

**THE GEOGRAPHIES OF THE SCHOOLING EXPERIENCES OF
IMMIGRANT CHILDREN AT A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN KWAZULU-
NATAL**

by

ZONKE AURA NGEMA

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of

**Master of Education
(Social Justice)**

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
Durban (Edgewood Campus)**

February 2014

ABSTRACT

In the last two decades or so, South Africa has become home to people of various nationalities, in particular citizens from other African countries. The South African Refugee Act passed in 1998 has been welcomed as a necessary piece of legislation that protects the rights and welfare of immigrants to the country, which includes the rights outlined in Chapter Two of the South African Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996). There has been a growing body of research that has explored the lives of immigrants and their families in South Africa (for example, Osman, 2009; Sookraj, Gopal & Maharaj, 2005; Vandeyar, 2012). The aim of the study was to explore the schooling experiences of African immigrant children in South Africa. The key research questions were: What are the stories immigrants children have to tell about their schooling experiences in South Africa? How do they negotiate the complex and varied spaces of schooling?

The study was conducted at a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal. The participants were 6 students whose families immigrated to South Africa from six different African countries. The study was a narrative inquiry. Data generation methods were: individual interviews, focus group interviews and photo-voice - a child centred, participatory, visual method.

The findings of the study reveal that all six immigrant children interviewed in this study had experienced exclusionary pressures in one way or the other in the schooling spaces. The key exclusionary issue was the language factor. The informal language policies and practices are in violation of education policy and legislation in South Africa. The key barrier that participants experienced to curriculum access was lack of language proficiency in English. Participants navigate the language issue through sourcing help and support from peers, and in particular, teachers, parents and networks outside the school. Children also experienced exclusion and oppression perpetrated by peers at the social level that impacted their sense of belonging at the school. However, much of the experience of exclusion occurs in the early years at the school. Learners also had good stories to tell about specific teachers by whom they are affirmed and who support them out of their own personal initiatives such as working with them during school breaks. The participants were able to share their constructions of what it means to be a good teacher from their own lived experience.

The issue of the school's responsiveness to cultural diversity emerged in the study. Although multi-culturalism appears to form part of the curriculum, the manner in which it is interpreted and practiced is questionable. From an analysis of the children's narratives, it seems that the

curriculum reflects a traditional multi-cultural education that focuses on celebrating diversity and understanding other cultures, in particular their religious beliefs, foods, dress, etc. The study suggests that there needs to be a shift in how the school engages with diversity, from a traditional multi-cultural education approach to a critical multiculturalism and anti-racism perspective.

The findings of this study suggest that immigrant children are active meaning makers of the schooling spaces they navigate in South Africa. Their voices need to be accessed to inform interventions that could support immigrant children to make the transition into the education system in South Africa.

DECLARATION

I, Zonke Aura Ngema, declare that this dissertation entitled:

The geographies of the schooling experiences of immigrant children at a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal

is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

Zonke Aura Ngema

Student No: 208526675

Supervisors:

Professor Anbanithi Muthukrishna

Ms Melanie Yvette Martin

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the many people who have supported me in this study:

- My Heavenly Father who allowed me this opportunity, He is worthy to be praised.
- My supervisor, Ms Melanie Martin and co-supervisor, Professor Anbanithi Muthukrishna for their patience, inspiration, dedication and unconditional support. I was privileged and blessed to work with them during my study. Thank you for opening my eyes and believing in my ability to complete the study. Your mentoring motivated me to work day and night.
- The principal, deputy principal, teachers and learners who supported me and contributed to the study.
- My beautiful daughter, Sinenhlanhla Ngcobo, my nephew Ayanda Ngema and my family for the support they gave me.
- My friends, especially Pat Magwaza, Hlengiwe Mhlangu, Happiness Khumalo and Thandi Ngcobo for their support, motivation and encouragement as I embarked on this eye-opening, and sometimes lonely, journey.
- My friends and colleagues at Ndabomuhle and Bambisandla Primary Schools for their encouragement at all times.

May the Grace of God be upon you at all times, Ndiyabulela.

