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Migration Decision-Making of Kenyan and Nigerian Women in London

The Influence of Culture, Family and Networks

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

This thesis is about the migration decision-making experiences of Kenyan and Nigerian women migrants in London. Its aim was to investigate the influence of culture, family and networks on the women's decision to migrate. The study used in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) to gather data. The four theories of migration decision-making used to illuminate the data and understand the women's experiences were: value expectancy theory; place utility model; network and system theories.

The results revealed that the sociocultural expectations of women in Nigerian societies influenced the migration decisions of some Nigerian women. It was a migration motive for some women who were stereotyped by gender in their society of origin and it was also a part of the migration decision-making negotiations, within households, especially between spouses. This was not true of Kenyan women who were least affected by gendered sociocultural expectations in their society of origin. Children also indirectly influenced the decision-making of married and single mothers. Single mothers focused almost exclusively on the needs of their children, whereas married women accommodated both their children and spouses' interests. Young single women were more likely to discuss their migration plans with their parents, but for a few, migration had to be negotiated before taking a decision.

The results also indicated that the women studied used various types of networks, linked differently, within a migration system. Women were interested in the type and quality of the information provided by their network(s) rather than in its gendered nature. Finally the findings also showed that the idea of 'gendered information' exists whereby certain information is given specifically to men or exclusively to women depending on the recipient's life stage and reasons for migrating.

This study contributes to the small body of literature on women's migration decision-making while adding new knowledge about what influences decision making among women from two African countries. It lays foundations for further research case studies on factors affecting African women's migration decision-making.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted anywhere for any award.

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I would also like to express my gratitude to all my friends who have supported me during this research in many ways. I would also like to thank my family for keeping me grounded. My mother, Margaret Oyim-Oucho for being the voice of reason and for always being there whenever I needed her. My brothers, Allan and Kwame Oucho for their endless moral support and motivation. Last but not least, my father Prof. John Oucho for being a symbol of inspiration and for the endless support he has given me.

This thesis is dedicated to my family of migrants.

Background

In 2004 I had just completed my first degree when my parents asked me, what was next? As a recent graduate, I had no job in Botswana, the country I was living in at the time, but I thought my next step would be to go for further studies abroad. I have always been curious about western countries as I read about them in history classes and my interactions with British and Americans had always been a pleasure. Now that I was in a position to choose where to go as my parents had given me that option, I had three countries in mind: Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. My parents and friends had often spoken positively about Canada's rich multicultural society which intrigued me so it became my first option. However, when I researched it, I realised that the cost of living and education would be too high and the fact that I had to write a Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) did not interest me. I was looking for a university which did not require a long process of application. Sadly, the United States had a similar system to Canada and the courses took too long to complete. I was not interested in the United States as even though I had friends and family there, I wanted to migrate to a place where I could establish myself on my own. The UK became more attractive at this stage as I had fewer friends there and no family.

My sources of information about the UK were mostly the universities that I contacted, my friend who had been living in the UK for four years, the internet and stories told by family members who had visited. As I did not know of places other than London, I restricted my search to the latter. I asked my friend about the universities I had selected and she informed me that they were too expensive as they were based in central London. When I searched the internet, and requested prospectuses from the universities which interested me, I realised that most if not all universities in the UK charged the same fees for international students. My interactions with the universities were mostly via email and telephone to confirm that my applications had been received. The prospectuses they sent allowed me to

read details about the university for myself. In addition, my brother who had visited the UK the year before, had stayed in Manchester and had advised me that the country is very nice, but different when one lived there. My parents had been supportive of my decision so no negotiation was necessary but we had to discuss my migration plans.

Within four months, I had surveyed my options relating to the country I would migrate to, I had assessed the cost and benefits of migrating to the three countries that I had researched, I interacted with my networks for confirmation or advice on certain areas and I had discussed my migration plans with my parents. At that point in time, I was not dissatisfied with my situation, but I knew that Botswana held no opportunities for me and I was at a life stage where I needed to decide what was next. I identified the goals I wanted to achieve which were to gain qualifications that would give me access to greater job opportunities in the UK and Kenya. Alongside those goals, I hoped to achieve wealth, status and comfort which ranked high on my wish list. In time, I was accepted by my university of choice, I had made arrangements to stay with my friend until I could secure a place in the halls of residence and all I had to do was wait for my departure date. I remember my migration experience vividly because it was a turning point in my life when I chose to step out into the world and establish myself on my own.

When proposing this research, I knew I wanted to explore the migration experience but had to identify specifically an area on which to focus. I reflected on my own experience of migrating to the UK and wondered whether other women shared similar or different experiences of migration. On discovering De Jong and Gardner's well written book on migration decision-making (1981), I began to survey the literature on the migration decision-making process from the perspective of African women and discovered that the area was under-researched. At that point, I found other studies on migration decision-making and the experiences of women from Latin America and Asia (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994; 2000; De

Jong, 2001; Oishi, 2005). Their contributions to this literature made me explore studies focusing on African women's experiences of migration decision-making. The studies I identified, which dealt with migration decision-making from a gender or woman's perspective, include the works of Nelson (1991), Von Bülow (1994), Adepoju (1991, 1995, 2004), Oppong and Abu (1987), Makinwa-Adebusoye (1994), Reynolds (2006), McGregor (2005), Flesicher (2006), among others. However, I noticed that there were more studies on rural-urban migration patterns in which women were portrayed as associational migrants joining their husband (Adepoju, 1991) or women who were left behind (Nelson, 1991). In addition, when exploring some of the research on rural-urban migration and studies in Latin America and Asia, cultural issues emerged as barriers preventing women from migrating or accessing migration networks. Thus, I proposed this research where I aimed to explore the migration decision-making experiences of Kenyan and Nigerian women. The rationale behind this research will give a clear idea of why I chose to investigate the migration experiences of women from Kenya and Nigeria and why I believe this research is important.

Rationale for the Study

Ravenstein (1885) once stated that “a woman is a greater migrant than man” (1885: 196). This was presented in the backdrop of statistical evidence about female migration to the United Kingdom at the time suggesting that women have been significant actors in migration. A substantial body of literature on women and migration has been built up since the 1980s, covering rural-urban migration in developing countries and international migration, with Morokvasic (1984: 886) stating that women were ‘birds of passage’ meaning that they are also actors of migration. Within this literature on women and migration, there is a small but growing body of work on the gendered aspects of migration decision-making but much of it focused on women migrating from Latin America and Asia (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994; Oishi,

2005; De Jong, 2000, Hoang, 2011a, 2011b). There have been fewer studies on African female migrants.

De Jong has been an advocate of research on migration decision-making. Together with Gardner (1981), has explored the development of theories of migration decision-making since 1955. De Jong and Gardner (1981) also documented the studies of others which explored different aspects of migration decision-making in developed and developing countries. Migration decision-making has also been explored from the perspective of the household and/or individual (Sell, 1981; and Root and De Jong, 1991). Other scholars such as Findlay and Li (1998), Boyd (1989), Reynolds (2006), Davies and Winters (2001) outlined how culture and migrant networks may play a role within the migration decision-making process. In terms of networks, the idea of gendered networks began to emerge in some scholarly work introducing the idea of exclusively female or male networks as a source of information. Kanaipuni (2000), Lawson (1998), Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) and Chant (1998) focused on gender roles and gendered migration and made a comparative analysis of men and women's choices during the migration decision-making process. Hoang's recent study (2011b) has captured the role of social identity and gender in migration decision-making in Vietnam, demonstrating how sociocultural expectations held about women and men can influence their migration decisions.

African migration scholars have tended to concentrate on the rural-urban migration patterns of women within particular countries (Byerlee, 1974, Agesa and Kim, 2001; Makinwa-Adebusoye, 1994; Oppong and Abu, 1987). In terms of international migration, there has been a focus on the movement of women as asylum seekers (Robinson and Segrott, 2002) or labour migrants (Arthur, 1991; 2008, Nowak, 2009) but relatively little on African women and migration decision-making especially in international migration. The studies by Nelson (1991) and Von Bülow (1994) have suggested that during pre-colonial times, society

placed certain expectations on men and women in relation to their gendered roles, but neither sex was considered to be more important than the other, as collectively they helped society and the family/household unit to function (Hay and Stichter, 1984: 9). Under colonial rule, Christianity changed gender dynamics making men more dominant within the marriage institution by promoting them as bread winners through the introduction of wage labour. This history reveals the creation of new gender relations which may have had an effect on women's ability to make or contribute to decision-making. In the next section, I discuss my reasons for investigating the migration decision-making experiences of Kenyan and Nigerian women in London.

Why Kenyan and Nigerian Migrant Women?

Kenya and Nigeria are both former British colonies which, since decolonisation, have established important links with the UK through trade, cultural exchanges and through export of labour migrants (Falola and Heaton, 2008). There are two reasons why this research is necessary and important and it is based on the literature available on the topic. First, this research is necessary because both countries have a large population of nationals resident in London. In 2007, the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) report on *Britain's Immigrants: An Economic Profile* outlined the population of economically active international migrants in London. They estimated the population of Kenyans stood at 123,600, with women accounting for 51 per cent of that population. Kenyan migrants were the third largest population of African migrants in London following the Nigerian population. In the same report, the Nigerian population in London was estimated to be 146,300, of which 48 per cent was constituted by women, making it the second largest African immigrant population in London next to South Africa (Sriskandarajah, Cooley and Kornblatt, 2007: 11). However, the statistics on the Kenyan immigrant population included black Africans, Asian-Kenyans as well as former European settlers. Nevertheless, the report revealed that there is a

significant population of female immigrants in London making the exploration of their experiences in relation to the migration decision-making process an interesting focus of study.

The second reason for this study is based on the fact that there have been relatively few studies that have concentrated on the migration decision-making experiences of black African women, especially in the case of Kenyan women. Previous studies on the migration patterns of Kenyans tended to focus on the migration experiences of the Asian population (Chadha, Sheikh, Sheikh, Prashar and Rozsa, 2010). There are few studies focusing on the international migration of Kenyan women (Kihato, 2007) which are difficult to identify, but the literature on rural-urban migration patterns in terms of household decision-making are easier to locate where men were assumed to be the primary decision-maker (Sly, 1985; Agesa and Kim, 2001; Agesa and Agesa, 1999). Far more sources are available on the migration experiences of Nigerian women (Reynolds, 2006; Komolafe, 2003). Despite this, there are few studies which have been able to capture some of the decision-making experiences of Nigerian women from a rural-urban migration perspective (Hollo, 1991; Olurude, 1995; Pittin, 1984; Surdakasa, 1977; Makinwa-Adebusoye, 1994). There are even fewer studies which have examined the influence of culture and migrant networks in the decision-making process.

Finally, another reason for investigating the experiences of Kenyan and Nigerian women in migration decision-making is because I wanted to compare the experiences of women from different national and cultural backgrounds. This exploration would help to put into perspective whether there were any differences or similarities they had when having the same experience of migration decision-making. To my knowledge, I have yet to find a study that has made such a comparison, therefore, I believe that this study would introduce a discussion in this area of research.

This area of research is important as it will help to contribute to the body of literature on migration decision-making and bring into focus the experience of Kenyan and Nigerian women. This would help to expand on the current literature on migration decision-making in Latin America and Asia, which has dominated this area of research as well as introduce a discussion of the process from an African perspective. In addition, it will contribute to developing a discussion about the influence of culture, networks and family in the migration decision-making process. For these reasons, I believe that my research is important and necessary. In studying the role of women in migration decision-making, it is important to acknowledge the different migrant categories which exist. These categories can indicate the women's reasons for migrating based on their migrant status.

Migrant Categories

Migration research tends to categorise migrants differently depending on whether the basis of the categorisation is social or legal. In sociological terms, for instance, a person migrating for the purpose of better employment opportunities and economic gains is considered a labour migrant. This category can be further divided in terms of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labour migrants. In legal terms, especially with regards to the UK immigration system, labour migrants fall into the 'work permit holder' category which in turn has been divided into different tiers which refer to the type of employment they have chosen to take up (UK Border Agency, 2008). Thus legal categorizations are based on the laws which govern the movements of individuals from particular countries to the UK while the sociological categorization describes the movements of an individual or group which may be influenced by external 'push' and 'pull' factors such as information provided by individuals in the destination country (network theory) and/or immigration policies which encourage people to migrate (systems theory).

This study targets black African Kenyan and Nigerian women who have migrated to the UK between 1990 and 2011. Within this group, I aimed to interview the following categories of migrants as constructed according to particular sociological or legal characteristics: labour migrants (working holiday makers, highly skilled migrants, international graduate student and work permit holders); temporary migrants (students); undocumented migrants; permanent residents and family migrants (those granted Indefinite Leave to Remain, those who have gained British nationality and dependants who accompanied the primary applicant or who arrived later in the context of family reunification). These different categories of migrant will provide some insight into their experiences of migration decision-making influenced by culture, networks and family which will expand on our understanding of the phenomenon.

In my initial proposal, I aimed to explore the migration decision-making experiences all migrant categories including asylum seekers and refugees as previous studies revealed that their migration may not have been voluntary as some were in a position to select where to claim asylum (Neumayer, 2004). However, because I was unable to identify sufficient numbers of Kenyan and Nigerian women in the UK in the category of asylum seekers and refugees, I chose to study a wider population of Nigerian and Kenyan migrant women. However, there have been interesting studies which have described the decision-making process of refugees and asylum-seekers to which interested readers can refer to (Koser and Pinkerton, 2002; Robinson and Sergott, 2002; Böcker and Havinga, 1999; Koser, 1997; Crawley, 2010).

Aims and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of my study is to explore how migration decision-making is carried out and how it is influenced by the social and cultural expectations, migrant networks and family situation of Kenyan and Nigerian women resident in London. I intended to:

- i. analyse how social and cultural expectations that their families and communities held of Kenyan and Nigerian women influence of their decision to migrate;
- ii. examine the role of family (i.e. children and husband) in the migration decision-making process;
- iii. explore how, according to the decisions they make, the women in my study are located within Oishi's 'ideal types' of female migrants; and
- iv. investigate the role of gendered networks in relation to these women's decision to migrate.

In order to achieve the above aims, the following objectives were pursued:

- i. an exploration of the migration histories of 30 women in London in order to understand the events that occurred before and during the process of migration decision-making;
- ii. a discussion of the role that children and/or husband's play in the migration decision-making of the Kenyan and Nigerian women;
- iii. a comparison of the migration experiences of Kenyan and Nigerian women demonstrating the effect of sociocultural expectations and use of networks on the decision to migrate; and
- iv. an analysis of how networks and information operate within a migration system and the role they played in the migration decision-making process of Kenyan and Nigerian women. In addition, it will outline how the women in my study advised potential migrants

Research Questions

Therefore, my project proposes to answer the following main research questions:

- i. How do the sociocultural expectations (e.g. responsibility for children) of the families and communities of Kenyan and Nigerian women affect their decision to

migrate?

- ii. What influence do family members (children, husband and parents) have in the migration decision-making process of Kenyan and Nigerian women?
- iii. Can 'ideal types' of female migrants identified by Oishi (2005) be applied to Kenyan and Nigerian women and can other categories be identified?
- iv. What role do gendered networks play in women's decision to migrate?
- v. How do these women, in turn, convey information to potential migrants in their respective countries? In other words, how do they contribute to the extension of social, gendered networks?

Thesis Structure: Chapter Summaries

This thesis comprises of five chapters excluding this introduction and the concluding chapter. **Chapter one** commences with a review of the literature outlining the theories of migration decision-making and the critiques of such theories by feminist and non-feminist scholars. In addition, it reviews the literature on women and migration decision-making, emphasising the main issues of concern highlighted by scholars e.g. gendered networks, culture and migration as well as household and individual migration decision-making.

Chapter two outlines my chosen methodology and methods. I explain my reasons for adopting a qualitative approach and outline my epistemological position in relation to my research. This will be followed by a presentation of my methods of data collection, in-depth semi-structured interviews and focus groups discussions (FGDs), and includes an explanation of the design, approach and implementation of the methods. I also discuss some of the problems of data collection encountered during the fieldwork as well as the strategies I adopted to overcome the barriers. My assumptions prior to and during the field were presented for the purposes of explaining how assumptions can be challenged in the field but can be useful for strategising an approach for accessing certain women.

Chapter three seeks to answer my first research question on the influence of the sociocultural perceptions, held by families and communities about Kenyan and Nigerian women, on migration decision-making. Some historical background (on the former British colonies from pre-colonial to post-independence times) will help to identify the different institutions in which women played a prominent role and how they were perceived by African society. A discussion of the changes that occurred under colonialism will demonstrate how external influences can shape perceptions of women's social role and position. This will provide a background to the responses of the women in my study, on their view of how family and community members viewed them as women in their respective society, which will help to explain how the learned perceptions played a role in the migration decision-making process.

Chapter four is divided into two sections answering the second and third research questions. Part A focuses on a discussion of the role of children in the migration decision-making process as well as that of parents and spouses. Part B draws on the findings of chapter three and this chapter to categorise the Kenyan and Nigerian women in my study using Oishi's 'ideal types' of female migrants model (2005).

Chapter five focuses on the use of networks and the information derived from them in migration decision-making. I adopt Fawcett's (1989) conceptual framework to describe the link between networks and information operating within a migration system. In addition, I will focus on answering two of my research questions in this section which relate to gendered networks and the advice given to potential migrants in Nigeria and Kenya. This chapter aims to demonstrate the use and role of networks by the Kenyan and Nigerian women in this study.

Finally, the concluding chapter summarises the findings of my thesis and indicate possibilities of further research in the area of women and migration decision-making.

Terminology

Before discussing the literature on migration decision-making, the following terms and their definitions need to be taken into account in order to understand the context in which I use them.

Capitalism is “an economic system in which natural resources and the means of producing goods and services are privately owned” (Macionis and Plummer, 1997: 415). Within my research, I discuss how the introduction of wage labour in sub-Saharan African (SSA) societies during colonialism created social divisions between women and men within the household which affected women’s ability to contribute to or make decisions (see discussion in Chapter 3, section 3.2.2).

Class is presented from the perspective of Marx Weber who defined it as “a group of individuals who share a similar position in a market economy, and by virtue of that fact receive similar economic rewards” (Haralambos and Holborn, 2008: 29). Class is therefore viewed in economic terms. Within this thesis I will define the different types of classes which include upper middle class, lower middle class, working class and underclass.

Socioeconomic status (SES) has been defined as “a composite ranking based on various dimensions of social inequality” (Macionis and Plummer, 1997: 253). Within my research, the socioeconomic status of the women takes into account the division of labour within the household and the earnings of the women in comparison to men.

Chapter 1

Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

The literature on migration has tended to side-line the experiences of female migrants. Kofman et al. (2000) stated the necessity of including women in migration studies and debates not only because of their role within the household but also their role as active participants in the process of migration. This includes theories of migration decision-making which have changed through time. Many theories have been designed and tested and empirical studies conducted that have described and analysed the nature of migration decision-making. Most of the theories at the initial stages of development viewed the male migrant and his characteristics as the standard and it was only in the 1980s that some scholars began to focus their attention on the role women played in migration in general (Litcher, 1983; Trager, 1984; Morokvasic, 1987; Lauby and Stark, 1988). This chapter reviews the literature on some of the main theories of migration decision-making taking into account empirical as well as theoretical evidence presented in this field of study. These theories include the human capital theory, place utility theory, systems theory, value expectancy theory and network theory. There exist other closely related theories, but for the purpose of my research, I will restrict my discussion to these five. Within this discussion, I will consider some of the critiques of theories of migration decision-making including those by some feminist writers. The review will include a discussion of women in household and individual migration decision-making to outline the arguments put forward. In addition, I will review research conducted on women, migration and culture as well as research on networks and migration decision-making in relation to women's experiences. My main focus will be on reviewing the literature on women from sub-Saharan African (SSA) societies, but I will include literature from other developing countries that have dominated this area of study. The

literature review will provide insight into the state of knowledge in this area of research and identify any gaps as well as potential areas of study in the future. However, discussing the literature on women and migration decision-making, I will outline some of the theoretical perspectives put forward to understand the phenomenon of migration decision-making.

1.2 Theories of Migration Decision Making

The first attempt to explore migration decision-making between two or several locations was conducted by Rossi (1955) who explored the reasons why families move homes and geographical locations, taking into account the community and the social ties that bind individual migrants or families to a given area. Since then, several theories of migration decision-making have been designed and tested to explain the different factors potential migrants assess in their decision-making. From the 1960s, several scholars began to explore the different motivations of migration behaviour initially focusing on economic migration decision-making (De Jong and Gardner, 1981; Sjaastad, 1962; Wolpert, 1965; Todaro, 1969). Of them, De Jong and Gardner (1981) provided a detailed summary of the development of migration decision-making theories which included Mabogunje's (1970) application of systems theory initially designed by McDonald (1969); place utility model (Wolpert, 1965) where the life cycle model was also discussed; human capital theory (Todaro, 1969) explaining economic migration patterns; and value expectancy theory (De Jong and Fawcett, 1981). Some of the theories are closely related as they critique and build others, e.g. the place utility model appears to have been modified by the value expectancy theory. In the next section, I describe the design of the theories and the empirical studies which have applied them in different contexts. In order to put the theories of migration decision-making into perspective, I discuss them in two categories. First, will be the motivational theories of migration decision-making, which include value expectancy theory, human capital theory and the place utility model. These theories explore migration decision-making from the

perspective of the migrant and the family. The second category includes the systems and network theory which have been described as theories that explain the perpetuation of migration decision-making (Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pelegrino and Taylor, 1993: 448). The theories explain how migration decision-making is maintained through the use of networks operating within migration systems.

1.2.1 Motivational Theories of Migration Decision-Making

a. Human Capital Theory

Influenced by the work of Todaro (1969), Da Vanzo (1976) and Byerlee (1974), the human capital theory refers to the cost-benefit calculations made by an individual (Sjaastad, 1962). Using Ravenstein's (1885, 1889) neoclassical theory of migration, the human capital theory measures economic factors such as the differences in wages between the sending and receiving locations, as well as non-economic factors, which include community ties between the original and destination locations as factors explaining migration decision-making (Da Vanzo, 1976). Non-economic factors have proven to be much harder to measure non-economic costs, referred to as non-statistical information, are hard to quantify. This, however, has been the most widely used theory in migration research especially in relation to labour migration patterns (Borjas, 1989) and theories of brain drain (Bildirici, Orcan, Sunal and Aykac, 2005). Borjas (1989) suggested that migration decisions are a result of an assessment of the values available in different locations where the migrant's decision takes into consideration legal and financial constraints (1989: 460). Most countries require the primary migrant to provide proof of maintenance for him/herself and their families for the duration of their stay in the country. The UK Border Agency outlines that the maintenance and accommodation (MMA) varies as it depends on the type of visa the primary migrant is applying for.

Todaro's (1969) and Harris and Todaro's (1970) research in developing countries was instrumental in demonstrating how individuals measured the cost of wage differentials against their potential of finding employment, during their migration decision-making, in rural-urban migration patterns (Todaro, 1969). The models were designed and tested in newly independent African states to understand the surge of migration to the urban areas. The human capital theory has been modified through time to adapt to changing social, economic and political conditions. In the 1990s, most of the research using this theory investigated the migration decision-making of dual-income households. Married couples became the focus of scholars and interest in women became part of the research on migration behaviour although they were still perceived as 'tied movers' and/or 'tied stayers' (Bielby and Bielby, 1992; Cooke and Bailey, 1996: 46; Shihadeh, 1991: 441). Tied mover is a term used to refer to the individual who migrates with his/her spouse, whose migration would result in a net gain for the family. The tied mover's net gains are smaller than that of the principal migrant (Mincer, 1978: 751). On the other hand, a tied stayer refers to a husband or wife who may be reluctant to leave for the purpose of family obligation (Bielby and Bielby, 1992: 1246). However, most of the studies conducted during the 1990s were on migration in Europe as well as North American countries, focusing on both internal and international movements.

Where research in developing countries in Africa is concerned, scholars tended to use the human capital theory to explore rural-urban migration patterns. Arthur (1991) argued that the human capital theory, along with the systems theory, were best suited for studying migration in Africa because of its emphasis on the labour market and economic conditions faced by migrants. In addition, it considered the family structure within a West African setting and was capable of explaining migration behaviour in the region (1991: 67). The theory has also been used to understand household relations between husbands and wives in both rural-urban and international migration. In the case of Kenya, Agesa and Agesa (1999)

explored the wage gap between rural and urban areas arguing that men were more educated than women and were more likely to migrate. Economic factors are important in considering migration decisions but these may be based on whether potential migrants are satisfied with the 'utilities' (e.g. goals) they are able to access in their country of origin. Dissatisfaction in the country of origin can lead potential migrants to explore 'utilities' in other locations, a term that Wolpert referred to as the place utility model (1965), discussed in the next section.

b. Place Utility Model

Wolpert's (1965) model took into consideration certain 'descriptive principles' that measured the process of rational thinking in terms of migration decisions. He argued that the 'intended rational man' tends to measure his options against each other before concluding on the best option (1965: 161). He explains that place utility can refer to the collection of utilities that a person possesses in his/her place of origin which he/she aims to achieve. It can also refer to the utilities a person expects to achieve in alternative locations of his/her choice (Wolpert, 1965: 162). Failure to acquire the expected utilities in the place of origin could lead to dissatisfaction thus initiating a search for alternative locations which have the expected utilities of a potential migrant. Wolpert does not define or give examples of what he means by utilities but suggests that they are goals that a person strives to achieve either in his/her place of origin or alternative locations. Place utility model also takes into account a person's life stage, that is, what s/he is experiencing at a particular stage of his/her life (e.g. marriage, birth of children, divorce, death etc.) which determines the utilities s/he hopes to achieve in the chosen destination. Roseman (1983: 159) argued that each individual has the potential to make the decision to migrate, but that it depends on when they have realised it. The place utility theory can be related to the value expectancy theory (De Jong and Fawcett, 1981) which explores how 'values' (e.g. wealth, status) lacking in the country of origin can

encourage migration to locations that offer the desired utilities. Value expectancy is discussed in the next section.

Brown and Longbrake (1970) tested the place utility model in household migration decision-making by exploring how households select a new residential location based on the environmental surroundings. They argued that the surrounding environment near a residential area, the neighbourhood and its proximity to shops, for example were factors taken into consideration in decision-making (1970: 370). McHugh (1984) argues that “over the life course, individuals are continually building social, economic and psychic attachments to places based upon various experiences...persons are also continually depreciating ties and bonds with places over time” (1984: 317). He was discussing the link between the life cycle model and the place utility model as people have different experiences throughout their lives which may tie them to a place or cause them to sever links with a location. Therefore, potential migrants could consider a new place that would provide them with the utilities that are lacking in their place of origin. The life cycle model is important to consider in migration decision-making as it may show how people’s life s stage ituations influence their migration decisions.

The place utility model and the life cycle model together were quite instrumental in explaining how different phases of life can influence the migration decision-making process. As mentioned earlier, the place utility model closely resembles the value expectancy theory, which is discussed below.

c. Value Expectancy Theory

De Jong and Fawcett’s theory (1981) is a psychosocial model which “calls for the specification of the personally valued goals that might be met by moving (or staying) and an assessment of the perceived linkages, in terms of expectancy, between migration behaviour

and the attainment of goals in alternative locations” (1981: 47). They add that decisions can be indirectly affected by the socio-economic and demographic situation of an individual or household, the cultural and social norms of the migrant as well as the ability to take the risk (1981: 31). The theory was influenced by the works of Stouffer (1940), Bogue (1959), Beshers and Nishirua (1961) and Chemers, Ayman and Werner (1978). The research conducted by Stouffer (1940) explored how the decision to migrate can be related to distance in migration by suggesting that people move as far as they have to and that their knowledge about other locations determines their choice of movement (1940). Bogue (1959) adds that for some individuals the decision to migrate can be motivated by the economic and social environment. He argues that migration occurs as a result of dissatisfaction with the location and a strong urge to seek other opportunities elsewhere (1959: 499). As such, the expectancy theory considered how dissatisfaction within a location could lead to migration, an idea that Wolpert outlined in place utility model (1965).

Beshers and Nishirua (1961) promoted the idea that migration usually depended on the head of household who is the sole decision maker for the household even though the head may not be the primary migrant (1961: 214). One of Beshers and Nishirua’s most important contributions relates to the two types of decision-makers involved in the process. First, the ‘purposive-rational’ decision-maker (1961: 215) refers to the individual who lists his/her options and weighs the pros and cons, basing the decision on the option that best suits him/her. Second, the ‘short-run hedonistic’ decision-maker refers to an individual whose decision relates to situational factors in employment; that is, if an individual is disillusioned at work, s/he would be more likely to consider migration but perhaps as a short term goal (1961: 215). This also closely resembles Wolpert’s place utility model (1965).

Chemers, Ayman and Werner (1978) expanded on Beshers and Nishirua’s argument (1961) when exploring migration patterns in Iran and where they use the expectancy theory to

incorporate both 'individual desires and cultural contexts' (1978: 43). Chemers *et.al.* argued that, "the more valued the outcomes and the higher the subjective estimate the behaviour would eventuate in obtaining them, the more likely it is that the individual will engage in the behaviour" (1978: 43). In other words, an individual is more likely to engage in certain behaviour if they feel that the outcomes are valuable to them. In their research, they looked at three different types of migrants in Iran: people living in rural areas who had never moved to cities; migrants living in Tehran; and regressive migrants who moved back and forth between rural and urban towns. They predicted that individuals would live in locations where they have a higher opportunity of achieving their goals with the rural and regressive migrants as having higher levels of motivations in the rural areas and the migrants in cities having higher outcomes (1978: 44). They used the expectancy theory to predict migration in a cross-cultural setting.

Prior to De Jong and Fawcett's design (1981) of the value-expectancy theory, several scholars had applied, tested and expanded on each other's ideas of what the expectancy theory should cover and the latter closely resembled the place utility model (Wolpert, 1965). However, De Jong and Fawcett (1981) identified a fundamental flaw in previous theories, which was their inability to explain why certain people did not move despite being in the same social and cultural environment as those who moved (1981: 43). De Jong and Fawcett's contribution to the theoretical design and application of expectancy theory was to add conceptual values that an individual would consider in their migration decisions as values they expected to achieve in potential destination areas. These values include wealth, status, comfort, suggestions, autonomy, affiliation and morality (see table 1 for descriptions).

Therefore, it will be interesting to see whether and how the values of the theory can be identified in the migration decision-making of Kenyan and Nigerian women in London, which will be covered in chapters three, four and five. Nevertheless, there are two other

theories closely related to each other that are important to consider in migration decision-making. Systems theory (McDonald, 1969; Mabogunge, 1970) and network theory (Fawcett, 1989) are important for my study as they explain how the motivational theories of migration decision-making link to perpetual theories of migration decision-making. These theories are dealt with in the next section.

Table 1 Conceptual Categories of the Value Expectancy Theory

General Values/Goals	Indicators of Values/Goals
Wealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - having high income; stable income - having economic security in old age - being able to afford basic needs; some luxuries - having access to welfare payments and other economic benefits
Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - having a prestigious job - being looked up in the community - obtaining good education - having power and influence
Comfort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - having an 'easy' job - living in a pleasant community - having ample leisure time - having comfortable housing
Stimulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - having fun and excitement - doing new things - being able to meet a variety of people
Autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being economically independent - being free to say and do what you want - having privacy - being on your own
Affiliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - living near family and friends - being part of a group/community - having a lot of friends - being with spouse/ prospective spouse
Morality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - living a virtuous life - exposing children to good influences - living in a community with a favourable climate

Source: De Jong and Fawcett (1981: 50)

1.2.2 Perpetual Theories of Migration Decision-Making

a. Systems Theory

This theory conceptualised migration as a system of networks that links different countries (Bilsborrow and Zlotnik: 1996). Arango (2004: 29) argues that the systems theory refers to the “spaces characterised by the relatively stable association of a group of receiving countries with a number of areas of origin”. Systems theory has been discussed in relation to westernized countries by McDonald (1969) who analysed the factors that caused immigration and emigration to occur in relation to international labour migration. For example, employment opportunities in another country may encourage or ‘push’ people to move and the immigration policies of a given country may ‘pull’ migrants towards it (1989: 439). Mabogunje (1970) discussed systems theory within the context of rural-urban migration patterns in Nigeria to discover how a rural dweller becomes a permanent urban resident. He was looking to explore the link between rural and urban migration by analysing the various sub-systems (e.g. institutions) that exist between the two locations (1970: 1). Consequently, systems theory considers the influence of both economic and non-economic push-pull factors on migration behaviour and appears to integrate the ideas contributed by the two theories discussed earlier.

As mentioned above, the systems theory considers the linkages between locations which can be established through colonial links, exchange of goods and services as well as ideas (Massey *et.al.*, 1993: 454). In order for the exchange of goods, capital and people to occur, agreements may be established between two or more countries. According to Faist (2000), some systems theorists have used the social network theory to explain the linkages between countries of origin and destination countries arguing that networks are used to study the flow of goods and resources “through particular configurations of social and symbolic ties” (2000: 52) that exist in migration systems. As a result, Faist (2000) suggests that in

order to understand how goods, resources and ideas are exchanged, a researcher may consider the linkages that exist between the country of origin and the destination country through networks. In the next section, I will discuss Fawcett's conceptual framework (1989) that was used to connect the systems theory to the network theory.

b. Network Theory

Networks play a vital role in the migration decision-making process as they exist in the form of interpersonal links that connect not only migrants from the same country or region but also former migrants and non-migrants both in the country of origin and destination country (Massey *et.al.*, 1993: 448). The larger the network, the lower the cost and risks of migration and the higher the net returns and likelihood of making a decision to migrate. The networks in the destination country will provide information and possibly financial and social support once an individual has migrated to the country thereby reducing risk in the destination country. The most common networks are those which exist between individuals in the destination country and the country of origin through families, relatives, friends and the community. Massey *et.al.* (1993: 448) argue that networks can be viewed as a form of social capital which members can use to gain access to employment opportunities abroad. The concept of social capital has been associated with the works of Bourdieu (1985) and Coleman (1988).

According to Bourdieu social capital refers to "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (2004: 51). Coleman (1988) added that social capital exists in the relations between people and its value relies on the social structures which its members use to achieve a particular goal or interest. He suggested that these relations may be dependent on trust, expectation and obligation. By

looking at a favour as a credit slip, Coleman suggests that if a person has a range of favours owed to him/her from others in his/her network, then he/she should expect many favours to be returned to him/her (1988: S101-102). Garip (2008: 594-595), on the other hand, presented social capital in migration as resources such as information or direct assistance given to potential migrants (recipients) by former migrants (networks). The relationship between the recipients and the sources of information may determine the value and/or usefulness of the resources. From these definitions, it is clear that networks and social capital are closely related as the network members rely on each other for information and assistance.

As mentioned earlier, Fawcett (1989) developed a conceptual framework that connected systems theory with network theory. His framework outlines the non-personal links which exist in international migration and he identifies four categories of linkages (networks) in relation to three types of linkages which operate within a system. The four categories of linkages/networks include:

- State to State Relations;
- Mass Culture Connections (e.g. mass media);
- Family and Personal Networks;
- Migrant Agency Activities (e.g. NHS recruitment agencies).

The three types of linkages include those which are tangible, regulatory and relational and are to be found in each of the four categories mentioned above. In order to understand how the types of linkages work in relation to networks, I describe below the relations between the linkages and family and personal networks as an example.

a. Tangible, Family and Personal Networks

Tangible linkages to this network can be linked to the monetary remittances, gifts and written communication between individuals in the destination country and the country of

origin (Fawcett, 1989: 675). The relationship between the potential migrant and family members as well as personal contacts reveal the close interactions they engage in whereby the network would provide some material product (e.g. remittances representing potential wealth) or face-to-face as well as written information about a destination country. The information can be useful for immediate family as well as members of the community who have not migrated (Winters, de Janvry and Sadoulet, 2001: 161).

b. Regulatory, Family and Personal Networks

Regulatory linkages in this network refer to the cultural obligations between relatives, friends or classmates in the destination country and the potential migrant. They determine who to support in the migration process, for example, informing members of the same ethnic community about jobs in an ethnic restaurant which requires authentic waiters/waitresses from that particular ethnicity (Fawcett, 1989: 676). Therefore, migrants in the destination country are expected to provide information and support to potential migrants.

c. Relational, Family and Personal Networks

Relational linkages with family and personal networks relate to the way that potential migrants gauge the socioeconomic status of emigrants and return migrants. Emigrants and return migrants viewed as successful in the destination country in terms of financial achievements, for example, are more likely to be viewed as role models for potential migrants who hope to achieve the same success or better. Therefore, their decision to migrate is based on the potential benefits and financial gains they hope to achieve in relation to the experiences of emigrants and return migrants. A more detailed discussion of Fawcett's (1989) conceptual framework as well as the table outlining these categories and types of linkages is discussed in more detail in chapter five because it provides a background to the findings in my study.

Networks in migration decision-making are important as they ensure that potential migrants connect with the relevant sources of information that can help inform their decision to migrate. Equipped with some positive and negative information, the potential migrants can prepare for the new destination. Hence, this section has mainly focused on describing some of the migration decision-making theories which have been developed to explain the process. In the next section, I focus on empirical studies which have tested the theories and explain how they can be usefully applied to my research.

1.3 Empirical Research on Migration Decision-Making

It is important to bear in mind that in the application of the theories of migration decision-making, several scholars have used quantitative methods to test the theories and fewer qualitative methods have been used to describe the migration decision-making process from a subjective perspective.

In terms of the human capital theory, this has been applied in several studies in which scholars adopted Todaro's (1969) and Harris and Todaro's (1970) model to explain the migration internally and internationally. Scholars such as Mincer (1970) and Bielby and Bielby (1992) have used this theory to study the movements of married couples and the decision-making they engage in, thus developing concepts such as 'tied mover' and 'tied stayer'. Neto and Mullet's (1998) study of the decision-making of Portuguese teenagers demonstrated how the human capital theory and the network theory work together as the potential migrants rely on networks that provide information about wage differentials and employment opportunities in the destination location (1998: 59). They found that the presence of a relative in the destination increases the chances of migrating as the relative would be able to assist the new migrant in finding employment that pays higher wages than their earnings in their place of origin. This shows that more than one migration decision-

making theory can be applied within a particular study. Other scholars that have used the human capital theory to explore migration decision-making include Yezer and Thurston (1976), Hunt and Kau (1985) Farber (1983) and Shumway and Hall (1996).

The value expectancy theory, like the human capital theory, has also been widely used to explain how potential migrants employ a 'cognitive calculus' of their expected goals in a potential destination (De Jong and Fawcett, 1981: 49). The theory was applied in several studies including that of De Jong, Abad, Arnold, Cariño, Fawcett and Gardner (1983), De Jong, Richter and Isarabhakdi (1996) and De Jong (2000), where they asked their respondents to rate the level of importance for each value and assess whether their expectations had been met. De Jong, Abad, Arnold, Cariño, Fawcett and Gardner's (1983) research in Thailand, investigated internal and international migration of rural migrants in Ilocos to Manila and Ilocos to Hawaii, USA. They examined the significance of individual expectations of achieving economic values taken into account in the decision-making process. They hoped to identify variables such as money constraints and household characteristics which could be used to explain migration (1983: 471). They used a survey to identify the values of their respondents where the latter survey rated the values according to the level of importance of value to them. In addition, the respondents were asked to compare the values they expected prior to migrating from Ilocos to those they achieved after they had migrated to Manila and Hawaii.

The results of the study revealed the values that many of their participants had expected to achieve prior to migration and these included morality and comfort in Ilocos, whereas in Hawaii, participants revealed that they achieved wealth and status and Manila bound migrants identified the values of stimulation and status as the values they wanted to achieve. As an analytical framework, the theory was used quantitatively to compare value

expectancies before and after migration as it was used to provide 'proximate causal variables'¹ to explain the decision to migrate (1983: 476).

Within the context of Africa, very few studies have applied the value expectancy theory to understand its role in migration decision making. The exceptions are Kok, O'Donovan, Bouare and Van Zyl (2003) who used the theory to explore the multiple motives of internal migration in South Africa. Karlsson's study (2008) in Tanzania, to a small extent, explored the expectations and values of potential rural migrants bound for urban areas. She explained that one of her participants wanted to move into an urban area because she expected to access certain services. She highlighted her expectation to find cars, tarmac roads and banking services, in urban centres (2008: 19-20). These expectations may not be related entirely to some of the listed values in De Jong and Fawcett's model (1981), but could expand on other values to be taken into consideration in the model. In my research, identifying some of the expected values such as wealth and status of some women would help to understand the role that expected values played in the women's migration decision-making process, especially if those values relate to sociocultural factors which may have pushed them out of their country.

Meanwhile, there was Wolpert's place utility model (1965) which was designed to show how dissatisfaction in one area can lead a potential migrant to consider alternative locations. A few studies were identified that had used this model. Those that did adopted quantitative methods to predict the movements of people attracted to a new location because of the utilities it offered (Brown and Longbrake, 1970). Brown and Longbrake's study discussed how place utility functions in migration decisions. They identified two ways in

¹ Proximate causal variables within the context of De Jong *et.al.* (1983) research refers to factors such as personal traits, knowledge of the destination country, ability to afford migration as well as the human capital characteristics of the potential migrant. These variables affect the potential migrant's decision and may result in migration based on the assessment of these and other factors (1983: 476)

which it functions. “First, it is a factor in the household’s decisions to seek [a] new residential site. [Second the] place utility is also a factor in the household’s decision of where to search for a new residence and ultimately where to locate” (1970: 370). It would be interesting to explore the utilities sought by family members in the migration decision-making, especially expected utilities of children and husbands’ in order to understand how the utilities of others influence the migration decision-making process. Other studies have explored the expected utilities of husband and wife in the destination location (McDevitt and Gadalla, 1985). McDevitt and Gadalla explored how the subjective place utilities of couples influenced migration decision making within a village setting in northern Egypt. Their study concluded that the expected utilities of the husband were deemed more important than that of the wife and influenced the decision to migrate.

The concern in this thesis would be to consider the expected place utilities of the women in my study and how they were instrumental in their decision-making process, including initiating a search for alternative destinations. As previous research was concerned with measuring and predicting movement, this research is concerned with describing how place utilities operate within the decision-making of the women and also in family migration decision-making.

In terms of the migration systems theory, Zlotnik’s study (1992) identified six principles of migration systems, one of which stated that in order to understand the migration flows between two nations, data needed to be collected from both the sending and receiving countries. Bilborrow and Zlotnik (1996) suggested that household surveys would be a useful data collection method that would help in understanding the determinants of migration (1996: 69). Though they were not applying the theory to any particular society, they made suggestions as to how to apply the theory within international migration. There have been very few studies which have used the systems theory especially in understanding migration

decision-making. However, studies have outlined the linkages between countries where they have described the connections between recruitment agencies in the destination country and potential employees in countries of origin which takes into account the flow of migrants. McGregor's study (2006) on the migration patterns of nurses bound for the UK from Zimbabwe described how migrant agencies in the UK were actively recruiting for the National Health Service (NHS). It is noticeable that there are few studies that apply the systems theory on its own and scholars such as Arthur (1991) found Mabogunge's model useful in investigating rural-urban migration and the linkages between the two locations. The systems theory is best understood when it is applied with other theories of migration decision-making such as the human capital theory, value expectancy theory, place utility model and network theory.

Finally, network theory has been used in studies in Latin America and Asia (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994; Winters, de Janvry and Sadoulet, 1998; Reynolds, 2002; Curran and Rivero-Fuentes, 2003). Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) in particular focused on the networks of men and women, highlighting differences in the type of information or support both groups received and how both groups accessed their networks (see section 1.7 for further discussion). In Winters, de Janvry and Sadoulet's (1998), data was used from the national survey of rural households in Mexico to find out the impact of networks on the decision to migrate. The value of the information transmitted to potential migrants depended on clearly outlined information such as that relating to job opportunities and on the source of the information, for example, someone who had already migrated to the United States (1998: 161). Their study revealed that family and community networks were used interchangeably for information so that if an individual did not have strong family ties in the destination country, s/he was more likely to rely on community networks. In addition, they argued that if

a large network exists in a particular location, it can affect the individual's choice of destination as a person will most likely move to a region with a large network (1998: 181).

Curran and Rivero-Fuentes (2003) also studied the role of gender and networks in internal migration in Mexico and international migration to the United States. Their results revealed that female networks were more important for internal migration and male networks were more important in international migration. Reynolds (2002), on the other hand, analysed the chain migration that relies upon established networks in the United States and their interactions with potential migrants in Nigeria. An established migrant organisation called the 'Organisation of Ndi Igbo' (ONI) started up with the migration of a primary immigrant in 1969 which was followed by slow migration flows to the Chicago region, but which sped up later on and expanded the population of Igbo (Nigerian ethnic group) in the region. They provided support and a sense of companionship based on ethnic lines (2002: 275). Thus, the information and support provided by networks, as a result of both individual and chain migrations, are important for an individual in making her/his decision not only in terms of reducing costs and risks but also establishing a home away from home with individuals from the same community or country.

This brief review has attempted to show how theories can be applied in a range of social settings and geographical locations and, at the same time, how some scholars have provided an overview of a theory. However, the theories have been subjected to criticism by a range of scholars including feminist scholars who have identified gaps in their design and application especially in terms of understanding the migration decision-making of female migrants.

