

African Communities in New Zealand: An Investigation of their Employment Experiences and the Impact on their Well-being using African Oral Tradition of Storytelling as Research Methodology

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ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

“I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning”.

Name: **Kudakwashe Tuwe**

Signed: 

Date: 23rd October 2018

DEDICATION

This PhD thesis is dedicated to my supportive and dear lovely wife **Annette Tuwe** (nee **Mutema**), my two children: **Makanaka Tuwe** (daughter) and **Munashe Tuwe** (son) and finally my dearest mother **Agatha Tuhwe** (nee **Kanda**).

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ABSTRACT

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This qualitative study seeks to investigate and identify the key employment-related experiences and challenges faced by New Zealand-based African communities and the impact of these experiences on their well-being. The African oral tradition of storytelling was used (as a methodology) to critically examine the meanings, feelings and experiences of these communities (Olupona, 1990; Tuwe, 2016). The use of African storytelling enabled African community groups and individual participants to share their “lived” experiences regarding the employment-related experiences and challenges within New Zealand. The main research question was: *What are the main employment challenges faced by African communities in New Zealand?*

The Labour Disadvantage Theory (LDT) and Critical Race Theory (CRT) were used as theoretical frameworks. LDT theory states that most minority groups are disadvantaged and excluded from the labour market and sometimes coerced (by the system) into starting small businesses (Li, 1997). Some individuals end up on state benefits because of not getting employment (Li, 1997). CRT is widely used to examine issues of racism and discrimination (Bell, 1985; E. Taylor, Gillborn, & Ladson-Billings, 2009). In the context of my study, CRT was utilised to investigate racism in employment regarding Africans in New Zealand. These two theories will be used to explore the employment experiences and challenges faced by African communities in New Zealand.

In-depth discussions using face-to-face interviews with 20 individual participants and storytelling in the African tradition with four community groups provided the data to critically examine these employment experiences. For the purposes of this study, I will refer to community groups as communities. One of the unique features of this study is the concept of communities in storytelling. This thesis uses African storytelling as the research

methodology (Achebe, 1959; Olupona, 1990) and the approach of using communities was more than the focus group concept. Community voices expressed common experiences, worldviews, thoughts and feelings of the African communities regarding employment issues. According to McMillan and Chavis (1986), the characteristics of a community include place or locality, interest and communion. In the context of this study, place refers to New Zealand. Common interest concerns employment experiences. Communion refers to 'spirit of community', and 'sense of belonging' (Ife, 1995) which is enshrined in the African concept of Ubuntu. Ubuntu means 'I am what I am because of you' (Mandela, 1994.p.10).

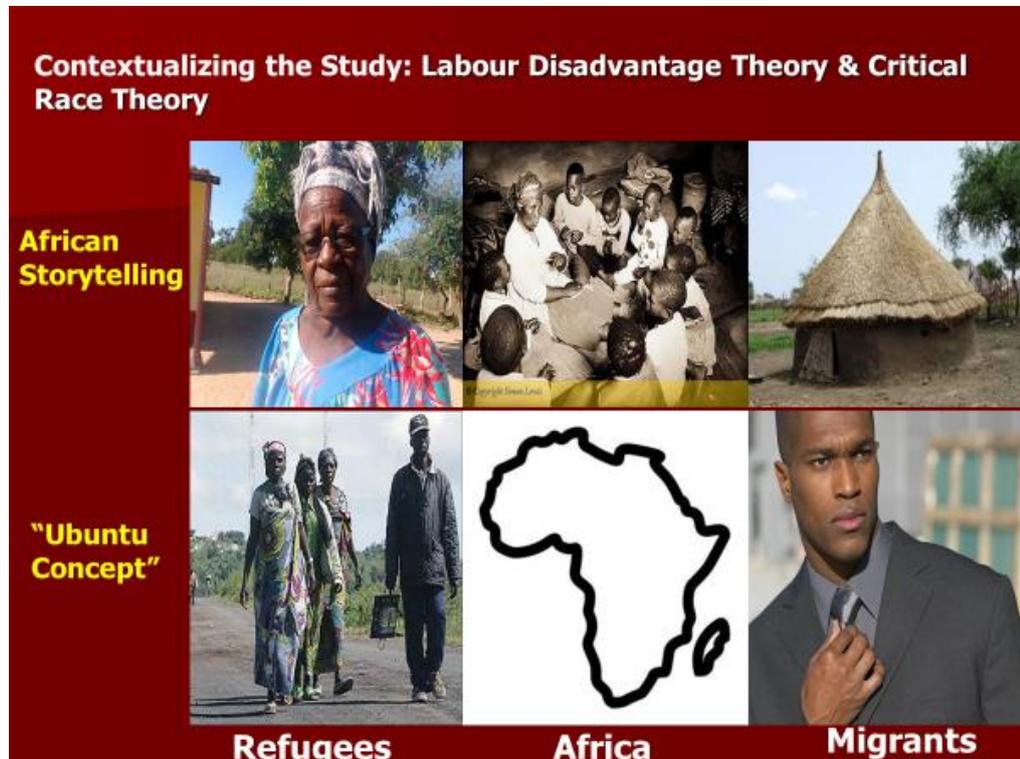
The original contribution to the body of knowledge of my study is in three specific areas namely; the utilisation of the African oral tradition of storytelling as a methodology, the concept of communities in storytelling or the use of community group discussions (referred to as communities) as opposed to contemporary focus groups and the application of the African philosophy of Ubuntu. The African storytelling provided African communities in New Zealand an opportunity to share their employment experiences using lenses and worldviews they are familiar with (Olupona, 1990). The use of community group discussions offered members of the New Zealand-based African communities a platform to learn, discuss, debate and challenge each other on employment matters. The Ubuntu philosophy helped African community members to maintain respect and dignity for each other as they discussed their employment experiences, even if they did not agree (Mandela, 1994; Nussbaum, 2003). The Ubuntu philosophy also strengthened and complemented the use of communities in the African storytelling process.

The results showed that African communities in New Zealand are experiencing employment challenges such as racism and discrimination, English language proficiency and non-recognition of their overseas qualifications. The study concluded that for African communities to settle and contribute meaningfully to the productivity of New Zealand these challenges need to be addressed urgently. This will require a coordinated approach by key stakeholders,

including the government, African communities, employers and service providers. The stories of African communities showed determination, resilience, community networks and strategies to survive under challenging employment conditions such as under-employment and lack of promotion opportunities. The storytelling set-up depicted the olden days' communal gatherings where people sat around a fire listening to stories from their elders. It is hoped that this research process would empower the African communities and make their voice heard.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

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"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter" Dr Martin Luther King, jnr.

1.1 The Story of My life: Why I Chose this Topic

This is the story of my life: I was born in a relatively poor Zimbabwean family in Southern Africa. My late father was a jovial polygamist. Initially he was employed as a police officer and later became an ambulance and fire-engine driver. He was loved by many in our community. My mother (currently 84 years) has never been formally employed but single-handedly provided for the family from her earnings as a subsistence farmer. She is a staunch believer in biblical principles, human rights and social justice issues. I believe I inherited some of

those characteristics from her. Due to my poor background, when I completed my secondary school education, I could not proceed with my higher education and I got a job as an apprentice (Trainee Fitter and Turner in Mechanical Engineering). After four months, I resigned and joined the banking sector because I knew I was in the wrong profession. I loved working with people as opposed to machines and tools. After three years, I later discovered that my real passion and interest were in helping people to utilise their potential and talent. Hence, I left the banking sector and joined the human resources management (HRM) profession where I was responsible for the recruitment and selection of employees. While working as a human resources practitioner, I encountered some employment-related challenges where I felt that some of the employment decisions were unprofessional and unethical, for example, hiring, promoting and firing employees on the basis of tribalism, regionalism and racism. I fought against such employment practices. Due to my passion in employment matters, I embarked on and completed professional studies in human resources management with the Zimbabwe Institute of Personnel Management (IPMZ), where I am currently a full member, thus, using the credentials MIPMZ.

When I migrated to New Zealand in 2002, I was shocked when I experienced employment challenges similar to the ones I had fought against in my home-country, such as racism and discrimination. I could not get a job within my profession (HRM). I applied for many jobs which I believed I was qualified for, and by mid-2006, I had received more than 150 unfavourable responses from prospective employers. This was despite the fact that I had successfully completed a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from a reputable New Zealand university. As someone who had a keen interest in employment matters, I decided to join the New Zealand Institute of Human Resources Management, but this did not help my employment situation. I still could not get a job in the HRM profession. I was devastated and frustrated. My biggest question was: why was I unable to secure employment within my profession (HRM), yet I had both the experience and professional qualifications?

When I completed my second masters' degree, Master of Philosophy (MPhil), in 2012 at Auckland University of Technology (AUT), all of the participants (in the MPhil study on Health Promotion) expressed their employment experiences as a major challenge and barrier to their progression and social advancement in New Zealand. However, I did not deal with the issue of employment in my MPhil research since this was beyond the scope and limitations of that study. My experience with employment-related challenges, both in Zimbabwe and New Zealand, has had a huge influence in the choice of my current PhD topic. I am keen to determine the main key employment experiences and challenges faced by African communities in New Zealand and the impact of these challenges on their well-being. I am also interested in understanding why qualified, experienced and competent Africans encounter difficulties in getting jobs in their professions in New Zealand.

1.2 The Purpose of the Study: Research Aim

The main aim of my research project is to identify some of the key employment-related experiences and challenges faced by African communities who are based in New Zealand. Internationally, it is known that refugees and migrants tend to experience employment-related challenges that are similar to the ones encountered by some minority communities who live in developed countries. Some of these challenges are racism and discrimination and non-recognition of overseas qualifications (Allan & Larsen, 2003; Creese, 2010). These challenges have a potential to adversely affect communities and individuals' physical, mental, social and psychological well-being. My study therefore sought to understand these employment-related experiences and challenges within the African communities in New Zealand from a communities' perspective. The study also sought to comprehend the impact of these employment experiences on the well-being of African communities living in New Zealand.

My study is unique in that it used the concept of communities as opposed to the contemporary focus groups. The main reason for doing this was to use the community voices in the storytelling process (interviews) when African

communities shared their employment stories. For this reason, I will be referring to community groups as communities. The concept of 'communities', with its characteristics of 'sense of community', 'spirit of community' and the principle of 'community solidarity' are detailed in this thesis in the Methodology Chapter. These characteristics are key to the concept of communities.

In summary, community voices are critical as they express the common employment experiences of the Africans in New Zealand. The communities were able to critically examine and challenge some of the employment practices in New Zealand.

1.3 Main Research Question

The main research question investigated in this study was: *What are the main employment challenges faced by the African communities in New Zealand?*

Sub-questions for community groups were:

- What are some of the employment experiences faced by your communities?
- What are the impacts of these employment experiences on your communities?
- How do you feel about some of these experiences?
- With regard to the employment challenges faced by the African communities in New Zealand, what would be your suggestion(s)?

The guiding sub-questions for individual participants were:

- How long have you been in New Zealand?
- What was your profession in your home country before you relocated to New Zealand?
- What has been your experience in seeking employment in New Zealand?
- What experiences have you had while working in New Zealand? Please explain.
- If you are currently employed, what has been your experience regarding promotion at your workplace(s) in New Zealand?

Guiding sub-questions for both community groups and individual participants helped to gain insight into specific issues of employment-related experiences and challenges faced by African communities in New Zealand.

1.4 Employment Challenge Phases: Searching for a Job, In-Job Experience and Promotion Issues

Globally, it is acknowledged that racism and discrimination are the main employment-related challenges faced by refugee and migrant communities as well as minority groups (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2006; Danso, 2002; Dietz, 2010). My study seeks to establish the leading employment-related challenges for the New Zealand-based African communities. My thesis makes a distinction between the three phases of employment-related challenges faced by African communities namely: while people are searching for a job; when already in-the-job; and promotion or progression issues when individuals have already settled in their jobs.

1.5 Historical Context: Africans in New Zealand

All the participants in my study were New Zealand-based Africans, drawn from both refugee and migrant backgrounds. The term African means anyone originally from the continent of Africa (Chile, 2012). It is not determined by race, skin colour or religion. All community group members and participants were indigenous Africans save for two who were Indian-Africans. Both Indian-Africans were born and raised in Africa, regard Africa as their original home and call themselves Africans. All participants were recruited from the Auckland region which has the largest number of Africans in New Zealand (Refugee Services, 2012; Tuwe, 2012).

The African community is less than one percent of the ethnic population living in New Zealand as of March 2013 (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Within the New Zealand context, ethnic refers to anyone who is not indigenous Maori,

European and Pacific Islanders (Statistics New Zealand, 2016). The ethnic population in New Zealand is also known as Culturally And Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities (Statistics New Zealand, 2017). In 2008, the number of Africans in New Zealand stood at approximately 91 000 (Tuwe, 2012) (see Table below). Based on the 2006 New Zealand Census data, Dickson, Henrickson, and Mhlanga (2012) estimated that there were 61,428 Africans in New Zealand at the end of 2012. This discrepancy may be due to how people identify themselves in a census and because many Africans are relocating to neighbouring Australia for better employment opportunities once they have secured their New Zealand citizenship (Refugee Services, 2012; Tuwe, 2012). About 86.6 percent of Africans live in Auckland, Wellington, Waikato, and Canterbury regions (Dickson et al., 2012; Tuwe, 2012).

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008		Total
Numbers of Africans in NZ (with NZ Citizenship)	3092	2923	3625	3709	4406	4935	3106		25 796
All Visa categories (save for citizenship) end of 2008									65 533
Total of Africans in NZ as at end of 2008									91 349

Table 1.1: Number of Africans in New Zealand as at the end of 2008. Source: Department of Internal Affairs- New Zealand (Reported 2008)

The population of African communities in New Zealand has grown significantly since the early 1990s with the majority from refugee background (Chile, 2002; Tuwe, 2012). Historically, New Zealand's refugee policy has been underpinned by a strong humanitarian response and this was bolstered by supportive public opinion (Refugee Migrant Services, 1993; Tuwe, 2012). For the period between 1987 and 1994, New Zealand took only 375 Black African refugees (Chile, 2002). However, as a result of the escalation of political crises in Somalia (1992-1994), the Ethiopia-Eritrea war (1991-1993) and the Rwanda genocide of 1994, the number grew in the subsequent years (Chile, 2002). Between 1992 and 2001, around 3000 refugees from the Horn of Africa (Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Eritrea) arrived in New Zealand under the United Nations refugees quota system (New Zealand Immigration Services, 2004).

Until the 1987 Immigration Act, New Zealand laws and regulations restricted or prevented the entry of individuals or groups who were deemed to be 'undesirable', with the intention of making New Zealand 'British' and keeping the country 'white' (New Zealand Immigration Service, 1987). People from Britain were actively recruited while those who were perceived as 'different', particularly from Africa and Asia, faced restrictions (New Zealand Immigration Service, 1987). This restriction made it difficult for Africans to come to New Zealand.

Most of the African migrants who came to New Zealand in search of employment and a better lifestyle were professionals from English-speaking countries such as Zimbabwe, South Africa, Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria (Refugee Services, 2012; Tuwe, 2012). For example, Zimbabweans were accepted by the New Zealand government under the Zimbabwe Special Residency Policy on the basis that they were coming from an English-speaking country which had experienced economic challenges triggered by political instabilities (Hartnack, 2005; New Zealand Immigration Service, 2006; Zamchiya, 2011). As for the South Africans, the majority were fleeing from the Mandela-led African National Congress (ANC) government which was voted into power in 1994 (The South African Magazine, 2012). Given the varied cultural background of these communities, it is vital to understand the impact and magnitude of employment-related experiences and challenges on their social lives and well-being.

While this study included both African refugees and migrants, it should be noted that most women from refugee background are shown to face the most difficult employment challenges due to their traumatic experiences and the situation of their migration and re-settlement journeys (ChangeMakers Refugee Forum, 2012; Refugee Services, 2012; Tuwe, 2012). These situations often include difficulties in becoming proficient in English language mainly as a result of spending most of their time working within the home and result in the women feeling isolated and disconnected from both their communities and prospective employers (ChangeMakers Refugee Forum, 2012). For this reason,

I decided to have one of the community groups (focus group) composed of refugee women only.

Historically, most Africans in New Zealand made it clear that they do not want to be classified as black or white Africans. This was revealed in published studies on African communities in New Zealand which were jointly carried out by three New Zealand universities (Dickson et al., 2012; Fouche, Hendrickson, & Poindexter, 2011). For example, two of the studies, entitled *Standing in the Fire: Experiences of HIV-Positive Black African Migrants and Refugees Living in New Zealand* (Fouche et al., 2011) and *AfricaNZ Care: A report on knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and beliefs about HIV among Black Africans living in New Zealand* (Dickson et al., 2012) showed that the participants were adamant that they do not want to be referred to as 'Black Africans'. This request was ignored by the researchers and resulted in anger and disappointment by the Africans in New Zealand. They perceived this as arrogance by the researchers who were white. The communities felt disrespected and indicated that they would not participate again in any future research done by these researchers.

I participated in two of these research studies as a focus group member (Dickson et al., 2012; Hendrickson, Dickson, Mhlanga, & Ludlam, 2013). In the *Standing in the Fire*, I was involved in recruiting participants because of the confidentiality around their HIV status. It was easy for me to be the participant recruiter because I was working for the New Zealand AIDS Foundation as National Programme Manager-African Communities and had gained the trust and confidence of participants. For this current thesis, I was categorically told by most of my participants that I should not use the term 'Black African' especially within the thesis title. Based on this experience, I have decided to use the term 'African' as opposed to 'Black African' to maintain the trust and confidence of my people and communities.

However, it is important to note that some reference in the literature review, UK in particular, refer to the term 'Black African' in order to differentiate between black Africans and white Africans (Matthews, 2011; McKinnon & Bennett, 2005; Patten, 2011).

1.6 Rationale and Significance of the Study: Putting the Project into perspective

The issue of employment experiences or challenges means different things to different people depending on their background and context such as socio-economic status, political affiliation, immigration status, profession and qualifications (Mbiba, 2004; McGregor, 2008; The International Council on Human Rights Policy (ICHRP), 2010). For example, some migrants may be more concerned about issues of employment-related racism and discrimination and non-recognition of their overseas qualifications while those from a refugee-background may be apprehensive about English language proficiency as their main employment-related challenge (Abhink, 2006; Alboim, Finnie, & Meng, 2005; Daniel, Chamberlain, & Gordon, 2001; Danso, 2002; Esses, Dietz, Bennett-Abuayyash, Joshi, & Chetan, 2007; Morrice, 2009; Tillaart, Monnikhof, Berg, & Warmerdam, 2000). This indicates that the experiences of individuals within a community are different (Bradley & Longino, 2001). Therefore, it is important to understand what communities consider to be their employment-experiences or challenges distinct from what other people think or perceive these experiences to be.

In the United Kingdom, employment-related racism and discrimination had a strong negative impact on the lives and well-being of black and minority ethnic groups (Alexander, 1999). This claim was supported by Carr-Hill (2007) in the UK, and Uneke (1996) in Canada who revealed that racism and discrimination affected the mental health of African communities in these countries. Such negative employment experiences contributed to mental distress, which led to feelings of isolation, depression, fear, intimidation and low self-esteem within these minority communities. A resultant effect was anger and resentment toward the host communities (Carr-Hill, 2007). These adverse employment experiences obstructed job opportunities for African communities in the UK, Canada and other developed countries (Carr-Hill, 2007). New Zealand-based African communities are currently facing similar challenges with racism and discrimination (Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy Report, 2006; Butcher,

Spoonley, & Trlin, 2006; ChangeMakers Refugee Forum, 2012; Department of Internal Affairs, 1996; Department of Labour, 2010, 2011).

My study seeks to identify some of the key employment challenges faced by African communities in New Zealand and to suggest ways of empowering these communities to achieve equity and fairness in employment outcomes. From the data, my study hopes to be able to identify ways to reduce employment inequalities, minimise lack of access to employment information and employment opportunities, and secure employment-placements in supportive environments for the African communities in New Zealand. Matheson (2005) stated that for employment-initiated programmes to achieve the desired outcomes, partnership between communities and service providers should be genuine. This partnership should be anchored on values such as respect, trust and reciprocity. Furthermore, Minkler and Wallerstein (2003) stressed the need for a community-based participatory approach which will help to enhance and buttress the relationship between communities, prospective employers and employment service providers. Such initiatives are imperative in the process of reducing employment inequalities in our communities. Shepherd (1999) pointed out the importance of participation of, and consultation with communities on issues that involve their employment, social lives and well-being. This creates an environment where communities share their knowledge and experience; hence they feel empowered and valued. It is therefore important that communities be given fair opportunities to be actively engaged and involved in decision-making relating to their employability and well-being.

My study will hopefully be able to identify how societal factors such as human rights, social justice, equity and equality, active participation in policy development, and empowerment can positively contribute to solutions regarding the employment challenges affecting African communities and by extension other ethno-cultural communities in New Zealand (Laverrack & Labonte, 2000). Therefore, the benefit of this study is not only to the affected

African communities, but also to the host community and other minority communities in New Zealand.

1.7 Methodology

I used the African oral tradition of storytelling to critically examine the experiences, feelings and meanings of New Zealand-based African communities with regard to their employment-related experiences and challenges. Through storytelling, African communities were able to share their experiences and how these experiences impacted on their lives and well-being. African storytelling was more appropriate as the participants and communities, who are all Africans, are used to this tradition (Olupona, 1990). In order to reinforce and strengthen the use of African storytelling, I used the African philosophy of Ubuntu, which means 'I am what I am because of you' (Mandela, 1994.p.10; Johann, 2006.p.15). Ubuntu is mainly about the principles of respect and humanity. This philosophy helped African communities to work together in harmony and solidarity in their group discussions as they shared their employment stories and experiences. Ubuntu as a concept will be explained later in this study (Johann, 2006).

As a way of ensuring that the collective voices of the African communities were heard, I gathered together four community groups to hear their stories. Each community group consisted of six people. In addition to the community groups, I interviewed twenty individual participants from the African communities. The reason for including both community groups and individual participants was to create a platform to hear views from both perspectives and then make an analytical comparison. Many of the experiences and views of individual participants were similar to those of the communities.

1.8 Theoretical Approaches- The Labour Disadvantage Theory (LDT) and the Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Labour Disadvantage Theory (LDT) and Critical Race Theory (CRT) were used to explore the employment-related experiences faced by New Zealand-based African communities as these theories were found to be appropriate to this study. LDT was chosen mainly because of the effective manner in which it deals with issues pertaining to employment experiences and labour disadvantages of the job market faced by refugees and migrants (Young, 2000). LDT states that refugees, migrants and other minority communities are generally disadvantaged in the labour market and sometimes find it difficult to access employment (Li, 1997; Rigg, 2005).

CRT was selected to inform the issues of racism and discrimination faced by African communities in New Zealand. CRT is concerned with understanding how racism is able to persist despite its nearly universal condemnation by state policy and by the norms of polite society (Ansley, 1989; Bell, 1985, 1992; Crenshaw, 1988; E. Taylor et al., 2009). According to Bell (1985) and Delgado and Stefancic (2000), CRT can be understood as a study of white domination and collective white supremacy. CRT identifies that power structures are based on white privilege and white supremacy which propagate the marginalization of people of color (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006). It recognizes that racism is entrenched in the fabric and system of society (Bell, 1985). The objective of CRT is to highlight that race is embedded in all social structures and institutions (Bell, 1996). CRT aims to uncover and critique racially oppressive social structures, meanings, and ideas for the purpose of combating racism (Bell, 1995). In this way, CRT may empower people to resist and contest racism in real life. Both LDT and CRT will be discussed in further detail in chapter two of this thesis.

1.9 Outline of the Thesis

This thesis is organised into seven chapters. This introduction sets out the rationale, background to the study, significance and context of the study as well

as stating the main research question. The second chapter deals with the theoretical frameworks, Labour Disadvantage Theory (LDT) and Critical Race Theory (CRT). Chapter three provides a critical review of the current international trends on employment-related experiences of refugees and migrants (including African communities) in other developed countries to see if there are lessons to be learnt for the New Zealand-based African communities. The literature review also looks at the employment-related challenges faced by other minority and marginalized groups in New Zealand including Maori, Pacific Islanders and Asians. Chapter four explains the methodology, methods of data collection and analysis and the composition of the participants, that is, the community groups and individual participants. The rationale for using the African oral tradition of storytelling as the methodology to critically examine the meanings, feelings and experiences of African communities with regards to their employment-related experiences and challenges is also given.

Chapter five focuses on findings and data analysis. It presents findings related to the five identified themes from the data gathered. Chapter six discusses the key findings and links them to the theories and relevant areas discussed in the literature review. Chapter seven provides the conclusion, the recommendations and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

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“Black people are the magical faces at the bottom of society’s well. Even the poorest whites, those who must live their lives only a few levels above, gain their self-esteem by gazing down on us. Surely, they must know that their deliverance depends on letting down their ropes. Only by working together is escape possible. Overtime, many reach out, but most simply watch, mesmerized into maintaining their unspoken commitment to keeping us where we are, at whatever cost to them or to us” Derrick Bell

2.1 Theoretical Perspectives- Framing the Research: Labour Disadvantage Theory (LDT) and Critical Race Theory (CRT)

According to Young (2000), there are a number of theoretical frameworks and international perspectives that govern investigations on issues regarding employment experiences and challenges faced by refugees and migrants. Some of these theoretical frameworks include: Cultural Theory, Middleman Minority Theory, Opportunity Structure Theory, Ethnic Enclave Theory, Critical Race Theory and Labour Disadvantage Theory (Bell, 1985; Li, 1997; Meager, Bates, Dench, Honey, & Williams, 1998; Rigg, 2005). After careful consideration, I decided to use Labour Disadvantage Theory (LDT) and Critical Race Theory (CRT) to explore the phenomenon of employment-related experiences faced by New Zealand-based African communities. These two theories were chosen because they are more appropriate to addressing the issues of labour disadvantage, racism and discrimination in a comprehensive way (Young, 2000). In recent times, LDT and CRT theories have been used in a number of international studies that examined the employment experiences of refugees, migrants and minority communities (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000; Young, 2000; Rigg, 2005). In this thesis, I used LDT to critically investigate the five themes arising from the study. The application of CRT mostly focused on the theme of

racism and discrimination because it adequately addresses this particular phenomenon (Bell, 1985; A. P. Harris, 2012).

2.1.1 Labour Disadvantage Theory (LDT)

LDT states that refugees and migrants are generally disadvantaged on the labour market, sometimes finding it difficult to access employment, and as a result ending up in self-employment or on state-benefit schemes (Li, 1997). Rigg (2005) mentioned that some of the barriers and challenges associated with labour disadvantages are difficulties in getting jobs (before employment), the stagnant earnings growth, challenges in labour market participation, and the slow rate of training and upward occupational mobility, that is, promotion (when in employment). The other labour disadvantage include lack of recognition of overseas qualifications, demands of local work experiences and lack of promotion opportunities (Li, 1997; Riggs, 2005). Li (1997) refers to LDT as 'blocked mobility theory' whereby people are 'blocked' from entering the labour market. Li (1997) further states that if migrants happen to be employed, they are blocked from promotion opportunities to advance or climb up the corporate ladder in their careers and this hinders their career progression. According to Rigg (2005), LDT refers to a situation in which certain groups of people are excluded from participating in the labour market or face barriers in penetrating the labour market. Although LDT discusses promotion challenges, it does not offer reasons as to why refugees and migrants are not promoted. The studies by Li (1997) and Rigg (2005) point out the labour disadvantages faced by refugees and migrants, but they do not explain on why refugees and migrants were excluded from the labour market. My study seeks to find out whether Africans in New Zealand are experiencing similar labour disadvantages and why they believe they face such experiences.

A study by McMillan and Chavis (1986), which used a regression analysis of 1940 census data, found that during the Great Depression, joblessness, the most serious form of labor market disadvantage, forced the majority of urban blacks in the USA to become "survivalist entrepreneurs" and to start small businesses in

response to the need to find an independent way to survive. In their study McMillan and Chavis (1986) employed the LDT to explain why a black urban population was forced by labour disadvantages to get into business. A survey carried out in Toronto, Canada in the 1990s showed that Blacks had an unemployment rate of 12 percent which was the highest among minority English speakers (Uneke, 1996). The unemployment situation forced most Blacks to go into self-employment even if the majority did not have any knowledge of running a business. Similar situations also occurred in the USA and Britain where high unemployment rates were prevalent among Blacks (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990; Light, 1990; Wilson & Martin, 1982). Fairlie and Meyer (1996) showed in a study involving 60 ethnic/racial groups in the USA that those who had emigrated from countries with low self-employment rates had high self-employment rates. This suggested that although migrants were not used to self-employment in their countries of origin, their unemployment situation in the USA compelled them into business as a survival strategy. Volery (2007) indicated that most refugees and migrants in many developed countries get into self-employment as an economic survival strategy. Most of the above-mentioned studies found unemployment as the major cause of migrants becoming self-employed but makes no mention of other possible factors such as lack of local work experience, cultural issues and language barriers. By using storytelling, my research seeks to reveal whether some of these factors contributed to labour disadvantage situations for Africans in New Zealand.

Labour disadvantages in the western world faced by migrants normally force them into self-employment. For example, Li (1997) found that in Canada, labour disadvantages forced refugees and migrants into self-employment and some on to government benefit schemes. In Germany, the Vietnamese migrants went into self-employment as a way of avoiding negative employment experiences in the labour market (Schmis, 2013). In his study, de Raijman (1996) found that minority communities in the USA, for example, Koreans, Middle Easterners and South Asians were more likely to be motivated to self-employment than white natives because of employment barriers and challenges. Min and Bozorgmehr (2000)

concluded that African and Hispanic migrants are the groups most disadvantaged in the USA labour market. Waldinger., Aldrich, Ward, and Blaschke (1990) found that racism and discrimination were the major employment challenges faced by African refugees and migrants in the USA job market.

Light (1979) has shown that the LDT is often used to explain why migrants and minorities embrace small businesses in their host economy as a strategy for survival in the face of joblessness. According to Volery (2007), it is not a sign of success or desire for most refugees and migrants to venture into business, but they are mostly pushed into it due to difficulties in securing employment. Similar findings were confirmed in Australia, USA and Europe (Body, 1992; de Raijman, 1996; Light, 1979; McMillan & Chavis, 1986; Min & Bozorgmehr, 2000). Volery (2007) argued that factors that motivate refugees and migrants to enter into business are multi-layered and include the economic, cultural and religious challenges. A Labour Force Survey conducted in Britain, revealed that labour disadvantages adversely affected disabled people, refugees and migrants from getting jobs (Burchardt, 2001; Meager et al., 1998). The results of two studies in Denmark showed that Taiwan-Chinese young men and Turkish youth were forced by unemployment and lack of promotion, respectively, into self-employment (Kupferberg, 2008). Studies by Waldinger et al (1990), Volery (2007) and Kupferberg (2008) specifically mention labour disadvantage barriers such as racism and discrimination, cultural issues and lack of promotion as forcing some refugees and migrants into business. In order to have an understanding of the labour disadvantages that are affecting Africans in New Zealand, my study will document the labour disadvantages as specifically stated by community groups and individual participants in their employment-stories.

LDT suggests that engaging in small business activities is a common response by some refugees and migrants to blocked employment opportunities. Unemployment or underemployment often compels members of oppressed ethnic groups to find an independent means of livelihood (Light & Rosenstein, 1995; McMillan, 1976). According to (Boyd, 2000), jobless minorities are

pressured into self-employment even with limited chance of success. However, it should be noted that refugees and migrants come from diverse backgrounds and their needs are varied. Some go into self-employment for different reasons, for example to make money or passion. They are not forced. However, some are compelled by economic and employment difficulties. My study will examine whether there are any Africans in New Zealand who have been compelled by labour disadvantage situations to go into self-employment or on state benefit-schemes.

Employment challenges faced by refugees and migrants include racism and discrimination (Dietz, 2010). English language proficiency (Mogalakwe, 2008), lack of local work experience in the host country (Opoku-Dapaah, 1993), non-recognition of educational and professional qualifications (Kirk, 2004) and non-recognition of work experience acquired from the country of origin (Beyene, 2000). My thesis will investigate labour disadvantage challenges around upward occupational mobility and promotion issues for the Africans in New Zealand.

Research carried out in New Zealand revealed that refugees and migrants are discriminated against in the labour market and employers normally turn them away due to a lack of local New Zealand work experience (Butcher et al., 2006). Employers fail to understand that refugees and migrants cannot purchase work experience but gain it by being offered an opportunity through employment. From the above examples, LDT is appropriate for this study.

2.1.2 Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a framework used to understand the question of how racism persists despite its nearly universal condemnation by state policy and by the norms of a polite society (Ansley, 1989; Bell, 1985; Crenshaw, 1988; A. P. Harris, 2012; E. Taylor et al., 2009). CRT can also be understood as a study of white domination and collective white supremacy and it examines how racial domination persists without blatant coercion (Bell, 1985, 1989, 1996; Delgado & Stefancic, 2000). CRT states that power structures are based on white privilege

and white supremacy which in turn propagate the marginalization of people of colour (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006). The objective of CRT is to highlight that race is embedded in most social structures and institutions and to uncover and critique racially oppressive meanings, and ideas for the purpose of combating racism (Bell, 1995, 1996). According to Crenshaw (1988) and Ansley (1989), CRT originated in American legal studies in the post-Civil Rights Movement period (mid-1970s) as a means of providing a critical analysis of race and racism from a legal point of view. It emerged as a product of three distinctive developmental themes, namely: political, intellectual, and sociological within the American legal academia (Bell, 1985).

Politically, the 1980s were a time when many American civil rights activists and left-wing legal scholars felt themselves caught up in a conservative backlash against the civil rights movement gains of the 1960s, championed by the likes of Dr Martin Luther King Jr (Carson, 1998). The scholars who would later call themselves critical race theorists sought explanations from the government as to why formal legal equality had produced only minimal success in improving the lived experience (including employment) of most African-Americans and other people of colour, and why hopes for social integration with whites seemed largely to have faded (Crenshaw, 1988; Ansley, 1989). Derrick Bell Jr (an African-American, 1930-2011), credited as one of the originators of CRT, claimed that both the state and the judiciary system had failed to address and eradicate racism (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995). Legal discourse says that the law is neutral and colour-blind; however, CRT challenges this notion by examining liberalism and meritocracy as a vehicle for self-interest, power, and privilege. In this context, meritocracy refers to the view that everyone who works hard can achieve wealth, power, and privilege (Delgado, 2012; A. P. Harris, 2012). This story normally paints an incorrect image of meritocracy while ignoring the systemic inequalities that institutional racism provides. Critical race theorists have rejected the conventional liberal position that racism survives only as a residue from a less-enlightened time or as a characteristic of poorly-educated or troubled individuals (A. P. Harris, 2012). This means race theorists are taking the

issue of racism seriously and not accepting the fact that racism merely thrives on the historical events which were perceived to have happened during times of ignorance. They believe that racism is happening right now and is adversely affecting communities.

The other component of CRT is its commitment to social justice and the active role played by scholars in working towards the elimination of racial oppression (Solorzano, 1998). In this manner, CRT may empower communities to challenge and resist racist practices (Parker & Lynn, 2002). For this reason, it is necessary to look into CRT in some detail, to understand its origins and key concepts.

Intellectually, the early 1980s saw the rise of Critical Legal Studies (CLS) in the American legal academy. CLS introduced into legal scholarship poststructuralist ideas that had already permeated other disciplines focused on the interpretation of writings on subjects such as philosophy, literary criticism, and anthropology. Within legal studies, CRT scholars challenged the divide between 'law' and 'politics,' arguing that legal rules were radically vague. They called for the deconstruction and condemnation of legal doctrine in order to expose the traditional legal reasoning (Kelman, 1987). They also provided an intellectual opening for broad-based critiques of law based on hidden norms of race and gender exclusion. CRT scholars were also disappointed with CLS's failure to broadly engage and challenge racism (Delgado, 1987; P. J. Williams, 1987).

Sociologically, the 1980s saw the gradual entry into legal academia of African-Americans and other people of colour, although in small numbers. Most of these new scholars were however disappointed and frustrated by the outcomes of traditional avenues of legal reform which ignored the voices of people of colour (Delgado, 1984). Taylor et al., (2009) argues that CRT should place race relations into a global political-economic context, including in its consideration of employment issues. For example, in contemporary USA social life, it is popularly accepted that racism is a form of injustice and that state law has the moral obligation, not only to refrain from perpetrating racist acts against citizens, but to provide redress of racism as a matter of public policy (Taylor et al., 2009). According to Delgado (1984), the state should dismantle structural racism and

examine race relations beyond the “black/white paradigm” and make an effort to understand how race interlocks with other forms of oppression.

Based on the principles of critical race feminism, Staiano (2015) criticised both the CRT and the feminist legal theory for their dependence on an apparently universal concept of women which was in fact modelled on the experiences of white upper-class men and white heterosexual women. Critical race feminists also highlighted and condemned CRT's focus on men of colour as the only exemplary person of colour, while overlooking and side-lining women of colour (Staiano, 2015). These feminists later proposed an alternative method of legal analysis, based on a stronger and fairer awareness of the complex experiences of disadvantage and discrimination suffered by women of colour on the intersecting grounds of gender, race, and class, as well as other categories. Within the paradigm of CRT, Möschel (2011) further criticised the narrow legal definitions and perceptions of what constitutes racism and who is deemed to be racist. He argued that such a practice results in the detriment of the victims of racism to the benefit of most white upper-class men.

In recent times, CRT has emerged as a pivotal analytical tool in the field of education, offering critical viewpoints on race, and the causes, consequences and manifestations of race, racism, inequity, as well as the dynamics of power and privilege in education systems and employment settings (Ladson-Billings, et al 2009). In most western countries including New Zealand, racism can be viewed in social practices and institutions (Butcher et al., 2012). Through the use of CRT, it is hoped that my study will help to expose the presence of white supremacy and dominance as African communities in New Zealand share their employment experiences. From a political perspective, during my time in New Zealand for the past 16 years, African communities in New Zealand have held several workshops with relevant government departments to highlight some of the employment challenges they have faced in the country. My study seeks to understand if some of the raised issues have been addressed by the government.

In my research, the question of white dominance and white supremacy within the job market, in the context of employment-related racism and discrimination,

will be examined to see whether this is an issue affecting Africans in New Zealand. My study will also explore ways of exposing structural racism and scrutinising race relations (Taylor et al., 2009) while seeking to comprehend how the impact of employment-related discrimination can be minimised on the lives and well-being of Africans who are resident in New Zealand. Additionally, my study discusses issues of overt racism within the employment arena in the hope that African communities are offered equal employment opportunities in future (Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, 2015; New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2008). Using the CRT lens and storytelling, my study scrutinises employment-related racism and discrimination issues against a background that New Zealand is widely understood as a country which does not tolerate overt racism and discrimination (Butcher, Spoonley, & Trlin, 2006). Storytelling is a powerful tool which can be used to educate the younger generation of Africans in New Zealand about some of the difficulties of employment in relation to racism and discrimination (Achebe, 1959; Olupona, 1990). According to Delgado and Stefancic (2000), though we live in an unfair social world with practices and assignments of prestige and power, we (human beings) can change it for the better through stories, writing and speaking against any form of injustice. Through storytelling, I hope that the use of CRT engages the African communities in meaningful discussions with employers and prospective employers while exposing racism, discrimination and white supremacy on employment issues.

2.1.3 Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Employment Issues

CRT can inform a critical race methodology in many different settings. Gillborn's study (2007) presented a new and radical way to conceptualise the role of racism in employment settings. He argues that the patterning of racial advantage and inequity is structured in domination and its continuation represents a form of implicit intention on the part of white power holders and policy-makers. It is in this sense that employment policy is an act of white supremacy (Gillborn, 2007). My study seeks to challenge implicit actions that promote racial

discrimination on the part of white power holders such as employers and policy-makers in New Zealand.

According to Solorzano and Yosso (2002), a critical race methodology provides a tool to counter deficit storytelling. They challenged racism in education and exposed deficit-informed research that silences and distorts stories and epistemologies of people of colour. The authors further stated that although some social scientists tell stories under the guise of 'objective' research, at times these stories actually uphold deficit, racialized notions about people of colour. Applying an effective critical race methodology offers space to conduct and present research grounded in the experiences and knowledge of people of colour. In the context of my study, African communities were given a platform, through storytelling, to express their views and share their lived-experiences on employment issues in New Zealand. Yosso (2005) stated that communities of colour bring forms of capital such as labour skills, expert knowledge and cultural diversity from their homes to the receiving country. African communities, likewise, bring in cultural competence and knowledge, skills, labour and expertise to the benefit of New Zealand's economy. The CRT approach involves a commitment to develop policies in New Zealand that acknowledge the multiple strengths of members of the African communities. This will help to achieve social integration and racial justice as African communities settle in their workplaces in New Zealand (Yosso, 2005). CRT can be used to focus on the cultural knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts of marginalised groups.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

“Thick descriptions refer to richly described data that can provide the research consumer with enough information to judge the themes, labels, categories, or constructs of a study ... with enough information to judge the appropriateness of applying the findings to other settings...” (Byrne, 2001, p. 2).

3.1 Introduction

I carried out a critical review of current international trends on employment-related experiences encountered by refugees and migrants to determine the lessons to be learnt for the African communities domiciled in New Zealand. In addition, I examined the literature on employment experiences of other minority and marginalized groups in New Zealand such as Maori (indigenous), Pacific People and Asians as a way of finding out if there were any similarities and/or differences in employment experiences. In order to provide context, my literature review covered international and African migration, reasons for migrating, the right to work/employment (human rights and social justice issues) and the employment-related experiences of refugees and migrants in other developed countries. It was crucial to review literature on the impact of employment-related experiences on the physical and mental well-being of refugees and migrants in the diaspora as well as Africans in New Zealand. I also reviewed literature on suggested solutions related to employment experiences faced by refugees and migrants globally and these were compared with the suggestions and recommendations offered by my research participants.

My study is centred on the New Zealand-based African communities from both refugee and migrant backgrounds. There are significant differences, mainly in terms of immigration backgrounds, between refugees and migrants (please see

Table 3.1 below). According to the (United Nations, 1951), a refugee is defined as:

...Any person who; owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country (p.20).

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (1951.p.25) defines migrant as:

...someone who has left his or her country of origin to migrate to another country. This includes any people working outside their home country, mostly who have left their original country voluntarily. Some of these are called expatriates. Some are known as economic migrants. Some are professionals, and some are not.

Literature has indicated that in most cases the migration journey of refugees is more difficult and challenging compared to that of migrants (Chile, 2002; Ngunjiri, 2001). However, it tends to be assumed that since the migration journey of most migrants is voluntary, it is without trauma and risk, and yet there are many challenges that migrants face (Chile, 2002). For example, there are skilled migrants in New Zealand who came from non-English speaking countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda and Burundi whose official language is French, and yet have faced employment challenges associated with language use because New Zealand uses mostly English in workplaces (Butcher et al, 2006). There are also 'economic' migrants who have left behind their beloved families, including children, for other countries in search of better employment opportunities and improved living conditions. Leaving a partner, minor children and members of the family and going to an 'unknown' destination in search of better employment opportunities can be traumatic and distressing. I am one of the economic migrants who left a well-paying job, a young wife and two small children in Zimbabwe in 2002 for New Zealand, in order to explore better employment prospects and a good quality of education for my children. My wife and children only followed me to New Zealand after one year. Staying alone without my wife and children was one of the most difficult and traumatic times in my life. My wife and children experienced the same pain and stress because

they were missing me. There are also many Africans who are not classified as refugees but who have ‘voluntarily’ risked their lives in the Sahara Desert or Mediterranean Sea trying to cross into Europe for a better life (Ngunjiri, 2001; Dzvimbo, 2003; Gathua, 2003).

According to Koutonin (2015), an expatriate is a person temporarily or permanently residing in a country other than that of the person’s upbringing. By this definition, any person working outside his or her country for a period of time should be an expatriate. In reality, however, the term expatriate is normally reserved exclusively for white people going to work abroad (especially in Africa and Asia) while Africans, Arabs, Filipinos, Chinese and Asians are regarded as immigrants in most developed countries (Koutonin, 2015; Leonard, 2010). Leonard (2010) notes that ethnographic literature differentiates between expatriates and migrants in an organisational context, mostly based on race. Leonard (2010) suggests that discourse and research on workplace diversity and labour migration should continue to include an examination of the impact of immigration on race.

The table below (Table 3.1) provides a brief summary of some of the different challenges faced by refugees and migrants in their migration journeys.

Table 3:1. Difference between Refugees and Migrants Backgrounds.

Refugees	Migrants
Refugees do not choose to leave their homeland. They flee in response to a crisis. They have little choice about where they go and by what means they will travel. They have no time to pack or to distribute possessions. Almost everything is left behind.	Migrants choose to leave their homeland and settle in a country of their choice. They arrange the most suitable method of travel and pack the possessions they wish to take. They can sell or dispose of possessions they do not wish to take.
Refugees, due to their hurried, often secret departure, are unprepared emotionally for leaving, and may not have time to farewell loved ones.	Migrants have time to prepare emotionally for their departure and to farewell friends and family appropriately.
Refugees often flee without any documents whatsoever.	Migrants take with them their travel documents, passports and other documentation, including educational qualifications.
Refugees often leave family members behind.	Migrants usually emigrate with their families.

Refugees, although they dream of returning home, know that this is unlikely to happen.	Migrants depart for their new country knowing that they can return to their homeland for visit or return permanently if they cannot settle in the new place.
Refugees arrive in their new country ill-prepared and often traumatised. They have little in the form of possessions and financial resources. They are often debilitated by a pervading sense of loss, grief, worry and guilty about the family left behind.	Migrants are usually well prepared and well-motivated to settle in a new country. Many will have found out about schools, employment and local conditions before they left their homeland.

Source: Ministry of Health (2012, p. 5)

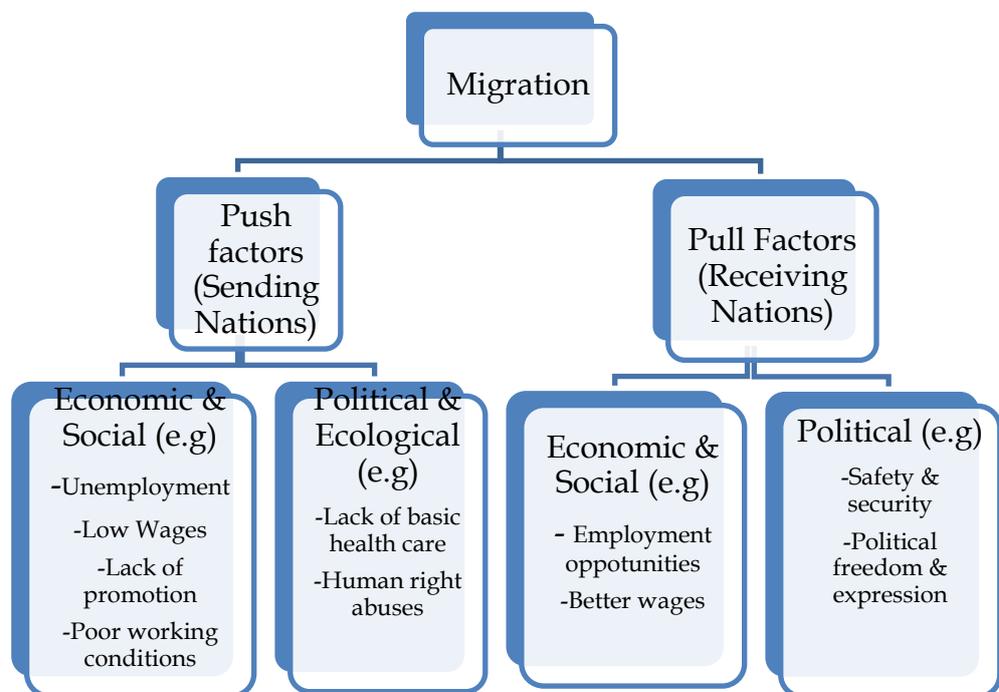
3.2 Why People Migrate: ‘Push’ and ‘Pull’ Factors

It is important to understand why people sometimes make risky decisions to leave their country of birth and their loved ones and cross international borders in order to pursue their life-dreams, such as employment opportunities and better lifestyles (Nyarko, 2008). Boon and Ahenkan (2012) found that some of the circumstances that make people leave their countries of origin are either ‘push’ or ‘pull’ factors (see Figure 3.1 below). Migration ‘push’ factors are those circumstances such as economic (unemployment, job scarcity) and social issues (poverty, high crime-rate, armed conflicts) that ‘push’ people away from their country of origin to other destination-countries. These include political issues like political repression, lack of freedom of expression, human rights abuses and suffocation of social justice and human rights (Boon & Ahenkan, 2012; El-Khawas, 2004). El-Khawas (2004.p.15) defines push factors, within an African context, as “the unfavourable conditions in African states that motivate people to leave”. International studies have indicated that medical professionals such as medical doctors and nurses from countries with high HIV/ AIDS prevalence rates have been coerced to leave their countries of origin to destinations where the HIV/AIDS prevalence rates are lower (Bezuidenhout, Joubert, Hiemstra, & Struwig, 2009; Kupfer, Hofman, Jarawan, McDermott, & Bridbord, 2004).

