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Title	Unmapping Local and Global Boundaries of Belonging: African Diaspora Youth' Imagination and Possibilities of "Home"					
Authors	Khalema, Ernest N.					
Type of output	Select the appropriate output type from the list below:					
Monograph/book*						
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Unmapping Local and Global Boundaries of Belonging: African Diaspora Youth Imagination and Possibilities of "Home"

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inequalities and justice:

influences, effects, intersections and evidence



26 - 27 september
birchwood conference centre



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Context

- ❑ **Migration as a state of flux:** Reorganization of individual (Akhtar, 1999).
- ❑ **Key issues/challenges faced by migrant youth** as they navigate the dual roles of developmental transitions to adulthood and adaptation in resettlement and transit countries of the North.
 - ✓ Identity-related issues (e.g. belonging and acculturation),
 - ✓ Mental health-related issues as a result of being uprooted (e.g. trauma and loss)
- ❑ Presentation draws from a variety of **data sources**, including:
 - ✓ Systematic review of theoretical frameworks from resilience/hope, refugee trauma, post-war/conflict studies Yohani & Khalema, 2012)
 - ✓ Systematic review of African refugee mental health in resettlement countries (Yohani, *et al* 2011)
 - ✓ Environmental scan of supports for refugees in African transit countries (Khalema, *et al* 2011)
 - ✓ **Qualitative longitudinal cohort study of refugee youth adaptation in Canada (Khalema, et al 2004-2011)**
 - ✓ Resilience factors in the adaptation and wellbeing of African migrant youth in African refugee camps (Khalema, 2012).



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Post-Conflict Adaptation



- ❑ Moderating factors include the nature of the host society; migration status, (refugee vs. immigrant), mode of acculturation; post-conflict processes in the country of origin, and psychosocial/individual factors (Kia-Keating et al., 2007).
- ❑ Adaptation is negatively affected by settlement issues in new country, (Bhattacharya, 2000; Yohani, 2010) and societal school pressure toward rapid assimilation into existing culture (Igoa, 1995).
- ❑ Positive adaptation is associated with the ability to hold a bicultural or integrated orientation (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

Contexts for Understanding Challenges for Refugee Youths' Adaptation

<p>School Adaptation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning School and Canadian Culture • Challenges with School Policies- Eg. Age Cap • Negative Peer Influence • Mental Health Impacting Learning & School Adaptation • Schools Not Adapting to Newcomer Children and Families • Discrimination • Lack of Community Representation/Sense of Not Belonging 	<p>Post-Migration: Acculturation & Resettlement Experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-Cultural Differences • Language Barriers • Lack of Voice • Acculturation Challenges • Settlement Needs- Housing & Employment • Discrimination • Family Stress and Conflict • Mental Health Impacting Resettlement 	<p>Pre-Migration: Refugee Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missed/Gaps in Education Opportunities • Trauma and Violence • Grief and Losses • Different Educational System and Culture E.g. Discipline
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Qualitative longitudinal cohort study of refugee youth adaptation in Canada

- **Funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)**
- Prairie Metropolis Centre for Research on Immigration, Integration and Diversity
- **Several NGOs and school authorities in Alberta**
- **Purpose:** Investigating transition pathways: The utility of a life-course/narrative approach.

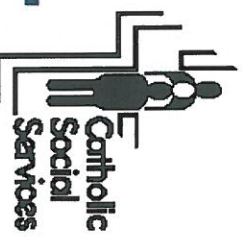
☐ **The impact of interventions (or collaborative interruptions)(Dimock, 1993; Watts, 1991)**

- ✓ How can we understand the long-term impact of an intervention?
- ✓ Can we attribute the identified impact to a single intervention?
- ✓ What methodological innovations can help us understand the impact?

☐ **Follow-up studies** that not only capture the transition trajectories of refugee youth, but **also assesses transition paths** (i.e. perceived support, challenges, successes, and coping strategies) longitudinally using a qualitative approach).



