proponents of pre-colonial spiritual beliefs, and who are neither Christian nor Muslim) and Muslims endorse polygamy and will usually have large households, and Nigerian families generally endorse a patriarchal system (Heaton & Hirschl, 1999). Religious and traditional systems have institutionalized the roles of family members; fathers are bread winners, mothers are nurturers and homemakers, and children are to obey and respect their parents. However, global and national economic trends have contributed to role modifications, with increasingly more mothers taking on provider roles, and fathers becoming more engaged in domestic activities

Although there are roughly 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria, virtually all generally endorse certain family values and culturally prescribed familial expectations. Three ethnic groups - Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa - are the largest and most centralizing to the other ethnic groups, and will be described here in order to extract underlying social and cultural family values. All ethnic groups in Nigeria adhere to a patri-lineal kinship relationship (Ekong, 1986), and male dominance is the over-arching paradigm of family dynamics (Sadiq, Tolhurst, Lalloo, & Theobald, 2010). Kinship is extended; family does not consist merely of the nuclear unit of father, mother, and children; but includes grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles, and in-laws. The Yoruba concept of *idile* (root house), and the Igbo notion of *Ezi n'ulo* (compound and home) represent a fundamental kinship connection (Ekong, 1986) that includes and transcends spatial proximity. In villages, the family dwelling may consist of a compound with houses arranged in a close cluster, and members living in close proximity to cousins, aunts and uncles. This compound becomes a unit of social and economic unity and an enlarged micro-system of development. In cases where the nuclear and extended families do not live together in a compound, the expectations are still for inter-dependence and shared responsibility for each other. Kinsmen, however distant, are treated and expected to behave as siblings from the same parents. Belonging to a kinship group involves caring for and being responsible for one another, sharing material resource flows, giving affection (Alber, Haberlein, & Martin, 2010), as well as child-rearing responsibilities.

Child rearing is jointly shared within the kinship network. For the Hausa, children are raised within the over-arching framework of the extended family. A man's cousins are called *yanuwa* (children of my mother), thereby extending the concept of family beyond a nuclear

structure (Pellow, 1996). A popular saying among the Igbo, “*ora n’azu nwa*” (translated to mean ‘the community raises the child’) embodies the notion that children are a communal responsibility, and a child is answerable to any elder or any older adult (Hron, 2008). Children are generally thought of as belonging to not only their biological parents, but the kinship group. Consequently, child fosterage exists as a traditional practice among a lineage group where children are raised by a relative other than their biological parents (Bledsoe & Sow, 2011). Fosterage occurs for economic, educational, or socialization reasons; parents might send their children to a wealthier relative to obtain an education, or to grandparents to be taught customs and traditions. Fostering is especially beneficial for working and new mothers; the former are able to have childcare challenges resolved through the lineage network, and the latter can take in or foster a relative’s child who can help her ‘mind’ the baby at home. Urbanization and migration (national and international) have not dramatically changed this phenomenon of fosterage within kinship networks in Nigeria, but migration to a distant country, like America, can sever the social, emotional, economic, and logistic support of a Nigerian family.

Child development in Nigeria, and the larger context of West Africa, is adult-centric; the child is perceived as subject to the purposes set by adult family/kinship members (Bledsoe & Sow, 2011; Okoli & Cree, 2012). This authoritarian view is in contrast to Western orientation of child development which tends to be more authoritative and child oriented, where the needs, inclinations, and propensities of the child tends to take first consideration (Cheah et al., 2013).

Respect is a significant expectation for Nigerian children; they are expected to greet elders or ‘seniors’ first, with seniority determined by age, social, educational and/or marital status, and it is considered rude behavior to interrupt or contradict an adult (Ohuche, 1986). Nigerian children are trained to value the needs of the family above theirs; children are assigned the responsibility of helping out in the family business/trade, at the farm, caring for younger siblings, running household errands, and dutifully representing the family by displaying respectful, and culturally appropriate behavior so as not to bring shame to the family (Bledsoe & Sow, 2011; Ekong, 1986; Okoli & Cree, 2012).

Immigrant acculturation strategies

Acculturation is the phenomenon that occurs when groups of individuals having different cultures come in continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural pattern of either or both groups (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). Berry (2007) provided a four-fold classification of acculturation orientations: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization. *Integration* occurs when the host culture is adopted along with the maintained heritage culture, this type of acculturation is associated with more positive psychological and sociological adjustment within the new culture. *Assimilation* involves discarding the heritage culture and adopting the host culture. *Separation* manifests when the host culture is rejected and heritage culture retained. Finally, *marginalization* involves a rejection of both cultures. A relevant dimension of acculturation theory is the notion that immigrants can interact with the cultural values and norms of the host culture from a behavioral and/or a psychological

standpoint. When immigrants adopt external traits of the host culture (e.g., mannerisms, greeting styles, language, dressing, etc.) a behavioral acculturation has occurred. A psychological acculturation, on the other hand, involves an emotional attachment to, and the internalization of host culture values (Berry, 1992).

Immigrant parenting- practices and challenges

Parenting acculturation involves immigrant parents' constant negotiation between heritage and host culture values, and the changes they make in order to help their children optimally adapt. In the on-going course of acculturation to American parenting values and behaviors, immigrant parents create a morphed ideology of parenting, motivated by the desire to help their children achieve optimal socio-cultural and academic adaptation in the host society (Cheah et al., 2013).