On the other hand, ‘pull’ factors are those economic, political and social issues which attract and ‘pull’ individuals to migrate to nations that offer lucrative

facilities such as good employment opportunities, better wages and a higher standard of living (Boon & Ahenkan, 2012; Ngunjiri, 2001; Royal College of Nursing, 2003b). El-Khawas (2004.p15) describes these pull factors (within an African context) as: “the favourable conditions in the receiving countries that lure and attract Africans to decide to move abroad”. However Boon and Ahenkan (2012) argue that international migration encompasses a complex series of economic, social, ethnic, and political push and pull factors. Within the New Zealand context, studies have shown that push and pull factors have played a role in motivating Africans to migrate to New Zealand (Butcher et al., 2006; ChangeMakers Refugee Forum, 2012; New Zealand Immigration Services, 2004; Refugee Services, 2012; Ward & Masgoret, 2007). Motivating factors such as social needs, economic needs, political needs and better employment opportunities played a significant role in the re-settlement experience of migrants as most were encouraged to remain positive while they resettled in a new country (Boon & Ahenkan, 2012). In other words, motivating factors helped people to focus on the positives as opposed to negative experiences.

Figure 3.1: Push and Pull Factors Diagram



Source: Boon and Ahenkan (2012, p. 351)

3.3 Employment: A Human Rights and Social Justice Issue

From its foundation in 1919, the International Labour Organisation (ILO)'s guiding principle advocated that labour should not be regarded as merely a commodity or article of commerce (ILO, 1996-2010). Of particular interest is the fact that from 1945, the United Nations' general conferences considered and adopted proposals that included co-operation between governments relating to the recruiting, placing and conditions of employing migrants (International Labour Organisation (ILO), 1949). The right to work or employment is important because it is of fundamental value to both the individual and the collective community, and this cannot be overestimated (International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), 1969; Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). Employment affects the human experience on several different levels. Employment is about the generation of income, but also about individual inner-fulfilment (Sarkin & Koenig, 2011). This also includes the constitution of one's identity, and one's social inclusion. According to Mundlak (2007), employment should be regarded and recognized as belonging to the sphere of human rights and social justice. R. Smith, . K .M, (2003) argues that work provides individuals in a society with an element of human dignity, social justice and respect as key contributors to that civilization. Employment is critical for survival rights such as food, housing and clothing (Craven, 1995; Mundlak, 2007; The Michigan Guidelines, 2010). Craven (1995) argues that adverse employment experiences directly affect an individual's human rights such as rights to education and good living standards.

Apart from reiterating the basic rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICPRMW) prohibits inhumane living and working conditions of all migrant workers. In addition, the ICPRMW emphasises that migrant workers have a right to freedom of expression, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, as well as equality with nationals in terms of access to training, promotion, protection against dismissal and unemployment benefits (United Nations Educational Scientific

and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 2009). The main message in the ICPRMW is about equality, basic human rights and social justice, and that refugees and migrants must be treated in the same manner as locals. However, the ICPRMW does not provide channels which can be followed by refugees and migrants in the event of seeking redress of their employment-grievances.

3.3.1 Employment Experiences for Migrants- Blamed for Stealing Jobs

Research by the Council of Europe and European Commission (2000) showed that refugees and migrants are targets of employment-related discrimination across the European Union (EU) and are often blamed for stealing jobs from locals. They found that governments are not doing enough to prevent these behaviours and perceptions (Council of Europe and European Commission, 2000). A number of studies revealed that when populations of migrants from one particular country/region increase rapidly, it creates an unfounded fear and a myth that locals will be forced into job-competition and other scarce resources (Council of Europe and European Commission, 2000; Schwartz, 2010; Osler, 2015). Research has shown, however, that refugees and migrants world-wide are not in direct competition with locals on the labour market (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2001; Osler, 2015; Schwartz, 2010; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). While the results of the above studies are detailed, they do not provide information and insight into whether these refugees and migrants were professionals or not and where they originally came from. However, an important finding of these studies is the fact that more could be done by governments of receiving-nations to protect refugees and migrants.

In a political upheaval that shocked the international community, in June 2016 the British voted to pull out of the European Union (EU). Although the pull-out was necessitated by other economic and political reasons, the impact was a heavy blow to migrants from other EU countries who were blamed for 'stealing' jobs from the local British (McCormick, 2017). Some EU governments have introduced and enacted laws that make it difficult for refugees and migrants to enter their countries in search of better employment opportunities (Catali, 2012;

McCormick, 2017). Recently, the world witnessed Donald Trump introducing the 2017-USA immigration decree that banned citizens from seven Muslim-majority countries from entering the USA (Hierman, 2017). The actions were justified in relation to concerns with employment issues. However, this decree adversely affected those who wanted to get into the USA for employment purposes, (Hierman, 2017) hence they experienced labour disadvantages.

Studies concluded that refugees and migrants contribute positively to the productivity and economic growth of their host countries by providing skilled labour, new technological knowledge and labour for sectors and industries that are shunned by locals such as healthcare and cleaning (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008; International Council on Human Rights Policy, 2010; International Organization for Migration (IMO), 2011; Taran, 2011; White House Council of Economic Advisers, 2010). Studies of migrant experiences tend to focus on what they are gaining from the receiving-countries rather than what they contribute to these countries (Bennett, 1988; Littlejohn, 2003; McGovern, 2007; Pasi, 2014; Phillips, 2003; Wayne & Rosenbum, 2005). Save for Pasi (2014), all the above-mentioned studies failed to acknowledge the economic contributions made by refugees and migrants and have focused mainly on what these people were receiving from countries of resettlement. Authors like Pasi (2014) advocate that it is important to mention the contributions made by refugees and migrants in their newly resettled nations.

Research has shown that even though refugees and migrants are qualified and experienced, they struggle to become employed and some end up settling for jobs which are despised by the locals; but they still get blamed for 'stealing' jobs (McGovern, 2007; Pasi, 2014). This exemplifies how refugees and migrants are disadvantaged from the labour market as well as experiencing discrimination.

3.4 International Migration and Employment

According to Esipova and Ray (2009), almost all of the world's nations are either sending or receiving countries for migrants, or both. As of 2010, the world's top

three migrant sending countries were Mexico (12 million), India (11 million), and Russia (11 million) (World Bank, 2011). The results of a survey conducted by Esipova and Ray (2009) in 135 countries (between 2007 and 2009) concluded that 700 million people, who accounted for 16 percent of the world's population, supported international migration of economic migrants, thus, people looking for better employment opportunities. Swamy (1985) stated that approximately 50 million people left Europe between 1815 and 1914 for the USA, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, mainly looking for employment prospects. Zolberg (1983) further pointed out that about eight million Chinese and three million Indians left their countries for other parts of Asia and overseas between the mid-19th century and World War I (1914-1918), again in search of improved employment opportunities. In 2002, the international employment-migration reached historic levels in the USA where 32.5 million foreign-born residents represented 11.5 percent of the total population (Martin & Midgley, 2003). Studies have shown that such massive movements of people prove that employment-related migration is a social phenomenon in many regions of the globe (Dow, 2011; Esipova & Ray, 2009; Swamy, 1985; Zolberg, 1983).

Within the New Zealand context, by the year ending March 2018, the country had received a total of 3.82 million visitors mainly from Australia, China, France, Germany, UK and USA (Statistics New Zealand, 2018b). Out of this number, 130 800 were migrants mainly from UK, France and Germany who had visited the country on work-visas, for employment purposes (Statistics New Zealand, 2018a). Though it may be challenging to ascertain, most of these studies do not provide information about the proportion of migrants who were professionals. There is also no mention of the occupations or trades of the migrants that were in demand in receiving destination-countries. The studies did not comment on how occupation relates to employment experiences of refugees and migrants. The type of occupation is relevant because it helps in critiquing the studies since some of the professions (e.g. nursing and motor mechanics) are easier than others to get into New Zealand (Chile, 2012; New Zealand Immigration Service, 2005; Tuwe, 2012). The studies are also silent about how many migrants were originally from the continent of Africa. My study seeks to ascertain whether different

employment experiences for Africans in New Zealand are dependent on professions.

3.5 African Migration: Current International Trends

An understanding of African migration is important as it helps to comprehend the factors that influenced African migrants to migrate to New Zealand. Data indicated that African migration is motivated by a combination of existing factors such as social needs, economic needs, political needs and employment opportunities, mostly in countries that share cultural and linguistic similarities with the country of origin (Goff, Zarin, & Goodman, 2012). It is important to note that migration is not solely driven by income disparities between home and destination countries, but that other factors are at play, like motivation by geographical proximity and historical links such as common language and colonial ties (International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2008a; Katseli, Lucas, & Xenogiani, 2006). Mainly owing to colonial ties and language, many Congolese immigrated to Belgium and France, while Ghanaians, Nigerians and Zimbabweans left for the UK (IOM, 2008a). For example, Zimbabwe is a former British colony and it is therefore easier for Zimbabweans to settle and get jobs in the UK as opposed to France due to language barriers as well as cultural similarities.

According to a World Bank (2011) report, 14 percent of the 214 million international migrants are Africans, most of whom go to Western Europe and the USA for better employment opportunities. The migration of highly trained professionals out of Africa to the western world, often called '*brain drain*' or '*brain loss*', has left many African countries with a critical shortage of the skills needed to meet the employment challenges of the 21st century (Dzvimbo, 2003). This phenomenon is not a new development in Africa. It began in the 1960s, following the independence of African states (International Labour Organisation (ILO), 1996-2010; Ngunjiri, 2001). In 2010, 64 percent of the Sub-Saharan Africa migration was employment related (Shimeles, 2010).

While the migration of African migrant professionals was on the upward trend, these professionals continued to endure alienation from their countries of origin as victims of government repression, accused of migrating to the West due to a lack of patriotism (Mwagiru, 1999). An example is when Ghana's former President Jerry Rawlings attacked African professionals and academics migrating to the West and abandoning their people, during a conference in Davos, Switzerland in June 1999 (Mwagiru, 1999). In response, eminent Kenyan scholar Ali Mazrui retaliated by blaming the exodus on the greed and corruption of politicians (Mwagiru, 1999). South Africa's former President Thabo Mbeki also joined the debate by urging educated Africans to relocate to South Africa and neighbouring African countries instead of migrating to the West. According to Mwagiru (1999), the general feeling of the majority of African professionals is that most African governments have nothing much to offer, in terms of employment, especially to the educated and experienced professionals. The recently inaugurated Zimbabwean President Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa appealed to millions of Zimbabweans in the diaspora who fled the country due to economic decline and political instability to come back home (New Zimbabwe. Com, 2018).

According to Hagopian, Thompson, Fordyce, Johnson, and Hart (2004) and Clemens and Pettersson (2006), the United Kingdom, USA, Canada, France, Australia, Portugal, Belgium and Spain were among the major developed countries that took a large number of professionals from Africa. This accounted for 94.2 percent of all African-born university-educated graduates living in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries in the year 2000. The main reason these professional African migrants left for these countries was better employment opportunities and a good standard of living. Every year, thousands of African professionals leave their home countries for foreign nations looking for better living conditions and employment opportunities (Ngunjiri, 2001; Dzvimbo, 2003).

Africans are said to be the most educated ethnic group in the USA, but have less job opportunities compared with other ethnic groups (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2001; U.S. Bureau of the

Census, 1997). It has been recorded that there are more African scientists and engineers from both refugee and migrant backgrounds in the USA than in the entire African continent (Belai, 2007; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2004; Woldetensae, 2007). According to the UN Economic Commission for Africa, 27 000 highly educated African migrant professionals left for the West between 1960 and 1975, in search of employment (Gathua, 2003). By the year 2000, there were around 871 000 African professional migrants who had migrated to the USA alone (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003).

However, Njubi (2002) stated that African migrants are aware of the strength of their professional qualifications and the obstacles they face as a highly visible migrant community. Their educational achievements are conspicuous in a racist culture that stereotypes black people as athletes and entertainers (Njubi, 2002). For example, African migrants in the USA tend to be viewed as less competent, in their professions, compared to white Americans and African-Americans (Njubi, 2002).

Du Bois, (1868-1963) a sociologist, historian, civil rights activist, pan-Africanist and the first African-American to earn a doctorate from Harvard University, stated that there is a sense of 'two-ness', which is even more applicable to African professionals and scholars who are in the diaspora today (Mwagiru, 1999; Njubi, 2002). In this context, two-ness refers to the fact of being African and away from home. As a result of the USA civil rights movement, employment opportunities were opened to black people in major universities, corporations, and international organizations in the mid-1970s (Njubi, 2002). However, most of these African professionals in the diaspora have fewer social and cultural ties to the West. They are much closer to the African 'soul' and are less prepared for the institutionalised racism and second-class status that they have to overcome in the West. Njubi (2002) argues that this duality is intensified by the sense of alienation and guilt aroused by the widespread demonization of these professionals by the West. They are perceived as selfish and ungrateful beggars who escape to greener pastures (in the West) as soon as they obtain their degrees (from Africa), as opposed to utilising their education to uplift their home poverty-stricken

communities that educated them at great expense (Njubi, 2002). Most migrant African professionals are therefore forced to come to terms with their African-ness for the first time and this political identity crisis produces three 'types' of migrant intellectuals, namely: the comprador intelligentsia, post-colonial critic and progressive exile (Mwagiru, 1999; Njubi, 2002).

3.6 Benefits of Employing Refugees and Migrants

There is often a perception that refugees and migrants are a liability to host countries, but the Australian Human Rights Commission (2008) in its report entitled *Face the Facts*, stated that migrants actually play a pivotal role in creating more jobs in Australia by generating a higher demand for local goods and services. It was also noted that it is an asset to have a multilingual and multicultural workforce as this results in increased productivity and provides businesses with a competitive edge (Rodrik, 2010). Schwartz (2010) emphasised that without the labour contribution of migrants, the USA would not be a leading world-economy and the political power-house it is today. The New Zealand Department of Labour report (2011) showed that migrants contributed \$8,101 million through income taxes (employment), Goods and Services Taxes (GST) and excise duties (Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, 2011). The New Zealand Human Rights Commission (2008) report mentioned that immigration is good for New Zealand's economic growth.

3.7 Employment Experiences of Refugees and Migrants: Internationally and in New Zealand

3.7.1 Definition of Discrimination and Racial Discrimination

To comprehend employment-related discrimination, it is crucial to have a clear understanding of the meaning of the term discrimination. The United Nations General Assembly (1995. p.10) defined discrimination as: "... The meting out of prejudicial treatment based upon category, rather than individual merit. The category can be based upon culture, class, race, nationality, creed, sex, gender

identity.... or any other division...". The United Nations General Assembly (1995) stated that discrimination against refugees and migrants is directly linked to their belonging to visible minority groups, especially those based on race, ethnicity, and religion. Within the context of refugees and migrant employment experiences, Dipboye and Colella (2005) argued that discrimination is a sub-category of differential treatment which they defined as "...behaviours that are displayed consistently towards members of one group, but not consistently across all groups...." (p.52).

Racial discrimination, an important factor in the study of employment experiences for refugees and migrants, is defined by the United Nations General Assembly's International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1995) as: "...any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life....." (p.20).

Dovidio and Hebl (2005) argued that organizational psychologists who study employment-related discrimination should go beyond the school of thought that workplace-based discrimination is merely a manifestation of prejudices and stereotypes. There is a need to understand the complex implications and impact of employment-related discrimination on the well-being of individual workers, their family members and communities (Dipboye & Colella, 2005; Dovidio & Hebl, 2005). Authors such as Brief, Dietz, Cohen, Pugh, and Vaslow (2000) and Dietz (2010) argue that employment-related discrimination is not only an intergroup phenomenon but also one of sought dominance and compliance. This means that those who practise workplace-based discrimination are in the habit of making sure that their superiority is felt by those whom they oppress, and they want them to comply and submit. Dietz (2010.p.15) argues that scholars on employment discrimination against migrants ought to consider the whole range of explanations and scenarios separately because refugees and migrants face different forms of racism and discrimination. Some of these forms of racism and discrimination are complex and depend on various circumstances. Dietz (2010)

argues that fair differential treatment in a workplace involves the application of different management styles such as employee disciplinary procedures and other measures necessary to effectively supervise employees. The main difference between fair differential treatment and employment-related discrimination is that the latter is based on prejudicial treatment of factors such as race, culture, nationality and sexual identity (United Nations General Assembly (1995). Dovidio and Hebl (2005) warn employers to make sure that fair differential treatment is not mistaken for discriminatory workplace practices. In this study, employment-related discrimination will be examined through the lens of Critical Race Theory. CRT is helpful to explore issues of racial discrimination for African communities at their workplaces in New Zealand.

Altonji and Blank (1999) mentioned that there are two main types of employment-related discrimination namely preference-based discrimination and statistical discrimination. Preference-based discrimination is where employers and fellow-employees from the majority group have negative attitudes towards their fellow workers from minority ethnic communities (Altonji & Blank, 1999). Workers from the majority group prefer their employers to hire employees who look like them (Becker, 1957). Authors such as Petersen and Dietz (2005) and Gelfand and Leslie (2006) argue that such actions and attitudes result in less demand for employees from the minority ethnic groups. Statistical discrimination is when an individual worker's productivity or output is measured on the average production (or characteristics) of a group they belong to (Phelps, 1972). For example, this could be measuring the performance of an African worker on the basis of how other Africans in New Zealand do their work. Phelps (1972) concluded that statistical discrimination is universal but subjective and its application results in the suffering of workers who belong to the minority group. This study examines whether African communities are experiencing negative attitudes from New Zealand employers and fellow employees.

Racism takes different forms, for example, black people in Brazil with lighter skin are often preferred by the general public compared to those with a darker skin (Arias, Yamada, & Tejerina, 2004; J. W. Berry & Kalin, 2000; Richmond, 2001).

This is referred to as peck order racism or social distance (Berry & Kalin 2000; Arias et al., 2004; Clarke, 2011). Studies showed that some employers in industrialised countries such as the USA, the UK and Canada appear to reject and dislike explicit racism, but physical differences and appearances of people are still viewed as important perceptions in their hiring decisions. This indirect and 'courteous racism' creates employment barriers that result in minority groups being denied access to employment and full membership as mainstream employees and to societies (Danso, 2002.p.10). This study seeks to establish how much this applies to the employment experiences of African communities in New Zealand.

3.8 Race-Based, Name-Based and Accent-Based Discrimination

Employment-related discrimination is manifested in different ways such as race-based, name-based, accent-based, gender-based and sexual orientation (Danso, 2002; Dietz, 2010). For this study, I will review the literature on discrimination based on race, name and accent as these appear to be the main discrimination-challenges faced by Africans in New Zealand (Auckland District Health Board, 2011; Butcher et al., 2006).

3.8.1 Race-Based Employment Discrimination

A number of studies revealed that most African refugees and migrants experience employment-related racial discrimination in many developed countries (Dietz & Petersen, 2006; Esses, Dietz, & Dixit, 2006; Reitz & Verma, 2004; Swidinsky & Swidinsky, 2002). Research in developed countries such as Australia, Canada, UK and USA found that employment-related discrimination occurred mostly against black African migrants but not against white African migrants (Collins, 1991; Danso, 2002; Dietz, 2010; Flatau & Lewis, 1991; N. Harris, 1995). For example, an Australia survey of refugees, originally from Yugoslavia, Africa and the Middle East revealed that they were predominantly employed in labour market niches ('secondary labour market') such as cleaning services, care

for the aged, meat processing, and taxi driving (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2006, 2007). These jobs are normally despised by local Australians. Harris (1995.p.10) argues that there is an “unwritten social contract” in most developed countries that deters locals from accepting some of these low-paying jobs. Colic-Peisker and Tilbury (2006) argue that the results indicated the presence of a segmented labour market, where racially and culturally visible migrants are employed in low-paying jobs regardless of their ‘human capital’.

Carty (1991) found that while minority groups in Canada have been subjected to a range of employment-racial discrimination, black Africans have been socially and institutionally discriminated against more than other groups. In his analysis, Calliste (1991) revealed that racially constructed ideologies, perceptions and images often portrayed black Africans as ‘naturally’ suited for jobs in the lowest band of the labour market. While the analysis by Calliste (1991) is relevant for this study, there was little discussion about the attitude of these societies toward those black Africans who were successful in their careers and professions. Elabor-Idemudia (1999) highlighted the fact that using racial discrimination as justification for denying African refugees and migrants access to gainful employment is an abuse of their human rights and social justice in a country that they have come to know as their permanent home. Based on a longitudinal survey of six professional migrants from different African countries, Ngo and Este (2006) revealed that these migrants experienced racial discrimination in the Canadian labour market primarily because of the colour of their skin. The Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2003) report showed that around 82, 000 African migrants who arrived in Canada in 2002 with at least a university degree could not secure employment in their professional fields due to racial discrimination. Though the report gave a detailed breakdown of the qualifications there was no mention of other factors such as years of work-related experience and whether those qualifications were assessed by a credible Canadian institution.

Racial discrimination in the workplace is prevalent in many countries (Ngo & Este, 2006). A number of studies have highlighted this phenomenon especially where dark skinned people are denied employment opportunities (Department

of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA), 2005; Ngo & Este, 2006; Pasi, 2011; Wooden, 1991). This shows that employment-related discrimination is mainly a 'visibility' problem, thus, that people are judged based on the colour of their skin. Black African refugees and migrants face employment-related discrimination in three main layers: (i) while searching for jobs (Crenshaw, 1988; Danso 2002) (ii) in-job situations (Butcher et al., 2006, Tilbury 2007), and (iii) when it comes to promotion on the job (Baklid el at, 2005; Taran, 2011; Pasi, 2011).

As regards the challenge of facing employment-related discrimination while searching for jobs, it is hard for Africans to be offered employment (Danso 2002). Mainly owing to their skin colour, many Africans have experienced difficulties in getting employed (Greenshaw, 1988; Danso 2002). Studies have shown that when Africans do become employed, they sometimes face hurdles such as being accepted as equal employees by their fellow workers and employers (Butcher et al., 2006). On promotion challenges, research revealed that most Africans in developed countries find it hard to get elevated in their positions even if they are competent and experienced (Baklid el at, 2005; Taran, 2006; Pasi, 2011). Petersen and Krings (2009) concluded that due to racial discrimination, blacks who account for 14 percent of the total USA workforce hold only 6.5 percent of the managerial positions.

While the analysis was quite detailed, for example, giving percentage breakdowns, the information regarding the nature of the main professions where most blacks held managerial positions and where there was no black representation was lacking. Foroohar (2002) also revealed that very few members of minority groups occupied senior managerial positions in 100 of the largest surveyed European corporations and none of these organizations had a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who was a person of colour. Petersen and Krings (2009) claimed that excluding talented and experienced workers solely based on race does not only damage the reputation of the organization but affects and limits its flexibility and productivity. In the long run, this may prevent organizations from gaining important competitive advantages (Dietz & Petersen, 2006; Ely & Thomas, 2001). While acknowledging that the population of Africans in New

Zealand is relatively small, my research aims to find out if there are qualified and competent Africans who have not made it to managerial positions and their perceived reasons for this.

3.8.2 Named-Based Employment Discrimination

Employment-based discrimination appears in the first form even before actual meetings between employers and prospective employees. Discrimination can take place even in vetting employment applications, especially through perceptions developed through applicants' names (Carlsson & Rooth, 2008; Derous & Ryan, 2012). Some migrants have English names whilst others have local names from their places of origin. A number of studies in different Western countries have shown that having a foreign-sounding name diminishes your chances of landing an employment opportunity. Notable examples are the work done in Canada (Alboim et al., 2005; Esses et al., 2007), Netherlands (Deros & Ryan, 2012) and Sweden (Carlsson & Rooth, 2008) which found that the majority of prospective employers were in favour of native-sounding names as opposed to foreign ones. Authors such as Brewer and Harasty (1999, p. 260) in their analysis of the "dual processes in the cognitive representation of persons and social categories" concluded that most recruiters can easily deduce undisclosed personal characteristics such as ethnicity and country of origin from the name(s) supplied in the curriculum vitae (CV) and this can lead to employment-discrimination.

Even if having a non-English name does not create a barrier to interview invitation, it may be a source of conflict during employment. Within the New Zealand context, one of the employment-related challenges faced by refugees and migrants is that of having a foreign and unfamiliar name that is 'difficult' to pronounce (Butcher et al, 2006). A study by ChangeMakers (2012) noted that most migrants are irritated when they get asked by employers to change their traditional-foreign names to New Zealand (Kiwi) ones. According to Ward and Masgoret (2007), the results of a research involving 42 CVs revealed that migrants with foreign-names were disadvantaged in the employment arena compared

with New Zealand Europeans. A study by Butcher et al (2006) which comprised three focus groups from New Zealand's three main cities (Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch) also found that refugees and migrants experienced name-based discrimination in the area of employment. These findings were supported by research by the Department of Internal Affairs (1996) and the Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy Report (2006) which also found that skilled migrants, particularly those from ethnic minority background also faced name-based discrimination in New Zealand.

3.8.3 Accent-Based Employment Discrimination

Accents remain crucial forms of and the basis for social differentiation in many societies across the globe and are normally used as an "index of authority" such that "the efficacy of a discourse, its power to convince, depends on the authority of the person who utters it" (Bourdieu 1977.p.15). Accents provide critical clues, including where people originally come from, what their first language might be, their gender and their race (Adams & Smith, 2006; Bourdieu, 1977; Lippi-Green, 1997; Purnell, Idsardi, & Baugh, 1999). This may lead to discrimination on employment matters (Bourdieu, 1977).

Although everyone has an accent, those in positions of power and authority are perceived as speaking "normal, unaccented English" in society and places of employment (Lippi-Green 1997.p.59). Lippi-Green (1997, p. 65) argues that the myth of unaccented English is part of "standard language ideology" in North America that "provides rationalization for limiting access to discourse". According to Lippi- Green (1997), one way of speaking 'normal' English is perceived as superior to other accents such as those from refugees and migrants. A study by Creese (2010) established that the demands for a 'perfect' accent was perceived as having less to do with genuine miscommunication and more to do with establishing power relations in social interactions.

Munro (2003) identified three forms of accent employment-related discrimination that have been raised in human rights cases; namely: (i) hiring decisions that inappropriately considered accents, where accent does not impair communication (ii) denial of access to jobs based on accent stereotyping, and (iii)

harassment or ridiculing a fellow worker because of their accent. Phillipson (1992) coined the term 'linguicism' to refer to these forms of linguistically-related racism, a view supported by Chen-Hayes, Chen, and Athar (1999).

Creese and Kambere (2003) argued that accents are markers for inclusion or exclusion when it comes to employment matters. Workplaces and educational institutions have been identified as central sites of accent discrimination in English speaking countries and developed nations such as the USA, UK, Australia and Canada (Derwing & Rossiter, 2003; France, Nezu, & Nezu, 1995; Roberts, 2006). Several studies have identified that a foreign accent is one of the discrimination tools used by some employers in developed countries (Creese & Kambere, 2003; Roberts, 2006; Creese, 2010). This is evidence that accent is one of the labour disadvantages faced by refugees and migrants. Although unrelated to employment matters, Creese (2010) found that participants in Canada were concerned that their conversations were always interrupted by a lot of 'pardons' (by the mainstream) and yet no one mentioned 'pardon' when the same participants were buying and giving away their money. The participants also stated that they were misunderstood deliberately (Creese, 2010).

Allan and Larsen (2003) reported that the International Registered Nurses (IRNs) cited accent challenges and expressed frustration that some of their UK work colleagues and patients deliberately chose not to understand their accents. The study pointed out that because English is not one's first language it does not mean one cannot effectively communicate in English. British dialects and colloquialisms were also used to intentionally frustrate these nurses (Allan & Larsen, 2003). As African communities share their employment-related stories, my study will seek to determine whether accent(s) was used by employers in New Zealand as a tool to discriminate Africans from securing employment.

Within the New Zealand context, some studies concluded that there is what might be called an 'accent ceiling' or a reluctance by employers to appoint or promote skilled refugees and migrants who speak English with an accent (Butcher et al., 2006; Henderson, Trilin, & Watts, 2006). The New Zealand studies,

however, did not give a breakdown of the professions which are mostly affected by the issue of accent on the countries from which the accents came.

3.9: English Language Proficiency

Pendakur (2005) argued that most job markets in developed countries are known for being difficult to penetrate, not only for the foreign born, but mostly those whose English language proficiency is deemed substandard. One of the main employment challenges faced by refugees and other people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background is poor English language proficiency (Scull, 2001; J. Taylor, 2004; Wooden, 1991). Without English language proficiency, even highly educated and skilled refugees and migrants from non-English speaking countries are disadvantaged in the labour markets of many English-speaking developed nations (Valtonen, 2001; Wooden, 1991). The results of a survey conducted by Stewart et al. (2008) in Canada mentioned English language proficiency as one of the predominant employment-related challenges. This was confirmed by Creese (2010) and Danso (2002). While the above studies supplied statistical data, they did not provide information on gender and age. Creese (2010) found that, though fluent in English language, refugees and migrants who sought entry into the USA and Canadian educational institutions to improve their qualifications were required to take English language tests. These immigrants felt that this was too expensive, time consuming, and often had to be repeated for each separate educational institution.

Abhink (2006) argued that any successful integration of a migrant community in a host country can be measured by a number of key factors such as language mastery, in order to access employment and educational facilities. The level of demand for proficiency in English language and local pronunciations in numerous developed nations have had an adverse impact on the employability of most African refugees and migrants, especially youth (Brekke, 2007; Galabuzi, 2007; Kilbride, Anisef, Baichman-Anisef, & Khattar, 2004; Kunz, 2003). Economists such as Dustmann (1994) also argued that verbal and written English language skills are key and critical determinants for job hire. Most of the above-

mentioned studies focused on high levels of English proficiency for all jobs including cleaning and fruit-picking. However, these jobs do not require a high level of English language proficiency (Galabuzi, 2007). All that is needed is basic English for communication purposes. Although most studies acknowledged the importance of English language proficiency, there is no information on the advantages and benefits of employing refugees and migrants who are competent in their jobs but have limited English language skills. Some of these advantages include covering the gap in employment segments and jobs that are despised by locals as well as contributing to goods and services taxes (GST) and excise duties or value added taxes (VAT) (New Zealand Department of Labour, 2011).

The Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy (2006) report and a research study by ChangeMakers (2012) indicated that due to limited English proficiency skills, some refugees and migrants who came from non-English-speaking countries find it difficult to engage in meaningful conversations with New Zealand prospective employers, resulting in most of them missing out on employment opportunities. Most refugees may have spent most of their time in refugee camps and did not have an opportunity to attend formal schools to learn English language (Refuge Services, 2012; ChangeMakers, 2012; Tuwe, 2012). Those who came from non-English speaking countries, such as the Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda, where French is the official language, also have challenges in understanding the English language. The Labour and Immigration Research Centre (2012) survey indicated that migrants in New Zealand who mentioned that their English was moderate, or poor earned 11 percent less on average than those who spoke English as their main language.

3.10 Lack of Local New Zealand Work Experience and Non-Recognition of Overseas Qualifications

3.10.1 Lack of Local New Zealand (Kiwi) Work Experience

Colic-Peisker and Tilbury (2006) found that migrants' work experience from their own countries was not considered in many industrialised countries, no matter

how relevant and impressive. For example, an Australian study revealed that 62 percent of the respondents (refugees and migrants) cited lack of local work experience as the main barrier to gainful employment (Scull, 2001). Opoku-Dapaah (1993) and Beyene (2000) documented similar findings when they looked at the experiences of Ghanaian, Somali and Ethiopian refugees in Toronto, Canada. The *Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada* stated that about 25 percent of newcomers to Canada (including Africans) had experienced problems in entering the Canadian labour market, mainly owing to lack of local Canadian work experience (Statistics Canada, 2003a). A number of studies revealed that the lack of local work experience is a critical barrier to employment, particularly for those from racialized groups (Perreira, Harris, & Lee, 2007; Statistics Canada, 2007b; J. Taylor, 2004).

Spence's (2005) research showed that between 2000 and 2004, 341 African professional migrant workers ended up in unskilled jobs in the UK, mainly due to a lack of local work experience. Raghuram and Kofman (2004) argue that it is crucial that when academics and policymakers draw distinctions between 'skilled' and 'unskilled' migrant workers, they need to consider that many of the so-called unskilled are actually the skilled who have been de-skilled (skills-discounting) on entry into the labour market. According to Raghuram and Kofman (2004), skills-discounting refers to the devaluation of foreign experience and qualifications/credentials. Employers in most developed countries tend to have doubts on the credibility of work experience gained from developing countries (Sweetman, 2004). As a result, most employers adopt a risk-averse strategy and attitude by giving first preference to local work experience and this marginalizes qualified and competent refugees and migrants (Feeney, 2000; Goodson & Phillimore, 2005; Sargeant & Forna, 2001; Sweetman, 2004).

The consistent undervaluing of foreign work results in huge wage gaps especially for those migrants who hold engineering, applied science and management experience (Grant & Sweetman, 2004; Li, 2003; Picot, 2004; Somerville & Walsworth, 2009; Statistics Canada, 2007b). These findings are consistent with earlier research which found that the return on foreign work experience is virtually zero, meaning that it is not recognised and rewarded

(Abdurrahman & Skuterud, 2004; Kustec, Thompson, & Xue, 2007; Schellenberg, Grant, & Maheux, 2007; Sweetman, 2004). By listening to employment-related stories, my study will examine the experiences of the New Zealand African communities to see whether there are similarities with the above-mentioned professions that have been undervalued. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the question which is often asked, by African refugees and migrants in New Zealand is: where do I get the required local work experience if I have not given an opportunity to work in New Zealand? The use of both the Labour Disadvantage Theory and Critical Race Theory will assist to have more understanding on some of the employment challenges faced by African communities in New Zealand, especially regarding where they are excluded in the labour market due to lack of local Kiwi work experience.

3.10.2 Non-Recognition of Overseas Qualifications

Several studies have observed that prospective employers do not acknowledge the academic qualifications presented by applicants from an immigrant/refugee background (Fozdar and Torezani, 2008; Scull 2001; Constable et al; 2004). It has become common to see well-educated migrants e.g. medical doctors and university lecturers working as taxi drivers and teacher aides respectively (Constable, Wagner, Childs, & Natoli, 2004; Scull, 2001). African professional migrants in many developed countries stated that their inability to obtain work in their areas of expertise was due to the employers' lack of trust in their overseas qualifications and previous work experience from their countries of origin (Ogunsiji, 2012). Danso and Grant (2000) argue that migrants' foreign qualifications and credentials were undervalued compared to those of native-born applicants. This is a waste of human capital (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2006). Although Africans in countries such as the USA, the UK, Australia and Canada possessed creditable professional qualifications, they were denied access to employment opportunities (Danso and Grant 2000; Carey, 2002). Studies indicated that they were also denied membership into professional bodies in these countries because their qualifications were obtained in Africa (Danso and Grant 2000; Carey, 2002; Ngo & Este, 2006). This was confirmed by other

international studies which showed that foreign education and qualifications were valued at 70 percent of local qualifications in a number of industrialised nations (Alboim et al., 2005; Carey, 2002; Sweetman, 2004). This adversely affects the salary scales for these professional migrants. Ngunjiri (2001) recommends that other countries should look at how countries such as Australia and South Africa administer their registration and supervision of foreign-trained medical doctors.

Some migrants have had to make the decision to retrain whilst others start at the entry level of their profession (Zulauf, 1999). Many of these professionals are from fields like management, sales and marketing, human resources management, engineering and law (Zulauf, 1999). Zulauf (1999) suggest that employers are likely to be reluctant in their recruitment drive, particularly when they are not able to verify the quality of the professional qualifications and skills, and this creates a potential for excluding refugees and migrants. Some migrants reluctantly enrolled in further studies in order to comply with accreditation requirements, even though there were no guarantees of getting a job after re-training. While training and further education generally have positive connotations, it imposed unbudgeted costs and became a source of stress and disappointment for the majority of refugees and migrants in many developed countries (Ogunsiji, Wilkes, Jackson, & Peters, 2012; The International Council on Human Rights Policy (ICHRP), 2010).

Within the New Zealand context, studies have indicated that most New Zealand employers do not recognise foreign qualifications held by refugees and migrants especially from developing nations (Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy Report, 2006; Labour and Immigration Research Centre, 2012). A survey conducted by the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils Inc (2007) revealed that about 48 percent of employed migrants had their foreign-acquired educational and professional qualifications unrecognised for their first job in New Zealand. Re-training and acquiring new qualifications in New Zealand can be expensive and some participants felt that they had wasted their time re-training and were also getting old (Butcher et al, 2006). Such experiences of being

excluded from the job market due to non-recognition of educational and professional qualification are an example of the Labour Disadvantage Theory. Such experiences may result in some refugees and migrants getting into self-employment or to become reliant on state benefit schemes.

3.11 Employment Challenges: Unemployment, Under-employment and Promotion

3.11.1 Unemployment

Statistics New Zealand (2017) counts unemployed people as those who are available to work, and who had either actively sought work or had a new job to start within a period of the next four weeks. The number of unemployed people globally has continued to grow with more than 200 million recorded in 2013 (Global Wage Report, 2013). Many countries (New Zealand included) are afflicted with this problem. New Zealand's employment data as at June 2014 showed that out of a population of 4,5 million around 2,3 million (1,2 million males and 1,1 million females) were employed, representing an unemployment rate of 5.6 percent (Statistics New Zealand, 2016). Flynn and Fromm (2012) found that unemployment significantly affected other ethnicities in New Zealand in the following order: Maori (15 percent), Pacific (13 percent), Asians (8.2 percent) and Europeans (5 percent). Māori had the highest unemployment rate. About 22.7 percent of Maori youth and 20.17 percent of Pacific people aged 15 to 24 were not in employment, education or training in 2013, compared with only 9.9 percent of young Europeans and 5.7 percent of young Asians (Statistics New Zealand, 2017). In February 2018, Statistics New Zealand reported that the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell to 4.5 percent in the December 2017 quarter, down from 4.6 percent last quarter (Statistics New Zealand, 2018). This quarter's unemployment rate was the lowest in nine years, since the December 2008 quarter, when it was 4.4 percent (Statistics New Zealand, 2018).

The reports provide important data on unemployment for other minority communities in New Zealand such as Maori, Pacific and Asians in comparison with the European New Zealanders, but there has been no comparison on the

Middle Eastern Latin American and Africans (MELAA) grouping (Statistics New Zealand, 2018).

Securing employment is important for refugees and migrants as it enables them to be effectively integrated into their new countries (Fozdar, 2009). This is for the benefit and well-being of the individual concerned and the wider-community (Beiser & Hou, 2001; Fozdar, 2009). When general unemployment is high in a country, it is inevitable that it will be over-presented within the migrant and refugee populations. Refugees and migrants are consistently the most unemployed group in countries such as the UK (A. Anderson, Ruhs, Rogaly, & Spencer, 2006). Many studies have highlighted the high levels of unemployment among refugees, globally, with estimated rates varying from 75 to 90 percent (Africa Educational Trust, 1998; S. Anderson, 2005; Bloch, 1997, 1999a; McFarland & Walsh, 1995; Refugee Council/MBA Training Research and Development Ltd, 1999). Some migrants with professional qualifications e.g. medical doctors still find it difficult to secure employment even after they have sat for professional examinations (Elabor-Idemudia, 1999). Most of them had little option but to live on social state benefit for over two years and to start exploring employment opportunities in other countries. Dumper (2003) stated that unemployment is even more prevalent among women refugees globally. Refugee women who are professionally qualified with skills and experience from their home country often find it hard to receive the support needed to enter the job market (Nickerson (1995).

3.11.2 Unemployment: Social Integration of Refugees and Migrants in New Zealand

The New Zealand Human Rights Commission (2008) and the Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy Report (2006)-(ARSS) revealed that work is arguably the single most important element that is inextricably linked to the social integration of refugees and migrants in New Zealand. The reports further stated that work is about income, individual fulfilment, identity, social inclusion and cohesion. The employment-related objectives of the ARSS are to facilitate refugees and migrants to make meaningful social and economic contributions to New Zealand society by enabling them to gain employment that is appropriate to their abilities

and skills. The report also revealed that even though New Zealand's employment rates are currently the best (in 20 years), refugees and migrants are highly represented among the unemployed.

ChangeMakers Refugee Forum (2012) showed that refugees are among the most marginalised groups in the labour market in New Zealand (JR McKenzie Trust, 2004). In a 2009-10 survey by the New Zealand Department of Labour involving 512 former refugees, 51 percent of the respondents stated that government benefits were their main source of income (Searle, Gruner, & Duke T., 2011; Statistics New Zealand, 2010). Furthermore, another study of 33 Bhutanese refugees who resettled in New Zealand in 2009 revealed that only two of them had gained employment by the year 2011 (Department of Labour, 2011). They cited racism and discrimination, English language as a communication barrier and lack of New Zealand work experience as some of the main reasons for their unemployment.

A longitudinal study conducted by New Zealand Immigration (2012) indicated that unemployment was one of the major concerns for many Africans (youth) in New Zealand. Recent statistics show that only 43 percent of refugee African youth who arrived as a child in New Zealand between 1991 and 1999 held a salary as their main source of income (New Zealand Immigration, 2012). Butcher et al. (2006) stated that unemployment has social, economic and spiritual negative impacts on the health and wellbeing of African refugee and migrant communities. While New Zealand's national unemployment rate was 5.6 percent as at the end of 2012, Africans' unemployment rate accounted for almost 12 percent (Auckland District Health Board, 2011; Flynn & Fromm, 2012).

According to Turner (2015), Auckland, New Zealand's biggest commercial city has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). About 70 percent of Auckland youth need support to transition from education into employment (Turner, 2015). This includes African communities as well. Turner (2015) further argues that to turn around such a problem and realise the associated social and economic benefits, there is need for a collaborative cross-sector approach that is focused on

gaining a strong understanding and commitment from employers to preparing the youth to obtain gainful employment.

3.11.3 Under-Employment and Under-Payment

According to Flynn and Fromm (2012), underemployment refers to a situation where an employed individual wants to work more hours than they usually do and is available to do so. The International Labour Organisation (2011c.p.20) defined the underemployed as those employed individuals who: (i) work less than a specified threshold of hours (usually part-time), (ii) would like to work more hours, and (iii) are available to do so in the reference week. A number of studies have highlighted the plight of African migrants with professional qualifications who are under-employed and under-paid, for example, nurses working as care givers and lecturers employed as cleaners, cross-cultural workers, and teaching assistants in schools (Dunn, 2003; Flynn & Fromm, 2012; Gerrish, 2003; Hatoss, 2012). In Australia, casual interpreting for the Department of Immigration is a significant niche for refugee professionals (Hatoss, 2012). The challenge with these jobs is that they are often part-time or casual, insecure and paying very little, mostly below the stipulated minimum wage (Harris, 1995; Hatoss, 2012).

Studies done in New Zealand revealed comparable results (Labour and Immigration Research Centre 2012). Incomes for minority groups (e.g. Maori and Pacific Islanders) and African are still not showing any trend towards catching up with higher-paid Europeans. A number of Africans and those from the minority groups have lost relatively more jobs compared to Europeans in New Zealand in the recent recession period of 2007-2008 (Collin, 2014). Compared with the other ethnic groups, Maori, Pacific and African peoples had the highest rate of underemployment in New Zealand as at the end of June 2017 (Statistics New Zealand, 2018).

3.11.4 Promotion Challenges

According to Taran (2011), the glass ceiling and the invisible hand concepts refer to an invisible or unseen 'hand' operating within organisations, corporations,

government departments or education systems which effectively prevents certain groups, mostly minorities such as refugees and migrants, from being promoted and attaining positions of power and influence. Thus, African refugees and migrants are systematically denied access to positions of authority and leadership despite their experience, qualifications and expertise (Pasi, 2011). Taran (2011) argues that African refugees and migrants suffer the most prejudice due to unfair factors such as corporate culture which is biased towards retaining power and authority in the domain of white middle-class males. Many migrant job seekers refer to the notion of 'sticky floor' whereby people are stuck and trapped in the same positions, hindering their opportunities for promotion (Baklid el at, 2005; Pasi, 2011). The 'glass or cement ceiling' is when employees are blocked and stopped from been promoted to positions of influence (Baklid el at, 2005: p. 87). Pasi (2011) further argues that institutionalised and structural barriers are a result of systems that are strategically put in place in the social and economic structures of a society to ensure that power is retained in the hands of white people. For example, Pasi (2011) found that most Zimbabweans in the diaspora, no matter how qualified, skilled or educated end up in 'dead-end' jobs with low pay and low-status. The upward mobility is blocked by elements of glass-ceiling and gatekeeping which are the invisible machinery within industrial, commercial and government organizational settings (Kupferberg, 2008).

The International Council on Human Rights Policy (ICHRP) (2010) report showed that professional migrants in several developed countries were under-represented in management and leadership roles. This meant that despite their job-competency, high educational and professional qualifications, they were employed in blue-collar jobs while their local counterparts held white-collar jobs and leadership positions (ICHRP, 2010). This tells us that structural and systemic barriers that prevent migrants from promotions do exist in our contemporary world (Kupferberg, 2008).

3.12 Cultural Issues and Religion

3.12.1 Cultural Issues

Liu (2006) pointed out that the economic and labour market integration of refugees and migrants cannot be taken in isolation from their social and cultural integration. Different cultural norms should be distinguished. Liu (2006) found that culture is twofold, namely, societal culture and corporate or organizational culture. In this context, societal culture refers to a set of rules commonly accepted by members of a society that dominates their behaviours, thinking, perception and social relationships. Corporate or organizational culture is interpreted by small cliques and groups in power who enforce and reinforce dominant values within their organizations (Kirsh, 2000; Liu, 2006; O'Reilly III, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991; Werbel & Johnson, 2001; Westerman & Yamamura, 2007). It represents some of the core values of the organisation and is dominated by what people often call the 'old boys club'. My study seeks to determine whether there are any corporate or organizational cultural barriers that stand in the way of African to progress in their careers.

According to Cable and Edwards (2004) and Westerman and Yamamura (2007), most employers insist on what is known as 'cultural fit', or 'chemistry fit', which refer to a person's ability to know and understand how things are done in a particular employment setting. Other studies also support the notion of cultural fit and chemistry fit (O'Reilly III, 1991; Kirsh, 2000; Werbel & Johnson 2001; Liu 2006; Westerman & Yamamura, 2007). For example, in New Zealand, the notion of cultural fit or chemistry fit would require a new employee, even from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background, to understand the 'New Zealand way' of doing things and the New Zealand job market (Scull, 2001). Most employers place more emphasis on the need for job seekers to conform to the demands of understanding the culture within the local job market (Kyle, Macdonald, Doughney, & Pyke, 2004). Most prospective employers are reluctant to employ refugees and migrants because they fear that due to cultural differences, existing employees may react negatively and not welcome 'new'

employees and this may adversely impact on the productivity of an organisation (Sargeant and Forna, 2001; Feeney, 2000; Goodson and Phillimore, 2005). While cultural fit is important, most of the above studies ignore the economic benefits of employing refugees and migrants. Rodrik (2010) and Taran (2011) argue that a diversified workforce improves productivity and helps in the public relations and image-building of an organisation.