1.4 Critiques of Mainstream Migration Decision-Making Theories

There have been some scholars that have been critical of some of the traditional theories of migration decision-making especially when focusing on women in the migration process. A number of feminist and non-feminist scholars have critiqued mainstream traditional theories of migration decision-making and Kanaiaupuni (2000), in particular, provides a useful overview of some of these critiques. She outlines five problematic areas in mainstream theories. These are “the human capital investments, the socioeconomic status, the familial considerations, social networks and local opportunities in the place of origin relative to opportunities abroad” (2000: 1313). I will briefly discuss these problematic areas in relation to the mainstream theories of migration decision-making. It should be noted that the discussion below relates to some, but not all of the on-going debates on women and migration. The interested reader should refer to Boyd (1989), Kofman, *et.al.* (2000), Lawson (1998), Pittin (1984), Pedraza, (1991), and Chant (1991) for an overview of the debates on women and migration.

1.4.1 Critique of Human Capital Theory

a. Human Capital Investments

The ‘human capital investments’ and the ‘local opportunities in the place of origin relative to opportunities abroad’ can be related to the human capital theory. As mentioned earlier, the human capital theory is a calculated decision made when the costs and benefits are measured against the probability of finding a job in the destination location (Todaro, 1969). This takes into account qualities an individual may have such as level of education that will allow a potential migrant access to a particular job. Some feminists have criticized this theory for failing to take into account the structural and normative forces which favour men over women as well as the importance of intra-household dynamics (Kanaiaupuni, 2000; Lawson, 1998). In the case of Mexican women, patriarchal society shaped the roles and expectations

of men and women, where men were encouraged to provide financial support for the family and women were expected to care for and nurture the family. As a result, women occupied a position that disadvantaged them because they were not contributing to the household economy (Kanaiupuni, 2000: 1314). Intra-household dynamics refers to the power relations between men and women within the household (Agawal, 1997). Men usually have more power than women as they are expected to provide financially for their families meaning that they normally reserve the right to make the final decision. However, the theory fails to consider the experiences of women who challenge male decisions and gender ideologies within the household (Lawson, 1998: 42).

The intra-household relations within some West African communities during the 1960s and 1970s illustrate two different pictures between two ethnic groups in Nigeria, the Hausa and Yoruba. The Hausa had a similar patriarchal society to that in Mexico, mentioned by Kanaiaupuni (2000), where men were considered to be the heads of household and women were expected to care for the family and home. The only difference between the Hausa and the Mexican women was that the Hausa women were disempowered further by religion (Islam). Some Hausa women were secluded once they were married “in accordance to Muslim tradition” (Surdakasa, 1977: 182), however, Makinwa-Adebusoye (1994: 224) argued that some women did work to be viewed as respectable adults but the population of female migrants was smaller than that of Hausa male migrants bound for Ghana. Makinwa-Adebusoye (1994) noted that “Hausa culture and Islamic law dictate that all women marry, which is a custom that greatly curtails a woman’s freedom of movement. Moreover, Hausa society has no legitimate role for unmarried adult girls who are derogatorily known as *karuwai*²(prostitutes), a term also used to denote unmarried widows and divorcees” (1994:

² *Karuwai* is a courtship system where Hausa women living in the same house are courted by different men who present them with small gifts before engaging in sexual intercourse. The men at the end decide how much they

225). Women's migration was therefore socioculturally controlled by the norms held by members of society that prevented women from migrating on their own. By holding women to stereotypes, men discouraged them from migrating. This situation is described in Lambert's study of the internal migration behaviour of Sierra Leonean women (2007).

Yoruba women, on the other hand, were more independent as they were and have been known to be commercial migrants (e.g. traders) since pre-colonial times (Surdakasa, 1977). In the 1960s and 1970s, Yoruba women were more economically independent than women in other ethnic groups in the region such as the Hausa. In its early development, the human capital theory, as applied and tested by Harris and Todaro (1970), failed to consider gender in household decision-making related to rural-urban migration. Their primary focus was to demonstrate how expected earnings in the urban centres would affect the economic behaviour of a rural migrant as described earlier. Nevertheless, the intra-household relations differed between the Hausa, the Mexican and the Yoruba women as the latter had more flexibility to migrate. Thus, intra-household relations between women and men vary in different regions but are important in the decision-making process as they determine the influence a woman may have in the decision-making process as it relates to costs and benefits.

In the 1990's, most studies using the human capital theory began to research on dual-earning households, where both husband and wife became the focus of research (Bielby and Bielby, 1992). However, according to Chattopadhyay (2000), Bielby and Bielby's (1992) account of tied mover and tied stayer always showed women playing a subordinate role in family migration decisions. Hiller and McCaig (2007) summarised the situation in the 1980s and 1990s by stating that "the patriarchal model of gender/family relations assumed that the

will pay for the brief courtship, instead of a price being negotiated beforehand. This is based on the belief that Hausa women are passive (Pittin, 1984:1301)

true migrant was a male in search of economic betterment, placing women in the position of being merely accompanying family” (2007: 458). The trend has changed and since the year 2000, women have been seen as active labour migrants who sometimes forgo having children to pursue their own goals; have fewer children thus allowing them to work; or leave their children behind. Migration to other locations is, therefore, based on their own assessment or contribution to a family migration decision (2007: 459). Hence, although considering the economic costs and benefits of migration is important, it is equally important to consider the position and cultural expectations of women within a community and the household. Another critique of the human capital theory pointed out by Kanaiaupuni (2000) relates to local opportunities.

b. Local Opportunities

The local opportunities in the place of origin relative to those abroad refer to the jobs available or in demand in the destination country in comparison to the country of origin. Kanaiaupuni (2000) argued that migration may occur in areas where there are poor local opportunities (e.g. poor income). She argues that women are constrained by gender as men are in a better position to secure employment locally and even if the women secure employment, they experience occupational discrimination. She adds that migration as a result of conditions in the local area also depend on the opportunities available in destination countries (2000: 1316), which may depend on the immigration policies of the destination country. Kofman et.al (2000) are critical of immigration systems for establishing policies and rules that confine women to the private sphere. Women who migrate independently and the type of employment they engage in is often not recognized as ‘work’ as it falls within the domestic sphere (2000: 24). Boyd (1989) argued that government policies can both encourage and discourage migration of certain groups of people. Family reunification schemes in Europe, guest worker programmes in West Germany and the Highly Skilled

Migration Scheme (HSMP) in the UK are some of the many policies adopted in many western countries to attract migrants for the purpose of meeting the country's economic needs (McLaughan and Salt, 2002). There are, however, some schemes that attract more men than women because they relate to particular industries. For example, the guest worker programme in Germany during the 1960s was designed to attract manual labourers to help build the economy, for example, in the construction industry dominated by men. Later on the family reunification scheme was established to allow for migrants, who chose to settle in the destination country after the guest worker programme ended, to bring in their families and most of the time, women migrated under the family reunification scheme (Castles, 1986: 771). Towards the turn of the century, the UK also developed a similar policy to attract more women because of the shortage of skills in nursing under the UK Border Agency category of overseas qualified nurses and midwives which ended in 2008. Even though the government had established a policy to attract mostly women, it also managed to de-skill many women who worked in positions other than those for which they trained (Piper, 2005: 8). Thus, it can be argued that the human capital theory with regards to opportunities available in the destination location does not take into account the role of immigration policies which may attract more men than women, or vice versa. Kanaiaupuni (2000) also discussed how gender relations can determine the socio-economic status and assets available to women and men that critique the value expectancy theory.

1.4.2 Critique of Value Expectancy Theory

Kanaiaupuni (2000) argued that women may not be in a position of power socio-economically or have assets that could place them in the position of an economic provider. She argues that the reasons why an individual may migrate could be for financial gains for further investment in their business which was mostly in the hands of men, in the case of Mexico. However, she states that some scholars are unable to explain the independent

migration decisions by women who do not own a business nor engage in agricultural activities unrelated to the family business in their country of origin (Kanaiaupuni, 2000: 1314). This critique can be related to the value expectancy theory as the theory takes into account the expected values a migrant may be lacking in their country of origin and these values can be related to their access to assets and socio-economic status. In the case of Kanaiaupuni (2000), women may migrate for other reasons that may not be related to wealth and the socio-economic status and assets available to women may help to determine their expected values in potential destination countries. In a sense, the socio-economic status of women and assets available to them in their country of origin are important factors to consider as differences exist between them in terms of social class, ethnicity and educational background, just to mention a few. Boserup (1985) argued that in most African countries, women occupied a low economic status, especially in Muslim societies, because they were mostly economically dependent on men as they had no access to land that could sustain them. Women could not own land as the land reforms in certain countries gave men ownership of land which gave the power to dispose women (1985: 388-389).

However, Reynolds' (2006) study revealed how women's socio-economic status in Nigeria was a key factor in their migration decisions. She explained that some of the women in her study left to gain financial security in countries where it was possible. They described situations where their husbands would do little to provide for the family despite earning a good salary (2006: 177). However, Reynolds was studying a group of women who belonged to the upper middle class³ in society and their experiences differed from those women belonging to a lower class. Since the end of colonialism, the employment market in Nigeria has changed and some women still engage in agricultural activities, others are working in

³ The upper middle class represent those who have above average income. They are in a position to accumulate property and live in good neighbourhoods. They possess recognised skills (e.g. educational qualifications) that would give them access to material wealth and investment opportunities (Macionis and Plummer, 1997: 273; Haralambos and Holborn, 2008: 52)

industry or business in urban areas. The values and utilities which attract women to a particular location may differ from those which attract men. In the case of women, some may not have similar access to resources as others which would depend on their social class, ethnicity and education background. As a result, women's position in the migration decision-making process would need further investigation especially in terms of understanding how the values of women, married or single, feed into the migration decision-making process either as values or utilities. Finally, Kanaiaupuni (2000) provided a critique of the network theory in relation to women and migration.

1.4.3 Critique of Network Theory

Relations between family members (nuclear and extended) can be linked to the migration risks men and women face throughout their life cycle. Women have been viewed as 'associational migrants' who follow their husbands' (Adepoju, 1995: 94) or 'tied movers' linked to their husbands movements (Adepoju, 1995; and Mincer, 1978). Kanaiupuni (2000) found women's motivation to be hindered by social and cultural barriers such as childbirth and their responsibility as mothers. However, at a later stage in their life cycle, women are encouraged to move in order to visit or assist their children who have migrated. But in other countries, women can be isolated and tied to the home after marriage and cannot migrate without their spouse. Those who do were often viewed as 'prostitutes' as it was the case in Nigeria (Kanaiaupuni, 2000 and Pittin, 1984). Therefore, factors encouraging migration (families or friends) and the barriers which delay women's efforts to migrate or to influence migration need to be considered.

Social networks can be linked to familial considerations as they provide both support and information about the destination country. The importance of female networks has been explored in detail by Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) where she identified the challenges faced by Mexican women who desired to migrate to the United States but did not have access to

information or resources as their husbands discouraged them from migrating. Instead, the women sought assistance from other women in the destination country challenging their husband's refusal. In their study, Winters, de Janvry and Sadoulet (1998) stress that the source and content of information passed on is important. Some of the men did not support their wives' decision to migrate and therefore they may have provided little or no information on the migration process in order to maintain control over the women (Boyd, 1989). There are instances where organisations such as employment agencies specifically target women (e.g. nurses) for employment in countries with labour shortage in certain industries. Such organisations act as networks because they provide potential employees with information about the job and country of destination as well as support.

Organisations recruiting specifically women may not be female networks, but they are organisations which operate in favour of women (Pedraza, 1991: 308). Some feminist scholars suggest that the role of female networks and institutions which provide information as well as support to women needs to be considered in migration decision-making research because they may play an important role in the decision to migrate and make the position and role of women more visible. Harzig (2001) adds that most female migrants rely on extended networks and in case of economic migration she suggests women relied on the family to support their migration. She further argues that "it is these household and family strategies and consideration which at first confused the individual based rational-choice models of the sociologists who were trying to explain emigration" (2001: 23). Rationality, in her opinion, should rely on the perspective of the migrant because what is rational to a researcher may not be rational to a migrant. She stresses that the meso-level (i.e. social ties and social capital) can be used as an analytical tool to assess migration decision-making which would help researchers understand the interactions between individuals and families (nuclear and extended), communities and other social circles (2001: 23).

Thus, some scholars have highlighted key shortcomings of the mainstream migration decision-making theories and have made suggestions for future research to incorporate women within some of the theoretical models. There has been significant progress in research on women using migration decision-making theories to analyse decision-making practices in which women engage which include research by Pedraza (1991), Piper and Roces (2003), Anthias (2000), Oishi (2002; 2005), and Hoang (2011a) as well as others. However, more focus is needed to explore the experiences of women. In the next section, I discuss one of the main debates that has been taking place in migration decision-making research. The discussion focuses on household and individual migration decision-making where I review studies that have outlined the position of women within the two processes.

1.5 Women in Household and Individual Migration Decision-Making

Massey (1990: 9) argued that household migration decision-making is a collective process where the needs of the members of a household are taken into account in terms of the cost, benefits and risks of migration. Individual migration decision-making, on the other hand, is a subjective cost-benefit calculation made by an individual where he/she considers the expected values he/she hopes to achieve in the destination location. Individual migration can also be part of a family strategy where members of the household can elect an individual to migrate for the purposes of supporting the household (Massey, 1990: 10). In this section, I focus on the discussions on individual and household migration decision-making and outline the empirical studies that have explained the process. I discuss how women have been portrayed within the two processes.

1.5.1 Individual Migration Decision-Making

According to Fawcett (1986), the process of investigating individual migration decision-making has been explored in migration psychology. He argues that studies that focused in this area compared “underlying attitudes, values, perceptions and migration

intentions” (1986: 5) of the potential migrant. Fawcett suggests that individual migration decision-making is linked to the value expectancy theory (De Jong and Fawcett, 1981) and the place utility model (Wolpert, 1965) as these are theories that explore migration from the expected values and utilities of an individual migrant. Individual migration decision-making can also be linked to human capital theory (Todaro, 1969) which is an “individual income maximisation model” (Massey, 1990: 10). Individuals choose to move to locations where they can benefit from their human capital investment which can be dependent on the expected values and utilities of the individual (Gubhaju and De Jong, 2009: 35).

Haberkorn (1981) developed a five-stage process that occurs in the socio-psychological process of individual migration decision-making using Janis and Mann’s (1977: 77) seven-stage decision-making process. The five-stage process includes: stage one, appraising the challenge; stage two, surveying alternatives; stage three, weighing alternatives; stage four, deliberating about commitment; and stage five, adhering despite negative feedback (1981: 256-7). When appraising the challenge, Haberkorn argues that an individual makes an assessment of his/her situation in his/her place of origin (i.e. facing job loss or dissatisfaction), similar to Wolpert’s place utility model. Once an assessment is made, he/she would survey alternative options in his/her place of origin where options would be eliminated in the place of origin. It is at this point that a potential migrant begins to identify the values and utilities he/she is lacking at the place of origin. After surveying alternative options, a potential migrant would weigh his/her alternatives where he/she determines the particular values and utilities that he/she hopes to achieve. Once specific values and utilities are identified, a potential migrant could chose to involve others (e.g. family members) in his/her decision which can help to generate approval especially if he/she needs financial and/or moral support from key family members (e.g. parents). At this point, a decision has been reached by a potential migrant and he/she begins to find out more information on alternative

locations where he/she will be able to achieve his/her expected values and utilities. Haberkorn (1981) argued that at the final stage, doubts could set in and a potential migrant would have to re-evaluate his/her decision.

This five-stage process can also lead individual migrants to reconsider migration and chose to stay in their place of origin. Mellander, Florida and Stolarick's study (2011: 7) found that factors in the community, such as physical beauty and convenience (i.e. good transport links), can lead a potential migrant to reconsider migration which could be linked to stages three and four of Haberkorn's five-stage decision-making process. Mellander, Florida and Stolarick's study revealed that when individuals review their places in their local community as well as involve the input of others in the decision, they can, as potential migrants, reconsider migrating.

The literature on women in individual migration decision-making is reviewed in research that explores women's migration as part of a family strategy (Lauby and Stark, 1988). Other analysts discuss the experience when exploring gender and migration where they demonstrate differences in the way men and women make decisions. Hoang's study (2011b) on gender and migration in Vietnam, found that women are constrained by their social position within the household. For them to make a decision to migrate, they must consult with their husbands or parents. This was the case with single women who had to make consultations with their parents (2011b: 1450). One of the issues Hoang identified was the risk the rural female migrants faced in urban centres (for instance, sexual violence and discrimination) which was sometimes not considered in their migration decisions. A review of this topic found that very few studies have been devoted specifically to women and their subjective experience of migration decision-making. The focus has been on gender and migration decisions or individual migration as a family strategy (Lauby and Stark, 1988). The few studies that do focus on women in individual migration decision-making show that

women need to consult with others (husband or parents) in order to make a decision. My research aims to explore the individual migration decision-making experiences of women who were single to provide a perspective on the topic.

Studies by Lauby and Stark (1988) and De Jong (2000) demonstrated how women were normally nominated to migrate as part of a family strategy, not because they possessed the appropriate skills but because of their tendency to make financial remittances back home. Other studies, including those by Oishi (2005) and Nowak (2009), described the conditions that made women migrate to support the family. This area of focus is closely related to household migration decision-making which takes into account the needs of a household unit as opposed to individual needs.

1.5.2 Household Migration Decision-Making

Household migration decision-making can be linked to the new economics of labour migration (Stark and Bloom, 1985; Arango, 2004). The theory argues that migration decisions of the household are based on a cost-benefit calculation of the unit, which also considers risk evasion. The theory “pays more attention to information and to the complex interdependence between migrants and the context in which they operate” (Arango, 2004: 23). Household decisions also depend on the demographic structure of the household, in particular, household size and household members’ age-sex structure (Harbison, 1981: 232). In terms of size, larger families may require certain individuals to migrate to diversify the labour force participation of members of the household. At the time, Harbison also pointed out that ecological and socio-economic factors influenced migration decisions because if a household owns a large piece of land, it would require the assistance of all members to cultivate the land, making out-migration impossible. But if a household had a small piece of land and a large family, the economic needs of the household would take precedent and individual members may be nominated to migrate to support the household with the income

they earn in urban areas (Harbison, 1981: 233). The age-sex structure and life stage encompass the birth order in a family, in which Harbison contends that the household encouraged the migration of sons more than daughters (1981: 233). However, as Lauby and Stark (1988) found out, women were more likely to send money and were encouraged to migrate, implying a change in the perception of who migrates or should migrate.

Within the household migration decision-making, some scholars have discussed the power relations in the decision-making process between women and men (Pessar, 1982; Parrado, Flippen and McQuiston, 2005; Hiller and McCaig, 2007). For instance, Parrado, Flippen and McQuiston's study argues that power is determined by the qualities that women possess, such as education, which provides them with the skills to explore employment opportunities elsewhere. In addition, power puts women in a position of acquiring resources (e.g. wealth) which positively influences the household migration decision-making (2005: 349). Men were automatically assumed to be the primary decision-makers even if they were not the primary migrant. This perspective is prominent in some of the studies conducted in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) exploring rural-urban migration (Agesa and Kim, 2001). Women would normally take a secondary role, although Reynolds' study (2006) found that women were capable of making decisions for the family (for example, in the interest of children) even without their husbands supporting the wives' involvement in international migration. Root and De Jong's study (1991) demonstrates the close relationship between the systems and network theory in family migration. They argued that "within the systems framework, family migration is determined by family ties, family pressure to migrate, family structure and socio-economic resources of the family, and the previous mobility experience of family members" (1991: 223).

Although children also play a vital role in household migration decision-making, some scholars have criticised theoretical models for neglecting the role of children (Bushin,

2009; Hutchins, 2011). Long (1972) indicated that the age of the children impacted on household migration decisions as school-age children (six years and older) have acquired strong community links thereby posing a challenge in the migration plans because the children would find it difficult to adapt to a new location. Ackers' study (2000) also discussed how school-age children reacted to the parent's decision to move the family, some children citing their loss in friendships they had already established. Ackers (2000) notes that the parents were acting on the children's best interests, though some of the children in her interviews were affected by the failure of their parents to consult them beforehand. This was also the case in Hutchins' study (2011).

Significant contributions on the influence of children in family migration decision-making have been made by studies on the migration of Mexicans to the United States. Explored under the concept of "transnational childhoods" and/or "transnational migration", Orellana, Thorne, Lam and Chee's investigation (2000) from the perspective of the mothers in their study, revealed that children participated in the family migration decision-making process. The women studied revealed that their children were actors of migration by their mere presence or active participation in the process. Although Orellana *et.al.* (2000: 573) focused on the adult's view of children's role in migration decision-making, they found that children still continued to be viewed as 'luggage', as they were either considered attachments of family migration or were subsequently sent for by parents already residing in the destination country (2000: 11). Nevertheless, the stories in their research reveal that the women made their decisions to migrate after assessing the children's place in the migration process. It is important to point out that the women studied in Orellana *et.al.*'s (2000) research were undocumented (more accurately trafficked) migrants and, therefore, their decision to migrate to the United States using *coyotes* (traffickers), had to take into account the needs of the children within that experience. Bushin (2009) has highlighted the lack of

attention given to children in research on migration decision-making. She argues that “for children’s participation in decision-making to be meaningful, they need to believe that their voices will be heard, listened to and acted upon” (2009: 439). Against that realisation, Bushin (2009: 439) suggests adoption of “children-in-families approach” in future research to explore the experiences of children and parents in household migration decisions.

Accordingly, individual and household migration decision-making take up different approaches and have different characteristics, although the two are inter-linked when it comes to individual migration as a family strategy. In my research, I explore both individual and household migration decision-making processes described by the women in my study; although children were not included as respondents in my study, their agency in household migration decisions was explored from the perspective of their mothers. This is the focus of one of the research questions I set out to answer.

In the next section, I review some of the literature which considers women, culture and migration decision-making. The purpose is to provide an explanation of the place of culture in migration research and describe how it fits into my research. I draw examples from studies on African women and migration (international and internal) to compare and contrast with studies of Asian and Latin American women’s migration.

1.6 Women, Culture and Migration Research

In this section, the focus is on research that has explored the interrelationship between women, migration and culture. The term ‘culture’ is and continues to be difficult to define unless applied to a particular context as it varies from region to region. Some westernised definitions have viewed culture as being a collection of ideas that is passed down from generation to generation (Patterson, 2000: 208). From an African context, Ajayi (2007) argues that culture is also a preservation of past traditions. He identified three characteristics

that relate to culture in Africa. First, culture is a product of man's environment; second, it is dynamic as it is subject to changes and finally it is learned by members of the society who are also transmitters of culture (2007: 6).

In SSA, the history of colonialism led to changes in some of the cultural practices, norms and beliefs of some African cultures. Kanu (2007) described colonialism as “the physical conquest and control of African territories by the Europeans, and as the domination and control of the minds of those conquered” (2007: 67). The introduction of a capitalist economy (e.g. wage labour) divided groups in terms of promoting individualism and the introduction of Christianity divided the relations between women and men (Cutrufelli, 1983). This historical background is important in migration research as it puts into perspective how migration came to be associated as a male activity promoted in different ethnic groups. Scholars conducting research on culture and migration tend to investigate how migration was established as a cultural expectation (Hahn and Klute, 2007). Exploring the perceptions of women in migration, in SSA needs an in-depth investigation as some scholars do not always clearly indicate whether cultural factors featured in the migration process. This section will discuss a few studies which attempted to connect culture and migration. In addition, it will review the literature specific to SSA.

Within this research, I am concerned with the idea of sociocultural perceptions and during the process of reviewing the literature I was unable to identify any study that defined the term ‘sociocultural’ within sociology, with the exception of child development studies. Scholars have used the term in association with perceptions or factors in order to identify elements within society and the Oxford sociology dictionary simply states that it is a combination of social and cultural factors. Empirical studies conducted by scholars such as De Jong (2000) have investigated the prevalent cultural perceptions relating to women's position and role in society and how such perceptions can affect the decision to migrate and

indeed the question as to who can migrate. In his study in Thailand, De Jong (2000) showed that women were not allowed to migrate at one time because of the expectation society had of them to care for the family (children and elderly parents) and the home. However, as political and economic changes occurred through time, women were encouraged to migrate because of their capacity to support the family household economy (2000: 307). De Jong's study shows that if perceptions of women change within the family and society, it can influence the migration decision-making process in as far as accepting women as economic actors and hence as migrants. However, Asis (2002: 79) reveals the effects of leaving family behind in international migration and the effect it has especially on mothers who have left their children and husbands behind. Much as women decide to migrate for the economic benefit of the family, they face losing the bond they have with their children, especially younger ones. Others in her study revealed the challenges of convincing parents or husbands to allow them to migrate for the benefit of the family because of some of the sociocultural perceptions that their parents held of women's position and role in society. A realistic assessment of the household economic situation had to be made in order to justify the decision of women to migrate (2002: 81).

Sociocultural perceptions held about the position and role of different groups in society determine gender roles, access to resources as well as the relations between women and men. Access to resources is important in migration decision making as resources (e.g. information or financial support) can determine whether a potential migrant can move. Through time, perceptions of access to resources available to men and women have changed especially in SSA. Lambert's study (2007) found that the Sierra Leonean women in his study accumulated resources that assisted in the migration plans of other female members of the network. Several women in his study pointed out some of the social and political barriers in their society which disadvantaged women leaving them no choice but to migrate to urban

areas. Accumulating enough assets gave women the opportunity to migrate without having to rely on support from their husbands or fathers. In the society Lambert was studying, the migration of women was not accepted, especially by older men, who still believed women's place was in the home. But through time, this perception was weakened as women continued to migrate and as men were unable to curb the support offered by the established female migrants as they concentrated their efforts in controlling the movements of individual women (2007: 130). Not only did Lambert's study show how a culture of migration was created for women because of their active participation, but also that it became an acceptable life choice for women to make.

The household has been viewed as a resource unit that supports the migration plans of its members as theories, such as those of new economics of labour migration (NELM) and human capital, describe how members of a household unit can influence migration decision-making. It also represents an institution operating within the private sphere that is responsible for the socialisation of its members in society. Masini (1991) argued that "the household, in all its differential cultural connotations, is the primary social living unit. In it are encapsulated a cluster of activities of people who live together most of the time and provide mutual physical, socio-psychological and development support and functions within the broader organisation and environment of the community" (1991: 7). The household unit comprises of different forms including households occupied by one person, nuclear and extended families (Scott and Marshall, 2009). For the literature review, I adopted the term households and for my findings chapter, I used the term families as these represent the units that are engaged in migration. The configurations of households or family vary as they have been linked through blood ties, marriage, co-workers and friends (Chant, 1998: 7). This configuration is not unique to developing countries, as some western societies maintain similar links within households.

In migration, the interactions between members of households have been mostly explored using the network theory which will be discussed in relation to women and migration, in the next section. During the colonial era, in most British colonies in SSA, it was noticeable that men were better placed to make the decision to migrate as colonial policies favoured their migration for employment purposes and discouraged that of women who were confined to their villages (Furedi, 1974). Women in some societies were viewed as associational migrants migrating with the purposes of joining the husband (Surdakasa, 1977) which was related to the roles they played within the household. In Western Kenya, some of the women left behind were in a position to manage their husband's assets in making decisions on his behalf (Nelson, 1991). There were other societies where women were managed by other male members of the family whilst the husband was away. Olurode (1995) found that sociocultural factors can be instrumental in influencing migration which becomes a form of escape from restrictive norms and values, both for men and women. For women, the political institutions together with the sociocultural perceptions that society has of women created a situation whereby women would consider migration to escape this control (1995: 300). Therefore, women's migration can be viewed as being influenced by the perceptions held in the social, cultural, political, religious as well as legal environment that they occupy which may create barriers for them.

Access to power is also another aspect that is important in decision-making. For instance, amongst the Hausa, an Islamic ethnic group in Nigeria, some women are secluded. They are socialised from a young age not to associate with the outside world making them highly dependant on their fathers and/or husbands. Therefore, they are unable to participate in or make decisions concerning migration and their movement is most likely to be a fulfilment of their 'wifely' duties, that is, to be obedient (Pittin, 1984: 1300). In this situation, the women's inability to contribute to decision-making is linked to their lack of access to power

due to their seclusion. However, Pittin's study revealed that some Hausa women chose to migrate independently to urban centres, engaging in a different form of prostitution e.g. courtesanship (karuwai). Women's contribution and participation in migration decision-making may lead to migration and access to better opportunities in the destination country. In addition, it may yield positive effects in terms of redefining the roles of men and women within the household. Arthur's (2008) study on Ghanaian women migrating to the United States as part of a family reported that some women had better jobs in the destination country and thereby contributed more to the household economy. Their husbands began to respect them more as equal wage earners and included them in decisions that involved the family. At the same time, he highlights the fact that some of the women in his study chose to maintain part of the gender roles they held in Ghana so that the children could grow up in a stable household (Arthur, 2008: 56-57).

Thus, there are studies which have attempted to link migration decision-making to culture in SSA. The studies described above discuss social conditions and institutions that hindered or helped women in decision-making. Some scholars have chosen to explore cultures of migration reflecting back to historical periods where migration was a part of cultural expectations, mostly for men. Women's role was not always downplayed as in some societies women still engaged in migration whether it was acceptable or not (e.g. the Yoruba in Nigeria). However, they encountered problems with the men in society and colonial administrators who sometimes tried to restrict the domestic units. Recent studies by Arthur (2008) revealed that sociocultural perceptions are sometimes overlooked in the migration decision-making process until the migrants reach the destination country where the gender roles and relations are re-assessed. I have indicated that I aim to explore how the sociocultural expectations that society has of women influence the decision to migrate with

the aim of contributing to a growing area of research. However, because of the lack of information in this area, it will be a challenge to establish linkages between the two.

In the next section, I briefly review research on women, migration decision-making and networks that have been explored in SSA and other developing countries. The aim is to provide an account of women's use of networks and how they influence their own decision-making or the family for household migrations.

1.7 Research on Women, Migration Decision-Making and Networks

The discussions on women and networks and some emerging debates on gendered networks and their role in migration decision-making by individuals and/or households has been dominated by research done in Latin America and Asia (Asis, 2002; Oishi, 2005; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994). The research of the latter scholars has provided insight as to how women use networks for their own migration plans, especially when the most obvious sources are unhelpful, that is their husbands (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994).

On the other hand, there has been little work undertaken on the migration decision-making process of SSA women and their use of networks. The few sources that discuss the use of networks in the migration decision-making of SSA women explore rural-urban migration using a quantitative approach in which women are perceived as followers as opposed to being initiators of or part of the migration decision-making process (Agesa and Kim, 2001). Other studies have focused on the migration patterns of professional African women (mostly nurses) in international migration describing the conditions that pushed women out of their country of origin (Reynolds, 2002; 2006, Bloch, 2006). These studies mention networks but do not contain detailed discussions of them as the ones conducted in Latin America and Asia. A recent study by Toma and Vause (2010: 3) investigated the "gender differences in the role of migrant networks in the international migration" of

Congolese and Senegalese migrants. One of the objectives was to determine whether women and men used different networks to migrate. They argued that there have been few studies have investigated the differences in the way networks are used by men and women and the quality of information they received (2010: 5). This study shows that there is growing interest in investigating gender and networks in migration studies.

In this section, I review the literature available on migration decision-making and networks, specifically focusing on SSA women's migration. However, before reviewing the research in SSA, it is worth commenting on the literature from Asia and Latin America in order to show the wealth of knowledge generated by scholars with interest in this region. This will also put into perspective the position of research on SSA women with regard to migration decision-making and networks.

Where Latin America is concerned, the most quoted study on women and migration (from Mexico to the United States) is that of Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994). Her work has provided some insight into how networks were used by Mexican men and women during the era of the Bracero Program that was set up during the Second World War to contract temporary labour from Mexico in order to meet the labour shortages in agriculture during the war (1994: 22). Her research revealed that when men migrated, most did not include their wives in the decision-making process, suggesting that migration was not a result of joint conjugal decisions. Men also had more networks as they generated information from both men and women resident or formerly resident in the United States. Cerruti and Massey (2001) support Hondagneu-Sotelo's findings arguing that decisions were made by the 'altruistic' male suggesting that women were neither seen as contributing to the household bargaining nor seen as independent decision makers (2001: 187-88). An 'altruistic' male "evaluates various economic options and chooses those that provide maximum utility for the household as a whole" (Cerruti and Massey, 2001: 187). Women expressed their dismay with

such decisions through prayer, hoping for their husbands to fail in their attempt to enter the United States. Other women feared that they would be abandoned by their husbands as they interpreted their departure as an escape from their family responsibilities and access to an independent and promiscuous life (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994: 59). From this perspective, women were at a disadvantage especially in terms of the migration decision-making process as they had no say in their husband's departure.

Consequently, Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) revealed that when women were planning their own emigration, they tended to rely on the assistance of other Mexican women resident in the United States or return female migrants, especially when their husbands discouraged them from migrating. Those who had no access to networks were left to rely on the assistance of *coyotes* (traffickers) as the latter helped them to enter the United States illegally, with their children and without the consent of their husbands. These coyotes, however, were not known personally to the women and were strangers who assisted the women to find safe passage for a fee and upon arrival, the women's husbands were forced to accept the move (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994: 72-73). Both men and women migrated for economic purposes and relief from household burdens. Women were hoping to escape the patriarchal system in their country of origin, which placed them at a disadvantage as they were expected to sacrifice their autonomy for the benefit of the household (1994).

The literature on the migration decision-making of African women and networks as mentioned earlier, is small and sometimes difficult to locate. The most useful studies have been conducted by Makinwa-Adebusoye (1994), McGregor (2006), Fleischer (2007) and Toma and Vause (2010). I will discuss these studies to explain how their research connects women, migration decision-making and networks. It is important to note that these are not the only studies available but they constitute a good representative sample. Makinwa-Adebusoye (1994) focused on the migration experiences of Nigerian women. She conducted a survey of

Nigerian women in Ibadan, Enugu, Lagos and Kaduna (states in Nigeria) and discovered that within Nigeria, the family constitutes an important source of information in migration decision-making and support and an investment from which remittances can be generated (1994: 234-35). Again, Makinwa-Adebusoye (1994) revealed interesting findings but did not expand on the interactions between potential female migrants and their networks.

An interesting study conducted by McGregor (2006) explored the importance of networks in facilitating the migration of nurses from Zimbabwe to the UK. The shrinking Zimbabwean economy and the uneasy political situation after the year 2000 led to several dissatisfied nationals choosing to migrate to neighbouring countries such as Botswana or South Africa and locations as far as the UK to meet their economic needs and escape from the political distress of the country. McGregor found that most of his participants had networks in the UK who had migrated as students from Zimbabwe in the 1970s or who had fled in the 1980s from the civil unrest. Some were former residents in the UK who had returned once they had completed their studies. As a result, they had knowledge about the UK either through experience or through information from their networks, thus putting them in a better position to migrate. In addition, he revealed that from the late 1990s to 2002, there were private recruitment agencies in Zimbabwe which had recruited nurses and teachers for the British labour market. McGregor's study showed the existence of activities between destination country and country of origin similar to that which is described by the connection between the systems and network theory presented in section 1.2.2.

McGregor's research revealed that most of the Zimbabwean women in his study migrated to attain their expected values and utilities such as better paid jobs which, in turn, created opportunities for their family, e.g. remittances used to fund children's education. Interestingly, McGregor's study revealed that negative information or advice received by potential migrants had a small impact on their decision to migrate. As one female participant

stated, potential migrants in Zimbabwe are less likely to believe negative information (2006: 11), especially if the people advising them appear to possess material goods such as cars and good clothes which suggested that life was good in the UK. McGregor notes that women took the lead in migration as nurses through agreements between the recruitment agencies in Zimbabwe and institutions in the UK, but that their actions became a matter of moral debate as some members of their family/community felt that they were abandoning their role as carers to their families (2006: 5). Therefore, even if a family decision is made for the wife/mother/daughter to migrate, because they leave their family behind they are not seen to be fulfilling their obligations as mothers/wives/daughters. McGregor's study demonstrates the importance of interactions between migrants, social conditions in their society of origin and the use of formal networks (i.e. migrant agencies).

Similarly Fleischer (2007) investigated the role of kinship in the decision of Cameroonians to migrate to Germany. She interviewed migrants still living in Cameroon with no connections in Germany. The results of her study show that when it comes to migration decision-making, the whole family (nuclear and extended) is involved in deciding who migrates, but this is from the perspective of a male participant in her study. One of the reasons provided for this perception was that families are able to provide or arrange for financial resources for an individual to migrate (2007: 11-12). A female participant in the study stated that her older brother was the main influencing force in the decision to migrate because he had established networks in Germany. However, Fleischer (2007) notes that the term older brother does not only refer to the biological brother but someone who is senior to a person and may not be blood relations (2007: 13). Fleischer's study demonstrates that men can sometimes support the migration plans of women. Another mother in Fleischer's study advised her daughter not to get involved in any personal relationships before migrating to Germany (to pursue further education) as she feared the decision would no longer be her

daughter's but would necessarily involve any future partners (2007: 16). Thus, Fleischer's study revealed how influential families can be in the decision-making process and how networks of family members were also used in the migration plans of women as well as men. Her study can be used to understand the influence of family members (nuclear and extended) in the migration decision-making process and the networks available to them that can be useful for other potential female migrants.

In comparison to the rich information provided in studies in Latin America and Asia, the research on migration decision-making and networks of SSA female migrants still needs to be extended. In our globalised world, networks are bound to change as we enter a digitised environment where people connect via the internet or no longer need personal connections for information. Drawing on examples from some of the studies in Latin America, Asia and SSA, this project reveals the interaction between female migrants and their networks as well as the influence of the latter, if any, in the migration decision-making process. It also aims to demonstrate the use of digital networks (i.e. internet) in accessing information about the destination country or connecting with personal or in professional networks. Another area of interest explored by Oishi (2005) in the migration patterns of female migrants in Asia was the categorisation of women as 'ideal types' of migrants, which is the focus of the next section.

1.8 Ideal Types of Female Migrants

Oishi's study (2005) identified five ideal types of female migrants based on the findings of her study. These are the adventurous woman, dutiful daughter, good mothers and wives, destitute woman and distressed woman (2005: 113-123). Oishi used the characteristics of her participants to identify the reasons for their migration as well as their chosen locations of migration. She found that women from a high socio-economic background (e.g. middle or high class) were more likely to migrate to western countries whereas those from a lower class background migrated to the Middle East or South East Asian countries (2005: 108-109).

Oishi's study investigated the migration experiences of women from a lower class background.

Oishi was careful not to restrict them as a typology and instead adopted the Weberian concept of 'ideal types' as opposed to a rigid typology of migrant women. The use of Weber's ideal types concept indicates that Oishi does not represent exact situations that individual migrant women face as she argued that "it is impossible to construct typologies into which all migrant women can be classified perfectly, since the motivations of human beings are so often complex (2005: 112). This allows a researcher to develop new categories of female migrants depending on the conditions they face and the reasons they state for migrating. Table 1 below provides an outline of Oishi's ideal types of female migrants (2005) and their characteristics that give some indication of their reasons for migrating.

Table 1: Ideal types of migrant women

Ideal Types of Migrant Women	Characteristics
Adventurous Women	Migrate to seek 'adventure' in life. Sometimes they have an economic motive such as aspiring to live a middle class lifestyle or acquire material things. They are two groups of women that fall into this category: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Young single women with a moderate level of education who want to migrate overseas because they have been exposed to information about countries overseas b. Older women, usually unmarried, separated or divorced with no children
Dutiful Daughter	Migrate to support their parents in the country of origin and help their siblings with providing money for their education. Economic interests.

Good Wives and Mothers	<p>Usually married with children and migrate because they want a better life for their family members. Some of them are forced to become breadwinners and some had no intention to migrate but circumstances in their society forced them to migrate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Good Wives usually migrate to support their husband e.g. pay off debts or medical expenses; b. Good Mothers migrate to provide for their children
Distressed Women	<p>Migrate to free themselves from problems at home e.g. intrusions from in-laws in their marriage. Sometimes they are escaping distressing situations such as domestic violence and they are looking for a safe haven.</p>
Destitute Women	<p>Migrate to escape poverty but their migration is sometimes intended to be short term to develop own/family economy</p>

Source: Oishi (2005: 112-123)

Oishi's ideal types of female migrants appealed to this study because it provided descriptive categories of female migrants linked to the women's decision to migrate. The purpose of including it in my study was to explore whether these categories can be applied to women migrating from African countries to western countries coming from a different class background as compared to the women in Oishi's study. However, it is important to be aware that Oishi's ideal types of female migrants have been constructed based on some of the demographic characteristics of the participants in her study (e.g. class) which were different from the women in my study. In my analysis of the experience of the women in my study, I was aware of the differences that existed between my participants and Oishi's participants, one of which was class, which is explored in chapter 5 of this thesis. Hence, Oishi's ideal types of women were used as categories for my study but the characteristics of the categories were based on the characteristics of the women in my study.

1.9 Conclusion

The literature on migration decision-making has revealed that there are different theories that can be adopted to understand the phenomenon. These theories are useful in understanding how the women in my study made their own decisions to migrate. The literature provided discussions of how cost-benefit calculations are made by potential migrants (individual and households) which may depend on the level of satisfaction an individual has in a particular location and whether they have expected values they hope to achieve through migration. The potential migrant's life stage is also important to consider as it can determine the types of resources and networks available to them. Feminists have critiqued the lack of attention paid to conditions experienced by women that may be overlooked by some of the theories, as suggestions have been made for further revisions to the theories (Kanaiaupuni, 2000). Historically, studies have had a male oriented approach to studying migration as a culture of migration had been established especially during the colonial era in the African nations. The introduction of wage labour and Christian values reshaped some of the sociocultural perceptions of women in society, in which men's roles were promoted as heads of household with women taking a back seat. These events explain some of the gender roles and relations that can be found in some societies today which may have an effect on the decision-making process.

Similarly, women's access to resources for migration have changed as in some societies established female networks in rural areas helped to support the migration plans of women of the society (Lambert, 2007). Professional migrant agencies were also instrumental in the recruitment process of women especially for the shortage skills needed in the UK in the late 1990s. For this research, I have chosen to adopt a qualitative approach in order to answer my research questions stated in the background chapter. Hence, the purpose of the next chapter is to elaborate on the reasons why I adopted this methodology, outline my

epistemological perspective in this research and describe the methods and ethical issues in the field.

Chapter 2

Methodology and Methods

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I explain why I have chosen qualitative methodology for my research. I discuss the characteristics of the methodology describing how it will be useful for my research as well as consider the disadvantages of the methodology that may be a challenge in my research. In addition, this chapter outlines the epistemological theories chosen to guide the methodology, namely the insider-outsider theory (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009; Griffith, 1998; Brayboy and Deyhle, 2000; Merton, 1972) and the black feminist standpoint theory (Beoku-Betts, 1994; Collins, 2000; Egharevba, 2001; Few, Stephens and Rouse-Arnett, 2003; Johnson-Bailey, 1999). This is followed by a discussion on the data collection methods, namely in-depth semi-structured interviews and focus groups, and an outline of the scope, design and implementation of the methods. The section on interviews includes notes from the field in order to illustrate the challenges and successes I faced as a researcher as well as the range of strategies I adopted to overcome certain expected and unexpected barriers. This chapter will conclude with a discussion on the ethical considerations for my research.

2.2 Qualitative Methodology

I chose to adopt a qualitative approach which I believed would help to contribute to the literature on the experience of migration decision-making which was identified as being under-researched. Studies involving a deep understanding of researched subjects and their lived experiences often use qualitative methodology, especially research involving women (Roberts, 1993; Cannon, Higginbotham and Leung, 1988; Bhattacharya, 2007, Zavella, 1993; Bhopal, 2001; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994). Researchers focusing on the experiences of women are more inclined to use qualitative methods because of the subjective nature of the approach,

unlike quantitative research which is sometimes seen as a “masculinist way of knowing” (Maynard, 2005: 11). In the 1970s, the experiences of women were invisible as researchers were more interested in defining experiences instead of learning about them. Some feminist researchers at the time were searching for a way to get in-depth information on the experiences of women in order to understand the different contexts in which they may occur. For instance, Oakley’s (1974) study on *The Sociology of Housework*, explored how sociology as a discipline analysed housework from the perspective of women. She was able to find out some of the challenges she encountered using qualitative methodology when studying women and was at the same time able to offer a realistic image of the role that women play in housework from the perspective of her participants. Such studies led to the development of ‘women-oriented fields of research’ such as domestic violence, childbirth and domesticity (Maynard, 2005: 12). By using a subjective approach to collect data, some researchers were able to access information on an experience from those that have been through it as opposed to quantifying the experience for the purpose of demonstrating the seriousness of the situation (Mies, 1983: 118). For instance, Nowak’s study (2009: 269) investigated the changing perceptions of the migration of Ghanaian skilled female nurses. The evidence she presented showed different views on why skilled women migrate and how it relates to some of the Ghanaian gender norms.