Immigrant parents' environmental experiences of host culture practices, particularly related to child-rearing, impact the decisions they make about parenting practices. Immigrant parents observe how American parents and professionals interact with children in various contexts and may use practices such as timeout, sticker chart, praise, and privilege withdrawal. In time, these immigrant parents might decide to change their pre-migration parenting practices in favor of the "American style." For example, first-generation Korean parents' report eschewing spanking and limited expressions of affection that are common in Asian culture (Kim & Hong, 2007). At the same time, Korean and Eastern European immigrant parents note that American parents over-use some strategies like granting children excessive freedoms in decision-making, over-praising their children for insignificant achievements, and grounding children. They indicated that they modify these parenting practices to fit with their pre-migration core values (Kim & Hong, 2007; Nesteruk & Marks, 2011). Further, a study on West African immigrant parents adaptation in the United States notes parents' disappointment with the U.S. educational system, which they described as morally inferior and lacking in the ability to teach children to 'act proper', a notion that entails training the child, not only in formal education, but in character development (Roubeni, De Haene, Keatley, Shah, & Rasmussen, 2015). These West African immigrant parents adopted strategies that included sending their children back to the home country, and also taking the responsibility to teach their children the 'good way'. This evaluative attribute denotes a dual frame of reference (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1995) that immigrants use to compare host culture experiences with those of the heritage culture in order to find the most adaptive fit, and for deciding which host country cultural domains to adopt and which to reject (Cheah et al., 2013).

Pre-migration cultural frame of reference informs parenting style and practices (Rasmussen et al., 2012). Nigerian parents endorse the child rearing ideology of 'training' (Bledsoe & Sow, 2011), which is different from formal schooling, as conceptualized by Western society. It is the idea that children, particularly the older siblings, have a responsibility to help with family advancement. In furtherance of this responsibility, children are exposed to experiences that will teach personal struggle, moral discipline, and perseverance in the face of

harsh adversity. These experiences are provided by adults whose authority is unquestionable, and are revered for their hard earned knowledge and experience. Children who are not ‘trained’, but instead are pampered, coddled and indulged are expected to grow up lazy, arrogant and disrespectful to adult authority; essentially a shame to their family name (Okehie-Offoha & Sadiku, 1996). Nigerian families have been known to send their young children ‘back home’ to be raised by extended kin, in a bid to ensure they are trained in the traditional cultural expectations for children (Bledsoe & Sow, 2011). These parents are inclined to perceive American parenting as ineffective, overly permissive, and the cause of such social ills as drug use, sexual immorality and violence. They endorse the Nigerian cultural values of training up children to respect one’s elders, obtaining a good education, and the use of targeted corporal punishment as the remedy to such unwanted behavior (Ogiehor-Enoma, 2010).

African families are able to maintain their subscription to such pre-migration parenting ideologies and practices through membership of ethnic associations within the host country (Baffoe, 2010), or through the unique status of being transnational families, i.e., families having close relationships with relatives in distant countries (Suarez-Orozco, Bang, Kim, 2011). Members’ pre-migration values and practices may become reinforced through constant communication with loved ones at home.

The socio-ecological backdrop of culture provides support for parenting practices and values, while extended family and the community at large reiterate socialization values and practices. Families transposed to a cultural backdrop different from their origin, however, lose socio-ecological support, and may face the challenges and choices of adjustment (Rasmussen, Chu, Akinsulure-Smith, & Keatley, 2013). Collectivistic cultures (like Nigerian culture) generally socialize their members to value family/community goals over individual goals. For parents from collectivistic cultures, the inclination to assert pre-migration parenting practices might elicit controlling, inhibiting, and authoritarian parenting behaviors with little emphasis on child autonomy and independence (Yaman et al., 2010). In contrast, individualistic cultures (like American culture) that promote exploration, independence, and negotiation might place less emphasis on strict obedience and apply verbal reasoning, induction, and more authoritative parenting in order to encourage stated socialization goals (Cheah et al., 2013).

For parents who move from a collectivistic to an individualistic culture, the challenge becomes implementing pre-migration parenting ideas within a host culture that might not support it (Rasmussen, et al., 2012). In relevant research, Mexican immigrant parents complained about their inability to raise their children with the moral values of obedience and family unity of their home country. They decried the excessive freedom and power that U.S. culture, and child abuse policies give to their children to question their authority, and threaten to call the police on them; a socio-cultural state that enables children to be “given wings to go against their parents” (Reese, 2001). Their expressed challenge was finding ways to combat the ‘ill effects’ of the new culture on their children. A conclusion here and a transition sentence to start the next paragraph would help the flow.

The present study seeks to explore the lived experiences of first generation Nigerian immigrant parents, as they negotiate the pull of both host and heritage cultures in order to adapt behaviorally and psychologically in the U.S. The aim is to adopt a process focused approach in establishing the *why* behind parents' acculturation strategies and parenting practices.

Method

The data for this paper come from a larger study examining the adaptation experiences of Nigerian immigrants residing in the southern region of the United States (Onwujuba, 2015). Particular attention is paid to the parenting experiences, challenges and decisions of these Nigerian immigrants within the context of a new socio-cultural ecology. In-depth personal interviews were conducted with 30 immigrant parents in order to obtain narratives of their immigration experiences.

Recruitment and data collection

Participants who met the following criteria were selected for this study: 1) married couples with young children between 6-10 years old; 2) first generation immigrants from Nigeria; 3) minimum length of residency in the U.S. of 4 years to ensure familiarity with the culture. After receiving IRB approval from their university, the researchers recruited Nigerian participants through proprietors of African markets/shops located in the area; the leaders of the local chapter of a Nigerian association group; an African church with members originating from different countries across Africa; as well as Nigerian individuals who fit the criteria. Snowball sampling, which is a method of asking already interviewed participants to suggest a referral, was also used as a recruitment strategy.

Participants filled out informed consent forms and a background information questionnaire, after which semi-structured interviews were conducted. On average, each interview lasted for 60-90 minutes, and was conducted by the first author in the participants' homes (except for one interview that took place at a fast food restaurant, per the participants' request). Both spouses were interviewed together in all but two instances, due to spouses' work and personal schedules. All interviews were conducted completely in English, except for one instance where the participant and the researcher shared the same language, this resulted in occasional language switch during the interview. The first author translated these comments into English with consideration for cultural context.

Study participants

As previously noted, study participants included 30 college educated Nigerian immigrants (15 married couples). The participants represented the southern, eastern and western parts of Nigeria. On average, these families had resided in the US for 11 years (range 6-17 years) and all but two couples had migrated together. With the exception of one couple who came to the

U.S. on a student visa, all other couples migrated via diversity visa lottery. Five out of 15 couples had at least one child born in Nigeria; the rest of the children were born in the United States. The average number of children per couple was three, and the average age for the children was seven years.