'Person-organisation fit' is defined as the extent to which applicants are perceived as similar to existing organizational members and as sharing the organization's values and culture (Cable & Edwards, 2004; Piasentin & Chapman, 2006, 2007). This means that a new employee is expected to possess similar cultural characteristics to those of the existing staff. The similarity-attraction paradigm introduced by Byrne (1971) suggests that interviewers are more attracted to individuals who are like them and therefore assess similar applicants as more qualified for the job and a better match for the organization than dissimilar applicants. Consequently, an applicant who is dissimilar to the interviewer may not make it to the final selection (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). Similar findings were obtained in Norway (de Meier, Born, van Zielst, & van der Molen, 2007; Horverak, Hege, Sandal, & Pallesen, 2011; Segrest, Perrewé, Gillespie, Mayes, & Ferris, 2006) and the Netherlands (Eriksen & Hylland, 2002). The studies on person-organisation fit seem to have overlooked how dissimilar workers would be assisted to fit into the organisation.

The Nova Scotia Barristers' Society published an interviewing guide (2006) and cited three main types of cultural misinterpretations or pitfalls in the job interview process for refugees and migrants, which included: response styles, language styles and non-verbal difference styles (Liu, 2006). These pitfalls illustrate how, due to true or imagined cultural differences in communication and correctness, refugees and migrants are misunderstood in the job interview process.

Studies in New Zealand have shown that the issue of cultural or organisational fit is of great concern to some employers as they think that if they hire migrants and refugees who are from a different culture, it may cause some cultural

conflicts with existing staff (Basnayake, 1999; Butcher et al., 2006; ChangeMakers Refugee Forum, 2012).

3.12.2 Religion and Employment: Global Perspective

The Council of Europe and European Commission (2000) report noted that religion-based discrimination in employment settings was common in the European Union (EU). Most of the prejudice appeared to be directed against the Islamic faith, and to a lesser extent against Judaism. Gardham (2009) has argued that such religion-based discrimination has a negative effect on those from the Islamic faith because their chances of getting employed may be diminished. They stated that there is a prevailing stereotype, globally, that Muslim migrants are more interested and faithful to Sharia law than to the national law of their host nation and their employers (Gardham,2009). This is supported by the European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS) (2009) which reported that one in three Muslim respondents had experienced employment-related discrimination in a period of 12 months in the EU. Muslims between the ages of 16 and 24 experienced the highest rates of employment-related discrimination. About 34 percent of Muslim men reported employment-related discrimination compared to 26 percent women.

Anti-religion discourses can have devastating effects globally. On the 28th January 2017, the recently inaugurated 45th USA President Donald Trump surprised the world when he announced a policy that banned more than 218 million people from seven targeted Muslim-majority countries from entering America, for the next 90 days (Hierman, 20017; McCormick, 2017). Though this policy was targeted at those of the Islamic religion, it also adversely affected non-Muslims who wanted entry into America for employment purposes and other reasons (Hierman, 20017; McCormick, 2017).

The New Zealand 2016 Human Rights Commission annual report mentioned that out of 1122 complaints alleging unlawful discrimination against the 1993 Act, forty-nine cases were based on religious beliefs. While the Human Rights Commission report identified the specific number of unlawful discrimination

cases based on religion, it did not tell us how many of these were employment-related. Such information is useful for analysis purposes.

3.13 Impact of Employment Experiences: Well-being of Refugees and Migrants (Globally)

3.13.1 Impact on Physical Health

There is an intertwined relationship between employment experiences and measures of well-being (Trewin, 2001). Employment enhances skills, social networks, and identity (Tilbury, 2007). Researchers found that refugees and migrants regard securing employment and settling in a job within their profession as a high priority in their life (Jasinskaja-Lahti, Karmela, & Riku, 2007; McSpadden, 1987; Rydgren, 2004; Tilbury, 2007; Valtonen, 1999, 2004). Mesthenos and Ioannidi (2002) argue that refugees and migrants experience a sense of loss of self-worth and self-esteem in adjusting to low-paying jobs in a foreign land. McGregor (2008) found that African migrants in the UK suffered from class-issues over loss of employment-status. Werkuyten and Nekuee (1999) found that employment-related discrimination has a complex relationship with self-esteem, anxiety, life satisfaction and that it damages the physical well-being. The impact and result of discrimination on social well-being have been found to be direct, strong and instant, while it has a more indirect and slower impact on overall physical health status (Gallo & Matthews, 1999; D. R. Williams, Neighbors, & Jackson, 2003). Due to the fact that discrimination experiences are often chronic and reflect a stable perception of a prejudiced environment, their negative impact on the well-being of refugees and migrants has been found to be extremely adverse and very long lasting (Allison, 1998; Swim, Cohen, & Hyers, 1998). Allison (1998) and Swim et al. (1998) pointed out that whereas most research focus on the traumatic experiences and contexts of refugees, the refugees themselves tend to focus on their present lives in the new contexts, especially on getting a job and moving on. Most of the above studies, however, focused on the past experiences of refugees, with minor attention to the present 'bread and butter' issues that affect them, such as securing a job, job-promotion prospects

and improving their social lives. This study seeks to capture key employment-factors that have a significant impact on the social lives of Africans in New Zealand through presenting the employment-stories shared by African community groups and individual community members.

3.13.2 Impact on Mental Health

Studies have found that many African migrants in the diaspora, suffer from psychiatric disorders and clinical psychological-related conditions due to a lack of securing gainful employment or procuring similar jobs to what they had back in their home countries (Pasi, 2011; Warfa et al., 2012). Silove et al. (2007) argued that key stakeholders such as policymakers need to consider and understand both the social and physiological impact of employment experiences on refugees and migrants.

Danso (2002) and Ogunsiji et al (2012) indicated that many refugees and migrants, feel lonely, isolated and depressed because of their challenging employment experiences. Although these respondents were physically present in their new homes, their minds, thoughts, feelings and affections still seemed to be connected and centred on their homelands. It's like they are 'here' but constantly thinking about 'there' – where they believe they really belong (Tilbury, 2007). As a migrant in New Zealand, this notion resonates with me. Fozdar and Torezani (2008) have stated that the longer refugees stay in their new home, the more their mental health and social well-being are adversely affected by ongoing negative employment-related experiences.

Apart from employment-related challenges, most refugees and migrants described the difficulty in making new friends, limited interaction with neighbours, and absence of extended family members who normally play a pivotal role in providing social, psychological and spiritual support (Askling, Saartok, & Thorstensson, 2006; Husain, Creed, & Tomenson, 2000; Kim & Buist, 2005; Read, 2004; Wall & José, 2004). Although employment problems are considered to cause some mental health outcomes for individuals in society, Pernice and Brook (1996a) and Aycan and Berry (1996) argue that refugees and

migrants' negative employment experiences can also cause adaptation difficulties.

3.13.3 Economic Impact: Refugees and Migrants in New Zealand

Pernice et al. (1996a) found that employment helps refugees and migrants to challenge negative stereotypes and provide them with an opportunity to financially support their immediate and extended families overseas. Most refugees and migrants in their study agreed that the sense of well-being associated with having a job relates to the economic independence that comes with receiving a regular wage or salary (Abbott et al. 2000; Butcher et al. 2006). The results of the 1998-2002 New Zealand longitudinal survey showed that employment-related problems have a negative effect on the social well-being of refugees and migrants and their families, such as depression, stress, low self-esteem, loss of status and identity (Butcher et al., 2006). These findings were confirmed by other New Zealand studies (Abbott, Wong, Williams, Au, & Young, 2000; Butcher et al., 2006; ChangeMakers Refugee Forum, 2012; Pernice & Brook, 1996a). Some of these problems trigger negative social impacts which may result in issues such as family violence and abuse of some vulnerable family members (Pernice & Brook, 1996a; Husain et al., 1997; Abbott et al., 2000).

Summary

This chapter reviewed literature and past studies on employment experiences of refugees and migrants, internationally and in New Zealand. It offered a summary of the empirical studies and findings that are relevant to my study and in line with the main research question of my research. This section summaries the main ideas from the literature, and its relationship to this research.

Migration Motivations

Studies have shown that people are motivated to migrate because of social needs, economic needs, political needs and better employment opportunities. Motivation to migrate can be characterised in general terms either by 'push' or 'pull' factors. Migration 'push' factors are those circumstances that 'push' people away from their country of origin to other destination-countries. Examples of 'push' factors are economic (unemployment and job scarcity), social issues (poverty, high crime-rate and armed conflicts) (Boon & Ahenkan, 2012). 'Pull' factors are those economic, political and social issues which attract and 'pull' individuals to migrate to other countries in pursue of better standard of living and other good facilities such as good employment opportunities and a higher quality of education (Boon & Ahenkan, 2012; El-Khawas, 2004; Ngunjiri, 2001; Royal College of Nursing, 2003b).

These motivation factors play an important role in the migration journey of migrants by helping and motivating them to keep their hope alive as they settle in a new country. As Boon and Ahenkan (2012) recognise, however, the international migration process may present a series of complicated challenges such as economic, social, ethnic, and political issues. This is especially true in African migration where the right to work/employment, human rights and social justice issues have been shown to be evident challenges for refugees and migrants in developed countries and in New Zealand.

African Migration Experiences

Data indicates that every year, thousands of African professionals leave their home countries for developed nations in search of better living conditions and employment opportunities. Some of the reasons why people leave their home countries are economic decline and political instability. Studies found that the United Kingdom, USA, Canada, France, Australia, Portugal, Belgium and Spain are among the major developed countries that tend to take a large number of professionals from Africa. This phenomenon is not a new development since it started in the 1960s, following the political independence of African states.

Colonial ties, historical links, cultural and linguistic similarities and geographical proximity have been shown to influence decisions and choices of country-destination. For example, mainly due to colonisation and language issues, main Zimbabweans settled in the UK while Congolese chose to live in Belgium and France (International Organization for Migration, 2008a). The cultural familiarity appears to make it easier for African professionals to get jobs in these countries. However, African professionals often face migration challenges in their new countries, such as racism and discrimination. At the same time, they also continue to endure alienation from their countries of origin as victims of government repression, accused of migrating to the West due to a lack of patriotism (Mwagiru, 1999).

Some of the employment challenges faced by refugees and migrants internationally are racism and discrimination. It has also been found that English language capability can be a communication barrier as can be non-recognition of overseas qualifications, demands of local work experience, culture and religion (Liu, 2006; Gardham, 2009) and promotion and career progression challenges. Some of these challenges have forced some migrants to retrain thereby changing their careers after many years of investment in particular fields.

Studies in New Zealand context have incorporated African migration experiences within wider research focusing on refugees and migrants. Earlier studies have shown that refugees and migrants often experience employment-related discrimination based on race, name and accent. They found that employers tend to prefer New Zealand European employees. These findings were supported by research by the Department of Internal Affairs (1996) and the Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy Report (2006) which confirmed that skilled migrants, particularly those from ethnic minority background (including Africans) experience many forms of employment-related discrimination such as name-based. This was particularly evident in research conducted by ChangeMakers (2012), which noted that most migrants are irritated and feel discriminated when they get asked by employers to change their traditional-foreign names to New Zealand (Kiwi) ones, for the sake of getting employed.

Negative employment experiences are shown to impact greatly on migrants' settlement experiences. Studies have revealed that employment-related discrimination has a complex relationship with self-esteem, anxiety, life satisfaction and that it damages the physical and mental well-being of individuals. Employment experiences have an impact on both the physical and mental health of African migrants. Employment enhances skills, social networks, and identity. Researchers found that refugees and migrants experience a sense of loss of self-worth and self-esteem if they do not settle in jobs within their professions. Studies have found that many African migrants in the diaspora, suffer from psychiatric disorders and clinical psychological-related conditions due to failure to secure similar jobs to the ones they had in their home countries.

The literature showed general understanding that refugees and migrants to New Zealand can face significant challenges in gaining and progressing in employment. This has been shown to substantially impact individuals and their families. Despite this general understanding, there is little that deeply explains these experiences for African migrants, and how the challenges faced impact on the well-being of the individual concerned and their families. Moreover, the effects of these challenges on African migrant communities is even less known. This research seeks to contribute new knowledge into this important area.

Labour Disadvantage Theory (LDT) and The Critical Race Theory (CRT)

The application of the LDT and the CRT are appropriate for this study because they provide lenses for examining how African communities in New Zealand are disadvantaged on the labour market as well as in facing employment-related racism. These theories are important as an analytical basis for building new understanding of this minority community. The use of the LDT will be helpful to examine issues of how African communities are disadvantaged in the labour market while the CRT will be utilised to scrutinise issues of racism.

As the review shows, LDT enables an understanding of how Africans are disadvantaged on the labour market. For example, they miss out on employment opportunities due to discrimination based on English language proficiency, lack

of local work experience, and non-recognition of overseas qualifications. Within the New Zealand context, Ward and Masgoret (2007) found that out of 42 job applications, migrants with foreign-sounding names were disadvantaged in the employment process compared to New Zealand Europeans. As a result of these disadvantages, some end up on self-employment and some on state benefit.

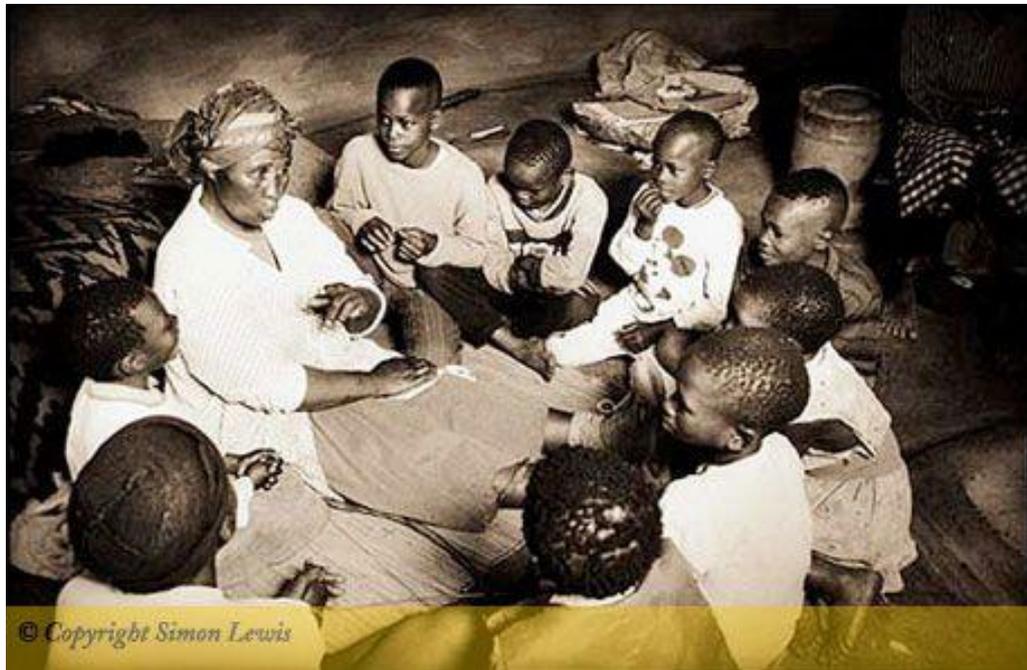
CRT highlights white domination and collective white supremacy in society. In the context of my study, CRT is useful to address the issues of employment-related discrimination faced by African communities in New Zealand, especially in considering discrimination based on race or skin colour (Crenshaw, 1988; Ansley, 1989).

An important consideration in developing research that uncovers authentic migrant experiences is how those stories are gathered. The African storytelling method is therefore an important complement to the LDT and CRT approaches. In the context of my study, African storytelling will provide an advantage in that all participants are Africans and will understand and value its importance (Olupona, 1990). Community participants will be able to share their employment experiences in a context they are comfortable in.

The application of the African storytelling will blend well with the underpinning theoretical frameworks of Labour Disadvantaged Theory and Critical Race Theory as well as the Ubuntu philosophy. The methodology will be explained in greater detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

CHAPER FOUR: METHODOLOGY



African Storytelling Session

“Storytelling is a creative component of human experience and in order to share our experiences with the world, we as Africans need to recognise the importance of our own stories” (Chinua Achebe’s foreword in ‘A Grain of Wheat’ by Ngugi wa Thiong’o, 1967.p.(i))

4.1 Methodological Approach

In this qualitative study, I investigated the employment-related experiences of New Zealand-based African communities and how these experiences impact on their well-being. I used the African oral tradition of storytelling to critically examine the meanings, feelings and experiences of African communities with regard to their employment-related experiences and challenges. The use of African storytelling was considered appropriate because all the participants, that is, the community groups and individual participants who are all Africans,

are familiar with the tradition and practice of African storytelling (Achebe, 1959; Olupona, 1990). Storytelling is not a new phenomenon to the people of African descent because most of them grew up hearing stories from their community elders (Achebe, 1959; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1965; McAdams, 1993).

This study is unique because of the approach of using African storytelling, the utilisation of the concept of communities and the application of the African philosophy of Ubuntu. Highlighting and emphasising the importance of the collective voices of the African communities alongside individual voices or individual participants is critical in this study. The use of communities is exceptional in that it goes beyond the usual concept of focus group because the voices and views of communities are regarded as paramount in the sharing of community stories, thoughts, emotions and opinions on their employment experiences. By congregating together, the community groups were able to examine, discuss, debate, challenge and express their perceptions and beliefs.

In order to make the collective voices of the communities heard, I have used four distinctive community groups, which I have decided to refer to as 'communities', and not focus groups. Each community group consisted of an average of six people and their composition will be outlined later. In addition to community group discussions, I held individual face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with 20 individual participants from the New Zealand-based African communities in order to understand their personal employment experiences. The rationale for including both groups (community groups and individuals) was to hear views from both perspectives and then make an analytical comparison. Some of the individual experiences and views were similar to those of the communities.

This study used the Labour Disadvantage Theory (LDT) and the Critical Race Theory (CRT) which address issues pertaining to employment disadvantages and racial issues in the job market, as might be experienced by African communities in New Zealand. In summary, LDT states that most minority groups, including refugees and migrants are normally disadvantaged in the labour market and find it challenging to get employment such that they end up

in self-employment and some on state benefits (de Raijman, 1996; Li, 1997; Min & Bozorgmehr, 2000; Schmis, 2013; Volery, 2007; Young, 2000). CRT seeks to highlight racism, white dominance and white supremacy in societies (Bell, 1985). CRT also aims to uncover and critique racially oppressive social structures, meanings, and ideas for the purpose of combating racism (Bell, 1995). In my research, CRT was used to investigate issues of racism and discrimination faced by Africans when seeking employment in New Zealand. Through storytelling, community groups and individual participants expressed their views on employment-related challenges encountered by African residents in New Zealand.

4.2 Research Question

The main research question investigated in this study was: *What are the main employment challenges faced by the African communities in New Zealand?*

4.3 Research Strategies

4.3.1 Quantitative and Qualitative

This study employed a qualitative approach. The African oral tradition of storytelling was used because it was found to be the most appropriate methodology as most Africans are accustomed to and comfortable with storytelling (Olupona, 1990). Communities narrated their stories regarding their employment experiences in New Zealand. Limited quantitative data was used in the collection of employment statistical data, such as unemployment rates, that related to African communities in New Zealand.

4.3.2 Qualitative Approach and Interpretive Research

A qualitative research method is used to generate qualitative information (use of words, text and observation) rather than quantitative information (use of numbers) (Veal, 2005; Veal & Simon, 2014). According to Hanley-Maxwell and Al Hano (2007), qualitative research is an approach that enables researchers to study phenomena in natural settings and to make sense of the meanings people

bring to the events. The aim of this study is to investigate the employment experiences and challenges faced by New Zealand-based African communities. Therefore, the use of a qualitative approach has been found to be appropriate for this study as it sought to understand the stories and employment experiences of this population (Benoliel, 1984; Higgs, 1999). Qualitative research is interpretive, pragmatic, and grounded in the life-experiences of people (C. Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Qualitative research focuses on phenomenological enquiries (lived experience) of participants (Polit & Beck, 2004). It also empowers communities and participants to share their personal experiences, stories and voices (Creswell, 2013). Interpretive research such as this is associated with a small sample population and normally lends itself to the interview process where the observer looks for a high level of detailed information (Collis & Hussey, 2003). In the context of my study, the small sample population represented the community groups and individual participants. The interpretive approach complemented the African storytelling methodology, where African communities shared their lived-employment experiences. An interpretive paradigm has been used in previous studies relating to employment experiences and challenges faced by refugees and migrants globally (Dustmann, 1994; Kirk, 2004; Mogalakwe, 2008; North, 2007; Opoku-Dapaah, 1993). An interpretive approach was thus deemed appropriate for this study as it sought to investigate the impact of the employment-related experiences and challenges on the lives and well-being of African communities in New Zealand. Marshall and Rossman (1999) indicated that the qualitative method is a widely-accepted technique for studying such social phenomena.

4.4 Research Paradigm/ Framework: African Oral Tradition of Storytelling (AOTS)

4.4.1 What is African Storytelling?

Before reading and writing was developed in ancient Africa, Africans used storytelling as a way of transmitting their history, heritage, knowledge, experiences, thoughts, aspirations, dreams, beliefs, values, fears and feelings

from one generation to the next (Achebe, 1987; Cannarozzi, 1999; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1967, 1986). Among others, these stories were about the many gods and goddesses worshipped by their ancestors in the valleys and mountains, and some were about their heroes and heroines, and leaders and kings who fought and won great wars and battles (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1964). Stories were also about the evils of colonisation and how the African ways of knowing were invalidated and side-lined (Achebe, 1959; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 2000). There was no written language, so stories transmitted orally, kept African history alive (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1982).

When contemplating the research methodology to use to investigate the employment experiences of Africans in New Zealand, I therefore decided to use African storytelling to collect data because all my participants are Africans and also it is a culturally appropriate methodology. This decision was also based on the cultural match of storytelling to the cultural processes and beliefs of African people (Ache, 1959; Gbadegesin, 1984; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; Mkabela 2005; Manley, Begay & Cornell 2008; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). This methodological approach is similar to the one taken by Bessarab and Ng'andu (2010) when they used Yarning/ Conversation to carry out research projects with indigenous Australians and indigenous Batswana (Botswana people).

Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) argues that it is appropriate and effective to use a language and research methodology which is understood by the researched. He further stated that Eurocentric research-driven methodologies and interventions are likely to be ineffective when dealing with an indigenous phenomenon, due to their failure to draw from indigenous knowledge and indigenous epistemologies. My study is therefore based on a narrative methodology (African storytelling) which is rooted in African oral tradition and world-view (Achebe, 1959; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986). In this study, storytelling and story making from an African perspective have been used as the method of gathering data. Most African stories are embedded in proverbs, demonstrations, sport, poetry, praise, songs, word games, dance, music, and other education-centered activities (Ngara 2007).

Most stories shared by individual participants and communities reflected elements of labour disadvantages and racism. This reflected the Labour Disadvantage Theory and the Critical Race Theory which were used in this study as the overarching theoretical approaches to ground this research. Communities also shared stories on the impact of some of the employment experiences on their well-being.

Traditionally, African people are rooted in oral cultures and traditions and as a result they are renowned good storytellers (Chinyowa, 2004; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; Vambe, 2001, 2004). Since olden times, storytelling within the African culture has been a way of passing on traditions, codes, values of acceptable behaviour, from generation to generation as well as upholding and preserving good social order (Olupona, 1990). Gbadegesin (1984) argues that the history of African people is re-constructed through oral stories and testimonies supplied by communities and individuals.

Storytelling was the most common form of preserving the history, traditional culture and ritual ceremonies of the people of Africa (Chavunduka, 1994; Vambe, 2001). The tradition of oral African storytelling is one of the oldest in African culture, across the continent (Vambe, 2001). Ancient writing traditions do exist on the African continent, but most Africans today, as in the past, are primarily oral peoples and their art forms and stories are oral rather than in written form (Achebe, 1959; Chinyowa, 2001). In many parts of Africa, after dinner, upon the sound of tantalising drums, villagers would congregate around a central fire and settle down to listen to interesting and captivating stories (Achebe, 1959). The narration of the stories is accompanied with singing, drumming, percussion instruments, clapping, and dancing (Achebe, 1959). The proverbial songs and parables are utilized to highlight the expression of the characters (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1982).

Gbadegesin (1984) described African storytelling as a method of recording and expressing feelings, attitudes, and responses of one's lived experiences and environment. Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) argued that African storytelling is not

the same as reading a story aloud or reciting a poem; it requires particular abilities such as pedagogical skills, which is the art and science of narrating a story and how to effectively engage the listeners. Traditional storytelling within African context reveals ideas, themes, wisdom and facts. It takes people on a journey that motivates them to learn about themselves and the world around them and reflects social values in a culture that inspires communities in their pursuit of a meaningful life (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1964).

Bessarab & Ng'andu (2010.p.38) defined African storytelling as “a feature of African Indigenous societies where oral tradition was the main form of transmitting and sharing knowledge with individuals and communities”. Asante (1987) described African storytelling as “a paradigm that has at its core the understanding of the African identity and philosophy as rooted, centred and located in the African culture in all aspects, such as spiritual, social, political and economic” (Asante, 1987; in Owusu-Ansah and Mji, 2013.p.2). Mkabela (2005) emphasised that African storytelling is the examination of the African reality from the perspective of the African; one that places the African lived-experience at the centre, recognises the African voice and reaffirms the centrality of African cultural experience as the place to begin to create a dynamic multicultural approach to research.

Carroll (2008) stated that African storytelling is a genre of thought and knowledge created out of experience rooted in the cultural image and interest of the people of African descent. Its basis is grounded in an African worldview (Carroll, 2008). These worldviews and values play a pivotal role as African communities in New Zealand narrate their employment-related stories and experiences (Bishop, 1998).

African storytelling encourages cultural and social immersion of both the storyteller and story-listeners in the storytelling process (Mkabela, 2005). Social immersion provides the researcher with knowledge about the history, language, culture, philosophy and myths of the researched (Mkabela, 2005; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). African storytelling has the potential to reduce misinterpretation,

perpetuation of myths and researcher imposition because people normally assert their values in their stories (Mkabela, 2005). Another advantage of using African storytelling is that African communities in New Zealand had an opportunity to suggest solutions to some of the identified challenges, using a method they are familiar with (McAdams, 1993). Participants also talked about the impact of these employment experiences on their well-being.

While African storytelling can be a useful tool for the collection of research data, the success and outcome of the interviews are usually dependent on the quality of the relationship between the researcher and participant, the language being used, and the conceptual baggage brought to the interview process (Bessarab & Ng'andu (2010.p.38). As a researcher, I did my best to maintain healthy and professional relations with all participants and community groups. I was also mindful of the language I used and focused on encouraging and empowering words.

African researchers and scholars are challenged to utilise and preserve African research methodologies and indigenous knowledge for the development and empowerment of African peoples (Mkabela, 2005; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013; Ngara, 2007). To be meaningful and empowering, African-based research should include African thoughts and ideas from inception through completion of the research, especially when examining African phenomena. It should reconsider its continued use of research pathways mapped out by Western methodologies within which many have been trained (Mkabela, 2005; Ngara, 2007; Tanyanyiwa, & Chikwanha, 2011; Owusu-Ansah & Mji (2013). Knowledge or science, and its methods of investigation, cannot be divorced from a people's history, cultural context and worldview(Tanyanyiwa & Chikwanha, 2011) . Worldviews shape consciousness and form the theoretical framework within which knowledge is sought, critiqued and understood (Sarpong 2002; Ngara, 2007). According to (Asante, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1993), African storytelling is an appropriate research methodology in qualitative research, especially when the study includes participants of African descent because the philosophical and theoretical paradigm underlying African storytelling is consistent with the African

worldview. In predominantly Western-oriented academia and investigations, the African voice is either side-lined or suppressed because indigenous knowledge and methods are often ignored or not taken seriously (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). While acknowledging the contribution of Western knowledge systems and research methodologies to the development of modern research paradigms, my study seeks to show how African storytelling is not only a culturally appropriate research methodology for African communities to share their employment experiences in New Zealand and the impact of these experiences on their well-being, but also as a means of empowerment for the participants.

Past writers such as Achebe (1959) and Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1982), have noted that African research methodologies have been criticised as primitive, in favour of westernised methodological approaches. On the contrary, the African storytelling methodology is as effective and culturally appropriate as any other social research methodological framework, especially as it investigates African phenomena within African communities in New Zealand (McAdams, 1993; Tuwe, 2016). As a way of empowering African communities in New Zealand, participants were given opportunities to share their wisdom and highlight the effects of their employment experiences on their wellbeing.

African storytelling unveils concepts and values that are unique to a tribe, village, or region. Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1982) has highlighted that tribes may be united by national African traditions and yet have different stories of their own tribal champions, regional legendary heroes and unique ancient tribal origins. In the context of this study, similarity of experience was emphasised over tribal or national differences. Community groups and individual participants stated that although Africans in New Zealand are originally from different African countries and backgrounds, their employment experiences and challenges are uniquely similar, thus, their experiences are usually the same.

In the process of this research, African communities and individual participants were able to narrate their historic stories, among others, their employment experiences and how and why they decided to come to New Zealand for

employment. They also talked about the impact of these employment experiences on their well-being. These stories reflected their aspirations, dreams, feelings and fears of their employment experiences. In the narration of their stories, they displayed traditional knowledge and African ways of knowing. They intrinsically motivated each other to share their different employment experiences for the benefit of the communities.

Although the participants were aware that African storytelling would be used from the participant information package, at the beginning of each group session, I again informed them that African storytelling was going to be utilised as the data gathering tool. I discussed the meaning of African storytelling and explained the crucial storytelling components as: Why are employment stories told? Why are they important? What makes an employment-related story worthy of telling? How are employment-stories narrated? (Mandela, 2002; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1998; Soyinka, 1978; Utley, 2008). Together with the participants, we suggested how the community groups might wish to deliberate and operate as they shared their stories. All community groups discussed and agreed to a strategy that made the process of narrating their employment-stories easier, clearer and time-saving. As for the individual participants, I followed a similar procedure, and this was welcomed and accepted by all participants, individually.

4.4.2 The Uniqueness of African Storytelling

African storytelling is unique. It is advantageous to use African storytelling, as a research methodology, when dealing with participants of African descent or investigating an African phenomenon. The uniqueness of African storytelling is rooted in its African culture and the way in which African storytellers narrate their stories (Achebe, 1959; Ngugi wa Thiog, 1986; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013; Mkabela 2005). This uniqueness is also enshrined in its distinctive ability to provide entertainment, to satisfy the curiosities of the African people, and to teach and impact important moral lessons about everyday life (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; Utley, 2008). African storytelling is unique to the social structure and cultural values of African indigenous communities (Goduka, 2000; Mkabela,

2005; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). Despite Africa's vastness and diversities, which include about a thousand indigenous languages, the uniqueness of African storytelling techniques shows distinctive, consistent and enduring commonalities transcending geographical boundaries and ethnicities (Goduka, 1999; Ngara, 2007). Specific elements and characteristics of African storytelling make it unique from other Western methods such as narrative enquiry. The following sections present examples which show the advantages of using African storytelling as a data collection tool, especially where participants are Africans.

The Call and Response Technique

The common feature among most African storytelling cultures is the 'call and response technique'. The attention and enthusiastic response of the audience make the stories interesting and captivating (Vambe, 2001). African storytelling is intertwined with the storyteller's environment because the process is not a private individual affair. In adopting the style and protocol, the storyteller makes a call and the audience /community responds accordingly (Achebe, 1959; Adelowo, 2012). For example, Chinyowa (2001) presented the storytelling situation in a typical Zimbabwean Shona context (Shona is the biggest tribe in Zimbabwe) as follows:

- **Storyteller:** "Paivapo....." meaning "Once upon a time there was"
- **Audience/ Community response:** "Dzefunde." meaning "Let it be so" and "Let your story come" (Chinyowa 2001,p.20). This response is equivalent to the 'Halelujah' and 'Amen' in religious church scenario.

The call and response technique presents a context of storytelling in which the narrators and audience are co-performers (Fretz, 1994). During the process, the active responses from the audience make an effective performance (Mabasa, 2014). This makes the role of the audience in the storytelling process very important. The mood of the audience, either sad or happy, impacts that of the storyteller (Akivaga & Odaga, 1982). Peek and Yankah (2004) stated that the audience acts as a stimulus, a catalyst, and helps the creativity and imaginations of the storyteller. Without this interaction, a story cannot be fully understood and at times it may not be appreciated (Chinyowa 2001; Vambe, 2004). In my study,

as individuals shared their stories, community group members responded in unison as a way of intrinsically encouraging the storyteller and providing for the same context.

Pedagogical Skills-The Art and Science of Narrating Stories

The pedagogical skills element is about the manner in which most African storytellers deliver and narrate stories, thus, the art and science of presentation. For example, this involves the facial expressions used by the storyteller, how the storyteller imitates certain behaviours in the story, the intonation of the voice, which is the rise and fall of the voice, clapping of hands and nodding of heads (when in agreement) or the 'shaking' of heads (when disagreeing) (Achebe, 1959; Vambe, 2004). Normally, depending on the story, the storyteller stands up to demonstrate the actions embedded in the story. The stories do not follow any sequential order (Chinyowa 2004; Vambe, 2004).

This was emulated in the context of my study when some group members stood up and demonstrated and dramatized particular behaviours and experiences they had with employers and prospective employers.

Spiritual Connections

There are specific ways of sharing stories from an African perspective, and the most common one is the process of performing spiritual rituals. This means there are rituals performed to invite stories. The process tends to be unique from one village to another, or one storyteller to another. African storytelling is used as an avenue to connect the physical and the spiritual worlds. There are rituals performed to invite African stories. In the storytelling process, the storyteller normally gazes up in the sky or at the apex of a thatched roof of a hut as if he/she is '*seeing things from afar... from a distance*' and communicating with the spiritual world (Achebe, 1959; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986). During my data collection, a number of both individual participants and community group members got deeply engrossed in the narration of their stories such that they would look like as if they were in a trance.

The storyteller creates and generates a series of mental metaphors and images associated with the spiritual world, illustrating that African storytelling is deeply connected with that which happens in the spiritual realm (Bleek & Lloyd, 1911; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; Utley, 2008). A renowned African storyteller, Kabo (in Bleek & Lloyd, 1911.p. 301), expressed the spiritual element:

I am waiting for the moon to turn back for me, so that I may return to my home and tell stories..... When the weather gets a little warmer I sit in the sun, sitting and listening to the stories that come from a distance. Then I catch hold of a story that floats out from a distant place.....I feel that I must visit and talk with my fellows...

Dialogical and Communal Affair

African storytelling is a dialogical and communal affair that involves the assembling of the community (Chinyowa 2004). When the audience is familiar with the stories, they actively participate as they learn important aspects of the story and their culture (Ngugiwa Thiong'o, 1986; Utley, 2008). African storytelling is not a private affair in Africa; it involves the storyteller and the audience that the story is 'gifted to' as well as the communal space of storytelling (J Banks-Wallace, 2002; Mensah, 2007). The community members are present to listen, make contributions and interjections and impulsive shouts/screams such as 'Ndizvozvo. Wataura iwe!!', meaning, 'That's true. Bring it on!!' in my native language, Shona. They sometimes join in the singing, especially the chorus. It is a process that involves the storyteller and the audience singing and clapping to affirm the story that is being told (Peek & Yankah, 2004). They are active and not passive participants in the process (Achebe, 1959; Adelowo, 2012). To show that the process of a meaningful storytelling is dialogical, (Finnegan, 1970, p. 197) summed it up as follows:

In all this, participation of the audience is essential. It is common for members of it to be expected to make verbal contribution-spontaneous exclamation.... echoing of the speaker's words, emotional reaction to the development of yet another parallel and repetitious episode. Further, the audience contributes the choruses of the song

and interjections of both approval and disapproval, depending on what was said.

Repetition Techniques

Repetition of the language, rhythm and gesture are important characteristics of African storytelling (Matateyou, 1997). Storytellers repeat words, phrases, gestures and verses or stanzas. From an African storytelling perspective, the utilisation of repetition techniques makes it easy to understand and recall the stories from memory. It is not merely tautological and primitive (Achebe, 1959).

During the entire interview process, community group members continuously repeated particular topics that were of interest to them, such as racism and discrimination, English language and demands of local work experience.

The Power of African Stories

Chinua Achebe, in his book, *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987), explains that a story does many things, such as entertaining, informing, and instructing. Stories live beyond the storyteller and the audience (Achebe, 1959). They are powerful and influential in people's lives (Ngugi wa Thiong'o 1986; Achebe, 1987). African stories support and reinforce the basic doctrines of the African culture, such as humanity, peace and love (Ngugi wa Thiong'o 1986; Achebe, 1987). The storyteller would work out and calculate what is right and what is wrong, what is courageous and what is cowardly, and turn it into a vibrant story (Achebe, 1987). To demonstrate the power, influence and significance of a story, Chinua Achebe said:

...It is only the story that can continue beyond the war and the warrior. It is the story that outlives the sound of war-drums and the exploits of brave fighters. It is the story.....that saves our progeny (off-spring) from blundering.... The story is our escort; without it, we are blind. Does the blind man own his escort? No, neither do we....it is the story that owns us and directs us (Achebe, 1987.p.50).

The power and influence of stories was at play when some members of the community groups were in tears after listening to heart-breaking employment stories and experiences of Africans in New Zealand.

This uniqueness of African storytelling, as recorded here, refers to the context of the African experiences and African worldviews which are debatably different from those of the Western world (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013; Mkabela 2005). However, this does not mean that it is so unique as to be completely divorced from all other forms of western research methodologies and knowledge (Owusu-Ansah and Mji, 2013). It is hoped that the use of African storytelling will encourage African researchers and scholars to return to their roots and utilise African ways of knowing alongside existing 'mainstream research' knowledge systems. As for western researchers, it is intended to inform and remind them that African storytelling and other indigenous research methods are appropriate research methodologies (Mkabela 2005). Failure to do this may alienate African research methodologies and African ways of knowing from the mainstream research (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013; Mkabela 2005).

Functions and Roles of African Storytelling

African stories offer explanations of natural phenomena, teach morality, provide African people with a sense of identity, and are entertaining as well as instructive (Achebe, 1987; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; Utley, 2008). In a journal article entitled "Emancipatory potential of storytelling in a group", Banks-Wallace (1998) identified the following six functions of storytelling: (i) contextual grounding; (ii) bonding with others; (iii) validating and affirming experiences; (iv) venting and releasing; (v) resisting oppression; and (vi) educating others. Both the adults and the young people will learn valuable lessons about life experiences from African storytelling (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1982; Utley, 2008). African storytelling has been used to interpret the universe, resolve natural and physical phenomena, maintain cultural values, pass on methods of survival, and praise God (Kunene, 2012; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; Utley, 2008; Vambe, 2001). Through storytelling, the

African youth, in particular, are likely to learn good behaviours both in the employment environment as well as in the community at large.

In most African cultures the main function of storytelling is to entertain, mediate and transmit knowledge and information on culture and worldviews across generations (Alidou, 2002; Asante, 1987; Chinyowa, 2004; Kouyate, 1989; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1982). However, Silko (1977) argues that stories are not just for entertainment but they assist people to assert themselves and what they stand for. He goes on to state that if one does not have a story, he/she "does not have anything" (p. 2). Banks-Wallace (1998) suggested that people could also voice their concerns and fears through telling their stories and that storytelling has evoked feelings and memories of what it is to be people of African descent across time and space within the research setting. Sharing experiences on employment-related stories is significant for Africans in New Zealand in the sense that it helps to invoke a sense and feeling of self-identity, solidarity and togetherness in the community as people relate to these issues (Banks-Wallace, 2002; DasyIva, 2007).

Storytelling helps to establish a common experience and bonding between the teller and the listener (Banks-Wallace, 1999). This is important for Africans in New Zealand as they share their employment-related stories. Narrating and articulating stories on employment experiences have been identified as a critical aspect of regaining a sense of self-worth for immigrants (Traeder & Berry, 1995). It is important for African communities in New Zealand to use storytelling as a means of sharing their employment experiences as they voice their dreams, concerns, and fears (Canon, 1988; DasyIva, 2007; Gbadegesin, 1984).

4.4.3 Examples of Successful Case Studies using African Storytelling

Below are some of the examples where African storytelling was successfully used as a research methodology.

1. Experiences of African Female Chefs in the Hospitality Industry in Kenya

Orido (2017) used African storytelling in his masters degree to investigate the challenges faced by 15 female chefs in the Kenyan Hospitality

Industry. The participants who were all Africans were able to articulate their stories using a methodology they were familiar with and understood.

2. Inter-organizational Relationships (Chinese Human Resources Managers and African Employees in Africa)

By using African storytelling as a research methodology, (Xing, Liu, Tarba, & Cooper, 2016) were able to address important inter-organizational relationships between 32 Chinese human resources managers and African employees in 21 Chinese companies operating in Africa. The findings revealed the importance of the cross-cultural training and mutual learning between Chinese managers and African employees to enhance mutual understanding against the backdrop of Chinese firms entering African countries.

3. Evaluating Higher Education System in Africa

As result of using African storytelling, local communities were able to tell Kaya and Seleti (2013) that higher education system in Africa and South Africa in particular, is still too academic and distant from the developmental challenges of African local communities. The results showed that the integration of African indigenous knowledge systems into the higher educational system could improve its relevance to its people.

4. Experiences of African Women in New Zealand

Adelowo (2012), in her PhD thesis entitled “The adjustment of African women living in New Zealand: A narrative study” used the storytelling methodology to investigate the migration experiences of 15 African women in New Zealand.

5. Installation of Digital Mobile Communication Systems (South Africa and Kenya)

Reitmaiera, Bidwellb, and Marsdena (2011) showed that through using African storytelling, as a research methodology, two rural African communities based in Eastern Cape of South Africa and in Kenya were able to secure the installation of a digital mobile communication system.

6. Experiences of Mine Employees (South Africa)

By using African storytelling, Tobin and Snyman (2008) were able to document a successful case study research in a large mining company based in South Africa. The findings identified African storytelling as an innovative and culturally appropriate research methodology for employees to share their knowledge and experience.

7. Experiences of Disabled Women (Cape Town, South Africa)

African Storytelling was successfully used as a research methodology to solicit the lived experiences of disabled women who lived in wooden shacks in the peri-urban area of Khayelitsha in Cape Town, South Africa (Lorenzo, van Niekerk, & Mdlokolo, 2007). Through storytelling, they shared experiences of what helped or hindered their social and economic development since they started living with disabilities. The findings revealed the struggles and sadness of these women, at an individual, family and community level. The women spoke strongly about the urgent need to meet their employment challenges and other essentials such as physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. The discussion reflected on the many paradoxes of disability encapsulated in the essence of interdependence within the African concept of Ubuntu. Ubuntu will be more fully explained later, in this study.

8. Measuring the Effectiveness of Health Promotion Initiatives: Women of African Descent Living in the USA

Banks-Wallace (1998) successfully used African storytelling to measure and examine the effectiveness of health promotion initiatives by interviewing 28 women of African descent living in the Seattle-Tacoma

region of the USA. The author concluded that storytelling can create an environment that supports evaluation of experience and promotes problem-solving.

4.4.4 Examples of other Indigenous Storytelling Methodologies

Indigenous storytelling methodologies have been utilised successfully across a range of cultural context. An example is Lee (2009) who used Pūrākau in examining Maori narratives of decolonisation. Pūrākau is a Maori traditional oral storytelling that contains philosophical thought, epistemological construct, cultural codes and worldviews that are fundamental to the identity of Maori people (Lee, 2009). Maori are the indigenous people of Aotearoa, New Zealand. Pūrākau was deliberately designated and used as a methodological tool to investigate the stories of Māori teachers in New Zealand (Lee, 2009). Lee (2009) mentioned that Pūrākau was developed as an appropriate research methodology for the Maori people in New Zealand to address the issue of decolonizing research methodologies.

In the Pacific context, Talanoa has emerged as an important methodology. Talanoa is a Pacific Island epistemological approach that captures the traditions and protocols of the Pacific people. It is a traditional Pacific practice which is about the art of connecting people through storytelling. This is a face-to-face form of communication. Talanoa essentially removes the cultural distance between researcher and participant as the exchange between the researcher and participant(s) is done via dialogue that takes the form of an unstructured/ semi-structured interview (Morgan, 1998a). A growing number of Pacific and non-Pacific researchers have come to favour and write about Talanoa as a culturally appropriate Oceanic research methodology (Stewart- Withers, Sewabu, & Richardson, 2017). An example where Talanoa was successfully used was in Prescott (2009) to investigate the experiences of Tongan businessmen based in Auckland, New Zealand in 2006 and 2007.

Yarning (Storytelling) Methodology has been used as a Legitimate Method in indigenous research (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010). Bessarab and Ng'andu (2010) demonstrated the credibility and rigour of yarning (storytelling) as a data gathering tool when they conducted two different studies with two different Indigenous groups, in Australia and Botswana (Africa). Yarning is an Australian indigenous cultural form of conversation that uses storytelling and requires the researcher to develop and build a relationship that is accountable to indigenous people participating in the research. Yarning is also known as storytelling as well as narrative (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010; Walker, Fredericks, Mills, & Anderson, 2014). In Western Australia, Nyoongah people use the term 'yarning' when they want to talk with someone (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010). Ng'andu and Bessarab have both researched using yarning in interview-type contexts to gather information from the participants of their lived experience. Bessarab and Ng'andu (2010) argued that yarning was employed not only to collect information during the research interview but to establish a relationship between the researchers and indigenous participants prior to gathering their stories through storytelling. Yarning has also been used successfully to understand health and wellness of indigenous Australian women (Walker, et al, 2014). Prior to the use of yarning, previous research methodologies were regarded (by the indigenous women themselves) as inappropriate and ineffective in gathering information and promoting discussion (Walker, et al 2014).

4.4.5 African storytelling and other Western Narrative Methods: Acknowledgments and Complementary

It is crucial to mention that African storytelling acknowledges and complements other western narrative research methods such as phenomenological approach and narrative enquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Mkabela, 2005; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013).

African storytelling can make contributions to global research by being grounded in its own African knowledge system as well as having an appreciation of other western paradigms because 'true education' is when one has learned one's own as well as those of others (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013. p.39.). In the same vein,

western researchers need to appreciate the African storytelling methodology as well as other indigenous methods (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). African storytelling is a rigorous and culturally safe research methodology (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). It is an interpretive process that has a legitimate place alongside other western research methods in the gathering of data and is one of many tools enabling the application of indigenous methodologies (Mkabela, 2005). African storytelling is unique, in its own right. Both African storytelling and other narrative research methods use interpretative schemes to understand, contextualize and articulate issues such as the culture and lived experiences of particular groups or communities (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Mkabela, 2005; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). There are several western qualitative research methods such as semi-structured interviews, participant observation and conversation that can be used to obtain information and understanding on the experiences of individuals and communities (R. S. Y. Berry, . 1999; Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010; Kellehear, 1993; Spradley, 1979).

Czarniawska (1997) argues that in order to understand most common social phenomenon in western organizations, there is a need to use stories. Using a narrative approach unique to organizational studies, Czarniawska (1997) employed storybook devices to uncover the hidden workings of organisations. Czarniawska (1997) goes on to state that while scientific knowledge is contained in and transmitted by scientific texts, everyday knowledge is circulated in stories, thus, one can speak of narrative knowledge.

The main claim for the use of narrative in educational research is that humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and collectively, lead storied-lives. The study of narrative, therefore, is the study of the ways humans experience the world (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Narrative thinking is used intentionally by storytellers and story listeners to construct new stories (Wiessner & Pfahl, 2007). By viewing experiences from the three vantage points of individual, community groups and organisational level, storytelling brings educators and learners together as co-learners prepared to acknowledge each other's differences (Wiessner & Pfahl, 2007). Wiessner & Pfahl (2007) argue that the use of

storytelling and narrative facilitate adults learning that leads to construction of knowledge.