Before selecting qualitative as a methodology in my research, I considered using a mixed method approach – quantitative and qualitative methodology. I planned to use quantitative methods (i.e. survey questionnaires) to collect data that would assist me to identify some of the reasons why women migrated including the expected values they hoped to achieve through migration. At the same time, the survey questionnaire would allow a comparison to be made on the migration decision-making experiences of Kenyan and Nigerian women. The survey was also intended to assist in the design of the interview

questions. However, the sample size was too large, the online survey did not seem feasible as it was difficult to determine whether the survey was reaching my target group and it was costly to design and set up an online survey. When reviewing the literature, I noticed that a number of studies on migration decision-making adopted quantitative methodology to investigate migration decision-making (De Jong *et.al.*, 1983; Cooke and Bailey, 1996; Hiller and McCaig, 2007; Todaro, 1969; De Jong *et.al.*, 1983, McDevitt and Gadalla, 1985).

The following section outlines the characteristics of qualitative methodology explaining why it is the appropriate methodology for this research. Within the discussion, references will be drawn from empirical research on migration and research conducted on women that have used this approach to show how qualitative research can bring forth the experiences of women. The following section will also consider the shortcomings of the methodology with examples drawn from the field in my research as well as challenges encountered by other researchers.

2.2.1 Characteristics of Qualitative Methodology

Qualitative research has been used to understand social reality through the lens of the participant (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) with the researcher exploring reality as subjective, complex and diverse and as being constructed by humans who attach meanings to behaviours, things or experiences (Sarantakos, 2005: 41). The main characteristics of qualitative research as outlined by Rossman and Rallis (2003) and Sarantakos (2005) can help to put into perspective the nature of the enquiry. Within the context of my research, the characteristics of qualitative research have been linked to the aims, objectives and research questions in order to determine the possibility of achieving its goals.

For one, qualitative research is inductive where the data collected is used to explain a theory (Flick, 2007; Bryman, 2004). Unlike quantitative research that uses hypotheses to

predict a certain event or behaviour, a qualitative researcher uses research questions to help guide the direction of the research which includes the selection of methods by which to collect the data. My research is inductive in its approach as information on migration decision-making is gathered from the perspective of Kenyan and Nigerian women and linked to one or several theories of migration decision-making, such as the value expectancy theory (De Jong and Fawcett (1981) and the human capital theory (Todaro, 1969). During the review of literature on this subject, different theories of migration decision-making were identified and explored in order to understand the different contexts in which migration decision-making takes place. The task of this research is to explore the experiences from a woman's perspective in order to link it to the range of theories identified in chapter one.

In order to achieve the above, research has to take place within a natural setting where an in-depth subjective perspective can be explored (Sarantakos, 2005: 45). In 2002, Reynolds' study focused on the development and role of an immigrant network set up by Nigerian professionals of the Igbo community in Chicago and demonstrated the usefulness of adopting a qualitative approach. She attended the site of her research, the Organisation for Ndi Igbo, in order to interact with the members, to understand the role the organisation played in the migration process of potential migrants in Nigeria. Using in-depth interviews, she identified some of the underlying reasons for migration and the usefulness of the organisation to the participants as a source of information. Quantitative research would be unable to achieve this level of detail as it is objective and its role is to hypothesize measure as well as predict reality (Sarantakos, 2005: 42). In other words, quantitative methodology would test the applicability of a theory (e.g. human capital theory), measure the population size of that immigrant community from Nigeria (e.g. gather statistical data) and predict future movements of Nigerian people by looking at the population movements of this group over a set number of years (Harris and Todaro, 1970). Within my research, the subjective approach

will help to understand an experience of migration decision-making by determining the nature of the act from the perspective of individual women. Although the methodology may not be able to predict the population of movements of women from these countries, it may explore secondary reasons for migrating as well as the details of the negotiation and/or discussion process between husband and wife or father and daughter.

Qualitative methodology proved to be very useful in Hondagneu-Sotelo's (1994) study on the migration of Mexicans to the United States. Exploring the migration experiences of both women and men, she was able to reveal the challenges faced by the female migrants when they discussed their migration plans with their husbands/fathers. Using in-depth interviews, she observed that many of the women and children were excluded in the decision-making process when men were the primary migrants. When women wanted to migrate, as primary migrants in search of better opportunities and/or to join their husbands already in the United States, the negotiation process was difficult, even though the women had already decided on migrating. This led them to rely on other women for information and guidance so as to subvert the male authority (1994: 72). By exploring the experiences of her participants within a natural setting, Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) was able to establish the relations between women and men in decision making and migration in a holistic manner - which is yet another characteristic of qualitative methodology.

Exploring the subject in detail means some qualitative researchers are trying to gain a "contextual understanding of social behaviour" (Bryman, 2004: 281). In that way, a behaviour that is viewed as unusual would make sense if people can understand the environment in which it is taking place, which includes considering the belief and value system of that given society or community. By referring to existing literature on the subject matter, research is able to become familiar with what has been explored in a particular area of research and at the same time identify some of the loopholes that may have been overlooked

by previous scholars or which were not in the scope of the researchers' work. Roberts (1981), for instance, conducted research on the relations between female patients and their doctors and referred to previous literature on the sociology of illnesses. In doing so, she was able to identify a gender imbalance in senior medical staff, which was male dominated at the time (1981: 19). Using this literature, she was able to back up her assertion on the importance of having women in high positions in the medical profession but also highlight the conditions that some women face and that prevented them from engaging in senior positions in the profession (1981: 20). Therefore, she not only considered the relations between women and their doctors, but also took into account the gender imbalance amongst senior doctors; from this she could make recommendations for further research on the matter.

In relation to my project, by conducting a literature review on migration decision-making in general and narrowing the search to research on the migration of Kenyan and Nigerian women, I was able to create a foundation from which I could familiarise myself with the subject as well as identify the lack of focus on women from these as well as other African countries. In addition, assumptions that I had long held were challenged once in the field, as new questions emerged which had not have been identified in the initial stages of the research but were important. One question emerging from the field work was whether the participants regretted their decision or whether they would do things differently if they had known better. These and other questions helped to expand scope of my research as it helped me explore migration decision-making using a question that would help the participants to reflect back on their own migration decision. In such a situation, questions raised by participants in the study can be explored at a later stage in another research project or discussed as part of the methodological dilemmas encountered in the field of research (Ribbens and Edwards, 1998; Gallagher, 2008).

Qualitative methodology is also flexible which means it refers to the changes that occur during the research process in areas such as the design and methods (Sarantakos, 2005: 45). As this approach views the world through the eyes of the participant, as the researcher, I reserve the right to modify my research design in order to gain better access to the data. By referring to related research that focuses on women, I could identify different ways of accessing and negotiation with the target group in advance in order to determine which approach would be useful in my research (Few, Stephens and Rouse-Arnett, 2003). This trial and error stage permitted me to adopt an approach that was designed to meet the challenges of my research. According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), flexibility helps to narrow down the focus of the research in the early stages of fieldwork and this can help identify some themes to explore in the research (2006: 58). Therefore, the information can be tested to determine its suitability within the research.

In order to utilise the study by Few, Stephens and Rouse-Arnett (2003) in my research, I needed to have some degree of openness which would allow for flexibility to occur as there are no rules or strict designs that govern this methodology (Bryman, 2004). Within my research, I conducted a pilot interview in the early stages in order to find out whether the questions being asked were suitable. It was a very useful tool to adopt for the purpose of finding out the advantages and disadvantages of the method in terms of its application, but it also prepared me to deal with the changes that would occur in some interviews conducted, which helped to accommodate the interests of each participant.

Finally, once the data has been collected using a variety of methods, the researcher makes appropriate interpretations and reflexivity becomes important at this stage. Reflexivity captures initial feelings, comments, reactions or interpretations about an experience and the impact of the data collected by the researcher. Interpretation and reflexivity are important especially in the analysis stage as they can reveal differences between people and can reflect

on the process of knowledge production from the perspective of the researcher and the participant. In Arthur's study (2008), he investigated the migration experiences of Ghanaians to the United States and Europe. In his introduction, he explained the common features he shared with his participants revealing that he too was Ghanaian and a migrant. Therefore, he could relate to some of the experiences expressed by the participants in his study. This has also been found to be the case in Li's study (1997). From the foregoing, it is evident that reflexivity can be used to help the researcher become more aware of his/her place within the research, which includes whether s/he is an insider or outsider as in the studies mentioned above (see also section 2.3.1 on insider-outsider theory).

According to Gallagher (2008), reflexivity helps to identify problematic areas in the application of qualitative methodology which helps the researcher to find ways of dealing with the experience of collecting data as well as the content of the data with which s/he may be familiar (2008: 78). For instance, Watt (2007) outlined how she began to question her use of participant observation as a method in her research, especially when she proposed the idea to one of her respondents who explained that she would not be able to act normal because of Watt's presence. Watt had to return to the literature on participant observation to consider another strategy of applying the method as she did not expect to encounter such a situation (2007: 90). Interpretation is also necessary for understanding the meaning and experiences of others, but at the same time, a researcher must be aware of his/her role within the research especially if he/she is familiar with the experience and whether he/she is an insider and/or outsider. Reflexivity allows a researcher to describe their experience of the research process and this can be instrumental in interpreting the data and contributing to knowledge on qualitative methodology.

Quantitative researchers have criticised qualitative methodology for its inability to be replicated due to its unstructured nature (Bryman, 2004: 284). However, this characteristic

can be an advantage of qualitative methodology which is not guided by rules and standard procedures and in that way, research conducted on a similar topic thereafter will be unable to follow a similar path. Researchers who explore a similar topic will be able to use other approaches to gain access to further information and thus contribute to the subject area and reflect on previous researchers who outline possible problems which maybe encountered in the field. My project has referred to previous research on migration decision-making in Asia and Latin America in order to understand how the researchers, Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) and Oishi (2005) were able to identify gendered networks and the construct of ideal types of female migrants respectively. Their work reveals the different strategies they adopted to gain access to certain information from the participants in their study and being aware of these strategies has helped me to design a range of ways and means to getting information from Nigerian and Kenyan women in my study. The information produced within my research would contribute to literature on migration decision-making especially that of African Kenyan and Nigerian women that was identified as being under researched.

In summary, a qualitative approach is more appropriate for this research because it allows the exploration of the experiences and meanings of people within a given society. As a researcher, I am given the opportunity to consider a subject in detail in order to provide contextual explanation of certain behaviours. By allowing me to be flexible and open during the implementation of the research, the methodology empowers me to change direction in order to achieve the best results for my research. Throughout the process, reflexivity is adopted as a tool to reveal my positionality (Merriam *et.al.*, 2001) as an insider or outsider, as some researchers can be closely related to their subject matter, as mentioned earlier. By interpreting the data, I attempt to make sense of the experience of the data collected from the perspective of the participants. However, like any other methodology, it has its problems and

several scholars have revealed the challenges faced in implementing this approach (Ribbens and Edwards, 1998; Maynard and Purvis, 2005; Gallagher, 2008).

2.2.2 Disadvantages

Having identified qualitative methodology as appropriate for this study, I had to consider some of the challenges or problems that I might have had to encounter when implementing this methodology in the field. Quantitative researchers have been the biggest critics of the qualitative approach. They have criticised it for being too subjective as the researcher can be too close to the subject matter as well as the participants and this could lead to bias in the study (Bryman, 2004). The research by Li (1997) and Arthur (2008) mentioned earlier, revealed the close proximity between the researcher, the subject matter and the participants who were sharing not only similar experiences but also a national heritage. Arthur (2008), for instance, stated that he found it difficult to remain neutral within his research because of his close relations with the experience of migration and that the way he dealt with it was to accept that differences exist between the experiences of his participants. Being neutral within a subjective study is challenging as it requires the researcher to approach the site and the participant as a 'learner', being careful not to influence the information from the participants (Rossman and Rallis, 2003). If the researcher knows who he/she is and his/her role in a setting, it may help to balance the different perspectives between the researcher and the researched, that is, the *emic* (insider view and voice) and *etic* (outsider view and voice)⁴. Anthropologists use these terms to help identify the thoughts and points of view of the researcher (*etic*) and his/her participants (*emic*) (Rossman and Rallis, 2003: 48). The situation is different with quantitative research that adopts an objective approach

⁴ *Emic* and *etic* both stem from psychological backgrounds, but *emic*, being the insider perspective, is also influenced by cultural anthropology where scholars try to understand culture from the perspective of those that live within that culture. *Etic*, referring to the outsider perspective is influenced by behaviourist psychology and anthropology where researchers link culture to the external factors that may have an impact on it (Morris, Leung and Lickel, 1999: 781)

ensuring that the research is not tarnished by bias and that certain methods are adopted to make that possible - for example, survey questionnaires (Bryman, 2004).

In Oakley's (1993) analysis of research on motherhood, she referred to a situation where the participant 'invited' the researcher to be part of the interview by asking her opinion on mothering, knowing that she was a mother familiar with the experience. Oakley advised that in such a situation, the researcher should try to avoid giving an opinion by placing the opinion of the participant above that of the researcher. By offering an opinion, the researcher could be in a position where she either guides the responses of the participant or disrupts the interview that is in process especially if the researcher does not agree with some forms of mothering revealed by the participant. The researcher must be aware of her position within the research and the experience in the field will further make her aware of this position as well as help her deal with situations where she is invited to give her opinions, express her feelings and thoughts on a particular issue. Therefore, as challenging as it may be, the researcher must learn to be neutral in her dealings with the participants as it may influence the outcome of the research.

As most qualitative researchers study a small group of people, they have been criticized for being unable to generalise the experience to the entire population of the target group (Bryman, 2004). Nonetheless, by narrowing the scope to a small population of the target group, the qualitative researcher hopes to gain a better understanding of an experience or behaviour instead of simply using statistics to show the impact of it on the society (Ambert, Adler, Adler and Dentzer, 1995: 880). However, I feel that this criticism has to take into consideration the purpose of the research, that is, whether it provides solutions to a problem (instrumental), contributes to knowledge on the subject (enlightenment), provides a new way of understanding (symbolic) or requires changes in terms of actions on the part of the participants (emancipatory) (Rossman and Rallis, 2005: 20-24). My research may be

viewed as a combination of enlightenment and the symbolic as it is adding to existing literature on migration decision-making and African women as well as combining two theories to explore the subject matter, namely black feminist standpoint theory (Collins, 2000) and the insider-outsider theory (Merton, 1972) which will be discussed in detail in the subsequent sections. The results of this research are not intended to be generalisable as they will be used as an example of migration decision-making of Kenyan and Nigerian women which is currently lacking in this area of research.

Finally, this methodology has the challenging task of analysing people's thoughts, feelings, mannerism and experiences. Questions of truth and knowledge emerge out of the data, where the researcher has to find out whether the information given is a true representation of an experience. Choosing an appropriate epistemological approach will help to develop a way of understanding the information presented to me in terms of how I analyse and interpret the data thereby establishing my position within the study. The next section explores this point further by providing a detailed discussion of the theoretical underpinnings that guide this methodology and identify the most suitable methods of data collection. The theories that will be discussed are the insider-outsider theory and the black feminist standpoint theory.

2.3 Epistemological Approach

From my research, it was important to adopt a theory using the literature on migration decision-making and women that would make sense of the knowledge provided by my participants. In addition, reflexions recorded in a research journal were useful in describing the research process as it occurred as I could describe some of the challenges encountered in the field and how I made sense of them using the theories of knowledge production. The theories used for this research were the insider-outsider theory where the focus is on my relationship with Kenyan and Nigerian women (Merton, 1976; Dweyer and Buckle, 2009)

and the black feminist standpoint theory, where the focus is on knowledge and truth from a black woman's perspective (Collins, 1986, 2000; Bekou-Betts, 1994; Johnson-Bailey, 1999; Few *et.al.*, 2003). These theories will be discussed separately to illustrate how they fit into the research, drawing examples from previous scholars that have contributed to the theoretical discussions. Examples from the field will be drawn upon to demonstrate how they both operated jointly during the research process.

2.3.1 Insider-Outsider Theory

This theory focuses on the relations between the researcher and his/her participants (Griffith, 1998). Demographic characteristics such as gender, age and 'race'/ethnicity can determine the researcher's insider/outsider status which may ensure access to and information from the participants (1998: 362). The theory is also important in the analysis and interpretation of the information given, where the researcher begins to critically assess his/her membership status in the participant's group through reflexivity and interpretation of the findings. Several scholars have explored this theory in different contexts (see Zavella, 1993; Brayboy and Deyhle, 2000; Merriam *et.al.*, 2001; England, 1994; Dwyer and Buckle, 2009; and Merton, 1972). Within this section, I discuss the development of the insider and outsider theory individually in order to present an overview. In terms of the outsider theory, I will cover part of the discussion in relation to Collins's (2000) 'outsider within' and Beoku-Betts's 'cross-national outsider within' (1994) concept in section 2.3.2. As far as the insider perspective is concerned, I discuss it as it has been presented by Merton (1972), Merriam, Johnson-Bailey, Lee, Kee, Ntseane and Muhamad (2001) as well as other scholars in order to anchor this position within my research. One of the main themes to be discussed is the role of power and positionality (see section 2.3.4), that is to assess the multiple roles the researcher adopts in the field, how he/she views him/herself in relation to the participants and how his/her participants view the researcher (Merriam *et.al.*, 2001: 405). The approach being

adopted is to look at the assumed insider-outsider status before the fieldwork, the reality of the insider-outsider status once in the field which then leads onto a discussion of my understanding of my position and power within my research and vis-à-vis the respondents.

a. Insider Theory

The insider theory has been described as the commonalities shared by the researcher and his/her participants, which include race, gender, class, culture as well as other characteristics (Merton, 1972; Merriam *et.al.*, 2001). A researcher who is a member of the group he/she is studying can be expected to have better access to the people and the information they offer, which was an initial assumption I made in the early stages of my research. As an insider, access is determined by the researcher's familiarity with the participants of a study. Other characteristics include the fact that insiders have more long-term access than outsiders and through informal discussions insiders are able to contextualise information such as designing the interview schedule before entering the field (Dobson, 2009: 184-5). Thus, being an insider means that the information may be easily retrieved and rich in meaning because it is incisive. Assumptions are a useful tool to assess the researcher's insider status with the target group, which, in the case of this research and others, proved to be a challenge once in the field.

Insiders sometimes assume that a common identity may grant them access to the target group (Zavella, 1993). Identity can include national heritage, ethnic affiliation, educational background, class, gender as well as the sharing of a common language/dialect and other attributes. However, researchers are aware of some of the multiple identities they assume as a researcher, colleague, friend and/or family, which could affect their relations with some of the participants (Dobson, 2009: 185). Dealing with multiple identities is challenging in the field as they sometimes create barriers to the group being studied. For instance, Brayboy and Deyhle's (2000) study on indigenous American-Indian communities,

Brayboy belonged to the same ethnic identity as his participants, but his role as a researcher challenged his position as a 'good Indian' in terms of interaction (2000: 165). Using the participant observation method in his research, he stated that he had to strike a balance between participating and observing since culturally it is considered rude not to take part in an activity (2000: 164-5). These barriers can be addressed at the initial stages of the research process where the researcher can assess positive and negative aspects of being an insider to try and find ways of overcoming them. Once in the field, the barriers become more specific to the researcher and he/she will be in a position to identify the factors that make him/her an insider and use it to the best of his/her advantage (Merriam *et.al.*, 2001).

In Zavella's (1993) study, her initial assumptions exceeded her expectations when studying Chicana working mothers in Santa Clara Valley in the United States. She assumed her identity as a working class Chicana feminist scholar would grant her access to the women and an understanding of their experience of work. But once in the field, she became more aware of differences between herself and the participants as her identity as a Chicana needed to be constantly defended vis-à-vis her participants who were less educated and of a different social class (1993: 58). The participants, in this case, determined whether or not she was an insider based on how they saw her in relation to themselves. Therefore, researchers need to be aware of the multiple identities they have in relation to their participants as well as the barriers they encounter in gaining access to people and their information.

One of the initial assumptions I held was that I was an insider to the Kenyan women as I shared a national heritage with them and was familiar with some of the cultural beliefs as well as the experience of migration. I had made an unconscious assessment as to what made me an insider. Once in the field, I found out that I had to consider the multiple identities I had in relation to my participants, that is my age, ethnicity, national heritage, educational background and migration experience. For instance, I assumed my age would make it

difficult to access women who were much older than I am, and I believed that my level of education might have been considered intimidating to my participants. This was similar to an experience of Beoku-Betts (1994) who felt that her age, along with other factors, denied her access to certain people, which eventually she finally attributed to a power issue between the researcher and researched (1994: 418). I too encountered such a situation with a highly educated potential respondent who questioned the validity of my research and challenged me to defend my reasons for studying Nigerian and Kenyan women, whom she believed had nothing in common. She cautioned that, 'you cannot compare a fruit with a vegetable' and she commented that the project was of 'high school calibre' and not worth a PhD. Initially, I assumed that the information I provided and my responses to her questions had not convinced her of the potential of my project. However, upon further reflexion, I realised that my age might have been a factor in preventing my access to her as well as the fact that I was pursuing a PhD at a young age. But this is an assumption I made based on my assessment and may not be true from her perspective. This experience did affect my confidence, but it helped to prepare me for a similar situation if it were to emerge. Despite that experience, I was granted insider status by other women who wanted to support the project because they found it to be noble and proud initiative and they suggested they wanted to support a 'fellow Kenyan'. I had insider status during the initial stages of the research but that status was only granted by the participants once in the field and these relations were assessed when reflecting back on the experience.

Being an insider can also prevent a researcher from investigating an experience objectively from the perspective of the participant because of the subject being close to the researcher's own experience (Beoku-Betts, 1994). Such a situation can occur in circumstances where a researcher assumes that he/she knows what the participant means when expressions such as 'you know what I mean' or 'you know how it is' are used at the

end of the participant statements. This could lead to a lack of meaning and understanding on the part of the researcher and his/her role is to get in depth details on an experience even if they know about it (O'Connor, 2004). In the first few interviews, I became aware of some of the presumed information from the participants. Expressions such as 'you know what I mean' were used by the participants at the end of some explanations to life in Kenya or decision-making to imply that I did know what they meant. Yet, in actual fact, I could have interpreted the information they gave more differently to how they did. In O'Connor's view (2004: 169), "familiarity may mean that the researcher makes presumptions as to what is being said rather than seeking clarification as an outsider would". Through my assessment of the interview transcript, I believed that more prodding would be necessary in order to gain better access to information. In the interviews that followed, I adopted this approach which proved to be more rewarding in terms of the quality of information received.

In summary, the insider theory, referring to membership of the group being studied, has its privileges and constraints. As an insider, a researcher is able to gain in depth information due to their close relations or familiarity with the participants which can be due to one of the many assumed identities of the researcher. However, being close to the target group and/or subject matter could mean the researcher takes for granted certain information given assuming that s/he understands what has been said. I have illustrated situations within my research where I assessed the extent to which I considered myself an insider and at the same time how the participants gave me access to their group, thereby confirming some of my presumptions. At the same time, there are challenges related to being an insider in terms of interpreting the information as well as balancing the multiple identities in the field. Using this theory helped to determine my power and position in my relationship with my participants. It helped to explain my position as a partial insider. However, before further

exploring the role of power and positionality in the field in relation to my insider status, I discuss the outsider theory, relating it to my experience in the field.

b. Outsider Theory

Being an outsider refers to the researcher studying a group to which they do not belong (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009: 57). The position that researchers find themselves in is that of a 'stranger' (Griffith, 1998: 336) where they may not have experienced a certain event as the group that they are studying but may be knowledgeable about it through previous research. In the same way as the insider status, the researcher who finds herself/himself in this position will make some presumptions about what makes her an outsider. This includes being aware of the multiple identities she assumes in relation to the participants and knowledge of their experiences.

In my research, I felt more of an outsider with the Nigerian women as even though we (myself and the Nigerian women) understood the experience of migration decision-making from our respective perspectives, we were nationally and culturally different and had different ways of communicating. In addition, age as well as my level of education widened the gap between us. Nonetheless negotiating access to the Nigerian women was far more challenging because there was a constant need to justify the importance of the research before they would volunteer to participate and usually I needed to gain access through a key gatekeeper, especially to those who were members of an organisation. One of the biggest challenges I encountered in the field was communication. My polite way of speaking distanced me from the Nigerian women who were very assertive, forthright in the way that they spoke and more suspicious if they were not informed before-hand that I would be contacting them. The strategy I adopted to deal with this was to respond assertively, but respectfully without being overbearing with the women. In the next section, I describe how Beoku-Betts (1994) "cross-national outsider within" concept was appropriate for my research

especially concerning my relationship with the Nigerian women. I will also elaborate on the benefits of being an outsider researcher and discuss the use of the “cross-national outsider within” concept and how it operates within my research. To put the discussion into perspective, I briefly provide a background to the “cross-national outsider within” concept from the black feminist standpoint theory.

2.3.2 Black Feminist Standpoint Theory

Feminist standpoint theory is difficult to define or describe because since its development, feminists have taken up different positions on what it is and how it should be applied. It was influenced by Marx’s work on class domination, where he looked at the relationship between classes within a capitalist system, more specifically the differences in the way knowledge is produced by the ruling class (capitalists) and the working class (workers) (Harding, 2004: 3). Black feminist standpoint theory is one of the many different theories that have emerged within the discussion of standpoint theory and will be the main focus of discussion in this section.

In the early years of its development, black feminist standpoint theory was discussed within the context of the marginalised position that African-American feminist scholars occupied in academia, a position captured by the term ‘outsider within’ (Collins, 2000). The argument is that research on black women tended to be dominated by works written from a westernized, white male elite which produced negative images of black women and which did not have the experience that the participants of their study had in order to understand it (Collins, 1986). At the same time, black feminist scholars were aware of the differences that existed between black women, for example those of class, age, marital status and religion, just to mention a few (Beoku-Betts, 1994: 414). One of the challenges faced by black feminist scholars using standpoint theory was to find new ways of self-defining and self-

valuating⁵ black women and at the same time being aware of the differences between black women that may affect the researcher's access and interpretation of to information (Collins, 1986).

Few, Stephens and Rouse-Arnett's (2003) article outlines some of the areas of concern they encountered when exploring a sensitive experience by African-American women, which could help in this process of self-definition and self-valuation. These scholars review their research experience of studying women exposed to domestic and sexual violence and make recommendations that could be useful in both qualitative and quantitative research. They suggest that black feminist researchers should conceptualise research and subjectivity, be able to use multiple strategies to gain access to information, consider the power of symbols and be aware of the impact of the research process on the participants (2003: 205). Conceptualising research meant I had to read about the participants of my study to learn about their history as well as customs especially if the group was unfamiliar. Conceptualising subjectivity refers to the position the researcher takes within her research where self-reflexion through journals is used as a tool to determine her position within the research. Monitoring the power of symbols is equally important as it refers to the strategies of communication adopted by the researcher which includes the language used (formal/informal) and the dress code. Adopting different ways of asking the same question could help the participant to reflect on the experience to open up more about it. Finally, being aware of the 'ethics of caring' (Collins, 2000: 262) is vital during and after the research process, especially if the issue is sensitive, that is, being aware of the impact the research process has had on the participants and finding ways of helping them cope. In the case of Few, Stephens and Rouse-Arnett's article, the researchers recommended some reading lists as well as therapists

⁵ "Self-definition involves challenging the political knowledge-validation process that has resulted in externally-defined, stereotypical images of Afro-American womanhood. [Whereas] self-valuation stresses the content of Black women's self-definition – namely, replacing externally-derived images with authentic Black female images" (Collins, 1986: S16-17)

that would help their participants find the right help for their condition (Few *et.al.*, 2003: 211). The reading lists were designed to prepare qualitative researchers prepare for the fieldwork, but they can also be used in non-sensitive and quantitative research. Few *et.al.* (2003) study could help researchers prepare to deal with the relationship between researcher and participant and they make relevant recommendations of one of several ways of gaining access to an experience.

Within my research, the first two recommendations, that is conceptualising research and subjectivity as well as considering multiple strategies of gaining access, have played a vital role in terms of my negotiating access (i.e. reading about my target group) and has helped to define my position during the fieldwork through reflexions in my journal. However, my study explores the experiences of two groups of women that I assumed were culturally and nationally different to one another. Communication for the purposes of access, negotiation and publicising of the project was key as a range of contacts were made with church pastors, mosque elders, representatives of community/national organisations, representatives of the relevant national embassies and personal contacts, male and female. The language used to communicate with my personal contacts was informal because of my close relations with them through work or years of friendship. The same informality could not be adopted when speaking to pastors, representatives of the Kenyan/Nigerian High Commission, mosque elders and executives of community/national groups which were more formal. Once the fieldwork commenced, there were moments where I needed to assess my dress code before entering the site of research deciding between formal or informal clothing and, in terms of attending the mosque, preparing to respect Islam by covering my head. All these experiences were determined by what I learned about the women being studied, even though I had expected some of them.

During the interview process, I learned the art of asking the same question differently (2003: 211) through trial and error as well as self-reflexion and listening to previous interview transcriptions. Not only were new questions incorporated into the initial interview script, but I was able to learn different ways of exploring an experience of the participant by referring to the transcriptions and consulting texts that focus on the implementation of qualitative research in the field (Bryman, 2004; Marshall and Rossman, 2006; Flick, 2007). Throughout the data collection process, I became aware of the “ethics of caring” a concept that is highlighted by Collins (2000) which is more relevant in my research. Collins (2000) states that each individual expression is unique and that emotion can be used to reveal how an individual really feels about an experience based on the words and tone of voice being used. In addition, empathy expressed by the researcher and sensed by the participant could help reveal something more about the experience.

In addition, I had to consider the significance of the ethics of care concept in a study involving Nigeria and Kenya, two countries which I assumed were distinct from one another and African women who are different in terms of ethnicity/tribe, culture, class, age and marital status. Collins (2000) principle on the ethics of caring in this study can be used to gain better access to the information needed for the research (2000: 265). One of the assumptions I had before entering the field was that access to one group, Kenyan women, would be much easier than access to Nigerian women. I related my insider status vis-à-vis Kenyan women based on the fact that I was also Kenyan and had experience of migration decision-making. Whereas the Nigerian women were a different nationality, I could relate to them as far as the experience of decision-making was concerned. But once in the field, my assumptions were challenged. Differences were bound to exist between myself and the participants and those differences were important in contextualising behaviour. Johnson-Bailey’s study (1999) illustrated the importance of difference when she interviewed African-

American women on their experience in education. She assumed that being an African-American woman, she would be granted access to the women and their information. However, the issue of colour/complexion came up on three occasions where the participants insinuated that because she was fair in complexion, she had an easier time in school than they did as they were much darker in complexion. This, according to Johnson-Bailey, can be linked to the history of segregation in America where colour defined people's status within society (1999: 660). As much as she was able to get information on the disadvantaged position that some women had in education, she assumed that her identity as a black woman would grant her access but did not foresee the issues of complexion with her participants.

Again at this point, assumptions about being an insider or outsider can be determined by looking at my position with regards to the two groups of women. Membership of the respective groups, however, can only be granted by the participants of the study. For instance, as far as the Kenyan women were concerned, being part of the in-group depended on where a person lived or the school she attended in Kenya. Access to the Nigerian women was sometimes determined by the head of the organisation before being approved by the female members or the potential participants. Therefore, based on my experience engaging with the participants, I was able to develop a 'cross-national outsider within' status (Beoku-Betts, 1994) with the Nigerian women and more of a partial insider in terms of the Kenyan women. In the next section, I discuss cross-national outsider within status as presented by Beoku-Betts (1994).

a. Cross-National Outsider Within

The term and concept of 'outsider within' has been commonly associated with the works of Collins (1989; 2000) and influencing other black feminist scholars in their studies of black women (Beoku-Betts, 1994; Johnson-Bailey, 1999). Within my research, this concept has proved to be a useful tool for me to understand the role I played within the research

process. It is a similar experience to that described by Beoku-Betts (1994) in her work whose title is, interestingly, 'being black was not enough' (1994: 418). In her study and in terms of her membership of the group she was studying, she identified herself as an insider and 'cross-national outsider within' (1994: 420). She was studying the food practices of Gullah women, an African American community located in the Sea Island of South Carolina and Georgia with roots in West Africa (1994: 414). She felt that being from West Africa and familiar with the similar food practices of the Gullah communities, she would be able to gain membership of the group of women, which was the case in some communities. She argued that the communities that granted her access were familiar with modern day West Africa, whereas other communities that were not familiar with West Africa did not grant her access. In the latter communities, she considered herself a cross-national outsider within.

As a cross-national outsider within, she identified the multiple identities that disadvantaged her access to certain women, at first, and required that she constantly defended her reasons for conducting research within that community. At the same time, the status of cross-national outsider gave her the opportunity to conceptualise her research by engaging in community chores that would build trust with the women. As such, she was gathering data at a point where she thought that access had not been gained. In a similar situation within my research, I found that I was unable to gain access to some Nigerian women as they indirectly and directly questioned my motives and intentions. They assessed whether I could be entrusted with information concerning their migration experience as well as the usefulness of the research to them; more specifically they wondered if it would change their lives by influencing government policies in Nigeria. Before I entered the field, I had assumed that there would be some difficulty convincing the women to participate as migration can be a sensitive issue in terms of the experience and more so if migrants have fled violence in their

home country as asylum seekers or gained access to the destination country through illegal means. Trust, therefore, needed to be effectively negotiated.

These assumptions were challenged once in the field when it became clear through my historical research that the Nigerian women were similar to many other African women in terms of their cultural practices and belief systems. As a cross-national outsider within, trying to establish connections with the relevant women became problematic as it was not as simple as sending an email, calling or walking into the organisation. I soon came to realise that I had to identify key gatekeepers who I believed would give me access to the women which sometimes was a longer and extended process. A range of strategies were adopted and exhausted as I went from snowballing with personal contacts to attending business events and collaborating with church pastors to gain access. This will become clear in my descriptions on negotiating access to interviewees and focus group participants in section 2.4.1. Nevertheless, I was unaware of my exact position with the Nigerian women until I reflected back on the experience in my research journal which contained discussions of the barriers and challenges I faced. However, my relationship with the Kenyan women was also assumed as I adopted a partial insider position. In the next section, I outline the importance of power and positionality in the field in relation to the insider-outsider theory and cross-national outsider within concept.

2.3.3 Power and Positionality in the Field

a. Power

My position with my participants varied, as discussed earlier, as I had assumed that I had insider status with the Kenyan women and cross-national outsider within status with the Nigerian women. Power became an issue in both the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions as I realised my social characteristics (age, ethnicity etc) influenced my

interactions with the participants. Power (as described by Ntseane's experience in the field) is negotiated and not given (Merriam, Johnson-Bailey, Lee, Kee, Ntseane and Muhammad, 2001: 409). It can influence every stage of the research process but has a profound impact in the field as being an insider alone may not grant full access to certain people, as the participants make an assessment about the power held by the researcher (Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002). Ntseane noticed in her study on business women in Botswana that some of the participants were of a different class to her but did not feel threatened by her strong educational background because they believed that business was a more lucrative and challenging occupation compared with that of an academic. Initially, the participants tried to steer the research in a direction that best suited them. They were not concerned with giving information on aspects of culture as they believed that the researcher, who was a Motswana, was aware of them. Ntseane, therefore, had to emphasize the importance of information on culture from the business women's perspective because it was to be presented to academics in the United States who were unfamiliar with the Tswana culture. Ntseane was constantly negotiating her power with the women in her study as it appeared that they wanted to control the direction of the research.

In the process of establishing access and confirming interviews, as well as in the interview process itself, I experienced power imbalances where I felt I had lost ground in the negotiation and access. For example, I felt disempowered by the altercation I had with a potential participant who questioned the purpose of my research. Had I not held my ground, her comments could have influenced the direction of my research, which was her main issue of concern. Ultimately, my reaction to her negative comments was to accept the fact that not everybody would be enthused about my research and as a result, I learned when not to pursue a potential participant. This experience taught me to develop alternative ways of approaching those women who needed to be convinced about the merits of my research.

During the interview segment, at the end of each interview session, in order to refine my interview questions, I invited the women to volunteer their thoughts about the project, including interview questions that I may not have asked. This allowed the women to engage in the process of design and knowledge production. For instance, a question contributed by one of the participants was: would the respondent be willing to return to Kenya/Nigeria? The respondent in question was one of my first interviewees and believed that this question would complete the research by asking the participants to rethink about their reasons for leaving. The addition of this question can invite other researchers to consider the migration decision-making process of return migrants. The above experiences show that power can be removed from a researcher and at the same time it can be yielded by a researcher with the intention of generating more knowledge on an experience. However, in order to negotiate power effectively, a researcher needs to establish his/her positionality vis-à-vis the participants.

b. Positionality

Chavez (2008) argued that positionality is an issue for insiders to contend with as knowing where the researcher stands in relation to his/her work and participants could determine whether they can get access to relevant information. Flagging up the problems faced by the insiders, Chavez (2008) argues that prior to the fieldwork, positionality is assumed and theoretical as it depends on whether the researcher is knowledgeable about the customs and practices of the target group (total insider) or whether the researcher only shares some of the characteristics with the participants (partial insider). Chavez (2008: 475) argues that positionality determines closeness to and/or distance from the target group.

My relationship with the Kenyan women revealed that my position was that of a partial insider because I shared a few characteristics with them, but the differences that existed between us, which emerged later on, related to my class as well as lived experience in

Kenya. Prior to entering the field, I was aware of some of the differences (e.g. upbringing) with some of the Kenyan women but still assumed I was a total insider. However, reflections on my previous interactions with Kenyans abroad and in Kenya, as a teenager, revealed that some Kenyans did not view me as being Kenyan enough because I did not speak one of the national languages (Kiswahili) fluently, I did not attend state schools when growing up and I did not live in Kenya for most of my teenage years. Thus, I was a partial insider based on this background. Once in the field, some of the Kenyan women I contacted queried my upbringing and where I lived in Kenya as if to determine my class background and determine my position in relation to them. In some circumstances, I could sense from their body language that they had placed me as an outsider because of my inability to speak Kiswahili fluently and lack of knowledge of certain neighbourhoods in Kenya. Revealing my background prevented any access to them and to the information I wanted. Thus, I decided to limit some of the personal information I gave to them as I realised it affected my position in relation to the potential participants.

Table 1 below outlines some of Chavez's list of advantages and complications concerning insider status and positionality i.e. in accessing the field and collecting, interpreting and representing the findings of the research. The points outlined featured at different stages of my research which became clear upon reflexion. For instance, as a researcher, I felt overwhelmed by the need to attend and participate in diaspora events that were Kenyan, Nigerian or African in order to reach participants for my project. Having attended several formal and informal events as an insider, I realised even though I was Kenyan it did not mean I could access the groups in the events I attended. For instance, I attended a celebratory event called *Jamhuri Day*⁶ which was formal and was attended by invited guests, business people, diplomats and students. I assumed that I would be able to

⁶ This is the day that Kenya became a republic on 12 December 1964. A year later, the country became independent from the British colonial administration. It is celebrated annually by all Kenyans.

access a number of Kenyan women who would be willing to participate in the project as I assumed that it would be viewed as an important project for understanding the Kenyan female diaspora. I spoke to a number of women who, on the surface, expressed their interest in the project and mentioned vaguely their migration experience and emotions, but none of them were willing to arrange an interview at a later stage and I sensed some aloofness in their responses to my request. Upon reflexion, I realised that the term 'very interesting' in reference to my research was just a polite response that did not in honesty interest the women at all. In fact, I associated it with lack of interest. There were other scenarios that demonstrate the challenges of being an insider, however, this experience stood out because it occurred in many of the events I attended, both formal and informal.

Table 1: Advantages and Complications to Insider Positionality

Advantages to Insider Status	Complications of Insider Status
<p><i>Positionality:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An equal relationship between researcher and participants; • Easy to build rapport; • Immediate legitimacy in the field; and • Economy to acclimating to the field. 	<p><i>Positionality:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insider status unchecked can complicate or overwhelm researcher role; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ over-reliance on status obscures researcher’s role or goal of research; ▪ expectation to participate in community events; and ▪ compromised professional ethics and/or research results
<p><i>Access:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expediency of access; • Access to more in-group activities 	<p><i>Access:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bias in entering the field and establishing rapport; • Limited access based on political climate
<p><i>Data collection/ Interpretation/ Representation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the historical and practical happenings of the field; • Detection of participants’ hidden behaviours and perceptions; • Identification of unusual and unfamiliar behaviour occurrences 	<p><i>Data collection/ Interpretation/ Representation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty with recognizing patterns due to familiarity with community; • Breaking or maintaining relationships with participants when leaving the field; • Community interaction style compromises interview process or observation

Source: Chavez (2008: 479)

The cross-national outsider within position I adopted with the Nigerian women was much easier to handle especially since the assumptions I had prior to entering the field were confirmed once in the field. Nevertheless, power and positionality operate consecutively as once a position is established by the researcher in relation to the participants, power is

negotiated between the two parties. If the researcher does not know her position in relation to her participants, power relations could be imbalanced. As a partial insider among the Kenyan women, I negotiated power in the access stage and, to a small extent, the interview stage. In one situation, one of the participants gave me a certain degree of power to ask the list of questions I had designed but withheld certain information about her migration experience despite being prodded in different ways. Having access to an individual does not guarantee full access to the information they can provide. Most of the women who were personal contacts were less reserved and I generally felt that there existed a balance of power between us. With the Nigerian women, there was a power struggle in terms of negotiating access from my cross-national outsider within status. In order for the representatives of organisations or the individual women to give me access, I was required to justify the importance of my research to them (see section on 2.3.2a. for an example). In this instance, power needed to be negotiated at the earlier stages, not during the interview or focus group discussions.

In summary, the epistemological approach I adopted reveals that assumptions I made prior to entering the field, about my position and power as a researcher, had important implications for negotiating access and for the interview process. The examples given show the challenges of being an insider and that I was unable to secure full insider status with some Kenyan women. They also demonstrate the challenges of being a cross-national outsider within in relation to the Nigerian women. However, these challenges helped to create new approaches to different groups of women, establish different ways of presenting information and justifying the research. Nevertheless, this is a part of a larger research process which includes the design and implementation of the methods of data collection which forms the focus of the next section.

2.4 Methods

The selected methods of enquiry were based on the research questions outlined in the introduction of this thesis. My main target group was Black Kenyan and Nigerian women aged between 18 and 65 years plus who had migrated to the UK between 1990 and 2010/11. In the initial proposal, I aimed to interview women who had migrated between 1995 and 2010, but my interactions with potential participants and gate keepers led me to widen the scope to 1990. This is due to the fact that many of them declined to participate because they had migrated before 1995. The two data collection methods which were adopted for this research were distributed over two stages: stage one covered the in-depth interviews and stage two covered the focus group discussions. The details of the scope, design and implementation of the methods are explained below.

2.4.1 In-Depth Semi-Structured Interviews

“Interviewing is rather like marriage: everybody knows what it is, an awful lot of people do it, and yet behind each closed front door there is a world of secrets” (Oakley, 1993: 221). This interesting definition of the interviewing process considers its details, that is, looking at what is involved in interviewing as opposed to viewing it as a conversation between individuals with one asking the questions (interviewer) and another answering them (interviewee). According to Oakley (1981) and Reinharz (1992), in-depth interviews have been successful in producing the thoughts, ideas and memories of the participants. In my research, the interview process proved that this was possible despite the few barriers present in the beginning of the fieldwork. These were discussed in the previous section. The next section outlines the scope of my interviews and the techniques adopted to collect the data.

a. Scope and Strategies of Approach

The target group, as mentioned above, was Kenyan and Nigerian women who had migrated to the UK from 1990 to 2010/11. The group sample consisted of 30 women: 15 Kenyan and 15 Nigerian aged between 18 and 65 years and over. It included women in all immigrant categories, such as work permit holders, students, asylum seekers and refugees and dependants of primary migrants. The women were asked to volunteer their participation in the interview segment and it included those identified before the proposed research was designed. None of the participants were pressured into taking part in the interview.

In the negotiation and access stage, information about the project was given to the participants and/or gate keepers to make them aware of why the research was being conducted, the relationship between researcher and participants, data protection rights as well as other ethical concerns (see Appendix B for sample of information sheet). Before each interview was carried out, the participants were asked to sign a consent form confirming their participation in the study (see Appendix C for sample of consent form). The interviews were voice recorded with the consent of the participant and later on transcribed for my analysis.

Asylum seekers and refugees proved harder to gain access to even though I contacted well known organisations such as the Refugee Council and identified smaller organisations through which I hoped to gain access to Nigerian and Kenyan women. However, my conversations with the Refugee Council proved futile as I was unable to gain access to the group of women and was directed instead to recent relevant research by the organisation (Crawley, 2010). Other organisations contacted either stated that they did not deal with Nigerian or Kenyan women asylum seekers or refugees or failed to respond to my requests. Due to time constraints, I chose not to actively search for Nigerian or Kenyan women who were refugees and asylum seekers, but was still open to interviewing any that volunteered to

be part of the research. However, both Nigeria and Kenya are not known to produce large numbers of people seeking asylum but there are studies which have investigated the plight of Kenyan and Nigerian women seeking asylum which suggests that the group exists (Home Office, 2002; Asylum Aid, 2003). I managed to interview a woman who had claimed asylum with her family in the early 1990s, but she refrained from giving me details about the experience, despite my prodding. Her responses, though sketchy, were interesting but cannot be used to reflect the experiences of all asylum seekers or refugees. It is an example of an experience.

When approaching the women, three strategies were developed: snowballing, contacting organisations, diplomatic offices (e.g. high commissions) and attending events (e.g. national celebration events). Snowballing was initially done through personal contacts, but later on was used with women who had volunteered to participate in the project and with professional organisations. It proved to be a useful tool during the initial stages but later on became challenging as a chain of contacts had to be established before a willing participant was found. There were several constraints and barriers experienced in the field that led to the adoption of the second strategy, namely contacting organisations.