The average age of the parents was within a 30-40 year range. The participants were highly educated: 26 possessed advanced post-graduate degrees (MS/MBA/PhD), 4 had 'some college' experience. Two of the post-graduate degrees were obtained in Nigeria, while the rest were obtained in US universities. Participants held a wide range of occupations, including customer service representative, social worker, nurse, pharmacist, accountant, electrical engineer and data analyst. All of the couples were dual career couples with full-time employment for all fathers and 13 out of 15 mothers (2 of the mothers had part-time jobs). Combined family income was around \$40,000 for 3 families, around \$60,000 for 6 families, around \$80,000 for 2 families and over \$100,000 for 4 families. Although at the time of the study these immigrant parents were residing in Texas, they reported having lived in various states over the years in the U.S. (such as California, Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Tennessee).

Procedure

Participants were recruited through snowball sampling which initially comprised of contacting the proprietors of African markets who provided the name of the leader of the local chapter of a Nigerian association group, as well as individuals who fit the criteria or who might know possible participants. As participants were interviewed, they were asked to suggest a referral. Also contacted was an African church with members originating from different countries across Africa. Only Nigerian couples were recruited.

Prior to the interviews, parents filled out informed consent forms that explained the study and their right to anonymity and optional withdrawal. Additionally, a background information questionnaire was administered to the participants prior to the interviews. This questionnaire included information on their age, educational level, occupation, number of years in the U.S., number of years married, income, age and gender of children, and the states that they had lived in while in the United States. After the forms were completed, a semi-structured interview with 19 open ended questions was conducted. Sample interview questions include, 'What are your reasons for immigration? What are the greatest challenges you face as a parent in this country? and, how would you say 'American culture' influences your family and your parenting?' Semi-structured interviews allowed for further probing if participants' responses were brief. Interviews were conducted at participants' homes (except for one family interview that was conducted in a fast-food restaurant).

Due to work and personal schedules, two couples were interviewed separately, while all the others were interviewed together. On average, each interview lasted 60-90 minutes. Participants' identifying information was available only to the investigator and then kept in a secure location upon completion of the study. All interviews were conducted completely in

English, except for one instance where the participant and I shared the same language and there was an infrequent language switch during the interview. I translated her comments into English with consideration for cultural context.

Data analysis

A grounded theory methodology was used to analyze data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Data collection and analysis were done simultaneously. All data was audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim within a few days of collection by the first author. Open and axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) was used to identify salient themes, this was done by using line-by-line and sentence or paragraph coding for initial interviews. Essentially, if a certain sentence or paragraph reflected parents' perceptions on 'discipline' it would be noted on a post-it-note. After conducting some more interviews and open coding sessions, numeric content analysis was used to ascertain the number of categories that appeared most frequently across the different interviews. This was done by grouping together the post-it-notes that contained similar summaries to form a distinct category (Marks, 2015). This plan of analysis was adapted from a similar strategy used by Marks, Nesteruk, Swanson, Garrison, and Davis (2005). Axial coding was used to compare and make connections between categories. Eventually, the most salient and frequently mentioned concepts were identified.

Reflexivity

The researcher's role as a facilitator does not occur in an interactional vacuum; facial expressions, body language, and voice have the potential to influence participants' responses, and the study results as a whole. Reflexivity refers to the continuous process of self-reflection that researchers engage in to generate awareness about their feelings and perceptions (Hughes, 2014), and how their biases might affect the research in data collection, analyses and findings. In light of this knowledge, it is important to note that the first author and her husband are both immigrants from Nigeria. They have two children (9 and 2 years old). A shared cultural background, as well as being an immigrant professional and mother enabled an insider status for the first author, and facilitated participants' recruitment and building rapport. Second and third authors contributed alternative perspectives to data interpretation as a U.S.-native father and a Ukrainian-American immigrant mother respectively.

Findings

Three major themes pertinent to the study of Nigerian immigrants' parenting practices emerged from participants' narratives: 1) immigrant parents' socio-cultural adaptation, 2) issues of parent-child interaction, and 3) limited community support for child-rearing. These themes will be expounded below, supported by excerpts from participants' interview responses.

Participants indicated that they would like to negotiate a cultural mid-point between

Nigerian parenting culture and American parenting culture for the purpose of providing optimal adjustment for them and their children. Based on participants' responses, their immigrant identifications allowed them to assess the worth of what would otherwise have been blindly accepted cultural norms and values. They have had to consciously evaluate the cultural choices available to them and choose which ones to keep and which ones to discard in order for them and their children to succeed in the U.S. All participants' names are pseudonyms.

Femi(father): There should be a synergy or balance of both cultures. Nigeria has a great culture that has respect and great value and there is a need to keep this. [Equally], in America, there is a culture that gives confidence to children which we don't really have in Nigeria... Some you keep and some you throw away, depending on how you look at it. This synergy will help [our] kids.

Further, participants shared that their children would, most likely, adopt American cultural values and behaviors because this is where they live. Funmi, a mother of two, stated that her children were probably not going to return to Nigeria and will reside in the United States for the rest of their lives. Therefore, she would like for her children to adapt to the American culture at a level that would ensure successful integration within the new environment. This was a common sentiment shared by many other participants.

Ada (mother): With the way we were raised, we want them to keep our culture... As a parent, I would like them to adapt to the Nigerian culture, but because they live here and mix with American peers, they still have to do the American way. But we still have to remind them that this is what your culture is like.

A majority of the participants indicated a strong inclination to find a balance between the two cultures that they experience by sloughing off norms from both cultures that are deemed negative, useless, or unproductive, all for the purpose of reaping the benefits of both worlds for them and their children. An apt example is the idea of desiring and encouraging open communication between parents and their children; a norm that is not prevalent in the Nigerian culture where a majority of parents implement authoritarian parenting practices.

John (father): Back home we like to shout kids down, it's like your opinion doesn't count, you're still a kid. So I don't think that's ideal, you know. My goal will be that my kid will trust me enough to be able to share whatever it is, maybe some developmental changes he's going through.