CONTENTS

Title	i
Abstract	ii
Declaration	iv
Acknowledgements	v
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	9
1.1 Introduction	9
1.2 Research focus and rationale for the study	11
1.3 Key research questions	12
1.4 Background to the study	12
1.5 Significance of the study	13
1.6 Structure of the dissertation	13
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1 Introduction	14
2.2 Defining key concepts	14
2.3 The schooling experience of immigrant children	16
2.3.1 Navigating cultural differences: what are the challenges?	16
2.3.2 Social and emotional spaces within the schooling contexts	17
2.3.3 The language issue	20
2.3.4 Curriculum access and achievement outcomes	21
2.3.5 Parental involvement	??
2.4 Conceptual and theoretical framing of the study	23
2.5 Conclusion	25
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	26
3.1 Introduction	26
3.2 Methodological issues	26
3.2.1 Qualitative research	26
3.2.2 Participatory research	27
3.2.3 Narrative inquiry	28

3.4	Research design	28
3.4.1	Participants and research context	28
3.4.2	Data generation	29
3.4.2.1	The individual semi-structured interview	29
3.4.2.2	Focus group interview	29
3.4.2.3	Photo voice	30
3.5	Data analysis	32
3.6	Ethical considerations	32
3.7	The issue of trustworthiness	33
3.8	Limitations of the study	34
3.9	Conclusion	34
CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS		35
4.1	Introduction	35
4.2	Profile of participants	35
4.3	Findings of the study	37
4.3.1	Experiencing and negotiating the language barrier	38
4.3.2	Negotiating social spaces: inclusion and exclusion	41
4.3.3	Experiencing curriculum spaces	47
4.3.4	Cultural diversity	50
4.4	Conclusion	55
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY		56
5.1	Introduction	56
5.2	Conceptual framework and research methodology	56
5.3	Synthesis of the findings	56
5.4	Researcher reflections on methodology	58
5.5	Implications of the study	59
REFERENCES		60
Appendix 1: Ethical clearance - University of Kwazulu-Natal		65
Appendix 2: Consent letter for school principal		66
Appendix 3: Consent letter for learners		68
Appendix 4: Consent letter for parents/caregivers		70

Appendix 5: Turnitin report	72
Appendix 6: Letter from language editor	73

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

South Africa, as a democratic nation, is experiencing high rates of immigrants coming into the country, particularly from African countries (Crush, 2008; Statistics South Africa; 2012a; 2012b). Vandeyar (2012) states that with the change in legislation regarding the entry of immigrants into the country, South Africa is considered an attractive destination for those in search of work and a new life. Vandeyar (2012) states that as immigrant communities grow, more and more immigrant children are visible in South African schools. Walker (2011) states that immigrant community's sees good education as a pathway to stability and a better future for children and young people. James, Jenks and Prout (1998) stated that schools are important and significant spaces in the children's lives. I would argue that schools are critical spaces in the lives of African immigrant children as they make sense of their educational lives in a new country.

There is small emerging body of research in South Africa that has examined the schooling experiences of immigrant children (for example, Sookrajh, Gopal & Maharaj, 2005; Adedayo, 2010; Vandeyar & Vandeyar, 2011; Meda, Sookrajh & Maharaj, 2012; Vandeyar, 2012). Vandeyar and Vandeyar (2011) examined the socio-cultural experiences of immigrant students in a South African schooling context. The findings revealed that the children had difficulty protecting and preserving their culture. Black female immigrant students in the study felt that their value systems were contested within the school. The study by Adedayo (2010) reveals the tensions immigrant students/youth experience as they negotiate the space between their own value systems linked to their own cultures and the mainstream culture as they strive to assimilate and gain entry into, or a place in, the dominant culture. The study by Vandeyar & Vandeyar (2011) also revealed how immigrant youth struggled to make meaning of, and negotiate, their identities in schooling contexts.

Internationally and in South Africa, studies have investigated the struggles immigrant children face in the host country socially and educationally (for example, Giralt, 2011; Meda, Sookrajh & Maharaj, 2012)

The issue of social networks that immigrant children form and the purposes these serve in their educational lives has been examined in studies (Weller, 2010; Wells, 2011). A study by Wells (2011) examined how social networks could provide emotional and material support for

young refugees, and have the potential to link young refugees to social, material and cultural resources such as legal advice, education, and entertainment.

Research shows that seeking to belong is a key issue in the social and educational lives of immigrant children. Schmitt (2010) examined the ways in which immigrant children in the Germany and Canada achieve 'belonging' in social groups and how they build unique contextualised competences in this endeavour. A study by Den Besten (2010) explored the sense of belonging of immigrant children living in Paris and Berlin and how they negotiate their social spaces to gain acceptance by native peers.