Multicultural Coalition for
Equity in Health & Wellbeing



EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



Citizenship and
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science
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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

METHODS

- **Investigating transition pathways: The utility of a life-course/narrative approach**
 - The inter-relationship between time, place and space on the well-being of immigrant youth (Fuligni, 2001; Waters, 2011)
- **Data Generation (recruitment & design)**
 - Knowledge of settlement experience
 - Knowledge of what it feels like to be a young adult
 - Familiar Faces
 - Personnel from the program, Personnel working within the community
 - Snowball Approach
 - Can you pass this message?
- **Sample Recruitment**
 - Theoretical sampling and maximum variation (Miles & Huberman, 1984)
 - Targeted sample: 25 participants
 - Aged 19-24 primarily from Africa (South Sudan, Sudan, Liberia, Eritrea, Somalia, Serra Leone) Males (n=8) females (n=10). Latin America (Mexico, Columbia).
 - Sample Comprises of 2004/2005/2006/2007 cohorts

Theme 1: Program Impacts (past & present)

- **Education**
 - Most are still upgrading; 2 are in post-secondary institutions (NALT, Norquest)
 - All intend to get to post-secondary school
 - Some have identified that the education (module) helped in discovering school choices
 - Some have learned the value of education in securing a job (meaningful and financially better)
- **Employment**
 - While all intend to have a career, only some identified particular sectors that include social work, opening a business, an artist, an accountant
 - Most are working (most have a part-time job)
 - Some have identified that the employment (module) helped in discovering and learning about career options
- **Family/Personal Life**
 - Intend to have their families with them (e.g. parents, wife, etc) join them in Canada
- **Community Developers**
 - Most want to help their families, friends, neighbours in resolving issues related to settlement (e.g. helping a student become accustomed to the school, helping youth stay focused on their goals)

Theme 2: Accomplishments, Coping Resources, & Learned Skills

- Notable successes due to a combination the intervention (life management module), support system, motivation, etc.
- Noted accomplishments: Improved family life (being married, moving out on one's own, finishing high school, getting a job, completing a degree)
- Coping: Cope with stress on their own, talking to family or friends, praying, drumming
- Developing a critical consciousness through life events
 - Learning to develop boundaries : Develop healthy relations within their relationships and friendships
 - Nurturing their decision-making skills: Which friends improve their lives? How do you balance a social life with your work life?
 - Youth remember the importance of coming here and not screwing up
 - Sense of Service- Helping Others(as advocates)- Providing support or directing resources to friends, family members or community members who have similar settlement experiences (i.e. developing educational goals)
- A sense of responsibility to support people “ Back home” financially. Family Responsibilities-Youth are still responsible for their families (in Canada & overseas)
 - Many are still responsible for the welfare and/or sponsorship of family members

Reflections on Values

A sense of responsibility-Community Service/Engagement

“...When I came here we didn't get as much as they're getting right now, it's like people are starting to wake up and realize that immigrants are being neglected when they come here, like they're not getting enough help, and now it's really good **we're helping them find schools and following up on them and their kids**...cause some of them they don't know what it means to follow up on the kids school, and most of the kids are not happy actually...cause, they feel like no one cares about them, it's like just being thrown there, and nobody asked them how, how it is, so they keep a lot of stuff...that's, that's mostly what happened to us” (PYIE 7_VN810007)



Negotiating Identities

- “ I don’t feel welcomed here...I am always asked where are you from as if I don’t belong here...Maybe I don’t (pause) because sometime people look at me and I know *they* are talking about me...When I eat my food at school *they* come and say it smells...”(PYIE 15_VN810015)

“Reclaiming Home”

- “....like, like I say I will speak like on behalf of the African like me, like we came from a different ethnic, we came from a different planet.. sometimes I feel like a shocked by what people say..., if you’re balancing things you might end up, things might end up not going well with you, this is what I think and this has been happening with a lot of people. Maybe going back home things will be better, you know!” (PYIE 2_VN810002)

Imagining Home

- “...Oh yeah, it’s, it’s very important cause living here is hard, living in Canada is hard like, eating healthy like even the fruits you’re eating is not as healthy as you think it is. *Back home* you can eat better food hey!..mangoes, maroro and stuff. Here too expensive and don't taste good...”
(PYIE_6 VN810006)

Discussion

Navigating Values

Value development is dynamic and emerges from repeated interactions between a young person and their environment. The process of negotiating and refining values involves youth “navigating” and refining their values base on their “capacities” (Swartz *et al*, 2012) across and in between individual, proximate and distal factors (larger social systems).

Growing from Adversity and “Trauma” Evidence of what appears to be post traumatic growth (Tadeschi, 2003)

While resiliency and coping have been described as “bouncing back”, posttraumatic growth and adversarial growth have been described as “bouncing forward’ (Johnson *et al*, 2007). I conceptualize this as a process of growth that involves widening of ones personal and social resources/capital.

Africa Imagined, Idealized, Celebrated and Restored

- Safran (1991) and diaspora
- The discourses of longing and belonging
- Reframing transnationalism through diasporic landscape

Thank You

Kea leboha

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