Sade (mother): My parenting style has changed in the sense that there is open communication. [As a child] I didn't have the confidence to go to my parents and say, "this is what I am thinking about, you did this to me and this is how it affected me and this is how I am feeling."

Another example of the conscious decision to discard undesirable cultural norms in a new culture is the notion, expressed mostly by the mothers in the study, that American children are ‘indulged’ and unable to withstand life stresses because they are not “tested.” Parents indicated that the whims of American children are overly accommodated, in contrast to the child-rearing approach prevalent in Nigeria.

Sade (mother): The children here [in the U.S.] have been protected to death, they are not tested. Because you don’t have the dress color you want, you feel you want to die. It’s being over-pampered and over-protected.

Ada (mother): It’s like the kids are ruling here, which is not supposed to be. That’s why most of them are spoiled because they never suffered for one day to see the value of something. They believe it’s there, and that you owe it to them, and that’s why the life is so different here.

Parents’ perspectives on this issue stem from their experiences in Nigeria which included the commonly held expectation that children would benefit from experiencing hard work, and substantially contributing to the welfare of the family. It is not uncommon for children to have to fetch water from distant sources, to walk long distances in order to attend school, and to sell household wares to help the family (Nzelibe, 1993). The general strategy for preventing this ‘spoiled’ attitude was to show children ‘tough love’ by giving them what they need, not necessarily what they want, and demanding responsibility, high achievement and hard work from them. Such experiences were expected to teach children the character traits of perseverance and focusing on the important things.

Although the idea of a blended culture is suggested to be the best acculturation option for immigrant family generations (Berry, 2011), some participants, however, indicated that given the choice, with regards to child-rearing, they would teach their children more of the Nigerian culture because they placed a greater value on it. Since they grew up on the above referenced tenets of hard work, perseverance and responsibility, they believe that these values have served them well and gotten them to where they are right now. They believe it would be an asset for their children to have more of these Nigerian cultural attributes. Ada, a mother of three, opined that she would rather give up the American culture and take the Nigerian culture (with regards to child-rearing practices) because it helps her as an adult. Another mother presented a similar sentiment and even offered a specific prescription:

Juliet (mother): I would like (a cultural blend of) 80% Nigerian culture and 20% American. It favored me and I want to pass that on to my children. At some point they will find a balance and I will find a balance.

For the most part, the parents of this study appear to have adopted a bi-cultural disposition, specifically with regards to raising their children. This disposition appears to be relevant to the on-going decisions that they make, not just about their own interactions within the new culture, but also about how acculturated they would like for their children to be.

Issues of parent-child interactions

Another theme that emerged among all the participants is the topic of expectations for interactions between parents and children. Of first note is the issue of respect; parents unanimously attested to the ingrained and widely socialized manner in which Nigerian children were to show respect to adults or those in authority. As noted earlier, children in Nigeria are trained to greet elders or those in authority first, and to address them in a respectful manner (i.e., yes sir/ma, mama/papa), and never by their first names. Children are also never to argue with or interrupt an adult. The Nigerian norm for addressing adults is more formal, and assigns certain interactional roles to adults and children. This is in contrast to the American norm where adult-child interactions are more informal, and children are allowed to express their opinions. Participants indicated their strong displeasure with the way American children addressed or behaved towards adults, particularly their parents.

Ada (mother): It has been a struggle to keep [our children] from being confused about their culture, in greeting, for instance. How can you wake up in the morning and you don't say anything to me? In Nigerian culture they will tell you, "When you wake up in the morning, you say 'good morning mom, good morning daddy'". And in American way when they come into the house they say, "hi!" "Who are you hi-ing? Me? No! You say, good afternoon."

John (father): American values I reject are kids calling parents and aunties by their first name, or saying "Hi" to their daddy or someone of their daddy's or uncle's age. When you notice unwanted behavior, you tell them it is not acceptable.

All of the participants either stated categorically, or implied that such behavior of not showing proper respect to parents or adults is a cultural norm that they would not accept. Martha, a mother of three children, shared her displeasure with children not acknowledging when she speaks to them or tells them to do something. She, like other parents in this study, chooses to correct such behaviors and teach the children more respectful responses to adults.

Juliet (mother): Growing up in Nigeria kids are raised to say, "Yes sir/Yes ma" to older people and you put your head down and not make eye contact when talking to an adult as a sign of respect.

It is important to note that, from a Nigerian perspective, it is considered a cultural anathema to encounter another person and not acknowledge them in greeting; even more so for young children to begin their day without giving proper salutations to their parents and older siblings. This is perhaps why the parents in this study were insistent on their disappointment that the host culture does not facilitate an awareness of this seemingly obvious obligation.

Participants also spoke passionately about children “talking back” to them; a concept that is rooted in the aforementioned expectation that children should show respect to those who are older than they are, and also to those in authority. Talking back does not translate to the normal back and forth of a conversation between an adult and a child, but considers the body language, attitude, whether or not the child is looking the adult in the eye, and tone of voice of the child involved in the conversational exchange. From the Nigerian perspective, children are considered rude if they refute the parent’s statement, or if they argue with a parent or adult. By doing so, they are deemed to be calling into question the adult’s character, integrity, judgment, and authority.

John (father): Kids talking back to their parents is not common in Nigeria... At whatever age or educational status, it is frowned upon to talk back to one’s parents in Nigeria, when you begin to do that it’s called rebelling against your parents. Even if you have a doctorate degree you don’t talk back, your daddy is your daddy and your mommy is your mommy. Even when you are having an argument/discussing problems, you are expected to present issues with respect.

Grace (mother): You know, it’s something you don’t even dream of, like your parents are talking and you’re talking back. “My son... no, you can’t argue with me, when I finish talking, then you say what’s in your mind, you don’t exchange words with me.” Mm-mm (no), it won’t happen.