A key struggle for many immigrant children in a range of contexts internationally is difficulty in accessing the language of the host country, and exclusionary pressures they experience in this regard. Language is a 'cultural bridge' for immigrant children in their route to assimilate in the new country context (Yeh, Okubo, Ma, Shea, Ou & Pituc, 2008). Language is the key to classroom interactions, curriculum access and to forging social relationships with peers, teachers and others in the school community. Den Besten (2010) highlighted how language support programmes for immigrant children have proved to be valuable internationally in improving their language competence. Yeh et al. (2008) undertook a study on the relationship between language proficiency and integration into new society. The findings showed that language proficiency was a key factor that shaped social inclusion in a new country. Similarly, Asanova (2005), in a study in Canada, found that the language proficiency in the dominant language facilitated social interaction within the school settings with indigenous peers

Studies have also documented positive stories of how immigrant children adjust to schooling contexts in host countries. Kao (2004) points out that although it appears that immigrant children have limited access to social capital, in many contexts they perform better academically than the native children. Suarez -Orozco and Carhill (2008) also documented how many immigrant children perform very well in schools once they have overcome their initial complex adjustment difficulties, in particular the language barrier.

The issue of discrimination, oppression and marginalisation based on ethnicity, race and religion has been the subject of research with immigrant children (for example, Fischer, 2004; Aikhion-Bare, 2007; Devine, Kenny & Macneela, 2008). The studies reveal that whilst a degree of inter-ethnic mixing occurs at a primary school level, various kinds of exclusion continue to be evident. The researchers suggest that this is due to the fact that immigrant students do not

display characteristics important to indigenous contexts such language, religion, colour of skin, culture, ethnicity and other non-Irish traits.

Lee and Koro-Ljungberg (2007) revealed in their USA study, that many Korean immigrant youth reported experiences of racism based on their ethnicity, race or culture. Qin, Way and Rana (2008) highlighted factors that contributed to social exclusion of immigrant children, including immigrant status, physical attributes and ethnicity. Osman (2009) found that immigrant students in South Africa experience xenophobia in schools. Devine, Kenny and MacNeela (2008) in their study reported name-calling and bullying on the basis of nationality and ethnicity in schools in Ireland.

In light of the above literature I had studied in the initial stages of my research, I became interested in exploring the lives of immigrant children in a schooling context in South Africa. Therefore, the goal of my study was to explore the complexities of schooling for a group of immigrant children in South Africa through a narrative inquiry. I was interested in the stories immigrant children had to tell.

1.2 Research Focus and Rationale

In the last two decades or so South Africa as a country has become home to people from various other countries. The Refugee Act, passed in 1998 (Government Gazette, 1998), was welcomed as a necessary piece of legislation that provided for the rights of forcibly displaced persons coming to South Africa in search of asylum. According to Palmar (2001), the Act states that refugees are entitled to the rights enshrined in Chapter 2 of the Constitution of South Africa of 1996 (with the exception of political rights and the rights to freedom of trade, occupation and profession, which do not apply to non-citizens). My research focus sought to examine the lives of African immigrant children in the educational space as they strive to access the right to quality education in South Africa, as enshrined in the Constitution.

At a personal level, I was keen to hear and listen to the voices of African immigrant children in South Africa, about how they navigate their schooling experiences. From personal communication with various colleagues in schooling contexts in South Africa, I have had some anecdotal insight into the tensions and dilemmas immigrant children face. I have felt that it is my moral obligation as a teacher to gain knowledge and understanding of the successes and challenges immigrant children experience as they navigate schooling lives in a foreign land.

The research paradigm of new sociology of childhood considers children as active, valuable contributors to and members of society. From this paradigm, it is argued that children are active “meaning-producing beings” in their own right (Holloway & Valentine, 2000, p. 12). Children are seen as social agents who have definite views about matters that concern them. I am influenced by this perspective and am interested in what meanings immigrant children make of their schooling in South Africa. The study aimed at gaining an understanding of their personal experiences through the stories they tell. I aimed to learn about how they navigate language policies, curriculum, social interactions and the culture of the school; amongst other issues. Research indicates that factors such as language and cultural differences can be associated with negative outcomes for immigrant children (Lee & Koro-Ljungberg, 2007; Qin, 2009).

1.3 Key Research Questions

The critical questions explored were:

What are the stories immigrant children have to tell about their schooling experiences in South Africa?

How do they negotiate the complex and varied spaces of schooling?