The second strategy was contacting relevant organisations identified via the internet. A keyword search was used to identify organisations with female or male and female members that were Kenyan and/or Nigerian (e.g. Nigerian/Kenyan women's organisation). At times, I assumed that some organisations involved a Kenyan or Nigerian population but once contacted, it became clear that they represented wider groups of people (e.g. the Great Lakes African Women and Children's Network). In addition, personal and professional contacts made recommendations of organisations they believed would have Kenyan and/or Nigerian members which I explored. Once a list of organisations was compiled, communication was established via email with a follow up phone call especially when I did

not receive a response from the organisation. If the phone call failed to bear fruit, I decided to visit the offices of the organisations and have face-to-face contact with the director of the organisation. In section c. below, I elaborate on some of the constraints that sometimes made these steps ineffective.

The third strategy adopted was attending Kenyan, Nigerian and other African events in an attempt to approach potential participants or identify key gate keepers. This strategy was adopted because I believed that I would have a larger pool of women to approach for the project. However, this did not always secure interviews. The assumed success of this approach was because I believed that the project would be of interest to the women who had shared an experience familiar to me and the women. This enthusiastic perception of my research clouded the fact that I still had to establish my position with the women which included gaining their trust as well as justifying why they should contribute to the project. At every stage, I made an assessment of whether the strategy was successful and be continued or whether it needed further adjustments that would guarantee some level of success. Each failed attempt or approach was refined until there was no room for change at which point I chose to revert to the first strategy (i.e. snowballing with former participants or personal contacts). Nevertheless, during the process of establishing access, the interview structure needed designing which meant identifying the types of questions that needed exploration with regard to my research questions.

b. Design: Interview Structure

The interview segment was designed to meet the first, second and fourth objectives of my research: the first, to investigate the migration history of each participant in order to understand the context in which their decision to migrate was made; the second objective was to explore the role that children and/or husband's play in the migration decision-making of

the Kenyan and Nigerian women; and the fourth objective was to examine the role of gendered networks in the migration process and how they transmit information to potential migrants in their country of origin. The structure of the interview was guided by three general sections which could be subject to changes. Any contributions provided by the interviewees were welcomed to widen the responses to the research questions (see appendix D for interview structure).

Section one of the interview explored the social, economic and cultural backgrounds of the participants to consider their perceptions of their family/community/society's expectations of them as women, their upbringing and the economic position they occupied within the household with regard to their occupation and earnings. In addition, the background helped to develop a picture of what their place was in Kenyan or Nigerian society. Section two explored the migration decision-making process, which inquired about networks, channels of communication and the role of family members (i.e. children, husband or parents). It also helped to identify some of the expected values (e.g. access to better education) they were hoping to achieve through migration. Fundamentally, this stage aimed to gather detailed information about gendered migrant networks (male or female), the usefulness of the information received and their own assessment of the success of their migration plans based on the information provided by their networks.

Finally, section three was planned to look at how they advised others based on their own migration experience, and whether they would give specific information to men as opposed to women. The aim of adopting this line of questioning was to establish the importance of information being shared and how potential migrants reacted to the information they had been given by the women in my study. In addition, the women were

asked to reflect back to their decision to determine whether they believed they made the right choice in migrating based on the information they were given. This section also explored whether the women themselves were acting as gendered networks that is, providing specific information to men and women in their home country. The rest of the section provided a space for adding any comments on or responses to the topic and was open to the participants to contribute. One of the contributions made by the women in the initial stages queried whether the women would consider returning to Nigeria and Kenya. In her case it was important as when she migrated it was temporary until circumstances changed that led her to stay permanently. It was an interesting question to ask of the women because it helped them to review their reasons for migrating and the reasons why they would return. In the next section, the implementation process of the design of the interview reveals the changes, challenges and successes of the design.

c. Implementation: Reflexions from the Field

Before accessing the field, I conducted a pilot interview with a personal friend, a Kenyan migrant, in order to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the interview guideline. The participant was asked to scrutinize the questions asked by evaluating whether they were easily understood, needed further simplification or whether they should be excluded from the interview guideline, giving reasons for her thoughts. She was also asked to suggest other questions that should be explored, and her overall opinion of the interview process, including the duration of the interview. In addition, I assessed the possible problems that I could encounter during the interview such as background noises and their impact on the quality of the recording. As the participant had a child present, she constantly needed to pay attention to her child which made it difficult for her to respond to the questions. This added pressure on me to speed up the interview. Therefore, the recording had to be restarted if the child needed attention and later listening back to the interview, it was clear the recording was of poor

quality due to the child's presence. On the questions asked, the participant felt that the question on culture was a bit vague and tricky and that it needed to be put within a context. The questions I used for the interview structure were a result of reviewing some of the survey questions that Bilborrow (1997) raised in his study. In addition, it was based on questions I would have liked to be asked had I been in the same position as the participant. DeVault and Gross (2007) suggest, as researchers "we begin by considering our own intellectual biographies and contexts and our relations with each other" (2007: 173). At the same time, it was important to be aware of some semi-conscious biases that may have emerged in terms of the questions as I had to consider differences between myself and the participants of our respective experiences of the same activity.

The interviews which followed the modified interview structure were more tailored towards the individual interviewee. For instance, questions on the role of children in the migration decision-making process were irrelevant for women who had migrated as single migrants with no children. Some improvisation was needed during some interviews with participants whose migration story needed deeper prodding. For example, two participants did not want to reveal detailed accounts of the steps they took to complete their migration plans. This was the case of an undocumented migrant and another who gained refugee status following an asylum claim. I assumed that because I was not well known to these women, I could not be entrusted with this information and even though the same question was asked in different ways, it was clear that they did not want to reveal too much information. At this point, I chose not to explore further in order not to harm the participant in any way.

Nonetheless, new questions needed to be formulated in order to explore particular experiences of women that I had failed to take into account in other interviews and thus improvisation proved to be a useful tool. Initially, I intended to interview women who had migrated to the UK between 1995 and 2008, but because I was unable to generate a wide

enough range of interviewees, I decided to extend the period from 1990 to 2010. This was also based on the advice given by gate keepers and potential participants in my study who declined to participate because they migrated before 1995.

As I had assumed an insider status with the Kenyan women and a cross-national outsider status with the Nigerian women, I approached the interviews with the two groups differently. I approached the interview with Nigerian women as an explorer learning about a group of people with whom I am familiar as far as social relationships are concerned but unfamiliar in terms of their culture and customs history. In opposition, interviews with the Kenyan women were approached with the view that I was familiar with their experiences and cultural practices, which at times, as previously mentioned, led me to neglect exploring certain questions further. Nevertheless, these were treated as lessons learned as I became aware of the behaviour and determined the best approach to interviewing relying on reflexions by other scholars in a similar situation (Oakley, 1981; Zavella, 1993).

Limerick, Burgess-Limerick and Grace (1996: 449) argue that “the interview is a gift received by the researcher, and participating in the process of the production of knowledge inevitably means being embroiled in some uncomfortable contradictions”. In my case, there was no discomfort but I experienced a few occasions where I became the participant and the participant became the interviewer. Such a situation arose mostly with the Nigerian women who did not know much about me or Kenya and wanted to find out about me, which I assumed would build trust. On one occasion, a Nigerian participant tactfully asked me halfway through the interview why I had not talked about Kenya, after which I talked about a few details about Kenya to regain more trust. Oakley (1981) focused on the risks of interviewing giving an opinion about the topic of the research whereas in this situation the interviewee was only interested about my country of origin. My decision was to respond to her query by mentioning a few details before returning to the interview questions.

However, not everything goes according to plan and the negotiation strategies needed redesigning at various stages when one strategy was exhausted. For instance, it was more effective to have a gate keeper introduce me to potential participants especially if s/he was well respected or known. Thus, occasionally, I requested that the gate keepers contact the potential participants before I communicated with them. When communicating with organisations in the first instance, as described earlier (see section 2.4.1.a), I found that I had to follow up email messages with phone calls, often repeatedly. Usually, I requested to speak to the director of the organisation or second in line. If this failed, I visited the offices of the organisations hoping that my physical presence could persuade them to assist me. Sometimes, contacts with organisations proved to be a challenge. For example, one organisation offered to fully support the project on condition that I or my university department funded them for organising a forum with their members. This prevented me from accessing the female members of the organisation because I told the representative that, neither I nor my department could provide any funding for organising the forum. This was also problematic as the representative wanted to plan the focus group. This was a setback in arranging the focus group and will be discussed in the next section.

In summary, negotiation and access to the participants was constantly negotiated, whether I was an insider or cross-national outsider within. Strategies needed to be put in place to deal with the challenges and barriers encountered along the way and at this point reflexivity and self-motivation proved to be useful but sometimes difficult to maintain. They helped to identify problems with my strategy, to develop new ones and deal with rejection by the participants. Several writings on data collection mentioned earlier in this chapter were useful in providing case study scenarios on strategies of access and negotiation in the field, offering alternatives that I could adopt.

2.4.2 Focus Group Discussions

Focus groups are important in capturing interaction between individuals in an attempt to understand certain issues. The questions developed at this stage were based on the responses of the women in the interview stage. The questions were designed in a way that a discussion could be held without requiring the participants to delve into personal experience. Focus groups are usually associated with market research where the opinions of individuals are explored about a given product in order to predict its success, shortcomings and possible changes. The focus group method has been criticized for not taking place within a natural environment in which social interaction occurs, however, it allows social scientists to observe human interaction (Madriz, 2003: 365). An advantage of using focus groups is that in principle a focus groups is not intrinsically non-hierarchical, it depends on how it is organised. The balance of power is shifted from the researcher to the participants allowing them to control the discussion (Wilkinson, 1999: 65). However, this method can have a negative side as the researcher may lose control of the discussion which could (and did in my research) stray on irrelevant topics. At the same time, it can reveal certain issues which may not have been otherwise considered by the researcher (1999: 70). Another advantage of focus groups is that the discussions within may lead to self-disclosure where the participants in the focus groups can express how they feel and think especially in a comfortable environment that is non-judgmental (Krueger and Casey, 2009: 5). It can, however, also be problematic if there are individuals dominating the discussion and the researcher is unable to control it.

In this project, focus groups were adopted as a space for the Kenyan and Nigerian women to discuss aspects of their migration decision-making experience and to tease out women's role in the process. The focus group would also provide a platform for women to possibly explore sociocultural perceptions of women in their respective families and communities and possibly identify any differences. In addition, it created an opportunity for

the women to question each other's views about the migration experience and/or culture. Focus groups provide a space for the women to grapple with their experiences in a group. Focus groups may also produce different results from interviews about the same issue as the participants' opinions and ideas may be modified according to the social situation (May, 1997: 114). Thus, focus groups can help to identify consensus between the two groups and/or alternative ideas that may not have been raised in the interview process or considered prior to data collection. From a feminist perspective, focus groups can help to substantiate the experiences of marginalized women. They allow for the construction of the words and thoughts of the women participating in the focus group (Madriz, 1998: 116-117). The next three sections discuss the development, design and implementation of the focus groups.

a. Scope and Approach

As the sole researcher, it was important to plan the number of groups to be used in the focus group and the number of participants that would make up each group. The choice of the number of groups and its participants depended on the topic of research; as recommended by Bryman (2004), smaller groups are better for controversial and sensitive issues. Where my research is concerned, I was aware of women whose migration may have been a result of difficult or sensitive situations they faced in their country of origin. These women might not have felt comfortable discussing their migration history with a group of strangers. In such cases, the women were not invited to the focus group due to the sensitive nature of their migration, but had been considered for the semi-structured in depth interview if they had agreed to participate.

The initial decision was to run three focus groups with 6 – 10 participants each: Group A would comprise of Kenyan women, Group B contained Nigerian women and Group C included both. The scope of the groups gave women of the same nationality the opportunity to discuss their migration experiences and at the same time allowed women from different

nationalities to make comparisons and comments in the mixed group discussion. The small number of participants made it easier to moderate in terms of knowing who the participants were especially during the interpretation and analysis stage and in controlling the direction of the topic (Bryman, 2004: 352). I assumed that the challenge would be more to do with identifying Kenyan and Nigerian for the joint focus group discussion as there was a high chance that these women did not know each other. The next step, elaborated in the next section, was the design and recruitment of participants for the focus group discussion which took into consideration the three sections discussed in the individual interview. Strategies of recruitment needed to be put in place and the questions to be explored during the focus group needed to be designed.

b. Design and Recruitment

The design of the focus group was not decided until some of the interviews were conducted. An assessment was made of the most discussed issues amongst the women in relation to the research topic. A list of possible questions was considered for the focus group discussions. For instance, from the interviews, it was clear that information received from networks was important for migration decision-making. As a result, in the focus group, the question of the importance of networks and the information they impart was raised. Assuming that the women would not be willing to discuss personal experiences, the questions were designed in such a way that revealing personal experiences was optional. Nevertheless, once the focus groups were underway, some new questions which were not considered originally were discussed and included for the next planned focus group discussions. The focus group participants were issued with a consent form, similar to those used in the semi-structured interview, to confirm their participation in the focus group but also to accept established rules relating to the focus group structure and data protection rules. During the course of designing the focus group, I also established ways of recruiting women.

In the initial proposal, the plan was to recruit some of the participants who took part in the interviews and a statement was included in the interview information sheet on the possibility of being invited to a group discussion if they agreed. In addition, snowballing was a strategy I used for recruitment with associations, societies, churches and hair salons that I had been contacting during the interview stage. After further consideration, I opted to ask each interviewee, whether they were willing to participate in one of the focus groups I was planning. It was pointed out by one of the Kenyan women interviewed that this strategy may not work because of women's different commitments and lifestyles. She suggested that it was best to target women who were members of the same organisation.

Once in the field, as many of the interviewees declined to participate in the focus groups, I began to contact churches, organisations, university societies as well as lecturers to enlist their assistance in establishing contact with potential participants. These were suggested by the participants who stated that churches, for instance, had organisations with large female congregations that were worth targeting, especially with Nigerian women. It was difficult to identify Kenyan women in churches as there were fewer churches with a large Kenyan female congregation. In addition to exploring the above option, I attended a number of community events such as *Jamhuri Day* to recruit potential focus group participants although, as explained below, they did not always guarantee successful recruitment.

c. Implementation

Putting into action the above plans proved more challenging than expected. I initially searched all possible organisations, churches or societies to approach in order to invite their members to take part in the group discussion. One organisation stood out as a possibility for recruiting Nigerian women, but did not yield results as its director asked to be paid for setting up the focus group. Other organisations approached to recruit Nigerian women were the Muslim Association of Nigeria (MAN) and a number of churches in south and east London

suggested by gate keepers and participants in the interviews, including one with a Nigerian only congregation. The members of the church and mosque were identified as ideal candidates for the focus group as I hoped to discuss the issue of migration from women who belonged to two different religious groups – Muslim and Christian. However, it was impossible to constitute a focus group through MAN as access was compromised by the gate keeper. While I managed to get access to the group, to propose my research, when I attended the mosque, I found they had been misinformed about the subject of my research and some were unwilling to participate. Nevertheless, I managed to get two women to participate in face-to-face interviews. Thus, I embarked on constituting a focus group with a church that had mostly a Nigerian congregation but welcomed other nationalities. However, the social event I was invited to made it difficult for me to interact with the women as they were busy with their children. With the assistance of a male member of the congregation, I was introduced to some of the women. As an academic himself, he was familiar with the process of recruiting or networking in general. By the end of the event, I had managed to meet the leader of the women's division and present my research to her. In addition, I established relations with another member of the congregation who took a keen interest in my research. It was agreed that I should contact the women's representative to plan the focus group.

Subsequently, I was invited tentatively to a baby shower gathering that I imagined would be a suitable opportunity to conduct a focus group. However, as I received a late confirmation of the invitation and that the focus group could go ahead, I was unable to get a note-taker in time to support the focus group discussion and decided to go ahead with the arrangement without one. I planned to act as moderator and an observer making it impossible to take notes during the discussion. Notes were made retrospectively and documented in my research journal after the focus group discussion ended. Although the focus group discussion was lively and animated, it was difficult to moderate especially whenever some women were

talking to one another rather than offering their own views to the group. At the same time, there were some women who chose to comment only briefly. Others did not participate in the discussion despite being invited to do so. The group was also big as nine chose to take part. However, the position I sat in made it easier for me to view the majority of the women who sat in a circle. A disadvantage of the focus group experience was that it was time constrained. I was given a small amount of time to conduct the focus group because some of the women had other commitments. However, the group discussion revealed some interesting findings which are discussed in chapter three, four and five.

The Kenyan only focus group was much easier to organise as I received support from a Kenyan woman I met in a focus group in which we both participated. She managed to recruit the women for the group discussion as well as arrange a convenient location, whereas I was left to prepare the material and refreshments for the event. With a note-taker present, she was able to capture some of the body language of some of the women while the discussion was taking place. The conversation occasionally went off tangent but I carefully brought it back to the points being discussed. It appeared that the women enjoyed the interaction and reflection as it allowed them to review their experience. In this focus group, I believe there was a power balance. Even though I had pre-prepared questions to explore, the women were given the freedom to discuss the topic and I only stepped in when it went off topic. Using the challenges faced in organising and implementing the Nigerian focus group, I was able to ensure the same problems did not recur in this focus group which was much smaller than planned (five participants) but easier to moderate.

Finally, the mixed focus group presented the biggest challenge to organise as attempts to bring the two groups together fell through on several occasions. Individual participants from previous interviews and focus groups were successfully recruited but a convenient location and time were difficult to arrange as many were working at different times and

travelling from different parts of London. As an alternative strategy, I contacted university lecturers in London with a research interest in African women, migration and culture and hoped that I would be able to enlist their support to help recruit the women, in particular Nigerian women. One lecturer contacted agreed to recruit the Nigerian women, on the basis that I would recruit the Kenyan women and provide refreshments for the focus group. She suggested that the focus group could take place in one of the empty classrooms at the university after hours.

However, organisational difficulties persisted resulting in further postponements. Therefore, a decision was made (with the lecturer in question) to postpone the date further (by a month and a half) in order to provide enough time for the participants to confirm their attendance for the planned day. When the group interview finally took place, the challenges raised by the previous focus groups were dealt with better although I was constrained with time. The focus group discussion was easier to moderate because the group was small (six people), with one dropping out at the last minute because of child care commitments, only to be replaced by another invited participant. There was, however, an imbalance between Kenyan (two) and Nigerian (four) women as the plan was to have three on each side. As before, the questions outlined did not require the women to refer to their personal experiences, but as in the previous focus group discussions, many of the women volunteered the information without being prompted. All the focus group discussions were voice recorded as none of the invited participants objected.

In conclusion, the focus groups proved to be the most challenging as well as revealing part of the data collection. It was revealing because it helped me to identify the various strategies that could be adopted when organising any future focus group discussions. Recruitment, venue and location proved to be problematic because of the low budget available to me, but I was fortunate enough to find people who were willing to provide a

venue that would consider the needs of myself and my participants. It was suggested that I could host the focus group at my house, but I did not believe many of the participants would be willing to do that because it did not represent a neutral space. My aim was to find a location and venue in which we all felt most comfortable.

2.5 Data Analysis

In this section, I describe how I analysed my data. My chosen sample allowed me to provide descriptions of the different experiences of migration decision-making as there have been few studies that have explored the experience especially from the perspective of Kenyan and Nigerian women. As a result, my sample size was adopted for the purpose of understanding the experience and does not represent the experiences of women from Kenya and Nigeria. However, previous studies in other developing countries helped to put into context how certain women make their own decision to migrate or contribute to family migration decision-making. During my data collection, I had begun some preliminary analysis with the data I had already collected where I took notes on the interviews conducted outlining my views at the time. This, according to Basit (2003) is normal practice. She explained the difficulties of conducting qualitative analysis stating that “it is not fundamentally a mechanical or technical exercise. It is a dynamic, intuitive and creative process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorizing” (2003: 143). This turned out to be case in my research demonstrated how the theories of migration decision-making operated using the experiences of the women in my study.

During the field work, once the data was collected, I transcribed each interview verbatim to reduce some of the workload during the data analysis easier to conduct. However, I excluded redundant conversations and utterances from the interview transcript because I was not going to analyse the words but the experience. According to Halcomb and Davidson (2006: 40), verbatim transcriptions are beneficial for researchers as it brings them closer to

their data, however, the cost of time and physical resources can create problems for the researcher. In the case of my research, a one hour interview took 6 to 7 hours to transcribe which was sometimes physically draining. Out of the 30 individual interviews, only one participant declined to be voice recorded which resulted in a hand written interview. The focus group interviews were all voice recorded and two of them (the Kenyan and mixed focus group) included observation notes from the note taker.

When analysing the data, I first read each interview transcription and began coding and categorising my data with the focus of providing answers to my research questions as well as identifying some common and different themes. Second, I began summarising the responses of the participants in order to have a brief overview of the participant's migration decision-making experiences. This made it easier to compare and contrast the responses of the participants in both the focus groups and in the in-depth interviews. I used codes or categories that I identified from the interviews to develop an argument in order to provide answers to some of the research questions and identify any expected themes. According to Basit (2003: 144) "codes usually are attached to chunks of varying-sized words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs, connected or unconnected to a specific setting".

One of the challenges faced in following these steps is maintaining the goals I set for myself, that is, identifying themes that would be able to answer the research questions. Some of the interview transcriptions were very detailed and I had to determine what was relevant to my study. Another challenge I experienced was staying motivated as at the time I started my data analysis, I was trying to conduct my mixed focus groups as well as write some of the chapters of my thesis. Nevertheless, the results of my study were able to yield results which are discussed in chapters 3, 4 and 5. Below, I have outlined the characteristics of the participants in the in-depth interviews which will be a useful guide for the analysis chapter. The characteristics of the women that participated in the focus group were difficult to tabulate

in a similar manner as the discussions were general and the participants did not reveal too much information about themselves as the in-depth interviewees did.

Table 2a: In depth Interviews – Kenyan Participants

Participants	Year of Migration	Marital Status	Children (Yes/No)	Age Group	Ethnicity	Reasons for Migrating
Agnes	2004	Married	Yes	46 – 50	Luhya	Join husband
Naomi	2002	Married	Yes	40 – 45	Kikuyu	Attend her own graduation and explore employment opportunities for self
Deon	2000	Married	Yes	46 – 50	Luhya	Found a job opportunity
Felicia	1991	Married	Yes	26 – 30	Luhya	Looking for a better life for self and family (mostly her children)
Chloe	1995	Married	No	21 – 25	Kamba	To join her husband
Jennifer	2006	Divorced	Yes	36 – 40	Kikuyu	In search of job opportunities
Samantha	2003	Single	No	21 – 25	Kikuyu	Career development
Anita	2002	Single	No	21 – 25	Kikuyu	Career development
Lucy	1993	Single	No	16 – 20	Luhya	For higher education
Gertrude	1993	Single	No	21 – 25	Kisii	For higher education
Elizabeth	2001	Single	No	21 – 25	-	Job placement opportunity
Constance	2005	Single	No	26 – 30	Luhya	Further education
Viola	2005	Single	No	21 – 25	Kenyan	Career and self development
Corrine	2006	Single	No	26 – 30	Kikuyu	Escaping depression and for further education
Pamela	2001	Single	No	21 – 25	Kikuyu	For further education

Table 2b: In depth Interviews – Nigerian Participants

Participants	Year of Migration	Marital Status	Children (Yes/No)	Age Group	Ethnicity	Reasons for Migrating
Anna*	2000	Single	No	21 – 25	Yoruba	For further studies due to the university strikes
Tola*	1990	Single	No	21 – 25	Yoruba	For employment purposes
Afolá	2010	Widowed	Yes	41 – 45	Cham	For further education and to escape her in-laws to protect her children
Abi	1996	Single	No	16 – 20	Edosian	For education, because the high school education was of low quality
Jacinta	2003	Single	No	26 – 30	Yoruba	For further education and to find a spouse
Alice*	2009	Married	Yes	56 – 60	Yoruba	To support her husband during medical treatments
Brenda*	1994	Single	No	16 – 20	Yoruba	For education
Beatrice	2000	Married	No	21 – 25	Yoruba	To join her husband
Angela*	1996	Single	No	21 – 25	Ibibio	Had no clear reason for migrating (spontaneous)
Renee	1999	Married	Yes	36 – 40	Yoruba	To support her child during his medical treatments
Patience	2006	Married	Yes	36 – 40	Yoruba	For employment, education needs for her children and to join her husband
Odessa*	2007	Married	No	26 – 30	Yoruba	To access fertility treatments
Odera*	2006	Single	Yes	26 – 30	Yoruba	To escape the stigma of being a single mother
Olivia	1991	Married	No	26 – 30	Yoruba	To escape her parents and in-laws from intervening in their marriage
Fahima	1991	Married	No	21 – 25	Yoruba	To join her husband

* British-born Nigerians raised in Nigeria

2.6 Ethical Considerations

This study has been guided by the British Sociological Association’s code of ethics. There is also a well-established framework for ethical scrutiny of research projects at Warwick University and approval from the Humanities and Social Studies Research Ethics Committee was approved with the upgrade of research from Mphil to PhD. Prior to

fieldwork, all my potential respondents were provided with information sheets clearly outlining the purpose of my research and the ways in which the data would be used and stored. This enabled them to make a decision as to whether or not they wished to be involved in the study. Once potential participants agreed to take part and an interview date was arranged, they were given a consent form on the interview day which outlined the agreement between me and the participants.

The respondents in this research remain anonymous and the information they provided in the interviews and focus groups was used in a way as to ensure that confidentiality was protected. All the data collected from the individual interviews and focus groups was coded to ensure the anonymity of the respondents (for example through the use of pseudonyms) and was stored securely, whereby only I have had access to the data. All the participants were given the opportunity to withdraw at any time and they were assured that any data relating to their participation would be destroyed or returned to them. I also took care to ensure that the interviews and focus groups were carried out in a safe, supportive and non-judgemental environment and I especially took into account the views of potential participants with a sensitive background (e.g. asylum seekers and refugees, victims of domestic violence, or undocumented migrants) in the questions I asked them. The data I collected has been stored in protected files which are only accessible to me. This includes transcriptions of interviews and focus groups conducted. The consent forms were also stored carefully and are accessible only to me.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter discusses my reasons for adopting a qualitative methodology in this study and analyses my position in relation to my participants as a (a.) partial insider (b.) a cross-national outsider within. These positions are important as they influenced the power relations between me and the participants before and during the fieldwork. To collect my data

I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 30 women (15 Kenyan and 15 Nigerian) as well as three focus groups. Negotiating access to these groups of women sometimes proved difficult and at other times was easier due to my position vis-à-vis the participants. In the next three chapters, I discuss the findings of my research.

Chapter 3

Sociocultural Perceptions and Migration Decision-Making by Kenyan and Nigerian Women

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to answer one of my proposed research questions as to ‘what is the impact of society’s sociocultural expectations on the decision of Kenyan and Nigerian women to migrate?’. First, I examine how society’s expectations of women’s position and role in both the home and in the public domain has evolved from pre-colonial times in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to the post-colonial period. The historical changes of cultures in SSA societies is of interest in this research as the events that have taken place since the pre-colonial era have had a significant impact in shaping some of the social and cultural perceptions about women’s position and role held in today’s societies. Within my research, I am interested in examining culture in its non-material form, as the history of the development of social institutions within some SSA countries will reveal the history of women’s past and the position they occupied in relation to the perceptions attached to them. This background will provide an understanding of how sociocultural expectations of women in traditional African societies combine with western sociocultural expectations of women and impact on the migration decision-making capacity and behaviour of the Kenyan and Nigerian women in this study.

3.2 Society, Culture and Gender Roles in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)

At the turn of the 20th century, societies in Africa comprised mainly of traditional, agricultural settlements which were transitioning into a capitalist cash economy due to the influence of western colonisers. Contact with the colonising European countries led to significant changes in the structure of SSA societies which included changes in the economic

and political practices as well as the cultural, social beliefs and attitudes of those societies.

Culture in SSA is an important area of focus as through time, it has changed through western influences.

The concept of culture has been difficult to define in isolation as it needs to be understood within a context and differs according to regions. Within my research, the focus has been primarily on African culture which, according to Olaoba (2005: 36), refers to the distinctive characteristics that are unique to Africa as opposed to British or Chinese culture. From a western point of view, culture has been described in terms of values, belief systems and practices that govern the lives of members of society. Patterson (2000) argues that culture is a collection of ideas on life and passed down from generation to generation (2000: 208). Harris and Johnson (2007: 10) stated that it can also refer to acceptable forms of behaviour as well as gender roles which have been described in terms of division of labour.

Ajayi (2005) compares western and African definitions of culture accepting that it is passed down from generation to generation, but states that western definitions restrict themselves to ideas, values and attitudes whereas African definitions view culture as a preservation of the traditions of the forefathers (2005: 2). He adds that culture in general has two broad aspects: the material and the non-material. The former refers to tangible human creations (e.g. schools) whereas the latter refers to the “ideological, made up of all non-physical or abstract human creations which are only discernible by the human mind” (2005: 4). In other words, the non-material aspects of culture are felt but are invisible and manifest themselves in different social, political and religious institutions in the form of values, morals and customs just to mention a few. Ajayi reveals that culture is a dynamic concept. It is a product of the human environment, meaning that it is inherited by future generations. It is learned formally and informally, shared by members who associate themselves with a particular group and it is integrated in the sense that it is a whole system in which different

parts complement each other (2005: 5-6). Falola (2003) stated that traditional African culture has changed through time as it was replaced with a culture that favoured the western-educated elite. The colonial experience, as examined further on, transformed African culture to the extent that the traditional culture became strange to its own people (2003: 3).

In the next section, I discuss how stereotyping was used in African societies to control women and the roles that they played from pre-colonial societies to the present. In my discussion on the colonial period in SSA, I mostly focus on former British colonies and how policies were used to control the African societies through the imposition of capitalist practices (wage labour), Christianity and education. These institutions were also used to re-define the sociocultural perceptions of women which disadvantaged them. The main social institutions discussed are the household, marriage (polygamy), traditional or informal education, the political and economic system. In my discussion on post-colonial SSA, I discuss how the sociocultural perceptions of women in the same institutions targeted during colonialism continued to change. It is important to bear in mind that Africa is a large and diverse continent with a range of ethnic groups and societies which have similar as well as divergent cultural practices and perceptions. For this reason, I restrict my discussions to those countries or regions which were colonised by the British in some East, West and Southern African countries.

3.2.1 Perceptions of Women's Roles in Pre-Colonial Sub-Saharan Africa

The societies in pre-colonial SSA were mostly hunter-gatherer and/or agricultural where the division of labour between women and men was based on the roles they were expected to play in their respective societies. These roles were defined usually as a result of cultural perceptions of men and women in society, commonly shared in different regions of SSA. Most African groups were made up of kinsmen or clansmen and, depending on the group in question, they were either patrilineal or matrilineal (Collins and Burns, 2006). The

family lineages in patrilineal societies were usually traced from the father, whereas those in matrilineal societies were traced from the male kin of the mother's side of the family. In past epochs of patrilineal societies, such as the Gusii society in Kenya, there was a preference for boys over girls because of the protection and support that they were believed to provide to the community and/or their families. However, in some matrilineal societies such as the Yoruba in Nigeria, there was flexibility in terms of the sociocultural perceptions held about women and their roles in society (see 'female daughters and male husbands' in 3.2.1.a). Women in some pre-colonial societies (e.g. the Akan in Ghana and Igbo in Nigeria) engaged in the political affairs of their society as well as trade. This was a result of some of the accepted roles attributed to them in their societies. Moreover, the division of labour within the household and the socialisation of children, especially young girls, are important areas to highlight with regards to this research as women played an influential role in these areas.

a. Women's Productive and Reproductive Role in the Household

The household in pre-colonial SSA has been described as a unit in which the relations between women, men and children depended on the prescribed roles they played within the unit (Shaw, 1997; Schmidt, 1991). As outlined in the literature review, the household refers to members sharing a living space where they interact regularly which can be comprised of an individual, nuclear family or extended family. Most pre-colonial households were comprised of both nuclear and extended families which lived in a shared compound. Most of the households were usually headed by a man because of the protection and care he was expected to provide for his wives and families. However, in some unique situations, for instance among the Yoruba, older or widowed women were in a position to set up their own domestic units (McIntosh, 2009: 84). Polygamy was a common practice in many African societies whereby a man was allowed to marry as many women as he could afford through

the cultural practice of bride wealth. Bride wealth was paid before any marriage was consummated and it was an agreement between two families and not only husband and wife.

Guy (1987) indicates that in southern Africa, bride wealth for women signified that women would fulfil their productive and reproductive obligations for their future husband's household and men were also expected to provide and protect their wives. If either failed in their duties, the bride wealth would be returned to the woman's family and the marriage annulled. The marriage system was, therefore, governed by the cultural norms and beliefs that ensured that it remained a collaborative and functional unit in which there were expected roles that men and women had to fulfil (Kressel, *et.al.* 1977). Married women usually lived with the husband and his family and the living arrangements in polygamist marriages were that each wife had her own house or a separate room to accommodate her and her children. The man had his own house or separate room in a large compound owned by the man and/or his family. This communal set up allowed members of households to function as a unit as according to Kanu (2007), "the doctrine of communalism emphasizes the activity and success of the wider society rather than, although not necessarily at the expense of, the individual" (2007: 74). This set up worked as co-wives were able to support one another in domestic chores (McIntosh, 2009). This arrangement was later targeted by the colonial administrators who aimed to change the structure of marriage and the division of labour between women and men with the introduction of Christianity, education and wage labour (see section 3.2.2.a).

Nonetheless, women's status and wealth depended on their productive and reproductive roles as they provided labour for the land owned by their husband or father who inherited the land from their forefathers. Women unable to have children were denied a status (Silberschmidt, 1991; Shadle, 2006: 12). Amadiume (1987) notes that among the Igbo in Nigeria, negative and positive stereotypes were attached to women but not men. 'Good'

women were those who were obedient, performed their expected duties, bore children and looked after their husband. 'Bad' women, on the other hand, were considered to be rebellious and challenging towards their husband or father and were sometimes associated with women unable to socialise respectable children (1987: 93-94). Women were not expected to exhibit masculine behaviour (e.g. being authoritative towards men). This suggests that women's behaviour was controlled by the dominant perceptions of society which served to stereotype and control women. Being restricted to certain forms of gendered behaviour could mean that an individual lacked control over her own life including decision-making.

Women were unable to inherit land or large livestock (e.g. cows), but were entitled to a piece of land in order to grow food crops needed for their family and own small animals such as pigs and chickens considered to be 'women's animals'. Yet, this depended on the society as amongst the Kipsigis in Kenya, women had the right to hold and control 'house property' (e.g. women's personal cattle) and pass it onto their sons as inheritance (Von Bülow, 1992: 527-8). Other East and West African societies such as the Nandi in Kenya and the Igbo in Nigeria, allowed for the practice of 'male daughters and female husbands'⁷ that enabled women to inherit land and wealth from their fathers (thus male daughters) or occupy a male status (hence female husbands). The Igbo language interestingly used a gender-neutral term to refer to the head of household or wife without specifying the gender as in the case of the latter, a wife can be used to refer to those under the authority of another (Amadiume, 1987: 90). This practice suggests that women were allowed to occupy positions normally reserved for men (Berry, 1989: 43). In other societies, this was not the case as amongst the Gusii people in Kenya, the gender division of labour was prominent and women were

⁷ 'Male daughters' as a practice occurred only when a father with no male kin to inherit his wealth could call on his daughter to return from her husband's home, to inherit his wealth (Amadiume, 1987). Whereas 'female husbands' (in woman-to-woman marriages) emerged when a wealthy, usually senior, woman married another woman for the purposes of having children on her behalf due to infertility or menopause (Amadiume, 1987; Obbo, 1976; Oboler, 1980).

expected to be subordinate to men (either their husband or father) and men had the right to assert their authority through control of the household wealth (Silberschmidt, 1991: 35-6).

The sociocultural perceptions established in some pre-colonial SSA societies suggested that women were expected to be subordinate to men, except where practices such as those of female husbands and male daughters prevailed. Women were stereotyped as a way of controlling their behaviour from deviating into male roles. In addition, women occupying a subordinate position were not allowed to be involved in the decision-making process as men took up this role. However, they were in a position to make decisions regarding their expected roles (e.g. child rearing, domestic chores). The gendered division of labour within the household was further entrenched during the colonial era, when administrators used religion, education and wage labour to create new and different sociocultural perceptions of women in relation to men. Alongside the household, women were seen to play an influential role in the socialisation process, especially of daughters or girls.

b. Women in Traditional African Education and Politics

Traditional African education began at puberty and refers to the transmission of the tradition and culture of the society (Kanu, 2007: 69). Wandibba argues that women were considered responsible for socialising children from infancy to puberty (1997: 333-34). Once children reached puberty, they were put in age groups by gender where they learned as a group, the skills that would make them men or women. For example, before puberty amongst the Luhya (specifically the Babukusu), an ethnic group in Kenya residing near Mount Elgon, all children (male and female) were taught about their societal environment and ways of contributing to the household. From puberty, gendered cultural expectations were transmitted to young children, and within this labelling may have occurred. Young girls worked alongside their mothers in domestic-related activities where they learned roles that they

would engage in once they became mothers and wives. The age groups created a space where young girls and boys learned the cultural meaning of the activities that they engaged in (Shaw, 1997). More responsibility was placed on women to socialise children in the traditions of society as young girls were taught how to be good wives and mothers to their future husbands and children (Falola, 2003: 252-3). Failure in this duty could lead women to be reprimanded by members of society.

Men normally dominated political and economic institutions though some scholars suggest that women, in some societies have held political positions or engaged in certain institutions. For instance, among the Akan of Ghana, Smock (1977) noted that senior women in society managed political affairs concerning women. This suggests that women's issues were dealt with by a highly respected female member of society, usually the wife of a chief. On the other hand, Shaw (1995) found that among the Kikuyu (ethnic group in Kenya), women were being excluded from general political activities because their reproductive and mothering roles prevented them from participating in political meetings held at night. This implies that while women were in a position to deal with women's issues and could be represented by a senior woman, their gender role restricted them from participating in political issues in general. Amongst the Igbo in Nigeria, Van Allen (1972) noted that men had more power and influence in political issues that affected the society as a whole, but that women had their own space where they held their own political discussions, mostly in gatherings at the marketplace (1972: 169). Women's engagement in politics was minimal and on rare occasions they occupied senior political positions, for example, when they were appointed as regent to male heirs. This was commonly found in West and southern African kingdoms (Barnes, 2006). Meanwhile, during the early years of contact with westerners through trade of exotic goods, missionaries and anthropologists were engaged with African

society as they learnt about the cultures and practices of African groups. This helped the colonising European nations to understand African social institutions and formulate ways of controlling as well as manipulating them for their own gains.

3.2.2 Perceptions of Women's Roles in Colonial Sub-Saharan Africa

Although the Berlin Convention (1884) divided Africa amongst the European powers at the end of the 19th century, some African societies had had previous contact with westerners through trade. European missionaries, adventurers and scholars had already ventured into the continent and interacted with different African groups specifically to understand the African society. The missionaries were intent on so-called 'civilising' the Africans through Christianity and by the time the Berlin Convention was signed, the European nations had gathered enough knowledge to impose physical as well as psychological changes on African communities. Amadiume (1987) argued that the western colonisers noticed that the Igbo women in Nigeria had a certain degree of power which differed from the status occupied by European women. Intent on dislodging the African communities from their culture, the colonial administrators used the knowledge gathered by anthropologists and missionaries to change the traditional structures, to resemble those in western societies. This included changing the norms, values, beliefs and expectations of women and men in society through the introduction of wage labour, western education and culture and political institutions which in turn affected the gender division of labour between women and men.

My primary concern in this section is to focus on how the system of colonialism used social, economic and cultural policies to introduce wage labour, formal education, and religion to the African communities and how these impacted on society's sociocultural perceptions and expectations of women and men. Colonial institutions changed the structure of the household through the traditional African marriage system, education and wage labour.

As a result, the institutions and systems I focus on are the household, employment, religion and education as they were instrumental in imposing cultural imperialism.

a. The Impact of Wage Labour and Religion on Household Relations

During the colonial era, the British chose to adopt a system of indirect rule to control many of its East and West African colonies through local chiefs (Musisi, 2002). Wage labour was introduced as part of an economic system that exploited raw materials using cheap African labour to extract them. In the British colonies, when wage labour was introduced, many African people (mostly men) did not participate as they were subsistence farmers that depended on the crops produced on the land that they inherited from their forefathers. The colonial administration introduced taxation forcing able-bodied men to work in order to pay the taxes on their land and the colonial authorities used local chiefs to sanction men who did not work (Musisi, 2002). Wage labour forced men to engage in economic activity outside the household and to abandon their traditional duties and responsibility for providing care and protection to their wives and children.

The 'women left behind' (Nelson, 1991) lived in African reserves which were most commonly found in British settler colonies (Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe). The women were left to produce food for their children as well as grow cash crops in order to sustain the family thereby protecting the husband's assets while he was away (Schmidt, 1991: 732). The African reserves were designated areas demarcated by the colonial government in order to keep African groups separate from the colonial settlers. A pass law system gave African migrants, mostly men, temporary access to the developing urban centres for employment purposes. Women and children were excluded from pass law system and could not be accommodated in urban areas. In addition, the colonial administrators wanted to make sure the men had a reason to return home to their families thus instituting temporary labour

migration. This was the case in Zimbabwe (Barnes, 1997) and in South Africa which has a long history of pass laws and the containment of Africans in reserves known as 'bantustans' (Savage, 1986: 182). However, women did migrate for employment without their husband's and authorisation by colonial officials thus challenging the perceptions of women as 'left behind' (Cutrufelli, 1983). Yoruba women in Nigeria, for example, use western education and skills in their businesses demonstrating that in some societies women were not willing to engage only in the domestic sphere. Nevertheless, by restricting women to the reserves, colonial administrators were slowly creating the perception that women should not be allowed to engage in employment or have the freedom to move. Wage labour created power imbalances between women and men as men entrenched their domination over women through their earning capacity. This put men in a stronger decision-making position and women at a weaker position to influence any family decisions.

Women's role within the household was also promoted through Christianity and education. Missionaries were concerned with the practice of polygamy which was shunned in Christianity. Amongst the Akan ethnic group in Ghana, missionaries used the colonial government to develop policies that ensured that polygamy was eradicated. Smock (1977) reports that the missionaries petitioned the British colonial administrators in Ghana to introduce a policy that would legally recognise monogamous marriage. Scholars indicated that women in some SSA countries supported such policies that gave them the legal right to choose their marriage partner and allow them to present their grievances, although in most instances the laws disadvantaged women (Cutrufelli, 1983: 24). However, this new system of marriage broke the household unit and the communal structure of marriage and family was replaced by nuclear family units in which women were unable to rely on co-wives for support in domestic activities. These monogamous marriage arrangements were created in such a way that women were subordinate to men as the missionaries promoted the idea of men as

breadwinning head of households. Soon a culture was created where good husbands were breadwinners (McIntosh, 2009: 97-8). However, education institutions played an important role in creating and developing new cultural expectations of breadwinners in some African societies.

b. Cultural Imperialism of Women's in Formal Education

Western education was one of the systems with promoted cultural imperialism. Initially, western education focused on training boys in administrative skills that would cater to the local civil service. Girls were later on given access to formal education, but were trained in subjects restricting them to the home. Amongst the Yoruba in Nigeria, this was a very difficult position to accept as women were active in contributing to the household economy (McIntosh, 2009: 242). In Uganda when the first school for girls was introduced in 1906, the local chiefs were anxious about the impact it would have on girls. However, the local chiefs were convinced a few years later that it guaranteed that girls would continue to play the roles they were expected to play within the household, what Musisi referred to as "ordinary work for women" (Musisi, 2002: 99). The traditional African gender and social configurations were redefined by the British administrators by means of manipulating laws and regulations to create a western biased system and western thinking about how society should be organised (Musisi, 2002).

Education along with religion and capitalism (in particular wage labour), worked together to create westernised perceptions about women and men's position and roles in society. However, the western educators did retain some pre-colonial, sociocultural perceptions of women's domestic role but used Christian values and education to justify their position in the household. African men in powerful positions (e.g. chiefs) as well as affluent

women (e.g. princesses) did nothing to challenge the newly configured gender relations as they were in a better position in society.

The introduction of wage labour, Christianity and formal education suggests that new, different perceptions can be created as a result of imposed practices. Colonial administrators used policies that further favoured men and disadvantaged women by reducing any power or influence they may have held in pre-colonial times. By the time most SSA countries received independence, the westernised perceptions held about women's social position and role were already ingrained in the sociocultural perceptions and practices of African societies.