In the context of my study, storytelling brought together community group members as co-learners and listeners. It also helped to create an atmosphere and environment where communities acknowledged and accepted their differences and personalities.

4.4.6 Examples of other Western Narrative Methodologies

Although storytelling in the non-Indigenous communities is often referred to as narrative (White, 1995; Wingard & Lester, 2001), indigenous people prefer to refer to it as storytelling (Achebe, 1959, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986). This shows some similarities between African storytelling and the westernised narrative enquiry. The similarities between these are explored below.

Narrative enquiry seeks to record and highlight the stories of research participants. Williams-Brown, Baldwin, and Bakos (2009), for example, used narrative stories as a successful methodology to teach breast health information to older African- American women within a focus-group setting. The research concluded that integration of African-American women's self-identified issues and concerns with breast health messages through storytelling resulted in a meaningful teaching-learning experience (Williams-Brown et al, 2009).

Ezzy (2000) utilized narrative stories to examine unemployment experiences of people who had lost their jobs. He explored the role that broader social forces played in how people tell their stories about their job losses. These stories or narratives provided insights into the individuals' real experience of unemployment. They told how people came to understand and share their unemployment situations and the type of action or inaction they took as a result (Ezzy, 2000; Frank, 2000).

Phenomenology focuses on the lived experience of humans and asks the question: what is the structure and essence of the phenomenon (facts) for the individual or researched community? (Polit & Beck, 2004). Many case studies

have successfully used a phenomenological approach (Mutema, 2003; Polit & Beck, 2004; Polit & Hungler, 1995). My Master of Philosophy (MPhil) thesis used a phenomenological approach to investigate the health promotion challenges faced by Africans in New Zealand (Tuwe, 2012). This approach was able to identify key health promotion challenges faced by Africans in New Zealand.

Ethno-methodology is another narrative form of research which enquires how people make sense of their everyday activities so as to behave in socially acceptable ways. Ethno-methodology shows how behaviour and tradition of a particular group of people influence their culture (Polit & Beck, 2004). Many studies have used Ethno-methodology as an appropriate method and its strength is seen giving insights in cultural aspects of communities (Husserl, 1931; Hungler, 1993; Polit & Hungler, 1995).

The above examples show the similarities between African storytelling and other western research methodologies. However, there are a number of differences in that African storytelling has specific unique elements and characteristics, particularly in the technique and content of the storytelling.

4.4.7 Strength/ Benefits of African Storytelling as a Research Methodology

There are several benefits and strengths to using African storytelling as a research methodology especially when investigating an African phenomenon. The strength of African storytelling lies in the cultural security that it provides for indigenous African people participating in the research. It cuts across the formality and power dynamics between the researcher and the researched and demands the human-to-human interaction where both are knowers and learners in the process (Spradley 1979; Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010). Before the advent of western methods of scientific inquiry, African storytelling and other African methodologies have successfully guided its peoples in all spheres of functioning, such as spiritual, social, educational, agricultural, political and economic (Asante, 1987; Emeagwali, 2003; Mpofu, 1994, 2002; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 2000; Nkrumah, 1968; Nsamenang, 1995; Ntumngia, 2009; Pence & Nsamenang, 2008; Sarpong,

2002; Tanyanyiwa & Chikwanha, 2011; Zulu, 2006). African storytelling is conducive to an African way of knowing and doing things. It allows researchers to learn from African communities and to create a working relationship in which the priorities and values of communities are expressed in the research project (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). In the African storytelling process, communities within which research is conducted are not treated as 'informants' but as significant participants and as equals (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013; Mkabela 2005; Ngara, 2007).

The use of African storytelling as a research methodology is emancipatory. According to Barnes (2008), an emancipatory research agenda based on the social model exposes disabling barriers in society and points toward change. Communities normally have a say in the research process and, to the same extent, in the dissemination of the research product (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). Asante (1988) argues that it is imperative for people of African descent to empower themselves and free their minds by using theories and research methodologies such as African storytelling (and Afrocentric methods) that resonate with their value-systems. This has been supported by a number of African authors such as Achebe, Gbadegesin, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Mutema, Vambe, Mkabela, Ngara, and Owusu-Ansah & Mji. By using African storytelling for African communities in New Zealand, it became apparent that it empowered and emancipated them to speak freely on their employment experiences because they were using a methodology that is conversant with their culture and ways of knowing.

African storytelling research methodology has a collaborative approach that emphasises and strengthens the African value of collective stories and responsibility. This is in line with the African concept of Ubuntu. African storytelling methodology upholds the centrality of African indigenous ideals and values as legitimate frames of reference for conducting research, from data collection to analysis and implementation (Mkabela 2005). It also encourages data collection where community-participants and researchers intersect in a synergetic and harmonious manner (Mkabela 2005), consistent with the African value of oneness as enshrined in the African Ubuntu concept (Mandela,1994).

Through storytelling, information is passed down through the generations. Oral histories are another research genre where the information that is gathered and recorded relies heavily on conversation and storytelling to elicit the information (Ng'andu, 2004).

The benefits of using African storytelling and other indigenous ways of telling stories, for other disciplines which may not readily ascribe to this methodology of collecting information, are the building of connections and establishing relationships of trust. Through African storytelling, the stories people share can often provide information relevant to the question(s) being asked, which might not be so apparent or provided in a short question and answer interview (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010).

The use of a methodology that is understood by participants is as good as speaking to someone in their native language. This echoes the quote of the late South African President, Nelson Rolihlahla "Madiba" Mandela which says "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart" (Mandela, 1994.p.250). For example, in Australia, when an indigenous Australian says, 'let's have a yarn', what they are saying is, let's have a talk or conversation (Terszack, 2008, p. 90). This talk/conversation/yarn can entail the sharing and exchange of information between two or more people socially or more formally. Similarly, in Zimbabwe, in my native language (Shona), the saying of 'gara pasi titaure' means 'let's sit down and talk'. This implies a serious and meaningful conversation that is two-way and inclusive of both parties. It is a dialogical process that is reciprocal and mutual (Chinyowa, 2004; Vambe, 2004). Therefore, the use of African storytelling on African participants has the same positive effects of 'Let's sit down and talk' because it resonates with most Africans.

African storytelling as a research tool has benefits for researchers as it facilitates in-depth discussions in a relaxed and open manner providing a source of rich data and "thick descriptions" on employment experiences (Byrne, 2001.p.2). Asante (1987) argues that all cultures and indigenous ways of knowing need to

be respected and valued in their uniqueness. African scholars such as Tanyiwa and Chikwanha (2011); Ntumngia (2009); Pence and Nsamenang (2008); Nsamenang (2006); Mkabela (2005); Mpofu (2002) and Mpofu (1994) have taken on an important and yet daunting task of demonstrating that African research methodologies (including African storytelling) have much to enrich existing western knowledge and methodologies. Contributions made by Africa and her people to history and civilisation are mostly missing from text books in formal education and generally remain unknown to many (Nsamenang 1995; Ngara, 2007). The literature reveals that Africa has historically made a host of contributions to world civilisation (Asante, 1990; Derricourt, 2011; Ngara, 2007; Nsamenang, 1995) which remain unknown and the myth that African traditional methodologies are incapable of rigorous scientific inquiry continues to spread.

Owusu-Ansah and Mji (2013) argue that since culture is the 'lense' through which a person perceives, interprets and makes sense of his or her reality, when researchers include African indigenous knowledge in any research, they are talking about the examination of African reality from the perspective of the African, and therefore, the African cannot remain on the periphery. Thus, it was crucial to involve Africans in an authentic manner when using African storytelling to solicit their employment experiences in New Zealand. The participants were able to talk freely about their employment experiences which enabled me (as the researcher) to explore the topic in more depth, resulting in rich information that other narrative research processes, such as western methodologies may not have achieved. It is from this perspective that I am of the view that African knowledge and methods of knowing should drive African research if it is to be meaningful and beneficial to its peoples.

4.4.8 Challenges of African Storytelling as a Research Methodology

African storytelling and other indigenous research methodologies have experienced challenges in being accepted and appreciated within the western research arena mainly because of the western constructs in science (Azuma, 1984) and the lack of respect and recognition for indigenous methods as valid forms of

knowledge (Achebe, 1959; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; Nsamenang, 1995). It is important to note that African storytelling, like any other research method, is not without limitations and challenges. At times, there is a tendency to forget that African storytelling is exposed to critical observation and analysis (Tanyanyiwa & Chikwanha, 2011).

The challenges associated with using African storytelling as a research methodology include biased attitudes towards the methodology which causes lack of acceptance and misunderstanding of what it achieves. Mkabela and Luthuli (1997) argued that mainstream research has largely misunderstood and disregarded the value of African storytelling and other indigenous research methodologies. For example, although supported by their supervisors, Bessarab and Ng'andu (2010) were criticised by most western academics for using an indigenous methodology (yarning/conversation) in their separate research projects. The main reason for this criticism was that yarning was not regarded as a bona fide research methodology and was not recognized as a legitimate tool for gathering data (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010). Today most research students are still experiencing difficulty in applying yarning and other indigenous methodologies in their research because they are not recognized as credible research methods (Bessarab and Ng'andu, 2010).

Researchers using African storytelling have met with barriers to publication. There are constraints and difficulties when publishing articles based on African research methodologies in reputable international journals. This is mostly based on the general assumption that westernised methodologies are better and more superior than indigenous ones (Owusu-Ansah and Mji, 2013). The scarcity of research literature on African storytelling is a major cause of concern to many African researchers (Goduka, 2000; Ngara, 2007; Obotetukudo, 2002; Petrie, 1991; L. T. Smith, 1999). Smith (1999) stated that indigenous methodologies are not easily accepted by most western researchers and scholars. Obotetukudo (2002) argued that African ways of knowing can only be realized through an African philosophy derived from what Africans think of themselves as informed by their indigenous cultural knowledge and stories. If people's stories, cultures and

values are not told and integrated in international research, then a sense of isolation arises, and no recognition can be expected (Ngara, 2007). Nussbaum (2003) observed that African stories and values have a great deal to contribute to world consciousness, but Africa is deeply misunderstood and misconstrued, especially in the West for a number of reasons, for example: (i) much of the richness of Africa's stories and traditional cultures are inaccessible since they are oral rather than written; they are lived rather than formally communicated in books or journals; and it is difficult to learn about African stories and traditional cultures from a distance; (ii) some African political leaders have chosen to betray many of the philosophical and humanitarian principles on which African cultures are based, and the political failures in these African countries tend to tarnish the views of many Westerners; (iii) people in the West, receive negative and limited information through media-images such as ethnic wars, dictatorships and poverty, and unfortunately as a result, the potential contribution of African storytelling and traditional values are often lost in these images (Nussbaum, 2003).

Another concern is the increase of non-African researchers and writers wanting to write about African issues (Achebe, 1959; Ngugi wa Thiong, 1986; Obotetukudo, 2002). Smith (1999) stated that most indigenous people feel over researched mostly by non-indigenous researchers who are less knowledgeable about indigenous ways of living. These researchers also give little thought to the cultural safety of the researched. Chilisa (2012) stated that deficit theorising, the written literature on the colonised, and the use of dominant languages are implicated in the construction of knowledge that marginalises the worldviews and indigenous knowledge of the colonised and historically disadvantaged groups.

African storytelling has been accused of lacking rigour and clarity. According to Feldman, Sköldbberg, Brown, and Horner (2004), storytelling and the indigenous methodologies lack these traits. Storytelling and other oral traditions are usually looked down upon because indigenous knowledge is mainly oral and not written. The other reason is that it is people-centred and sometimes not so easily

'measurable,' as a result, it has been mistaken by many as simplistic and not amenable to systematic scientific investigation (Emeagwali 2003; Ngara 2007).

Secrecy and mystery are also considered some of the challenges associated with African storytelling (Chavunduka, 1988). The practices, traditions and beliefs are covered in secrecy and mystery which makes conducting research challenging and difficult to facilitate necessary changes (Ahebe, 1959; Chavunduka, 1988).

Storytelling can be messy; thus, the conversation does not always flow smoothly (Feldman et al., 2004). Keeping the storyteller on track is sometimes difficult as the tendency to stray is likely to happen (Kvale & Flick, 2008; Marcus, 1998). The challenge for most researchers is to listen to the meandering stories while searching for threads that relate to the research topic. Protocol and cultural issues can also present challenges especially when interviewing elderly people who stray from the topic because, in most African cultures, it is disrespectful and a taboo to openly and publicly interrupt and correct elders. Feldman et al (2004) further argued that relying on storytelling as the process for gathering information means that the story may not always adhere to the plan and may take many different turns before returning to the research question.

When using African storytelling, the ability to know when to draw the story to a close can be challenging. What makes it more difficult is the fact that, in most cases, participants would just begin to warm up towards the end of the interview process and suddenly have more to say (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010). Therefore, knowing when to interrupt and how long to allow a conversation to run without offending the participant requires balance and skill. For inexperienced researchers, this can be a daunting process that is filled with the potential to make mistakes. Informing participants at the beginning of the interview about the allocated time is one way of overcoming this challenge.

A further challenge is that the participant's language often portrays a different landscape and meaning within the mainstream research arena (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986). In his book titled *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*, Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) emphasised the influence of language in the colonisation process of Africa by the then political rulers.

Therefore, in utilising African storytelling in the English language, the researcher needs to allow the participants some flexibility and space in their responses. Use of storytelling as a method of data collection can also result in large amounts of data being gathered, especially where a non-native language is in use. This normally means long hours of transcribing (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010).

One of the main challenges to the use of indigenous research methodologies is the continued use of western research tools and methodologies when carrying out research on the people of Africa. Instead of utilising culturally appropriate African indigenous research methodologies such as African storytelling, researchers tend to resort to western methodologies (Azuma 1984; Mpofu 2002; Nsamenang 1995).

4.4.9 African Storytelling: “Ubuntu” as an African Philosophy

Storytelling is an integral part of the traditional African oral culture which is rooted and entrenched in African philosophy and African worldviews (J. Banks-Wallace, 2002; Carroll, 2008; Chinyowa, 2000; Kambon, 1992). A combination of African philosophy and African worldviews results in an African concept known as ‘Ubuntu’. Ubuntu means ‘I am what I am because of you’ (Mandela, 1994.p.10; Johann, 2006.p.15). In my mother-tongue (Zimbabwean Shona), Ubuntu is interpreted as ‘Munhu, munhu nekuda kwevanhu’ which means ‘a person is a person because of other people’ and ‘I am human because I belong to the human community and I view and treat others accordingly’ (Chavunduka, 1978, p. 25). According to Tutu and Tutu (2014, p. 148), Ubuntu says, ‘I am incomplete without you’. The entire concept is centred on people and humanity (Mandela 1994, Carson 1998).

Historically, Ubuntu is a Nguni word which originated from South Africa. It speaks about our human interconnectedness and the responsibility we have to each other that flows from our deeply felt connections (Tutu & Tutu, 2014). Ubuntu is the consciousness of the African natural desire to affirm fellow human beings and to work and act towards each other, with the communal good as the core objective (Mandela, 1994; Nussbaum, 2003). According to Nussbaum (2003),

Ubuntu is a social philosophy, a way of being, a code of ethics and behaviour deeply embedded in African culture. The underlying value of Ubuntu seeks to honour the dignity of each person and is concerned about the development and maintenance of mutually affirming and enhancing relationships (Kasenene, 1992; Nussbaum, 2003). Nussbaum (2003) argues that Ubuntu is the capacity in African culture to express compassion, reciprocity, dignity, harmony and humanity in the interests of building and maintaining communities with justice and mutual caring.

Ubuntu has been in existence for thousands of years in most African countries and continues to play a central role in the majority of traditional African cultures today, although in urban areas, its significance and values are beginning to erode (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). In its practical manifestation, Ubuntu could include any actions that express an individual, organizational, corporate or governmental commitment towards attaining compassion, love, caring, sharing, human rights and social justice for the common good of the community (Nussbaum, 2003). For this reason, an understanding of the Ubuntu concept was important as the African communities in New Zealand shared their employment stories.

When I was growing up in my village in Zimbabwe, Africa, when someone committed a wrong, he/she was taken to the centre of the village, known as 'Dare' (The Meeting Place), and surrounded by people from the village where they spoke of all the good and positive things he/she had done in the past. The village believed that each person is good, yet sometimes we all make mistakes which was seen as a cry for assistance. The village united in this ritual to encourage and inspire the person to reconnect with his/her true nature and good behaviour. The belief and lesson are that unity and affirmation have more power to influence good behaviour than shame and punishment. This was what the elders in my village called Ubuntu- humanity towards others.

Ubuntu gives an understanding of people as human beings in relation with communities and the rest of the universal-world (Mandela, 1994; Johann, 2006). Ubuntu is a positive human quality with the very essence of enabling human beings to become 'abantu' (people), thus, humanised beings, living in daily self-

expression of love, kindness and harmony. It aims to create peace and tranquillity with all human-kind (Mnyandu, 1997; Prinsloo, 1998). Ubuntu is not an expression of individual attributes but an advocate of melodious interactions that are focused on building and maintaining strong communities anchored on principles of human rights and social justice (Hanks, 2008; Mandela, 1994; Nussbaum, 2003). It essentially states that no one can be self-sufficient, and that interdependence is a reality for all (Dandala, 1996). The Ubuntu concept communicates a basic human respect, empathy and compassion for others, which is critical for African communities. The Ubuntu concept has been demonstrated by internationally known personalities such as the late President Nelson Rolihlahla 'Madiba' Mandela, of South Africa (Mandela, 1994), Martin Luther King jr, of the USA (Carson,1998) and Mahatma Gandhi of India (Chadha, 1997). It is the very concept that sustained President Mandela in South Africa's apartheid prisons for 27 years (Mandela, 1994).

According to Nussbaum (2003.p.3), the following are the general principles of the African concept of Ubuntu:

- The hallmark of Ubuntu is about listening to and affirming others with the help of processes that create trust, fairness, shared understanding, and dignity and harmony in relationships.
- Ubuntu consciousness is about the desire to build a caring, sustainable and just response to the community – whether that be company, village, city, nation or our global family.
- Because of its emphasis on our common humanity and the ethical call to embody our communal responsiveness in the world, Ubuntu offers an alternative way to re-create a world that works for all. Simply put, people, businesses and countries would re-learn how to live together with respect, compassion, dignity and justice and to re-organize resources accordingly.
- Ubuntu, applied to business and corporate responsibility, would ultimately be about sharing wealth and making (at the very least) basic services, such as food, housing and access to health and education accessible and visible to all members of our global family.

Nussbaum (2003) mentioned that there are some visionaries and leaders in America and Europe who are beginning to speak with the spirit of Ubuntu, for example, Rinaldo Brutoco, Founder and President of the World Business Academy (www.worldbusiness.org). The African Ubuntu concept is gaining international reputation as evidenced by its use as a business concept known as 'Ubuntu Touch Concept', by some international Information Technology organisations such as Apple and Google's Android OS (Shaikh & Inamdar, 2014). Ubuntu Touch Concept is driven by a belief that software should be free and accessible to all. Ubuntu community believes that computer users should have the freedom to download, run and share their software for any purpose, without paying licensing fees and use their software in the language of their choice (Shaikh & Inamdar, 2014; Stuit, 2016).

The utilisation of the Ubuntu concept as a traditional African philosophy in my study helped community groups to work together in a humane and respectful manner as they shared their stories on employment-related experiences in New Zealand. This meant that, although at times there were moments of confusion and disagreements, community group members were still able to work together as well as maintain respect for each other. In this regard, the Ubuntu concept equipped African communities with human-relations skills and techniques such as respect, morality and a sense of identity (Ngugi wa Thiong'o 1982, Mandela 2002). The Ubuntu concept also assisted African communities to understand the importance of keeping and maintaining good and healthy relationships with their employers and fellow employees.

African worldviews which include philosophical assumptions and values founded on African cultural traditions and the Ubuntu concept are required to build and sustain African families and communities in New Zealand as they face employment challenges (Montgomery, Fine, & James-Myers, 1990; Schiele, 2000). African communities in New Zealand are not an exception to employment challenges faced by other diaspora African communities. Some of these challenges include complications in juggling and trying to blend the African culture and the New Zealand (Kiwi) culture within a work-environment, difficulties in securing employment, the struggles of keeping a job after being

employed, and the barriers to getting promotions (Butcher et al., 2006).

4.4.10 African Storytelling: Traditional Knowledge, Indigenous Paradigms and De-Colonizing Social Research Methodologies

Traditional knowledge refers to knowledge which is grounded in the traditional way of life of indigenous peoples and is often characterized by customary awareness (Kuokkanen, 2000; Legat, 1991). Traditional knowledge includes cosmologies, spirituality, relationships with the natural environment (ecology), and the use of natural resources by people. The incorporation of traditional knowledge and epistemologies is a crucial element of an indigenous paradigm. According to Myres and Klein (1997), in recent years, the notion of 'traditional knowledge' has gained more attention in the academic world. African research methods and methodologies are as old as African ceremonies and nations (Adelowo, 2012; Ndlovu & Mangena, 2013). Elabor-Idemudia (2002) argues that before colonization, the African culture was richer, with many appropriate ways of gathering, discovering and uncovering knowledge. However, these ways of knowing were invalidated and side-lined by the western systems with an agenda of imposing and enforcing western paradigms, methodologies and ideologies. Elabor-Idemudia (2002) further argues that it is important to decolonize social science research to ensure that African people's worldviews are not constructed through western lenses and ideologies. Kunene (1991) stated that it is important to acknowledge and present African research methods and methodologies that reflect the beliefs, values and rituals rooted in African societies.

Most indigenous scholars have expressed criticism about what they view as the dominance of Euro-western methodologies, which marginalise indigenous knowledge of the colonised and the historically oppressed (Chilisa, 2012). Chilisa (2012) argues that evidence is mounting about the ineffectiveness of mainstream research-driven interventions due to their failure to draw from indigenous knowledge and indigenous epistemologies. Escobar (1995) and Chambers (1999) documented the errors that arise in research projects when mainstream research methodologies are imposed on indigenous communities. In "Preparing Education Doctoral Students for Epistemological Diversity," Pallas (2001)

proposed that to prevent a recurring pattern of imposing that westernized methodologies be used by indigenous students, scholars and researchers should engage with multiple indigenous epistemologies that include beliefs about what counts as indigenous knowledge. By using an African research methodology, my study contributes to decolonizing social science research in order to give voice to African people's worldviews, moral beliefs, cultural values and customs that are grounded and rooted in African philosophy.

Oral tradition is often looked down upon compared to the written tradition due to its lack of documentation (Emeagwali 2003; Owusu-Ansah, 2013). However, its rich complexities are found in the community ceremonies and rituals, such as story-telling, proverbs, demonstration, sport, poetry, praise, songs, word games, dance, music, and other education-centered activities (Ngara, 2007). Kuokkanen (2000) argues that indigenous peoples' narrative knowledge has to be part of the decolonization process that is taking place within many global indigenous peoples' societies. A common view of Indigenous peoples is that stories tell who they are. This includes stories of origin and ancestors, worldviews, values and knowledge for everyday survival (Kuokkanen, 2000). Many foreigners and outsiders believe that before indigenous books were published, indigenous people did not have literature (Kunene, 1991). But their literature had been in existence for a long time in the form of rich oral storytelling traditions (Achebe, 1959). In many instances, indigenous black and "Third World" writers and critics have highlighted that storytelling has been their form of conceptualizing, analytical thinking and theorizing (Vuolab, 2016). Stories and contemporary writing have been called "theorized fiction" or "fictionalized theory" (Kuokkanen, 2000.p.420). LaRocque (1990) encourages indigenous writers to dismiss as myth, the self-serving colonial cultural notion that Europeans are more developed and civilized than indigenous peoples. For want of demystifying some of the stated colonial myths, I used African storytelling methodology to investigate employment issues of Africans, as opposed to westernised methodologies. African storytelling mirrors the history, worldviews, values and distilled-wisdom of Africans in New Zealand as they share their employment-related stories.

According to Kremer (1997) and Kuokkanen (2000), another objective of an 'Indigenous paradigm' is the recognition and acceptance that indigenous methodologies and epistemologies are as important as western research systems of knowledge within the academia. It is crucial that indigenous and non-indigenous scholars acknowledge that indigenous epistemologies have value in their own right. This means that the uniqueness and rigour of indigenous research methodologies need to be acknowledged within the academic arena. The absence of such acknowledgement would continue the marginalisation and colonisation of indigenous researchers within the academic institutions. It is therefore crucial for indigenous scholars to be vigilant and to refuse to remain in the periphery within the academic world. There should be no attempt to re-define indigenous epistemologies and methodologies into Eurocentric frameworks as this will only allow western thinking and dominance to structure and disempower indigenous being and knowledge before it has unfolded its healing powers (Kremer, 1997). Kremer (1997) suggests that instead of demanding that indigenous peoples give definitions satisfactory to the western paradigm, it is time to challenge minds conditioned in the Eurocentric ways of knowing to objectively seek to understand and appreciate the narrative nature of indigenous peoples' being and knowing. He puts forward a number of reasons for doing so.

First, an indigenous paradigm has a clear social and political agenda which aims at the overall decolonization of indigenous societies. Second, it maintains a critical stand against western metaphysical dualism which still informs much of the current patterns of thinking and research practices, and against the notion that it is only the westernised research practices and methodologies that are superior in the academia. Third, an indigenous paradigm is based on a holistic approach which strives towards a balance between different areas of life and which does not separate intellectual, social, political, economic, psychological and spiritual forms of human life from each other. In the context of my study, this means that the issue of employment affects people in all aspects of their lives. Fourth, within an indigenous paradigm, research has a clear connection to the researcher's own culture. This means that cultural practices and forms of

expressions are reflected in the ways of conducting research, in language, style, structure, methods as well as assumptions of knowledge and the role of the researcher. Language and style, for instance, may reflect oral traditions of a particular culture, either through stories, songs, prayers or spoken-word (Kremer, 1997).

Bishop (1998) advocated for indigenous people (Maori) in New Zealand to free themselves from neo-colonial domination in research. He concluded that Maori worldviews provided grounding in researching indigenous methodologies in the academic environment in New Zealand. In my research, African worldviews played a pivotal role as African communities narrated their stories on employment experiences in New Zealand. Schiele (2000) alluded that some of the dimensions of the African-centred worldview consist of, among others, spirituality, oral tradition, harmony, time as a social phenomenon, stylistic expressiveness and communalism. Some of these dimensions determined how the African communities shared their employment experiences, for example, some participants testified that their faith in God helped them to harmoniously handle difficult and provoking situations at work. Adelowo (2012) argues that although Africans' arrival in New Zealand is recent, their stories, customs and cultures should be explored to reveal the depth of their lived experiences. The use of storytelling as a research methodology in my study complements Adelowo's work on New Zealand-based African migrant women's migration experiences. Adelowo (2012)'s study is useful in enabling members of the general African communities in New Zealand to be more aware of their cultural values and become custodians of their African culture, philosophy and traditions.

4.4.11 African storytelling: A Communal Participatory Experience

In contrast to written literature, African storytelling is orally transmitted and communally owned. It is performed as an integral part of a community activity (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1964). According to Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986), storytelling is not a private affair in Africa; it belongs to the community and the communal space of storytelling. It is a community dialogical event that encourages the participation of the storyteller and the community in partaking in accounts and

stories of the past, beliefs, wisdom, counsel, morals, taboos, and myths (J Banks-Wallace, 2002; Mensah, 2007; Utley, 2008). In most cases, African storytelling is setup in an environment where the storyteller and the audience interact and both parties have rights and obligations (J. Berry, 1991; Soyinka, 1978; Vambe, 2001). In many parts of Africa, storytelling gatherings are also used as an opportunity to discuss and plan the collective affairs of the communities. Many problems are discussed and resolved through the knowledge and messages gained during the storytelling processes (Achebe, 1959). The communal participatory experience was typified in my study by creating and providing community groups a platform to congregate together and share their employment-stories. Some community members stated that they felt a sense of oneness, safety and solidarity when they discovered that their employment experiences and challenges were akin to other group members. They also said that the ownership of those stories belonged to the African communities in New Zealand. Community group discussions created an environment and stage where members discussed, planned and suggested solutions to some of the employment-related problems faced by communities.

In Africa, stories keep the community united and help to preserve the knowledge, values, norms, wisdom, and techniques which are part of African society. In an African storytelling setting, where the storyteller and the audience interact, both parties have equal privileges and freedom of expression (Achebe, 1959; J. Berry, 1991; Riessman, 2001; Soyinka, 1978). Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) reminds us that in many old African traditions, the narration of the stories was accompanied by music, singing, dancing, drumming, clapping of hands and the stamping of feet. Most African accomplished storytellers are respected community members who have mastered many complex verbal, musical, and memory skills after years of communal-traditional training (Chinyowa, 2000; Mungoshi, 1975). The sitting arrangements around the community group discussions in this study portrayed similar communal-like surroundings and environment that reflected the old African storytelling gatherings where people congregated around a night-fire and listened to thought-provoking and

fascinating stories from their elders. Members stated that they felt safe and encouraged to effectively participate in the deliberations and discussions.

Utley (2008) stated that during the olden days when the audience was familiar with the story, especially if it involved a song, they actively participated by joining in the singing as they learnt important aspects of their culture. Similarly, in my research, this notion of joining the storyteller in song was depicted by a chorus of agreement from community group members each time an important or common point was made. The animal trickster¹ stories, like the cunning tortoise, are the favourite among the folktales because they include an animal trickster with human habits, beliefs, and weaknesses. African stories reflect relations among humans, man and woman, and humans and the animal-world. The storyteller creates and generates a series of mental images associated with words. The analogy of the animal-world and cunning tortoise-like behaviours helped to portray and expose bad manners by some members of the general African communities at their workplaces. Community group members appeared empowered as they discussed some of the immoral behaviours about employment-related issues, which they thought had a negative impact on African communities. The element of human relations symbolized the connotation and importance of respect and humanity, shared amongst community group members, as enshrined in the African concept of Ubuntu (Mandela, 1994).

4.4.12 African Storytelling: Use of Proverbs and Parables

African writers such as Achebe, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Wole Soyinka, Chenjerai Hove and Charles Mungoshi frequently introduced African traditional proverbs and parables in their stories to enrich their content and make it more relevant to their African readership. A proverb can be described as short, poetic axioms

¹*Most African stories use animal tricksters especially the cunning tortoise to depict crafty behaviours.*

(sayings) of truth, or wisdom often characterised by their sharp wit, sarcasm and humour, while a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning (Achebe, 1959). In many African cultures, the majority of storytellers have been trained in how to use complex proverbs and parables (Achebe, 1959; Chavunduka, 1988; Chinyowa, 2000; Mungoshi, 1975; Vambe, 2001). Obiechina (1993) argues that the story itself is a primary form of the oral tradition, primarily as a mode of conveying culture, experience, and values, but the utilisation of proverbs and parables would enhance the weight and significance of a story. Proverbs and parables are also a means of transmitting ancient knowledge, wisdom, feelings, and attitudes in oral societies (Obiechina, 1975, 1993). Likewise, in my study, several community group members and individual participants used African proverbs and parables in their stories to express their views, feelings and thoughts regarding their lived-employment experiences in New Zealand. The use of proverbs and parables demonstrated the collective wisdom of African communities to promote harmony and peace as well as upholding and preserving good social order both at workplaces and within the communities.

Within the African context, proverbs and parables are also used to express points of view and the philosophy of the community, and explain cosmology (Mphande, Mackenzie, & Mwamba, 2015; Obiechina, 1993; Peek & Yankah, 2004). Proverbs and parables in African storytelling have been utilised to interpret the universe, explain natural and physical phenomena, pass on methods of survival, and to praise God, the Creator (Kunene, 2012; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; Utley, 2008; Vambe, 2001). Community group members displayed a sense of ownership as they used African proverbs and parables in their employment stories. In this context, cosmos refers to the universe of the employment-world and employment environment for African communities in New Zealand. The symbolism of proverbs and parables in passing on methods of survival and to praise God depicted situations where African communities discussed survival strategies on how to manage and cope in challenging and stressful employment environments. Some members of the community groups and individual participants acknowledged that their faith in God played a pivotal role in sustaining them

during trying moments and devastating periods of their employment experiences.

4.4.13 The Pedagogical Significance of African Storytelling

Using illustrations from the Zimbabwean ²Shona trickster stories, Chinyowa (2001) argues that African storytelling is a powerful pedagogical tool for communicating the people's knowledge and wisdom. Storytelling is far from being a mere source of entertainment because stories help to sharpen the people's creativity and imagination, shape their behavior, train their intellect and regulate their emotions (Chinyowa, 2001). Vambe (2004) stated that throughout colonisation, the liberation struggle, and post-independence periods in Zimbabwe, African storytelling was a mode of expressing resistance to authoritarian ideas and cultural dominance, and a social vision. In his article titled "African Ways of Knowing and Pedagogy Revisited", Ngara (2007.p.7) stated that his intention was to bring awareness to academia and researchers that African methodologies and African paradigms of knowing are appropriate pedagogical research tools because these are based on African philosophy. The majority of community group members and individual participants in my study, were able to effectively present their stories by using pedagogical skills in the form of body-language and facial expressions as they expressed their feelings on employment matters. This showed that African storytelling is a powerful pedagogical tool for communicating and disseminating people's knowledge and experiences. The employment stories that were shared helped communities to understand more about and appreciate the gravity of the employment challenges that Africans who are resident in New Zealand are experiencing. Some of these challenges prompted community groups to come up with strategies in order to mitigate and minimize the adverse impact on the well-being of communities.

² *Shona is the main indigenous language in Zimbabwe. Tortoise is normally associated with cunning behavior.*

4.4.14 Significance of African Storytelling to this Research

The significance of African storytelling as a methodology in my study is appropriate because as individual participants and community group members, who are all Africans, shared their stories regarding employment-related experiences in New Zealand, they expressed their views, thoughts, feelings in a traditional way they are familiar with (Achebe, 1959; Gbadegesin, 1984; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986). As the function of storytelling has been identified as a traditional way of transmitting knowledge and information across generations, about the culture, worldviews, morals and expectations, norms and values, I have seen it appropriate to use this methodology in my study (Alidou, 2002; Kouyate, 1989).

Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) argues that oral African storytelling is essentially a communal participatory experience and phenomena. This means it is a shared communal event where people congregate together, listening, participating, debating and sharing ideas (Achebe, 1958 & Utley, 2008). This was demonstrated when community groups gathered together and shared their employment stories in New Zealand.

The use of African proverbs and parables in employment stories demonstrated the collective wisdom of both individual participants and community group members as they expressed their feelings and thoughts (Chinyowa, 2000; Kunene, 1991; Obiechina, 1993; Vambe, 2001).

4.5 The Concept of “Communities” Versus Contemporary Focus Groups

The utilisation of the concept of communities in storytelling in my study is unique and goes beyond the usual use of traditional focus groups. The voices, stories and views of communities are paramount because they are considered as an expression of the common experiences, thoughts, feelings and emotions of Africans in New Zealand regarding employment issues.

Community groups normally have diverse and unique characteristics such as place or locality, common interest and communion that link and bring them together (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). They share common perspectives and engage in joint actions in geographical locations or settings (McMillan, 1976). Social connections, cultural ties and historical heritage also play a significant role in bringing communities together (MacQueen et al., 2001). Place or locality refers to territorial location where communities or people can be seen as having something in common, and this shared element can be geographic. In the context of my study, place or locality denotes New Zealand where African communities are domiciled. The common cultural and historical heritage refer to the African traditions and ways of knowing. Interest refers to the notion of communities or a group of people working together because they have common concerns, for example, the scientific community, the international business community or professional bodies (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Interest also means people share a common characteristic other than as human beings, for example a debating club. Contextualising my research, a common interest and emotional sense that linked and connected African communities in New Zealand together is the topic of their employment experiences. Communion is about a sense of attachment to a place, group or idea. In other words, this refers to the concept of 'spirit of community' (Jamie, 2014; McMillan, 1976). Communities play a crucial symbolic role in generating people's sense of belonging (Ife, 1995). Ife (1995) emphasises the importance of the 'concept of community' which is associated with the spirit of community and he defines it as "a subjective emotional sense of being linked with others on the basis of similar values, interest of experiences" (p.15). For any community voices to be heard, there is a need for solidarity from its members. Solidarity is related to the strength of the social ties among members as well as their shared sense of identity with the overall community (Ife, 1995; Turner, 1996). McMillan (1976) argued that the principle of sense of community is crucial for any community to be strongly united so as to be able to effectively advocate for its members. Regarding solidarity, Habermas (1971) calls for a dialogical action that is in support of community initiatives and programmes that are aimed at empowering community voices. Habermas (1971) describes this process as

translating community dialogue into active practical action. Stablein and Nord (1985) define this solidarity action as blending and interlocking community dialogue and tangible action into a strategic and reflective manner.

African communities are a minority group in New Zealand; they are attached to each other. Therefore, it is easy to have a bonafide 'spirit of community' that binds them together, especially when it comes to addressing important community issues such as employment experiences. In the context of my study, African communities in New Zealand are in solidarity as one unified entity under their regional 'umbrella' organisations such as the African Communities Forum Incorporated (ACOFI) in Auckland, and the Canterbury African Association in Christchurch. In my study, the African communities in New Zealand demonstrated the spirit of community as enshrined in the African concept of Ubuntu (Mandela, 2002), by accepting my invitations to voluntarily participate in this research. Another way of showing the spirit of community is the way in which African communities in New Zealand have been fully engaging and attending many other African community events, in support of the community. Specific characteristics and principles such as sense of community, spirit of community and solidarity were clearly evident in African community groups as members interacted and worked together as they shared their employment stories. These characteristics and principles helped the group members to advocate for their communities and remained connected as a community in solidarity and continued to work together even after this study. Again, it is important to note that all these characteristics and principles are also enshrined in the Ubuntu philosophy.

However, in most cases, the above characteristics (place or locality, common interest and communion) are not found in contemporary focus groups. Focus group members are mainly concerned in discussing and presenting arguments centred on the topic at hand. Once the focus group discussions are over, members tend to go their separate ways. They do not remain connected as a community. The elements of spirit of community, concept of community, sense of belonging and solidarity are normally missing within contemporary focus group settings. There were a number of differences I noticed when I used African community

groups as opposed to the contemporary focus groups in this study. The main one is that all group participants understood, valued and respected the African philosophy of Ubuntu. Ubuntu states that 'I am what I am because of you' (Mandela, 1994.p.10; Johann, 2006.p.15). It is the equivalence of the notion of 'be thy brother's keeper'. The whole concept is centred on respecting people and the importance of humanity and humility. Ubuntu assisted community group members to work together in harmony and solidarity in their group discussions as they shared and debated their employment stories and experiences. Even when members disagreed in their discussions, they remained respectful to each other. The respect and oneness embedded in the Ubuntu is rarely found in the contemporary focus groups settings. Focus group members are mostly engrossed in presenting their convincing arguments.

The other common feature in community group members was the strength and vigour displayed as they shared their employment stories. They were passionately advocating and articulating community stories and employment challenges. Their drive and passion were grounded in a cultural and historical heritage of the African people. They also understood African storytelling. Such strength, vigour and passion are normally absent in focus group settings.

The other difference to note in the use of community groups in African storytelling was the manner in which participants narrated their stories, thus, the pedagogical skills which are the art and science of presenting (e.g. the facial expressions, clapping of hands, stamping of feet and nodding of heads). Another difference was the 'call and response technique', the spiritual rituals involved, and the dialogical and communal affairs concept (Achebe, 1959; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986). Most of these attributes and gestures are not found in focus groups.

In my work, I have heard a number of people from different cultures narrating their stories but the way most Africans present their stories is uniquely different, as described above. I also witnessed the difference when I used the traditional focus group approach with Africans for my previous study (Tuwe, 2012) where participants did not display or engage with some of the aforementioned characteristics of African storytelling. The reason for this could be that I had

specifically informed the participants that I was using a phenomenological approach as opposed to African storytelling.

4.5.1 Community Group Discussions

In order to get the views of the communities, I had group discussions with four distinctive community groups which I will refer to as communities or community groups, in line with the concept of communities as previously discussed. According to Saunders and Lewis (2009), focus groups involve interviewing a group of participants as opposed to separate individual interviews. As a way of setting up community groups for discussion, I followed three specific approaches as suggested by Utley (2008), namely: Why stories are told? What makes a story worth telling? How stories are told? Initially, at the beginning of each storytelling session with each of the four community groups, we agreed to follow a research protocol which included general ground-rules such as not speaking-over others, respecting different views from other group members and having the right to ask questions and clarification where needed, but respectfully. Finally, we agreed that I was going to play the role of a facilitator, thus, keeping time, chairing and directing the meeting by allocating turns for people to speak, so as to maintain order.

During the discussion process, communities used storytelling to share their employment experiences. The stories reflected their feelings, thoughts, aspirations, dreams, fears and experiences on employment issues. Community members stated that they felt free and safe to share, deliberate, discuss and debate their stories in a community collective affairs atmosphere. In their storytelling, they shared their wisdom and beliefs and motivated each other to speak out on any employment issues that affected the African communities in New Zealand. They utilised the African proverbs and parables to express their worldviews. African oral storytelling was used as a data gathering tool. Communities criticised, critiqued and scorned certain behaviours practised by community members which they perceived as giving a negative image of African communities in New Zealand. Good behaviours were praised. In order to maintain dignity and respect for one another, community group members

constantly reminded each other of the significance and importance of the African concept of Ubuntu (Mandela, 1994).

A total of 24 community members participated in the four community groups. Each group consisted of an average of six people. The size of the community groups provided participants with more quality time to share their stories with other group members, make contributions, and receive feedback and ask questions where necessary (Krueger & Casey, 2000).

The uniqueness of this study, from other previous studies, was the utilisation of African storytelling as a methodology and the use of community groups drawn from different African communities whose views expressed common experiences of being an African in New Zealand. Another unique aspect is the application of the African concept of Ubuntu. Common themes and challenges were collectively identified and discussed by communities and how these impacted on their lives and well-being. The communities brought collective solutions and suggestions to some of the employment-related problems faced by African communities in New Zealand. The use of communities had the added benefit of enabling group members to share their views as a group and work together in highlighting issues that were common and important to African communities on employment-related experiences (Saunders & Lewis, 2009). Such an approach had the potential to create opportunities and a safe environment for communities to share their stories.

Each community group session took between 60-90 minutes. The groups were informed about the option of audio-recording and they gave their consent. Communities were advised of their right to withdraw their individual participation from the discussion process at any given time without any consequences. All discussions were conducted in English and audio-recorded. Following discussions with my supervisory team and the African community, I decided to have four distinctive community groups (Table 5.2):

- 1. Community Group One: Refugees and Migrants- Females and Males.**

This group included both males and females from refugee and migrant backgrounds. The purpose of having both refugees and migrants was to hear employment experiences and views of those from both migration

backgrounds. Bringing together both males and females was to find out if gender played any part in their employment-journey. This mixture enriched the discussions because their stories, from different migration journeys and gender, brought in diversified perspectives on employment experiences (Ministry of Health, 2012; Tuwe, 2012).

2. Community Group Two: Refugees Only- Females and Males.

This group was comprised of both males and females but from a refugee background only. The reason for having this group was to hear the stories of those from a refugee-background only so as to have a deeper understanding of their background in relation to their employment-related experiences. Males and females were brought together to find out if gender played any part on their employment experiences. This provided an opportunity for in-depth discussions by people from a similar background.

3. Community Group Three: Migrants Only- Females and Males.

The composition of this group was for migrants only, both males and females. The aim was to hear if there were any different employment experiences between male and female from the same immigration background. For example, most women in Africa usually play a subordinate role, both at home and at work while male were usually the breadwinners. However, a number of female nurses have migrated to New Zealand ahead of their husbands because their qualifications and skills were needed here.

4. Community Group Four: Females Refugees Only.

This was a special and unique group because it was composed of women only who were exclusively from a refugee background. Women from a refugee background are considered to be the most vulnerable immigrants as they face more complex challenges such as immigration difficulties and at times sexual abuses/demands in exchange for employment opportunities while in refugee camps or in transit from one country to the other (ChangeMakers Refugee Forum, 2012; Chile, 2002; Ministry of Health, 2012). The women experience greater disadvantages especially

given the paternalistic family structures in Africa. Often, the women are disadvantaged when it comes to getting out of their homes to look for employment because they are normally baby-sitting young children at home. The more they confine themselves in their homes, the more they lose out on getting employment as well as lack of exposure and the opportunity to learn and practise the English language (if they cannot speak the language) during interactions with both prospective employers and employees (ChangeMakers Refugee Forum, 2012). This research group provided women with an opportunity to share and find out if there were specific employment challenges as a result of their gender.

4.5.2 Individual Interviews: African Oral Tradition of Storytelling

In-depth face-to-face individual semi-structured interviews were carried out with 20 participants from African communities based in Auckland, New Zealand. We discussed the storytelling-elements, save for issues that did not apply to individual interviews, such as showing respect for one another. The reason for holding individual interviews was to hear personal perceptions which would be analysed and compared with the findings from community group discussions. Kvale and Flick (2008) suggested to have between 15 and 25 interview participants for a research study in order to get as much information as possible. This was supported by Saunders and Lewis (2009). However, the number of participants depends on the subject being researched (Kvale & Flick, 2008). The reason for choosing 20 participants was to have deep and quality discussions and it was a manageable number that provided me with an opportunity to carry out detailed one-on-one quality interviews that produced significant findings for this study.

According to Bryman. (2009) and Lewis (2009), a semi-structured interview is a qualitative method of inquiry with the use of predetermined sets of open-ended questions by the interviewer that are meant to extract opinions and ideas from the participants on a topic at hand. I used storytelling as a methodology to hear the views from the individual participants on their employment-related

experiences in New Zealand. In their stories, participants talked about their feelings, thoughts, aspirations, dreams as well as their fears regarding their employment experiences. I endeavoured to create an environment which encouraged participants to freely share their stories (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986). Participants were motivated to share their stories and highlighted their struggles hoping that maybe a solution would be found for the benefit of the communities. The use of pseudonyms also boosted participants' confidence to share their stories as they knew that their confidentiality was secured.

The open-ended interview questions for individual participants were developed in such a way as to give participants flexibility and space for free flow of ideas and opinions as they responded in a form of storytelling (Bryman., 2009; Denscombe, 1998). The questions focused on allowing the participants to describe their lived employment-related experiences in New Zealand. I respected, valued and acknowledged the stories and allowed the perspectives of the participants to unfold as the interview progressed (Marshall and Rossman, 1999).

Participants' personal stories of employment experiences were narrated as natural and ordinary stories. As a way of avoiding potential bias during the sessions, I assumed a minimalist role. This meant I did not interrupt participants during the interviews, save for the purpose of asking questions and seeking clarification. Each interview session lasted between 45-60 minutes and was audio-recorded. The participants were informed about the audio-recording and their consent was sought and obtained. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the interview process at any given time without any consequences. All interviews were conducted in English.

4.6 Research Method and Research Design

4.6.1 Sampling

Selecting a study sample is an important part of any research project because it is not feasible, practical and efficient to study a whole population. I therefore

selected a sample population from among members of the African communities in New Zealand whose voices are believed to express common experiences of the African people in New Zealand (Bryman & Bell, 2007). My study employed a non-probability sampling technique to investigate the employment-related challenges for Africans in New Zealand. According to (Neuman, 2011), non-probability sampling is the selection of sampling units, for example, participants, from a population using non-random procedures such as snowballing. Non-probability sampling can use the following formats; quota sampling, snowball, purposive sampling, self-selection and convenience. My study used the non-probability purposive sampling technique.