From a Nigerian perspective, parenting is deemed a near-sacred role that is integral to the composition and continuity of the community. Children are expected to defer to the adult, and age is commensurate to certain degrees of authority; older siblings hold a certain degree of authority over the younger ones. Within such a paradigm, parents are imbued with absolute authority (culturally and legally) in all aspects of raising their children, particularly discipline. The use of punitive discipline strategies is widely accepted in Nigerian society, as a means of re-directing erring children. Study participants, however, discussed the restrictions that they feel, trying to apply these familiar discipline measures in a new society that is less accepting of punitive discipline measures.

Sade (mother): If my child does something, I can’t spank her legitimately without fear of retribution, even though the child has done something really serious. I am training my child within the parameters of what society [here] allows, according to the dictates of the majority, although bending it a little. Where I can bend/compromise, I will. But where I cannot, I will stand my ground.

All of the parents in the study talked about having to modify their claim to absolute parental authority since moving to the U.S., claims that are similar to those of West African immigrant parents in New York who reported that they had relinquished their parental authority because of prevailing parenting norms and child-abuse laws which compelled them to implement less authoritarian child-rearing practices (Rasmussen et al., 2012). For participants in the present

study, a change in their perception of parental authority was influenced by personal realizations of the benefits of a change in discipline style, or by constraining societal norms and laws in the host culture.

Martha: Here in America, you discover that when you tell your child to do anything, the first question is “but why?” and initially that was a challenge that was kind of shocking to me. Initially, I considered it that the child is being rude, being disrespectful. That was part of the cultural shock that I had. But I discovered that is what the system entails. So over time I had to kind of un-learn what I knew back home; how I was raised.

Martha’s comment exemplifies parents’ initial preconceptions of how children are expected to behave, and also the challenge facing immigrant parents to choose between cognitively adapting to the new cultural norms or maintaining their cultural expectations. Many other parents in the study chose to adapt to more culturally approved parenting behaviors and attitudes because of the undeniable influence of the new culture and environment.

For some other parents, the decision to adopt a different parenting style came about through self-reflection on the effectiveness of the style they were familiar with growing up. Perhaps the juxtaposition of contrasting styles (yelling vs. talking) brought an evaluation of the efficacy of each.

Juliet: Explaining is more of the American style of parenting. The American culture gives you a breather-where you have to breathe and talk rather than be violent. If I spank her, that doesn’t help her understand the reason why she needs to put her books away. I have to tell her why it’s important for her to take care of her things, versus being aggressive and hitting her for talking back first.

Parents not only used their dual frame of reference to assess the benefits and detriments of parenting practices in the U.S., they were also critical of Nigerian cultural parenting strategies that they deemed ineffective. Some participants admitted that Nigerian parents can be “brutal” because of the “lack of checks and balances.”

John (father): Back home, somehow it’s like the master-slave relationship kind of thing, where the father does no wrong, the mother does no wrong, you don’t question...but here I think it’s good that sometimes they question your authority, you know; especially if they do it politely. But back home there’s nothing like politely or not polite. [If] you question authority: it’s rude.

In summary, these immigrant parents appear to have undergone parenting attitude and style changes, as a result of their continued interaction with U.S. culture. This cognitive and behavioral transformation is an adequate example of the potential that immigrant parents have to evaluate and choose cultural norms that best benefit them and their families.

Lack of community in child-rearing

As noted previously, the communal nature of life in Nigeria ensures that all members of a given village/tribe/community have a unified stake in the upbringing of a child and consider it their duty to aid or correct any child regardless of whether or not they are biologically related (Okehie-Offoha & Sadiku, 1996). Additionally, children are socialized to exhibit a classic socio-cultural learning style: the older ones teach the younger ones varying lessons ranging from putting their clothes on, to appropriate body language when addressing a parent or an adult. For immigrants who have grown up in this type of socio-cultural setting, it can be challenging to have only the parents shouldering the responsibility of raising the child. Below are some representative responses that address this issue.

Efehi: Parenting is a community job. Neighbors and relatives help watch and discipline kids. Here [in the U.S.], it's all on the parents; it's just you alone taking care of the kids. Back home, when I had my first kid, in the morning we drop off the kid with grandma and we don't come back till about 5pm. There are people around to help take care of the kids. There are always cousins, uncles, younger siblings, neighbors, family members there to assist you.

Stella: Back home children relate with a lot of people, but [here] it's just you. So if you don't tell them, they don't know. [In Nigeria] they have their age-mates, they have people older, they have older siblings, they have [a village of people raising them]. But here, it's just you and them, so where will they know from? T.V.? And the way they learn from TV is not good. It's a big challenge.

Stella and Efehi's comments further support the view that the Nigerian conceptualization of parenting ideology and practice is a stark contrast to the societal view of parenting in the U.S. culture. Participants perceive that in the U.S., everyone "minds their own business," hence the diminished inclination to publicly chastise a child who errs.

Sade: [In Nigeria] if someone sees your child misbehaving or having issues, anybody at any time can step up to help guide or correct your child. But here, if you see a child misbehaving you pretend like you don't see because you don't know if your response will be misconstrued. It's not that you don't want to help; you just don't know how the parent will react to it. So people tend to turn in the opposite direction and then it's the child that falls through the cracks.

The Nigerian communal environment is difficult to re-create in the U.S., as parents noted that they did not feel completely comfortable letting their children play with their neighbors because they don't do not know them. Ayo, a father of two, reminisced about being allowed to play in the streets when he was younger, and not having to come home until it was dark. This was possible because his parents felt it was safe for him to play outside, unsupervised, because there would always be an adult who could keep an eye on him. Parents shared that here, in

America, the full weight of child-rearing is on them and they do their best to impart goals and expectations to their children.

Despite the perceived parenting challenges of ‘raising kids alone,’ these parents shared that they mitigated this challenge by implementing various strategies that range from having a grandparent or a relative visit intermittently, or adjusting work schedules in order to accommodate their children’s school and extra-curricular activities. Although there is research indicating that immigrants obtain support from ethnic associations within the host country (Reynolds, 2009), the participants in this study did not mention belonging to any ethnic organizations that would provide them with child-rearing support. Parents indicated that they did not see any benefits to belonging to a formal ethnic association. Some of them had relatives who lived close by, and so were able to assuage their need for ethnic association in that way, while others found and established friendships with other Nigerians or Africans. This choice of ethnic relationships appears to be further evidence of immigrants using a dual frame of reference to decide who would be included in their social interactional matrix, as an extension of their socialization goals for their children.