1.4 Background to the Study

The participants of this study were African immigrant children who were attending a fairly well-resourced public school in KwaZulu-Natal. They were randomly selected from a pool of learners who were willing to participate in the study. The data generation methods were: individual interviews, focus group interviews, and photo voice – a child centred approach. The study was a narrative inquiry as I was keen to examine intensely personal accounts of immigrant children’s schooling experiences. My aim was to allow the children to represent themselves through the stories they told. The study was undertaken over a limited time-period and presented a snapshot of the African immigrant children’s experience in one school context.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The value of this study is that it has the potential to initiate dialogue and encourages further research about how African immigrant children navigate schooling – the tensions, complexities

and contradictions. The study provides a platform for further research in the area of teaching African immigrant children in South Africa schools.

1.6 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 provides a broad overview of the research study. It offers my aim and rationale in undertaking the research and presents the research questions.

Chapter 2 presents a review of literature related to this study.

Chapter 3 presents the conceptual and theoretical used in this study. In addition, I discuss theoretical perspectives on children and childhood that influenced my epistemological stance. The chapter moves on to a discussion of the research design and the design choices I made.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study arranged according to the key themes and issues that emerged.

Chapter 5 is the concluding chapter. This chapter presents the concluding reflections and the implications of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

As stated in Chapter 1, the aim of this study was to explore the schooling experiences of African immigrant children in South Africa. The key research questions are: What are the stories immigrant children have to tell about their schooling experiences in South Africa? How do they negotiate the complex and varied spaces of schooling?

In this chapter, I review literature related to my topic in order to identify key debates and to locate my study within these debates. I will, firstly, define concepts of relevance to the study. Secondly, I present the debates on the schooling lives of immigrant children evident in international and national literature. I have not been able to access much literature from the African context on the issues under the study.

2.2 Defining Key Concepts

In this study, explanations of concepts relevant to the study are discussed. I conceptualise a ‘*child*’ as a person or human being under the age of 18. This conceptualisation is in line with the South African Children’s Act 38 of 2005 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1989). On the other hand, I view childhood as constructed through various discourses and narrative practices. Stainton-Rogers and Stainton-Rogers. (1992) asserts that ‘*childhood*’ is socially constructed through how and what stories are told by the storytellers of childhood. Furthermore, children actively construct their childhoods. I will re-visit this argument in the section below where I discuss the conceptual framework for this study.

It is important to understand how other scholars have defined concepts as this informs how I conceptualise them in this literature review. Osman (2009) defines an ‘*immigrant*’ as an individual who settles in a country not of their birth. This definition is also stated in the White Paper on International Migration (Republic of South Africa, 1999) which states that immigrants are persons who migrate across borders to change their place of residence. My study focussed on the immigrants from the African continent.

However, in my study of literature I find that scholars and researchers use the concept, ‘*immigrant*’ in different ways. Bajaj (2009) contends that the phrase ‘*children in immigrant families*’ refers to both first generation (immigrant) children and second-generation U.S.A born children

of immigrant parents. Rashid and Tikly (2010) state that ‘*children from migrant background*’, ‘*children of migrant*’, and ‘*migrant pupils*’ are used to refer to children of all persons living in an EU country where they were not born, irrespective of whether they are third generation country nationals, citizens of another European Union member State or who subsequently became nationals of the host member state. On the other hand, Garcia (2005) explains “*immigrant*” children as a term that includes only children (including refugees) born outside the United States.

Mc Brien (2005) explained that ‘*refugees*’ are persons admitted to a country based on evidence that they have reason to fear persecution in their home country. The 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention defines a ‘*refugee*’ as a person who is outside their country of origin or habitual residence because they have suffered (or fear) persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or because they are a member of a persecuted ‘social group’ (UNHCR, 2002).

Refugees and asylum seekers are from other countries but differ in their status. An “*asylum seeker*” is a person who has left his/her country of origin and formally applied for asylum in another country but whose application has not been yet processed (Walker, 2011). Pinson, Arnot and Candappa (2010) assert that the asylum-seekers and refugees in many contexts might not have formal citizenship of the host but they have a right to access education. However, the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA) contends that asylum seekers and refugees are finding it extremely difficult to access education in South Africa. There is delay in obtaining necessary documents and children miss out on schooling (CoRMSA, 2008).

In my study, I conceptualise ‘*immigrant students*’ as those children from a foreign country who have settled in South Africa and are now studying in South African schools. My participants were African immigrant children who were not born in South Africa and had come from other African countries. In South Africa, every child has a right to education. According to South Africa’s Immigration Act (No.13) of 2002, ‘*legal immigrants*’ have the same rights as South African citizens.