4.6.2 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling allows the researcher to choose participants based on their experiences of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2009). Neuman (2011.p.267) stated that “purposive sampling uses the judgement of an expert/researcher in selecting cases, or it selects cases with a specific purpose in mind”. Grinnell and Unrau (2005) argue that purposive sampling is utilised when the selection process is done on the basis of participants’ knowledge of the research problem. Purposive sampling is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling. Saunders et al (2009) stated that the sample can include extreme cases, homogeneous cases, heterogeneous cases, typical cases and critical cases. In this study, I chose purposive sampling because it permitted me to select participants who were knowledgeable about the employment experiences of African communities in New Zealand (Creswell, 2013; Sarantakos, 1998; Saunders & Lewis, 2009).

4.6.3 Consultation with Community Leaders

The support of community leaders was important for identifying prospective participants in this research. African community leaders and community members were consulted through the existing nationality-based communities such as Nigerian Association, Zimbabwe Association and Ghanaian Association in the development of this project design in order to get their input,

endorsement and support regarding the study. In this context, African community leaders refer to those who were elected as office bearers at their respective national annual general meetings as well as those who were not elected but are regarded as community elders by virtue of their age, wisdom and influence in their respective communities. The African Communities Forum Incorporated (ACOFI), which is an umbrella organisation that represents all African communities in Auckland also participated in this project.

4.6.4 Participants Recruitment Method/ Criteria

As the researcher, I attended most of the key strategic community meetings and events and presented the research proposal. I asked for permission to distribute information sheets and consent forms to all members present at the meetings and gatherings and invited interested people who met the criteria to participate in the research on a voluntary basis. This was done by filling in relevant forms which were returned to me in pre-paid self-addressed envelopes. The reason for providing pre-paid self-addressed envelopes was to minimise losing potential participants due to inconvenience of posting or postal costs that may be incurred. It also ensured that those who chose to participate had ample time to consider the invitation and respond privately to maintain their confidentiality. I left copies of the information sheet and consent forms with respective community leaders for distribution to interested members who met the selection criteria but were not able to attend the meetings/gatherings. The recruitment process was aimed at achieving the intended selection criteria, for example, gender balance and country of origin.

The study considered only participants who had a refugee or migrant background and originally from the continent of Africa and who had lived in New Zealand for at least two years. The reason for using the two-year cut-off time period is that it was anticipated that at least new arrivals in the country would have settled or almost settled (Refugee Services, 2012; Tuwe, 2012). In recruiting participants, factors such as gender balance, age, education level, work

experience, professional qualifications, country of origin and a representation of persons from refugee and migrant backgrounds were taken into consideration in order to have participants who met the criteria. The prospective participants included elected community leaders, elders of the community, political leaders, religious leaders and professionals of African heritage working in senior positions in non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government departments. The other criteria that I considered during the recruitment process was the ability to speak and understand English. This was not meant to marginalize or discriminate against people who did not speak English. It was intended to avoid the use of interpreters. Besides, engaging professionally trained interpreters was going to be expensive and difficult to access them when needed. In addition, most African migrants speak and understand English (Refugee Services, 2012; Tuwe, 2012). The minimum age for the participants was 20 years because this did not require any parental or guardian consent for participation and also at that age most people are likely to be working. Those who responded and met the requirements were invited to participate in the study. I then contacted prospective participants by telephone and/or emails. I recruited all participants from the Auckland region as this is where the majority of the African population is domiciled (Refugee Services, 2012; Tuwe, 2012). The other reason is that Auckland is considered the main commercial city and New Zealand's biggest business hub (Auckland District Health Board, 2011).

In my current role with a New Zealand government department where I manage a national community engagement portfolio, and in my former position as National Programme Manager (African Communities) for the New Zealand AIDS Foundation (NZAF), I have had opportunities to work closely and network with both African communities and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities in New Zealand for the past 16 years. I have also actively participated in many research studies, carried by New Zealand universities, which involved African communities in New Zealand. I have managed to build and gain trust and confidence with the New Zealand-based African communities. This was an added advantage for me regarding contacts.

4.6.5 Information Gathering Process and Auckland University of Technology (AUT) Research Ethics Approval

I worked closely with my supervisors for guidance and support on matters of facilitation, maintaining neutrality during interviews, and respect for the communities and participants' views and values. During the discussions, all relevant major points were noted, and I compiled preliminary summaries after each interview. Ethics approval was obtained in July 2015 (reference number 15/210) from the AUT Research Ethics Committee before the research study was undertaken.

4.7 My Personal Experience

As a community leader and member of the New Zealand-based African communities, my personal experience also contributed to this research because of my own employment-related challenges in New Zealand. I am actively involved in key community initiatives that address some of the negative social impacts of employment-related experiences on the lives and well-being of the African communities. Some of these key community initiatives include community-empowerment and dealing/coping with self-esteem and depression caused by employment-related problems. Every effort was made to retain objectivity through regular consultations with my supervisors and colleagues so that my personal views or bias did not unduly influence the outcome of this study. I did my best to remain professional and not pre-determine the outcome of the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS



African Community Discussion Group

‘The researcher’s role in narrative research is a comprehensive one: as collaborator; a ‘listener’ providing an audience for the construction of the story during an interview, an interpreter during analysis, and as author in presenting participants’ voices through written stories to a wider audience of readers’’ (Marshall, 2005, p. 53).

5.1 Introduction: Data Analysis- Thematic Approach

In this study, I used thematic analysis to analyse the data. A summary of the results of this study are presented in Table 5.1 (below). The data have been grouped under five themes emphasized from the employment-stories narrated by members of the African communities in New Zealand.

Theme	Results/Themes identified by community groups and individual participants
Theme One	Racism, Discrimination and Accent Issues
Theme Two	English language Proficiency as a barrier
Theme Three	Lack of local New Zealand (Kiwi) Work Experience and Non-recognition of Overseas Qualifications
Theme Four	Employment Challenges: Unemployment, Under-employment and Promotion
Theme Five	Cultural Issues and Religion

Table 5.1: Results (themes) of the research

5.1.1 Data Coding and Theme(s) Development

After data collection was completed, data analysis was conducted to enable me to identify and categorise key themes. According to (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 6), thematic analysis refers to “a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data”. Thematic analysis focuses on identifiable themes and patterns of living and/or behaviour. Thematic analysis has the ability to organise and describe data in a rich detailed way and interpret various aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998). Key themes arising from the data were identified to help understand their patterns, groupings and characteristics as the research unfolded (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). The emergent themes from the analysis, notes and summaries became the foundation for clustering the data, thus, grouping similar themes together.

The thematic analysis of the data complemented the African oral tradition of storytelling as similar stories, topics and narratives were placed under the same theme (C. Marshall & Rossman, 1999). The African storytelling became more appropriate in this regard because the African culture is based on communal and collective values and views where community members share their stories and resources as an extended family (Banks-Wallace, 2002). Pseudonyms for community groups and individual participants were used to maintain their confidentiality. The theoretical frameworks of the Labour disadvantage theory (LDT) and Critical race theory (CRT) complemented the African storytelling as a

methodology where issues relating to disadvantages in the labour market and racism and discrimination were discussed.

For the process of organising data, I decided to follow the six stages recommended by C. Marshall and Rossman (1999). These six stages are as follows:

1. The first stage was to organise the data at the end of the data collection process. This was achieved by reading through the transcripts several times in order to comprehend stories on employment-related experiences. This enabled me to reduce these stories into readable formats. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), this process of organising the data in a compact form allowed me to capture all important employment stories and relevant information, highlighting the interesting and vivid events.
2. The second stage was to generate and categorise themes based on the stories narrated by communities and individual participants on employment issues. This was achieved by continual reading of the data. The identification of these themes became 'baskets' into which information was placed (Marshall and Rossman, 1999).
3. The third stage was coding the data. This has been described by Marshall and Rossman (1999,p155) as "formal representation of analytical thinking". At this stage, these different themes and categories were allocated colour-codes that identified them for further analysis. Different colour codes were used to identify similar employment stories within the text. For ease of management of the data, I also formulated tables (with columns) where I placed participants' stories and quotes under similar theme-headings.
4. The fourth stage was to examine (test) emergent themes in relation to the main research question. I looked for any similar and contrasting themes, based on employment stories and fitted them into the general discussion as was necessary. This process became the backbone of my discussion chapter.

5. The fifth stage was searching for alternative explanations for themes that were apparent in the research study and then present an argument that linked the themes to previous research. According to Marshall and Rossman (1999), this process allowed me to present an explanation of the findings and to offer assertions about the data. In addition, the process provided me with an opportunity to supply substantial evidence for those assertions and build a logical interrelationship among them and related proclamations to future research.
6. The final and sixth stage was to produce a written report where I interpreted the information and gave meaning and shape to the thesis.

The analysis of the data in this research followed two important principles: (i) it allowed the stories, voices, views and concerns of the community groups and individual participants to be heard (Ellis & Berger, 2002) and (ii) it went beyond the stories and voices of the African communities and individual participants in such a manner that their views regarding employment experiences were comprehensively understood (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). While the method of data analysis ensured that community groups and individual stories and perspective(s) were respected, it made an attempt to view such perspectives in relation to the collective stories and understanding of all participants (J. Banks-Wallace, 2002). I endeavoured to reflect, the voices and views of the participants, by listening and documenting their stories (Ellis & Berger, 2002).

Table 5.2 (below) shows the composition of the four community groups, the pseudonyms of the participant, country of origin, career/profession in New Zealand, gender, and immigration status of each community group member. In order to provide important variables for both the community groups and individual participants, it is crucial to briefly talk about their countries of origin and the lengthen of their stay in New Zealand or residence in the New Zealand. The majority of Africans in New Zealand who originally came from countries such as Eritrea, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Burundi, Somali and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) are refugees while those from Zimbabwe, South Africa,

Botswana, Sudan, Nigeria, Ghana, Zambia, Kenya and Malawi are mostly professional migrants (Refugee Services, 2012). Historically, as a result of the intensification of political crises in Somalia (1992-1994), the Ethiopia-Eritrea war and famine (1991-1993), and the Rwanda genocide (and Burundi political instability) of 1994, the population of Africans in New Zealand grew in the subsequent years (Chile, 2012). Around 3000 refugees from what is known as “The Horn of Africa” (Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Eritrea) arrived in New Zealand under the United Nations refugees’ quota system between 1992 and 2001 (New Zealand Immigration, 2004). On average, most participants have been in New Zealand for ten years. Most of them have now acquired either permanent residency or citizenship in New Zealand.

Ref #	Pseudonyms	Gender	Career/ Profession Status in New Zealand	Employment Status (Time of Interview)	Country of Origin	Immigration Status
Group One (Refugees & Migrants -Female and Male)						
1	Fore	Male	Info Management	Employed	Eritrea	Refugee
2	Mutsa	Female	Laboratory Technologist	Employed	Zimbabwe	Migrant
3	Fifi	Female	Social Worker	Employed	Eritrea	Refugee
4	Dinga	Male	Community Development	Employed	South Sudan	Refugee
5	Samson	Male	Civil Engineer	Employed	South Sudan	Refugee
6	Solo	Male	Laboratory Technologist	Unemployed	Zimbabwe	Migrant
7	Dumela	Female	Psychologist	Employed	Botswana	Migrant
8	Khuhle	Female	Social Worker	Employed	South Africa	Migrant
Group Two (Refugees Only Female & Male)						
1	Husseni	Male	Community Development	Employed	Ethiopia	Refugee
2	Furanzisi	Male	Film Actor/ Musician	Unemployed	Rwanda	Refugee
3	Lolo	Male	Disability Advocacy Worker	Employed	Eritrea	Refugee
4	Ali	Male	Community Development	Unemployed	Somali	Refugee
5	Zafbir	Female	Social Worker	University Student	Ethiopia	Refugee
6	Musa	Male	Policy Analyst	Employed	Somali	Migrant
Group Three (Migrant Only Female & Male)						
1	Kalifi	Male	Mechanical Engineer	Unemployed	Sudan	Migrant
2	Fungai	Male	Mechanical Engineer	Employed	Zimbabwe	Migrant

3	Obrigado	Male	Logistic Specialist & PhD student	University Student	Nigeria	Migrant
4	Simbisai	Female	Community Development	Unemployed	Zimbabwe	Migrant
5	Faduma	Female	IT Specialist	Unemployed	Sudan	Migrant
6	Edamini	Male	Strategic Leadership & PhD Student	University Student	Sudan	Migrant
7	Bongiwe	Female	Social Worker	Unemployed	South Africa	Migrant
Group Four (Refugees Female Only)						
1	Mantas	Female	Communications Student	University Student	Rwanda	Refugee
2	Natila	Female	Community Development	Employed	Ethiopia	Refugee
3	Jenifa	Female	Medical Doctor	Employed (Community Worker)	DRC	Refugee

Table 5.2: List of Community Groups

Table 5.3 (below) details the composition of the 20 individual African community members, the pseudonym of the participants, country of origin, career / profession in New Zealand, gender and immigration status of each member. The interviews helped to understand the employment experiences from an individual perspective. They also assisted in suggesting varied solutions, from an individual perspective, on employment challenges faced by this community. After the interviews were transcribed they were analysed according to the key themes as emphasised by both community groups and individual participants.

Ref #	Pseudonyms	Gender	Career/ Profession in NZ	Employment Status (Time of Interview)	Country of Origin	Immigration Status
1	Mufundisi	Male	Pastor	Employed	Zambia	Migrant
2	Shanduko	Female	Social Worker	Employed	Zimbabwe	Migrant
3	Mujaya	Male	Information Management	Self-Employed	Zimbabwe	Migrant
4	Tihaba	Male	Motor Mechanic	Self-Employed	Burundi	Refugee
5	Ridos	Female	Accountant	Employed	Burundi	Refugee
6	Khrushina	Female	Early Childhood Teacher	Employed (Cleaner)	South Africa	Migrant

7	Tari	Female	Customer Service	Un-employed	South Africa	Migrant
8	Kofi	Male	Production Engineer	Employed	Ghana	Migrant
9	Acadia	Female	Lawyer	Employed	South Africa	Migrant
10	Dhavhidi	Male	Social Worker	Employed (Part-Time)	Ethiopia	Refugee
11	Arekisi	Male	Teacher & Motor Mechanic	Self-Employed	Burundi	Refugee
12	Mambo	Male	Food Technologist	Employed	Zimbabwe	Migrant
13	Sameri	Male	Food Technologist	Employed	Uganda	Migrant
14	Rosina	Female	Social Worker	Employed	Rwanda	Refugee
15	Nasambu	Female	Human Resources Management	Employed (Community Worker)	Kenya	Migrant
16	Kadhija	Female	Social Worker	Employed	Ethiopia	Refugee
17	Aniko	Female	Accounts Admin	Employed	Rwanda	Refugee
18	Nahani	Female	Social Worker	University Student	Eretria	Refugee
19	Aphiri	Male	Air Craft Engineer	Employed	Malawi	Migrant
20	Nyagada	Male	Banker & PhD Student	University Student (Employed Part-time)	Nigeria	Migrant

Table 5.3: List of Individual Participant Interviews using Pseudonyms

I believe that the views of the 24 community group members and 20 individual members from Auckland expressed the voices, common concerns and opinions of the majority members of the New Zealand-based African communities as almost 50 percent of Africans in New Zealand live in Auckland and most nationalities are domiciled in Auckland (Nakhid et al., 2016; Statistics New Zealand, 2013; Tuwe, 2012).

5.2 Data Analysis

The main aim of the analysis was to present the data in a manner that would enable the readers to understand the stories shared by the African communities

in New Zealand. In the process of looking for a suitable African way of analysing, explaining and presenting the data, I reviewed a number of authors, both from African and Western perspectives that provided guidance on data analysis (Achebe, 1959; Barber, 1993; Bruner, 1996; Chinyowa, 2004; DasyIva, 2007; Kunene, 1991; S. Marshall, 2005; Mungoshi, 1975; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; Obiechina, 1993; Peek & Yankah, 2004; Riessman, 1993; Sarbin, 1986a; Vambe, 2004). I chose the work of African writers such as Achebe, Kunene, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chinyowa, Vambe and Obiechina because their perspectives complemented African oral tradition of storytelling as an appropriate methodology for this study. Since I utilised the transcribing services of someone who was not from the African communities, I made sure that the transcription was accurate, mainly owing to accent issues.

5.3 Data Analysis: Management and Organization

According to Cole and Knowles (2001), organising data informs the analysis and writing process. I had initially planned to utilise a qualitative data analysis software tool, NVIVO 10 and I attended a NVIVO 10 course at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) offered by Academic Consulting Ltd in early 2015 (Academic Consulting Ltd., 2015). After attending the course, I decided not to use the NVIVO 10 because it looked and sounded inappropriate for a research of this nature that was using an African methodological framework of storytelling. I was not convinced that NVIVO 10 would capture all the feelings, emotions, worldviews and gestures in the rich stories narrated by members of the African communities. I therefore opted to use a manual data management system to sort and categorise stories into different themes and data segments in order to understand these stories (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). This also helped me to read and understand more fully the collected data and stories, getting involved in the words, expressions, emotions, feelings and flow of events as expressed by the participants (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). The reading and re-reading of data on hard-copies and the physical exploration allowed me to become intimate with the stories because the relationship did not halt after

collecting the data as I would continue to 'hear' the voices of storytellers in their stories.

5.4 Findings on Key Employment Challenges for African Communities in New Zealand: Five Themes

The stated five themes were brought into the analysis process by grouping related stories under a particular theme(s). There was a separation of summaries of what was said by community groups and individual participants as well as identifying which participant(s) had offered narratives on specific themes. Regarding the emotional aspects, I discovered that it was not easy for anyone who was not part of the interview process to comprehensively understand how the participants felt by merely reading the transcripts. As an 'insider' and the researcher, I could tell and see how communities felt as they told their stories. Their raw emotions were contagious. It was not easy, emotionally, to analyse the forms of stories, and to explore how aspects of stories such as styles and narrative tone revealed and uncovered characteristics of storytellers' experiences, inner-feelings and identity (Lauritzen & Jaeger, 1997). I made an effort to capture and record the responses by community group members where they either agreed or disagreed to issues raised by other group members. Some similar issues were raised by separate community groups but from different perspectives. Some quotations/extracts were cited in full in order to discuss different points. The significance of doing this was to select the quote(s) that best described the story(s).

5.5 Community Group Discussions and Individual Participant Interviews

I made an effort to highlight specific issues that were of great importance to each immigration-background group, that is, the refugees and migrants. Some of their experiences were encountered before they secured employment or at the recruitment and selection (interview) stage or when they were already in their

respective jobs. Other issues were to do with promotion, underpayment and unfair dismissals.

For the purpose of making it easy to read and understand the flow of events, I decided to put together findings for both community groups and individual interviews under each relevant theme or sub-heading, for example “Discrimination: Race and Skin Colour (Community Groups/ Individual Interviews”. I discuss, separately, under each relevant theme, the following:

- What both community groups and individual participants said about the employment-related experiences in New Zealand, taking note of any differences and similarities
- The suggestions made by both community groups and individual participants regarding the identified employment-related experiences
- The impact of the employment experiences on the well-being of the members of the African communities in New Zealand.

It is important to note that since this study is about African communities in New Zealand, who believe in communal living and extended family dynamics, as opposed to an individualistic life style, they shared second-hand experiences, thus, talking about stories of other community members, friends or relatives. They deemed these second-hand experience stories important and relevant to their culture and tradition (Achebe, 1959, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, 1986).

The moment I mentioned to each community group that I was going to use African storytelling as a methodology, all group members always sat in a circle as they shared their employment stories. No one told them to sit in a circle. This reminded me of the olden days when community members sat around a fire as they listened to their elders narrating stories (Achebe, 1959, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, 1986, Vambe, 2004, Chinyowa,2004).

5.6. Theme One: Racism, Discrimination and Accent Issues

In this section, issues related to racial discrimination and accent will be discussed. Nineteen out of twenty individual participants and all the community group members cited racism and discrimination as the biggest employment-related

challenges faced by African communities in New Zealand. Only one participant, who is currently employed by a Workers' Union, said that she had not personally experienced racial discrimination at her workplace. However, she said she had heard many stories from her friends and other community members about the racial discrimination they faced at their workplaces. Discrimination can be based on different dimensions such as race, skin colour, and indirect (subtle) judgement. These different dimensions of discrimination are discussed in detail (below). In the following sections, racism and discrimination will be discussed in two parts, that is, what the community groups and individual participants said in the interviews.

5.6.1 Discrimination: Race and Skin Colour (Community Groups)

Community groups shared stories of employment-related racial discrimination. Some mentioned race and skin-colour as the basis of such discrimination. In some instances, qualified people left their well-paid jobs in Africa only to face racial discrimination at workplaces in New Zealand.

One of the group participants, Fungai, a senior mechanical engineer and a poet and writer (in Zimbabwe) stood up, gazed at the roof, for some time, and finally spoke. He talked about how he felt racially discriminated when he was offered a salary that was no way near the one advertised, yet he felt that he was qualified, competent and the best candidate. His pain and bitterness 'enveloped' the room. The sense of anger was contagious. As Fungai was sharing his story, some group members interjected and reacted by shouting that they had experienced similar treatment at their workplaces. After the reaction of the community group members, there was dead silence in the room. Some of these actions by Fungai and the response by community group members demonstrated the pedagogical skills as enshrined in the African storytelling processes (Achebe, 1959; Ngugi wa thiong'o, 1986; Vambe, 2004). This shows the uniqueness of African storytelling and the dynamics of using African community groups. The story from Fungai indicated that there are employers in New Zealand who racially discriminate when it came to hiring Africans:

“... I applied for a senior engineering job which they had believed that no one in NZ had both the experience and qualifications. It was difficult for them to offer me the job, but they finally did because I proved that I had all the requirements, but they offered me half the advertised salary. In my view, I concluded that it was due to racial discrimination, the colour of my skin....and I told them exactly that during my exit interview....” (Fungai).

In his story, Fungai acknowledged that New Zealand gave him the employment prospects he initially needed, but the moment he sought to get paid more and to advance in his career, he was perceived by some New Zealanders, particularly the unqualified ones, as someone who came all the way from Africa to steal their jobs. The members of the group concluded that there is nothing wrong with someone who is competent and qualified to aspire for better career prospects and earn more money. Fungai summed the whole attitude as racial discrimination:

“..., my own experience, coming to New Zealand (NZ) was voluntary. I wanted to find a country where I can progress in my profession. I could have gone to UK or any part of the world. But I was qualified I came to New Zealand, and indeed, New Zealand did give me an opportunity. I ended up being an operations manager who was section head. But then I wanted more money and responsibilities, some Kiwis (with no qualifications) started complaining about me, as they felt I had come to take their job....to me that's racial” (Fungai).

However, Fungai reiterated that racism can be problematic to prove as it is elusive and subtle. He shared his story where his junior colleagues would plot his down-fall by making him appear as an incompetent engineer to his manager and external-clients. At times when he was on his way visiting clients, his juniors would phone the clients and say adverse things about him. They also told his manager malicious things about him. It was only his good work performance and excellent client-relationships, evidenced by cash-in-flows from his projects that saved his job. The community group members agreed that there were situations when they felt “back-stabbed” by their colleagues and racially treated.

Based on race and skin-colour, some said that their salaries were reduced as a way of frustrating them into resigning. For example, Samson a New Zealand-trained civil engineer said he had his salary reduced and he later resigned. Some community group members narrated stories citing racial discrimination when they were not selected for university work-placement by some public-funded government departments. Their stories were punctuated by emotional pain

brought on by what they perceived as inhumane and unprofessional practices. While Dumela (psychologist) and Zafbir (social worker) were sharing their stories, there was a chorus of agreement from community group members. Some said *"Oh yes, I agree with you my sister. It's true. We have faced the same issues too...."*. This reaction from community group members was similar to the reported call and response technique in the African storytelling process.

".... I am trained teacher in Africa, but I could not get a job as a teacher-aide. ...When I asked for the reason, I was told that I do not look like other teachers and some parents may not be happy to have their children in my care.... I think that was racial...." (Dumela)

"After being in my job as a civil engineer for a couple months, my salary was reduced. When I asked I was told that I was already getting more than I deserve..... I could not stomach it, I resigned within weeks...." (Samson)

".....I'm doing my 3rd year Bachelor of Social Practice. My Kiwi (New Zealander) white friends and I applied for placement at one of the big government departments and all my white friends were taken save for me and other Black Africans.... To me, it was to do with our skin-colour...But what they don't know is that they're actually killing us inside...." (Zafbir).

Jenifa, a medical doctor who trained in Africa told the community group that some of the employers in New Zealand have a mentality where they associate work performance with skin-colour. Communities felt that it was strange that people would have such a mentality in the twenty-first century. They condemned such thinking, which they considered to be primitive.

".... I think there is always racial discrimination.... when they look at the skin colour, they believe the skin colour is linked to the skill. So, because they think you have a black skin-colour, you don't have the proper skills – which is absurd, of course...." (Jenifa).

Mantas, a Communications Studies university student, told the community group that her relative, a qualified African civil engineer who trained in New Zealand got sick and depressed due to the racist treatment he was getting from his work colleagues. He later resigned and went to Australia. This group consisted of refugee-background women only and I could see sad expressions on all their faces. Their pain could be 'felt' in the room. Mantas informed the group that it was not the first time for this civil engineer to experience such abusive

racial discrimination. He initially left Wellington for Auckland which he thought was more racially diverse only to experience the same racism, not only from his work colleagues but also from customers. When asked why some Africans were moving to Australia when research studies have shown that there are numerous incidences of racial discrimination in that country (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008), communities agreed that the majority of Africans go to Australia mainly because of higher salaries compared to New Zealand, especially in Western Perth which recently experienced a mining boom. They said it was therefore a matter of weighing the benefits between enduring the pain of racial discrimination and the need to get better paying jobs:

"...Many Africans have left for Australia simply because of the racial discrimination at work in New Zealand. I'm aware of about 20 skilled people from an Auckland-based African community have left for Australia because they felt discriminated at work. A lot of recent-university graduates have also left for Australia... where they also get more money. New Zealand is losing out and has become a training ground for Australian job market. ..." (Mantas).

Solo, a laboratory technologist who was unemployed at the time of the interviews, told the community group members that racial discrimination in New Zealand is publicly condemned and reprimanded but unfortunately it is covertly embraced and practiced. At this point, community group members nodded their heads and concurred with Solo. He said there are legislations that denounce any form of racism in New Zealand. He mentioned that if one practices racial discrimination openly, they risk being publicly shunned but regrettably, employment-related racial discrimination is evident:

"...I think there is a polite way of practicing racism in New Zealand ... where they denounce it, castigate it, but practise it. And this is exactly what New Zealand does. They denounce it, they've got laws about it, they've got everything about it, but the flip side of it, it's practised..... You don't condone racism in New Zealand unless you are overt and if you go openly racist, you're ostracised. But when it comes to employment matters, its extreme racism in practise..." (Solo).

The story from Faduma, an information technology (IT) specialist who holds a master's degree in computer science showed that people of colour are generally associated with certain types of jobs, for example, cleaning.

".... I was looking for a job and I thought of just popping into this company, next to where I used to live in Hamilton. I handed over my CV to this receptionist (white young woman) and before she looked at my CV she concluded that I was

looking for a cleaning job. I was very annoyed, and I told her that I was not after a cleaning job.... I was an IT Specialist with a master's degree in Computer Science... (Faduma).

When asked if it was not a case of stereotyping, before she responded, all the group members shouted in one united voice and said, “*racial discrimination*”. Faduma insisted that the actions and attitude of the receptionist were racist. She encouraged the community group members to challenge such racist attitudes and actions. She further asked the following questions regarding her encounter with the white receptionist: “*Why did the receptionist straight away conclude that I was after a cleaning job? If it was a white woman, was the receptionist going to react in the same manner?*”.

Most of the above stories revealed how some African community members were disadvantaged in the labour market on the basis of their skin-colour.

5.6.2 Discrimination: Race and Skin Colour (Individual Interviews)

Nineteen out of twenty individual participants mentioned that racial discrimination and skin-colour issues were the most common forms of discrimination targeted at members of the African communities in New Zealand, by some of the employers, prospective employers and fellow employees.

Mambo, a UK-trained food technologist who had lived and worked in Africa and many Europe countries, said he had experienced numerous cases of employment-related racial discrimination. When he was employed as the only black night shift manager by a large dairy New Zealand organisation, he experienced what he considered to be racial discrimination from his immediate manager (a white woman). Due to this, he ended up getting frustrated and stressed. Mambo said that one particular night, there was an incident involving an employee who got injured and he followed all laid-down health and safety procedures and made necessary arrangements for the injured to be ferried to the hospital, where he was admitted. After adhering to all the required processes and procedures regarding the injured, Mambo felt that he was unfairly interrogated and finally subjected to a disciplinary hearing. When he sensed there was a danger of being unfairly dismissed, he engaged one of the top employment-

dispute lawyers in Auckland, at a cost of \$380 per hour. After winning the case, his manager persisted on making his job difficult by not supporting him and accusing him of incompetence for almost everything he did. He approached senior management and was told that there was no future for him in the organisation. He was encouraged to negotiate an exit-package, which he did. Mambo was emotional in the narration of his story and he stated that he was targeted purely because he was the only black manager in the entire organisation. He also said that some other white managers did not accept him, a black manager, to be at the same position as them. He said:

“... She (my manager) just didn't like me. And having been the only man of colour in the whole organisation, I could see she was racist and very serious. I hired a lawyer after being advised by friends. I got a very high employment lawyer who was costing me \$380 an hour...to me it was an issue of the colour of my skin....” (Mambo).

Mambo considered it unfair when uneducated white people from New Zealand and other developed European countries occupy managerial positions in Africa while educated and qualified Africans in the diaspora were struggling to get jobs. Mambo blamed the effects of colonialism for this kind of racial discrimination.

“... When a white person comes to Africa, even if he was a cleaner here (NZ), he gets a better and lucrative job because he is white.... Obviously, we were brainwashed- when you come here (NZ), if you're black, you are already judged before you open your mouth” (Mambo).

Mambo emphasised that if you are a black employee in New Zealand, you have to demonstrate your work competency beyond any shadow of a doubt, maybe by working twice as much as a white counterpart. He said that most employers believe that white employees are more competent than their black colleagues. He alluded to the fact that most competent black employees are usually not acknowledged by their employers. Aphiri, a senior aircraft engineer said that he was racially discriminated against when some racial utterances were made about him. Nothing much was done by his superiors to resolve the case when he formally reported it. As a result, he could not get promoted but instead his trainees were elevated ahead of him. He was dispirited and depressed such that his level of efficiency at work was adversely affected. The hostile racial treatment he got from his workplace had a negative impact on his social life, especially at

home. There was no career advancement for him and he had no choice but to resign:

"...my team leader compared me to a dark chocolate donut because I'm black. I reported the case to Human Resources Department, but it was not resolved professionally, and I was not happy. I felt very bad, and demoralised. This adversely affected my work performance, my family life at home.... The main problem is racial discrimination...because I was senior Engineer, training all the others (white guys) but these trainees got promoted before me, yet I had trained them...it was very hard for me to progress in that area...because of discrimination...I had to resign...." (Aphiri).

Another participant, Sameri, a food technologist experienced a 'cold' reception, mostly from other white employees when he joined a new organisation. He felt these employees did not accept anyone from another race. This racist attitude made his job difficult since he had to interact with other employees and departments.

"...The employees there were not really receptive. I don't think they really liked people from other nationalities (race)...They didn't receive me well. I think the main barrier was skin-colour...." (Sameri).

Nasambu's story shows that race is an issue for some New Zealand employers when it comes to hiring Africans, even the qualified ones:

"... After completing an MBA in New Zealand, I could not get a job, but all my other white colleagues got jobs before they even completed the MBA programme. I think they were being politely discriminatory and racial.... (Nasambu).

A number of participants complained that most New Zealander employers were in the habit of using competent African employees to train new white employees and then promote the white employees ahead of them. It was concluded that racism coupled with nepotism and corruption played a major role in Africans' failure to secure jobs in New Zealand. The disadvantage of many Africans is that they do not know people in positions of power and influence; hence, they find it difficult to network and get hired:

"... We (Africans) are not getting jobs and one time I was so angry, I asked one of the white community workers.... And she said, "Oh it's because so and so is on the interview panel and blah, blah, blah – they told me I can apply, they will support me". And I was shocked. To me this was nepotism and corruption. She went ahead and said, "Oh the other person in this department has promised me a job". And fair enough, she got that job. (Nasambu).

The stories of participants such as Fungai, Mambo, Sameri and Nasambu reveal the notion of racism as described in the Critical Race Theory (CRT) where white people are mostly privileged in society.

Nasambu pointed out that some public organisations were marginalising Africans and racially discriminating against them when it came to employment matters. She was disappointed and frustrated that other ethnic people were fully represented in some public companies save for Africans. Nyagada, an ex-senior bank manager (in Africa) and a holder of a master's degree in banking and finance said he could not get a job even as low as a clerical position in New Zealand. He said that he once narrowly lost an opportunity for a senior job due to racial discrimination. He stated that at times would-be peers (employees) influence hiring decisions, especially if the prospective employees are Africans. Since Nyagada had come to New Zealand on a Work-to-Residency Visa, when his time to secure a job was running out he was forced by the unemployment situation to get into a tertiary study programme. Nyagada said that he was convinced that racism and discrimination were the biggest challenges for Africans to secure jobs in New Zealand despite their vast work experience and overseas qualifications:

".... It's racism, discrimination, everything is racist...the colour of your skin dictates if you are going to get a job.... some people feel the moment they see your colour, you cannot do the job...." (Nyagada).

Mufundisi, who is a senior pastor at one of the biggest African churches in Auckland, mentioned that racial discrimination is a huge problem for Africans in New Zealand, especially when it comes to employment. Mufundisi reiterated in his story that employment-related racism in New Zealand is covert, elusive, refined, hidden and passive, but it is there. He said it is cunningly crafted and masked such that it can be difficult to claim it:

".... In some places, your own colour works against you.... Whether we like it or not, colour is a factor.... racism is a very subtle thing. In a very developed country like New Zealand it's something that is very nicely disguised.... but the truth of the experiences of the people working, is that it is there. It takes time to dismantle it..." (Mufundisi).

To emphasise his point, Mufundisi shared another story about his wife who is a trained accountant (from Africa), but could not get a job as an accountant in New Zealand. She was required to re-train for the same qualification in New Zealand, but this did not improve her employment situation. In frustration, she had to leave the accounting profession and take up a nursing career. Mufundisi's story showed that no matter how highly qualified Africans are, most employers in New Zealand are reluctant to employ them:

".....My wife is an Accountant, she came in as an Accountant (from Africa) and she had to re-do the same Accounting degree here in New Zealand. But even with all that, the best she could do was accounts receivable and accounts payable...pretty much clerical stuff...from an Accountant in Africa to a Clerk in New Zealand.... And the reason of course as I explained, is racial discrimination, the colour of our skin.... (Mufundisi).

Mufundisi said he once experienced racial discrimination from his students at a bible college. He said that, based on his discussions with his students, it was not a matter of stereotype, but a case of racial discrimination. The student made it clear to him that they did not think that an African could be their lecturer. Mufundisi mentioned that a combination of being black and foreign contributed to the issue of racial discrimination when it comes to hiring and employing Africans in New Zealand where the majority of Africans are forced into underemployment and work as factory workers and cleaners. Acadia, a young African lawyer who trained in New Zealand, said Africans are perceived as non-performers and incompetent in their jobs. Instead of paying attention to what needs to be done in a job, many employers looked at other irrelevant negative factors, such as race:

".... We, Africans are seen as representing poverty, inferiority....and unfortunately, especially for darker Africans.... major barrier that we as Africans face...black comes with the perception that you can't perform (at work) as high as someone who's white... So, when we come into the workplace I think those are the things we have to deal with.... "(Acadia).

Mufundisi's story shows how some Africans miss out on the labour market as a result of their skin-colour. The labour disadvantage is in line with the LDT while the issue of racial discrimination is associated with the CRT.

In addition to skin-colour based discrimination, individual participants shared stories of how they experienced employment-related racism and discrimination in other different forms. Nasambu, a community development worker shared a story where some employers and organisations are in the habit of giving important jobs to their friends who are white New Zealanders, making workplaces 'white men's clubs'. Some of these employers would later 'hide behind' policies in order to conceal racial discrimination. Jobs that are considered insignificant and non-influential are given to non-whites. She said:

".... there is systemic racism.... sometimes policies are used to hide racism.... and it can be hard to pick it up...if you go back in history it's always this white mans' club and they always go for their own ... and when they have a role that has no meaning that's when they consider other communities and it's a reality in NZ..." (Nasambu).

Kofi, a production engineer, stated that he experienced racial discrimination when he discovered that his juniors (production technicians) who were all white and who directly reported to him were being paid a higher salary than him. He approached the manager in order to address and solve this issue, but the manager refused and later fired him. Shanduko, a social worker by profession, stated that before she came to New Zealand, she had completed her degree in social work in Africa and rose through the ranks to a position of a director. However, she said that due to racial discrimination, her first job in New Zealand was that of a caregiver for about four years. Finally, after struggling with professional registration, she got a job as a junior social worker. She stated that she experienced what she perceived as racial discrimination when her manager literally criticised all her work performance. She also felt that all this was done in order to frustrate her and coerce her to resign. When she did not resign, they dismissed her based on false allegations. She took the employer to a tribunal, won the case and got paid reparation. Mujaya, an information management specialist (who trained in Africa) said that he encountered a lot of racial discrimination when he was employed as a community support worker. He later resigned to start his own business as he could not accept the continued unfair treatment and lack of career advancement:

"I couldn't get any recognition neither promotion in my job, yet I felt I was working harder than the majority.... instead I faced racism and I decided to leave and start my own business even if I was not prepared to do that....." (Mujaya)

The story shared by Mujaya shows how Africans are forced out of the labour market by institutionalised and structural systems into starting their business even if there are ill-prepared for it. This is an example that can be applied to and explained by LDT.

Ridos, a New Zealand-trained accountant from a refugee background, narrated her story on how she could not get an entry-level position as an accountant in a chartered accounting firm. She felt that this was due to racial discrimination because after she had received written confirmation that she was qualified and experienced and that an interview would happen shortly, she received a letter of regret within minutes. She was baffled and disappointed.

In her story, Khrushina concluded that her experience was mainly due to racial discrimination when her employer turned down her request to extend her leave soon after she attended the funeral of her husband. She had wanted a bit more time to grieve the loss of her husband. After a few months, Khrushina had another work-related experience where she was denied an opportunity to leave work early in order to see her medical doctor as she was not feeling well. She later collapsed that night and was taken to hospital by her neighbour. Despite having presented a doctor's medical certificate and engaging the union, she was still asked to appear before a disciplinary committee for not reporting for duty. She said that other employees in similar situations had received preferential treatment and this made her feel that she was being racially discriminated:

".... I've been through a lot. After my husband died, my employer refused to give me unpaid leave because I was not done with grieving....they wanted me to come in early, one week after I buried my husband...I broke down and I was really stressed...I collapsed and my doctor gave me off-sick but they said no, come to work...and I engaged my Union and my management was unhappy...The other time I went to my boss, and told her that I was sick and I needed to go to the doctor and they refused again....sick as I was, I worked the whole shift and collapsed during the night at home (alone) ..When I went back to work, with my booking-off certificate, I was subjected to a disciplinary hearing..." (Khrushina).

Tari, who was employed by one of the biggest electronics companies in New Zealand, shared her story that after training a new manager, the 'tables' were turned against her. She said the new manager started to bully, mistreat and

micro-manage her. She felt racially abused and resigned. Another individual participant, Acadia, narrated her story that she has been now working within the New Zealand justice system for the past four years and yet she has not seen a single practising African lawyer within the system, yet there are qualified African lawyers. She said they are not being given an equal opportunity to participate in the system. Kofi, a production engineer related his stories where he was told by employers and colleagues that they never knew that he, as an African engineer, would perform as per the expected standards. He felt that such attitudes were purely judgemental and racist. He categorically stated that the fact that he has two engineering degrees (civil and mechanical) plus an MBA, all from New Zealand universities, should dispel such overt racial discrimination.

The story of Ridos showed that there are some segments of the New Zealand society that are racist to people from other parts of the world:

"... My second job at a petrol station.... Some customers made discriminatory comments like... "Go back to where you came from". It's like-what are you doing here..." (Ridos).

Some participants cited the racial discrimination within ethnic organisations. They gave the example of the Office of Ethnic Communities (OEC) which they felt has betrayed them by constantly employing people from one particular ethnic group at the expense of other ethnic communities. They said that there was only one African in the entire OEC team of about 25 employees. Participants stated that, although the number of Africans in New Zealand is lower than other ethnicities, the ratio of African employees in the OEC is too low. Africans feel marginalised and discriminated by a government department which is supposed to represent their interest and concerns:

"...But if you look at OEC...it's office of Asians.... only Asians there, but it's supposed to employ different ethnic people...racial issues among us ethnic people.... We have to do a lot of advocacy for African communities and I know they say they've given us platform, like OEC but as I said that office is not helpful. I think we need a massive overhaul and change at that office..." (Nasambu).

The only African employee at OEC resigned at the end of 2017. There are currently no African employees at OEC.

5.6.3 Discrimination: Named-Based (Community Groups)

All community groups concurred that name-based discrimination plays a key role in the exclusion of Africans in the New Zealand job market. Some of the employment-experiences shared by individual participants were similar in content to those of community groups regarding name-based discrimination on employment issues. Solo, a qualified laboratory technologist shared his story with one of the community groups based on his recent discussion with a New Zealand employment recruitment agent who openly told him that most employers prefer local New Zealanders with local names. Community groups agreed that some New Zealand employers discriminate when hiring employees on the basis of names. They also stated that those with names that sounded foreign were excluded from the recruitment and selection process ahead of local white New Zealanders. It was mentioned that such discrimination makes Africans feel they are not citizens of New Zealand.

“.... In my recent interview where we had a frank discussion with the recruiter who said ...” ...There are people who come from their countries and look at our country as a country of milk and honey. But this is a small market. We have to take care of our own people, ...” But then I am a citizen of NZ with a funny name as you might call it, at the end of the day you begin to doubt whether you a really a citizen-citizen, or you are just a citizen in name...but then that’s named-based discrimination...” (Solo).

Fifi’s story showed how adopting an English-sounding name had helped her husband gain employment after being unsuccessful with his own African name. Fifi’s story divided this community group, which consisted of refugees and migrants (male and female), where one school of thought was that it was not in line with the African culture and also unpatriotic to change one’s name just for the sake of getting a job. Some believed that there was nothing sinister by simply changing a name in order to secure a job which will in turn bring money for the benefit of the entire family. They also stated that people need to be practical and consider the fact that Africans in New Zealand are in a foreign land where jobs are hard to come by and therefore if merely changing a name makes one secure a job, then there is no problem.

“...My African husband (Architect) was never invited for interviews but the moment he changed his name to a Kiwi one (Sam), he started to get job interviews and is now working... (Fifi).

However, a story by Dinga showed that even if when an African person had an English-sounding name, they were still not accepted when meeting the prospective employers face to face. When Dinga shared his story, there were echoes of “yes!!yes!!” from the entire group, in agreement:

“...I have a friend of mine Michael (pseudonym), originally from South Sudan. When he got called for the interview, on arrival the receptionist was surprised when she saw that he was black. She asked “are you Michael? She went to see the boss and Michael was turned away without an interview because that is not the Michael they were expecting....” (Dinga).

Solo shared his story of how some prospective employers wondered why he was not getting a job, yet he was well qualified, confident and presentable. When he ‘threw’ back the question to the prospective employer, he was told that 95 percent of New Zealand jobs are not advertised. He said that the prospective employer mentioned that names play a pivotal role in securing a job. The group members agreed that although most jobs in New Zealand are not advertised, it is still unethical and unprofessional to hire employees on the basis of names. Lolo, a disability advocacy worker unhappily shared a sad story about his late friend, Mohamed (pseudonym), who died before fulfilling his dreams of becoming a pilot because no one wanted to offer him a training opportunity simply because of his Muslim-sounding name. Members of the group condemned such practices and challenged the African communities to take appropriate actions by approaching the responsible office(s), e.g. Race Relations or the Ombudsman for redress.

Furanzisi, a film actor and musician, stood up and walked at the centre of the circle, removed his spectacles, raised his fist in the air and cleared his voice before he spoke. All eyes were on him. He stressed that if one’s name sounds foreign, the chances of securing a job interview are slim. Suddenly there was a chorus of “yes!!!! yes my brother..... bring your story. We are here....”. Such a response indicated the uniqueness of using the concept of communities in the African storytelling process. In this particular community group, which was composed

of refugee background people only (male and female), all members openly expressed their displeasure and agreed that it was not proper to change names in order to get jobs.

“.... So, when you appear different...chocolate bar...That becomes a problem. Your name, if it's Mahmood or Bin this or Bin that, then you are already condemned to death you know, you may as well not send your CV.... some people are changing their names to European names so as to get jobs...to Mark Lee and Ben Thomas...” (Furanzisi).

Faranzisi's story resonates with both theoretical frameworks of this thesis, thus, the LDT and CRT.

Faduma, who is from the Muslim faith, said that she had been advised by a prospective employer to change her Muslim name to a European one. At once, all group members reacted angrily and stated that it was hypocrisy at its level because when most New Zealanders and Europeans go to work in Muslim-majority counties, they do not change their names to Muslim ones.

“...One prospective employer told me that it's important to exclude anything that would be an obstacle towards getting a job. He suggested change of names....” (Faduma).

Simbisai, a community development specialist, was vocal in his opposition to changing African names to New Zealand ones in order to get employed. She stood up and raised her right hand as a sign of asking all community groups members to listen to what she had to say. She categorically stated that most African names have a crucial customary and ancestral meaning and therefore being forced by the system to change these names is an insult to the African culture. The community members agreed that it is insulting, domineering and oppressive to change one's name for the purposes of securing a job. In support of Simbisai's point of view, Fungai, the African poet and writer, stood up and spoke in a sharp and forceful voice. He expressed some disappointment and pointed out that it is uncultured for him to change his traditional birth-right African name at such an old age:

“.... It's not right to change our names for the sake of jobs. Our names have a traditional significant meaning. It will be therefore discriminatory to be asked by anyone, for that matter, to change them...” (Simbisai).

“...For me, changing my name, after 40 years is a gross abuse of humanity and dignity. We came here for better life. The same people (Europeans) if they go to Africa they don't change their names to get jobs....” (Fungai).

5.6.4 Discrimination: Named-Based (Individual Interviews)

All the 20 individual participants stated that named-based discrimination is a factor when it comes to employment-related experiences for Africans in New Zealand. They said if the name sounded foreign and non-English the chances were that there would be no interview invitation. If the name sounded English, you are likely to be invited for an interview. However, when they see that you are black, you are occasionally excluded from the recruitment and selection process. Mambo said that most employers can identify that a prospective employee is a foreigner by merely looking at the name. The majority of participants stated that they had experienced a situation where they only got called for a job interview after changing their African names to English-sounding ones. Dhavhidi, a New Zealand trained social worker shared his story where he immediately started receiving interview invitations the moment he used an English-sounding name:

“... after receiving a chain of unfavourable responses from prospective employers, I thought of simply replacing my African name with an English one and the moment I did that, I started getting lots of positive responses” Dhavhidi

Khadija, a social worker mentioned that she was shocked when she could not get a job as a clearer, after failing to secure a position as a social worker in her profession. She felt that was mainly owing to her African name. She said that her case was further complicated by the fact that her African name was also a Muslim one. She also mentioned that in her current job as a social worker, she had heard many stories from a number of Africans, youth in particular, who have encountered challenges in securing jobs mainly because they have African names:

“... after completing my Bachelor of Social Work degree in New Zealand, I had challenges of getting a job in my profession and I feel it had to do with my African name which is also Muslim.... Since I am a solo parent, I needed food and accommodation for my children.... I couldn't even find one as a clearer.... even apart-time cleaner....” (Khadija).

“... One of our African youth that I work with, sent her job application, using her African name and three times she was rejected. But the moment she changed her African name to a Kiwi-sounding one, she was invited for an interview within no time.... This experience shocked her...” (Khadija).