Discussion

This study is a qualitative exploration into the acculturative experiences of Nigerian parents living in the United States, particularly as it relates to their parenting decisions and practices. Participant narratives provide insight into the lived experiences of these immigrant parents, and the meanings that they make of their new socio-cultural environment. Immigrant parents tend to use their heritage culture as a frame of reference for assessing the value of host culture norms; the topic of respect and polite greeting (or lack thereof), in the new culture was especially strongly decried by participants. However, participants also applied host culture norms as a frame of reference for critically assessing the value of Nigerian cultural norms; the custom of authoritarian parenting that “shuts children down” was equally criticized by participants. This dual frame of reference perspective allows immigrant parents to appropriate seemingly useful cultural practices, such as less punitive discipline strategies, in order to create a unique child-rearing paradigm that is different from traditional Nigerian customs, but suitable for their current social ecology, a finding consistent with previous studies (Kim, 2003; Kim & Hong, 2007; Huang & Lamb, 2015).

Participant narratives indicate that parents’ degree of cultural blending (i.e., the point on the continuum between maintaining the heritage culture and completely adopting the host culture) reflects the type of acculturation strategy adopted. Participants’ willingness to adopt certain U.S. cultural values and behaviors, while maintaining some pre-migration cultural values is a loose indication of an *integration* acculturation strategy (Berry, 2007). This finding is consistent with previous studies on Nigerian (Rodriguez, 2014) and Kenyan immigrants (Odera, 2010), as well as Korean-American and Eastern European immigrant parents (Kim & Hong, 2013; Nesteruk & Marks, 2011).

All participants in this study are first-generation immigrant parents and their adoption of host culture practices (such as increased open communication, and a more understanding view of ‘talking back’) appears to have increased with length of stay, a phenomenon consistent with previous studies (Kim & Hong, 2007, Huang & Lamb, 2015, Lin & Fu, 1990). Further, participants’ pre- and post-migration status entailed high education levels, relatively well-paying jobs and a middle class income level, characteristics which strongly influence the adoption of a positive attitude towards acculturation, as well as an integrated acculturation strategy (Dow & Woolley, 2010). Immigrant parents’ continued and consistent interaction with host culture practices provides greater experiences for evaluating and adopting parenting practices that would help accomplish their pervasive goal of helping their children adapt optimally.

In a bid to socialize their children into Nigerian behavioral values, Nigerian parents are generally stricter than American parents in the behavioral expectations that they have; an attitude similar to findings in research done with Latino and Eastern European immigrant parents (Behnke, Taylor & Parra-Cardonna, 2008; Nesteruk & Marks, 2011). Attitudes such as ‘talking back is unacceptable’, and “respect is a big deal” are strongly emphasized and upheld as ‘good’, ‘responsible’ behavior. However, parents also shared that they had come to understand that children’s relatively increased vocalizations did not mean that they are trying to be rude, but are a product of socialization into the American culture that values individuals’ opinions, even if they are children. Parents appear to have acculturated both behaviorally and psychologically to the idea and practice that children should have a voice and the right to express themselves, as long as it is done respectfully. Such modifications that parents make to their behavioral expectations for their children enable a truly Nigerian-American identity; one that they can pass on to their children as ‘the best of both worlds,’ a finding consistent with other studies of immigrant parenting (Kim, 2013; Nesteruk & Marks, 2011).

Issues of parent-child interactions was the most salient theme that emerged from the parents’ narratives. Although there was no specific question addressing discipline or authority, the greater portion of parents’ narratives reflected their opinions and experiences of this topic. Having immigrated from a more collectivistic and communal environment, parents were socialized into a cultural attitude where children are answerable to any elder or adult (Hron, 2008), and were supposed to show unquestioning obedience to parents or those in authority. Pre-migration, Nigerian parents also used discipline practices such as spanking, yelling and corporal punishment in child-rearing, similar to other immigrant groups: Mexican (Reese, 2011), Korean (Kim & Hong, 2007) and West African (Rasmussen et al., 2012). Although, post-migration, immigrant parents re-assessed these discipline strategies as negative and began to view them as barriers to raising their children ‘right,’ they did share that they felt conflicted about substituting familiar punitive discipline strategies for the dominant discipline practices in the U.S., and that they were adjusting to parenting within the cultural and legal constraints they perceive in the new/host culture.

Parents' preference for blending the host and heritage cultures is most likely facilitated by the moderate cultural distance between Nigerian and U.S. culture. Cultural distance indicates the differences in cultural models between the heritage and host country (Berry, 1997). The greater the difference between host and heritage groups (e.g., language, parenting/socialization values and dietary congruence), the more difficult the acculturation process (Berry, 1997). For instance, English is the adopted, official language in Nigeria, making these immigrant parents fluent and able to interact effectively with members of the host society; a cultural capital that is a salient contributor to immigrants' level of host country adaptation (Baek & Madhavappallil, 2009), and also enables an evaluation of relevant parenting practices, which, consequently influences their parenting decisions. Other socio-cultural similarities with U.S. culture include the pervasiveness of American media, entertainment, and fashion within Nigerian society. The existence of these similarities, however, does not preclude adjustment difficulties, as the overarching and internalized values of communalism, parenting values and child-rearing expectations present challenges of adaptation for Nigerian immigrants in the U.S., as shown in a study on Nigerian immigrant parents who indicated that being bereft of their large extended family was a significant adaptation and child-rearing challenge (Amayo, 2009). Parents' degree of cultural distance supports an easier adaptation to the new culture, enabling an integrated form of acculturation that may make the decision to blend both host and heritage cultures much easier.