3.2.3 Perceptions of Women in the Independence Era

British colonies began to gain independence in the 1950s, with Ghana paving the way when it achieved independence in 1957. Senior positions in government and the civil service, once occupied by white colonial officers, were taken over by educated Africans, mostly men, from elite groups of Africans (Obbo, 1980: 23). Women were disadvantaged after independence. Even though they had contributed to the liberation of their countries, only a small percentage of them were educated and were not invited to occupy government positions. Women's geographical mobility continued to be controlled as a result of the dominant perceptions which suggested that "migration [was] bad for women because it corrupts their virtue, leads to marital instability and erodes traditional norms. This leads to the weakening of the family structure, an increase in juvenile delinquency and violent crimes" (Obbo, 1980: 27-8). Women were expected to maintain their traditional roles to ensure stability within the family but the conditions in which they lived were forcing them to engage in survival strategies to maintain their family. Migration became one of many survival strategies that women engaged in but it was generally perceived as a male activity as a result of the policies introduced during colonialism. The following section focuses on the changing perceptions of women's economic role in the household as well and outlines the social and

cultural perceptions of women promoted through education. Particular attention will be paid to women resident in urban areas but differences in the perceptions of women in rural areas will also be highlighted.

a. Division of Labour in the Household and Education

Both the social and cultural perceptions of women in urban areas differed from the traditional view held in the rural areas. The perception of women as contributors to the household economy was slowly emerging especially amongst those women who were educated in urban areas (Little, 1973). This was evident in the responses of the women in my study that reflected their upbringing in the 1960s and 1970s. Household relations still promoted the idea of men as main breadwinners and heads of households which signified the strong economic role they played in the home and public sphere.

By the 1990s, the idea of girls going into education, especially in the urban areas, became more acceptable. Okeke-Ihejirika (2004) argued that in Nigeria, the oil boom helped to increase the level of access and enrolment of girls at tertiary level of education between 1992 and 1996 as there was increased public funding making it easier for parents to educate all children (2004: 62). The early independence years projected some of the western perceptions of women's position and role transmitted during colonialism along with pre-colonial African perceptions. Although men were perceived as heads of household, women were able to develop their skills through education and compete with men, leading to the establishment of more dual-income households. In some African societies, negative perceptions of women continued to be indirectly and directly transmitted through education. Gordon (1998) argued that the westernised models of education contained patriarchal ideologies which helped to justify some of the traditional beliefs that children learned within their local communities. This pattern continued to persist in post-colonial Zimbabwe for

example where girls and boys were encouraged to participate in subjects which were gender related e.g. girls were taught home economics and boys metal working (1998: 53-4).

Therefore, there was a continued pattern in which women were socialised into subordinate roles or female associated professions such as nursing or teaching. Such socialisation prevented women from taking up decision-making positions. Although contemporary SSA societies' sociocultural perceptions of women as home makers and mothers are less prevalent than during the colonial era, they still exist especially in the rural areas. The women in my study revealed how their behaviour was influenced by sociocultural perceptions held about women within their ethnic group but explained they were not controlled by it. In the next section, I aim provide a background of the women's upbringing, how sociocultural perceptions of women in their society shaped their behaviour and how it may have impacted in their own decision to migrate, as an individual or as part of a family unit.

3.3 Sociocultural Expectations of Women in Kenyan and Nigerian Household and Society

Within my study, the women revealed the important role that social agents (family, church and peers) and institutions (family, schools, employers and the church or mosque) of socialisation play in developing the perceptions of them as women in their society. However, the perceptions of women depended on the time period in which they were raised. For example, nine women interviewed were raised in the early years after independence (1960-1980) while 21 women were raised from the 1980s onwards. The perceptions of their position and role between these periods have varied.

Gender identity roles of children are learnt through observing role models such as parents who provide an example of how a girl or boy is expected to behave. This behaviour is

normally monitored and affirmed by parents who punish children who do not conform or reward those who uphold the norm. This idea is captured in social learning theory by Bandura (1969) who was concerned with imitation and observation of parents by their children where learning about accepted forms of gendered behaviours was a practical activity. The household is one environment in which social learning takes place and the majority of the women interviewed as individuals and in the focus groups, mentioned the household as the primary socialising institution, with the exception of two women (Odera and Olivia) who learnt more from their peers and interactions with members of their community. Parents played a very influential role in teaching their children about expected gender roles, but the distinction between gender and sex roles should be noted. According to Akintunde (2005: 347), sex roles are those based on biological differences between men and women, whereas gender roles refer to behaviour defined by society as masculine and feminine. Such masculine and feminine behaviours are transmitted in two ways: through socialising agents (e.g. parents and teachers) as well as socialising forces (e.g. education).

Socialising forces are commonly linked to the public domain with institutions such as schools, church and the workplace playing an influential role. The public domain in most SSA societies has been promoted as a male dominated space (Akintunde, 2005: 348). The home or private domain, on the other hand, is a space reserved for women and the women in my study stated that they learnt these different perceptions about women's role in the private domain from their parents.

3.3.1 Changing Perceptions of Women in the Household

Focusing on the gender division of labour in the household, the women in my study revealed that they were more aware of sociocultural perceptions of women within their ethnic groups located mainly in the rural areas. Their parents had taught them about acceptable forms of behaviour for women which were strongly adhered to in their ethnic groups, in rural

areas but less so in the urban areas where they lived. Even though the women in my study (both Kenyan and Nigerian) lived in cities, they continue to trace their lineage through their fathers. The women (for example, Deon, Agnes, Anna, Beatrice) stated that they associated themselves with their father's ethnic group and accepted their patrilineal norms. Most of the women in my study lived in urban multi-ethnic urban areas which meant they are an amalgamation of cultural practices and beliefs of different ethnic groups alongside western culture.

Agnes and Deon, both Luhya Kenyan women were born and raised in Nairobi. The Luhya ethnic group, located in western province of Kenya, is the second largest ethnic group in the country. Agnes and Deon were made aware by their parents of the sociocultural expectations of Luhya women based on their experiences of growing up in that environment. Interactions with extended family members still residing in the Luhya stronghold continued to transmit the traditional perceptions of women even though Agnes and Deon were from Nairobi, in central Kenya. Agnes noticed how the Luhya culture viewed women as subordinate to the men in their family. This was also the case with Odera and Afola (both Nigerian). Agnes remembers her parents being criticised by male members of the extended family for educating all their children in particular the daughters. Her uncle believed that education was exclusively for men, a perception that was solidified during the colonial era (see section 3.2.2). However, she credits the fact that both her parents were educated and 'enlightened' and knew the benefits of education for all children. Living away from the direct influence of Luhya culture in Nairobi allowed her parents to teach her and her siblings a different perception of women. In addition, Agnes believed that her father's approach was due to the birth order of Agnes and her siblings as out of seven children, only one was male and the last born. This suggests that the birth order of the children could determine the way perceptions of women are transmitted but it also depends on the parents and whether they still

subscribe to their ethnic culture or are open minded enough to be flexible with their views on women. This was found to be the case with Constance (Kenyan) who also has four sisters and one brother who is the last born. Punch (2001) found in her study on household division of labour of children in Bolivia, that in a household with only female children, the chores were divided by age as responsibility for senior chores was reserved for the eldest child (2001: 19).

Odera and Olivia, on the other hand, are sisters born in England but raised in Nigeria. They stated that they did not learn about perceptions of women in their ethnic culture (Yoruba) directly from their parents but from their peers. Most of their peers were of different ethnicities, but they were able to learn about aspects relating to respect for elders which were universal social and cultural expectations of youth. With regards to expectations of women, they stated that they picked up behaviour and other ideas along the way as growing up, they did not have a mother figure to learn from and their father or step-mother did not take the initiative to teach them. However, Odera stated as far as Yoruba society was concerned, women were subordinate to men. She explained that,

“the woman was always the secondary, she was like the woman behind the door not seen and not heard. You have to be a submissive wife and you have to be respectful and the woman played really good roles, and they played major roles”.

She recognised the fact that women are important members of society but do not get the recognition that they deserve because of the negative sociocultural perceptions of women in Yoruba society.

Olivia, on the other hand, described women's role differently. She stated,

“it is important that the woman, if she is a wife, she is to help in the cooking. The role of the woman is very important because the organisation falls on her shoulders.

It's seen as a taboo if a wife and there is a family gathering and you are not there. It's like disrespecting the family that they are not there".

As an organiser of the family, her presence is important as it affects the family as a whole. She suggests women's primary role is to maintain the family and anything else would have to take a back seat. She described a situation when she had an exam on the day a cultural festival was taking place. When she explained it to some family members, they did not understand why she was exchanging the responsibilities required of her on that day (i.e. cooking) for an exam. She also described a poster at her work place which summarised women's roles in her society. She said that the poster had a

“woman carrying something on her head, with about eight or 10 hands; she has a baby on her back, she is cooking. She is washing clothes, she is fetching water from the well, she is bathing for the baby, she is collecting fire wood, [and] she is going to the market. It just shows that the woman is multi skilled, she does a lot of things that involve[s] multitasking so that's how a woman is where I come from”.

This shows that not all women even in the same family unit share the same perceptions of women and their roles in society. Olivia promoted the image of women as being multi-skilled whereas Odera reflects on the perception that women are subordinate to men, but supports Olivia's statement on the multiple skills women possess. This perception can have an impact on the way women approach decision-making because if they view themselves as subordinate they may be less likely to take part in the process. But this will be dependent on their socio-economic status which was highlighted by Afola. Afola belongs to the Cham people located in north-east Nigeria and she noticed during her upbringing in a rural area in Gombe state, that members of the society adhered to very strict perceptions of women in society and their roles. She noticed the difference when her family migrated to an urban area where the

Cham's sociocultural perceptions were less influential. While living in the rural area, she stated that her father was influenced by the ethnic group's perceptions of women, but that changed once they moved to a different location.

Agnes learned that women within the Luhya society were socialised into domestic roles and was supported by Deon and Felicia (Kenyan). All three of these women learned about women's roles within the household by observing either their mother or other female members of household (e.g. aunt or sister). Felicia's father was still a practising polygamist and appeared not to have a significant role in her upbringing. She spent most of her time in a boarding school or being raised by her elder sister who took over the mothering role when their mother died. Deon also observed this expectation of women but grew up in Nairobi just like Agnes. With Deon, only her father was educated and her mother played the housewife role. However, even though traditional roles were being played by her parents, she noticed that her father would assist her mother when she needed help, a trait rarely seen in Luhya men in her opinion. She did make an interesting observation of Luhya men, arguing that their behaviour and perception of women changed only when they married a woman of a different ethnicity as they wanted to respect the culture.

However, the kitchen is one of the spaces within the household that many of the women debated about on the traditional and non-traditional gender roles. Some differences were observed in their responses regarding women's roles in this space in relation to their own upbringing. The perception of women's roles in this space also depended on the time period in which they were raised. Those brought up between 1960 and 1980 were taught that the kitchen can be either subordinating or empowering to women. Those brought up in the 1980s and thereafter were taught a different perception, that the kitchen was an open space in which domestic skills were needed for one's survival. In the next sections, I discuss the

debate concerning perceptions of the traditional and non-traditional gender roles women play in the household.

a. Traditional and Non-traditional Gender Roles, 1960-1980

The women in this study revealed that they learned about women's role in the kitchen by observing their mothers or other female household members and the attitudes of their fathers. Agnes, Jennifer, Deon and Felicia (Kenyan women) as well as Renee, Odessa, Florence and Afolá (Nigerian women) stated that women were subordinated in this space and it is a view that they link back to their cultural background. Felicia, for instance, indicated that within the Luhya culture, she felt that women were 'short changed' as high expectations were put on them to care for the home (husband, children and extended family) with no time for themselves or support from their spouse who engaged in more social activities outside the home with other men. Deon and Felicia (both Luhya women) observed that Luhya men would sit back and let the woman do all the work and not help around the house. Deon noticed the subordination of other women she came across and how they were treated by their husbands. Felicia made the same assessment when she noticed that men are not supportive of women especially in terms of helping around the house. As such, the sociocultural expectation was being entrenched through practice as the men did not engage in any domestic work in an effort to assert their culture.

Agnes, on the other hand, noted that even though her mother did play the role of the house wife, she did not view her as subordinated or a *Jikoni* (kitchen) woman. She viewed her mother as a career woman as she ran a business of her own at the time and that perception of her mother stood out for her as it signified her individuality and because economic activity outside the home was not common amongst Luhya women. As she got older, she became a mother, wife and career woman who still emulated her mother and the multiple roles that the

latter played within the household. This is consistent with Hype's study on women and education in sub-Saharan Africa (1993) in which she focused that the socioeconomic background of parents, their attitudes towards educating girls and the education of mothers determined the decision to take daughters to school and keep them there. Their social class also played a role as Hype added that women who came from families in a better socioeconomic situation were more likely to enter and remain in school (1993: 111-12). Agnes stated that when she was growing up, her family were middle class as she said that everyone admired the family as they attended the best schools in Nairobi. Her father could even afford to educate his relatives at the same time as his children.

Among the Nigerian women in this study, Renee, Odessa and Florence also linked aspects of their ethnic culture to the socialisation they received from their parents. Renee and Odessa (both Yoruba) explained that they grew up with very strict parents who were very closely linked to their ethnic culture and traditions. Renee explained that preparation for domestic work dominated her upbringing as her mother brought Renee up the same way she had been brought up by an aunt. Renee explained that her mother was bringing her up the only way she knew how based on her own experience. Renee came to realise later on that her mother was preparing her for the work she would do once she became a mother and wife. She was expected to cook and clean around the house and wash the maid's clothes as her mother felt it helped the maid to complete her duties around the house. Renee raises an important point that when a young child is being socialised into a role, she does not realise the benefits until she is put in that position. She explains that when she had her own family she realised her mother had prepared her well for that role. Odessa's upbringing was much stricter than Renee's as her parents controlled her behaviour and confined her life to school, church and home. She continued this way of life when she was married, that is, going to church, work and picking the children up from school. She had never socialised with other people

including her neighbour although her husband had tried to draw her out of this behaviour. Both Renee and Odessa grew up in an urban setting but their parents or in some cases one parent, chose to adopt the Yoruba view of women based on the way they had been brought up.

Florence (Nigerian), on the other hand, reflected on the benefits of the traditional role of women at the time of her grandparents, stating that women were primarily housewives who were supported by their husbands. Their role was to provide care, support and sustenance to their family while also having time to care for themselves. This is a luxury that she felt was not forthcoming with the new roles women were expected to play. She voiced her concerns about women's roles within the kitchen stating that in her culture it was not right for a man to go into the kitchen. She later added that there had been changes in the culture which had had an effect on the perception and expectations of women's roles within the household. She saw it as problematic that women's roles had expanded beyond the kitchen and that women were going into work. Florence is very critical of the changes in society that has modified the cultural perceptions of Yoruba women's roles in the household. However, women brought up during the 1980s and onwards were taught about a different view of women's roles in the kitchen.

b. Traditional and Non-Traditional Roles, 1980-2000

Women raised in the 1980s and 1990s may have received a more liberal upbringing from their parents. During this period, traditional perceptions held about women's roles especially in rural areas were slowly being excluded from some African cultures and the idea of women engaging in activities outside the home was becoming normal. The views of women's roles in the kitchen began to change. This was noticeable in the case of Anita (Kenyan). She belonged to the Kikuyu ethnic group from Nyeri. She explained that even

though her mother was a housewife, her father helped around the house including washing dishes. She observed differences between her upbringing and that of her male cousins who still believed that men did not belong in the kitchen. But she asserted herself in her parent's home by getting them to do chores in the kitchen regardless of whether they accepted it or not. Her parents also encouraged her to excel in other skills making her aware of her value beyond the household. In a way, her parents had taught her skills she would need to survive on her own or with her husband. Anita had a different upbringing from that described by Jennifer in the previous section as Anita belonged to the lower middle class⁸ but lived in an environment in which the Kikuyu culture was less imposing. Samantha, also Kikuyu, observed that her uncle was still very traditional in his views about women. As such, she knew not to do things around him that could be considered disrespectful to the culture such as drinking uncle, an activity she could do with her father who was more liberal.

As she was growing up, Gertrude (Kenyan) realised that her family belonged to a lower middle class. Middle class families in Kenya are known to have maids to assist them with chores such as cooking and cleaning on top of looking after the children. Because her family did not have that luxury all the children were expected to pitch in with the household chores, leading her to believe that domestic work was not exclusively for women. She did, however, indicate that she received mixed messages from her father who, on the one hand would comment that boys are not supposed to be in the kitchen and who, on the other hand, would not allow anyone else but him to cook *Ugali* (maize meal and staple food in most African countries). In addition, he did not reprimand the boys when they cooked or cleaned. Essentially, he did not practice what he preached and Gertrude therefore learned that

⁸ The lower middle class work in less prestigious white collar jobs (e.g. middle managers), have accumulated wealth throughout their working lifetime and have some post-secondary education (Macionis and Plummer, 1997: 273).

domestic work was not only for women. Like other women, she learned about women's roles by observing her mother and the relationship she had with her father.

One of the questions I raised when analysing domestic roles was whether the kitchen was an empowering or subordinating space as it represents the roles that women are expected to play. The responses of the women indicate that it can be both depending on the views and experiences of the women. Joyce's case (Nigerian) indicated that once married, her husband would not enter into the kitchen because he respected that space as her's whether she was working in it herself or supervising others such as the maids. On the other hand, Florence (Nigerian) took another stance and suggested that the traditional roles that women played, especially with regards to the kitchen, were functional and simplified as their duty was just to care and manage the household. Their roles became complicated when they engaged in activity outside the home. Deon, Agnes and Felicia (Kenyan) argued that the kitchen is a subordinating space because of the way the Luhya culture perceived it. But in the case of Deon and Agnes, their parents did not exhibit such a perception. The women brought up after the 1980s, however, were socialised into believing that as individuals they needed to learn tasks around the kitchen that would help them to survive in the world later on as adults. It became a gender-neutral space as both female and male children engaged in domestic tasks. The household was not the only institution in which perceptions of women were learnt. Some women indicated that religion can be a socialising force that transmits particular ideas about gender relations and the division of labour between women and men.

c. Religion and Social Class

Jennifer (Kenyan) had a different upbringing to the women brought up in the 1960s and 1970s described earlier. She belonged to the underclass⁹ as she described the poverty that her family suffered when she was growing up. Religion and the Kikuyu culture were the main instruments used by her parents to socialise her and her siblings. The Kikuyu are the largest ethnic group in Kenya located in central province which consists of three districts: the Murang'a, Nyeri and Kiambu. Jennifer is from Murang'a and according to her, the Nyeri and the Kiambu Kikuyus dislike those from Murang'a because of differences in cultural practices. This is important to point out as Jennifer was treated badly by her ex-husband's family because of where she was from, her socio-economic background and the fact that she did not go through the proper procedure of marriage. She was forced into the marriage because she had been raped and was pregnant by her ex-husband. This experience taught her about the stigma of women who were victims of rape and pregnant before marriage as blame is cast on the girl even if she is innocent. Her parents disowned her because of the events surrounding the rape as they understood it. She had not done what she had been told to do which was to go to the market and return home. Instead, they saw it as if she had gone and voluntarily slept with the man who raped her. She was underage and still attending school at the time and because of her pregnancy she had to drop out. Already she had revealed the negative perception of girls who had gone through such a traumatic experience and the constant pressure on them to be obedient whereas the men were not governed by such expectations.

She explained that because of her parents' lack of education and socio-economic status they were unable to assess for themselves the situation in a rational manner as they unquestioningly accepted Christian values and Kikuyu perceptions of women who were

⁹ The underclass "are economically, politically and socially marginalised and excluded. Those people live between unemployment and the labour market of casual and temporary work" (Macionis and Plummer, 1997: 274)

sexually active and unmarried mothers. At this point, the two are intertwined as the Christian values are viewed as a way in which an individual can live his/her life whereas the Kikuyu expectations determined the role of women by gender. Naomi, who was of the same ethnicity but of a different class, noticed the same thing about the Kikuyus and stated that their men were very selfish and that their views about women in society were and continue to be demeaning.

The women brought up in the 1960s and 1970s were adopting multiple roles which may have been developed as a result of access to institutions outside the household acting as secondary socialising forces. Being able to access these institutions may have put them in a better position to influence or make decisions. In the next section, I will discuss the multiple roles adopted by women as a result of their upbringing.

3.3.2 Multiple Roles of Women in Society

Growing up in the 1960s and 1970s, Agnes and Deon noticed a new generation of women emerging in the urban society. Agnes, for one, had a mother who was educated and had run her own business, whereas Deon was encouraged to gain further education in order to secure a better social position in society. Similarly in Nigeria, even though Florence was supportive of the traditional role of women, she explained that her upbringing was a combination of cultural norms of the Yoruba and that of the British as her parents, as in the case of some of the other women, were former residents in the UK and were influenced by the liberal perception of women's role in society. She asserts that her parents adopted parts of British culture that they believed to be useful for the development of their children which included seeing the value of education for all children. This was also in the case of Anna. As a result, this period saw the development of a new generation of women who adopted multiple roles alongside the domestic roles already expected of them.

Nevertheless, during this period (1960s and 1970s) there were few institutions and agents within society which were flexible especially in the way in which gender roles were perceived with regards to women. Some communities were guided by conservative ethno-cultural perceptions of women. It was the parents who played an instrumental role in helping the women to gain access to education in order to maximise their opportunities beyond the household. According to Okeke-Ihejirika (2004), in Igbo society, after independence, there were women who already had access to education but there were very few jobs they could obtain in the employment sector. In addition, there was still a strong demand for them to continue their domestic obligations in terms of marriage and having children, alongside their new found public roles (2004: 61). Thus, the ethnic culture in some of the societies the women belonged to still had a strong influence in determining the gender roles of women.

Gertrude, Elizabeth, Samantha, Pamela, Viola, Lucy, Caroline, Cynthia and Constance (Kenyan) as well as Anna, Brenda, Jacinta, Angela, Odera, Odessa, Olivia and Abi (Nigerian) described their upbringing in the 1980s onwards. Gertrude, Elizabeth, Samantha and Constance indicated that their mothers were role models in their lives and occupied influential positions within the household. These women described the multiple roles and fine balancing act that women played within the household. According to Okeke-Ihejirika (2004), Igbo women who were career women had to balance their commitments with their domestic activities. In some better off households, housemaids were employed to minimise women's domestic responsibility. Women would still have the responsibility of managing the housemaids but would not necessarily engage in domestic tasks (2004: 142-3). However, while women participated in professional activities, it did not always mean that they were economically stronger than their spouses but they would have some level of authority in matters concerning the household. Gertrude noticed that although her mother was not more economically powerful than her father, she dominated many of the household decisions.

Although she dominated the decisions within the household, Gertrude observed that her mother always consulted or included her father in the decision-making even though in the end she would make the final decision. She explains that her father was not incapable of making or contributing to decisions but he was from a background where the women dominated the decision-making process. This had an effect on Gertrude who found a role model in her mother and has carried out her home responsibilities in a similar manner to her mother.

Elizabeth's mother was a single parent and while growing up, she was surrounded by matriarchs. Elizabeth was able to learn that women were multi-talented as mothers, wives and career women. She noticed that amongst her female relatives, numerous sacrifices were made for their children, especially in terms of giving them the best education possible. She found this to be a noble act that was not tied to the sociocultural expectation of women in her society but that it was a natural instinct that most mothers had in relation to the needs of their children. Samantha, on the other hand, described her mother as a feminist and highly educated. Her upbringing was similar to that of Constance where their mothers encouraged them to be self-starters, independent and to not see their gender as a barrier. Constance and Chloe indicated that religion also played a role in the relationship between their respective parents. Constance argued that her mother would respect her father as a man stating that her mother believed in Christian values that were useful in guiding the marriage. As much as a woman can have her own professional career, there are those moral values and expectations as outlined by religion which their parents used to determine the relationship such as handling family decisions. Chloe, for instance, remembers being taught that respect is important in a marriage so that if respect was equally shared, there was collaboration between husband and wife. This was also noticed by Anna, Abi and Jacinta (Nigerian). It was important for them because it instilled within them the perception of women's relationship with their husband within marriage.

Therefore, the responses of the women in my study reveal that members of society and the family hold certain sociocultural perceptions about women which were more ingrained in their ethnic society in the rural area. Nonetheless the concern in this chapter is to show how sociocultural perceptions of women's role in the home and beyond impact the decision to migrate. The next section aims to answer this question.

3.4 Sociocultural Expectations as a Migration Decision-Making Motive

Previous studies have focused on the impact of the socio-economic roles of women amongst the Igbo of Nigeria and the role it played in the decision to migrate (Reynolds, 2006). Others have explored how sociocultural expectations function in the economic migration patterns of Igbo people in general (Okanga, 2003). However, Okanga's research did not indicate whether the sociocultural expectations of women impacted on the migration decision-making process.

In the previous section, I identified different socialising agents and institutions responsible for transmitting sociocultural perceptions of women's role in the societies where the women I interviewed resided. In this section, I discuss how some of these perceptions play a subtle and almost invisible role in the migration decision-making process. They could be linked to some of the theories of migration decision-making, namely the place utility model, which explains the dissatisfaction potential migrants feel with the utilities in their society, at a particular life stage (Wolpert, 1965). Demographic characteristics such as age, marital status, social class and education demonstrated differences between the women and their influence in the home and hence on the decision-making processes. Although it emerged that the majority of the women in this study migrated for the kind of reasons identified in other research (e.g. for employment, further education or better life), the sociocultural

perceptions of women's role in their communities can be seen as an additional reason for migrating.

My findings reveal that sociocultural perceptions of women's role in society can motivate women to consider migration. Migration was often initiated to escape the stereotypes associated with their marital status as single, divorced or widowed mothers in their respective societies. This appeared to be more the case with three Nigerian women than with the Kenyan women as Odera, Ethel, Afola (Nigerian) were single, divorced and married mothers respectively and the perceptions held of them in their society disadvantaged them. Jennifer (Kenyan), on the other hand, was a single mother but was not migrating to escape the stigma associated with her marital status. She provided a secondary reason for her migration which was to rectify the relations with her family after the traumatic experience she had as a rape victim that had strained their relations. However, she explained that this was not her primary reason for migrating.

Ethel (Nigerian), for example, was a divorced single mother at the time she planned her migration. She was once married to a pilot, which meant she had a high social status in her community. Without going into much detail, she indicated that when she divorced she opted to migrate with her children as most of her family were already in the UK. She was not stigmatised by her status as a divorced mother, but she appeared to have lost her social status in the eyes of her community. Although it was an interesting avenue to explore, she chose not to elaborate on her experience as she was participating in the focus group interview. Odera and Afola (Nigerian), on the other hand, were escaping the stigma that had befallen them. In Odera's case, she had already considered migrating but having a child out of wedlock sped up the process. She explained that,

“there is this stigma you know, being a single mum you know, back home. They look at it as a curse. How can you say you are a single mum? It doesn’t exist. So that was one of the things that I was saying, find it wasn’t working back home let me just come here and start afresh”.

Odera observed a common feature that other scholars have identified in their research on motherhood in Nigeria; that is, the sociocultural perception of single mothers who are not positively accepted by members of society (Makinde, 2004). In the case of Odera, it became her primary reason for migrating.

Afolá’s experience differs from that of Odera. She too had planned to migrate for further education. This had been a long term plan of hers which her husband and in-laws did not initially support. Her in-laws did not see the point of her seeking further education abroad and felt that her obligation was to her husband and family. Nevertheless, she took the opportunity to migrate when offered a place at a university and planned her migration in secret, discussing it only with her husband who had begun to support her efforts. However, unfortunate circumstances took place and her husband died weeks after she accepted a place at the university. After his death, Afolá was the target of a negative backlash from her in-laws and she was accused of killing her husband even though she was not with him at the time he fell ill. She later discovered that he had had a life-threatening disease which he had kept secret from her as he had been given five years to live. There have been several awareness campaigns and research outlining the plight of widows in Nigeria and other SSA countries. Nollywood has produced several movies depicting disturbing scenes where widows are ill-treated by their in-laws and the extensive research on the social, economic and psychological trauma inflicted on them (Soussou, 2002; Young, 2006). In the case of Afolá, her in-laws took over some of the material assets owned by her husband soon after his death, but luckily

for her, her husband had already drawn up a will which bequeathed all his assets and responsibility for his children to Afola. She had to go to the extent of proving that the will was genuine by providing her in-laws with a notarized copy of the will as she did not trust them enough to show them the original.

Prior to her husband's death, her in-laws were constantly involving themselves in Afola's marriage affairs which she admitted was sometimes a challenge. Her husband also had a fixed set of beliefs which included looking at woman as subordinate to him. She explained that her husband would tell her,

“as a woman, whatever your husband likes you should let him go ahead and do it, after all it is his life. Even if he carries some shit to eat, if I am a respectable woman, I should carry it and eat”.

However, Afola explained that she was in a fortunate position as she was educated and employed and when she rebelled against her husband's demands, he would attempt to withhold money from her, but she did not worry about that as she had her own earnings. Nevertheless, she explained that alongside wanting to migrate for further education reasons, she also hoped to escape her in-laws stating that,

“I felt like maybe if one moved away to an enlightened environment, maybe my husband could have changed his perspective about the way he thinks about a man being on top and delegating a woman. Because he was educated but that was the thing in the environment because that was what he was led to believe up to the point of death”.

These women describe circumstances where they had a certain degree of dissatisfaction with their local community caused by the sociocultural perceptions held about

women. Odera and Afolá were stigmatised by the belief systems of their societies that held negative perceptions of women. Ethel was looking to provide for her children, but at the same time trying to re-establish a new social status in a different community as her decision to migrate was a result of her divorce. Afolá, on the other hand, was at a stage in her life where she had identified negative values she hoped to eradicate such as the hold that sociocultural perceptions about women had on her husband. She was looking for a place of comfort for her family and for positive morals as she explored further education opportunities that would lead to her personal growth and benefit the family. Comfort and morality are values outlined in De Jong and Fawcett's value expectancy theory (1981). Morality refers to values of a society that determine good and bad ways of living. In the case of Afolá, she was hoping to find an environment which did not disadvantage women and which maintained balanced relations between women and men. De Jong and Fawcett (1981) described comfort as better living conditions which can be associated with the lifestyle that Afolá and her family were leading in her community. In my opinion, Afolá was also looking for a sense of comfort in her career as she had always been in a position to provide for herself and family but migrating would help to boost her career as well as contribute to the household economy and wellbeing. However, when she became a widow, she wanted to be safe from her in-laws and their sociocultural hold on her family life, especially her children. This can be classified under autonomy De Jong and Fawcett (1981) described as "personal freedom, the ability to live one's own life" (1981: 51), which is what Afolá wanted to achieve for her family by escaping the social and cultural perceptions and practices in her society.

In the case of Odera when she became a single mother, it encouraged her to look for specific information related to the needs of her child (see chapter five). She revealed that before she became a mother, she had no particular goal in mind but she admitted that she just

wanted to leave Nigeria. With the birth of her son, her search for information became more specific and urgent as she needed to confirm whether it would be best for her to migrate with him or not. However, this situation describes a link between her motive for considering migration and her use of networks for information related to her circumstances.

As indicated earlier, Jennifer was the only Kenyan woman in this study who indicated that her migration was a result of the social and cultural perceptions of women in her society. She explained that when she migrated, she hoped that she would be able to improve relations between her parents and siblings because of the shame she had brought to the family when she was raped at the age of 16. Though innocent, her family rejected her and she also experienced hostility from the rapist's family because they disliked members of her community due to differences in cultural practices despite being from the same ethnic group (Kikuyu). Even though she indicated that her primary reason for migrating was to provide for her children, she also explained that she wanted to be recognised by her family (i.e. her parents and siblings). The sociocultural expectations of women in Kikuyu society were very rigid and her family, whom she identified as very poor, combined religion and culture in the socialisation process of the children and everyday lifestyle, as mentioned earlier. By mixing Christianity with ethnic culture, Jennifer's parents had a fixed perception and expectation of female children and were willing to reject her because she had strayed from that expectation. Rape in Kenya at the time and more recently has been under-reported because of the negative perceptions of rape victims among members of society and because the law does not look upon rape as a serious crime (Francis and Amyunzu-Nyamongo, 2008: 224).

According to Kameri-Mbote (2000), cultural ideologies promoting women's subordination have been used to justify certain gender based violence towards women which

includes domestic abuse, female circumcision and rape. She explains that “masculine construction requires manhood to be equated to the ability to exert power over others especially through the use of force. Women are construed to be passive and submissive and to accept violence as part of the woman’s estate” (2000: 2). She adds that custom, religion and tradition were used to ensure that male authority is exerted. Socioculturally, Jennifer’s experience demonstrates that rape was not considered a serious crime against women and was not deemed as such by members of society at that time. Instead, negative cultural stereotypes were attached to rape victims casting blame on them and not the rapist. Therefore, Jennifer used migration as a way of fixing her relationships by improving her economic circumstances and sending home money to her parents. At the time of the interview, she indicated that her parents were now talking to her because she was sending money to them for maintenance for her children and themselves. Although subtle, the sociocultural expectations of women can emerge as a primary or secondary reason for migrating as revealed by the experiences outlined above. However, interestingly, the sociocultural expectations of women can also feature as a part of the migration decision-making process.

3.5 Sociocultural Expectations of Women as part of the Migration Decision-Making Process

Women have expected roles to play within the household especially within a family setting. From the responses of the women in my study, the sociocultural expectations of women’s roles featured as part of the discussion in migration decision-making for those women migrating as a family unit. This section concentrates on the responses of married women or women with families. It aims to explain how some women believed it would be important to discuss any possible changes in the roles that women and men played within the household once in the destination country. Women who migrated on their own did not

indicate any connection between the sociocultural expectations of women influencing their decision-making.

When Joyce (Nigerian) and her husband were considering migration, they visited the UK to find out about the lifestyle and cost of living in the UK. She became aware that the relationship between husbands and wives could deteriorate and even lead to divorce because some men carried the traditional sociocultural expectations of women from their society to the UK, expecting their wives to retain them. Joyce noted that women in the UK worked to help contribute to the household economy and that men needed to understand that women could not always be available to perform their expected duties around the household. In Nigeria, Joyce, like many of the other married women with children, explained that she worked outside the home but still maintained her role in the home as a homemaker or had house help. Joyce stated that,

“my husband won’t go into the kitchen to cook. He never did since we got married.

But when we got here, he had to adjust”.

Arthur (2008) pointed out that women’s domestic role prevented long term migration from occurring for women with obligations to their families in rural areas. Usually younger women who did migrate were still expected to support the family, by either being a child minder for the family with whom they stay or by sending money back to the family left behind (2008: 62). The findings of his research revealed that the migration of Ghanaian women to the United States altered their gender role transforming them into one of equal partnership with their husbands. However, the Ghanaian women continue to stick to the sociocultural roles expected of them for the sake of the children, arguing that children needed a stable and secure environment in a family set up with both parents involved (2008: 59). In Joyce’s case, both husband and wife had to negotiate the equal partnership before migrating which included

sharing responsibility in domestic and economic activities. This meant that the sociocultural perceptions of women held by the husband would have had to change and their husbands would have to be prepared for the change.

Felicia and Jennifer (Kenyan) made observations of other women they know where the husband's expected their wives to accept the traditional sociocultural expectations and roles of women from their ethnic community. Jennifer in particular noticed that her sister's marriage led to divorce because her sister's husband continued to subscribe to the Kikuyu sociocultural perception of women's domestic role. She explained how her sister's husband expected her to cater to his needs. Felicia also noticed that with some of the women who she advised and supported, their migration decisions clashed with what their husbands were willing to accept as their husbands wanted to maintain some of the sociocultural perceptions of women held in Luhya society. As part of the migration decision-making process, sociocultural expectations of women needed to be discussed. Wives needed to make their husbands aware that they would have to support one another and that included performing duties which were outside their gender roles in Kenya or Nigeria. With single migrant women, the experience differed. Although in their own decision-making the perceptions of women did not feature as part of their decision-making, they made observations of situations experienced by other women known to them in which relations between the women and men had broken down because they had failed to consider the influence of the sociocultural perceptions of women and men's roles in the UK, which was different to the Kenyan and Nigerian society.

Some studies have revealed that women migrating independently can consider the sociocultural perceptions of the women in their society, although it was not identified in my

study. Arthur (2008) pointed out that the Ghanaian women who migrated independently had reflected on the limitations of Ghanaian culture on women. He explained that women's "identity was shaped largely by fathers, husbands, and entrenched patriarchal relations that deprived them [women] of their full potential" (2008: 63). The Ghanaian women were able to enhance their status by migrating because they had several opportunities available to them. The reason why many of the women who migrated independently did not indicate that the sociocultural expectations of women played a part in their decision to migrate was because they had different backgrounds that were not guided by the idea that women are subordinate to men. Some of the women such as Samantha, Anita and Constance explained that their fathers were very important figures in their life who looked at their potential to succeed as an individual in society. Their parents did not transmit some of the restrictive sociocultural expectations of women that were dominant in their ethnic culture.

Therefore, there is a link between the sociocultural expectations and migration decision-making although it is very difficult to identify. My findings reveal that some of the women were motivated to migrate due to the sociocultural expectations held of women in their communities. These were mostly women who felt they had been disadvantaged by the perceptions held by society. Sociocultural expectations can also be part of the decision-making process where certain roles that men and women play in the household would have to be negotiated. This is an interesting revelation, that alongside the common reasons for migrating exist secondary underlying motives that can be linked to the gender of the migrant. In addition, it is important to consider the effect a change of society can have on the expected gender roles of men and women, especially if they differ. The challenge is making the connection between the two as during the analysis of the responses, the majority of the participants did not state the connection clearly but responded to them as separate issues.

With the women who migrated alone, very few indicated that some sociocultural expectations of women in their society led them to migrate or were considered within the migration decision-making process. They were unaffected by some of the traditional expectations of women in their ethnic society because they lived in an urban society that did not subscribe to any particular ethnic culture. Nevertheless, further studies can be conducted to explore other situations in which the sociocultural perceptions of women can influence the migration decision-making process.

3.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter focused broadly on the connection between sociocultural perceptions and migration decision-making. The historical background reveals how sociocultural perceptions held about women in society have often controlled the behaviours of women in the form of stereotypes and how they have changed as a result of historical events. These events have led to a mix of both western and ethnic sociocultural perceptions of women which was sometimes difficult to separate.

My findings reveal that the sociocultural perceptions of women can function as a motive of migration or as part of the decision-making process. The sociocultural perceptions of women in a society motivated some women to migrate as the negative connotations attached to their status or role was difficult to accept for single, divorced or widowed mothers. The place utility model and value expectancy theory were useful in explaining the behaviour of the women. The place utility model captures the dissatisfaction that the three Nigerian women experienced in their society regarding the way members of their society attached negative stereotypes to the status they occupied. This led them to choose to escape these stereotypes through migration because of the way they viewed the impact of the stereotypes on them and their family members (e.g. children). The value expectancy theory,

on the other hand, highlighted the values that the women hoped to attain in the destination country as they were unable to access them in their society of origin due to the stereotypes held about women in their social status.

My findings also suggested that within the decision to migrate, couples especially should consider the effects that migration would have on the roles they play within the household. Some women stated that problems can and have emerged in the relations between husband and wife in the destination country more so if the husband cannot accept to change his perception of the roles within the household, especially if they are associated with women. In this scenario, the value expectancy theory can be used to explain how values can be lost as a result of migration especially if they are not considered during the decision-making process. By discussing any possible changes in roles and/ or relationships between members of the family, it creates a self-awareness of possible challenges that the women and their family members may face in the destination country. However, the value expectancy has been used to identify values that migrants hope to achieve as a result of migration and not assess any values that could be lost in the process of migrating.

Hence, women's sociocultural perception of their changing roles, household obligations and changing readjustment of married couples obligated them to adopt rational behaviour and migrate when all those closely linked to them endorsed the action. Yet, certain stereotypes facing single, divorced or widowed women stood in their way whenever trying to make independent decisions to migrate. It is therefore inadvisable to generalise the effects of sociocultural perceptions without understanding individual women's backgrounds and situations before migration.

Chapter 4

Family and Individual Migration Decision-Making and Ideal Types of Female Migrants

4.1 Introduction

An important factor in the migration decision-making process, whether in terms of family or individual migration, is the influence of others. The participants in this study either migrated when they were young and single, married with or without children or as single mothers. The marital status of the migrants was an important demographic characteristic as the decision to migrate needed to take into account the needs of others such as the husband and/or children.

This chapter is divided into two sections. Part A aims to concentrate on the influential role of children in family migration decision-making (direct or indirect) as well as outline the negotiation process between wife and husband based on the responses of the participants of my study. The negotiation process on the migration decisions of single women and their parents will be discussed in order to show the extent to which parents were involved in the process. This section aims to answer my second research question which considers how migration decisions include the views and needs of others closely related to the decision-maker.

Part B will answer my third research question, that is: can Oishi's (2005) ideal types of female migrants be applied in this research and can new ideal types of female migrants be identified from the findings? In chapter 2, I explained the purpose of Oishi's study to my research and in this section I determine whether Oishi's categorisation can be applied. In addition, the discussion will expand on the characteristics of the idea types of female

migrants in light of the fact that most of the women in my study come from middle class backgrounds. The discussion will consider the responses of the women in this chapter and chapter three and will be used to categorise the women with the ideal types of female migrants identified by Oishi.

PART A

4.2 Background on the Influence of Children in Migration Decision-Making

Previous literature reveals few studies on the influential role of children in family migration decision-making process. Earlier research by Mincer (1978) revealed that the presence of children in family migration decisions can be a hindrance as parents have to consider the economic costs of migrating to a location where the family would have access to facilities (e.g. schools) for the children (1978: 750). The economic costs of migrating as a family unit could be dependent on whether the family unit was dual or single income. Mincer's argument which is, nonetheless, theoretical, provided a platform from which other researchers tested his theory and either corroborated, refuted or developed it. His argument is also dependent on the society in which it applies and should take cognizance of the changes that have occurred over time. Subsequent studies conducted within the context of developing countries, explored women and children both in internal and international migration (Orellana *et.al.* 2000; Parrenās, 2005) as well as independent child migration decision-making (Kwankye, Anarfi, Tagoe and Castaldo, 2009)

Other contributions have not directly dealt with the influence of children and migration decision-making but have indicated the role of demographic characteristics of children in the migration decision-making process. Long's study (1972) on residential mobility in the United States reported that the age of children could determine whether migration would take place. He distinguished between school-age children (ages 6-17) and non-school age children (ages 6 and below), stating that school-age children tend to have

stronger community ties than non-school age children. This raises the issue of adaptability of a child to a new environment, a theme that emerged in other studies such as that carried out by Ackers (2000) and in my study.

Ackers (2000) study has made an important contribution as she discussed the influence of children in family migration decisions with the parents in her study on internal and international family migration decision-making. She revealed that most parents were acting in the children's 'best interests' (2000: 7) when making the decision to migrate, even if the children did not see it that way at the time. Some teenagers in her study disliked the family moves because they lost the ties they had with their friends and community. She also revealed that some parents favoured the 'future oriented consent' approach, explaining that the decision to migrate made on behalf of the children was on the basis of the benefits they would gain in the future from their experience (2000: 8). In my study, many of the mothers adopted both the 'best interest' and the 'future oriented consent' approach in making their decision to migrate as a family. This will be discussed further in the next section (4.2.1)

However, the most significant contribution has been from Hutchins (2011) who studied the migration decision-making process from the perspective of parents and the children who established the child-adult relationship in the process. She explains that the shortcomings of previous studies lie in the fact that the models used to explain family migration have excluded children in the research process, assuming that the net returns of the parents would also affect the children. Hutchins interviewed 14 English-speaking families from the UK and Zimbabwe bound for Australia, including the children in the presence of their parents. She underlined the 'tacit notions of childhood' (2011: 1224), arguing that childhood can be viewed as a life stage in preparation to adulthood. At this stage, children are in need of care, protection and guidance. Childhood can also be viewed as a period of independence and autonomy for children in which they may have freedom of expression

(2011: 1224). These tacit notions of childhood can help researchers to examine how parents viewed their children in order to determine how they included them in the migration decision-making process.

Hutchins' findings revealed that although children's needs were important motivations for migration, some of the parents interviewed were acting in their own self-interest, that is, they migrated to meet their own needs. Many of the families from the UK explained their dissatisfaction with the social, political and economic environment which they felt was having an adverse effect on their family life. Migration became a solution in order to reclaim the family life that they believed they were losing through their hectic lifestyles. In addition, she revealed that some of the parents did not inform their children about migrating until they were in the final stages, whereas some parents chose to balance their self-interest with that of their children as they reflected on their own childhood experiences and the benefits they had while growing up in an environment that gave them autonomy (2011: 1226).

The studies described above will be useful to explain the influence of children in migration decision-making in my research will be that relating to the child-adult relations as presented by Alanen (2001) and Zehier (2001), adopted by Hutchins (2011). Alanen (2001) preferred the concept of 'generational structuring' describing it as the position of parents in relation to their children, a term she referred to as the 'childing' practices (2001: 29). Hutchins adopted the 'childing' practices concept in her study to explain the relationship between parent and child in the migration decision-making process. She also used Zeiher's (2001) child-adult relations, a concept which also refers to the relationship between adult and child that could be dependent, independent or interdependent. Within my research, the relationship between the mothers and their children was one of dependency as childing practices characterise their relations, revealing an unequal power balance (2011: 1228). The

independent and interdependent child-adult relations can be described as being based on self-interest on the part of the parents, of either the parents or the children, or an equal balance between parents and children (2011: 1228). In order to present my findings, I use Hutchins' tacit notions of childhood to describe the childhood perspective the women adopted in the decision to migrate. This will provide a background to the relationship between the women and their children using the childing practices as well as the child-adult relations descriptions as described by Alanen (2001) and Zeiher (2001).