5.6.5 Discrimination: Accent Issues (Community Groups)

All community members mentioned that the issue of accent is one of the key employment-related challenges faced by New Zealand-based Africans. Community members said that those times when they get invited for an interview based on the strength of their curriculum vitae (CVs), they feel that the moment their accent comes out, some employers would not hire them:

“...if you get invited for any interview, the moment you speak, your accent sells you out.... And they sometimes change their minds....no job for you.....” (Zafbir).

Simbisai expressed concern as to why some difficult-to-understand accents such as Irish were regarded as okay and yet clearer African accents were considered a barrier to employment. Before Simbisai processed, chorus of agreement filled the room. Communities were disgruntled and unhappy with such discriminatory and unethical employment-behaviours. Simbisai said:

“... What surprises me about accents is that if you are Irish or Scottish, its fine.... I think it's just the lack of willingness of the employer to give an ear to an accent that is coming from somebody who looks a bit different, colour-wise. I have discovered that some Kiwis here in New Zealand have challenges in understating the Irish accent but these (Irish) are happily accepted in jobs....so the bottom line is racial discrimination...” (Simbisai).

Zafbir and Simbisai's stories portrayed accent-centred discrimination which disadvantages Africans in the job market.

Dumela, a psychologist who is now working as a community development worker shared her story when she was invited for a call-centre job interview and was told that she did not make it because of her African accent. She said what pained her the most was the fact that the same call-centre has a number of other workers whose accents she felt are more difficult to understand than her African accent. Zafbir, a social worker also narrated a similar story where her friend got upset and depressed when she was openly told that she could not get the job

because of her African accent. She protested but still she was advised to change or modify her accent.

Simbisai stood up and walked to the centre of the circle, lifted her eyes and fixed them on the roof, with her hands 'glued' on her waist. She was at pains to share her story about how she could not get promoted to a senior position owing to her African accent. She said despite the fact that she was the one performing most of the challenging work-related assignments, she was by-passed for promotion to the position of Deputy Chief Executive. When she asked the reason why she was not appointed she was told that it had to do with her African accent. She was disappointed and told her manager that she had lived and worked in London without any complaints about her accent. She was distressed to the point of resigning as well as changing her career:

"... I will never forget the pain I once went through my brethren.....After working so hard and handing most of the difficult tasks, they promoted someone, my junior whom I had trained simply because of my African accent which I believe is very clear. I once lived and worked in the UK and not even a single day did anybody complain about my accent.....because of that nasty experience, I had to leave and re-train....." (Simbisai).

After Simbisai spoke, there was a long 'dead' silence, followed by a chorus of *"this is evil and oppressive.... inhumane and unbelievable....."*. Such a community response in African storytelling process reflects the dialogical and communal aspect. Storytelling is not a private affair in Africa; it involves the storyteller and the audience that the story is 'gifted to' as well as the communal space of storytelling. All members of the community are involved and are equal. The audience can join in the story, and sing (especially the chorus) if they are familiar with the song (Ngugiwa Thiong'o, 1986; Chinyowa 2004; Utley, 2008). Some of the pedagogical skills such as gazing on the roof depicts some spiritual connotations. The accomplished African storytellers use stories as an avenue to connect the physical and the spiritual worlds. In the storytelling process, the storyteller normally gazes up at the sky or at the apex of a thatched roof of a hut as if he/she is "seeing things from afar... from a distant" and communicating with the spiritual world (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1998, p. 30).

Obrigado, a Logistics Officer and a current PhD student recounted his story where he was the preferred candidate for a Logistics Officer position, in New Zealand, but lost the job when other board members complained about his African accent. They feared that other employees would experience difficulties in understanding him. Communities stated that there are different accents globally. Fungai said different accents should be celebrated as a reflection of diversity. New Zealanders sound different and sometimes their accent is not understood by other people. Therefore, the African accent should not be regarded as inferior to any other accent:

“... Accent might be different, but you have different accents – Kiwi accent, British accent, Australian accent, and Zimbabwean accent. So, mine should not be inferior to Aussie accent. Even Kiwis–if they go to the UK their accent sounds funny and difficulty.... (Fungai).

Community members stated that as long as there is clear and effective communication, the issue of accent should not be a factor in employability. They said that it is impossible and impractical for a person to change his/her accent when they are old. They felt that changing one’s accent was like throwing away and disrespecting one’s culture. For example, Fungai stressed a point that his principal and teachers (in Africa) were all Europeans but he proudly maintained his African accent and they maintained theirs.

“... My headmaster was from Australia and most of my teachers were British. So, in terms of exposure to the English ways, I was, but something like an accent I cannot change, because it’s something that I learn when I am a child, not when I’m 40-something years old. As long as we can communicate, and you understand my language– my sentence construction is Ok, my grammar is Ok, so what’s the problem? (Fungai).

5.6.6 Discrimination: Accent Issues (Individual Interviews)

Twelve of the twenty individual participants stated that the issue of accent was an employment-related barrier and challenge for Africans in New Zealand. Individual participants shared their stories and mentioned that one’s accent can work against them and stand in the way of securing employment in New Zealand. They said some employers judge prospective employees’ work performance based on their accents. It was also stated that once some prospective

employers identified your accent, you were “finished”; thus, they will not employ you no matter how qualified and suitable you are for the job. Participants felt that using accent or how one pronounces certain words as measures of one’s work performance was unfair, unprofessional and unethical. Dhavhidi, who is employed as a Cross Cultural Worker shared a story about an experienced engineer (petroleum industry) who could not find a job in New Zealand because of his foreign accent and was now working as a taxi driver. This is despite the fact that there is a shortage of engineers in the petroleum industry. The story of Kadhija showed that accent negatively affected the employment of Africans in New Zealand even if their communication in English was clear. Kadhija failed to understand why some employers were in the habit of linking accent to jobs which did not necessarily require intensive communication:

“...I don’t know what the problem was.... I didn’t get even a cleaning job and I guess it could be my accent... but I could read, write and speak English, I could understand them...My accent had nothing to do with the cleaning job. ... For me it was not my accent doing the job.... I was not going to do my work using my accent. I would use my hands and my brain. It had nothing to do with my accent... I was therefore strongly convinced that it was racism and discrimination.... (Kadhija).

Participants shared stories about employers who chose not to understand the African accent regarding employment matters, though they would understand every word when they wanted business or financial gains from Africans:

“.... On accent, they play selective hearing. They would say---“Oh it’s very difficult to understand your accent-- Oh this job really likes someone who is very fluent and articulate...but when you are buying from them, they understand you clearly....” (Nasambu).

Aphiri, an ex-senior air craft engineer, narrated his story that although he did not have any problems with technical issues because he was good at his job, he still experienced frustrations as colleagues and management would say that they did not understand his accent. He felt that this was a deliberate move to frustrate him because having once lived and worked in the UK for a long time, he had not had anyone complaining about his accent. Shanduko, a social worker, felt that some employers and work colleagues were caught up on issues of accent and how other people pronounced certain words rather than concentrating on the essence

and substance of the message. She pointed out that it seemed the main agenda would be on accent issues instead of getting what has been said:

“... And also, just our accent—the way we speak.... The way other people might say, for instance a word as simple as ‘parent’. And then people will say---No, you don’t say “parent”, you say “peerant”. So, it’s about people looking out for what you’re saying wrong, instead of picking up the essence of what you are saying...” (Shanduko).

Kofi complained about the syndrome of “I can’t hear you when you talk” as mere arrogance displayed by some prospective employers. He said if a migrant can understand the accent of a prospective employer, then the prospective employer should also make an effort to understand the migrant. He said as a global-human race, we all have our unique accents, and these should be celebrated and not become barriers to employment. Comments were made that the same New Zealanders, Americans and British do not change their accents when they go and work in Africa. Participants felt that they actually had to impose their accents on local Africans. There is nothing wrong with employers/ work colleagues asking someone to repeat something if they do not understand. They should not be embarrassed to ask. It was also emphasised that the most important thing was to have the job done; it was not about the accent. Nyagada recounted his story about the time he protested at one of his teaching-job interviews when the prospective employer told him that students, mostly migrants, would not understand his accent. He told the prospective employer that he was going to teach the migrant-students who had a similar background to his, and therefore there was no basis to claim that the students would not understand him. He challenged the employer not to complain on behalf of the students without any empirical evidence. He found it insulting and patronising that the prospective employer would complain on their behalf as if they had no rights of their own. Acadia, a New Zealand-trained lawyer indicated that the African accent is perceived by some New Zealand employers as backward and old-fashioned while the European accent is considered superior. This results in Africans missing out on employment in favour of Europeans. Her perception of a French-speaker and an African-speaker paints a picture of Africans’ disadvantage in the job market.

“... Again, it’s just perception, perception, perception.... that mentality that Africans are inferior, stupid or ignorant.... Europeans are always seen as better.

For example, if a French person, who barely speaks English, with a deep French accent, came, he'd probably get promoted faster than we (Africans) would, because it's seen as a glamorous, acceptable accent.... So, we come with our accent and it's perceived to be inferior ...” (Acadia).

5.6.7 Discrimination- Race, Name and Accent: Suggestions and Recommendations (Community Groups)

The community groups and individual participants were given an opportunity to suggest workable solutions and strategies to some of the employment-related challenges that were raised in the interview discussions. This section summarizes the suggestions offered by the communities. The Communities argued that if Africans work hard and establish a good and professional reputation, they will be hired without any problems by most New Zealand employers. Such professional reputations may create openings and more job opportunities for other Africans and their future generations. The example of the Zimbabwean nurses who have made a name for themselves was cited, such that if one mentions that they are a Zimbabwe-trained nurse, the probability of getting employed is high. Community members advised their fellow Africans not to simply give in when they face difficult situations in their jobs, but to remain focussed and steadfast. Fungai said the following as a way of encouraging the communities:

“.... As a strategy, I advise that---hold tenaciously, don't just quit easily. Be like a river--where there is a mountain, it will flow through the valley. And whatever resistance, it cuts through. Even if you build a dam wall, it will rise-up to the brim and start to overflow. So, I'm saying let's be single-minded. What you want is to get a job, come what may--obstacles are there to be overcome. There are ways to get around it...” (Fungai).

Although all the four community group members agreed that hiring employees on the basis of names was unethical and unprofessional, they stated that at times it was not entirely the fault of the prospective employer, but the manner in which CVs are formatted and presented. They suggested that people need to know how to write proper CVs by paying attention to the requirements stipulated in the job description. An example was given where certain backgrounds (countries) demand that information such as date of birth, primary education qualifications,

marital status be included in CVs and yet New Zealand employers are not interested in such information.

“...I think there’s one crucial point about what is it that I need to choose to put in the CV, and what is not required. I think it has something to do with the culture we come from. I might be interested in certain attributes, but the question is: Is it what the prospective employer wants? So, we need to know what we should put, and what should we not put in our CVs. I think we need to be more acquainted with the New Zealand labour market culture...” (Faduma).

Communities reiterated that New Zealand prospective employers should give Africans equal employment opportunities because the law stipulates that. Community groups said that they felt that the 90-day trial period legislation was oppressive because some of the unscrupulous employers were using it to exploit employees by dismissing them just a few days before the expiry period. The 90-day trial period allows an employer to dismiss a new employee within 90 days without giving any explanation (National News, 2014). Communities felt that the government was not consulting with African communities effectively. Communities suggested that the government should effectively engage African communities on issues of employment by using a bottom-up approach, starting at the grass-roots level as opposed to the current ineffective top-down approach where the government, via service providers, are giving instructions and making “Boardroom” decisions for communities. As a way of avoiding some unscrupulous employment agents and minimise discriminatory treatment, it was suggested that people should approach prospective employers directly where possible.

Another suggestion was that if the job did not involve giving instructions and having a lot of communication, the issue of accent should not have any bearing and effect. What was important was to have the job done.

“...As long as the job has nothing to do with issuing operational directions...then accent is a non-starter and non-event.....” Furanzisi

The community groups suggested that although Africans have their accents like everyone else, the best way is to speak English in a way in which they could be easily understood. Speaking slowly and audibly was recommended. Examples

of other Africans who improved their accents and are now doing well in the New Zealand film industry were given:

“... For us to fit in, especially regarding accents, we’ve to improve ourselves, by speaking slowly and making an effort to be understood. For example, in the New Zealand popular local TV play “Shortland Street”, we had a white South African girl who actually testified that she had to be drilled through to lose her strong Afrikaans accent, for her to be marketable- but she finally made it on Shortland Street. We also had this African lady originally from South Sudan who did very well and played as “Clamentine” in “Shortland Street....” (Fungai).

However, although they condemned accent-related discrimination, community group members agreed that at times it is true that some of the African accents are difficult to understand and there is a need for people to make an effort to be understood. They advised that people should learn to speak slowly and clearly to be heard:

“...Sometimes our accent actually does have a big barrier. It’s a challenge and a barrier in itself, because sometimes people don’t understand us...let’s try to be clear when speaking....” (Faduma).

5.6.8 Discrimination- Race, Name and Accent: Suggestions and Recommendations (Individual Interviews)

The following was suggested by individual participants. Some of the individual participants reiterated that Africans should be proud of the colour of their skin. They stressed the point that there is no need for Africans to feel as if they are inferior to other races in New Zealand. The central message in Mufundisi’s story was that all human beings are equal:

“...Particularly to the male folk, male Africans, we need to understand that black is beautiful. We’re not inferior; we have everything that it takes to contribute wherever we go. The colour of our blood is the same – white or black, it’s totally the same. So, we should not feel inferior at all....” (Mufundisi).

As a strategy to defeat and conquer racism, Africans were encouraged to display and demonstrate good work ethics as this will make a statement that they are capable and competent to positively contribute to the productivity and economy of New Zealand. In other words, Africans should be counted as an asset and not a liability:

“...I think I have a remedy to defeat the whole colour concept. I think if you work hard and you prove that you’ve got what it takes to bring development to this country, you are an answer to the problem; you’re an employee regardless of your colour. But that can only be proved once you get in the system...” (Mufundisi).

A number of individual participants encouraged members of the African communities to have a positive attitude when dealing with employment challenges as these are not meant to destroy people but to leave them in a better position. What is needed is focus, determination and a sense of purpose. It was suggested that, as a survival strategy, individuals and families should get as much information as possible about the place they want to migrate to well before they leave their country of origin. People should have some understanding of the new country and environment before relocating. Individual participants suggested that those who want to migrate to New Zealand need to do their homework and find out information, especially on job prospects and other settlement issues. Stories shared by some participants indicated that the majority would not recommend that their friends and relatives in Africa, who have good jobs, to come to New Zealand for employment purposes unless there are other pressing factors beyond their control, such as crime, corruption and political instability.

“...I would advise people back home in Africa to do their homework properly. Speak to people that are here (NZ) long enough and get to know—speak to people who will give you the true reflection of what’s happening and how it is. Personally, I wouldn’t advise my family and friends (with good jobs) to come here (NZ), unless there are big challenges.... the reason being when you come in to New Zealand, you have to work hard, really hard.... it’s hard...” (Sameri).

Employment workshops that are targeted at new arrivals in New Zealand were recommended to equip them with necessary tools and information on employment interviews and how the work-culture of New Zealand operates. Such workshops may boost the migrant’s self-confidence and self-esteem. It was suggested that African communities should run these workshops and invite Africans who have done well in New Zealand to come and share their success-stories and experiences. Networking and creating support structures within the African communities regarding employment issues were recommended so as to help break the cycle of poverty and state-dependence for future African

generations in New Zealand. It was advised that people should be well informed about what professions to study so as to avoid the disappointment of not getting a job after completing a study-course. People were advised to re-train or embark on other careers, if need be, in professions such as nursing, in order to be marketable. Human resources management was cited as an area where people do not easily get jobs after training.

Individual participants recommended that people should know their legal rights and report any unscrupulous employers to the authorities. They encouraged Africans to come together and form their own companies and then employ fellow Africans as a way of looking after each other. When asked if such a strategy would not be considered discrimination, they disagreed and stated that the whites, Indians and Chinese are doing the same in New Zealand and nobody has complained about it.

Individual participants suggested that Africans' job performance should not be judged on their accent. Africans need to be given a fair chance and get employed, just like anyone else. Accent is not a factor and should be viewed differently from English language proficiency and competency:

".... Africans should be given a fair chance and if someone is qualified enough and they can communicate well, whether with an accent or not, they need to be given a chance and then they can prove themselves..." (Mujaya).

5.7 Theme Two: English Language Proficiency

5.7.1 English Language Proficiency as a Communication Barrier: Employment Issues (Community Groups)

All community groups agreed with the 15 individual participants that English language is one of the biggest employment barriers for Africans in New Zealand, especially for those who are from a refugee-background and non-English speaking countries. However, it was noted that there are some jobs that do not require English language proficiency and therefore the issue of English should not be exaggerated. All community group members agreed that it is unfair for employers to demand English language proficiency for jobs that do not need this requirement.

“... English proficiency's is one of the barriers..... Even though it shouldn't be, because there are jobs that don't need English, for example dish-washing, all you need are visual instructions....” (Lolo).

Furanzisi's story stated that many people from refugee backgrounds and those originally from non-English speaking countries are disadvantaged on the job market if they are re-settled in a nation whose official main language is English, such as New Zealand because of communication barriers. Unfortunately, refugees do not have a choice in the selection of a destination country of final resettlement. The story from Furanzisi also raised critical issues regarding how people's career dreams and employment aspirations can be adversely affected by some of these decisions made by authorities within the refugee sector. Members of the community groups concurred that many people from refugee background and migrants from non-English speaking countries are experiencing employment-related problems in New Zealand because of English language skills. The debate was live and intense.

“... Yeah, English definitely is a barrier. I'm from a former Belgium or French colony. Had I been given a choice, I wouldn't have come to New Zealand because of the challenges associated with English language. Probably if I was in France I would be doing better than here. People who go in refugee camps since they were like 10 years, with no schools. So, they are not literate, and their English is below acceptable standard for employment.... Therefore, English language is a big employment challenge....” (Furanzisi).

Natali, a Community Development Worker mentioned that there are a number of smart and intelligent people within the African communities in New Zealand who cannot get employment because of their limited English language proficiency. After Natali made her statement, community group members responded in unison and said *“Yes sisi (sister), we concur with you...”*. This community group was composed of female refugees only. Some were nodding their heads and clapping their hands in agreement. Some of them said that they were too old to go back to school to learn English and this had become a source of frustration. Community group members shared stories about community members who had been verbally abused by their employers due to a lack of English language proficiency. As a result, some became depressed, sick and had to be admitted in hospitals. This affected not only the employees concerned but

the entire family and community. Communities said that policymakers and service providers need to make sound consultations and prudent decisions in the refugee re-settlement process by not ghettoizing (re-grouping) refugees in one location. It was recommended to resettle refugees in areas which are predominately 'white' so that they quickly learn the English language which in turn helps them to secure jobs. However, such policies of deliberately re-settling refugees in designated 'white' areas were criticised in other countries such as the UK (ChngMakers, 2012, Refugee Services, 2012).

Community members felt that comments made by employers such as "Your English is so good" were derogatory and a mockery. Fungai, a senior mechanical engineer and poet said he had to address prospective employers for making such a statement because as a professional and product of the UK Cambridge University system, he was fluent and articulate in English:

"...I've had to rebuke some potential employers in an interview, for commenting that "Your English is so good". So, to me, basically I was Cambridge educated, I attended Cambridge O and A Levels, got distinctions, best student in the country. So, to me English is a foregone conclusion that I'm quite eloquent in the language....." (Fungai).

5.7.2 English Language Proficiency: A Communication Barrier in Employment Issues (Individual Interviews)

Fifteen of the twenty individual participants concurred with community groups that one of the problems with prospective employers is the difficulty in speaking English eloquently especially for African people from a refugee background. This adversely affects effective communication resulting in community members missing out on employment opportunities. There are also migrants originally from non-English speaking countries (e.g. French-speaking nations) who face English language proficiency challenges when it comes to employment challenges in New Zealand. People for whom English is not their first language may find it difficult to effectively communicate with prospective employers, especially where colloquial English is used. These problems become more pronounced if Africans are from a refugee-background or non-English speaking countries. The story of Tihaba, a qualified motor mechanic (trained in Africa)

from a refugee background, showed that those who cannot communicate in the English language have a huge challenge in securing employment in New Zealand. Although Tihaba was a qualified and competent motor mechanic, it was hard for him to get a job because of his lack of English language proficiency. He only spoke French and Kirundi, his mother tongue:

“...I got here in New Zealand as a qualified Motor Mech but couldn't get a job.... It was difficulty and hard because of the language barrier...language was a big problem because you phone places and communication would be dead on the other end, so they won't know what you're after. So that was an employment barrier.....” (Tihaba).

Ridos, who came to New Zealand as a young refugee without English language skills, pointed out in her story the struggles she encountered in getting a job.

“.... My first job in New Zealand (1998), the first challenge was the language, because When I arrived in New Zealand I could not speak English properly English is not my first language. My first language is Kirundi.... but without English that was pretty difficult.... there was no help from the workplace to help me with my language difficulties.....” (Ridos).

Kofi, a New Zealand-trained engineer who is now working as a production manager also mentioned that it is difficult for Africans from a non-English language background to get their dream-jobs in New Zealand. Dhavhidi, also from a refugee background, who is currently working for a refugee-led organisation shared his own personal story in which he emphasized that New Zealand is predominantly an English-speaking country and therefore it is a major barrier for non-English speaking people to secure jobs:

“.... Well for the Africans in New Zealand—one of the problems is language barrier. Some African countries, they speak other language like French, Portuguese, Arabic and Swahili. And New Zealand is English-speaking country, so that's a major challenge for them....” (Dhavhidi).

Rosina (refugee background), another social worker who is employed by a refugee-led organisation agreed with the other participants. She said that at times some prospective employers view refugees as people who cannot be employed if they do not speak English. A story shared by Aniko, an accounts administrator with a workers' union, showed that English is the language of commerce in New Zealand and therefore without its mastery it will be a challenge to be employed. Limited English language abilities can result in isolation at work which may in

turn adversely affect one's work performance and well-being. Ridos told her story about feeling isolated and lonely at work because she could not speak English. In order to improve her English language abilities, she had to come up with a strategy of investing many unpaid hours manually copying names of grocery items in the supermarket where she used to work, and then taking them home to recite them. In these struggles, she got no assistance from the employer and work colleagues.

A number of participants also mentioned that the majority of New Zealanders innocently say to Africans "Your English is so good.... Where did you learn it from?" Most Africans consider this to be offensive. They feel looked-down upon and regarded as inferior and they felt that such statements inferred that Africans could not speak English and their general comprehension of life-issues and work performance were less than that of white people.

5.7.3 English Language: Suggestions and Recommendations (Community Groups)

Community groups suggested that the government should consider strategies to complement the good work done by the Mangere Refugee Centre, (under New Zealand Immigration department) after the six-month orientation programme by establishing English language courses in the communities. There are fewer free community English language courses for refugees in New Zealand because of government budget cuts (ChangeMakers, 2012; Refugee Services, 2012).

".... When refugees and migrants with no or limited English proficiency, come here (NZ), there is need for the government to set up proper and effective English classes, after the Mangere 6-week orientation programme. This is what is done in countries like Australia and Canada. Yeah....so we need more English lessons for refugee background people...because the more somebody learns, then they can improve their English language and be able to get jobs..." (Furanzisi).

5.7.4 English Language: Suggestions and Recommendations (Individual Interviews)

In light of some of the problems that were raised, individual participants suggested and recommended strategies that would help both refugees and

migrants to secure employment, for example, employers hiring people with no or little English language skills to do jobs that do not demand this ability. Rosina, a social worker, mentioned that New Zealand Red Cross is currently running a programme called Pathways to Employment that assists people from refugee backgrounds to secure jobs in New Zealand, especially those with English language skills challenges. The funding is provided by the New Zealand Ministry of Social Development. Participants encouraged members of the African communities, especially women from refugee background, to mix and socialise with people from other nationalities and the mainstream so as to learn the English language. Kadhija, a social worker, recommended that employers should consider Africans from refugee background for jobs and maybe set up programmes or sponsor them to improve their English. She said that employers need to understand that most refugees are linguistically talented and good at quickly mastering other languages. Some speak more than five languages and therefore, given a conducive environment, learning English would not be a problem for them.

5.8 Theme Three: Lack of local New Zealand (Kiwi) Work Experience and Non-recognition of Foreign Qualifications

5.8.1 Local New Zealand Work Experience: Community Groups

All community group members stated that the demand for the local New Zealand (Kiwi) work experience by local employers was a challenge for African communities in New Zealand. The communities felt that it was unfair for New Zealand employers to demand local work experience for jobs such as motor mechanics and other professions that do not warrant this requirement. Communities questioned the rationale and wisdom of employers who make such demands, especially from new arrivals, without offering them job opportunities in order to gain the required work experience.

“... When we (Africans) come here, the first question you have is: “Do you have New Zealand work experience...?” Where do I get New Zealand local work experience when I have a few days in the country? These are employment problems we are facing here in NZ (Samson).

The stories from communities indicated that demands for local experience go beyond the ordinary notion of work experience. They said that what New Zealand employers mean by New Zealand local work experience is someone who was schooled in New Zealand and who has worked in New Zealand, either on a voluntary basis or full-time. They also stated that employers do not care about people's 12 or 20 years of overseas work experience. Communities felt that the system is unfair as it forces experienced employees to start from the entry-point level in order to acquire the local New Zealand work experience. Communities shared stories that there are African professionals currently doing demeaning jobs because they cannot get jobs in New Zealand due to demands of local experience. Lolo's group was comprised of male and refugees:

".... Yeah, Kiwi local work experience is a big challenge here- they really want to see in your CV what you have worked in New Zealand and how long you have done it.... Why do we have doctors from Africa who have not been employed in New Zealand? One African medical doctor, with a lot of experience is employed here in New Zealand as an interpreter. He is depressed. As a result of lack of New Zealand work experience, he will never get employed here as a medical doctor...." (Lolo).

Community groups were resentful about the fact that most New Zealand employers demand local work experience, yet when New Zealanders and other white Europeans go to Africa they become executive managers without any African local work experience. As if this were not enough, they hire and promote their fellow whites (in Africa) at the expense of local Africans. There was a big shout of "Yes!!!! It's true and it's bad" from all group members:

"...When Kiwis, Americans and Canadians who are white, come to Africa, they become chief executives, directors, with no African experience, culture and accent....no African knowledge of our geography. But how come when we come here (NZ), we face all these employment problems? The answer is they (Westerners) do it in a smart but subtle manner such that they end up employing their kith and keen from abroad at the disadvantage of our people...." (Solo).

Due to the demand for local work experience, it was stated that New Zealand has become a training ground, especially for African university graduates who then leave for Australia.

5.8.2 Local New Zealand (Kiwi) Work Experience: Individual Interviews

Twelve individual participants also identified the lack of local New Zealand work experience as one of the major employment barriers for Africans in New Zealand. The story of Shanduko, a former director (in Africa) who is currently working in New Zealand as a junior social worker, was common to many Africans when it came to the challenges and demands of local work experience. Her considerable international work experience was dismissed as she had to accept low-paying jobs that were not related to her profession in order to survive. Even after acquiring New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA) verification, it was still not easy for her to get a job as a social worker:

“... Initially it was really difficult, because they were asking for Kiwi (NZ) experience. And I found that I couldn't just come in and just get a social work job. So, I started off doing caregiving and cleaning jobs...So once that was done (NZQA verification) it was this so-called Kiwi experience that became an issue...” (Shanduko).

Despite his considerable work experience and good command of English, Mujaya an ex-banker and a case manager (in Africa) was frustrated because he could not get a job in the New Zealand banking sector. Most participants were concerned about the demand for work experience, even from the new arrivals in the country.

“...My experience.... looking for a job in New Zealand was devastating because when I came over I started looking in to the banking sector and couldn't not get it because of the lack of Kiwi work experience...This is a huge employment barrier.... most employers would say “your qualifications are all good, your English is good.... but we want someone with Kiwi experience”. And yet by then I was just a new immigrant, with a few days in NZ and I didn't have any New Zealand experience. ...” (Mujaya).

Dhavhidi felt that some prospective employers only asked for New Zealand work experience after identifying that an applicant is a foreigner. He said this was unfair and unethical. Mambo a UK-trained food technologist who also had vast work-experience in many European countries where he had never been asked for local work experience, was at pains to share his story. Mambo and Nyagada said countries like the USA and the UK do not demand for local work

experience as New Zealand does. They wondered where New Zealand got this thing called “New Zealand (Kiwi) local work experience”:

“...The minute you walk into New Zealand.....New Zealanders are very different from many parts of the world that I’ve been to. I worked in several countries in Europe. Here they talk about New Zealand work experience. If you go to America they never ask you for American experience, or if you go to England they don’t say they want you to have British experience, but somehow NZ has got this New Zealand experience thing....” (Mambo).

“... USA is a mini world. USA is a country whereby everybody is celebrated, irrespective of where you are coming from, as long as you want to contribute to the economy, they don’t need USA local work experience (as NZ does) because what is USA experience? If the job I was doing in Nigeria or Zimbabwe is the same as the one in New Zealand, why ask for New Zealand experience...?” (Nyangada).

Some individual participants used the term ‘catch 22’ to describe the difficulty of getting a job when one has just arrived in the country. Nyagada challenged one prospective employer that if they did not give him any opportunity to work, where would he get it from. He felt that asking for local experience was merely a way of trying to avoid employing Africans. He reiterated that people need to be given fair opportunities to work so as to start from somewhere.

5.8.3 Local New Zealand (Kiwi) Work Experience: Suggestions and Recommendations (Community Groups)

Communities indicated that the demand for local work experience by most New Zealand employers is not the normal practice for most countries in the world. South Africa was given as an example of good international practice when it came to issues of local work experience and immigration requirements.

“... Recently I found out the new visa requirements to work in South Africa (SA).... for example, if you’ve been working for an international organisation which has branches in SA, you can get a 5-year visa to work in that company (SA).... So, it doesn’t mean that you have to have SA work experience... New Zealand should copy this good example....” (Jenifa).

Community groups also recommended that new arrivals in New Zealand should embrace a positive attitude to the issue of local work experience by humbling themselves and accepting any job for a start as this will be considered as part of the demanded work experience. Faduma, an IT specialist, pointed out that the

main problem with some new arrivals who were managers in Africa is a lack of positive attitude and humility to align themselves with future job prospects. All group members agreed with Faduma but made it clear that they were not endorsing the current practice of demanding local work experience, which they felt was unreasonable.

“...What I’ve seen with New Zealand is any Kiwi experience is valuable experience. So even if I came in as an IT specialist, if I go out and I clean, and I show that I have that desire to work, it doesn’t matter what experience I have. Kiwis will take that as a positive local work experience.... But some of us who have been bosses in Africa can find it challenging to start as a cleaner. So, I think it is just up to us to be a bit more enlightened and say- “I will pick up any job, I will do anything, as long as it adds up to my Kiwi experience”” (Faduma).

5.8.4 Local New Zealand (Kiwi) Work Experience: Suggestions and Recommendations (Individual Interviews)

Some individual participants suggested that New Zealand employers should offer employment opportunities to Africans, especially those who are qualified.

“.... I guess New Zealand companies should really give a chance to immigrants and refugees—especially when they have qualifications, ...because this will give them a chance to have the local work experience. If no one wants to give you experience, how are you going to get that experience?.....” (Aniko).

5.8.5 Non-Recognition of Overseas Qualifications: Community Groups

All community group members mentioned that overseas qualifications, particularly from Africa and other third-world countries, are not recognised in New Zealand. Communities narrated sad stories of qualified African professionals who are currently employed in demeaning jobs due to non-recognition of their overseas qualifications. Community members said that most Africans with overseas qualifications in professions such as human resources management and marketing have difficulties in getting jobs as compared to nursing and other trade-related fields such as motor mechanics and building. Many professionals like medical doctors who trained in most African countries are not able to practice in New Zealand. For example, Jenifa, a qualified medical doctor from Central Africa was in tears when she shared her story that she could not work as a medical doctor in New Zealand. The all-women community group

members hugged and comforted Jenifa. The environment was emotional. Jenifa said she had to work as a care giver for almost 10 years. There are no pathway programmes in New Zealand similar to those found in countries such as Australia and South Africa where foreign-trained medical doctors are assisted, under supervision, to register, write professional examinations and then become fully-fledged medical doctors. After Jenifa shared her story, the room erupted with echoes of “yes!!! yes!!!” as an endorsement to what she had just shared. Communities stated that employment and economic difficulties caused by the non-recognition of their overseas qualifications was making their lives hard as they had to provide food for their families in New Zealand as well as send money back home to families in Africa.

“... most of our parents, who are now old and unable to provide for themselves, sacrificed all they had to educate us...some of us went to expensive medical schools.... but now we can't financially help them...back home in Africa. It's very painful and stressful.....” (Jenifa).

Jenifa's story demonstrated some of the characteristics of African storytelling such as the power and influence stories have in people's lives (Ngugi wa Thiong'o 1986; Achebe, 1987).

Communities said that some people had been forced to change their careers due to the inconsistencies of the NZQA system when it came to the assessment of foreign qualifications. At times, such inconsistencies put people in a difficult situation where they were obligated and compelled to re-organise their lives and sometimes start a new career at an old age:

“... I was a secondary school teacher back home in Africa.... I tried to apply for NZQA Level 7 (degree) and they wanted me to do another extra year of study....I was frustrated and decided to do something else....” (Dumela).

The community group stated that there are some African professionals who decided to come and work in New Zealand but refused to have their foreign-acquired qualifications evaluated and assessed by the NZQA because they did not have faith in the system. Some community members mentioned that some of their foreign-acquired qualifications were stronger and higher than the New Zealand equivalent. For example, Fungai argued that his Bachelor of Science degree (Hons) in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Zimbabwe (UZ)

is much stronger than the New Zealand Bachelor of Engineering. His arguments were based on the fact that the Zimbabwe education system was, by then, under a Commonwealth syndicate where examinations were marked and managed by the Cambridge University syndicate in the UK which is ranked higher than all universities in New Zealand. In addition, he said that he compared the syllabi and discovered that the New Zealand one was easier than the University of Zimbabwe's syllabus. He therefore strongly felt that there was no need at all for his qualifications to be re-assessed by NZQA. The entire community group clapped their hands as a gesture of agreeing with Fungai. However, Fungai was quick to point out that due to the current corruption and political unrest, there may be need for NZQA to put timeframes and cut-off dates regarding when the qualifications were obtained from certain institutes of higher learning such as the UZ. He cited a recent example where it had been alleged that someone linked to the Zimbabwe ruling political party was awarded a fake PhD (by UZ). Fungai's group was comprised of migrants only (both male and female).

Communities shared stories regarding some inconsistencies in the verification processes of NZQA where qualifications obtained from the same institute (in Africa) were given different ratings by NZQA. Such inconsistencies disadvantaged those who have been graded down when it came to employment issues:

"...I am aware of a couple that went to the same teacher's college in Africa and obtained their qualifications at the same time. But NZQA gave them different ratings, thus the wife got a Level 7 and the husband Level 5. What is that? ..."
(Simbisai).

5.8.6 Non-Recognition of Overseas Qualifications: Individual Interviews

A total of seven participants (all migrants) out of twenty, specifically mentioned that the issue of non-recognition of overseas qualifications was an obstacle to employment for Africans in New Zealand. Participants expressed frustration that due to non-recognition of overseas qualifications, most Africans were forced to 'down-play' their qualifications and conceal higher academic qualifications in

order to avoid being told by prospective employers that they were over-qualified. Some only produce their higher qualifications once they are in the job, and after demonstrating and convincing their employers that they are competent in their jobs, or in the event of a more senior vacancy. New Zealand employers were criticised for not recognising qualifications outside New Zealand:

“...Qualifications...when I was looking for a job, I got a care job, I didn't even use my first degree, I used my national certificate because they would not have given me the job....so particularly Africans know that if they carry 'big' certificates, they will not get a job. So, the best thing is to use your very least qualifications—except if you acquired them in New Zealand, because New Zealand believes that any qualification you get outside New Zealand and Australia is not standard enough to match their own....” (Nyagada).

It was revealed that several African community members have higher overseas qualifications which are not valued and recognised here in New Zealand. Mujaya's story is a typical example of how New Zealand employers do not recognize overseas qualification.

“...I am a trained information systems practitioner from a reputable university in Africa, but I could not get a job in the sector. All I got was a community support worker position.... I have been told that my overseas qualifications are not recognised here in New Zealand.....I had to start my own business in order to survive....” (Mujaya).

Non-recognition of overseas qualifications disadvantages members of the African community in labour market. For example, after failing to secure a job in his profession, Mujaya was forced by the system to get into the re-cycle and rubbish collection business.

Participants mentioned that it was challenging for qualified people such as accountants, engineers and managers, who had high status in Africa to accept lower status jobs in New Zealand. It required humility and focus. Mufundisi likened this scenario to that of a “*qualified pilot being taught how to ride a bike by an amateur*”. Shanduko stated how she felt when her overseas qualifications were not recognised:

“... My sad story is that my professional qualifications I acquired back home in Africa were not taken into account. I'm very disappointed because my social work professional qualifications are not being accepted here in New Zealand...Our Social Work degree course is very strong and internationally recognised, save for NZ ...” (Shanduko).

Arekisi, a trained motor mechanic (in Africa), had to start a cleaning business as his qualifications and experience were not recognised and he could not get a job as a motor mechanic. Participants complained that it was painful that their hard-earned foreign qualifications and experiences were not being recognised by most New Zealand employers who seem to prefer qualifications acquired in the western world. Participants felt discriminated and undervalued.

Although the NZQA accreditation and verification process does not guarantee employment, participants felt that at least these must be respected by employers. Some employers disregard the authority of NZQA, which acts on behalf of the government:

“.... So, my question is, if New Zealand Immigration and NZQA are acting on behalf of the government and accept our qualifications (Point System) before we come here, it means they are happy with our qualifications.....but how come that when it comes to employment, New Zealand employers reject us? There is a problem....” (Kalifi).

5.8.7 Non-Recognition of Overseas Qualifications: Suggestions and Recommendations (Community Groups)

Although the community groups condemned the attitude of some New Zealand employers for not recognising foreign qualification, they accepted that there is a need in certain fields or professions, to re-train so as to gain specific knowledge and skills. Taxation law was cited as an example as it differs from country to country.

“.... I think, for accountants its beneficial to re-train.... I know one accountant after he re-trained here (New Zealand), he appreciated the differences.... if he'd re-trained straight away on arriving to bridge the gaps, he probably would have found a job sooner, but instead he worked in petrol stations, McDonalds and stuff, and kept looking for an accounting job without retraining. Then it was interesting, later, to hear the differences, for example, between the Zimbabwe tax system and the New Zealand taxation systems. We're completely different and he was stunned....” (Mutsa).

While communities did not appreciate a system and practice where most New Zealand employers did not recognise foreign-earned qualifications, they agreed that it was fair for NZQA to verify qualifications as some countries have not had legitimate governments for years. They therefore recommended that

qualifications acquired from such countries should be assessed and accredited by NZQA.

5.8.8 Non-Recognition of Overseas Qualifications: Suggestions and Recommendations (Individual Interviews)

Individual participants also suggested that there is a need for Africans in New Zealand to re-evaluate their employment situation and be willing to re-train in those professions which would easily offer them job opportunities at the end of the training period. Nursing was singled out as a good example of a profession in which a sizable number of African professionals had retrained. It was suggested that it may be better for an unemployed African-trained medical doctor to retrain as a nurse, in New Zealand and then advance from there. Participants mentioned that New Zealand employers should respect NZQA accreditation and verification systems and employ competent and qualified Africans with the verified NZQA qualifications.

5.9 Theme Four: Employment Conditions- Unemployment, Under-employment and Promotion Challenges

5.9.1 Unemployment: Community Groups

All community groups agreed that unemployment was a challenge for Africans in New Zealand, even if they are qualified and experienced. Solo's story, based on what he got told by a New Zealand recruitment agent, clearly revealed that it is difficult for competent and qualified Africans to get jobs in New Zealand compared to incompetent white people. At this juncture, all members of the community group joined in with one voice in agreement with Solo and said, "Not fair". Solo's group was made of both refugees and migrants (male and female).

".....And an incompetent white person can get a better job than I, a qualified black African. That's what I got told by one of the top recruitment agents in NZ. And as she was explaining all this, I am like "...haaaaaaa, no, in the New Zealand market, so as a foreigner, how do I get that job, to penetrate the job market..." I really found it hard ..." (Solo).

Husseni, a community worker told his story of how difficult it was to secure a job in New Zealand, yet it was easy for his European friends who were well connected:

“... There are a high number of African graduates who are not employed..... So, it's not fair. I remember when I finished university, my undergraduate degree, together with my New Zealand European friends.... they had jobs lined up for them through their family-links...I had nothing, and I struggled...” (Husseni).

Furanzisi, rose on his feet, walked to the centre of the circle and cleared his throat before he spoke in a strong shaky and bitter voice. He shared his sad story that his dream to become a broadcaster from an early age has been shattered by key players and employers in the broadcasting industry in New Zealand. Despite the fact that he left his job to train as a broadcaster in New Zealand, he could not get a job in that field. Instead he has been doing demeaning jobs for many years now since he arrived in New Zealand as a refugee. Frustrated, he has given up looking for a job and is currently on a state benefit. Due to his talent, some government officials encouraged him to join broadcasting, but no broadcasting organisation was willing to employ him. He has attended interviews at TV stations and presented his work (story-documentaries) but no one is prepared to give him a job. His fear and frustration are that he is now getting old without realising his dream. After some energetic discussions, all community group members came to the conclusion that most players in the New Zealand film and broadcasting industry do not accept other ethnicities except for whites. They also stated that the good African players and performers in TV documentaries are relegated to inferior roles.

“...I've been here, in New Zealand for almost 18 years now. I'm tired of washing dishes for this long now...my dream since I was little was to become a broadcaster. I trained in broadcasting here in New Zealand. After seeing the talent, some of the government ministers in New Zealand asked me why I was not getting into broadcasting. I have tried very hard to get into broadcasting, including visiting some of the radio and TV stations, but to no avail. Some of the stations interviewed me on my story/documentary but they do not want to give me a job in this area...its difficult.... I am getting old and I very frustrated and as a result, I think it's to do with racism and discrimination...” (Furanzisi).

Furanzisi's story is an example that fits the theoretical framework of LDT which states that most refugees and migrants end up in self-employment or on a state

benefit due to the challenges of securing a job (Li, 1997; Volery, 2007; Fairlie & Meyer, 1996).

Solo, who worked in Africa, New Zealand and Australia, shared the story of his struggles of being unemployed in New Zealand. After working in New Zealand for a number of years, he was offered a good job in Australia for two years and then decided to re-join his family in New Zealand after the two years. Now he cannot get a job. He expressed disappointment and questioned whether it was wrong to be educated or whether to change a career after so many years of investment and relevant work experience. He also questioned whether his decision to relocate to New Zealand was a prudent one. Based on Solo's story, all community members concurred that unemployment is a real employment challenge for the African communities in New Zealand.

".... It impacts on me as an individual.... ok, was I wrong to go to school? Why did I study? Was I wrong to come to New Zealand? Is New Zealand a country that makes me productive? So, if you're going for a year without a job, you sort of like get to a point where you've got to say - I think this is rubbish, I've got to change. And you look at what you're going to change. You try and forget what you've been doing for maybe the past 15 years and start something afresh.... Unemployment is a reality. I'm unemployed....." (Solo).

5.9.2 Unemployment: Individual Interviews

A total of twelve individual participants out of twenty mentioned that unemployment for Africans in New Zealand is an issue. They also stated that rates of unemployment in the New Zealand-based African communities are higher compared to other ethnic communities. These rates are as follows: Maori (15 percent), Pacific (13 percent), Asians (8.2 percent), Europeans (5 percent) and Africans (12 percent) (Statistics New Zealand, 2017).

Professions such as human resources management (HRM), sales and marketing, teaching, leadership and management were cited as challenging areas for Africans to be accepted initially, and later on to progress to senior positions. Nasambu, an experienced HRM executive (in Africa) and a qualified professional narrated her story that she could not get employment within the New Zealand HRM sector because of the different legislations in this sector compared to what is done in other countries, especially Africa. She expressed disappointment and

questioned why it is easy for Europeans to become HRM executives in Africa without any legislative associated problems:

“.... With my eight years of HRM executive experience in Africa and an MBA obtained in New Zealand, I could not get a job in New Zealand because they say that the rules and the laws and regulations in the sector are very different from an African set-up. This is despite the fact that I am member of International Society of Human Resource Management.... Yet when some Europeans come to Africa they become bosses in all sectors.... I felt it was a racial issue.... The only job I could get was a junior community development worker, for the past five years.... It hurts....” (Nasambu).

Kofi's story depicts the struggles of unemployment that most Africans in New Zealand face. He said that it took him a while to get a job. Many community members remain unemployed even after sending out hundreds of job applications:

“.... It took me about three months to get a job. I was applying for an average of 20 jobs per day, online, trying to get a job and I could not even get an interview...The guy who finally employed me said “Why have you been unemployed for three months? You are even more qualified than the job that we want to give you (Production Assistant Technician)” (Kofi).

Acadia also said that it was tough for most Africans to get jobs in New Zealand, especially within the legal fraternity. However, she stated that once most Africans are offered a job opportunity, they normally excel.

“...It's almost like you need divine intervention just to get in to break through that barrier (getting employed) and I think that once we get in there, we will be fine.....But initially just to get in there is a challenge on its own....” (Acadia).

Dhavhidi, shared his employment story in New Zealand and mentioned that as a result he once solely survived on state benefits. He said that most Africans are not used to the state-benefit assistance programme as these are foreign practices in their countries of origin.

“.... The first difficult thing is to get a job.... it was hard because by the time I was in New Zealand, many people (African refugees) were on state benefits.... which we are not used to where we come from....” (Dhavhidi).

Mambo narrated his story of the employment challenges he faced in getting a job in his profession in New Zealand. His first job was that of a farm labourer, after being a senior managerial employee (in Africa) to a farm labourer position. He

said it took him some time to be accepted by the New Zealand employment system and to get used to its practices. Mambo mentioned that even after getting a job in New Zealand, there is no guarantee of security as people continue to face other employment-related challenges such as racial discrimination, accent and cultural issues. After getting a job as a shift manager in his profession, he was later frustrated and forced to resign due to what he perceived as racial discrimination.

Due to the struggle of securing jobs, some members of the African communities chose to study English in order to improve their English language skills in the hope of securing jobs, later. Some, like Kadhija, a single mother, became volunteers. Kadhija testified that instead of getting a job after volunteering, she was shocked that someone else who had not volunteered and with no relevant experience got the position. She said that working as a volunteer is difficult for most Africans, especially single mothers because they need money for child-care (while volunteering) as well as for supporting their families. She also said that it is unfortunate that some New Zealand employers expect community leaders to volunteer and they forget that these people are refugees and migrants who need to earn an income and provide for their family here in New Zealand as well as back home in Africa. Kadhija stated that even PhD holders are finding it hard to secure jobs in New Zealand and as a result most of them have moved to Australia.

Nyagada, a former experienced bank operations manager and a holder of a tertiary qualifications failed to get a job within the New Zealand banking sector. To maintain his legal stay in New Zealand, the situation pressured him to enrol into a PhD programme which he had not initially intended to do:

“...Despite my MBA qualification and work-related experience as a Personal Banker and Operations Manager (6 years, in Africa) ...I could not get a banking-job in New Zealand...It was very difficult. I did three interviews in three banks and none hired me...because of immigration issues, I was therefore forced to do something I had not planned to do...studying for a PhD...” (Nyagada).

5.9.3 Unemployment: Suggestions and Recommendations (Community Groups)

Community groups suggested and recommended that African communities need to improve their networks amongst themselves and help each other in securing employment, for example, by sharing information on job vacancies. Aotearoa Ethnic Networks (AEN) was cited as a good example of an effective ethnic organisation that uses social-media networks to link ethnic people to vacant jobs in New Zealand (Aotearoa Ethnic Network, 2007).