Limitations

The findings presented in this study reflect the experiences of educated Nigerian immigrant parents. These findings may not be representative of all Nigerian immigrant parents due to differentiating factors like educational level, socio-economic status, immigration experiences and religion. Future research that includes participants from a mix of educational and socio-economic backgrounds would provide a more cross-sectional and representative perspective of adjustment. Participants' responses are also reflective of the time period in which they grew up prior to migration; current parenting practices and ideologies might be different due to increased globalized awareness of alternative parenting practices from other cultures.

Additionally, couples were interviewed together (except for two) with both spouses responding to some questions together, and other questions individually. While a joint interview presents the benefits of having both spouses providing varying perspectives on a singular topic, the interview process showed a dominant speaker most of the time. This dynamic did not allow for both couples to answer all questions, leading to the possibility that a more in-depth and nuanced perspective from both spouses was not obtained. Future research would benefit from having both spouses answer all questions, or interviewed individually.

Implications and Conclusions

When families immigrate to a new culture, there is usually a realignment of one's beliefs, practices, and role as a parent, resulting in a sense of conflict. The process of integration of the two value systems and the meaning making process is individual for each family; however, each family identified cultural balance as their goal for themselves and their children.

Family life educators, family therapists, medical professionals, social workers, teachers, and policy makers would do well to understand that many Nigerian immigrant parents still hold onto some pre-migration parenting styles and expectations for children's behavior, even though they might not be the salient factors that influence parenting decisions. Additionally, practitioners who are unfamiliar with Nigerian cultural values will be aided by the findings of this study in understanding why many educated Nigerian immigrant parents make the decisions that they do, and implement certain parenting practices. Practitioners would also benefit from evaluating immigrants' behaviors based on a dual-culture perspective, and not from the frame of reference of the dominant culture only.

In conclusion, immigrant parents face the daunting responsibility of not only simultaneously inhabiting two worlds, but also guiding their children through these worlds. The narratives that have been shared by the participants in this study have served as an opportunity for self-reflection, as one of the mothers shared informally; she said it was good for her to think about 'why we do what we do.' Family practitioners, teachers, and human service professionals working with immigrant families can glean some insight into the process of acculturation and changes in parenting practices of Nigerian immigrants and develop better appreciation of this immigrant population.

Chinwe Onwujuba, was in the School of Social Work (Child and Family Studies) at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA at the time of this study. She is currently a teacher at Murchison Elementary school, Pflugerville, TX.

Loren Marks is in the School of Family Life, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.

Olena Nesteruk, Department of Family and Child Studies, Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ.

References

- Ademariam, E. M. (2007). The challenges and opportunities faced by skilled African immigrants in the U.S. job market: A personal perspective. *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies, 5*(1), 111-116.
- Alber, E., Haberlein, T., & Martin, J. (2010). Changing webs of kinship: Spotlights on West Africa. *African Spectrum, 45*(3), 43-67.
- Amayo, F. O. (2009). Dimensions of challenging parenting practices: Nigerian immigrants in the United States. *Journal of Pan African Studies, 3*(2), 82-101.
- Baek, C. J., & Madhavappallil, T. (2009). Predictive factors of acculturation attitudes and social support among Asian immigrants in the USA. *International Journal of Social Welfare, 18*(1), 76-84.
- Baffoe, M. (2010). The Social reconstruction of “home” among African immigrants in Canada. *Canadian Ethnic Studies, 41/42*(3-1), 157-173.
- Berry, J. W. (2011). Integration and multiculturalism: Ways towards social solidarity. *Papers on Social Representations, 20*, 2.1-2.21.
- Berry, J.W. (2007). Acculturation strategies and adaptation. In J.E. Lansford, K. Deater-Deckard, and M.H. Bornstein (Eds.), *Immigrant families in contemporary society* (pp. 69-82). NY: Guilford.
- Berry, J. W. (1992). Acculturation and adaptation in a new society. *International Migration, 30*(s1), 69-85.
- Behnke, A. O., Taylor, B. A., & Parra-Cardonna, J. B. (2008). “I hardly understand English, but...” Mexican origin fathers describe their commitment as fathers despite the challenges of immigration. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 39*(2), 187-205.
- Bledsoe, C. H., & Sow, P. (2011). Back to Africa: Second chances for the children of West African immigrants. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 73*(4), 747-762.
- Capps, R., McCabe, K. & Fix, M. (2011). *New streams: Black African migration to the United States*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.
- Cheah, C. S. L., Leung, C. Y. Y., & Zhou, N. (2013). Understanding “Tiger Parenting” through the perceptions of Chinese immigrant mothers: Can Chinese and U. S. parenting coexist? *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 4*(1), 30-40.

- Dillon, F. R., De La Rosa, M., & Ibanez, G. E. (2013). Acculturative stress and diminishing family cohesion among recent Latino immigrants. *Journal of Immigrant Minority Health, 15*, 484-491.
- Dow, H. D., & Woolley, S. R. (2010). The acculturation processes: The strategies and factors affecting the degree of acculturation. *Home Healthcare Management & Practice, 23*(3), 221-227
- Ekong, S. C. (1986). Industrialization and kinship: A comparative study of some Nigerian ethnic groups. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 17*(2), 197-206.
- Farver, J. M., & Yoolim L. (2000). Acculturation and Korean-American children's social play and behavior. *Social Development, 9*(3), 316-336.
- Gambino, C. P., Trevelyan, E., N.; & Fitzwater, J. P. (2014, October 1). The foreign-born population from Africa: 2008-2012. *American community survey briefs*. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2014/acs/acsbr12-16.pdf>
- Heaton, T., & Hirschil. T. (1999). The trajectory of family change in Nigeria. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 30*(1), 35-55.
- Hron, M. (2008). *Ora na-azu nwa*: The figure of the child in third-generation Nigerian novels. *Research in African Literatures, 39*(2), 27-48.
- Huang, C., & lamb, M. E. (2015). Acculturation and parenting in first-generation Chinese immigrants in the United Kingdom. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 46* (1), 150-167.
- Kim, E. & Hong, S. (2007). First generation Korean American parents' perceptions of discipline. *Journal of Professional Nursing, 23*(1), 60-68.
- Kim, H. (2013). Parenting patterns of "1.5 generation Kowis' in New Zealand: "Take best of both worlds to raise the next generation." *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies, 15*(2), 78-93.
- Kim, S. Y., Chen, Q., Wang, Y., Shen, Y., & Orozco-Lapray, D. (2013). Longitudinal linkages among parent-child acculturation discrepancy, parenting, parent-child sense of alienation, and adolescent adjustment in Chinese immigrant families. *Developmental Psychology, 49*(5), 900-912.
- Logan, B. I., & Thomas, K. J. A. (2012). The U. S. diversity visa program and the transfer of skills from Africa. *International Migration, 50*(2), 1-19.