4.2.1 Child-Adult Relations and Migration Decision-Making Strategy

Within my research, the process of migration decision making was explored from the perspectives of the Kenyan and Nigerian women only. Children were not included as participants in my research, but questions on their influence in the process were posed to the women who migrated as mothers which was the focus of part of my second research question. The research question aimed to explore how the influence of others can be considered in the migration decision-making process of the Kenyan and Nigerian women. In terms of children, based on the responses of the women, many mothers viewed their children as in need of protection and support that would prepare them for adulthood (Hutchins, 2011: 1224). One of the reasons why some of them had this view was due to the ages of their children at the time that migration was being considered. Patience's three children were all under the age of 10; Odera had a newborn son; Afolá had three children under the age of 12; Jennifer had two children under the age of 12, one in his early teens; Deon's two children were in their mid-teens; and Agnes children's ages ranged from ten to 20 years. In chapter three, I discussed how the women felt that they were responsible for providing and protecting their children. The women felt that the younger children depended on them for safety and comfort. But the relations with older children in their teens and their mothers were different

as often the relationship was one of interdependency that is women including their children in the migration decision-making process.

The fact that children were dependent on their parents meant that children had considerable influence in the migration decision-making process. For example, Patience explained that her children were not directly involved in the migration process as they were too young, stating that “it was my decision to move them”. However, she explained they indirectly influenced the decision to migrate as she wanted them to get a good education that would give them a good social status in Nigeria. Odera also knew that her migration plans would affect her newborn son as she debated on whether to migrate with or without him in the first instance.

The few cases where the mothers developed an interdependent relationship mostly concerned children in their mid-late teens (e.g. Deon, Naomi, Agnes). Acker’s (2000) best interests concept and future oriented consent approach applies to the mothers mentioned in this section as they were all making decisions on behalf of their children, considering the benefits that the latter would gain in the future regardless of their age. For instance, Deon developed an interdependent relationship with her children because when she received information about migrating to the UK, she presented the information to her children, as in her view, one cannot migrate without the support of the family. Agnes, on the other hand, established a different type of relationship with her eldest son who was at university at the time. She was considering his best interests, especially because he was a victim of xenophobia whilst living in Botswana and that this was having an adverse effect on his psychological state. The relationship she established with her son differed from that of Deon and her children as Agnes was taking her son’s interest into consideration over her own. This relationship does not fit into Zehier’s child-adult relations (2001) descriptions but can be related to the best interest strategy as described by Ackers (2000).

Deon was making the decision to migrate at a time when she was threatened with unemployment just like Agnes' husband who worked at the same hospital in Botswana. Finding employment became the primary motivation for both families, to support the household economy, which also took into account the needs of the children. Agnes was not threatened by unemployment but had to think about migrating to a location where she had no job and where she would become a 'trailing' wife and mother (Cooke, 2000). In addition, the negative attitudes the local community in Botswana had towards foreigners contributed to their decision-making. This means that the social, political and economic environment can contribute to the migration decision-making process as was the case for Deon and Agnes. In contrast with Hutchins' study (2011), the mothers in my study argued that they were not acting in their self-interest; rather it was in the interests of their children. They revealed that many of the benefits that they wanted their children to have, such as education, would be instrumental in developing their future socio-economic status abroad or in Nigeria and Kenya.

In the next section, I focus on the needs of the children which the women took into account in the decision-making process. In the discussion, I identify some of De Jong and Fawcett's expected values¹⁰ (1981) that the women hoped to achieve for their children. It is important to point out that the children's expected values in this study are presumed by the mothers as they were acting in the children's best interests and with the future oriented consent in mind. The aim is to demonstrate how the expected values of the children, presumed by the mothers, are incorporated in the decision-making process of the family. Based on the literature reviewed in this study, I have yet to identify any research that considers the role of presumed expected values of others on the migration decision-making process because the value expectancy model was designed to take into account the personal

¹⁰ Values of the value expectancy theory: wealth, status, stimulation, comfort, autonomy, affiliation and morality

values of the decision maker. Therefore, my contribution to this model is to demonstrate how the presumed values of others can also function within family migration decision-making.

4.2.2 Expected Values for Children in Migration Decision-Making

“Every parent hopes to get a better future for their children, in particular education and the UK ranks the highest in the world” (Agnes, Kenyan). This statement summarises the sentiments that each mother, single, married, divorced or widowed felt during the time migration was being considered. Education is an important value in a child’s development, especially in terms of successfully accessing employment opportunities and establishing a particular status in society. On the other hand, the health and wellbeing of children were also listed as important values that the mothers expected from migration. However, the women’s responses revealed that certain events occurring in their respective communities also helped them to determine the values they expected their children to gain through migration. Interestingly, there was a slight difference in the order of the values desired for their children by married women and those desired for their children by single, divorced or widowed mothers. Married women expected that their children would benefit from a good education in the UK, as expressed by Agnes. This was the expectation of all mothers, but single, divorced or widowed mothers considered it as a secondary motive in their migration decisions. This is due to the fact that they faced social problems in their communities which some believed would affect their children. For instance, Odera, who was a single mother, noted that as much as she wanted to migrate to provide her child with a better future, her foremost reason for migration was to escape the stigma of being a single mother in Nigeria.

In the following sections, I discuss further the assumed expected values that the mothers in this study hoped to achieve for their children through migration. These include education, health and wellbeing. In addition, I discuss how some women stated that they had failed to consider whether their children would adapt to their new surroundings.

a. Children's Education

As mentioned earlier, married women with children considered the education of their children in their decision to migrate. This was sometimes based on the women's disappointment with the education systems in Nigeria and Kenya, some of them chose to take their children to private schools which were expensive. Patience (Nigerian) revealed that she and her husband wanted to provide their children with a good education which could give them a better socio-economic status in Nigeria. She stated that,

“if they [the children] grow up here [UK], if they do their primary school here, it would be better for them when they come back home. They will be in high places at home...they [will be] placed in high esteem when [they] say you are from UK”.

She presents the view that social status in Nigeria is associated with where you have lived and attained your qualifications. Agnes (Kenyan) concurred, underlying her admiration of British qualifications as a former graduate of a British educational university.

Deon (Kenyan) explained that “it is good to include the education of your children” in the family migration decision-making process. She also believed that the opportunity would give her children the chance to interact with other cultures as she saw value in learning about different people and their culture. She explained that when “moving away to somewhere else, you cannot do it by yourself”. When she announced her migration plans to her children, she received their approval. She shared the information on the employment opportunity given to her with her children which was perceived to have benefits for the whole family. This assisted her in making the final decision to migrate. For Deon, education could provide a space in which cultural exchange is encouraged through learning about differences between people and their cultures. Felicia and Afolá wanted to give their children the opportunity to

access high quality education, but in the case of Afolo, education became a secondary motive to the migration decision-making process.

In Ackers's study (2000), some of the parents with children under the age of ten indicated that the children were not included or made aware of the migration plans until the final decision was made because the children were considered too young to contribute (2000: 6). This was the case with Patience who adopted the best interest and the future oriented consent approach which Ackers mentioned to ensure that the children consented to the move, even though in some scenarios in Ackers study the children objected. According to the responses of the mothers in my study, the children were excited about the move based on the images they had seen of the UK in different media. However, after migrating to the UK, some of the married and single mothers in the study revealed the difficulty for their children of adapting to a new environment.

Naomi (Kenyan), on the other hand, initially migrated temporarily to the UK, later became a permanent resident when she got a job that enabled her to fund her children's education in Kenya. Naomi migrated when she was given the opportunity to attend her graduation ceremony in the British university where she had studied a Masters course through distance learning, which was sponsored by her employer in Kenya. She indicated that while she was attending her graduation, she planned to explore job opportunities available to her as a trained nurse. Through personal networks in the UK, she was informed of work opportunities as a nurse and was advised to do an adaptation programme for overseas nurses. After completion of the adaptation course, she secured a job with a hospital in London where she began to work, still in the belief that it was temporary as she had every intention to return to Kenya. However, she found that she was financially better off in the UK and was in a better position to fund her children's studies in Kenya. She, therefore, began to consider long-term settlement and began discussing the prospect of family migration with her husband. Her

husband was not ready to migrate as he had a successful business in Nairobi and, in Naomi's opinion, he preferred that she returned to Kenya. Naomi was reluctant to do that because she knew her salary in Kenya even jointly with that of her husband, would not sufficiently fund their children's education in the private schools they were attending or their future university education. In her opinion, her children's education took precedence over her husband's need for her to return.

However, when Naomi and her husband had agreed for the children to migrate, their visa applications were rejected and they were unable to join her in London. She continues to remain in the UK in order to finance her children's education in Kenya. This contrasts with the other mothers in this study who were able to migrate with their children. Naomi can be viewed as a 'transnational mother' (Parrenās, 2001) who sacrificed motherhood for her children to get ahead in life. Naomi's husband has also made a sacrifice as she argues that he supported her choice to stay in the UK while being stigmatized as it is not normal for a man to look after children, especially amongst the Kikuyu ethnic group.

The presumed expected values that emerged from the responses of the mothers in my study relate to wealth and status for the children. According to De Jong and Fawcett (1981), wealth refers to the "economic reward[s] and factors contributing to wealth...wealth can be viewed as an end itself, but is also a means by which other goals may be satisfied" (1981: 49). Patience stressed that by receiving British qualifications and experience, her children could gain access to wealth and a better social status; a position supported by Agnes. Status, according to De Jong and Fawcett (1981: 49), can be viewed as "social standing or prestige". The image presented by Patience, Agnes, Deon and most of the women in the focus groups (Kenyan, Nigerian and mixed) reveals that status can also be affiliated to a place. The fact that an individual once lived in or was born in the UK is a status symbol on its own. The UK has been marketed variously by the media and by the migrants themselves. Some return to

their country of origin and are assumed to be wealthy because of their westernised dress code and behaviour. Even though this is not a behaviour which some of the mothers condone, they realise that in the eyes of Nigerians and Kenyans back home, their children would be seen to have ‘made it’ and that status will reflect positively on them.

Aside from education and cultural exchange, some of the mothers in this study revealed that events occurring in their society of origin put them in a position where migration became their only option. This was mostly common for the single, divorced or widowed mothers as well as some married mothers who experienced events in their local community which made them consider the health and wellbeing of their children before their educational needs. This is the focus of the next section.

b. Health and Wellbeing

In my research, health is used to refer to the physical and mental condition and wellbeing of children. I discuss how the impact of social conditions on children’s health and wellbeing becomes an important factor for mothers to consider in the migration decision-making process. In terms of health, Renee (Nigerian) revealed how the physical condition of her child played a part in her decision to migrate. Her son was born with sickle cell anaemia and had been undergoing regular treatment in Nigeria for his condition. Towards the end of the 1990s, her doctor informed her that her son needed a kidney transplant, a procedure that Nigerian hospitals were not equipped to conduct, but recommended a hospital in Hammersmith, London. She stated that there was no discussion about who was going to accompany her son to London as she argued that “nobody can do like a mother”. Her husband played a vital role in funding the trip through an agreement with the company he worked for, which included maintenance and medical expenses for the procedure. They both decided that their other son would also travel to London to donate his kidney to his brother.

Renee migrated as a 'trailing mother' (Cooke and Bailey, 2001) as she sacrificed her career and lifestyle to tend to the needs of her ailing son. Cooke and Bailey's study (2001) revealed that women are more likely to migrate as a trailing wife or mother due to their home making and parental roles and their need to provide care to their children. By stating that "nobody can do it like a mother", Renee refers to the emotional and psychological support a mother can offer a child as she believed that her husband would not be able to handle the pressure of such a situation and offer the same emotional support as she could to their son. She underlined the fact that she "didn't have a mind to leave Nigeria", but that ceased to become a choice when the health of her son became life threatening. Renee's experience explains that sometimes some decisions cannot be discussed but must be acted upon. As a mother, she asserted her right to provide her child with comfort during the procedure.

Renee raised the importance of considering the wellbeing of children. This was presented in a different context by some of the single, divorced and widowed women. Jennifer (Kenyan), Odera and Afolo (Nigeria) were women who fell into these categories. Jennifer (divorced mother of three) was living in Nairobi under very poor conditions because when she divorced her husband, she was left to provide for her children without his support which proved difficult. She explained that she tried everything to support her children and to remove them from a life of poverty but failed. She described her disappointment when she became the victim of a government scheme purporting to provide employment opportunities for people on cruise ships but which sunk her further into debt. Her main priority was to find a way out of poverty for her children's benefit who she said had begun to take matters into their own hands by hawking and begging in the streets. As she saw the effects of poverty on her children, she began to consider migration as an option after seeing the economic achievements of her sisters living in the UK.

However, she explained that she had to ask her children for permission as it meant her leaving them behind. Her primary motive for migrating was to improve the wellbeing of her children by removing them from the poor conditions in which they lived and this, in her opinion, could only be achieved by migrating to the UK. Her children allowed her to migrate on condition that she did not overstay like some of their uncles had done before. That was the only condition laid down by her children which she did not want to break but eventually did as things did not shape up as she had planned. The conditions faced by Jennifer and her children in the slum in Nairobi reveal more pressing issues than education including the safety and wellbeing of her children. As a woman, Jennifer appeared strong enough to deal with the conditions she faced, but did not believe that the conditions were good for her children. Her decision, therefore, was provoked by the effects of poverty on her children's wellbeing and revealed that children have a say in the decision to migrate especially if it benefits them. However, Jennifer did not indicate that she was stigmatised for being a divorced mother.

Odera (Nigerian) was a single mother at the time migration was being considered. Prior to having her son, Odera had already made the decision to migrate but the act itself took long to materialise. She was not married at the time she had her son but was aware of the stigma attached to single mothers. She explained that,

“being a single mum back home. They look at it like that is a curse. If I say I am a single mum back home, they will say are you ok? It doesn't exist”.

Odera indicated that she was not prepared to deal with the stigma of being a single mother. She stated that the birth of her son sped up her decision to migrate and became the primary reason for her migration as she wished to take better care of him but at the same time escape the stigma of being a single mother in Nigeria. In this sense, her motivation for migration can

be viewed as her own self-interest but at the same time it took into account the needs of her newborn son.

Afolá (Nigerian), on the other hand, made the decision to migrate with her husband before he died. She was stigmatised after his death by her in-laws who blamed her for his death yet her husband died from a life threatening disease. She became concerned about the effect the treatment she received from her in-laws would have on her children, suspecting that they may have attempted to kidnap her children. Her in-laws were aware of her migration plans and her mother-in-law did not support them as Afolá was migrating for further education, which her mother-in-law did not feel she needed. As Afolá was concerned for the safety of her children, she looked for advice from her local pastor on how to present the final migration plans to her in-laws. She did not want to disconnect her children from their father's side of the family but also did not want them to be affected by the actions of the family members. She stressed that she did not need consent from her in-laws to process the children's passports and permission to migrate with her children, though her brother-in-law did not believe that women could "inherit" children. As the departure date drew closer, her pastor advised her to go on her own to inform them, judge their reaction to the news and decide what steps to take next. The reception she received when she presented the news to them led her to believe that her in-laws may have had bad intentions as they were physically and verbally abusive to her. Based on their reaction, she acted quickly and arranged for her children to be moved to Lagos where she would join them when it was time to leave.

The main issue of concern for her children was their safety based on the actions and intentions of her in-laws. This can be linked to their wellbeing because had her suspicions materialised, then her children would have been subjected to psychological trauma in terms of understanding why their grand-parents took them away from their mother and why their mother was lost to them. She did indicate that she did not want her children to lose contact

with their father's side of the family, stating that it was important for them to keep in contact with them. As a mother, she used her instinct to protect her children from harm even if it put her in harm's way. She indicated also that when her husband was alive, they had agreed that their children's education was the most important factor in their decision to migrate. Safety was also a concern found in Hutchins' study (2011: 1227) when one of her participants mentioned that she was concerned about the effect the local environment (e.g. pollution, rough neighbourhoods) was having on her children, which is different from the safety highlighted by Afolá. Afolá also knew that this decision would provide her children with the opportunity to get ahead in life by receiving an education in the UK.

Afolá can be said to have considered the comfort and safety of her children as they would benefit from living in a safe environment away from her community in Nigeria. She was more concerned about the effects her in-laws' behaviour would have on her children. In addition, Afolá explained that she did not agree with certain practices and beliefs amongst the Cham people and thought that the migration opportunity would take her children away from them. This can be linked to De Jong and Fawcett's morality value which they defined as the "deeply held values and belief systems that prescribe good and bad ways of living" (1981: 51). In a sense, bringing her children to the UK took them out of an environment that, in her opinion, supported some bad practices and beliefs which she did not wish her children to adopt in future.

The wellbeing of children as a factor in migration decision-making is difficult to place as it can be linked to the comfort and morality values of the value expectancy model (De Jong and Fawcett, 1981). In terms of comfort, wellbeing can be linked to the psychological and physical feeling of being comfortable for an individual. The definition of wellbeing is associated with a state of comfort, health and happiness and in Renee's case it was a concern over physical and psychological comfort and health, whereas for Odera and Jennifer,

wellbeing was concerned with the psychological comfort of their children with regards to the social stigma faced by one, the loss of status faced by another and the need therefore to provide a safe, healthy and comfortable environment for children. The findings reveal that there is a need to expand the range in definitions of values to take into account changes in today's society

Therefore, aside from education, health and wellbeing are other values that the women in this study took into account, in relation to the needs of their children. The discussion above shows how events in society can affect women and how they in turn assess the impact of certain events on their children's physical and psychological state. However, some mothers revealed that they had failed to take into consideration their children's ability (or not) to adapt to new environments. This was based on their assumptions that children are easily adaptable when it proved to be otherwise.

c. Children's Adaptability

Some of the mothers in my study revealed that some of their children found it hard to adjust to their new surroundings. Once in the UK, Joyce and Bonnie (Nigerian) mentioned the problems their children had adapting to the new environment. They both had school-age children who were under the age of 12 who did not object to migrating but at the same time Bonnie and Joyce did not consider how a change in environment would affect them. Joyce stated that in her discussions with her husband, they assumed that their children would adjust easily to a new setting, not realising how differences in a society and lifestyle can have a profound psychological impact on school-age children. The children were used to a different lifestyle in Nigeria as they used to have a driver to take them to school, but now had to walk to school. Their new home was initially shared with a stranger, which was shocking for their daughter who was not clear who owned the living room. Joyce explained that in the process

of weighing up the advantages and disadvantages of migrating, one of questions that they took into consideration especially with their children was:

“How [is it] going to go down with the children, moving them down from the [life they are used to] and you know that is going to be very different from that they are used to”.

Bonnie agreed with Joyce as she explained that her son was shocked by the hygiene conditions in the UK which challenged his view of the country, but he adjusted faster than Joyce’s daughter.

According to value expectancy theory, adaptability can be categorised under comfort which refers to physical and psychological comfort (De Jong and Fawcett, 1981: 50). However, De Jong and Fawcett’s definition appears to apply better to material conditions such as better homes and better working conditions. In my research, I use adaptability to refer to the ability of an individual to acclimatise to a new environment meaning accepting change in a positive way. Joyce’s daughter appeared to react negatively to the new environment as she was unfamiliar with it and it differed drastically from the lifestyle that she was used to. The value of adaptability did not figure in the migration decisions of Joyce and her husband as she mentioned that it should have been important to consider and suggested that she would advise others to think about this value in their own migration decisions. Aronowitz (1984) argued that previous research had failed to take into account the social and emotional effects of migration on children as they focused on the psychological effects of migration on adult migrant. Some scholars have explored the psychological and emotional impact of migration on immigrant children in the destination country taking into account difference in social and cultural practices (Fuligni, 1998; Sam, 2000). However, there is a need to explore in depth

the important role it plays in family migration decisions to understand how parents prepare for the impact of a new environment on their children.

The responses above reveal that children have a direct and indirect influence in the migration decision-making process whereby mothers act in the best interests of their children and/or take into account the future oriented consent strategy to make decisions for younger children. This would depend on the child-adult relations that exist which can be dependent or interdependent (Zeheir, 2001). The age of the children reveals whether mothers included or excluded them from contributing to the migration decision directly as the mothers adopted an assumed value expectancy for their children. Although the findings in my research are limited due to the fact that children were not the main focus of my research, they reveal that there is a need to understand the relationship between children and their parents in migration decision-making. Another important aspect to consider in the migration decision-making process is the negotiation process that the women engaged in with their husbands (for married women) or with their parents (for single women). This is the focus of the next section.

4.3 Negotiating and Discussing Migration

In the process of making the decision to migrate, some potential migrants may have to negotiate migration with their spouses or parents and the women in this project have different demographic characteristics (age, marital status, socio-economic status) and migrated during different time periods. The responses of the single women reveal that migration can be negotiated or discussed with parents. Negotiation took place in the sense that they were seeking consent and support, usually financial (e.g. Anna) as opposed to a discussion where the single women already had the support of their parents on their migration plans (e.g. Brenda and Abi). The strategies adopted by the women, if any, will be discussed and an assessment of their role in the migration decision-making process will be made.

The negotiation process between married women and their spouses took into account the needs of the children and the benefits the family would gain from migration. Those without children at the time of migration discussed migration with their husband in terms of the benefits they would gain and considered some of the psychological or ‘psychic costs’ (DaVanzo, 1976: 6) and possible economic costs they were bound to incur by migrating (e.g. Fahima, Chloe and Beatrice). It was interesting to discover that amongst the married women, their perception of their position in relation to the migration decision-making either identified them as the primary migrant (Deon and Felicia, Kenyan) or an associational migrant (Agnes, Fahima, Chloe and Beatrice). In this section, I describe the negotiation process and discussion that single women engaged in with their parents. In addition, I will present the responses of married women on their role in the discussion and negotiation process with their husbands.

4.3.1 Individual Migration Decision-Making with Parents

Many of the married women and single mothers in this study felt that single women tend to have more freedom to choose when and where to migrate as married women had a responsibility for their family. However, some of the single women in this study revealed that they had to negotiate and/or discuss migration with their parents with some needing to provide legitimate reasons for migration that would be acceptable to both parents. Previous research has revealed that the reasons for women migrating have changed as they used to migrate to contribute to the family economy even as independent migrants (Lauby and Stark 1988). This finding was consistent in studies conducted on migration and gender in South-East Asia as well as the Pacific (De Jong, 2001; Oishi, 2005). By the 1990s, women were migrating independently for personal goals. However, they were still expected to provide care and support to the family through migration.

The responses of the women in my study suggest that this negotiation process is important as it reveals the influence that parents have on the decision-making process of

young adult women. It was clear that some of the parents of the young adult women (usually under the age of 25) still believed that their grown-up children needed care and protection (e.g. Anna, Nigerian). However, this was not a situation experienced by all of the women under the age of 25 as Brenda and Abi (Nigeria) were both under the age of 18 and considered minors but their parents supported their migration plans to the UK. Nevertheless, most of the women under the age of 25 were still living with their parents which may be the reason why their parents had to be involved in their migration decisions, especially if they were going to be a source of funding. These women were either in full time employment, or recent high school, college or university graduates. They were at different life stages migrating for different reasons. Even though some of the women under the age of 25 indicated that they needed to discuss their migration plans with their parents, it was not the same for all of the women. Samantha (Kenya), a university graduate at the time did not need to negotiate with her parents her migration decision but discussed her plans with them, but did not require their financial support. She migrated in order to develop her career.

Some of the women indicated that their intention to migrate was because they were dissatisfied with certain aspects of society such as the economy, the education system as well as political environment. This dissatisfaction made them initiate a search for alternative locations that would help them fulfil some of their expected values, which were some of the stages described by Wolpert's place utility model (1965). Anna (Nigerian woman) made it clear that she intended to migrate because she was disappointed by the education system in Nigeria as she reflected on events she had experienced at a young age and a young adult. At a young age, she experienced a violent but short-lived strike by teachers near her school which had such a profound impact on her that all she wanted to do was migrate anywhere abroad. But she knew she could not express her feelings to her parents as she thought it was inappropriate for her to raise this issue with them and that they would question her decision.

Instead she educated herself about western countries by watching programs such as *Sesame Street* and other shows on television, as well as reading novels later on during university.

By the time she was at university where she was studying British classical literature, she discovered that she was born in the UK and became more drawn to migrating to the UK as opposed to the United States. When presenting her migration intentions to her parents, she explained that she received a very “suspicious” look from her parents who were curious as to why she wanted to leave. She mentioned that her parents are naturally inquisitive and question anything that is presented to them and knowing that this was the case, she prepared her answers to some of the questions she believed they would ask. Some of the reasons she stated were similar to other women, like Janet and Brenda, as she referred to the regular strikes at the universities which meant she would take a longer time to complete her studies. She added that,

“England is somewhere I can call my home and I just want to go and see another life that I could have”.

Interestingly, she had never visited or travelled to the UK, yet she regarded it as her home by virtue of birth, a sentiment that other Nigerian women shared (e.g. Janet). Her father did not accept that reason because he did not see it as a productive ambition or leading in any direction. In addition, he was concerned that she was not married indicating that she was still in need of care. However, she countered that argument by stating that she would like to pursue her Masters education in the UK which her father was more willing to accept. Anna’s mother was concerned that she was young and still in need of care but at the same time she knew it was a better opportunity for her. As advice, her mother told her about the hardships she had faced when they were in the UK, in the 1970s, as she had to be the primary breadwinner, providing for the family and taking care of the children as her father was on a

scholarship and was not allowed to work. Her mother gave her moral support but also made her aware of the challenges she could face in the new environment.

Although Anna listed some important reasons for considering migration abroad, she indicated that she had not revealed an important underlying reason for her migration which reflected her life stage at the time. At the time she was negotiating migration with her parents, she was also dating a man who her parents and extended family did not approve of because he belonged to a different ethnic group. She saw migration as an opportunity of escaping the watchful eyes of her parents allowing her to continue her relationship with her boyfriend who later on became her husband. Therefore, even though she had intentions to migrate prior to her relationship with her boyfriend, this relationship provided more reasons for her to migrate.

Anna raised two important concerns that emerged from her discussions with her parents. First, her father was anxious about her life and career path while her mother was worried about her wellbeing. They were concerned about her need for protection and guidance and they indirectly expressed this as a concern about her as a woman migrating independently, creating the idea that young women are more vulnerable. Second, it appears that Anna was being strategic whilst negotiating as she was aware of the requirement to convince her parents that migration was a good option and also knew the appropriate responses to give them, to convince them. Although she states that she went through a long negotiation process with her parents, she revealed that this was the normal procedure that she and her brothers had to go through. However, there appears to be a concern for her wellbeing as a young woman migrating independently which may be based on the sociocultural perceptions that her parents had about the migration behaviour of young women.

There were cases where negotiation did not take place as the decision was made on behalf of the women by a parent creating an indirect intention to migrate. Janet (Nigerian), Abi (Nigerian) and Gertrude (Kenyan) described different situations whereby their parents made the decision on their behalf as they were acting in their best interests. Janet stated that she did not have to negotiate migration as the decision was made by her mother who felt that the higher education system in Nigeria would not give her child the opportunities she needed to develop her career. Abi's parents were disappointed with the quality of education in Nigeria, even in private schools which were overcrowded and not mentally stimulating. Abi was much younger than Janet as she was 16 at the time her parents made the decision to move her to a boarding school in the UK, as they had done with her older sister. Abi did not object to the move as she explained that she was open-minded about the move. Gertrude, on the other hand, had completed high school and was working at the time while she was waiting to secure a position at a university in Kenya. However, she was not convinced she would finish on time due to the regular strikes taking place at the university. She explained that her mother had made plans for her migration, without her knowledge, with a friend who was based in London. Gertrude appeared not to have the intention to migrate but her mother looked for an opportunity for her to do so as she stated her mother was a planner. Although she did not know of the migration plans, she did not challenge them as she too saw migration as an opportunity.

On the other hand, the women over the age of 25 who usually had some work experience and who were living on their own did not negotiate migration but discussed it with their parents. Jacinta (Nigerian) was already successfully established as a manager at a local bank when she applied for a Master's course in several institutions in the UK "as a joke" because her sister was planning to study for Masters as well. She initially indicated that she did not have an intention to migrate but later on revealed that conditions at her work

place caused her to consider migration. As a single woman, she constantly found her needs being sidelined ahead of married women whose lives were seen to be busier than hers despite her senior position at the bank. She indicated that she discussed her migration plans with her parents for them to be aware and they shared their experiences of living in the UK with her, giving her advice on some of the challenges she may face. Jacinta had visited London previously when on holiday so she was familiar with the local environment but only as a visitor. But she indicated that visiting was different from living in a place.

Constance (Kenyan) was also working for an international non-governmental organisation in Nairobi and wanted to migrate when she knew what (values) she hoped to achieve through migration. Like Jacinta, Constance did not need to negotiate with her parents because when she was growing up, her parents had always taught her and her siblings to make decisions on their own and supported their chosen career paths. She involved her parents in her migration plans when she needed financial support for her studies and maintenance. Corrine (Kenyan), on the other hand, revealed that she had to be convinced to migrate by her mother and other family members when she had no intention to do so. Her mother wanted Corrine to migrate because they believed she was suffering from depression due to a failed business venture and the break-up of her long term relationship. Her mother saw migration as a solution to get Corrine out of the country and improve her emotional state. Corrine did not want to migrate because she had just returned from working in another country and because she was emotionally unstable, she did not want to move again. Her uncle who was based in the UK had to convince to take advantage of some of the benefits she would gain from studying and/or working in the UK. She was eventually convinced as she took up the initiative and started looking for a university and a course. Therefore, sometimes migration does not have to be negotiated but for some women it was necessary in order to secure the support from their parents. Others had to be induced into migrating. The

experience of married women was different to that of single mothers and single women.

Married women had to negotiate migration with their spouse and sometimes the children, as described earlier.

4.3.2 Family Migration Decision-Making: Negotiating with the Husband

Negotiating the decision to migrate within a family unit was a different process to that described in the previous section on single women. Some of the women who were married at the time the migration decision-making process took place stressed upon the flexibility that single women had as opposed to married women with children who had to factor in the family into the process and discuss the possibility of migration. Scholars who have studied in this area of migration decision-making focus, within the context of family migration behaviour on dual-earning household migration (Bailey, Blake and Cooke, 2004), husband-centred migration (Shihadeh, 1991) or on women described as the trailing wife/mother or tied mover/stayer (Cooke, 2001; Bielby and Bielby, 1992). It is noteworthy that previous research has either tried to predict movements of women, especially those who were married at the time of migration, adopting a quantitative approach. Very few studies have focused on describing scenarios of the negotiation or decision-making process with the exception of Hiller and McCaig (2007) and Hoang (2011b). Hiller and McCaig presented details on the role that women play in family migration and analysed why migration occurred as well as demonstrating how migration can be a process of negotiation. They argue that migration did not occur immediately but was given “time to germinate” (2007: 465). They add that during the period of ‘germination’, the women in their study would take time to consult a range of sources of information on a particular location of their interest. Discussions between husband and wife could take place over time before a final decision to migrate was made. Furthermore, Hiller and McCaig argued that some of the women’s husbands were unable to secure a job in their local community and that they had a better chance of securing

employment outside that community (2007: 466). The germination period, therefore, refers to that time between migration decision-making and actual migration based on the information gathered about a potential destination country.

Hoang's study (2011b: 1441), on the other hand, focused on the agency of women in negotiating "their own migration and that of others". She identified four types of migration decision-making: consensual where there is an agreement with household members on the migration decision; uncontested, where migration decisions are made without involving others; negotiated where the preferences of members of the family are taken into account in the decision-making process; and conflictual where conflicts of interests prevent a final decision from being made (2011b: 1446). This contribution by Hoang is useful in my study to show the type of migration decision-making the women engaged in with their husbands.

In order to provide a picture of some of the scenarios of negotiation that took place, I discuss my findings in terms of the following themes: first, I highlight the position of female breadwinners and analyse whether negotiation really took place between husband and wife. Second, I consider the place of utility expectations of the women and their role in the negotiation process, in relation to the place utility expectations of their husbands. Finally, I present the line of reasoning behind the migration of newly-wed women who had husbands based in the UK, who fall into the category of associational migrants, commonly linked with women's mobility from one place to another (Surdakasa, 1977; Adepoju, 1995).

a. Female Breadwinners as Primary Migrants

In terms of the migration decision-making process engaged in by the married women in my study, the relationship between husband and wife is important to explain the level of influence each spouse had over the process. There were some cases in which women played a dominating role in the decision-making process due to their high economic status within the

household. Deon and Felicia (Kenyan women) were the primary breadwinners of their households. They explained that before migrating to the UK their husbands had lost their jobs and were in some form of temporary employment. In Deon's case, when she left Kenya for Botswana, she explained that her husband's redundancy from his job was a blow to his self-esteem and she said that,

“the move also made him feel like he was a little bit uplifted. Because if you are down all the time you need something to uplift you”.

She added that when migration to the UK was being considered from Botswana, she involved the family in the process and brought home the documents of the job opportunity and benefits offered to her and her family. In her opinion, the decision was holistic and the xenophobic atmosphere in Botswana did not encourage her or the family to stay. Her husband supported her migration plans because he also saw it as an opportunity that he too could benefit. In Deon's case the type of decision-making she engaged in with her husband was consensual as they were both in agreement on the reasons for migrating and the location (Hoang, 2011b: 1446). However, Felicia's case is interesting as she said she made the decision without discussing the possibility of migrating with her husband. She said that he was not too happy that she was able to find what she called “an easy way to life”. Eventually he did accept the decision as she said they sold everything and she made arrangements to come first and he followed after. Felicia adopted an uncontested way of migration decision-making as she did not discuss the migration decision with her husband to consider his input as she just informed him of the migration plans (Hoang, 2011b: 1446).

These two scenarios revealed the position that the women have as breadwinners in terms of the decision to migrate as a family strategy. As they took up the task of providing for the family especially the children, their main priority is the needs of the children discussed in

section 4.2.1. Abraham, Auspurg and Hinz's study (2010) on the migration decision-making of dual-earning households used the bargaining theory to explain the process. The bargaining theory states that the discussions include whether to migrate or not and the arrangements which are made once a decision is reached. They argue that the partner with more options has more power in the relationship (2010: 877). This was the case with Deon and Felicia where they found opportunities to migrate; Deon for a higher salary with benefits for the family while Felicia was given an opportunity to offer her children a better life and improve her economic situation. Even though their husbands did migrate with them, the decision or the bargaining power was more on their side. There are, however, situations in which the place utilities of the women were taken into account in the decision to migrate alongside those of their husband.

b. Place Utilities of Women and Migration Decision-Making

McDevitt and Gadalla (1986) present an interesting discussion on how a husband and wife place utility expectations informed migration decisions in northern Egypt. They intended to explore how discussions between husband and wife could lead to a joint decision. The place utility model of Wolpert (1965) was used to explain the satisfaction of a potential migrant in the place of origin and also takes into consideration the expected place utilities a potential migrant hopes to acquire through migration. In Agnes' case (Kenyan), she belonged to a dual-income household in which both parties were bringing in a significant amount of income, but her husband earned more than she did with benefits that helped the family (e.g. subsidised housing). At the time migration was being considered, they were in Botswana where they were affected by the xenophobic atmosphere from the local residents and her husband was facing unemployment. In the negotiation between herself and her husband, she brought to the table the wellbeing and future of the children which she stated was being

affected in Botswana at the time. Her job was not under threat but she was not satisfied with the changes that were occurring in that society and how it affected her family.

Having lived, studied and attended conferences in the UK, she was in a position to influence the decision concerning the destination country. She mentioned the fact that Australia and Canada were countries up for consideration, but because of their unfamiliarity with these countries, she chose the UK, based on her knowledge of it. She assessed that the opportunity presented to her husband, to work as a doctor in the UK would benefit the family. However, she had to sacrifice her job for that opportunity. The dissatisfaction that she felt in the society that she was living in was a result of the attitudes of the local residents and it gave her enough reason to accept migration knowing that she would lose her job but that her family would get an opportunity to live a better life and secure a better future.

In this scenario, both Agnes and her husband were contributing to the migration decision-making process making it consensual. Agnes had the knowledge of the UK from previous visits and her husband had the job opportunity that would assist the family to migrate and benefit from the process. However, Agnes had to put the needs of her children and husband above hers because the benefits of the family outweighed some of the losses she would experience (e.g. unemployment). The third group of women to be discussed are the newly-wed women who migrated as associational migrants.

c. Women as Associational Migrants

The situation with newly-wed women at the time of migration is different in the sense that they do not have children to consider in the migration decision but they had to think about their marriage. On the surface, one could easily categorise these women, Fahima, Angela, Beatrice (Nigerian) and Chloe (Kenyan), as associational migrant women as they migrated to join their husbands who were either British nationals working or international

students resident in the UK. These women had either recently graduated from university and had completed their one year of compulsory civil service or stated that they had not secured jobs. They somehow felt obliged to fulfil their role as a wife by joining their husbands, more so because they had nothing to keep them in Nigeria. However, Beatrice (Nigerian) seemed a bit concerned about the differences in food between Nigeria and the UK as in the process of discussing her migration, her husband and friends in the UK had to assure her that she would find the same kind of food or similar to that she eats in Nigeria. Fahima, on the other hand, stated that,

“there was no debate. I said he had a job here [UK], I didn’t have any job in Nigeria so there was no way he would move back to Nigeria. We would have to stay at his or my parents’ house”.

In Fahima’s situation, the decision was already made when she got married and because she had completed her youth service it seemed only natural for her to join her husband because he would lose more if he returned to Nigeria. In this case, the fact that these women were recently married women at the time of migration meant that there was a stronger expectation for them to join their husbands which made their involvement in the migration decision-making process more consensual (Hoang, 2011b: 1446). In other words, there was not much to discuss. Therefore, negotiation may not be necessary in such situations.

It is interesting though that in Chloe’s case (Kenyan), she too was a newly-wed at the time of migration but she mentioned the fact that she did not want to leave Kenya even if it was to join her husband. Her husband was a student in London at the time and it appeared that she had seen his migration as temporary despite the fact that he tried to woo her into migrating permanently by highlighting the benefits for her in terms of career. When she did eventually decide to migrate, it was supposed to be temporary for a visit, but she said she got

pregnant immediately and with that she had to change her decision and to move long term.

Chloe had to negotiate migration with her husband as she was not prepared to leave.

Therefore, in the case of newly-weds, very little negotiation took place, with the exception of Chloe's case, as they had made a commitment to their husbands and had to decide whether to join them or not but this also depended on what was keeping them in Nigeria or Kenya. The negotiation, or lack of it, for these women is what has been typically represented in previous work in which a woman is seen to be following her husband. This is a logical step in the sense that they are measuring the utilities that he already has against their own and, in the case of Fahima, she was predicting his fate if he were to return to Nigeria. If anything, she had more to gain by joining him in the UK.

Therefore, negotiating migration depends on the utilities of the women measured against those of their spouses, the amount of power women have in the decision-making linked to their economic power as well as the location of their spouses at the time of their marriage and migration. Negotiating migration appears to exist more with dual-earning couples as in the case with Agnes (discussed above) in which utilities of both partners are taken into consideration.

PART B

4.4 Ideal Types of Migrant Kenyan and Nigerian Women

In this section, I focus on my third research question which was to examine how Oishi's ideal types of female migrants (2005) can be linked to the women in my study and whether new ones can be identified. In chapter one, I outlined Oishi's description of the ideal types of female migrants which are the adventurous woman, dutiful daughter, good mothers and wives, destitute woman and distressed woman (2005: 113-123). In this section, I will demonstrate how Oishi's ideal types of female migrants can be used to categorise the women in my study based on their migration decisions.

As I aimed to identify other types of women that migrate, I explore the possibility of additional motivations behind women's migration thereby adding to Oishi's 'ideal types' of female migrants. Therefore, I continue to use the concept of ideal types as it is used by Oishi to refer to the migrant women in my study. As mentioned in chapter one, Oishi used the characteristics of her participants to identify the reasons for their migration as well as their chosen locations of migration. She found that women from middle or high class backgrounds were more likely to migrate to western countries whereas those from a lower class background migrated to the Middle East or South East Asian countries (2005: 108-109). In terms of my study, 29 of the women interviewed individually were from middle class backgrounds as they had access to capital and resources that could support their migration plans. Therefore, the characteristics of the women in my study would differ from that of the women in Oishi's study.

Table 2 categorises the women interviewed using Oishi's ideal types of female migrants. The characteristics are based on the responses they gave in relation to their reasons for migrating and taking into account the values and needs of others (e.g. children and husband). A discussion of the ideal types of female migrants linked to the responses of the

women in my study is also presented below and I identify a new ideal type of female migrant (career women) which refers to those women who failed to fit into Oishi's five categories.

The categories are based on the discussions held in this chapter on the influence of others in the migration decisions and chapter three's discussion on how sociocultural expectations can influence the migration decision-making process.

Table 2: Ideal types of Kenyan and Nigerian migrant women

Migrant and Nationality	Ideal Type	Characteristics
Nigerian Fahima Beatrice Alice Kenyan Chloe	Good Wives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Young newly-weds joining their husbands based in the UK – Retired mother and wife who migrated to support her husband who needed medical care attention in the UK – Recent graduates from university and completed government civil service
Nigerian Angela Kenyan Felicia Samantha	Adventurous woman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Single/married woman migrated out of impulse – Invitation made without plenty of information; – Migration driven by curiosity
Nigerian Abi Kenyan Gertrude	Dutiful Daughter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Both migrated because parents/mother thought it would be best in terms of education and future benefits
Kenyan Naomi Agnes Felicia Deon Nigerian Odera Patience Renee Afola	Good Mothers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Migrated for their children to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benefit from education abroad; • provide economic support for children left behind; and • to improve their future economic status; – Migrated to uplift her husband's self-esteem; – To provide emotional, physical care and support for children; – Protect child from stigma; – The children's health and well being

Nigerian Olivia Afola	Distressed Woman	– Escaping the intrusion and control of parents and in-laws
Kenyan Jennifer	Destitute Woman and Good Mother	– Escaping poverty in order to economically provide for her children left behind
Kenyan Samantha Elizabeth Anita Viola Constance Lucy Pamela Corrine Nigeria Tola Jacinta Anna Brenda	Career women	– Exploring opportunities that would lead to career and personal development

Source: Based on findings of interviews in my study

4.4.1 Adventurous Women

There were few women (n = 3) in my study who fell into this category as most of the women had stated other reasons for migrating, even independently. There were three women who appeared to be adventurous as was the case with Angela (Nigerian). She made the decision to migrate when a friend based in the UK advised her to migrate and when her sister decided to move with her family, she also decided to migrate without carefully assessing her options or getting more information. She stated that she had no clue what she was getting into. Even though she was a British citizen raised in Nigeria, she did not have sufficient information about the UK as she indicated that in Nigeria, in the 1990s, telephone and internet communications were not easily accessible due to costs and service availability. Therefore, she migrated after her sister in the same year (1996) without waiting for any feedback about the town her sister migrated to in the outskirts of London, making her migration spontaneous and unplanned.

Felicia (Kenyan), on the other hand, may also be described as an adventurous mother. Her decision was driven by her children's and her own needs as she jumped at the opportunity when it came without giving it a second thought and without consulting with her husband. She only began to think about her situation once she arrived in the UK. These women's accounts of their migration decision-making experiences reveal that adventurous women do not necessarily assess migration as an option but act on impulse suggesting that if there is an opportunity, then they take it and deal with the consequences when they get to the destination. In Oishi's study, the adventurous women appeared to have a streak of curiosity that is looking for an experience. My findings reveal that the women can be adventurous to the point of being impulsive like Angela and Felicia. It introduces the idea that adventurous women can be driven to impulse and adventure for their children's benefit as well as their own sake (e.g. career development).

4.4.2 Dutiful Daughter

Oishi described a dutiful daughter (2005: 115) as one who migrates to help her family by sending remittances, for example. It was difficult to fit some of the women in my study into this category as they were sent abroad so that they could benefit from a good education which eventually would yield more benefits for the family. There were only two women that could be linked to this category. Abi (Nigerian) was sent to the UK for her high school education, but did not have to remit to her family who had a good socio-economic status. Similarly, Gertrude (Kenyan), who had completed her high school education, was sent to the UK so she could gain better qualifications that would help her in future. Gertrude felt that she had to migrate because of the time, effort and cost her mother had put into the migration plans. Therefore, dutiful daughters do not have to necessarily migrate in order to remit or support future migration plans but there was an expectation for them to access further education that would benefit them and their own families in the future. Dutiful daughters in

this instance, therefore, refers to young women who are sent to achieve values that would benefit them in the future and who are dutiful in the sense that they agree to their parents plans for their future.

4.4.3 Good Mothers and/or Good Wives

In my study, the women who migrated as mothers and/or wives were at times found to be acting more as good mothers than as good wives. Those who acted primarily as good wives (Chloe, Fahima and Brenda) were newly-weds who stated that they had to weigh the costs and benefits of migrating for themselves and for their husbands. The situation described by single mothers like Odera and Jennifer differed to the newlyweds, as they migrated for the benefit of their children. As a result, they acted as good mothers. Good mothers tended to act in the best interests of the children, but good mothers could also be good wives at the same time (Oishi, 2005: 117-118). This was the case with Agnes, whose husband had a job opportunity which would benefit the family. She assessed her losses against her children's gains and the benefits the opportunity would give to her husband who was facing unemployment if he stayed. This appears to be consistent with Bailey, Blake and Cooke's research (2004) where they stated that the decision to migrate is related to women's parental obligations. The women concerned in this category aimed to give their children a good education in order to place them in a position to get good jobs in the future.