“...I think we should be thy brother’s keeper, especially in a foreign land like NZ where jobs are hard to come by...if we network on employment matters as the Aotearoa Ethnic Networks (AEN) does, we will be better off.....” (Jenifa).

5.9.4 Unemployment: Suggestions and Recommendations (Individual Interviews)

Participants suggested that members of the African community who have done well in the arena of employment should support and help fellow Africans who are unemployed to secure jobs:

“...I think we’ve got quite a lot of African people that have good jobs, are quite in high senior positions, for those people to advocate....to hire those whose are looking for jobs....” (Rosina).

When asked if this was not nepotism, Rosina said it was not. She said this was networking which is practised by other groups of people such as New Zealand Europeans, Asians and others.

5.9.5 Under-Employment and Under-Payment: Community Groups

All community group members mentioned under-employment and under-payment as some of the key employment-related challenges experienced by Africans in New Zealand. Communities told stories of qualified medical doctors and accountants who are employed in low-paying jobs such as taxi drivers and caregiving. Such employment situations were described as heart-breaking and depressing. For example, Jenifa a medical doctor who trained in Africa, shared her depressing story that she could not register and practise in New Zealand as

a medical doctor and had to work as a caregiver for close to ten years. She said she was both under-employed and under-paid:

".... I am a trained medical doctor, but I can't practice in New Zealand and as a result, I am under-employed and underpaid as a caregiver. I know a lot of accountants and managers in our communities who are driving taxis.... This is terrible and depressing...." (Jenifa).

A sizable number of African university graduates are going to Australia due to under-employment in New Zealand (Butcher et al., 2006; ChangeMakers Refugee Forum, 2012). This was described as a loss for New Zealand:

".... I studied at university with some of my community youth and a lot of them have gone to Australia. They call it the brain-drain effect for New Zealand." (Musa).

Mantas, a New Zealand-trained chef testified that she once worked as a chef and was under-paid. She finally resigned. Communities expressed disappointment that the *90-day trial period is being abused by some of the employers who allocate more work load for low pay to the most vulnerable ethnic employees and then fire them just before the expiry of the legislated period:

".... The "90-Day Trial Period" is not fair- people say they are given heaps of work for less pay and then lose their job" (Mantas).

5.9.6 Under-Employment and Under-Payment: Individual Interviews

Most African professionals cited problems of both under-employment and under-payment, that is, being employed in lower level positions in comparison to their work experience and qualifications as well as being paid less money. Mufundisi shared his under-employment story in New Zealand, when his first job was that of a dog walker. Before relocating to New Zealand (from Africa), he had held a senior position. To stress how he felt about being under-employed, he stated that in Africa, his dog used to provide him with security but here in New Zealand he was now looking after the 'security' and welfare of a dog.

³ *Legally, the 90-day trial period does not require an employer to give reasons for firing an employee within the first 90 days.

“...Before I became a Pastor in Africa, I was a Senior Purchasing Officer for a big company. I used to have a security dog, looking after me (in Africa) but when I came to NZ my first job was that of a Dog Walker.... Senior Purchasing Officer in Africa to a Dog Walker in New Zealand” (Mufundisi).

Mufundisi also mentioned that although his wife was a qualified Accountant (from Africa) she had to do another accounting qualification in New Zealand, but this did not improve her employment situation. The highest position she attained in her accounting career in New Zealand was the position of a junior accounts clerk. Acadia shared a story of a trained African lawyer who had attained the status of a senior magistrate level in Africa but could not be employed as a lawyer in New Zealand. The African lawyer is currently working as a victim’s advisor at a court in New Zealand, a position which is well below her/his work experience and qualifications. She also said that African law students were finding it difficult to be accepted within the New Zealand legal system. The system demands that they write additional legal examinations even if their work experience supersedes this requirement:

“...I found, some African lawyers I know have found it really difficult, because even though they’ve had many years of experience ... so they have to meet a certain standard and do certain extra papers, even though their experience could far exceed what they’re asking....” (Acadia).

Khrushina, an early childhood teacher failed to get a job in the sector in New Zealand and is currently working as a cleaner within a hospitality industry. She said she felt both under-employed and under-paid. She is disillusioned:

“.... I came to New Zealand in 2005, from South Africa where I was a Childcare Teacher for 8 years...but it was difficult for me to get a job as a Childcare Teacher. I got one as a Cleaner...I’m disappointed and frustrated.....” (Khrushina).

The story of Shanduko resonates with a number of African people where the majority of experienced African professionals began with demeaning jobs before joining their professions, normally starting at entry-point level. People take many years before they get settled in their professions:

“...I already was at the top of my career, a Director, before I came to New Zealand ... Initially it was really difficult to get a job. I started as a caregiver... .. I found that I couldn’t just come in and just get a social work job. I only became a junior social work after four years....” (Shanduko).

Some qualified Africans felt exploited when they were paid below the stipulated minimum wage. Tihaba, a qualified motor mechanic from a refugee-background, discovered that the apprentices whom he was training were being paid more than him. When they completed their apprenticeship, they were promoted ahead of him:

“... I got employed as a Motor Mechanic getting paid \$5.75, which was below the minimum wage (\$8.50), by then...talking about promotion... I knew I was a top mechanic at the shop, I knew the payment was lower than my trainees...”
(Tihaba).

Participants said that there are some employers in New Zealand who had a reputation for discriminating and under-paying employees who are from ethnic communities. Tari, an ex-customer services supervisor, said her former employer, a call Centre organisation, was paying white New Zealand employees more than herself and other employees from different ethnicities yet they were recruited at the same time and doing the same job. Due to these employment challenges, some members of the African communities were forced into starting their own business. Mujaya got frustrated and later resigned because he was both under-employed and under-paid as a casual community support worker (on minimum wage). He started his own recycle collection business. He could not sustain and support his small family here in New Zealand as well as the extended family in Africa. He also expressed disappointment and frustration because his qualifications and vast work experience were not being utilised.

5.9.7 Under-Employment and Under-Payment: Suggestions and Recommendations (Community Groups)

The community groups suggested that members of the African communities should not be afraid to report any employers who under-pay their employees. They said not reporting such unethical and unprofessional employers is as good as endorsing their unscrupulous practices.

5.9.8 Under-Employment and Under-Payment: Suggestions and Recommendations (Individual Interviews)

Individual participants suggested that although most African community members and other ethnicities normally start in jobs that are below their work experience and qualifications (under-employed), they should not accept cases of under-payment. However, they acknowledged that it is difficult to know when one is underpaid since salaries are regarded as confidential. They said this will be exploitation 'of the weaker by the mighty'. Individual participants also suggested, just as community group did, that any under-employment should be reported to the authorities. People should not be scared to report such cases.

5.9.9 Promotion Challenges: Community Groups

All the community group members concurred with the seventeen individual participants that most African community members have experienced promotion problems at their workplaces in New Zealand. Communities stated that certain positions in particular sectors are reserved for white people only, not even the indigenous people, the Maori. This practice or concept is known as the "blocked mobility theory" or "blocked ceiling theory" (Baklid et al., 2005; Taran, 2011). Simbisai, a community development worker shared her story based on her work experience in the community development sector, where she was openly told by her colleagues that she needs to forget about being promoted:

".... But when I joined my sector (community development), a colleague of mine said to me "Oh, welcome on board. In this sector, there is a ceiling...". There is a cloud somewhere there-in that you go up to a certain point, in position, and after that you can't penetrate. There is a point where they (employers) don't trust you. If you look different, if you sound different, you will not get promoted to a certain level. So, when you get to most management positions, then you don't find anyone of colour. It's given...You mostly get the white, the Pakeha...." (Simbisai).

A story by Fore, who works for one of the institutions of higher learning, stated that Africans struggle when it comes to promotions at their workplaces. He said that one of the local universities appointed an inexperienced white staff member to a senior position which involved working with refugees and migrants yet turned down a professionally qualified and experienced African who was

already in the university system. Before Fore finished narrating his story, everybody in the room had a similar story to tell. All group members agreed that no matter how competent and qualified Africans are, they normally miss promotion opportunities ahead of inexperienced white people. As a facilitator, it took me long to restore order in the room because group members wanted to keep on discussing this matter.

5.9.10 Promotion Challenges: Individual Interviews

Seventeen individual participants shared their stories about employment promotion challenges they experienced in New Zealand. Most participants felt that promotion at work was not based on merit, but on favouritism and racism. Shanduko narrated her depressing story highlighting the challenges associated with getting a job promotion in New Zealand. She pointed out that the first hurdle is stiff competition at the job interview level where one is interviewed and assessed by people with the mentality that Africans are already getting more than they deserve. Even if one is competent, professionally qualified, and experienced, promotion still remained a challenge:

“.... Promotion doesn't come easily, because people on the selection panel do not have faith in your work abilities and at times think that you have already reached your full potential and you don't need any more promotion and any career advancement. Yes, it's difficult. It's like a “glass ceiling” or a “glass wall” that you just can't penetrate.... So, it's quite tricky....” (Shanduko).

Mambo lamented a situation where Africans, no matter how good and competent they are in their jobs, reach a 'dead end' in their career progression in New Zealand. He was emphatic in that there is a certain level which black Africans never surpass in their careers in New Zealand. His story was punctuated with sorrow and melancholy as he stated that there are positions in New Zealand which are reserved for whites only. He mentioned that this discriminatory practice is also prevalent in institutions of higher learning such as universities in New Zealand. Nasambu's story indicated that a number of qualified Africans were used as resource personnel to train and teach newly appointed inexperienced white managers how the job is done. If there were any promotions,

qualified and competent Africans were not considered. If Africans were promoted, it was likely that such positions were merely window-dressers, thus, there is no meaningful decision-making. Such practices were viewed as unwarranted and oppressive in a country which proclaims to be non-racist (Butcher et al., 2006).

“... No, most Africans don't get promoted and if they do, they get really, really low jobs and they don't go really beyond supervisory level....and if they go to management level it's not something very meaningful, those are powerless jobs, but you don't go very far. Someone (African) who was a supervisor in one of the Immigration Centres and they have gotten up the ladder and then they brought a white Kiwi, as a manager, from nowhere, who does not have any refugee sector experience...The new manager was saying “Oh I'm just very new in this job, I'm here and I'm going to learn a lot from you”....and I'm thinking what the hell, everybody is coming to learn from us, why can't you give us this job and we can do it better- so this person is there three years, learning the job, after three years she goes up the ladder and then someone else comes and we teach them the job and I'm thinking - Okay, something is not right here, yeah, so it's very hard to get promoted...”(Nasambu).

Ridos shared a story regarding her father who was employed as a caregiver at a rest home where his employer was reluctant to promote him. Although her father trained as a registered nurse in Africa and worked very hard, he could not be promoted. Instead, some other caregivers whom he had trained were promoted ahead of him. Due to this unfair treatment given to her father, she wrote a letter to her father's employer highlighting and challenging this bad practice. She believes the letter was ignored, as she never got a reply.

Khrushina shared her story where she was openly told by her general manager that she would not get a promotion as long as she remained in the employ of the organisation. She felt that such a practice was racially motivated. This was after she had solicited the help of the union on an employment-related matter. There were echoes of profound pain and stress in her voice as she narrated her story:

“... My General Manager told me point blank, that as long as I am in this company, I won't get promoted.... just imagine....” (Khrushina).

The stories of Mufundisi and Acadia suggested that most employers in New Zealand only consider Africans good enough to do the hard-work but not good enough for promotion. Participants mentioned that Africans were not trusted when it comes to leadership roles and managing work-teams. Some New

Zealand employers were considered as selfish for not promoting their African employees because they feared to lose them as they regarded them as loyal and hardworking. They also stated that most Africans, especially those working in factories are generally physically fit and willing to work and, as a result, some employers keep them in the same position and do not promote them. Regrettably, there is no financial compensation for these employees who are not promoted despite being good enough:

*“... I did ask somebody actually that question on promotion and they said that they employer do not want to elevate them because they are scared that they will lose them
...” (Mufundisi).*

5.9.11 Promotion Challenges: Suggestions and Recommendations (Community Groups)

The community groups recommended that employers should promote hardworking and deserving African employees and not refrain from doing so because of the fear of losing them. Members of community groups said such practises are a breach of the work-rights of employees. Communities suggested that if there are no promotion opportunities, employers should at least give a financial reward by way of pay increase to loyal and hardworking employees.

5.9.12 Promotion Challenges: Suggestions and Recommendations (Individual Interviews)

It was suggested that there is a need for unity among Africans, beyond nationalities, so that community forums are held and community members who have done well are given opportunities to share their success stories as a way of motivating others:

“... we need to be more united, beyond just our national groupings...as an African community, and have some workshops...for example, Professional Development, or Africans Career Night where... a few Africans that are in the community that have made it, e.g. medical doctors and nurses can come and give their testimonies so as to help others...” (Mufundisi).

Although participants acknowledged some of the difficult conditions under which some of their fellow community members work, they suggested that community members continue to challenge any unfairness while at the same time

work in harmony and a professional manner with both colleagues and employers. They said that such an attitude has the potential to make employers want to consider more Africans for employment. Participants recommended that Africans behave at work consistent with the African concept of Ubuntu (humility) and work-excellence.

“... It takes a good rapport with the people at your workplace to trust you and literally earn the respect before you go up in the ranks of promotion as well as make it easy for other Africans. We have one guy who was so good at his work and when he resigned his boss decided to hire his young brother all the way from Africa and helped with all visa requirements the concept of Ubuntu is important even at work....” (Mambo).

5.10 Theme Five: Cultural Issues and Religion

5.10.1 Cultural Issues: Community Groups

All community groups said that some of the cultural issues such as ‘cultural fit’, ‘chemistry fit’ and ‘person-organisation fit’ act as employment barriers and challenges for most Africans in New Zealand (Cable & Edwards, 2004.p.830; Westerman & Yamamura, 2007, p.155). Communities felt that the New Zealand culture is totally different from many African cultures. Due to some of these cultural differences, Dumela, a trained teacher (in Africa) told the communities that she had to abandon the teaching profession in New Zealand and re-train in psychology. She found it difficult to work in an environment where she felt that some of the cultural values, such as students’ lack of respect for teachers were not being challenged by the school authorities.

After Dumela shared her story there was robust debate in which half the group agreed with her and the rest did not. Those that supported Dumela insisted that the New Zealand education system needed to re-examine their policies especially regarding the cultural values in teacher-student relationship. They felt that most teachers who are not originally from New Zealand are finding it challenging to handle students who are bullies. They said that if teachers try to discipline the students, they are normally found on the wrong side of the law and get blamed by both the school authorities and the parents of these students. The opposing side argued that it was not proper for people from Africa to impose their cultural

ways of dealing with students in a New Zealand school-setting. Those that expressed this side emphasised that people need to be aware that they are now in a new environment and this called for a paradigm shift in the way they perceive and embrace other cultures. However, at the end of this vibrant debate and discussion, all community group members highlighted and agreed on the importance of cultural awareness and genuine respect and acceptance of other cultures. Communities said that New Zealand employers needed to respect other cultures and to learn to co-exist in a world that is fast-becoming a global-village. Fungai's story gives a comprehensive summary:

"... Regarding cultural awareness in New Zealand society...we should realise that people are different...And we are not simply saying--Let them embrace our culture or us be swallowed into their culture. But lack of respect or appreciation of the cultural difference leads to conflict, because one good gesture in one culture might be misconstrued as arrogant in another. For example, I had to ask you (as a Muslim woman) - "Can I shake your hand?" (Fungai).

Although the story shared by Fungai is not employment-related, it gave an insight into the need to be respectful, aware and sensitive to other cultures. After some informative discussions, communities agreed that cultural awareness is crucial at all workplaces for the harmony of both employers and employees. This is also important for the reputation of organisations:

"... If I were a Pentecostal evangelistic type of a preacher man and I preached to our Maori brethren and I want to lay my hands.... the moment you put your hand on the forehead--that's taboo. So those are the barriers we need to be aware of.... it's more to do with cultural respect....." (Fungai).

5.10.2 Cultural Issues: Individual Interviews

Ten individual participants mentioned that culture is one of the main employment-related barriers faced by Africans resident in New Zealand. They said some employers and/or existing employees in organisations expect new recruits (Africans included) to fit into their work 'clubs'. This cultural fit is sometimes called organisational fit, personality fit or 'social-chemistry' (Cable & Edwards, 2004,p.830; Westerman & Yamamura, 2007.p.155). Sameri's story revealed that to be able to fit and be accepted within certain employment environments, one has to embrace particular social behaviours and cultures.

However, at times some of these social behaviours and cultures may conflict with one's cultural core values and beliefs. Unfortunately, if one does not fit into the club or is deemed unfit, he/she is ostracised and regarded as a cultural misfit and if employed, may not last in the job:

".... The culture here (NZ).... they want people who really fit in. What they sometimes call "cultural fit" they want people who will go drinking with them in a group...You have to belong to the club. You go drinking with a group, and you talk in a certain way. Use a few swear words when you talk.... Then they know--This one belongs to us, he's fully assimilated...if you don't fit in you are a cultural outcast... (Sameri).

Stories shared reflected that most New Zealand employers favour European cultures at the expense of African cultures when it comes to hiring of employees. Some participants mentioned that the respect and humanity embedded in the Ubuntu African culture have been mistaken for weakness and an inferiority complex in African people by employees and employers from other cultures. For example, Mujaya pointed out that many times his respect for his superiors at work was misconstrued as docility and lack of assertiveness. At times, he had to explain to both his fellow employees and managers that Africans are generally respectful to their superiors and this does not mean they are weak people. Some employers fail to recognise that there are differences in cultures and ways of doing things in life. Not all Africans behave in the same way, just as it is in any society. Nahani, one of the participants mentioned that New Zealand is a small country and geographically isolated from the rest of the world and hence it is perceived as not easily accommodating of other cultures from the globe, especially from the developing countries.

5.10.3 Cultural Issues: Suggestions and Recommendations (Community Groups)

The community groups encouraged Africans to be proud of their culture, especially the good aspects of it and not to be ashamed to showcase it to the New Zealand mainstream society. However, members of the community groups advised African communities about the importance of respecting other people's cultures while maintaining and practising their own (African) culture. That is,

there is no need to scorn other people's cultures even if one does not understand or appreciate them. While Fungai's story was not related to employment issues, it showed that it is possible for people of diverse cultures to co-exist in peace and harmony without necessarily throwing away their culture:

"...But my philosophy is that-let's not become cultural animals to the point that we lose focus of the main thing...one good example-Mohamed Farah, a Somali-born Muslim who won the 2012 Olympic gold medals in the 5000 and 10000m races (for UK)so, we find he has been accepted by British society as their hero. And they called him Mo Farah.... But you see how he (Mohamed) tried to seek compromise. I could see him even after winning he bowed down and kissed the ground (Muslim culture). But to the British, it doesn't cause offence. They know he's Muslim, but to them instead of calling him Mohamed-which is a bit hard-they call him Mo. It's not changing like from Mohamed to David Smith - so I'm saying there are little things we can give and take without really selling whole Mother Earth to them...". (Fungai).

Africans were advised to avoid building 'little African states' in New Zealand. This meant that Africans need to mix and socially interact with the locals, both at work and in the community and avoid isolating themselves into small African groups. Kalifi, a Mechanical Engineer, gave his own personal testimony that although he is a non-smoking and a non-drinking Muslim, he attends work social events and socializes with fellow employees (who drink) after work hours and weekends:

"...I think some of our problems as Africans...we want to form African colonies within the New Zealand society that we live in, and we don't break out of those shells. For example, I don't drink, neither smoke but I hang out with my workmates at work social functions and during weekends...." (Kalifi).

5.10.4 Cultural Issues: Suggestions and Recommendations (Individual Interviews)

Some participants suggested that there is a lack of support systems and strategies for the African men in New Zealand because this group is the most affected by the dynamics caused by the challenges with employment, especially when their wives are the only bread-winners (Refugee Migrant Services, 1993). For example, it was stated that the majority of African men from refugee-background worked when they lived in Africa while their wives were predominantly house-wives, looking after children at home (Refugee Migrant Services, 1993). Now in New

Zealand, the dynamics have changed, and most women easily find work because they tend to accept any job, while is the opposite for men. Rosina, a social worker said that if most men fail to secure employment, they sometimes feel insecure and unworthy. Some become emotionally and psychologically affected by such situations. Khadhija, another social worker, said there have been some divorces and incidents of domestic violence in some African communities as a result of these employment changes and challenges. She advised that there is a need for African communities, especially the men, to be taught by fellow respectable African men and accept that they are now living in New Zealand where both the environment and employment situations have changed, and they need to adapt. Both social workers recommended workshops for men so that they get the help they need to handle some of these frustrations. It was suggested that if men shared their experiences and testimonies in New Zealand amongst themselves, it may assist them in addressing these problems as well as minimising the incidents of domestic violence.

“...Change of roles can cause marital problems..... if the wife is working and the husband is not.... If children are financially contributing and the father is not...problems.... you're changing the roles there...All these things trigger some tension, possibly leading in to domestic violence. People need to be taught that the circumstances have now changed and should adapt....” (Rosina).

5.10.5 Religion: Community Groups

There were eight members out of 24 people in all the community groups who identified themselves as Muslims; the rest were Christians. Four of the eight Muslims mentioned that they had experienced employment-related discrimination because of their religion. Faduma, a Muslim, said that some New Zealand employers had advised her that Muslim women should avoid wearing anything that clearly identifies them as Muslims, especially when going for a job interview:

“...One prospective employer told me that it's important to exclude anything that would be an obstacle towards getting a job, for example not wearing a Hijab or any Islamic dressing at a job interview...(Faduma).

The communities responded by challenging this advice and stated that such employment-behaviours are discriminatory and should be condemned. They said that such demands should only be accepted if health and safety issues are compromised (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC), 1992).

Kalifi, another Muslim also stated that some New Zealand employers discriminate on the basis of religion:

"... I've seen a lot of my Muslim friends with Muslim names...the moment employers see that this one is a Muslim name – they don't employ them.... It's a real challenge. In New Zealand, they say there's no discrimination of religion – you can have your own religions, you can do whatever you want to do – but the moment they see a specific Muslim name, they don't employ you.... So, it's real a challenge." (Kalifi).

5.10.6 Religion: Individual Interviews

Out of the twenty individual participants, five identified themselves as Muslims and fifteen as Christians. Three of the five Muslims stated that they experienced discrimination based on their Muslim faith. Nahani shared a story of her Muslim friend who was denied a job opportunity by a prospective employer because she was a Muslim:

"...I've got my friend who is a Muslim and strictly appavelled in Islamic garbs, so she was referred to an employer (a shop-owner) by the Work & Income (government department) to work there and the employer wouldn't accept her because he did not trust Muslims. In addition, he said if he was to employ her, she would likely refuse to take off her Islamic dress. She didn't get the job because of her faith...I would say that was discrimination against her religious beliefs.... (Nahani).

Due to the employment-related struggles and challenges that people have gone through, some participants stated and reaffirmed their faith in God as a source of strength:

"...I'm a Christian....It has been difficult but because through faith in my God, I have the strength to carry on. Otherwise there are so many times when I think maybe I should try another country..." (Shanduko).

5.10.7 Religion: Suggestions and Recommendations (Community Groups)

The community groups recommended that members of the African communities need to report any act of discrimination based on religion. Keeping silent would be tantamount to approving/agreeing. At this point, one group member requested that I recite my favourite quote from Dr Martin Luther King, Junior which says: 'Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter'.

5.10.8 Religion: Suggestions and Recommendations (Individual Interviews)

Individual participants gave the same recommendation as that of community groups, that is, reporting any act of discrimination based on religion.

5.11 The Impact of Employment Experiences on Physical and Health Well-being: Community Groups and Individual Participants

Both individual participants and community groups mentioned how they felt about some of these employment-related experiences and challenges. They also talked about the different impacts these challenges have had on the well-being of the New Zealand-based Africans. In this section, I decided to combine the findings of both the community groups and individual participants because there were no major differences in what they said.

5.11.1 Impact on Physical Health: (Community Groups and Individual Participants)

Communities expressed disappointment regarding their employment experiences and how they had been treated by some New Zealand employers. About 34 out of the 44 participants stated that their physical well-being was adversely affected.

".... the impact it had on me.... I became physically unwell...persistent headache" (Mujaya).

There was a feeling of frustration and deep concern especially for those who came to New Zealand more than a decade ago when they were in their forties, as they felt they were now racing against time to settle and secure proper senior employment positions as they prepare for a better retirement. Participants said that such concerns and worries make them physically sick. There was profound pain in the voice of Shanduko, a director-turned care-giver, as she recounted her story:

“...It can be quite disheartening sometimes and makes one unwell physically because when you look at your age and stage, and when you got your qualifications– for me, I’ve had my qualifications 30 years ago and I shouldn’t be at the base starting.... it’s sad.... you do have moments where you need to wipe your tears and say-Look, what is the full benefit? So, I think in terms of my family, this is not where I thought I’d be at my age and stage...I’m getting old now....” (Shanduko).

Tari shared her story about how she physically became sick after experiencing harsh treatment at her workplace. She later resigned:

“... I felt disgusted and never wanted to work there. It was detrimental to me. It became terrible. I started getting physically sick after that. It affected my health in a big way....” (Tari).

Acadia, a lawyer, said negative employment experiences can cause physical damage to one’s health:

“... I think one’s health would be adversely impacted... So, I definitely think that health is a factor as well. It would have far-reaching consequences...” (Acadia).

Communities mentioned that a lack of job opportunities may cause financial problems in the home which can possibly lead to domestic and physical family violence, especially on wives and children if the husband is not working (Refugee Migrant Services, 1993).

“... Negative employment experiences can cause family violence which can affect one’s physical health.....” (Rosina).

5.11.2 Impact on Mental Health and Psychological Effects: (Community Groups and Individual Participants)

Individual participants and community groups mentioned that failure to get a job can cause mental health problems in the lives and well-being of Africans in New Zealand. Some of these health issues are in the form of emotional and

psychological problems such as depression, stress, suicidal tendencies and other mentally associated complications.

"...Yeah not getting a job can cause a lot of negative impacts like emotional and psychological problems. You know if you are under pressure to find a job, but you are not really finding one, or you want to get promoted and you're not ...that could affect your health... if you don't have a job you will struggle with money issues and that could cause a lot of effect on your psychological wellbeing...including family issues." (Nahani).

Arekisi, a former teacher (in Africa) who is currently running his own cleaning business because he could not get a job, shared his heart-breaking story of the depression he suffered when he could not afford to provide for his family:

".... Before I started my business, I was depressed...Imagine your children asking you for bread and you can't provide...you can't provide for your wife...you become useless and helpless. It's so painful to be in such a situation where you can't help yourself...." (Arekisi).

The majority of both individual participants and community groups mentioned that most Africans feel that they are not appreciated in the workplace by their employers and colleagues. To show the relationship between the lack of support and appreciation from employers and depression, Nasambu shared a story about a medical doctor (trained in Africa) who could not practice in New Zealand. With the hope of registering (later) as a medical doctor in New Zealand, she successfully completed a master's degree in Public Health with a New Zealand university and then got a job as a health promoter. Instead of supporting and encouraging her, both management and her colleagues ganged up against her with the agenda of pushing her out of her job. She was stressed to the point where she became mentally ill and was admitted to the hospital. Furanzisi told one of the community groups that he wished he had died, just like one of his many late friends, when they were crossing country-borders on their refugee-journey. He mentioned that there was no reason to live because life without a job in New Zealand had become a struggle. He went on to say that if those who came from war-torn countries are not employed, this adds stress and depression to their already traumatised situations:

".... Yeah.... But when you sit, and you don't know what to do next, boredom kicks in. Boredom is the biggest sickness ever. How many of us have contemplated

jumping off the bridge? But then you say to yourself, ...man, I was praying to God when I was in that refugee camp, 37-40 degrees Celsius – never thought I was going to survive, others died, and I got this chance, it is ok.... But then it becomes like it's a curse. Sometimes you feel like, I should have been one of those statistics...dead ones...Some of us we came from war-torn zones and we all carry a certain degree and amount of trauma– nobody can actually change that, it is there. If this is now coupled and worsened by challenges of not getting a job, it becomes a more stressful and depressing situation....” (Furanzisi).

Communities said that employment challenges and problems have contributed to suicides and suicidal tendencies. Some have divorced (in New Zealand) as a result of some of these negative employment experiences.

Surviving on state-benefits because of not having a job destroys not only the individual's self-confidence but that of the family and the communities as well. People naturally dislike being told how to run their lives, especially on financial matters. Rosina said that children will not have any role models in their lives and hence no incentive to dream and aspire for better jobs. In addition, youth in the community have no one to emulate, especially on matters of career development:

“...not having a job impacts in all aspects of life, in your settlement life here in New Zealand.... receiving a hand-out and also being told what to do with that hand-out, yeah, it kills your self-confidence – you know your self-esteem is gone, it's gone. And also, what example are we setting for our children ... seeing Mum/Dad they're at home, doing nothing...It can't motivate them to study...” (Rosina).

In the hope of getting a better-paying job, some African community members have left their jobs to pursue studies only to discover that there are no job opportunities after the studies. Some later find themselves in a worse-off position and got frustrated, depressed and physically sick.

“.... I left my job and went to study for a certificate in Commercial Radio and my salary dropped from \$45 000 pa (\$1000 per fortnight) to \$180 per fortnight, (from StudyLink). My rent was \$220, and I needed food, transport and other stuff.... I suffered in the name of upgrading and further study so as to get a better paying job... which I didn't...I got depressed and frustrated...I'm now sick of being on state benefit scheme. When I can't provide soccer boots for my boy, I just feel like all my manhood is gone. I'm just lucky to have survived this far....” (Furanzisi).

A sad example was given where one African community member committed suicide, by jumping off a tall building in Wellington:

“...That's how my African friend killed himself in Wellington, the capital city of New Zealand He could not get a job and StudyLink (government department)

was putting him under immense pressure calling him lazy to find a job...” (Furanzisi).

Due to the struggles of securing a job as a medical doctor, Jenifa had to survive on small donations from community members who were also suffering financially. She got frustrated and depressed. She revealed in her sad story that she felt as if she had lost a big part of herself. She felt under-valued, ashamed, unworthy and ‘naked’. She also stated that training as a medical doctor in Africa is costly and takes a long time. Her poor parents had sold all they had and made sacrifices to pay her fees to attend medical school as most governments (in Africa) do not provide study grants or loans. Now she is in New Zealand and cannot help her parents. She was almost in tears when she was narrating her story. Other group members agreed with her and stated that many Africans in New Zealand are depressed as a result of not getting jobs in their professions so as to help their struggling parents back home (Africa). Community group members further said that what makes it more painful is that the same people who discriminate and refuse to employ Africans are the very first ones to blame and castigate them (Africans) as the “depressed and lazy”. Jenifa said that because of these issues, women end up neglecting themselves and not wanting to socialise or even beautify themselves.

“..... For me too, I agree with what all the other ladies are saying....it takes on your mental – gives you mental illness...So we keep spinning down, down to that big hole until we are lost. And that just add to what you already have....so it affects us at our level emotionally, psychologically and sometimes even physically, because you come to a point – and that is my own experience –where you don’t even want to take care of yourself. As a woman – we want, when you go out.....put some makeup, put some lip-stick.... but we can’t....” (Jenifa).

Participants said that the impact of negative employment experiences on communities resulted in the erosion of self-confidence and self-esteem. Some felt sub-standard, belittled, inferior and marginalized. Some of these experiences caused some of the community members to isolate themselves from community events and activities. People ended up losing faith in what they could do.

“.... Once your self-esteem is gone, your confidence is gone, your motivation is gone..... that impacts on you.... It comes with that confidence, being able to wake up in the morning and feeling a sense of purpose in life. Lack of self-confidence leads to mental health problems” (Rosina).

When asked how he felt working as a dog walker after being a senior purchasing officer in a large progressive organisation in Africa, Mufundisi, who is now a senior pastor, said that he felt de-humanised. He also talked about the impact of some of these negative experiences on the wellbeing of the members of the African communities and highlighted issues such as stress, depression and blood pressure:

"...but strictly speaking, as being human, you feel very inferior very belittled very stressful...very marginalised, and a lot of stress...people have developed health problems such as blood pressure.... but again, you have no choice. You've got to do something in order to survive in a foreign land...." (Mufundisi).

Some of the employment experiences and challenges were described by participants as "ambition-killers" because people's dreams and aspirations to advance in their careers were adversely affected. Sameri, a qualified food technologist, shared a story which clearly indicated that his dream to aspire for career advancement was destroyed as a result of what he had witnessed happening to some of the African managers in his organisation. For him, contemplating a promotion or professional development was now a nightmare:

"... it really killed my ambition. Ambition-killer because you stop aiming higher. You are like---It's been hard enough to get where I've gotten. If I go any higher, it's going to be tougher. I've seen it in my place of work. I've seen it when we've had a few African managers from Zimbabwe being fired for nothing.... the expectations on them was much higher than other white managers.....an African manager is expected to deliver more and if he/she doesn't, they get fired..." (Sameri).

A number of stories that were narrated revealed that within the tradition of African culture, one's job and profession determine the degree of respect one gets from the community and this has a huge impact on one's life. Rosina said that if one is unemployed, his/her contributions are not seriously considered and their participation in the affairs of the community is negatively affected.

"... I would say in most African cultures, they define you by the position you hold...a good job, you're a respectful person, then you contribute in your community, you have a voice. But if you are jobless, your self-confidence is gone, you won't even be able to participate meaningfully in your own community...." (Rosina).

Stories of self-imposed isolation due to employment challenges were shared; some members of the community did not attend community events because they were afraid of being asked what type of job they are doing. Nasambu chronicled her reasons as to why she had to stop participating in community events:

“.... People get social isolation because you can't go and join the other Africans, people will be say “.... Hey Sisi (sister), how are you? What are you doing, work-wise...” And I'm like - I'm doing caregiving. They're like, --“...Really? Are you serious? What went wrong?” So, I wouldn't go to those community functions because you find people are progressing and you're not....it can really isolate you...” (Nasambu).

5.11.3 Impact on Marriage Relations and Men's Ego: (Community Groups and Individual Participants)

Participants mentioned that most African men have a high ego and if their employment status is adversely impacted, they are affected both emotionally and psychologically and, in turn, this may adversely affect their marriages. Women and children are normally on the receiving end of this emotion. Frustrations at work or employment-related challenges can easily spill into the family and upset the family-dynamics. A story was shared about an African university professor who could not get a teaching job in New Zealand and as a result his marriage fell apart and he finally went back to Africa:

“.... Erosion of man's ego. African male ego is very dominant, and wives reap the larger chunk of the embarrassment...Family and domestic violence...the frustration of not finding employment or getting a job, which is very inferior to what you're used to back home, there's a lot of emotions emitted. And unfortunately, in talking, if anger is not controlled there, then the violence ensues.... rifts in marriages...For example, an African university professor could not get a lecturing position in New Zealand. In Africa, he was entitled to three company cars and many other perks. In New Zealand, all he could do was to take the children to school. He lost his self-esteem and finally got divorced” (Mufundisi).

Testimonies were given about marriages that fell apart because of husbands who used to have good jobs and provided for their families in Africa but could not do the same in New Zealand. It was suggested that it could be more complicated if it is only the wife who is now working and providing for the family. Things could worsen become worse if the husband used to ill-treat his wife back home in Africa. The women will seek revenge and the men would feel that their manhood

has been tampered with and down-trodden. These husbands get frustrated and disillusioned and if help is not offered, they may vent their frustration on their wives and children. At times, because of these family dynamics, children cease to give the same respect they used to offer to their father. Another story that revealed the seriousness of these employment-related challenges was that of an African trained medical doctor (specialist surgeon) who relocated to New Zealand with his white New Zealand wife and family. He could not get a job in his profession for three years. Instead, he was employed as a shelf packer at a supermarket. After failing to persuade his wife to back to Africa, as a family, he left alone, leaving the wife and two small children. They divorced.

Participants raised concerns about the lack of support services for vulnerable men. They said that most resources are channelled towards assisting children and women. Participants reiterated that some of the men had gone through some traumatic employment experiences and yet there were no support structures in place for them. The existing system in New Zealand was blamed for a lack of appreciation of the family dynamics within an African context and family set-up. Communities said that within the African cultural context, a man is usually the bread-winner and family provider and if he does not work, already there is a paradigm shift in how the family operates. If these interactions are not properly and culturally addressed, it can cause problems in the marriage set-up. A lack of positive role-modelling for children may be absent if a father fails to provide for his family. Communities stated that African women take advantage of the New Zealand laws and legal system that are good at protecting women's rights. Community members felt that Police and the justice system normally favour women. They gave an example that, if there is a dispute between a husband and a wife, it is likely that the husband is quickly blamed (by Police) even in the absence of a proper investigation. This dis-empowers the African men who are already suffering from other employment-related challenges and resettlement-associated issues. Participants singled out New Zealand as one of the countries that 'feminises' men, thus, reducing the self-esteem of men when it comes to employment matters. Communities said that this is all about watering down the ego of men and their manhood:

“... I’m a man, and I don’t make excuses about that, but New Zealand is the only country I’ve lived in, that ‘feminises’ a man.... regarding the job market.... Three quarters of all the things that I’ve experienced in the last 18 years have been a deliberate attempt to water down what is called the man in New Zealand....” (Solo).

However, the issue of “feminising” men was challenged by some community group members, both male and female. They thought the contributor was sexist and gender insensitive.

Solo narrated a story about men who did not get jobs in New Zealand and simply disappeared from their families and were never seen again. Most African men, because of their ego, and pride do not want to openly show their emotions, especially when they are going through a tough situation. Jenifa, a medical doctor and a married woman said:

“...Back home in Africa, the husband provides for the family.....but here if he is not working and the wife is working and providing for the family, his qualifications are underestimated and invalidated, they are so frustrated....that changes the family dynamics and causes a lot of discomfort and disharmony, stress and depression and at times divorces....most of our men don’t show their emotions—they try to hide it or they try to encompass it in a different way mainly because of their egocentric...but if there is no immediate help, they can get into serious depression and other associated mental problems....”(Jenifa).

Communities stated that many qualified African men were unwilling to accept low-level and low status jobs while most women would take on those jobs in order to put food on the table for their families. In other situations where a woman comes from work tired, and fails to fulfil her ‘conjugal duties’, the man may get upset.

“...At times when we (women) come from work tired, these men demand us to do all duties including sex.... if you say no, they will get angry.....”(Jenifa)

Though this statement was made by a female participant, most males challenged such attitudes displayed by some men. The debate was lively and vibrant. It was further stated that some of the local New Zealand women influence African women to rebel against their husbands in the name of democracy and equal rights and at the expense of African up-bringing and African cultural values and norms. This may lead to negative reactions from men, which lead to domestic violence and separation. Communities said that employment-related problems

have adversely affected many African marriages. They further stated that at times African children innocently share with their friends at schools about domestic violence and, before they know it, the issue is reported to the school social worker who will, contact Child Youth and Family (government department). This normally results in affected African children being taken away by the government, under child-protection laws. Communities mentioned that such harsh actions are not called for because what is termed by New Zealand law is unwarranted.

At times, there are cultural issues and norms which are beyond the comprehension of non-African social workers. Participants stated that most of these non-African social workers do not appreciate and understand African cultures and values and regard them as backward and abusive. However, some of the group members disagreed and said that while there are men who abuse their wives and children, they condemned such abusive practices.

Mujaya, a former banker and case manager shared his story on how the difficulties in finding a job in his profession adversely affected his marriage. His confidence and self-esteem were damaged:

"...In my case, it affected my marriage....my confidence and self-esteem were gone.... My wife had to asked me: "What has happened to you now? It seems you have lost your confidence..." So, it adversely affected my marriage..." (Mujaya).

Tari, a former Customer Services Supervisor blamed her employment experiences for adversely affecting her relationship with both the husband and children as she was mostly in a bad mood as a result of the harsh treatment she was receiving from her manager/employer:

".... It affected my relationship with my husband and children because I wasn't in a good mood ever...sometimes I'd snap at them for no reason. It wasn't fair on them. But I'd just say the wrong thing or do the wrong thing and then that would add to it because they tried to correct me. ... It was just too much..." (Tari).

5.11.4 Impact on Financial Position: (Community Groups and Individual Participants)

Life in New Zealand is difficult for migrants and refugees, Africans included. Bills need to be paid and therefore if one is not employed it becomes financially challenging. Participants said that in addition to providing for the immediate

family in New Zealand, most Africans have a responsibility to support extended families back home, in Africa. Within an African culture, if individual neglects his extended family, he/she could be ex-communicated, disowned and labelled an outcast. There is a belief that in many African cultures if one is disowned by parents, it attracts bad luck. It is unfortunate that even if people are struggling and not working in New Zealand or in the diaspora, those back home (in Africa) perceive people in the diaspora to be all rich and living in luxury. Communities said this is why when those in the diaspora fail to financially support those back home, they are quickly 'written off' and labelled irresponsible and uncultured.

Participants mentioned that most qualified Africans are failing to secure jobs in their professions and as a result they cannot afford to buy houses, provide for their families and lead a happy life. Most refugee-background Africans have been in New Zealand for a long time but are still dealing with basic settlement issues mainly because of poor employment opportunities:

"...That's the problem of unemployment for us, African refugees we all moved here for a better life. Those challenges negatively impact on us for a long time... You always struggle to find a job, you struggle to feed your family and you struggle to buy a house – like me, renting a house in New Zealand I end up paying around \$400- \$600 a week. I can't buy one. When you think about the future, you end up thinking you are nothing no matter you got a degree.... a PhD, whatever, you name it.... You lived in New Zealand 15 years and you still have settlement issues...." (Kadhija).

Participants expressed disappointment that refugees are exploited by some non-governmental organisations and service providers who make money for themselves in the name of refugees:

"...What angers me is that we have become statistics to some NGOs and some service providers.... they make money out of our numbers. Because I know, I can name some organisations.... They are getting funding, whereas we are the ones who should be getting funding and helping our communities...." (Dinga).

5.11.5 The Impact on Physical and Mental Health: Suggestions and Recommendations (Community Groups)

Some community group members suggested that Africans in New Zealand should make an effort to put their resources together and form companies so as to provide employment to talented and deserving Africans, especially the youth.

There are such programmes specifically for Maori and Pacific Islanders, so it is possible to have one for the Africans:

“..... people of refugee and migrant backgrounds, how do we pull our resources together financially and human resources, and help the young Africans who've got talent or ideas for start-ups? They might have a venture or business, and let's be producers, rather than consumers. We create jobs rather than sitting ducks.... Maori and Pacific Islanders have such specific programmes.... as a community.... NZ has 97% small to medium businesses. Let's produce more entrepreneurs and help them to start something....” (Fore).

It was also suggested that there is a greater need for the African communities to restore those old and strong cultural family bonds and friendships, as enshrined in the African Ubuntu concept. Communities said that the western type of counselling is not working for African communities and recommended that elders in the African communities fill this gap by helping the younger generation with cultural skills. Another suggestion was that the older people in African communities should mentor the younger ones so that if they encounter employment challenges they would know how to handle them. The younger ones, especially those who were born in New Zealand, needed guidance to withstand the pressure. The perception of the communities was that once people are given fair opportunities to work in their rightful professions, this will minimise employment associated challenges such as depression, emotional instability and mental-related issues. The New Zealand government departments should also be reminded that most African countries do not provide state benefits and, as such, many Africans are embarrassed to be recipients of these state handouts. Africans are prepared to work and earn their own money; which would lessen the financial burden on the government. It was also stated that the New Zealand government should encourage employers to adhere to legislation by paying Africans fair and stipulated salaries commensurate with their qualifications and work experience. Employers should not discriminate against Africans.

Solo narrated how difficult life is in New Zealand for African communities who are unemployed. He said that employment-related challenges do not only

negatively impact individuals, but families and communities. Some people are only sustained by their faith and religion:

“... And for some of us who are lucky to be Christians or have a religion that provides the peace, you make that peace and you keep soldiering on, with that open faith that something better will come up. So, these problems are not eternal—they’re an external issue...and to a good extent you can easily identify single families struggling to make ends meet...” (Solo).

5.11.6 The Impact on Physical and Mental Health: Suggestions and Recommendations (Individual Interviews)

It was suggested that there is a need for the community to come together and discuss these challenges as this may help those individuals who are facing these experiences to feel that they are not alone. Such gatherings can also be used as a forum for job networks since a lot of jobs in New Zealand are not advertised:

“... I would say as a community we can just get together and put our issues and problems on the table and talk about them and...just to minimise the stress and pressure on an individuals, families and communities, so they feel like there are some people who are going through the same thing as them...and that’s okay” (Nahani).

5.12 Summary of the Data Analysis and Findings: Different Needs of Community Groups

There were noticeable differences in the way community groups and individuals responded to the specific questions and issues that were raised during the sessions. In most cases, community groups simultaneously responded in agreement or disagreement to particular statements and issues raised, depending on how they were stated or framed. At times, there was clapping of hands, nodding of heads and stamping of feet from members of the group as a sign of affirming a point. However, they also reacted angrily to stories and issues that they felt reflected unfair treatment of African communities. Communities also had opportunities to debate, discuss, agree, disagree and correct each other during the deliberations. The utilisation of the African concept of Ubuntu also helped communities to maintain respect for each other in these deliberations.

The use of the concept of communities in African oral storytelling assisted in this process as community group members sat in a circle to discuss employment

issues, as was done in the olden days when people sat around a fire listening to stories from experienced community-elders. This process helped community members to have a deeper understanding of employment experiences and challenges faced by Africans in New Zealand. Some community group members mentioned that the process also assisted them to clear up some misconceptions they had on this topic. These showed how the utilisation of community groups in this study is uniquely different to individual interviews.

However, the individual interviews were important as they complemented the views of community groups by providing an avenue to hear personal stories and individual perspectives on the topic.

Although all community groups mentioned general issues that were similar, there were specific discourses and distinct themes that resonated with particular groups. For example, those from a refugee background cited English language proficiency as their main employment challenge while most migrants were mostly concerned about under-employment and a lack of recognition of their overseas qualifications and demands of local New Zealand work experience. However, migrants from non-English speaking countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi and Rwanda also had challenges with English language. In addition to English language challenges, a group of refugees (women only) tended to concentrate on specific issues that mostly affected women, such as isolation at home when their men went to work, and children were at school. They also talked about challenges of child-care when they wanted to volunteer, that is, they had no one to leave the children with. This group was also concerned with high rates of unemployment within the refugee African communities, youth in particular.

The other issue which was highly debated in most groups was that of name-change in order to get a job. For example, the group that comprised refugees only (male and female) said it was culturally damaging to change one's name for the sake of getting a job while the group of both refugees and migrants (male and female) was divided on the issue. Half of this group stated that there was nothing wrong with merely changing one's name in order to secure a job so that the family can survive. The reason for mixing both immigration backgrounds

(refugees and migrants) was to synthesise ideas from different people who have had diverse experiences and exposures.

Summary of Findings- Themes

The main findings of this study showed that racism and discrimination are experienced by Africans in New Zealand within employment settings. The research also revealed that Africans in New Zealand experience discrimination on the basis of their names and accents.

The study found out that English language proficiency is one of the main barriers to Africans gaining employment in New Zealand, especially for those from refugee-background and those coming from non-English speaking countries.

The results of this research revealed that overseas work experience and qualifications for most Africans are not recognised by many employers in New Zealand. The demand for New Zealand (Kiwi) work experience is a huge challenge especially for those who have just arrived in the country.

It has been shown that rates of unemployment and under-employment are higher in African communities compared with European and Asian groups in New Zealand. The unemployment rates for the main indigenous and ethnic are as follows: Maori (15 percent), Pacific (13 percent), Asians (8.2 percent), Europeans (5 percent) and Africans (12 percent) (Statistics New Zealand, 2017). Most Africans found it challenging to get promoted even if they felt that they were competent and experienced.

‘Cultural fit’ was found to be a challenge in New Zealand work environment for a number of Africans. Religion was also identified as one of the employment challenges faced by some Africans in New Zealand, especially those from a Muslim faith.