- Marks, L. (2015). A pragmatic, step-by-step guide for qualitative methods: Capturing the disaster and long-term recovery stories of Katrina and Rita. *Current Psychology*.
- Marks, L. D., Nesteruk, O., Swanson, M., Garrison, M. E. B., & Davis, T. (2005). Religion and health among African Americans: A qualitative examination. *Research on Aging, 27*(4), 447-474.
- Mberu, B. U., & Pongou, R. (2010). Nigeria: Multiple forms of mobility in Africa's demographic giant. Retrieved from <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/nigeria-multiple-forms-mobility-africas-demographic-giant>
- Motherland Nigeria (2013). *Nigerian organizations*. Retrieved from <http://www.motherlandnigeria.com/organizations.html>
- Nesteruk, O., & Marks, L. D. (2011). Parenting in immigration: Experiences of mothers and fathers from Eastern Europe raising children in the United States. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 42*(6), 809-825.
- Nzelibe, J. (1993). America's wild kingdom: A Nigerian immigrant is shocked by his U.S. high school. *Policy review, n66*, 40-43.
- Odera, L. (2014). Kenyan immigrants in the United States: Acculturation, coping strategies and mental health. *Contemporary Sociology, 43*(1), 138.
- Ogiehor-Enoma, G. (2010, May 15). Children of first generation immigrants: Victims of circumstances, African Abroad—USA.
- Ohuche, N. M. (1986). The ideal pupil as perceived by Nigerian (Igbo) teachers and Torrance's creativity personality. *International Review of Education, 32*(2), 191-196.
- Okehie-Offoha, M. U. & Sadiku, M. (1996). *Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Nigeria*. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press.
- Okoli, R. C. E., & Cree, V. E. (2012). Children's work: Experiences of street-vending children and young people in Enugu, Nigeria. *British Journal of Social Work, 42*(1), 58-73.
- Onwujuba, C. (2015). A tale of two cultures: A qualitative narrative of Nigerian immigrant parenting in the United States. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.
- Pellow, D. (1996). Hausa. Retrieved from <http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Hausa.aspx>

- Rasmussen, A., Akinsulure-Smith, A., Chu, T., & Keatley, E. (2013). The social ecology of resolving family conflict among West African immigrants in New York: A grounded theory approach. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 52*(1-2), 185-196.
- Rasmussen, A., Akinsulure-Smith, A., Chu, T., & Keatley, E. (2012). "911" among West African immigrants in New York City: A qualitative study of parents' disciplinary practices and their perceptions of child welfare authorities. *Social Science and Medicine, 75*(3), 516-525.
- Redfield, R., Linton, R., & Herskovits, M. (1936). Memorandum for the study of acculturation. *American Anthropologist, 38*(1), 149-152.
- Reese, L. (2001). Morality and identity in Mexican immigrant parents' visions of the future. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 27*(3), 455-472.
- Reynolds, R. (2009). Igbo professional migratory orders, hometown associations and ethnicity in the USA. *Global Networks-A Journal of Transnational Affairs, 9*(2), 209-226.
- Rodriguez, L. (2014). The transnational political involvement of Nigerian immigrants in New York City: Motivations, means and constraints. *Journal of International and Global Studies, 6*(1), 50-71.
- Roubeni, S., De Haene, L., Keatley, E., Shah, N., & Rasmussen, A. (2015). "If we can't do it, our children will do it one day": A qualitative study of West African immigrant parents losses and educational aspirations for their children. *American Educational Research Journal, 52*(2), 275-305.
- Sadiq, A., Tolhurst, R., Lalloo, D., & Theobald, S. (2010). Promoting vulnerability or resilience to HIV? A qualitative study of polygamy in Maiduguri, Nigeria. *AIDS Care, 22*(2), 146-151.
- Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage.
- Suárez-Orozco, C., Bang, H. J., & Kim, H. Y. (2011). I felt like my heart was staying behind: Psychological implications of family separations and reunifications for immigrant youth. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 26*(2), 222-257.
- Suarez-Orozco, C., & Suarez-Orozco, M. (1995). *Transformations: Immigration, family life and achievement motivation among Latino adolescents*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Takougang, J. & Tidjani, B. (2009). Settlement patterns and organizations among African immigrants in the United States. *Journal of Third World Studies, 26*(1), 31-40.

- Takyi, B. K. (2002). The making of the Second Diaspora: On the recent African immigrant community in the United States. *The Western Journal of Black Studies*, 26(1), 32-45.
- Tarlebba, N. K. (2010). An ethnographic study on the role of education and language among African Immigrants as they struggle to integrate and succeed in the United States. *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences*, 2(2), 854-868.
- Ukaoma, C. (2011). Nigerian associations abroad: Are they leading by example or they “all hat and no cattle?” Retrieved from <http://nigeriaworld.com/feature/publication/ukaoma/021311.html>
- UNICEF (December, 2013). *At a glance: Nigeria*. Retrieved from http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/nigeria_statistics.html#106
- U.S. Bureau of Census (2015). *Historical Census Statistics on the foreign-born population of the United States: 1850-1990*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/twps0029.html>
- Yaman, A., Mesman, J., & van IJzendoorn, M. H. (2010). Parenting in an individualistic culture with a collectivist cultural background: The case of Turkish immigrant families with toddlers in the Netherlands. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 19(5), 617-628.
- Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2015). Frequently requested Statistics on immigrants and immigration in the United States. Retrieved from <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states#TOP>