Three women, Afola, Renee (Nigerian) and Naomi (Kenyan), can be seen to be good mothers and good wives. These women migrated without their husbands in order to provide better opportunities for their children. The migration took place in agreement with their husbands, for example, Afola agreed with her husband that the children's education was a priority. Renee, on the other hand, asserted her right as a mother to travel with her un-well son for moral, spiritual and physical support while Naomi's migration plan was short term but changed once her family began to reap the benefits of her migration.

4.4.4 Distressed and Destitute Woman

Afola, Odessa and Jennifer fall into more than one ideal type of female migrants categories. Although I already categorised Afola as a good wife and mother earlier, she was also a distressed woman given the confrontation she had endured with her in-laws when she informed them of her migration plans with her children. Due to their extreme reaction, she was forced to flee in order to save herself and her children from further distress. Odessa, on the other hand, felt distressed by the psychological control her parents had on her growing up and in her marriage. She explained that she felt distressed because both her parents and in-laws were getting involved in marital matters which involved herself and her husband. The discussion with her husband on migration as a form of escape reveals that they both agreed that it was the best option. This is similar to the description given in Oishi's study which revealed that distressed women often migrated to free themselves from problems in their home (2005: 120).

Jennifer, on the other hand, suffered from distress as a result of her social and economic environment and was destitute as she lived in poor housing conditions and considered herself poor. The conditions she faced living in a slum with her children caused huge stress in her life because she was unable to educate her children or provide a safe environment where they could be provided for in terms of nutrition and financial support. Having been a victim of a scam of a government advertisement on recruitment for foreign employment, which landed her in debt, her only option was to escape to provide for herself and her children back in Kenya.

4.4.5 Career Women

Finally, this new ideal type refers to a significant number of women in my study who could not be classified in any of the other five ideal types of female migrants because their migration intentions were related exclusively to their own goals. Eight of them mentioned in

table 2 earlier wanted to develop their careers and took advantage of opportunities that made it possible. For example, Anita had no intention to migrate but was informed of a chance for career development through a student organisation at her university. She viewed the migration as an opportunity to build her skills and career within an international setting and hoped to transfer these skills to Kenya if she were to return. Viola also explained that she was looking to find a place where she could establish her chosen career path, although she had the opportunity to remain in the United States where most of her family resided, but she chose not to. All these women share similar motives of migration which helps to create a possible ideal type that takes into account only the women's career plans.

Therefore, Oishi's ideal types of female migrants can be useful for categorising the different types of female migrants based on their reasons for migrating. It can also be used to understand migration decision-making of women as it identifies the characteristics of different types of women that migrate and how they may function in the migration decision-making process. My contribution to Oishi's ideal types of female migrants was to include a group of women who migrated for their own self-interests (e.g. career development). In addition, the findings of my research show that the characteristics of Oishi's ideal types of female migrants can be expanded to consider the different reasons why women migrated.

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, my findings relating to the negotiation process of young single adult women reveal that negotiation is mostly only necessary if the migrant has an intention to migrate whereas those who had the opportunity to migrate did not need to negotiate but rather discuss and consult with parents especially where moral or financial support was to be offered. There are few studies exploring the migration decision-making process of young single adult women and this will need further and in depth exploration. My findings related to the negotiation process between a wife and husband, support previous studies especially in

the case of women viewed as associational migrants. However, experiences have changed as women assess the migration opportunity for themselves whereas previously they were presented as followers and not independent or collaborative decision-makers.

In terms of the influence of children in migration decision-making, the value expectancy theory was most useful as it helped to identify the values that the women believed their children would benefit from through migration. It was also used to determine the values that women migrating on their own were hoping to achieve in the new location. The place utility model was useful for describing the dissatisfaction experienced by the single young women as well as some married women who took into account the needs of their spouse. The dissatisfaction was used to justify to their parents their reasons for migrating. Based on this assessment, they were in a better position to make an informed decision of where and when to migrate as their dissatisfaction initiated a search for alternative locations that offer them better utilities and values. The theories of migration decision-making described in this chapter, therefore, are important for explaining interactions between women and their family members (i.e. children, husbands and parents) in the decision to migrate.

Chapter 5

The Role of Networks and Information within Migration Systems and the Migration Decision-Making Process

5.1 Introduction

Networks are useful tools in the migration decision-making process. They refer to connections between the potential migrant and current/former migrants in the destination country. Information provided through these networks can be important in completing a potential migrant's migration plans by providing details which would help them to settle in a new environment. However, there are different types of networks and channels of information which can be used by potential migrants operating within an established migration system. In this chapter, I examine the relationship between networks, information and migration systems which provides a background to the responses to my research questions. The two research questions I aim to answer are: how do gendered networks influence Kenyan and Nigerian women's decision to migrate? and what advice do these women in turn give to potential migrants in the country of origin?

5.2 Networks, Information and Migration Systems

Networks represent one of several links within migration systems between the destination country and the country of origin. They have been defined "as sets of interpersonal relations that link migrants or returned migrants with relatives, friends or fellow countrymen at home. They convey information, provide financial assistance, facilitate employment and accommodation and give support in various forms" (Arango, 2004: 27-28). This definition takes into account the relations between people and what they share: information and other resources. Boyd (1989) added that networks are systems which operate between two or more locations and which become a self-sufficient entity allowing individuals

to share information and assist one another in achieving migration (1989: 641). Migrant networks have sometimes been viewed as social capital as they both help to facilitate migration by providing information, reducing costs and risks (economic and emotional) and by assisting new migrants to integrate into a new environment (Curran, Garip, Chung and Tangchonlatip, 2005: 228). Some scholars have used networks and social capital interchangeably but within my research, I will use the term migrant networks.

Migration systems, on the other hand, have been found to exist between countries through investment, trade agreements and political relations (Castles and Miller, 2009: 27). Mabogunge (1970) has been commonly associated with the systems approach and applied it within the context of rural-urban migration in West Africa. Fawcett and Arnold (1987) and Fawcett (1989) discussed the possible relationship between networks and migration systems arguing that linkages can exist through the communication and/or regulatory agreements between the potential migrant and his/her networks.

Information is an important part of the relationship between the potential migrant and the networks used as it includes literature and all forms of media (e.g. television shows, pictures, social networking websites). Goodman (1981) was particularly concerned with the role of information in migration highlighting that in the 1970s and 1980s, few studies had explored the connection between the two. He argued that information helps potential migrants choose a destination, but imperfect information could be a barrier to moves to potential destinations (1981: 140). The changing channels of information (e.g. internet, telephones, letters) affect the quality of the information received as some channels may not allow information to be received on time or may not offer a realistic view of the destination country (Poot, 1996). However, Martinez (2008) argues that potential migrants may have access to information but that it may be misleading. The 'information society' dominating today's world creates a situation where a potential migrant is able to process information

using the technological advancements that have taken place, through time, in the development of information and communication technology (Martinez, 2008: 6). These technological advancements appear to play an influential role in the decision-making process for some of the women in my study who found it to be a useful tool for verifying certain information provided through personal networks (e.g. Constance).

Nonetheless, the connection between migrant networks, information and migration systems is an important aspect of migration research. Martinez (2008), Poot (1996), Goss and Lindquist (2000), Ros, González, Marín and Sow (2007) and Fawcett (1989) represent some of the scholars who have attempted to examine the relationship between the three. Therefore, relations can be seen to exist between networks in the destination country and potential migrants through the different linkages they establish within migration systems. Before presenting my findings, I examine the interrelationship between networks, information and migration systems as presented by other scholars in order to provide a background to my findings which aim to provide a description of the interrelationship between the three.

5.2.1 Networks and Information

Information is one of the main resources of a network as it imparts details about a potential destination country from the perspective of the source (Ros *et.al.*, 2007: 16). Without it, a degree of uncertainty about a potential destination country can emerge in which the risks taken by a potential migrant are higher because of the lack of information. According to Poot (1996), there are various ‘information channels’, both formal and informal. The former refers to the interactions between individuals and/or organisations where inquiries are made by the potential migrant about the destination country, whereas the latter are those which relate to literature (newspaper adverts) that can attract potential migrants to the destination country. These information channels can also be interactive (spread by word of mouth) or ‘two-way oriented’ that is, they reach only a certain group of

people (1996: 59). This is important to bear in mind as the type of information channel (formal or informal) as well as the form it takes (interactive or two-way oriented) could influence potential migrants decisions differently. The findings of my research, as discussed later, reveal that some of the women used different types and forms of information channels to make an informed decision based on the information they received.

Martinez (2008) adds that different channels of information can also be important to the potential migrant as having access to a variety of networks may not mean that the information received is entirely accurate. She argues that sometimes the information that the potential migrant receives is complex and that a translator maybe needed to interpret the information. An example of complex information is that contained in the immigration rules and regulations of the destination country which certain migrant groups of usually low skilled migrants, may not understand. As a result, information agents such as legal representatives may be available to assist the potential migrant make sense of the information. Martinez (2008) differentiates between the information agents of migration from migration networks stating that the latter refers to trusted sources of information which provide information based on the experience of a migrant. As the information is more subjective, she argues that it can sometimes be out-dated and inaccurate and could mislead a potential migrant (2008: 16). However, most low skilled migrants are more likely to rely on migrant networks than information agents as they are readily available. She also refers to the official institutions which have the most up to date information on immigration policy, but, as mentioned earlier, they provide information that not all potential migrants can easily understand. They are also the least trusted source of information as they can discourage a migrant from migrating.

Martinez (2008) raises the issue of trust of migrant networks as she argues that “uncertainty could only be reduced if migrants had access both to updated and trusted sources” (2008: 14). However, migrants tend to trust those sources which have out-dated

information because they may prefer word-of-mouth information based on experience. Some of the responses of the women in my study pointed to this being the case. Trust and obligation are aspects mentioned in social capital used to determine the relationship with a potential migrant. Coleman (1988) argued that the relations in social capital may depend on *trust, expectation* and *obligation*. Trustworthiness was an important characteristic of the relationship because if a potential migrant has been assisted by a member of the network in some way, there is an expectation that the particular member will be returned the favour (1988: S102). Trust was raised as an important characteristic of the relationship between a potential migrant and a network in the Kenyan only focus group but it also emerged that it may not be useful to rely on the intentions of some trusted sources. Thus, networks are important for conveying information to potential migrants and maybe dependent on the type and form of information channels used between the two, but it is also interesting to explore the migration system in which this relationship exists.

5.2.2 Networks in Migration Systems

Migration systems as argued by Massey *et.al.* (1993: 454) refers to the exchange of goods, labour and capital between countries or regions. In Mabogunge study (1970), he investigated migration systems that existed between rural and urban areas and how a rural migrant becomes an urban dweller. He found that development in an urban area can influence development in a rural area changing the social and cultural systems and incorporating them into a larger system. As a rural area interacts with the urban area, a rural dweller can become attracted to opportunities in the urban area initiating his/her migration plans to the new location (1970: 4). In this kind of migration system, a potential migrant may initiate migration based on the differences between two areas which are different in economic and technological terms. Linkages can be established through a variety of networks within a migration system which may not only be based on kinship connections. Hugo (1981) found

that information provided by networks assisted in the decision-making process of rural migrants bound for urban areas in West Java, in Southeast Asia (1981: 201).

Fawcett and Arnold's (1987) study highlighted the importance of the relationship between migration systems and networks. Their study advocated the use of surveys to help identify linkages between places in different forms (e.g. remittances) stating that "through these linkages, a migration system is energised as people in different locations become aware of different economic and social disparities and become knowledgeable about movement processes" (1987: 1529). In other words, the linkages allow for people to generate information about different places which can take into account people's perceptions about a place. Fawcett (1989) took it a step further by designing a conceptual framework describing the linkages which exist between networks operating within a migration system. His primary focus was to examine the communication between potential migrants and their networks as well as observable links such as trade flows or family obligations (1989: 673). Fawcett (1989) identified three types of linkages (tangible, regulatory and relational) and four categories of networks, namely State-to-State Relations, Mass Culture Connections, Family and Personal Networks and Migrant Agency Activities (1989: 673). The linkages can only be understood when applied to particular categories of networks. The table below displays these categories and linkages of networks followed by an explanation of how they relate to one another.

Table 1

LINKAGES IN MIGRATION SYSTEMS

Categories of Linkages Types of Linkages	STATE TO STATE RELATIONS	MASS CULTURE CONNECTIONS	FAMILY AND PERSONAL NETWORKS	MIGRANT AGENCY ACTIVITIES
TANGIBLE LINKAGES	Trade and Financial Flows Bilateral Economic and Technical Assistance	International Media Diffusion (Print, TV, Film)	Remittance Flows Correspondence From Migrants	Job Recruitment and Promotional Materials Officially Channeled Remittances
REGULATORY LINKAGES	Immigration and Emigration Policies Temporary Worker Policies	Norms Governing Out-Migration Societal Acceptance of Immigrants	Family Obligations Community Solidarity	Rules and Regulations Governing Migration Process Contracts With Migrant Workers
RELATIONAL LINKAGES	Complementarity of Labor Supply and Demand Economic Dependency	Cultural Similarity Compatibility of Value Systems	Relative Social Status of Migrants and Nonmigrants	Complementarity of Agency Activities in Sending Country and Receiving Country

Source: Fawcett (1989: 674)

a. Tangible Linkages

A tangible state-to-state linkage refers to the “political and economic connections between two countries” which involve movements of people engaged in the exchange of goods and commodities (e.g. business men). Tangible mass culture linkages refer to the information conveyed about destination countries through various forms of media (television, magazines) as they make a potential destination country attractive to a potential migrant

(1989: 675). Since the design of Fawcett's conceptual framework, there have been technological advancements which have led to the development of new forms of media such as the internet that have allowed for information and images to be shared easily and quickly. In this research, I include the internet as a new form of information and communication which some of the young women in my study used as an information channel.

There are also tangible family and personal network linkages which refer to the different interactions between family members in the destination country and the country of origin. Fawcett referred to remittances, written communication and face-to-face interactions as ways in which tangible linkages are established. Finally, there are tangible migrant agency activity linkages which refer to the material given by agencies regarding professional/employment and educational opportunities available in the destination country. These can be associated with professional migrant networks such as nursing associations as well as universities. Fawcett's framework restricted this category to professional networks but the findings of my study revealed that other institutions such as universities can also engage in recruitment practices (e.g. university fairs) and distribution of material (e.g. prospectuses). The linkages will be demonstrated in section 5.2.3.a. The second type of linkage is regulatory.

b. Regulatory Linkages

Regulatory linkages are defined as legal and contractual as state-to-state relations take into account immigration and emigration policies of destination countries and countries of origin, respectively. They also include student exchanges. These are international agreements between countries which allow for the movement of persons. Regulatory mass culture linkages, on the other hand, refer to the social norms of a society as expressed in social attitudes towards immigrants. This can include how the media of the destination country

portrays immigrants, positively or negatively. The dominant perception created can encourage and discourage potential migrants from moving. Regulatory family and personal networks linkages refer to the obligations which exist between people. Fawcett states that “culturally based family obligations may dictate the priorities for sponsorship of new immigrants by former immigrants” (1989: 676). The element of trust and obligation mentioned early will factor in the relationship between the network and the potential migrant. Finally, the regulatory migrant agency linkages refer to the rules and procedures followed by the agencies as well as the legal contracts with the potential migrant. An example of such a linkage would be the relationship established between the National Health Service (NHS) and nurses recruited from abroad at the time when the UK was facing a shortage of skills in nursing (Bach, 2007).

c. Relational Linkages

Relational linkages refer to the comparisons made by a potential migrant about the destination country/ location and place of origin. Fawcett argues that this linkage is the most powerful one within the migration system. In the context of state-to-state relations, this linkage is about complementary and disparate relations between the destination country and the country of origin. It can only be identified through historical analysis of data collected through time. Relational mass culture connection linkages are those in which comparisons of the value systems and norms of two different locations are made (e.g. differences in education systems, language). This kind of linkage can allow a potential migrant to be comfortable with the idea of migrating to a somewhat familiar society even though they may have never resided in the destination country before. Relational family and personal network linkages allow potential migrants to make a comparison between their own socioeconomic situations with that of those established successfully in the destination country. Successful migrants are those who may have secured good jobs or were able to remit regularly. The

positive reflections gathered of the destination country can encourage migration as the potential migrant assumes that success for himself or herself is possible. Finally, the relational migrant agency activity linkage would allow a potential migrant to assess the benefits s/he may gain in the destination country in comparison with the assets s/he has in their country of origin (1989: 678).

Using Fawcett's conceptual framework (1989) and the arguments by Martinez (2008) and Poot (1996) on the relationship between information and networks, I present my findings to demonstrate a possible relationship between migrant networks and information existing within migration systems. Therefore, the next section includes a discussion of how the women in my study initiated the search for networks and information based on their dissatisfaction of utilities and values available to them in their country of origin and the expected utilities and values that they hoped to attain in the UK. Within this discussion, I outline the importance of information technology and how the information received through different channels of communication was perceived by the women and how it may have affected their decision to migrate.

5.2.3 Networks accessed and Information received by Kenyan and Nigerian Women within Migration Systems

The responses of my participants revealed that information provided by migrant networks was important in establishing a link between the destination country and the country of origin. Prior to identifying the migrant network, some of the women in the study stated that they had either expected values they hoped to achieve through migration or they were disappointed by the unavailability of certain utilities in Kenya or Nigeria. The values I refer to in this case are those outlined in De Jong and Fawcett's value expectancy theory, namely, comfort, status, wealth, affiliation, stimulation, morality and autonomy (1981: 50). Those with an expectation of values (e.g. Samanatha, Constance, Elizabeth, Gertrude) may

not have been dissatisfied with the utilities in their country of origin, but were looking for opportunities of enhancing them. However, the Kenyan women in the focus group highlighted that sometimes, potential migrants in Kenya do not bother to seek out information from potential networks until they are in the destination country. This means that a potential migrant would migrate without using information to consider the risks and costs and would be driven by the potential benefits she may achieve in the destination country.

From the responses of the women, identifying the expected values as well as the utilities of dissatisfaction in their country of origin was the first stage prior to the search for networks. Having a reason to migrate could help a potential migrant identify the relevant network to solicit for information regarding their expected values and utilities as outlined in the place utility model (Wolpert, 1965). Once these values and utilities were identified, the women surveyed the networks available to them often opting for the closest network first (family and friends) as opposed to a distant network (e.g. university). This, as Paulina and Sarah (Kenyan, Focus Group) revealed, depended on the trust and comfort one may have with regard to the network. The relationship between the women and their networks could be linked to the types of linkages outlined by Fawcett (1989) which gave access to information using different channels.

a. Types of Linkages and Categories of Networks

Some of the women in my study revealed that they were already members of a professional network which gave them access to information about opportunities in a range of destination countries (e.g. Anita, Deon and Samantha). Other women needed to identify the relevant networks which would provide them with information about the UK. Below is a discussion of the categories of networks which the women used and the linkages they

established within them. The linkages include the different forms of information received and the importance of the information in relation to their expected values and planned utilities. A separate section discussing the different channels of information is presented later in order to demonstrate how technological changes can affect the information received for the migration plans. Most of the channels of information were interactive as opposed to two-way oriented (Poot, 1996). The categories of networks have been modified to take into account the changes which have occurred since Fawcett's framework was proposed and some of the linkages appropriate to the responses of the women in my study are discussed.

- **Family and Personal Networks**

Many women in this study mentioned that they referred to family members (immediate and/or extended) or personal contacts for information about the UK. However, they had established different types of linkages. Jennifer (Kenyan), for instance, observed the economic successes of her sisters who were based in London through the money they sent to their parents frequently. However, she did not contact them for assistance on migration or for information, as she assumed she could make enough money in the UK, within six months, and then return to Kenya. Instead of exploring other sources of information to be certain that financial success was possible, Jennifer went on to establish connections with a women's organisation in Nairobi which was willing to support her migration plans to the UK. Jennifer did not consult any official institution nor did she identify other migrant networks which could confirm or refute some of the assumptions she had about the UK. She therefore elicited misleading information from the situation of her sisters. Jennifer trusted her sister's ability to succeed, even though she was not in direct communication with them, she assumed that she would be able to achieve the same financial success. However, Jennifer misled herself into believing that she would be able to achieve the same financial success as her sisters as she did not consider the differences that existed between her and her sisters which would give her

access to certain opportunities (e.g. immigration status). The type of linkage she established by observing her sisters was relational as she compared the socio-economic success of her sisters in comparison to her socio-economic status in Kenya.

Constance also established a relational linkage by looking to the successes of her relatives and parents. She explained,

“My parents studied here. You look at the professors who had done well for themselves and the kind of life they were living, like my uncle in Minnesota and you were like, I would like to be a scholar like them”.

She was therefore comparing the successes of her uncle who is a scholar and compared that to her situation in Kenya at the time when she was working for an NGO and could visualise herself as being successful through academia. Constance’s linkage is not as visible as that of Jennifer but it affected her outlook on the benefits of international qualifications. Constance also connected with other personal networks, that is, her friends who were mostly based in London. She was critical of the information she received from her friends as it tended to be either misleading or not in her interests. For instance, she would ask them about the universities they attended, review the pictures they sent her, standing next to fancy cars and giving a false impression of the lifestyles they were leading. In addition, they would give her information on employment opportunities in the care industry which was not of interest to her. Her friends could be seen as trusted sources but provided unreliable information for her needs which did not make it possible for her to make an informed decision on her migration plans, which was a point highlighted in Martinez’s study (2008: 14). As a result, she consulted other sources of information which offered up-to-date accurate information (see next section on mass media). Nonetheless, Constance established a regulatory linkage with

her friends as due to their long friendship, they may have felt obliged to assist her with her migration plans (Fawcett, 1989: 676).

Anna, Jacinta, Janet and Beatrice (Nigerian), on the other hand, had parents who had been former students of British education institutions in the 1970s. They stated that their parents had described to them the lifestyles they had led when they were in the UK. Anna was told, by her mother, about the type of lifestyle she could lead in the UK when she informed her parents of her decision to migrate. However, her mother was only able to provide the subjective view of a married mother whose circumstances differed from those of Anna who was not married with children. But Anna accepted the information in order to increase her own awareness. Jacinta's parents also lived in the UK at different times, but she did not receive any information from them as she relied on her own experiences of visits she had made to the country. It was interesting that Anna and Beatrice received vague information in the sense that they were told about lifestyles in the UK which had long changed. As a result, they had to establish new networks, to access more up-to-date information about the UK, in relation to the values they hoped to achieve. Anna was connected to other extended family members who could assist with more information. Her cousin who lived in London was contacted through her uncle, based in the United States. However, she received very little information from her cousin as Anna was told to just "pack [her] bags and come". Having had direct communication with former and current migrants, she was able to establish a tangible linkage with her parents and cousin because of the communication she had with them.

Some women received information from their husbands who were based in the UK. Fahima, Beatrice (Nigerian) and Chloe (Kenyan), who were newly-weds, explained that they either were given descriptions of the day-to-day activities of their husband's life (Fahima) or were informed of the benefits they would gain by joining their husbands in the UK (Beatrice

and Chloe). They established tangible linkages with their husbands because they received information from them either face-to-face, by telephone or letter. Because of the period during which they migrated, they used different channels of information, namely telephone or hand written letters which could sometimes delay the migration plans because the information was not forthcoming. Ros *et.al.* study (2007) argued that African and Asian migrants have not completely abandoned the use of old forms of communication (i.e. letters), but combine them with new form of communication technology (2007: 22). Sophie (Kenyan) provided an interesting description of a network stating that it is,

“like a spider web whereby in each junction there is a point of information. ‘Cause everyone you meet you can learn something from everyone, they will give you some sort of information that will be useful in your life”.

Each category of network consulted led them to other networks, like a spider web. Constance, Samantha and Anna used more than one network as a source of information on the best universities, locations for accommodation and student/work lifestyles. One of those networks they used is that of the mass media. The discussion below takes into account the technological advancements which have taken place.

- **Mass Media**

There were different forms of mass media which the women consulted, with those migrating in the early 1990s relying on hand-written letters or phone calls from land-based telephones, whereas the young women (under the age of 30) migrating after the year 2000 relied on the internet as a source of information. In Fawcett’s framework, he referred to mass media as television, radio and press programmes and written material (e.g. magazines). Since then, there have been major technological advancements in mass media. Consequently, I include the use of ICTs, which include the internet.

Constance, Corrine, Jacinta and Anna used the internet in order to connect to other networks (e.g. friends, family or universities) and as a tool to find out more information about the destination country of their choice. Constance also used the internet to verify the information she had received from her friends. Creating a tangible linkage between herself and the internet (including, email, websites), she was able to generate information that would help her select the right university for herself.

On the other hand, Fahima, Odessa, Anna, Samantha, Angela and Lucy explained that when they had decided to migrate, the internet was not readily accessible to everyone in their respective countries. As a result, they chose to use other forms of media to generate some information. Fahima and Olivia, for example, used to watch British television shows such as the BBC news as well as light entertainment e.g. cooking programmes. Fahima explained that the BBC news gave her a visual impression of British society and its political and social structure whereas Olivia's interest in cooking programmes familiarised her with the food that the British prepared and cooked. Anna (Nigerian) and Samantha (Kenya) also watched television programmes such as *Sesame Street*, *Mind Your Language* and *Mr Bean* which gave them an idea of the culture (e.g. language, behaviour) and attitudes presented a visual impression of the UK as a multicultural society. Lucy (Kenyan) used to read her sister's magazines (e.g. *Cosmopolitan*) and the *Reader's Digest* to which her father subscribed. There was a tangible linkage between the women and mass media, but it was not an interactive linkage in the sense that some of their questions could not be answered using the television, for example. They were, however, able to form an image of the UK, through these sources, which may have helped to deal with any uncertainty they may have had about migrating to the UK. Furthermore, other women who were already members of an established professional network were in a position to access information quicker than others. This is due to the fact

that they had direct access to information from migrant recruitment agencies and institutions (e.g. universities).

- **Migrant Recruitment Agencies and Institutions**

The characteristics of the migrant recruitment agencies and institutions varied. These linkages were more commonly related to the women who were already part of an established professional or academic network. I have chosen to discuss recruitment agencies and institutions under this category as organisations and associations' aiming to provide information about opportunities abroad (e.g. employment opportunities and student recruitment). Deon, Anita and Samantha (Kenyan) were all part of established global networks. Deon worked as a nurse in Botswana and was a member of an association for medical practitioners whereas Anita and Samantha were members of a student association which promoted cultural exchange alongside training opportunities abroad (AIESEC¹¹). In addition, there were also university fairs that some of the women (Corrine, Pamela, Anna and Constance) attended which gave them the opportunity to interact with university representatives sometimes accessing the subjective experiences of the ambassadors of the visiting universities.

Women who were already members of established networks, such as Deon, had access to mailing lists of jobs in different countries which created a pool of destination countries to consider. Agnes, on the other hand, was not part of an established network, but her husband was also part of the same network as Deon. They were fortunate to meet representatives of their network who were looking for medical staff to work in care homes in the UK. Deon and Agnes' husband established a tangible and regulatory linkage with the migrant recruitment agency. It is tangible because the representatives provided them with the necessary information to make their decision but it was also regulatory because the

¹¹ Association Internationale des Étudiants en Sciences Économiques et Commerciales

representatives' job was to recruit nurses and doctors to fill the skills gap in the medical sector. Although Agnes' husband was the primary migrant who established the link with the network, the information he presented to her and the family allowed them to make a decision based on the benefits they would gain from migration.

In his framework (1989), Fawcett restricts migrant recruitment agencies to those engaged in the recruitment of labour migrants abroad whereas it can also include the recruitment activities of universities who also attract students through university fairs or have offices based globally. From the responses of my participants, some women were recruited as students through university fairs (Corrine, Lucy and Pamela). Those who attended the university fairs (e.g. Corrine and Pamela) were given information by representatives of the universities who were normally students or former graduates of the institutions. University fairs usually take place every year in Kenya and other "top-scoring student markets around the world" (University Fairs, n.d.). University exhibitions or fairs allowed the women to interact with a range of universities from across the globe whose representatives aim to recruit students. Lucy's case was unique as she did not attend the university fair but was informed by her brother about a student recruiter who was advertising his university to potential students. He was not part of the exhibition but spoke to Lucy face-to-face about the opportunities available to her. The Nigerian women in this study who wanted to study did not attend any university fairs but directly contacted universities with which they were familiar (e.g. Anna and Jacinta). Janet (Nigerian) intended to identify a university once she was in the UK as she was a British citizen. Nevertheless, Corrine and Pamela established tangible linkages with the universities through their representatives and because of the direct contact they had with them, they were offered advice and support in preparing them for migration and adjustment to a new environment.

Jacinta, as mentioned earlier had visited the UK on holiday often so she was familiar with the place but was not familiar with the lifestyle of a student. Anna (Nigerian) did not explore other universities apart from the one her parents attended in the 1970s. She sent hand written letters to the universities expressing her interest in being a Masters student before she was comfortable with email communication. She only chose to explore opportunities at the university her parents attended because she would receive a 25 per cent discount as her parents were former students and they had spoken positively of the institution. All three women described the regulatory and tangible linkages they established with the universities through the communication they had with the institutions. As universities aimed to recruit students, they provided them with the necessary information needed to make their decision. By receiving prospectuses, Jacinta was able to have information concerning costs, accommodation as well as details of the course in order to make her final decision about which university to attend.

Jennifer (Kenyan), however, was assisted by a local group that supports women based in Nairobi. Her membership of the organisation allowed her access to a wide range of resources that would support her migration plans. The organisation also provided help in dealing with the British High Commission as certain necessary documents had to be presented to authorise her entry clearance visa. Her experience differs from the other as she was not being recruited by an agency or organisation based in the UK, but was a self-employed religious agent migrating as a minister to perform God's work. The UK Border Agency allows for religious workers to enter the UK temporarily to preach and perform pastoral duties and the religious worker would need a certificate of sponsorship and a sponsor which are part of the requirements needed (UK Border Agency, n.d.). As a result, she established a regulatory linkage with the sponsoring organisation even though they did not

provide her with information about the UK, they were willing to provide her with the resources needed to get the entry clearance visa to migrate.

Some of the Nigerian women in this study had first-hand experiences of visiting or living in the UK. This first-hand experience counted as an important resource. Jacinta, Patience, Renee, Alice had visited or lived in the UK as young adults and were in a position to reflect on their experiences. Beatrice, Anna and Tola, on the other hand, were born in the UK but were too young to remember the experience and if they did, it was hazy. This experience of knowing first-hand was important for some of the women as those born in the UK identified it as a 'second home' (Anna) and those who had visited or lived there before were familiar with the country. There were fewer Kenyan women who had visited the UK with the exception of Agnes who had attended university in the 1970s. The linkages some of the women established in the categories of networks explored above led them to different information which they had to analyse for themselves in order to make a decision. At times, the way that they received the information was important as technological changes have led information to be readily available for quick decision-making. Prior to the emergence and availability of the internet, mobile phones and calling cards, communicating with networks in the destination country proved to be challenging and expensive. In the next section, I briefly discuss the different channels of communication and how they affected the migration decisions of women.

b. Channels of Communication

There were a variety of channels used to connect to networks in order to access the information based on the responses of the women in my study. After the mid-1990s, the internet and mobile phones gradually became more widespread to the two countries but were not available to everyone. At the turn of the century, the internet and mobile phones became a

global technological advancement making their way slowly to remote areas. But as mentioned by Ros *et.al.* (2007), traditional channels of communication were still useful to African migrants resident in the country of origin and connecting with their networks in the destination country. Anna (Nigerian) explained that though there was email at the time (1998) it was not easily available. She explained,

“I had to either go to the British High Commission or the university to send an email and I didn’t know how to do an email”.

Even though the internet was an emerging technological resource in Africa, there were few people who knew how to use it. Fahima, on the other hand, mentioned that she had received a 20 page letter from her husband providing a detailed description of his day.

Other women spoke of using land-based telephones in the mid-1990s. Angela (Nigerian) stated that when her sister migrated,

“in 1996, there was no email, mobile phones were not for everyone...the phone system wasn’t that great so you know we had to wait for the exchange, each time they had to ring us, we had to wait...she rings and she can’t get through....It was terrible so it really wasn’t possible to communicate”.

Her inability to contact her sister made it impossible for Angela to get information on time as a result of which she decided to migrate without the information she needed. Although she could have found other sources, she specifically wanted the information from her sister. This is an experience familiar to Beatrice and Chloe. However, they did not migrate spontaneously but took time to assess the little information they had. IT in the early 1990s was a resource that few sub-Saharan African countries had and the computer systems which were in use to be found in sectors such as banking, research and agriculture (Odedra, Bennett, Goodman and

Lawrie, 1993: 26). It was exclusively for large companies and government and not available as a social networking resource for ordinary members of society. Many SSAs had initially found it challenging to exploit the resource because of the lack of secondary equipment such as electricity or and training to aid the use and development of technology on the continent.

Constance (Kenyan), on the other hand, had been brought up to scrutinize every avenue before making a decision, she used the internet to survey the neighbourhoods her friends lived in, the universities they attended and the type of work that they did. From that, she explained that her friends were attending “blacklisted universities” (i.e. universities with a suspended Tier 4 license issued by the UK Border Agency), they were living in house shares which she stated was not in the culture in Kenya except when someone is still “struggling” to make ends meet. The internet was a reliable tool that she used to identify a reputable university for her chosen course, to find out information on the financial costs as well as find out whether certain neighbourhoods were desirable and safe. Corrine, on the other hand, did not exploit the internet as Constance did but used it to identify universities in a specific area in London because she had free accommodation with her uncle. Therefore, she did not find details about the university ranking, nor did she indicate that she found out about the environment, culture and people. It was only useful to find out details of the university she identified at the university exhibition. The different channels of communication, therefore, provided different forms of information especially for women who had intentions of migration.

Therefore, the different channels of communication are important to bear in mind in migration decision-making because it can influence the process as demonstrated by Agnes. It can also be used as a resource to compare information from different sources. The channels of information can reduce risk depending on whether a potential migrant uses it for that purpose, but as explained earlier, some women took the risk and dealt with the consequences

once they were in the country. In the next section, I focus on my fourth research question that focuses on the influence of gendered networks in the migration decision-making process. This will be followed by a discussion on the advice the women in my study gave to potential migrants from their respective countries.

5.3 Gendered Networks

Hondagneu-Sotelo's (1994) study identified a pattern of networking amongst the female migrants in her study where they used more female networks than male ones. The reason for this choice was because they were unable to get the support from the men who discouraged them from migrating. Some of the potential female migrants used female networks to convince their fathers or husbands to allow them to migrate suggesting that these networks were not only information agents but also resources used in the migration decision-making process (1994: 72). Hondagneu-Sotelo provides characteristics which may describe the idea of gendered networks. The fourth research question I aimed to answer was how gendered networks impact on the migration decision-making process. The findings of my research challenged my initial assumptions, prior to entering the field, about the use of networks by the women in my study, that is, that gendered networks existed and were used by the women in my study. However, it is important to understand the concept of gendered networks and how it has been explained by other researchers.

Hondagneu-Sotelo's (1994) study investigated the migration patterns of Mexican migrants during the Bracero program introduced after the Second World War by the United States government. According to Hondagneu-Sotelo, the networks that women consulted tended to be mostly female because they were readily available to assist them with information as well as moral support in the migration process. She discovered that the men had better networks than the women as they were able to receive information and support from both male and female networks, but they blocked the migration plans of the women

leaving the women to consult other supportive networks. The female networks were composed of either return migrants residing in Mexico or were residents in the United States. Either way, both groups were in a position to advise the women and offer support based on their experiences (1994: 69-70). Davis and Winters (2001) argue that women are less likely to benefit from male networks and “female networks may offer advice and job descriptions, directly motivate migration, provide encouragement and contacts, lend money and accompany first timers” (2001: 11).

Creighton and Riosmena’s (2010) investigation aimed to show how migration aspirations were associated with the gendered origin of the network that is whether it was matrilineal or patrilineal. They argued that researchers were concerned with identifying differences in female and male networks but not with analysing the interaction they engage in and how it influences the migration decision-making process (2010: 7-8). Curran and Rivero-Fuentes (2003) also argued that women’s migration depends on the kind of move they want to make; that is, migrating as a family, women will be able to use family networks more but independent migration of women is more challenging because of the lack of support women get from male networks (2003: 291). It is for this reason that women rely on other women for information and support. Cerruti and Massey (2001) suggest that women who have migrated create a positive image of women’s mobility and ambitions. They argue that the migration of a mother can positively influence the migration of the daughter more so than the son (2001:195). Thus, previous literature has described the characteristics of gendered networks but has not provided a specific definition. I use these characteristics to analyse and interpret the responses of the women in my study.

The survey of the literature pertaining to gendered networks in the migration of African migrants is outlined in chapter two. It demonstrates that little attention has been given to the idea that gendered networks could exist within African migration. The few

studies which have explored the use of networks by gender include Agesa and Kim (2001) and Surdakasa (1977). However, these authors referred to women using male networks (usually their husbands) to access information and support, providing descriptions of women as associational migrants. Recent studies by Toma (2010) and Toma and Vause (2010) argued that women and men had different migration experiences and that women's migration was perceived to be riskier as women are more vulnerable and bound to face more danger than men (Toma, 2010: 6). Toma hypothesized that "networks work along gender lines (female networks more important in the migration of women and male networks in that of men)" (2010: 10). Toma's findings revealed that women's networks were smaller and comprised family members and that both established female and male networks encouraged female migration (2010: 19). However, this study like many others was quantitative as Toma set out to test the hypothesis in relation to the data. There have been fewer qualitative studies which have discussed gendered networks and their interaction with potential migrants. Hoang argues that it is "unclear how networks feature in the decision-making process about the migration of women and men" (2011a: 421). She found that the women in her study were more likely to migrate when they have consulted a sibling or other family member (male and female) that migrated ahead of them, whereas men were less likely to consult such networks (2011a: 428). These and other studies like it have focused on women's need to consult networks prior to migration.

As mentioned earlier, the assumption I had made prior to entering the field was that the women in my study did use gendered networks when preparing to migrate as women tended to consult other women for information and/or support. However, the responses of my participants suggest that that may not be the case with all of the women. Paulina (Kenyan) indicated that women tended to connect to other women because they could relate to certain experiences and Ona (Nigerian) highlighted that women can provide a different perspective

as they tend to be emotional about certain experiences. But Paulina (Kenyan) was quick to point out that female networks may provide inaccurate information that may be misleading information. It would be up to the potential migrant to assess the information for herself in order to determine the truth in the information. For this reason, the Kenyan women in the focus group agreed that it is better to consult a network which is well known and would be able to provide proper information and that they are comfortable or have close relations with a female network more than a male one. As Coleman (1987) argues, truth is one of the elements of social capital as an individual expects the informant to provide honest information. The women in the interviews and focus groups were asked about gendered networks, whether they existed and whether any of them used them. Their responses suggest that they were not so much concerned about the gendered nature of networks as about the information that was provided by them which is similar to Toma's findings (2010). They managed to give some details of the information that female networks can provide in order to cater to the needs of women, but this information only emerged when they were asked what advice they would give others, another research question I aimed to answer.

The next section outlines the responses of the women taking into account the information that women received from male and female networks. The discussion outlines how the women rated their networks and assess whether the gender of the network mattered in their migration plans. This is followed by a discussion on the kind of information that the women received and whether it catered to the needs of women, thus giving validity to the idea of gendered information. Gendered information is used within the context of this research to refer to the information that specifically caters to the interests of women (e.g. child care advice) as opposed to those of men or of both. My review of the literature has yet to identify a study which focuses on the existence of such a phenomenon, but this does not suggest that it has not been identified by other scholars. The subsequent section provides

information which could answer my research question with regards to the use of gendered networks and their influence in the migration decision-making process.

5.3.1 Selection of Networks

When exploring the different networks, the question of whether some of the women consciously sought out female and/or male networks emerged during the interviews. The responses from the women revealed that the gender of networks did not matter as they were concerned about the information they could offer. Odera indicated in her case that all her networks were male (father and friends) because they were the sources that were readily available to her at that time. She did have female relatives living in London, but she did not have a strong relationship with them. This is similar to the case of Felicia, Gertrude, Constance and Corrine (Kenyan) who indicated that they used either female or male networks. This differs from the situation described in Hondagneu-Sotelo's study (1994) in which it was argued that established patriarchal views created barriers for the women as husbands or fathers would discourage them from migrating. My findings indicate that the women did not face barriers in gaining access to networks as within those particular networks, there were no patriarchal constraints attached to the migration of women. This observation may indicate that in some scenarios, social and political barriers may not disrupt the migration plans of a potential migrant but that other scenarios may resemble the situation presented by Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994).

Other scholars have argued that men have greater access to networks as they are able to generate information from both men and women, but women were more inclined to consult female networks because of the comfort they feel with women more so than with men (Curran and Rivero-Fuentes, 2003). Interestingly, Bessie (Kenyan focus group) argued that women would associate with other women more because of the ease they feel in women's company as they are able to describe experiences that they can relate to. However, she

indicated that men can also offer other forms of support which differs from what women can offer, suggesting that men and women have different ways of expressing their thoughts about an experience. Anna (Nigerian) noticed that women and men have different ways of providing information. Anna's uncle, who lived in the United States told her the raw honest truth about the lifestyle she could lead in the UK. She said that,

“men probably gave more details than the women. The men said ‘look get yourself prepared to work in McDonalds for the next five years’but on the other hand my auntie was like ‘look just pack your bag and come, just come. When you come we will chat’”.

Constance (Kenyan), on the other hand, who had mostly consulted other women, realised that her friends presented a lifestyle that she was not ready to settle into because of the difficulties she assumed she would encounter. As she did not indicate that she consulted male sources, it is challenging to make the comparison of the differences between the two. Although the women in my study did not consciously look for networks on the basis of gender, they were aware of the value of the information that they received but were careful not to dismiss any information. The idea of gendered information emerged within the context of different types of information from male and female networks that is specific advice for women or depth of the advice given by the male or female networks.

5.3.2 Receiving Information from Male and Female Networks

When many of the women decided to migrate, they needed further information to complete their migration plans. As mentioned earlier, Anna noted that men gave more information that was honest and direct and found some female networks were vague. She stated she only received information once she arrived in the UK because when she asked her cousin about the weather and type of clothing she would need she was told to simply just join

her cousin and nothing else. However, Paulina (Kenyan, focus group) claimed that Kenyans, in general, rely on hearsay a lot and do not like to read or explore information for themselves which led many of them to be shocked and disappointed when they arrived in the UK.

Paulina (Kenyan) explained that when tourists plan their trip to Kenya, they consult a variety of sources and have a list of things they plan to do once in the country. Kenyans, on the other hand, do not do their research prior to migration as they are reliant on others to assist them once they arrive. In generalising, she had made an observation about the attitudes of Kenyans known to her which may not translate to all Kenyan migrants in the UK. Paulina and the others suggested that potential migrants needed to be willing to accept information and from their observation this was not the case with Kenyans.

However, there are instances where women were unable to access information on time as in the case of Angela (Nigerian) who hoped to get her sisters opinion of the UK before she migrated. She explained that because of poor communication channels she was unable to get the information she needed on time, but still migrated. She stated that she went on instinct explaining that she felt that everything would be fine. Odera's interactions with her male networks were interesting as she was a single mother at the time and it could have been easily assumed that she would consult other mothers in the UK. However, she explained that her male networks advised her to secure housing first then employment. They said that,

“the [UK] has some facilities that they actually give to single mums and I was like I didn't understand anything...they [gave me] information about childcare, about housing, coping with a particular house or job”.

Her networks believed that she would benefit more if she migrated with her son as she was a British citizen and single mum which entitled her to access certain benefits. As she did not receive any information from female networks, she was not in a position to compare the

information given by men with that given by women. This gives an example of the content and value of the information she received, even though she did not understand it at the time.

Constance (Kenyan), on the other hand, consulted her female networks as, like Odera's contacts, they were the only sources available to her at that time. They advised her on employment opportunities in the care industry and portrayed a glamorous lifestyle through the pictures they sent her via the internet. She did indicate that one of her female sources explained that in comparison to Kenya, the systems in the UK worked (e.g. internet banking as opposed to queuing at a bank) which turned out to be true. But she felt that her other friends presented an unrealistic view of life in the UK and that she had to explore other sources to come to her own conclusions about the university she wanted to attend and the type of work she wanted to do.

Corrine (Kenyan) explained that it was important to be aware of the perspective of those providing information through the networks. For example, her uncle was an expatriate working in the UK and the information she received was therefore from his perspective which outlined the lifestyle of an expatriate and not a student. She assessed the information she received taking into account the benefits she could gain from working as well as studying in the UK and therefore did not build on unrealistic expectations. For information on student life and university options, she turned to the internet as well as student representatives of some of the potential universities she could attend. She did have her doubts about the UK initially because of the negative information she had received about it, but decided to take the chance based on the information she received from her uncle.