The use of communities in African storytelling helped to encourage participants to share their employment experiences. They said that they felt the environment was safe for them to do so. The utilisation of the African concept of Ubuntu facilitated an atmosphere of respect and human dignity for all participants. The

African storytelling, the African Ubuntu philosophy and the use of African community groups complemented each other. Much of the findings showed that the chosen theoretical framework of the Labour Disadvantage Theory was appropriate and useful for this study to explore issues where Africans were disadvantaged in the labour market. Critical Race Theory was also instrumental in investigating how employment challenges related to racism affect Africans in New Zealand.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. But if you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart” (Mandela, 1994.p. 250).

6.1 Introduction

The main research question investigated in this study was: *What are the main employment challenges faced by the African communities in New Zealand?* The results of this study show that there are a variety of challenges faced by African communities when it comes to finding, working in, and advancing in employment in New Zealand. Challenges to secure employment include lack of New Zealand work experience, non-recognition of overseas experience, religion and cultural issues, lack of promotion opportunities and many forms of discrimination such as skin colour and name-based. The lack of fluency in the English language is a substantive barrier to finding work in New Zealand, especially for those from a refugee background and non-English speaking countries. These challenges are substantial, given that one of the single most important needs of refugees and migrants is to secure employment. Many, however are unemployed, underemployed or engaged in unpaid family-care work. Employment is important as it enables immigrants to become part of society and not alienated from it.

It is further important that once in employment, refugees and migrants are treated fairly. It is crucial to note that most of the respondents cited discrimination as one of the biggest predicaments. Although approximately 50 percent of African communities reside in Auckland (Tuwe, 2012; Statistics New Zealand, 2013; Nakhid, Azanaw et al. 2016), consideration should also be given to the fact that the views of the 24 community group members and 20

individual participants may not necessarily represent all Africans in New Zealand.

In the following subsections, I will discuss the five identified themes. The two theoretical frameworks namely Labour Disadvantaged Theory (LDT) and Critical Race Theory (CRT) which ground this study will be used to provide a framework through which I explain the findings.

6.2 Discrimination

Racial prejudice and discrimination in New Zealand were experienced by the Chinese - the first non-Maori and non-European people to migrate in numbers to New Zealand, when they came to Otago in 1865 (Ferguson, 2003). Otago is in the South Island of New Zealand. At the turn of the 20th century, the racial issue remained a dominant feature of New Zealand and led to the White New Zealand policy of exclusion (Ferguson, 2003). Today New Zealand has strict laws and policies that prohibit racial discrimination (Department of Labour (NZ) 2010). However, despite all these clear legal guidelines and policies, discrimination is still a problem in New Zealand.

Minority communities in New Zealand (including Africans) continue to experience employment-related racial discrimination (Butcher, Spoonley et al. 2006), but how can one measure the degree to which everyday experiences and opportunities are shaped by current forms of discrimination? It is indeed a very difficult task especially when we consider that today contemporary forms of discrimination are often subtle and covert, posing problems for social scientific conceptualization and measurement. Some culturally embedded stereotypes about racial differences are reflected in both conscious and unconscious evaluations and may set the stage for various forms of discriminatory treatment (Greenwald, Banaji, & Mahzarin, 1995). Without disputing the role of discrimination in the challenges faced by African communities in their quest to find employment, it is also important to consider the importance of skill, changes in the economy and other non-racial factors that can be attributed to the increased variance in individual outcomes (Bagley & Abubaker, 2017).

The challenges of employment-related discrimination in this study were manifested in a number of different ways such as race, skin colour and name. The results of this study are similar to other international studies on employment-related challenges faced by African communities in the Western world, for example, name-based discrimination (Ngo and Este 2006), ethnic discrimination (Agerström & Rooth, 2008; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2006; Fozdar & Torezani, 2008); and discrimination based on foreign accent (Butcher et al, 2006; Creese 2010, Lauer, Wilkinson et al. 2012).

Discrimination involving religion, ethnicity and race exist in all human societies, and opposing it must involve social, economic, political and psychological understanding and strategies (Banton, 1996). For example, a study of racial discrimination in the UK using empirical testing through 'situation' and 'correspondence' showed that modern societies continue, in several ways, to be institutionally racist (Bagley & Abubaker, 2017). This research suggests that an empirical study of racial discrimination in New Zealand is likely to arrive at the same conclusion. Some of the African community members have attempted to change their names to European New Zealand names in the hope that it would improve their chances of employment. Still, it is doubtful whether changing one's name can work because discrimination could occur during the face-to-face interviews of the application process when the attitudes of some potential employers would change when they see that the applicant is not white.

This study found that African community members in New Zealand faced employment-related discrimination based on race, skin colour, accent and name. Bias and racism within the workplace were not always openly practiced; at times they are done covertly. It has also been shown that some of New Zealand's employment-related laws and policies such as equal employment opportunities (EEO) and zero tolerance on employment racial discrimination only exist in theory, and therefore do not benefit African communities (Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, 2015; New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2008). Alternatively, it could be said that policies like equal employment opportunities (EEO) are selectively implemented, that is, they exclude some people such as the African communities thereby disadvantaging them on the job market. Racial

discrimination experienced by African community members within employment settings in New Zealand illustrate the white dominance and white supremacy as described in the Critical Race Theory (CRT), and how, as CRT explains, racism is often hidden within social structures (Bell, 1985; Parker & Lynn, 2002). Aligned with findings often associated with LDT, many refugees and migrants are forced into self-employment or on state benefits due to labour disadvantages. In this study, three out of 44 participants were self-employed, and eight were unemployed (all whom were on state benefits). Through the utilisation of African storytelling and the CRT lens, this study has critiqued, and exposed employment-related racism and discrimination faced by African communities in New Zealand. It has sought, as Taylor et al., (2009) argue, to scrutinise race relations beyond the colour paradigm. It further attempted to comprehend how the impact of employment-related racism and discrimination can be minimised in the lives of and for the well-being of African residents in New Zealand.

6.3 Proficiency in English

English language is the most common language spoken in New Zealand, especially within employment settings (Butcher, at el. 2006). The participants stories have shown that English language, as a communication barrier, is one of the main employment challenges faced by some African communities in New Zealand, especially those from refugee background and non-English speaking countries. For migrants such as the African community members, the inability to speak the language of a new country is limiting in itself, but the added difficulty of having to navigate the subtleties of body language and other cultural and communication nuances or expectations make this very challenging for these newcomers. Similar problems with language have been reported by qualified nurses and medical doctors in many developed countries (Creese, 2010; Taylor, 2004; Torezani et al., 2008). In New Zealand, a high level of English language ability is essential in many employment settings, particularly those that involve writing or customer service where something needs to be explained. Obviously, there are some work settings where limited English skills can suffice.

Language problems can create obstacles to social and professional integration, increase stress, reduce self-esteem and create more social isolation. English has attracted a reputation for being a fearsomely difficult language to master (Sutherland, 2016). It is full of contradictions and even those who speak English as a first language can often struggle to have their accent understood. Nevertheless, this is a challenge that could be alleviated by having a willingness to learn. To improve English language skills, African community members might be encouraged to find classes at their level and learn the language especially the pronunciation and enunciation of words. Learning to speak slowly to enable listeners to understand their different accents may also help. Focusing on developing their overall communication skills, including the way they communicate with colleagues and the difference between communicating orally and in writing may pay dividends. That interaction with others may have a positive impact on their career and job prospects.

6.4 Lack of New Zealand Work (Kiwi) Experience and 'Soft Skills'

Within this study all four community groups and twelve individual participants cited the demand of New Zealand local work experience as one of the employment related challenges encountered by Africans in New Zealand. The employer is simply asking himself/herself -Will this person fit in the company's work environment? After all, the employer is not only seeking job skills, but also, among others, 'soft skills' that will make the applicant a great team player. Soft skills include a range of capabilities such as the ability to work with people, the ability to manage oneself, time and emotions, conflict resolutions, presentation skills and 'small talk'. Small talk could be a conversation where one speaks about the latest in sports, upcoming public events, etc. However, many migrants believe it is their technical skills and know-how that should be considered above all else. Research by Scull (2001) and Taylor (2004) revealed that lack of local job experience was used as a factor in marginalising and excluding refugees and migrants from the Australian job market. Similar findings were documented in

other international studies (Perreira, Harris et al. 2007, Statistics Canada 2007b, Fozdar and Torezani 2008).

Community members who are having a difficult time finding a job in their field may consider gaining experience through volunteer work or internship programs. Volunteering in the industry where they want to work will help them to learn more about what is expected and will give them some contacts in the field. Internships are another way to gain work experience. Community members should be encouraged to avail themselves of internship in order to demonstrate their work skills and experience. There are formal internships set up for different career areas or they can initiate these by directly approaching employers. The letter requesting an internship should be clear in what they can offer and should include a résumé that reflects their unique education, work experiences and occupational assets. It will also be useful to consult with people who are knowledgeable about résumés and cover letters to have them reviewed before they are sent out. Community members are encouraged to develop a curious, interested, non-judgmental attitude and demonstrate a willingness to push themselves out of their comfort zone. It may also help them if they develop a social understanding and openness to their new environment. In this way, they are likely to succeed in securing employment.

The stories shared by African communities showed that most New Zealand employers express doubt in the information they are given regarding work-related experience and work ethics of the immigrant's country of origin. As a result, they end up adopting a risk-averse strategy by giving first preference to locals and those from places such as Europe and the USA. These findings are consistent with other international studies (Sweetman, 2004; Statistics Canada, 2007b). Although it may be advisable for prospective employers in New Zealand to give a chance to these migrant job-seekers by initially employing them on a casual basis to ascertain their ability to do the job, this could potentially lead to exploitation by employers of migrant workers. It may also be important for prospective employees to 'sell' their soft skills which are regarded by most New Zealand employers. There is always a risk of misunderstanding and faulty

conclusions when the parties involved in the employment discussion lack a common language. In this case, employers should be considerate and compassionate enough to understand that some employees are capable of performing well on the job but may have limited English proficiency. The challenge is especially great for those community members who are unable to verify or confirm the documentation of their former career or education.

6.4.1 Non-Recognition of Foreign Qualifications

The findings of this study showed that most overseas qualifications gained by members of the African communities in New Zealand are generally not recognised. Similar findings have been recorded by Hardill and MacDonald (2000); Royal College of Nursing (2002b); Employability Forum (2003) and Morrice (2009). The Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy (2006) stated that most New Zealand employers do not recognise immigrants' foreign qualifications especially those obtained from developing nations. This is a sad reality for many African community members. Qualifications are too often not transferable, so people with high level qualifications and years of experience at management and professional levels can find themselves having to clean toilets or drive taxis to feed their families. This is a very difficult and common situation for many immigrants. Validation of academic credentials will be of benefit to migrant communities as it is not always easy to determine a person's competence. The named qualification and level of education may formally correspond to New Zealand conventions, but the content may differ fundamentally from local systems (ChangeMakers Refugee Forum, 2011). If their overseas qualifications are not recognised, many community members opt for gaining a New Zealand qualification to complement their original qualification. Most of the African community member participants in this study had to retrain or up-skill in order to get employment in a specific profession/trade in New Zealand. Retraining and up-skilling take more time, incur more cost and cause more frustration for African migrants, but in the end, may be worth it. A study carried out in Australia showed that most professional migrants, after failing to

secure employment, had to retrain in different disciplines (Ogunsiji et al., 2012). A study by Butcher et al., (2006) in New Zealand showed similar results. The non-recognition of overseas qualifications results in members of African communities in New Zealand missing out on employment opportunities, and meaning they are disadvantaged on the labour market.

A key challenge is the apparent disdain shown by employers for the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) system, which acts on behalf of the government. This was evidenced when employers rejected respondents' qualifications that were acquired in Africa and had been ratified and accepted by NZQA. The assessment of international qualifications by NZQA takes time and incurs a cost. Obviously, the hope is that once this is done things will be much easier for migrants, however, as the respondents found out, the validation by NZQA of qualifications does not mean securing employment. It is important also for African communities to realise that employers have the prerogative to hire the person they want regardless of qualifications or experience. Employers can decide to avoid risk in their recruitment drive, particularly when they question the quality and authenticity of overseas professional qualifications and skills (Harvey, 2012; Salaff et al., 2002; Zulauf, 1999). African community members need to understand that having an international qualification assessed by NZQA is only one part of the wider process that one may need to undertake. They may also need to register with a professional or industry body in New Zealand, and/or complete further assessment with them - particularly if one is in a professional field such as engineering, medicine, law, human resources management or teaching.

Another employment-related challenge faced by members of African communities was being told by prospective employers that they were 'over-qualified' for certain positions. This state of being over-qualified is not unique to the African communities in this study; a number of international studies have also revealed similar results (Harvey, 2012; Quinn & Rubb, 2005; Thomas, 2010). As a result of their negative experiences, the majority of overqualified community members say that they have learnt that it is wise to reveal the basic relevant qualifications required for a particular job. The notion of being over-

qualified is a way of excluding Africans from participating freely in the job market. It is not just to deny someone an opportunity for employment on the grounds of being overqualified and if a person chooses to work in a lower-qualified position, they should be allowed to do so.

6.5 Employment Challenges

6.5.1 Unemployment

Out of a total of 44 participants (community groups and individual participants), 27 were employed, eight were unemployed, three were self-employed and six were university students. The unemployed and the self-employed represented nearly a quarter of the participants. These results seem to contradict the notion held by the LDT that most refugees and migrants are generally disadvantaged on the labour market and end up in self-employment, but when asked why only a small number were self-employed, participants said that they were not comfortable to venture into business because they felt that not many locals would support their businesses. They also stated that the majority of the 'employed' had to retrain thereby changing their professions. Some had to accept low-paying jobs in order to provide for their families. All these were survival strategies in order to provide for their families (Li, 1997; Light, 1979; Volery, 2007).

Employment Status	Community Groups	Individual Participants	Totals
Employed	13	14	27
Unemployed	7	1	8
Self- Employed	0	3	3
Students	4	2	6
Totals	24	20	44

Table 6.1: Summary of Employment Status of Participants

This study found that differences in employment experiences were related to different professions. Those who had qualifications in professions such as nursing and technical trades (plumbing and building), found it relatively easy to gain employment. Participants said that a sizeable number of African community members, especially Zimbabweans had to re-train as nurses and tradesmen.

African communities in New Zealand have held several workshops with relevant government departments with a view to highlighting some of the unemployment challenges they have faced in the country. Since then, little has been done by successive governments to address this issue (ChangeMakers, 2012).

6.5.2 Under-Employment and Under-Payment

Communities shared many stories about African professionals in New Zealand who have experienced problems of both under-employment and under-payment. A number of studies have found similar results where migrants were underpaid (Hatoss, 2012). Underpayment is a difficult area to research as salaries tend to be confidential. Although there are inequalities in workplaces, immigrant workers are frequently segregated into low-paid and unskilled employment (Dunn, 2003, Gerrish 2003). There is evidence of barriers to the occupational promotion of migrant workers – such as fewer training opportunities, temporary employment and poor recognition of qualifications among these workers (Baklid el at, 2005; Taran, 2006; Pasi, 2011). New Zealand (Kiwi) workers with lower education credentials appear to have opportunities to acquire considerable technical expertise through on-the-job training in manual occupations (Changemakers, 2012). However, this is often not the case with migrant workers for whom even the transition from unskilled to skilled blue-collar positions is highly challenging, mostly due to widespread and covert discrimination. This social and economic devaluation of migrants' work-skills is discriminatory and a waste of human capital.

6.5.3 Promotion

The stories shared by African communities revealed that it is quite difficult to secure employment in one's profession in New Zealand especially if one is of African descent. Participants agreed that once employed it was also extremely difficult to get a promotion. Migrants and refugees of African origin (including youth) are over-represented among the unemployed and the underemployed in New Zealand (Flynn and Fromm, 2012; Nakhid, Azanaw et al. 2016). Inequalities in employment exist between Kiwi and migrant workers and the possibilities of landing a job are influenced by a person's origin, nationality and religion. A recent study found that despite having a better work ethic, refugees and immigrant millennials still struggle to get good jobs and promotions in New Zealand (Pio, 2017). Pio (2017) suggested that one needs to have some knowledge of idiomatic English, learn Kiwi ways of speaking in terms of phraseology, and display sensitivity to issues such as age, religion and marital status in order to secure employment and to progress in New Zealand work places.

6.6 Culture and Religion

6.6.1 Culture

One of the findings of my study is that African communities were concerned about being 'culturally fit' as this seemed to be a specific requirement of would-be employers. Separate studies by Segrest (2006) and de Meier et al (2007) confirmed that for some interviewers, factors such as culture affected their employment decisions when dealing with ethnic minorities. Cultural differences were seen to have a huge impact on migrants who felt that they stood out because of the way they dress or were concerned by the way their children want to dress. Some community members said that they did not have easy access to an appropriate place of worship, or that they had to go to work during important holy days and festivals such as Ramadan. Research showed that refugees and migrants found that some of the practices they carried out in their homeland, such as circumcising children, slaughtering a goat in the garden, or having more

than one wife, were taboo or illegal in their new country, and this created confusion and mental stress (Mphande et al., 2015). Hence it is important for African community members to understand and appreciate the New Zealand culture as well as the culture of the organisations they work for/intend to work for. Community members can utilise simple ways to improve their cultural fluency. Good starting points are community service programs, seminars, workshops, discussion and community groups. Cultural coaches, local teachers and volunteers are an encyclopaedia of local, cultural knowledge and are so eager to help migrants. Community members need to be pragmatic, and depending on the setting, try to adapt. Certain behaviour patterns will change slowly; after all, moving to a new country is an adaptation process. At the end of the day, it becomes a reciprocal process. Migrant community members can become confident, ask questions and discuss with their 'cultural coaches' about their way of life. This way, everyone will learn. African community members do not have to lose their culture and identity; but there may be a need to adapt, accordingly.

6.6.2 Religion

This research has shown that religion is one of the employment-related challenges faced by African communities in New Zealand. A number of the Muslim women interviewed were told during the job interview process that prospective employers were concerned about their religion and their hijab (head-cover). These results are similar to other studies (European Commission, 2010; Fozdar & Torezani, 2008). In Britain, a number of studies have suggested that Muslims are discriminated against when they apply for jobs, and researchers found that religion mattered far more than skin colour when it came to job prospects in Britain (Adaida, Laintin, & Valfort, 2016). Muslims were found to suffer the most, with men as much as 76 percent less likely to get a job offer than their Christian counterparts, while Muslim women were found to be 65 percent less likely to be employed than Christian women (Esses et al., 2007; European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS), 2009). No such research has been done in New Zealand, but it has been reported that a Muslim

name may jeopardise an applicant's chances at landing a job at the earliest stages of the application (Butcher et al., 2006). The challenge of structural unemployment due to discrimination on the basis of religion is not easy to overcome and needs a multi-faceted approach. Small efforts, such as publicizing rates of discrimination complaints, can raise awareness and reduce discrimination (Adaida et al. 2016). At the firm level, businesses should review their own hiring practices. They should also consider hiring consultants who can help them address tensions that arise due to workplace conflicts related to religion. There are some jobs that are considered unsuitable for certain immigrants because of their religious beliefs, for example, restaurants where they serve pork or alcohol. However, some governments and authorities appear unsympathetic to migrants who refuse to accept jobs that go against their religious beliefs and ethos. For example, in a recent article, the Norwegian Prime Minister demanded that immigrants coming into Norway must work to sustain a living and should not refuse some jobs for religious reasons. She went on to further exhort migrants to live by Norwegian standards ([www.euronews.com/21 Nov 2016](http://www.euronews.com/21-Nov-2016)). Another example is a Canadian mayor who had harsh words for members of the Muslim community who were unhappy with public shops that served pork (Abu-Laban, 2007). Such attitudes are likely to promote and perpetuate hate speech and public-dislike and discrimination against Muslims.

In summary, the four themes (English language proficiency; demand for local work experience and non-recognition of overseas qualifications; employment challenges; cultural issues and religion) showed how African community members were disadvantaged in the labour market (LDT) while the fifth theme (racism and discrimination) utilised the characteristics of Critical Race Theory. The use of communities in storytelling was pivotal in bringing out these stories.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

“Oral forms of knowledge, such as ritualistic chants, riddles, songs, folktales and parables, not only articulate a distinct cultural identity but also give voice to a range of cultural, social and political aesthetic, and linguistic systems-long muted by centuries of colonialism and cultural imperialism” (Patience Elabor-Idemudia, 2002, p.103).

7.1 Introduction

The main objective of this study was to provide a critical examination of the employment experiences of African communities in New Zealand. As a researcher and a member of the New Zealand-based African communities, I was also interested in understanding the impact of these experiences on the wellbeing of this community. My study found that the African communities in New Zealand face a number of significant employment challenges. The communities and individual participants identified the following five themes as the key challenges for this community:

1. Racism, Discrimination and Accent Issues;
2. English Language Proficiency as a barrier;
3. Lack of Local New Zealand (Kiwi) Work Experience and Non-recognition of Overseas Qualifications;
4. Employment Challenges (Unemployment, Under-employment and Promotion)
5. Cultural Issues and Religion.

7.2 Original Contribution: African Storytelling, Community Groups Concept and Ubuntu Philosophy

The original contribution and significance of this study is three-fold: the utilisation of the African oral tradition of storytelling as a unique research

methodology; the use of community groups concept; and the application of the African philosophy of Ubuntu. This is the first study that has exclusively focused on the employment experiences of Africans in New Zealand using African storytelling as the research methodology.

The use of African storytelling provided African communities in New Zealand an opportunity to share their employment experiences using lenses and worldviews they are familiar with. Storytelling was suitable and appropriate for this study because all participants and community group members were Africans and Africans are used to this oral tradition (Achebe, 1959; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; Olupona, 1990). Storytelling is an inherent part of African people. African storytelling had a significant positive impact on African communities because it liberated them (participants) from the oppression of using foreign and westernized lenses and methodologies as they shared their stories. By using African storytelling, the communities demonstrated their inner strength, courage and resilience in dealing with employment-related challenges. They were also able to come up with coping strategies in dealing with stress related to employment challenges. Through storytelling, African communities were able to talk intrinsically about their employment experiences in New Zealand and how these experiences impacted on their lives and well-being.

Based on what I learnt and saw unfolding in this study, the African oral tradition of storytelling is an effective research methodology, especially where participants are of African heritage. Africans were able to view the world from their own perspective. The African communities and individual African participants showed that African storytelling as a methodology is powerful and emancipatory in the collection of shared experiences. Through storytelling, they were able to share their employment experiences as well as challenge the various misconceptions, assumptions and stereotypes they faced and still face. From a methodological perspective, my study has provided an opportunity to present a relevant African methodology and framework that can be utilised when researching phenomena relating to people of African descent in New Zealand and the diaspora.

The use of community group discussions (communities) is a new strategy in research methodology which offered members of the New Zealand-based African communities a platform to learn, discuss, debate and challenge each other on issues of employment matters. There were noticeable differences in how community groups responded to issues raised compared to how general contemporary focus groups have been shown to respond. Some of these responses are the 'call and response technique' (Achebe,1959; Chinyowa, 2001), 'pedagogical skills', which is the art and science of narrating stories (Chinyowa, 2004; Vambe,2004) and spiritual connections/ritual performances. During the story sharing, the four community groups naturally sat in a circle, depicting familiar environments in the olden days where community members would sit around a fire during the night and listen to their elders telling them educative and thought-provoking stories (Achebe, 1959; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986). This did not happen when I used a contemporary focus group in my Master of Philosophy (Tuwe, 2012). The storytelling-space became communal, thus, it belonged to all community members and all members had the same rights and obligations. This process empowered all group members and they felt safe and liberated to share their employment-stories and experiences.

The use of community groups gave a voice to African communities regarding their employment experiences in New Zealand. The communities were able to say what they think, feel and dream about their employment experiences. The concept of communities created a safe environment that enabled group members to share their views as a group and work together in highlighting employment issues that were common and important to them (Saunders & Lewis, 2009). The community group set-up also provided a platform for members to reflect on why they were marginalised and segregated on the labour market, although they believed and felt that they were qualified and experienced. The community concept also offered members an opportunity to use the philosophy of African Ubuntu to question each other, agree, disagree and debate employment matters, in respect and dignity. The voices and views of communities were considered as

a dialogical reflection on the common feelings, thoughts, and opinions of Africans in New Zealand regarding employment issues.

The application of the African concept of Ubuntu strengthened and complemented the use of communities in the African storytelling process. The Ubuntu philosophy helped community members to maintain respect and dignity for each other even if they did not agree on issues that were discussed (Mandela, 1994; Nussbaum, 2003).

The combination of the African storytelling as a methodology, the concept of communities and the Ubuntu philosophy sets this thesis apart from others. Although we have had two studies in New Zealand that used African storytelling as a methodology (Adelowo, 2012; Orido, 2017), I am not aware of any research that has combined all these three aspects together in one study.

Although the literature showed general understanding about how employment experiences can impact on the well-being of refugees and migrants, there is little that is known on how these experiences affect African migrants and their families in New Zealand. This research seeks to contribute new knowledge in this important area.

The application of Labour Disadvantage Theory (LDT) and Critical Race Theory (CRT) theoretical frameworks complemented the African storytelling methodology because these have been successfully used in a number of international studies to explore the phenomena of employment-related experiences of people of colour (Fozdar & Torezani, 2008; Gbadegesin, 1984). It also shows that African or other indigenous research methodologies and European / western frameworks have the ability to complement each other.

7.3 Community Voices and the Impact of African Storytelling on the Data

Some of the characteristics of a community such as place or locality, interest and communion were also taken into consideration during the community group

discussions (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). The principles of 'sense of community' and 'spirit of community' were central to the community group discussions in this study (McMillan, 1976; Ife, 1995). McMillan and Chavis (1986) argue that these principles are critical aspects for any community to be united and to be able to voice their issues and effectively advocate for its members. The 'sense of community' and 'spirit of community' blended and complemented the African storytelling and African philosophy of Ubuntu (Mandela, 2002) during group discussions. This was demonstrated by the way in which the members were committed and interested in community employment issues. In this study, the African communities in New Zealand were able to exhibit the Ubuntu philosophy by assembling in community groups, knitted and bonded together by the principles of respect and humanity, to discuss matters that were of interest and emancipatory to their communities. The communities managed to uphold and maintain the Ubuntu underpinning core values of human kindness, solidarity and compassion for each other (Kasenene, 1992; Mandela, 1994; Nussbaum, 2003; Tutu & Tutu, 2014).

This was not a quantitative study whereby one could determine the impact of African oral tradition of storytelling on the data using a control group. However, in comparison to the focus group interviews I conducted for my Masters thesis (2012), I found that community group members were more open and willing to share their stories compared to individual participants. People spoke with passion and were articulate in expressing themselves in a group set-up compared to individual interviews. This could be connected to the African cultural values and principles enshrined in the philosophy of Ubuntu where people believe that African storytelling is not a private affair but that it belongs to the community and the communal space of storytelling (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986). Both groups (community groups and individual participants) stated that people feel safer, intrinsically motivated, and empowered to share their stories in a group set-up as opposed to being interviewed individually. In this study, the community group members said they felt liberated and experienced a sense of solidarity and togetherness. I also discovered that people who were initially not

interested in community issues became more engaged at the end of each group discussion.

7.4 Recommendations Arising Out of this Study

This thesis has highlighted a number of challenges faced by Africans in New Zealand seeking employment. From the findings of this study, a number of recommendations are proposed:

- **Policymakers** - Although policymakers may be aware of the plight of Africans in New Zealand regarding their employment experiences and challenges, they need to effectively engage with the African communities to identify their concerns. This process may include key service providers and government departments that are strategically positioned and working closely with the African communities. One suggestion is for African community members to make presentations about their experiences to policymakers/government departments. In one attempt, I presented the preliminary findings of this study to the Office of Ethnic Communities (OEC) in April 2017. OEC is the New Zealand government department that looks after the issues of all ethnic people in New Zealand. I also had an interview in April 2018 with a New Zealand national newspaper where I highlighted some of the findings of this thesis. Another way is to present at strategic national and regional conferences. Posting on government and service providers' websites can also be effective. Using main stream media (newspapers and television) and social media (facebook) can also serve to highlight the employment situation of Africans in New Zealand.
- **Employers** - It would be important for employers to know how African communities perceive their hiring practices and the work environment. This could be done through presentation of these findings at employers' associations, seminars and workshops and seeking permission to post on their websites.

- **Communities** - I would recommend that African communities, through their existing community structures, such as African Communities Forum Incorporated (ACOFI) in Auckland, African Communities Council of Wellington (ACCW) and African Council in Canterbury (South Island) could hold workshops focused on practical ways to help Africans secure employment in New Zealand. These workshops should be run by communities with community members (as guest speakers) who have been through employment challenges and have succeeded. I would recommend that communities hold these workshops with minimum involvement of government agencies because some of these agencies are viewed (by communities) as 'gatekeepers' who stand in the way of community progress. In a report published by the New Zealand Immigration Services (2004) titled *Refugee Voices: A Journey Towards Resettlement*, refugees complained about the interference of gatekeepers.

In addition to the above recommendations, there are a number of options that African community members could also consider in order to enhance their chances of securing employment or, at the least, getting a chance to be interviewed. These are listed below:

Community Practical Action and Emancipatory Initiatives

As an African migrant who has lived and worked in New Zealand for the past 16 years, I relate to and understand the aspirations and struggles faced by my community in terms of employment and identify with how employment issues impact one's livelihood, wellbeing, integration into a new society and participating in that society. I resonate with the pain and injustice suffered by this community when it comes to their employment experiences and challenges. From the results of this study, it is evident that employment challenges are a reality and continued lived experience for African communities in New Zealand. Through this research, the African communities have spoken strongly and clearly. Based on their stories, it is apparent that there is a need for genuine engagement and bold dialogical action between the African communities and the New Zealand government or its delegated authority in order to urgently address

these challenges. This dialogical action and engagement should be tested and tried for the purposes of authentic and sincere commitment on the part of the government. As a way of holding the responsible authorities to account and ensuring that they are honestly committed to addressing these issues, the communities should consider forming a sub-committee (consisting of community members only) that regularly meets with the authorities, challenges the status quo, evaluates progress and provides comprehensive feedback to the African communities. Such dialogical action is in support and agreement with Habermas' (1971) epistemological framework that advocates for practical action and emancipation of authentic community voices. Habermas (1971) calls this process converting community dialogue into practical action while Stablein and Nord (1985) describe it as fusing and meshing dialogue and practical action, in a strategic and reflective way.

Employment is considered and recognized as belonging to the province of human rights and social justice (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948; Mundlak, 2007). Therefore, the government of New Zealand, as a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, should urgently and genuinely work in partnership with the African communities to address these challenges. Employment is also a constitution of one's identity, and one's social inclusion (Smilth, 2003). Craven (1995) argues that employment directly affects the level of achievement a community may attain for a variety of other human right issues, such as health, education, culture, freedom of expression and freedom of association. There is therefore a great need for the New Zealand government, in collaboration with its key stakeholders and service providers to effectively and strategically engage with the African communities with a view of urgently addressing these challenges.

Survival Coping Strategies and Networking

Today's labour market relies on networking, and this disadvantages new immigrants as they do not have established networks. However, there are ways to develop connections in any new community. One can start by joining community groups, professional networks for immigrants, other professional

associations, interest clubs, sports teams or any other groups that will put you in contact with people you would not ordinarily meet. It is important to socialize and get to know people. After all, most professional networks begin from a social connection.

Communities suggested strategies such as running employment-related workshops where individuals from the African communities who have done well in the employment arena come and share their success stories and experiences. It is hoped that from these workshops and networking communities may find ways and strategies of helping each other in regard to employment challenges. This was seen as a way of encouraging others who may be facing similar employment-related challenges. Networking and sharing job information by word of mouth and on social media platforms among African community members were also encouraged. For example, an African women's group in Ireland called the Akina Dada wa Africa (AkiDwA) which means 'African Sisterhood' (De Tona & Lentin, 2011) and some African associations in countries such as the USA, the UK and Australia (Elabor-Idemudia, 1999; Salih, 2002) successfully utilised some of these strategies. Poros (2001) found that social networks have been crucial in helping Indian migrants assist each other to secure jobs in the high Information Technology (IT) sector in both London and the USA. Adequate funding would be necessary for community-based organisations to effectively address community employment needs and issues. The New Zealand government could provide community-based African associations and organisations with funds to enable them to address some of the key employment-related challenges faced by their communities. I would also recommend that the New Zealand government create initiatives and re-visit policies in order to improve the employability of refugees and migrants (Phillimore & Goodson, 2006). For example, employers should consider not demanding local work experience where it is not needed.

The development of individual capability statements or an "elevator pitch" is an effective skill for employment-seeking migrants. This statement could be a couple of sentences that summarize the capabilities and achievements of the job applicant, aligned to the requirements of the job being advertised. It may also

include the professional qualifications and credentials of the applicant. An elevator pitch will become useful during interviews and when community members meet with industry professionals who may ask them about their professional goals.

Community members should have an online presence, including an effective LinkedIn profile and clean social media platforms such as a facebook page that reflects a professional image. They should make use of the numerous employment services available in New Zealand that can help when one is preparing a CV and building a professional brand, such as New Zealand Career Services (New Zealand Career Services, 2017). Many of these services are free and tailored to assist refugees and migrants.

Most New Zealand recruiters are focused on how the CV is formatted, designed and presented. Community members should adjust their CVs to show the skills and experience required for the particular job to which they are applying.

Rather than apply for as many jobs as possible, community members should focus on those opportunities that are commensurate with their experience, education and skills set. They could develop their own 'brand' as an individual asset in job-seeking.

7.5 Recommendations for Further Research

This study sets a foundation for future research on the topic of African immigrants in New Zealand. Based on the findings of my study, it would be interesting for future research to further explore, in particular, the issues of racism and discrimination and the demand for local New Zealand (Kiwi) work experience. These two topics generated a lot of interest and resentment from African community members.

On racism and discrimination, community members said that there is no relationship between work performance and race and therefore they felt that employers should not link the two factors when hiring staff. They further stated

that employers are likely to be missing on the expertise of competent and experienced employees from the African communities.

As regards the demand for local Kiwi work experience, African community members said that most jobs, such as motor mechanics and diesel plant fitters do not require local experience. They found this requirement counterproductive to the economy of New Zealand.

The other recommendation for future research is a consideration of different understandings and measurements of the impact of employment experiences (IV) of African refugees and migrants in New Zealand on their well-being (DV). It is important to note that, in this study, both the employment experiences and the impact on well-being are coming from the same data source. Future studies need to include objective measures of impact on well-being.

I would further recommend that this proposed research include the perspective and thinking of New Zealand employers. Perspectives of employers are likely to assist African community members to understand what is exactly required in the New Zealand job market. It would be important to have a comparative study on the views of both employees and employers.

7.6. Limitations

This thesis did not address the labour relations or industrial relations between employers and employees as this was outside the scope of the study. The views of employers and prospective employers were also not covered as this was again outside the scope of the research. The ability to generalize the experiences and findings is limited as all participants were recruited from Auckland only. More depth would have been given to the study if the participants were drawn from other major cities of New Zealand. This was due to limited resources (costs involved).

Although the participants in this study met a wide range of criteria (e.g. age, profession and gender) and came from different African countries, the small sample size of 44 participants (20 individuals and four community groups of 24

people) may not necessarily represent the views of the majority of African communities in New Zealand. It would be ideal to have had a larger number of participants in future studies and to carry out comparisons with other minority groups such as Asians and Pacific People in New Zealand. As a result of the sample size, caution needs to be taken with respect to interpreting the findings and applying them. However, the experiences are likely to be common and resonate with the majority of African community members (Nakhid, 2003, 2017; Nakhid et al., 2016).

The community members found that the allocated 60-90 minutes was not adequate to discuss all the relevant issues related to their employment experiences in New Zealand. The time constraint was further compounded by the utilisation of African storytelling which normally requires more time like most indigenous storytelling methodologies such as Kaupapa Maori (New Zealand) and Yarning (Australia) (Pihama et al, 2002; Lee, 2009; Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010).

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Appendix A: Ethics Approval Letter from AUT University



M E M O R A N D U M

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEK)

8 July 2015

Camille Nakhid

Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear Camille

Ethics Application: **15/210 An investigation into the employment experiences and their impact on the well-being of African communities in New Zealand.**

Thank you for submitting your application for ethical review. I am pleased to confirm that the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEK) has approved your ethics application for three years until 6 July 2018.

AUTEK wishes to commend you and the researcher on the level of consultation that has taken place.

As part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to AUTEK:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. When necessary this form may also be used to request an extension of the approval at least one month prior to its expiry on 6 July 2018;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>. This

report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 6 July 2018 or on completion of the project;

It is a condition of approval that AUTEK is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence. AUTEK approval needs to be sought for any alteration to the research, including any alteration of or addition to any documents that are provided to participants. You are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken under this approval occurs within the parameters outlined in the approved application.

AUTEK grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to obtain this.

To enable us to provide you with efficient service, we ask that you use the application number and study title in all correspondence with us. If you have any enquiries about this application, or anything else, please do contact us at ethics@aut.ac.nz.

All the very best with your research,



Kate O'Connor

Executive Secretary

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: Kudakwashe Tuwe ktuwe2013@yahoo.co.nz

Appendices

Appendix B: Individual Participant Information Sheet



Date Information Sheet Produced:

25 May 2015

Project Title

An Investigation into the Employment Experiences and their Impact on the well-being of African Communities in New Zealand

An Invitation

I bring special greetings to you.

My name is Kudakwashe Tuwe and I am currently studying for a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) within the School of Social Sciences and Public Policy. I am originally from Zimbabwe and have lived in New Zealand for 13 years.

I believe that you have some valuable knowledge that you can share on this important topic and I am kindly inviting you to be a part of this project. Please note that participation is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw your participation at any given time during this process without any adverse consequences.

Please read this sheet and if you think you would like to take part, then contact me by telephoning on **021-792-642 (Mobile)** or writing to me: **Kudakwashe Tuwe P.O Box 6663, Wellesley Street, Auckland, 1141 New Zealand**. My email address is: ktuwe2013@yahoo.co.nz. I would like to hear back from you before the end of **July 2015**.

What is the purpose of this research?

The main aim of this study is to find out the employment-related experiences and challenges that are faced by the growing African communities in New Zealand. This is the first research of its kind in New Zealand. It is therefore important for members of the New Zealand-based African communities to tell their stories relating to the challenges they have faced on the employment market in New Zealand.

On completion of this research, I will publish a thesis and some academic journal articles. I will also present my findings at various academic conferences and as

well as gatherings attended by different African communities in New Zealand. A brief summary of my findings will be made available to all my participants, like you. My thesis and journal articles will also be made available to anybody that is interested.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have been invited to participate in this project because you meet the research criteria of this research. Amongst others, participants should meet the following requirements: have either a refugee or migrant background, be originally from the continent of Africa, be above the age 20 years; having been living in New Zealand for at least two years, be currently domiciled in Auckland and be able to communicate effectively in English as interpretation services will not be available in this research.

What will happen in this research?

The interviews will be held with two separate groups of participants, namely; face-to-face individual interviews with 20 participants and four group discussions (focus groups). No participant will participate in both groups. The researcher has decided to give participants the right to choose between individual interviews and focus groups. This minimises the element of bias on the part of the researcher.

This Participant Information Sheet is for face-to-face individual interviews. Each individual face-to-face interview will take approximately 45-60 minutes. With your permission, the interview will be audio taped and transcribed at a later date. Participants will have the opportunity to check and correct the transcripts. After putting and consolidating everything together the thesis will be a combination of excerpts from your stories, and a discussion of themes during focus groups.

What are the discomforts and risks?

Please be aware that in the interview you will be talking about your personal lived experiences and this may cause some discomfort and revive past emotions. However, every effort will be made to ensure that these are minimised or where possible eliminated.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

In the event of participants feeling embarrassed, re-traumatised or experiencing feelings of discomfort, the interview will be stopped, and they will be referred to AUT counselling services. Please note that you have the right to bring along a support person of your choice to the interviews and that you are free not to respond or answer any question(s) that you are uncomfortable with.

What are the benefits?

Your voluntary participation in this study will give you an opportunity to share your employment-related experiences. Some people often find this to

have empowering and invigorating experience. These challenges will be shared to the responsible authorities with a view of addressing them.

What compensation is available for injury or negligence?

N/A

How will my privacy be protected?

Pseudo names will be used to protect your privacy. If you decide to withdraw from the study (before its completion), your information will be immediately destroyed. It is also important to realise that I cannot guarantee your anonymity and total confidentiality as some of your personal story(s) will be quoted in the thesis, and it may be possible that someone who knows you will recognise your story. I can offer you limited confidentiality.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The major cost of participating in this study is your time.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

If you are interested in participating in this project, after going through the information on this Information Sheet, please get in touch with me as soon as possible so that we make arrangements. My contact details are below.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

By completing a simple Consent Form which is attached (Appendix B)

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

If you are interested in getting the feedback on the results of this research, please let me know so that I can organise this for you. I can post a full report of the final results or email you a brief summary of my findings - whichever you prefer.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, whose contact details are as follows:

Dr Camille Nakhid, Auckland University of Technology (AUT) Social Sciences and Public Policy (IPP), AUT WT Building 14th Floor, Rutland Street, Auckland, New Zealand; Email address: camille.nakhid@aut.ac.nz; Work Telephone number is 09-921-9999 Ext 8401

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, Kate O'Connor: ethics@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 Ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Research Contact Details:

Kudakwashe Tuwe: 021-792-642 (Mobile); Email address: ktuwe2013@yahoo.co.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr Camille Nakhid: 09-921-9999 Ext 8401; Email address: camille.nakhid@aut.ac.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 6th July 2015. AUTEC Reference number 15/210

Appendix C: Consent Form for the Individual Interviews



Project title: An Investigation into the Employment Experiences and their Impact on the well-being of African Communities in New Zealand

Project Supervisor: Dr Camille Nakhid

Researcher: Kudakwashe Tuwe

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 25 May 2015.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one):
Yes No

Participant's signature :

.....

Participant's Name :

.....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate) :

.....

Date:.....

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 6th July 2015. AUTEK Reference number 15/210

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Appendix D: Consent Form for Community Group Discussions



Project title: An Investigation into the Employment Experiences and their Impact on the well-being of African Communities in New Zealand

Project Supervisor: Dr Camille Nakhid

Researcher: Kudakwashe Tuwe

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 25 May 2015.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that identity of my fellow participants and our discussions in the focus group is confidential to the group and I agree to keep this information confidential.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the focus group and that it will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- If I withdraw, I understand that while it may not be possible to destroy all records of the focus group discussion of which I was part, the relevant information about myself including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will not be used.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one):
Yes No

Participant's signature :

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):.....

Date: *Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 6th July 2015. AUTEK Reference number 15/210*

Appendix E: Researcher Safety Protocol



Topic: An Investigation into the Employment Experiences and their Impact on the well-being of African Communities in New Zealand

As the researcher, I will make sure that I have researched and have a basic understanding of the cultural values, traditions and beliefs of the participant(s) before conducting the interviews. I will also ensure that these cultural values are respected all the time during and after the interviews. In order to ensure that the interview venues for both individual interviews and focus groups are free and conducive, these will be conducted in places where participants feel free and comfortable. These places include Community Halls, Community Meeting Rooms or offices.

In order to ensure that I am safe, all the individual interviews and focus group discussions will be held during the day, especially if the venue is the participant(s)' house. To further create a professional and conducive environment, no interviews will be held in my office or my house.

At times participants may request that interviews be carried out in their houses. Under such circumstances, I will put in place a plan that will not compromise my safety and security. The plan will operate as follows:

- All scheduled interview times, including dates, travel times and specific venues (physical addresses) will be detailed
- This schedule will be given to my wife or a close friend whom I will closely be working with
- I will communicate, through a phone call or text, with my wife/ colleague just before the start and as soon as I finish the scheduled interview

- If my wife or colleague does not hear from me, between 10- 15 minutes, after the scheduled interview, she will then call me on my mobile to check on my safety
- If I do not respond to the call, she (my wife/ colleague) will then have to call the Police to check on my security circumstances.

Participants will be informed and reminded of their right to bring along a support person of their choice, should they choose to. However, this support person will not be permitted to respond to the interview questions. The support person(s) may not be ideal for focus group discussion as this may compromise the confidentiality of other focus group participants.

I thank you.

Kudakwashe Tuwe

Appendix F: Individual Face-face Interview Research Questions



Topic: An Investigation into the Employment Experiences and their Impact on the well-being of African Communities in New Zealand

The main research question that will be investigated in this study is: What are the main employment challenges faced by the African communities in New Zealand?

Individual Face-face Interviews Questions

The guiding sub-questions for individual face-face interviews that will help establish the objectives for this research will include:

- What have been your experiences of seeking employment in New Zealand?
- Do you consider these experiences to be positive or negative? What has helped you in seeking employment in NZ?
- Do you think that there are barriers to employment in New Zealand, for Africans? If yes, please explain. Why do you think these barriers exist? How can we remove these barriers?
- If you are employed, have you experienced any difficulties in getting a promotion at your workplace(s) in New Zealand? If yes, describe these experiences.
- How do these experiences impact on you, your family and African communities in New Zealand?

Thank you for your participation.

Demographic Data

Your Age Range (years): (Indicate by an “X” or tick)

- 20-30
- 30 -40
- 40-50
- 50-60
- 60+

Sex:

- Male
- Female

How long have you lived in New Zealand?

- 2-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 20 + years

Education:

- Primary
- Secondary College
- Tertiary/ University

Profession:

- Engineering/ IT
- Education
- Health/Medicine
- Banking/Finance
- Hospitality/ Entertainment
- Arts/Dancing/ Music
- Students
- Other (please specify)

Country of origin:

Immigration status when entered into New Zealand? :

- Refugee
- Migrant
- New Zealand born

Date:.....

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 6th July 2015. AUTEK Reference number 15/210

Appendix G: Focus Group Discussions Research Questions



Topic: *An Investigation into the Employment Experiences and their Impact on the well-being of African Communities in New Zealand*

The main research question that will be investigated in this study is: *What are the main employment challenges faced by the African communities in New Zealand?*

Focus Groups

Sub-questions for focus groups that will examine the impact and effects of employment experiences on participants, their family members and communities will include the following:

- What are some of the employment experiences faced by your communities?
- What are the impacts of these employment experiences on your communities?
- How do you feel about some of these experiences?
- What do you think could be solutions to some of these experiences/challenges?

Thank you for your participation.

Demographic Data

Your Age Range (years): (Indicate by an “X” or tick)

- 20-30
- 30 -40
- 40-50
- 50-60
- 60+

Sex:

- Male
- Female

How long have you lived in New Zealand?

- 2-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 20 + years

Education:

- Primary
- Secondary/College
- Tertiary/ University

Profession:

- Engineering/ IT
- Education
- Health/Medicine
- Banking/Finance
- Hospitality/ Entertainment
- Arts/Dancing/ Music
- Students
- Other (please specify)

Country of origin:

Immigration status when entered into New Zealand?

- Refugee
- Migrant
- New Zealand born

Date:.....

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 6th July 2015. AUTEK Reference number 15/210

Appendix H: Confidentiality Agreement (Transcriber)



For someone transcribing data, e.g. audio-tapes of interviews.

Project Title: *An Investigation into the Employment Experiences and their Impact on the well-being of African Communities in New Zealand*

Project Supervisor: *Dr Camille Nakhid*

Researcher: *Kudakwashe Tuwe*

- I understand that all the material I will be asked to transcribe is confidential.
- I understand that the contents of the tapes or recordings can only be discussed with the researchers.
- I will not keep any copies of the transcripts nor allow third parties access to them.

Transcriber's signature : 

Transcriber's Name : Kudakwashe Tuwe

Transcriber's Contact Details (if appropriate):

021-792-642

Date:.....

Project Supervisor's Contact Details (if appropriate): **Dr Camille Nakhid**

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 6th July 2015. AUTEK Reference number 15/210

Note: The Transcriber should retain a copy of this form.

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