Jennifer, Felicia, Elizabeth, Angela and Tola revealed that they had little or no information about the UK as whatever they knew about it was they felt sufficient. Tola (Nigerian) stated that she thought she would find out how things worked once she was in the

country but had already made up her mind to migrate. They were either being driven out by the socio-economic or political conditions in their country or decided to leave when an opportunity for them to migrate opened up (Elizabeth). There are those women who had prior impressions about the UK seeing it as a better place for them to be in, with more opportunities (e.g. in employment) and this was the case with Anna, Ethel and Janet (Nigerian). As British-born citizens, they were comfortable knowing that they could claim certain benefits other immigrants would not be able to (e.g. pay lower fees for university). In the Kenyan focus group, the women explained that there were misconceptions about what the UK could offer migrants and that some migrants have unrealistic expectations about the UK. Paulina (Kenyan) explained that some migrants do not see differences between British and Kenyan cultures that they end up experiencing culture shock where they did not expect it. Agnes and Corrine (Kenyan) expressed their own shock of finding out about discrimination in employment and education as Agnes stated that she did not know what discrimination meant until she moved to the UK. This was something she did not consider in the migration plans as her impression of the country had been positive, based on her previous brief visits.

Some of the Kenyan women, through experience or observation of other people's experiences, indicated that sometimes networks are not very reliable and that information providers have their own underlying intentions. Sarah (Kenyan, focus group) explained that when contacts in the UK advise potential migrants, they usually want to use the latter for some personal benefit. Some encourage potential migrants to migrate and agree to accommodate them but when they arrive treat them as a baby sitter or maid. Gisele (Kenyan, focus group) explained this happens a lot and the British High Commissioner had been running awareness campaigns at the time she visited in 2008 to make potential migrants aware of the traps that they could fall into if they followed the advice of network contacts whose intentions were not honest. However, the onus would be on the potential migrant to

decide how much to trust or believe their source of information and the descriptions of the Kenyan focus group depicted a worst case scenario.

Even so, the women in this study migrated in the end and those who did not consult any sources or heed any warnings from their network contacts explained that they had to learn how to live and adjust to the system and life style in the UK. Some found it challenging because they did not migrate with an open mind (e.g. Janet, Anna, Bessie), others found it easier because they planned their trip and/or had an open mind (e.g. Constance, Tola, Angela). Their experiences of living, working and/or studying in different parts of England gave them a wealth of experience which they were able to share with potential migrants planning their own migration to the UK. Nevertheless, my findings reveal that the women did not actively identify and only associate with female networks and it appeared that the gender of their networks did not matter. However, the information which they were provided with appeared to be important as some of them were given information that catered to their needs as women, but sometimes the information did not influence their decision. Odera was advised by her male networks to migrate with her son as she would be able to access benefits, but she decided against it as she did not understand the nature of some of the benefits they said she would access. Because of her lack of understanding of the social security system in the UK, she took it upon herself to migrate first before sending for her son as a way of testing the waters. The women in this study explained that their advice to potential migrants would be based on their experiences of receiving advice as well as living in the country. In addition, it would also depend on the life stage and reasons that potential migrants want to migrate to the UK. This is the focus of the next section.

5.4 Advising Potential Migrants

One of the research questions I aimed to answer, is ‘how do these women (i.e. women in my study) convey information to potential migrants in the country of origin?’ The purpose

of this question is to find out the information that the women in my study have given or plan to give to potential migrants in their country of origin. This is an important area to explore because it demonstrates what women's advice focuses on when advising others as well as puts into perspective how a network interacts with potential migrants and their reaction to the advice given. The responses revealed specific areas that the women would focus their advice on as well as outlined specific issues that men and women should be aware of prior to migrating. Both the Kenyan and Nigerian women stated that they would give advice on financial issues, required immigration documentation, finding the right universities for higher education and the challenges of finding employment. In addition, they highlighted issues of concern surrounding relations with household members, especially for those migrating as a family unit alongside the expectations for lifestyle changes due to the difference in cultural setting. These were areas that most of the women stated that they had to deal with when they migrated to the UK with some indicating that they wished they could have asked for more information or even been more open minded to receiving information.

Many of the women in the Nigerian focus group agreed that "experience is the best teacher" (Bonnie, Nigerian) as not many people are willing to listen to negative stories of migration. Reflecting on their own experiences of migration, the women pointed out the problems that they encountered because they had not wanted to listen to or consult any networks on information about the UK. Most of the women argued that the advice they would give would depend on the life stage of the potential migrant women stating that their advice would vary depending on the intentions of the potential migrant. Thus, the advice they gave was based on their own personal experience and the experiences of others known to them.

5.4.1 Financial and Immigration Advice

Financial advice was a major area highlighted by the majority of the women in this study as they explained that it ensured that one is able to fulfil the immigration requirement

on maintenance as well as that of finance of the studies for those migrating as students. Hence, financial advice was important in relation to employment, education and the household. Education for international students is expensive and at times some parents sending their students to study assume that once their children are in the UK, they will be able to work freely, to pay for their fees as well as send money back to them (Paulina, Kenyan). This is a major issue on which the Kenyan focus group women agreed and that parents and local community needed to also be advised about the lifestyle that students lead in the UK. Whereas the women in the Nigerian focus group stated that they struggled to convince potential migrants that the UK is not what they think it is as Bonnie explained some people believe that they (Nigerians resident in the UK) “are getting all the riches (making money)”. They suggest that some potential migrants believe that Nigerians resident in the UK are rich.

Constance (Kenyan), on the other hand, explained that women or men planning to study in the UK needed to ensure that they already had enough finances to support themselves for the duration of their course. She gave an example of a friend who migrated without having enough finances for the duration of her year long course and was forced to defer her studies because she could not afford the fees. Jacinta (Nigerian), Corrine, Anita and Pamela (Kenyan) also supported Constance’s view on advice regarding securing finances. Jacinta in particular stated that she advises her friends to be prepared and to “have a lot of money to sustain yourself for at least two years just in case”. She linked this with the fact that some people may be lucky enough to get a job before the money runs out but having a back up resource would assist in the long run.

The advice given to potential migrants who had secured jobs before migrating differed as Anita (Kenya) stated that she would advice others about managing their finances while in the UK. Maintaining bank statements, council tax bills and applying for a national

insurance number were some of the aspects of advice she had given to potential migrants in the past. However, she explained that she did not give detailed advice on jobs as employers provide such detailed information. Anita could only give advice according to her experience of maintaining her finances.

Anna (Nigerian), who is a British citizen, explained that some of her friends did not contact her for advice about the UK or on immigration regulations governing their status. She explained that she had received a phone call from one of her friends when she had arrived in the UK on a visitors permit and when asked whether she was on holiday, her friend explained she was here to stay. When she tried to give her advice on the challenges of living in the UK her friend refused to listen stating that,

“because you are a citizen...to get...papers, you didn't have to look for papers”.

Her friend assumed that as a British citizen she had freedom to do as she pleased which was true to a certain extent but Anna experienced her own challenges, one of them being financial. Brenda (Nigerian) also supported Anna stressing that a person who wanted to work in the country needed to be “legally living in the UK”. It appeared that potential migrants disregarded the fact that life could be tough in the UK as the women suggested that their friends simply tended to compare the lifestyle they live in Nigeria or Kenya with that of their friends living in the UK, not realising the hard work that had been put in to reap the benefits. Brenda had to challenge the assumptions of the friends thinking of migrating who believed that many people become rich quick when they live and work in the UK. She reiterated several times that those people returning to Nigeria with signs of wealth (good clothes and spending money) had borrowed money on their credit cards. It was difficult to challenge some entrenched assumptions some Nigerians have about the UK. Thus, advice on finance and immigration would depend on the life stage of the potential migrant and their reasons for

migrating (i.e. as a student, employee, spouse). Nonetheless, financial matters cannot be separated from education and employment opportunities which are interrelated factors and form the focus of the next section.

5.4.2 Education and Employment Opportunities

The advice relating to education and employment opportunities mostly came from those who had migrated as students (Constance, Anna, Janet, Lucy, Pamela and Corrine) or as associational migrants (Fahima, Beatrice and Chloe). However, others who were familiar with the UK education system also gave advice when asked. Constance explained that she would advise others to do their own research about the university they wanted to attend, just as she had done herself. She explained that education and employment go hand in hand stating that,

“I always advise my friends, when you come here, come with school fees, and also remember the first one year you will hate it, you will keep on wanting to leave...if you come as a student, finish graduate and look for a job, and a professional job...not an odd job”.

Thus, she advised those who were planning to study, to keep in mind the kind of jobs that they do. She insisted on a professional job because odd jobs such as “flipping burgers at McDonalds” or care work could harm their chances of entering a professional career especially if it was not in the same industry. She went on further to explain that the starting salary for professional jobs were not often good as she reflects back on her first salary of £350 per month, but within two months she was able to secure a job paying £800 per month. In her opinion, upward mobility is possible if a person aims to get a professional as opposed to an odd job.

Samantha (Kenyan) stated that she would advise others to be careful in selecting the right university for their chosen subject area and the right location for starting their career.

She explained that,

“a number of people do not have that knowledge of the top universities in the UK or they restrict the knowledge of the UK universities to Oxford”.

She therefore advised potential students to look at other good UK universities depending on the course they wanted to study. Therefore, researching the particular university to attend depends on the course the individual wants to study. An additional piece of advice she gave to potential students was to live with people from other countries and cultures to benefit from the exchange and not to live in halls of residence for the duration of their course but to venture out. Interestingly, she would also advise Kenyans not to live with other Kenyans because she thought they would gain more from a cultural exchange with others yet, Paulina from the Kenyan focus group explained that her father advised her to avoid Kenyans because they “would bring her down”, meaning that they would be disruptive to her studies. Corrine (Kenyan), explained that had she known about the best universities and courses in relation to her chosen career, she would have been more careful in her selection.

Corrine (Kenyan) reflected on the difficulty she had trying to secure a job in her field of interest during and after her studies. She believed that with her qualifications from Kenya and experience of working in China she would have secured a good job during and after her studies. Her advice to others would be to,

“pick your university well if you can...if you can't that's ok as long as it is an accredited institution...and I tell them about the fact that foreign qualifications does not matter much. So be prepared for that and keep an open mind to what your job options would be when you come here...and I will tell them if you're on minimum

wage and your managing your finances well and your education is taken care of, you can get on with what you need”.

Therefore, she advised people that they may have to consider working in another industry to maintain themselves while studying as long as they were ‘open minded’.

Jacinta, Anna and Odera advised potential students to come to the UK with the mind of working hard and completing their studies. As in the case of Corrine, they stressed the need to be aware of the barriers that may exist when job hunting as Nigerian or Kenyan qualifications or experiences were not necessarily recognised by universities or employers. Odera and Olivia summed this up as coming to the UK to start a “B.A.” or a ‘Begin Again’ because one had to start from scratch regardless of whether one had a well-established educational background in Nigeria or not. Anna was more concerned about advising potential students to secure a scholarship to cover the tuition and maintenance costs. She explained that she found it difficult working first before she did not qualify as a home student paying a national fees rate because she had not lived in the UK three years prior to applying to the universities. As a result, she was unable to start her degree when she initially migrated because she would have had to pay the international student rate. Jacinta was less convinced about trying to establish a career in the UK as she personally felt that she had lost more than she had gained from being in the UK. Her advice to others was,

“as soon as you finish and you don’t get a work permit, don’t waste your time, go back home straight. It’s better to be home than be a second class citizen in any country”.

This brings us to the challenges that potential migrants face once in the UK in terms of getting a job. Corrine (Kenyan) already mentioned the lack of recognition of Kenyan qualifications and international experience in finding a job. However, Angela looked at the

challenges, including racial discrimination experienced by men and women, as one less thing that people should worry about as she believed overall that the UK was a good place offering opportunities if a person remained open-minded. Fahima (Nigerian) supported Angela by stating that it took time to find a job but that people had to be persistent and keep applying until one door of opportunity opened to them. Odera also advised others to be humble and focused on their goal stating that one should,

“just put yourself into the mud because that is what it is all about. People are gonna throw a lot of things on you, a lot of insults on you but you just have to take them”.

Other women, such as Brenda (Nigerian), Agnes and Deon (Kenyan) believed that racial discrimination is an important aspect that potential migrants must be aware of before migrating. Brenda stated that racism had not been erased and that people were put in a position where they could not do anything about it but take it. Agnes had experienced discrimination and witnessed the discrimination her husband went through as a doctor. She explained that her husband was treated as a nurse or a kitchen porter, that there was a lack of recognition that he was a trained doctor. This experience affected her. She had attended several interviews which were unsuccessful and she linked her lack of success to discrimination because some of the posts she applied for were re-advertised. Therefore, the most important advice she would give to others was that getting a job is really difficult and a person had to be thick skinned because his/her self-esteem could be crushed by the experience. Discrimination, in her opinion, affects both men and women, but men experience it more because of the already established perceptions of black men in the UK.

Apart from education and employment matters, lifestyle changes and cultural differences also affected migrants. The next section focuses on the latter two.

5.4.3 Lifestyle Changes and Cultural Difference

Lifestyle and cultural differences as defined by some of the participants related to issues surrounding integration, cultural exchange and acceptance by members of the British society. Some of the women believed that migrants select destination countries because they consider that they share 'similar' cultural behaviours and practices especially if they are former colonies of the destination country. Corrine (Kenyan) lived and worked in China before, a country that is culturally different from that of her own, she believed that she would have integrated easily into British society because of the similar cultural systems shared by Britain and Kenya. She suggested that she tried to remain objective by trying not to scare people off coming to the UK and not sugar coating the whole experience. In terms of lifestyle, she advised others that people have busy lives trying to establish themselves in the UK and therefore, she advised,

“you may not have as many forums like you do back home to get together with your friends and just chill. For one, even if people have enough time...people are working different shifts”.

The Nigerian women in the focus group, however, stated that potential migrants need to be prepared with differences in culture between the British and their own. By culture they referred to aspects such as respect for elders and others. They suggest that respect is lacking in the British society and maybe a shock to new Nigerian migrants. Angela, Brenda, Beatrice, Fahima and Odera (Nigerian) also advised on the difficulty of adjusting and integrating into a different society. Interestingly, they stated that they did not refuse to advise potential migrants or try to change their mind about migrating, as in their opinion goals can be met but as explained in the previous section, the potential migrants needed to be aware of the challenges they would encounter living in the UK. Samantha (Kenyan) stated that she would also advise on the type of neighbourhood that potential migrants should live in, but this

depended on their gender. She explained that in her opinion, women should live in areas closer to central London which are much safer and not areas such as Croydon. She also explained the advantages of living in a multicultural society and benefitting from interactions with the local citizens as well as an international community. Hence her advice, as mentioned earlier, was to take advantage of the culturally diverse society and to learn about others.

One aspect the women were quick to clarify was this assumption that the UK is the “El Dorado” and the “land of milk and honey...with streets paved in gold” (Anna, Nigerian). That is an unrealistic view that Anna as well as Agnes (Kenyan) explained should be avoided as it would lead to disappointment. Beatrice (Nigerian), for instance, gave the example of a friend of hers who was trained as a lawyer in Nigeria and ran her own business on the side. She had two young children and a husband who was working for a company in Nigeria. She stated that this friend and her husband,

“had a false paradise, a dream in their mind that they want to go and live abroad”.

However, they could not afford to live the lifestyle that they led back in Nigeria. Things were very challenging that they could not afford to take their children to nursery as the skills they gained working in Nigeria were not enough to get them a job in the UK. This is just one example among several given by the women of the way potential migrants make decisions under a false belief that they can have a better lifestyle in the UK than in Nigeria or Kenya. Another area of advice that many of the married women with children gave to potential migrants was on household relations and matters which also includes issues of child care and relations between husband and wife.

5.4.4 Household Relations and Matters

Deon, Agnes, Jennifer, Naomi, Chloe and Felicia (Kenyan) as well as Brenda, Fahima and Beatrice (Nigerian) are some of the mothers who revealed the challenges about family

life in general in the UK. Cleo was particularly keen on advising parents about the costs of child care. When she migrated she was married without children, but she had her children in the UK and realised that child care costs were very high especially if couples have very young children. Deon's advice to parents based in Kenya who wanted to send their children to the UK, to study, was that,

“people shouldn't cheat them[selves] that their child can come here to study and work at the same time and even if they get the job it would not be enough to sustain the child”.

She said that she would make parents aware of the financial constraints children would face if they did not have their finances in order on arrival. This was an issue that Sarah from the Kenyan focus group stated was a problem. Parents in Kenya had false ideas about what their children could achieve in the UK that needed to be changed.

Jennifer's advice, on the other hand, focused on the relations between husband and wife suggesting that it was difficult for couples once they were in the UK as their relationship begins to deteriorate due to some of their sociocultural expectations of their wife's role. Her advice was based on what happened to one of her sisters who was married when she came to the UK but divorced later on because her husband tried to impose a traditional Kikuyu male role while in the UK; that is, expecting his wife to cater to all his needs, cook, clean, look after the children as well as work. In his study, Arthur (2008) explained that the migration experience often made relations between husband and wife more equal as they both became contributors to the household economy. Some of the women in his study chose to maintain the same role they played in Ghana as they wanted to give their children a balanced upbringing and avoid conflict and divorce. This was not the case in my study as Joyce (Nigerian) explained that many divorces happened because of this way of thinking and the

fact that many potential migrants did not take this into consideration in their migration decision-making process.

Therefore, many of the women stated that the advice they would give would not be gender specific and would apply to everyone. Yet there were some women who felt that men and women had to be advised differently on issues they believed would impact on them differently. This pointed to the idea of gendered information which is also based on the personal experiences or observations of others.

5.4.5 Gendered Advice to Women and Men

The responses of the women in this study suggested that certain information needed to be given specifically to men or women. Brenda (Nigerian) stated that advice varied according to whether it was directed to single or married women, explaining that single women might get by more easily as there are more opportunities for them in the UK than in Nigeria but that they would have to be patient that things would work out. She further explained that married women would have to be aware of the costs of child care, as stated earlier, but that the UK can offer a woman and her family a better life. In addition, she stated that both married and single women should have a skill (e.g. baking or braiding) which they can fall back on while looking for a job or which can be done along with an office job if they were lucky to get one. She explained that African women are family oriented and concerned about their own children or parents they left behind in Nigeria. They should be advised about the psychological costs of migrating without family, a term that Da Vanzo (1976) referred to as the psychic costs.

Men, on the other hand, she felt were more free-spirited in the sense that they could migrate, not having to worry too much about the family as long as they had been able to secure a job. Samantha (Kenyan) supported Brenda's advice stating that men took more risks

and, for example, would be more willing to live in dangerous neighbourhoods in order to lower costs. Samantha explained that she would advise women migrating to London to live closer to central London in what she considered safer neighbourhoods as opposed to living in outer London areas. She added that women would have to deal with the aspect of being alone which can be difficult which links back to Brenda's statement of women being family oriented. However, she argues that women have better survival skills than men meaning that

“if they get into a rut, they can come out of it and move on with life within the next day”.

The women appeared to suggest that women's attachment to their families in Nigeria or Kenya would create a problem for them in terms of integrating into a new society. However, Samantha felt that this depended on their life stage explaining that young women attending university as students were more likely to adapt easily than those who were much older with strong family and community attachments.

Interestingly, Jacinta (Nigerian) indicated that she would give men more advice than women as men, in her opinion, could face more challenges than women in terms of finding employment as women knew how to market themselves to employers. Deon (Kenyan), on the other hand, argued that even though her advice would not be any different to men or women, that men find it difficult,

“because accommodating a man is so difficult... it's difficult for men to mix they just want to go to a particular place where they know they have been welcomed and live there”.

She added that men and women are two different species suggesting that the experiences of a woman may not be useful for men. Agnes (Kenyan) added that African men find it difficult

especially professionals because of the bias and stigma attached to images of black men and the discrimination that they face as a result of the stigma. It is important to point out that these women were presenting their views of migrant African men resident in the UK that may not represent the views of all migrant women. Elizabeth chose to adopt another approach stating that she would give balanced advice of worst and best case scenarios using herself and her fiancé's experience as an example. From her own experience, she argued that because she had not prepared to migrate permanently, she did not gather the necessary information needed to meet her intended goals. As a result, she learnt through trial and error for ten years before settling into her eventual career, whereas her fiancé arrived knowing what he expected to achieve and was able to secure a job in a company. He experienced financial difficulties but knew which bank would be able to offer him a loan to finance his MBA and once he completed his studies he secured a well-paid job to pay off his loan in the space of five years. Thus, she did not advise women or men in terms of gender but advised on the basis of prior preparation and eventual successes and failures.

Alice (Nigerian) preferred to advise potential migrants (men and women) to only consider migration for career progression. She explained that they should complete their studies and secure a good job in a prominent company in Nigeria which would give them an opportunity to train either in the UK or United States. In her opinion the experiences that migrants went through in the UK were challenging and her strategy was to advise potential migrants not to be attracted to the lifestyle of others but to settle in Nigeria and use training opportunities to gain access to the UK temporarily and to visit occasionally.

Therefore, there are certain details which the women in this study indicated that could only be given to men or women. This supports the idea that gendered information can exist but is dependent on who gives it. As the focus of my study was on the Kenyan and Nigerian women, an assessment of the type of advice men would give could not be made. However,

studies such as those by Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) demonstrated that men benefited from both female and male networks in terms of the information and support that they received. Overall, the women in this study revealed that general information concerning selecting a university selection, job applications or advice on integrating into society would be the same for potential male and female migrants.

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I used the network and systems theory to describe the interaction between the women and their networks. My findings revealed the relationship between the women in my study and the specific networks they identified which related to their reasons for migrating. This interaction operated within a migration system which was using Fawcett's conceptual framework (1989). The findings of my research were able to provide a real case scenario that describes the different networks and their linkages with potential migrants which is something few studies have explored. The women in my study suggested that they did not identify networks by their gender but by the information that they provided for their migration plans. However, when advising others, they suggested that they would advise women and men differently, depending on their life stage. Thus, the discussion in this chapter shows how the two theories (i.e. systems and network theory) worked together to in the decision making process and demonstrated how a person's life stage would determine the right advice to give. The findings in this chapter can engage scholars focused in this area of research such as Toma and Vause (2010) to explore the important role that gender plays in networks and the migration decision-making process.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research set out to explore the migration decision-making experiences of Kenyan and Nigerian women resident in London taking into account the role of culture, family and networks in the process. The research questions have been answered in chapters three, four and five and help to develop a deeper understanding of the migration experiences of women.

How do the sociocultural expectations, held by their communities, affect the migration decisions of Kenyan and Nigerian women?

This question is dealt with primarily in chapter three. Prior to the fieldwork, I was aware of the lack of information on the topic with regards to whether dominant sociocultural perceptions have an impact on the decision-making process. This made it difficult to determine where to start especially in terms of designing the appropriate questions that would enable me to generate the relevant answer to this question as culture in its non-material form, was difficult to identify in the responses of the women in my study. This is because they would never directly answer the question but indirectly mention how elements of the sociocultural perceptions in their society influenced their decision to migrate. Their reflection on their upbringing revealed that sociocultural expectations held in their ethnic communities about women, and more so in the rural areas than in towns and cities, had less of an effect in controlling their behaviour in society and in relation to men. However, there were those instances where dominant, negative sociocultural perceptions of women who were single mothers or widows became motivating factors in their decision to migrate. The stigmatising and stereotyping of women seen not to fit the norm is historically associated with many cultures in SSA (Amadiume 1987; Cutrufelli, 1985). This was mostly the case with some of the Nigerian women interviewed in this study but was not identified to be entirely the case with Kenyan women. The practice of stigmatising women was stronger with the Nigerian

women due to their strong cultural roots, as many of the women highlighted the importance of culture in their lives. This is not to say that culture was not important to Kenyan women, but it did not strongly define or control the women's lives as the Nigerian women mentioned.

The findings also revealed that the sociocultural perceptions of women can be part of the decision-making process. Some women discussed how marriages end up in divorce because the men still expected their wives to maintain their domestic duties in the household once in the UK, which was difficult to balance as the women had to work to help support the household economy. Some women found that it was important, especially for men, to prepare for the change as they had difficulty in undertaking 'women's work'. This was an observation made by other women in this study of women who had experienced such difficulties in the UK with their husbands. Therefore, it appears that it is important to discuss women and men's roles within the household in the migration decision-making process to prepare for any changes that would occur once in the UK.

None of the young single women in my study indicated that the sociocultural perceptions held about women in their societies functioned as a motive in their migration decisions or was part of the process. This is due to the fact that many of them were brought up by parents who were liberal and educated and who had combined the positive perceptions of women in their ethnic culture with western thinking which had penetrated their society during and after colonial times. Some studies have revealed that there are sociocultural barriers which pushed some single women to migrate because they prevented the women from gaining access to certain utilities in their society (Arthur, 2008). This was not the case in my study as many of the single women were migrating for self-development unrelated to any negative sociocultural perceptions of women in their respective societies

The findings also show how some of the theories of migration decision-making are applied. The place utility model and the value expectancy theory have been applied in this study to explain both scenarios. The women identified utilities within their respective societies where they experienced dissatisfaction in some part of their life as well as identified certain values that were not forthcoming for them in their society. Migration became a solution to their dissatisfaction and a means of achieving their expected values. In terms of the women who included changing sociocultural perceptions of women's role in the household once in the UK within the decision to migrate,

In conclusion, the findings in chapter three reveal that in some instances, sociocultural perceptions held about women in society can influence the migration decision-making process either as a motive of or as part of the process. One of the challenges I experienced investigating the influence of sociocultural expectations on migration decision-making has been raising the relevant questions that would help to generate richer information. This challenge can be taken up by future researchers who can develop new ways of investigating the phenomenon expanding the knowledge in this area of research. This leads me to the focus of my second research question which dealt with the influence of others (i.e. children and husbands) in migration decision-making.

What influence do family members (children, husband and parents) have in the migration decision-making process of Kenyan and Nigerian women?

This question was dealt with in part A of chapter four. A review of the literature revealed that there have been few studies that have captured the role of children in the migration decision-making process even more so when it comes to literature on Kenyan and Nigerian women. Hutchins (2011) and Ackers (2000) studies were useful in my research as Ackers use of the 'best interest' and 'future oriented consent' approach explained how parents incorporated the interests of their children in the decision to migrate. Young children

(12 years and under) were not included in the decision-making process but their presumed expected values at the time and future gains were considered in the process. Teenage children were somewhat involved at one stage of the decision-making process in terms of being given the chance to agree or disagree with the move. There was only one unique situation where a mother had to negotiate migration with her children. Although Ackers explained that the children in her study were unhappy migrating on the basis of the parents decisions, in my study, many of the mothers revealed that their children were excited at the idea of migrating to the UK because of the image they had in their mind of an exciting place. Hutchins study (2011) was also useful for my study especially in terms of her use of Alanen's concept of 'childing' practices (2001) as well as Zeheir's child-adult relations (2001) to explain the relations between parents and children in the decision-making process. My findings revealed that the majority of the mothers adopted dependent child-adult relations with their children because they were all mostly under the age of 12. With teenage children, the child-adult relations were interdependent in which the views of the mother and her children were considered.

The women had expected values they hoped their children would achieve through migration include getting quality education which they believed to be lacking in Nigeria and Kenya. This would give them the opportunity to occupy good social positions in their country of origin if they were to return. However, for other mothers health and wellbeing of their children were important values to consider in the migration decision-making process because of the difficult social conditions they were facing at the time migration was being discussed. However, it was pointed out that parents need to consider the impact that a change in lifestyle would have on children who had strong links with their communities and family back home. The inability of children to integrate could lead to psychological problems.

My findings on the negotiation and discussions between parent and young adults revealed that in some situations, parents were involved in the migration decision-making process because they were still depended upon them financially. However, single women who had been active in the job market or had been living on their own only discussed their migration plans with their parents. This suggests that parents are not necessarily involved in the migration decision-making process but it would depend on the reasons why the young adult women were migrating (e.g. for education). Meanwhile, married women who negotiated migration with their husbands varied. Hoang's use of the migration decision-making strategies (2011b) was useful for explaining the interaction between the women and their husbands. Some of the women tended to discuss migration with their husbands making it consensual, but it can also be uncontested in which the husband's views are ignored by the wife.

The value expectancy theory was useful for explaining how the women incorporated the needs of the values that they believed would benefit their children in future into the decision to migrate as a family. The place utility model was useful for explaining the interactions between single women with their parents and married women with their husbands. The value expectancy theory, as mentioned is a theory that explains the individual experience but my findings used the theory to explain how the women include their expected values of their children to inform their decision to migrate. This is different from other approaches because the theory was applied in this research in relation to others dependent on the primary migrant that is the mothers. The findings therefore, demonstrate how the value expectancy theory can be expanded to include the expected values of others in migration decision-making especially for the family. The place utility model is best used to explain the interactions between the women and their spouses because it takes into account the view of

both especially the dissatisfaction they experience in their society of origin. The dissatisfaction leads to a search for alternative locations and then finally migration.

As a result, the presence of children and the inclusion of parents or husbands in the decision to migrate were important for some women, but not all. This is because they had to incorporate the needs of their family (children and husband) as well as heed the advice of parents, especially if they had lived in and had knowledge of the country of destination. As highlighted in Chapter four, children were not the primary focus of my research but questions were raised about their influence on family migration decisions. My findings in Chapter four reveal that children do play a role in migration decisions and that researchers need to focus on exploring children's agency in migration decision-making with parents, in the same way that Hutchins (2011) explored the phenomenon. Additionally, further research needs to focus on the interaction between single women and their parents in the migration decision-making process. part B of chapter 5 focused its attention on categorising the women in my study using Oishi's 'ideal types' of female migrant's model, which is my third research question.

Can 'ideal' types of female migrants identified by Oishi (2005) be applied to Kenyan and Nigerian women and can other categories be identified?

The purpose of using Oishi model was to determine whether it could be used to categorise the women in my study using the findings discussed in Chapter three and Part A of Chapter four. My findings revealed that the women in my study fitted the Oishi's 'ideal types' of female migrant model, but had different characteristics due to their socio-economic background and reasons for migrating. The majority of the women could be placed into one or more of the five different categories, even though they had different migration stories. In Oishi's research (2005), the women who were categorised had a lower socioeconomic status as she found that those of a higher status would migrate to Europe or the United States. In

addition, the women in her study migrated on their own leaving their husbands', children, parents and/or siblings behind. My contribution to Oishi's model was to expand on the characteristics of the 'ideal types' of female migrants. In addition, my findings reveal how women of a higher socioeconomic background can be categorised using Oishi's study and who have migrated to a European country.

As I chose to maintain Oishi's (2005) use of the term 'ideal types', I have included in the model a sixth possible category suggesting that there is room for expansion. Career women were identified as a new category to refer to women who were migrating purely for their own personal needs as they hope to acquire the expected values that they sought prior to migration. These women were mostly graduates or mature students hoping to generate gain skills that would assist in their career development. They could not be placed in any of the five categories as outlined by Oishi (2005), as their characteristics and reasons for migrating differed from those outlined in Oishi's model.

What role do gendered networks play in women's decision to migrate?

This question was dealt with in Chapter five and focused on the use of networks in migration decision-making. I considered whether the concept of gendered networks existed based on the evidence of their existence in Latin America (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994). Based on the responses of the women in my study, gendered networks appeared to be non-existent. The characteristics of gendered networks suggest that they are resources which women or men rely on according to whether they are female or male. The women revealed that the information about the country to which they migrated was obtained from men and women they knew as well as from mass media. The internet proved a useful tool for information and was used by some of the women in making their migration plans or it was sometimes used to verify the information given by their personal sources. An interesting revelation was that some women found that the information obtained from men and women differed. Others

received very detailed information from their sources concerning their circumstances at the time. It would appear that the women in my study referred to networks that were available to them and did not pay attention to their gender.

I also explored the use of different channels of communication to connect with the networks which were vital for the migration decisions of some women. The women who migrated prior to advancements in IT outlined the difficulties of communicating with their network through land-based telephones or letters. The use of the internet after the year 2000 made it easier for people to communicate with each other and get the necessary information needed to make an informed decision. Some women indicated how it was difficult to get information on time because of the channels they used to communicate (e.g. land-based telephones). This suggested that if information is not received on time, a hasty decision may be made without information or the decision to migrate may be prolonged.

I also used Fawcett's conceptual framework (1989) to explore the connection between networks and information operating within a migration system which helped to describe how the two theories function. Fawcett created a table which identified the categories of networks¹² and the types of linkages¹³ to describe the interaction between potential migrants and the networks in the destination country. Using this framework, I was able to identify how different networks can be used to establish different links, as friends can provide information which can be challenged by information gathered using the internet. Future studies can consider developing Fawcett's conceptual framework in order to explore the interaction between networks and potential migrants operating within a migration system. In relation to the use of the internet in migration decision-making, researchers can benefit from exploring

¹² State-to-state, mass culture, family and personal networks and migrant agency activities

¹³ Tangible, regulatory and relational linkages

how the internet has become a network to connect potential migrants with information available online.

How do these women convey information to potential migrants in the country of origin?

This was my last research question in which I dealt with the women acting as networks for potential migrants in their respective countries of origin. The women advised potential migrants (male and female) with the same information regarding financial and immigration issues, education and employment, change in lifestyle and household relations. Their advice was also based on a person's life stage and reasons for migrating. Some women discouraged others from migrating to the UK because of the difficult experiences they had integrating into British society. Others had given their honest opinion about their own experiences which unfortunately was taken negatively by the potential migrants who thought that (the women in my study) were discouraging them from migrating. As it was summarised : 'experience is the best teacher' as the message which emerged from the focus groups and the responses of individual interviews, regarding advising others, was that there were some things that people needed to experience and could not be told. In addition, as it was put, potential migrants would have to be aware that they would have to 'Begin Again' (B.A.).

Another interesting finding in my study was that some women suggested that they would give specific information to men and women in relation to their circumstances (e.g. married, single, student) creating the idea of 'gendered information'. In terms of potential female migrants, some women explained that they would advise mothers on the cost of child care in the UK which ranked high on their list as it was a resource that some of the women stated they took for granted when in Nigeria or Kenya. Some of the women indicated that men would be easier to advise because of their ability to deal with difficult situations along the way such as living in a bad neighbourhood, whereas women were considered to be more emotionally attached to the family and may find it difficult to live in areas which some of the

women in my study considered to be unsafe neighbourhoods in London, if that was their destination.

One of the challenges experienced applying the systems theory was that there have been few studies that have described its application as many scholars tend to refer to the work of Mabogunge (1970) as their conceptual framework. Recent studies have been drawing attention to exploring in detail what migration systems are and how they operate (Bakewell, de Haas and Kubal, 2011) meaning that there is awareness that migration systems theory needs further exploration. This study attempted to demonstrate how the systems theory works with the network theory by suggesting that networks operate within migration systems, which is a space where potential migrants can share information.

Therefore, the results that can be drawn from this study is that information is important for migration decisions as it prepares a potential migrant for their chosen country of destination but sometimes it is not well received. Further research should be conducted to investigate the idea of gendered information and how such information can inform migration decisions taking into account the different channels of communication. In addition, future research should also consider researching the experiences of migration decision-making from the perspective of potential migrants in the country of origin which would help to put into perspective the experience as it happens.

Methodological and Research Challenges

There were four methodological and research challenges that affected my data collection. First, the design of the appropriate questions that would answer my research questions was a challenge, especially in relation to the influence of sociocultural expectations in the migration decision-making process. As there were few qualitative studies on migration decision-making, it was difficult to determine the relevant questions to ask to explore the

phenomenon. I chose to use a small sample in order to understand the experience at a micro level, without the intention of generalising the experience because of the few research studies on it in Kenya and Nigeria. As a result, the findings of the sample were able to provide a snapshot of the migration decision-making experience from the perspective of women which could be developed further in order to explore the experience with a much larger sample. It would be worthwhile for researchers interested in this field to develop different questions to explore the experience. It is also hoped that future research may also consider using different qualitative methods of data collection thereby establishing different ways of investigating the experience.

The second challenge of my research was that it was investigating migration decision-making over a 20 year period meaning that those that migrated in the 1990s may forget certain details about their migration unless it was a turning point in their lives. Although there have been some studies that have investigated migration over a similar time frame, I had to be wary of the fact that some women may not remember everything about their experience of migration. However, my study did reveal that the experience is memorable because it was a turning point in the lives of the women therefore they were able to remember the important events.

Finally, applying the theories of migration decision-making was also a challenge as they have been mostly applied using quantitative methods. This made it difficult to identify some variables that would have been able to provide answers to my research questions. But at the same time, I believe it also made my research original as my findings were used to describe how some of the theories of migration decision-making operate based on the women's experiences. These challenges can be overcome in future research as my project has provided one of many ways of investigating migration decision-making.

Final Remarks

The experience of investigating the migration experiences of the women in this study has been bittersweet. Being a migrant, I was familiar with the experiences of the women whom I understood but at the same time I was aware of the differences we had in terms of the experience of migration decision-making. Their experiences were important for highlighting the diversity of migrant women based on the background and chain of events that occurred in the lives of the women. Being able to relate to the experience can make a researcher blind to the experience and not approach the participants' story as a learner. At the same time being a part of the experience can give a researcher inside knowledge as to some of the attitudes and behaviours which an outsider may not understand. My interactions with the women have made me understand how women approach migration decision-making differently. Even though my research is not generalisable in relation to the experience of women from Kenya and Nigeria, it provides snapshots of migration decision-making processes and experiences which may not have been seen before.

My original contribution to this area of research has been putting into perspective the Kenyan and Nigerian women's experience of migration decision-making as previous research have been interested in push/pull factors of migration but not the process by which women discuss, assess and/or negotiate migration with their family and themselves. It has been able to shed some light into the experience for which I am willing to engage in and develop an understanding of this area of focus. Thus, women may be greater migrants than men (Ravenstein, 1885) as they also contribute to the migration decision-making experience either individually or as part of a family unit.

Appendices

Appendix A - Focus Group Advert

Migration Decision-Making of Kenyan and Nigerian Women in London: Culture, Networks and other Influences

I would like to take this opportunity to invite Kenyan women to participate in focus group discussion on my research project as part of a PhD in Ethnic Relations at the Centre for Research and Ethnic Relations (CRER) at the University of Warwick. The research will be focusing on the decision-making process that Kenyan and Nigerian women go through before migrating to the UK. I am exploring how culture, networks and other influences may have impacted on the decision to migrate. In addition, my project will explore the information that these women give to potential female migrants in their country of origin based on their own migration experience.

The primary aim of the focus group discussion is to discuss the importance of information in the migration decision-making process determining whether gender is an important factor and exploring how experience can help advice others of what to expect once they are in the UK. This will be a general discussion in which no personal information will be asked of the participant and the names of the participants will be anonymous.

The focus group will be a mix of Kenyan (4) and Nigerian (4) women and is planned to take place at the University of East London, Stratford Campus on 11 April at 17.00 or 19.00 pm. I am interested in getting in recruiting 4 Kenyan women aged between 18-65 years that have migrated to the UK (currently living in London), between 1991 to present. Refreshments will be offered for the duration of the focus group. It promises to be an interesting discussion and a great contribution to this particular area of research.

For further information, please contact Miss Linda Oucho on L.A.Oucho@warwick.ac.uk or call on 07810 651 292

Thank You!

Appendix B – Participant Information Sheet

PROJECT TITLE

Migration Decision Making of Kenyan and Nigerian Women in London: Networks, Culture and other Influences

SUPERVISORS

Dr. Khursheed Wadia

Dr. Helen Toner

PRINCIPAL RESEARCHER

Miss Linda A. Oucho

INSTITUTION/ DEPARTMENT

University of Warwick, Centre of Research and Ethnic Relations (CRER)

COURSE

PhD in Ethnic Relations

1. Introduction

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to take part in my research project as part of a PhD in Ethnic Relations at the Centre for Research and Ethnic Relations (CRER) at the University of Warwick. Before you decide whether or not to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done, and what it will involve. Please take some time to read the following information carefully.

2. Why the Study?

The research will be building on already existing literature on migration and the decision to migrate exploring the latter from the perspective of African women, in particular, Kenyan and Nigerian women living in London. I hope to find out how culture, networks and other influences impact on the final decision to migrate to the UK. In addition, I will also investigate how the women under study convey information to potential female migrants in their country of origin.

3. Why have you been invited to participate in this study?

You have been invited to participate in this research because you are a Kenyan/Nigerian woman aged 18-65 who migrated to the UK from 1991 to present and who

is currently resident in London.

4. Do you have to take part?

It is up to you whether or not you want to take part. If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep. You will also be asked to complete and sign a consent form that indicates your willingness to take part in the interview or focus group. Your participation will be entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time with the assurance that this will not have negative consequences for you.

5. What you will be expected to do?

Once you have completed and signed the consent form, we will discuss a suitable time and venue for a face-to-face interview to be conducted. If you wish to take part in a follow-up focus group to be arranged at a later stage, you can inform me either before or at the end of the interview session. Light refreshments will be provided during the focus group meeting, which will be attended by 10 women at the most. Before the focus group begins, you will be reminded about the projects aims and outcomes. If you know of other women who will fall into my target group for research, I would appreciate any recommendations.

6. What will happen to the results of the research?

The results of the study will be used to complete my PhD thesis and may be presented in seminars held at the University of Warwick and at other conferences I may attend in the near future. All findings involving interview or focus group material will be anonymous.

7. Declaration to Participants

The information that you and others give will be kept strictly confidential. All written documentation will be stored in a lockable filing cabinet. All audio recorded conversations will be stored on password protected CD all of which will remain solely in my possession. If you decide to take part in the study, you have the right, among other things, to:

- a. refuse to answer any particular question, and/or to withdraw from the study up to three months after the date of your participation in the interview and/or focus group meeting;
- b. ask any further questions about the study that occur to you during your participation;
- c. access a summary of the findings from the study.

8. Contact Details

Linda Adhiambo Oucho

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Mobile: 07810651292

University of Warwick

Coventry, UK

CV4 7AL

Thank you for your time and I hope to hear from you in soon.

Appendix C – Consent Form



CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Migration Decision-Making of Kenyan and Nigerian Women in London:
Culture, Networks and other Influences

Name of Researcher: Miss Linda Adhiambo Oucho

**I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated
For the above project which I may keep for my records and have had the opportunity to
ask any questions I may have.**

I agree to take part in the above study and am willing to:

- Be interviewed
- Voice recorded

I understand that my information will be held and processed for the following purposes:

- Completion of a PhD thesis in Ethnic Relations at the School of Health and Social Studies
- Presented in anonymised form in future seminars and conferences

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time (up to three months after the interview/ focus group meeting date) without giving any reason and without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of person taking consent if different from Researcher	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix D – Interview Topic Guideline

Interview Topic Guideline

Questions:

1. Social, Cultural and Economic Background

- 1.1 Where are you from in Kenya/ Nigeria?
- 1.2 Do you have any siblings? Were you raised differently in relation to your brother(s) or sister(s)?
- 1.3 How would you describe your relationship with your parents and siblings?
- 1.4 Where are most of your family? Kenya/Nigeria/UK (if so where?)
- 1.5 Could you describe the community that you grew up in? Was it mixed in terms of different groups/cultures?
- 1.6 What do you know about your culture in terms of roles and expectations of women?
- 1.7 Did you ever sought out advice from them about your migration plans? If yes/no, what did they tell you?
- 1.8 When did you consider migrating?
- 1.9 Do you have children?
- 1.10 As a parent, was your decision to migrate influenced by your children and if so how?

2. Migration Decision-Making

- 2.1 When did you move to the UK? Under what immigration status?
- 2.2 Did you move on your own?
- 2.3 What did you know about the legal requirements of migrating to the UK?
- 2.4 What did you know about the UK in general, e.g. society, environment, education etc?
- 2.5 What were your sources of information and what did they tell you?
- 2.6 Was the UK your first choice of country to migrate to?
- 2.7 What were other people's reactions to your decision to migrate?
- 2.8 What was your own reaction to your decision? How did you feel?
- 2.9 Can you describe to me what was going on around you at the time you were assessing your decision to migrate e.g socially, politically or economically?
- 2.10 Did your parents/ siblings/ extended family/ community play any role in your decision-making? If yes, can you describe it?

2.11 Just to remind you that you are not in any obligation to answer this question, but do you mind me asking you what your current immigration status is now?

3. Networks

3.1 Were there any other organisations, individuals, community groups or associations that may have advised you about migrating to the UK? If yes, what were there and can you remember what they said?

3.2 Has your experience changed any expectations you previously had about the UK?

3.3 Do you have people asking you for advice about coming to the UK? What do you tell them?

3.4 What do you or would you advise another woman about migrating to the UK and would it be different to what you would tell a man?

3.5 Finally, if you had known what you know now about the UK, would your decision be any different?

I have no further questions. Is there anything else you would like to mention? Thank you for your time and participation.

Appendix E – Focus Group Questions Guideline Group A and B:

Nigerian/ Kenyan Focus group

1. What do you think is the role of women in the migration decision-making process?
2. How important is information and networks in the migration decision-making process?
 - a. Do you think gendered networks exist?
 - b. How useful are networks and the information they provide in migration decision-making?
3. Do you think things would be different if you were better prepared for it?
4. Do you think at any point, you regretted your decision for coming to the UK at any point?
5. What would you advise potential migrants in Kenya/Nigeria about the UK?

Group C:

Kenyan and Nigerian Focus Group

The purpose of this focus group is to discuss the following theme:

The importance of information and networks in the migration decision-making process

1. How would you define networks and information?
2. Why do you think networks are important in migration?
3. How do you find networks/information?
4. What kind of information do you think networks provide?
5. What kind of information do you think women and men provide respectively?
6. How useful are networks and the information for migration decision-making?
7. What do you think is the best way to advise a potential migrant in Nigeria/Kenya?

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