2.3 The Schooling Experiences of Immigrant Children

In this sub-section, I examine literature on the schooling experiences of African immigrant children as documented in research internationally and in South Africa. As the immigration

population in South Africa increases, immigrant children are accessing education in a range of schooling contexts and in uniquely challenging ways (Vandeyar, 2012). The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 and various education legislation and policy documents affirm and protect the rights of learners; irrespective of diversity, for example, the South African Schools Act of 1996; Education White Paper 6: Special education – building an inclusive education and training system (Department of Education, 2001).

Despite the protective legislation and education policies, the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa indicate that refugee and asylum seeking learners often find themselves marginalised in various, often pervasive, ways in the public education system (CoRMSA, 2008).

2.3.1 Navigating cultural difference: what are the challenges?

Children of immigrants come to a country from a variety of circumstances and contexts. According to Qin et al. (2008), the transition of immigrant students into a host country is impacted by a number of factors which include discrimination, harassment, isolation, language barriers, changes in social standing in the school environment, academic standing and a lack of a sense of belonging. According to Magnuson, Lahaie and Waldfogel (2006), many children of immigrants must navigate the linguistically and culturally different social contexts in the new country as early as pre-school.

The issue raised in studies is that immigrant children bring resources, experiences and expectations to the host country, which reflects their transnational and transcultural lives; yet most schools fail to build on these assets (Sanchez, 2007). In many countries, the home language, cultures and identities of children of immigrants are silenced, marginalised and not affirmed (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2000). According to Qin (2008), immigrant children and youth transverse complex cultural worlds in the host country and have to make sense of conflicting expectations in daily lives. Qin (2008) explains that, in the context of the USA, many immigrant children and youth have to negotiate allegiance to their own culture, peer culture and aspirations with the mainstream culture.

Bajaj (2011) documented that Latin American child immigrants often struggle against a triple segregation and marginalisation; that is, by race, poverty and language. They often experience the devaluation of their cultural norms and beliefs and generally are not equipped with skills to effectively participate in the learning as other students. Morrow et al. (2008) states that although the social capital of immigrant children is not affirmed in schooling contexts in the

host country, in many contexts they perform well academically when compared to native-born children and youths

2.3.2 Social and emotional spaces within schooling contexts

Morrow (2008) states that the social and school spaces that children occupy influence their identity formation and the kind of childhood they experience. Brooker and Woodhead (2008) explain that immigrant children have a sense of who they are and develop both positive and negative meanings and attitudes about their emerging selves and their place in the world, as they interact with others in their social worlds; for example, in the context of their social interactions with peers in schooling contexts.

A sense of belonging is an issue that has been examined in research on immigrant children. According to Yuval-Davis (2006), a sense of belonging occurs at two levels: the cognitive and the emotional (affective). Immigrant children construct meanings around their social experiences using both cognitive and affective tools.

Many immigrant children navigate the lack of social interaction in schools by building other networks outside schooling contexts. Weller (2010) explains that the children orientate themselves to networks based on religious affiliation, for example. Network formation plays an important role in making it possible for people to meet one another. Social networks enable immigrant children to be themselves in a host country.

According to Weller (2010), in South Africa, immigrants generally choose to live in the same area and attend the same churches so they maintain some form of network which is valuable for the children. Chundamala and Peng (2006) emphasise that cultural, faith and religious communities are valuable sources of social support to families and their children. Contrary to this, Foner and Alba (2008) argue that such networks may be a barrier to integration into the host society. However, Blunt (2007) points out that the immigrants' social experiences are never homogeneous and their adaptations to new places differ from person to person. However, Weller (2010) contends that there is little analysis of social networks of immigrant children in schooling contexts, and that striving for a sense of belonging is a key issue in the social and educational lives of immigrant children. Den Besten (2010) contends that the experience in a new school will affect the emotional and psychological development of immigrant children depending on whether they experience inclusion or exclusion in the social sphere.

Vandeyar and Vandeyar (2011) examined the socio-cultural experiences of female immigrant students in South African schools. The study found that the immigrant youth struggled to construct and make sense of their identities in a new context and the schooling context represented them in deficit terms. Even their cultural value systems were subject to contestation. This adversely impacted their struggle to develop their independence, self confidence and self-esteem.

Imtoul, Kameniar and Bradley (2009) found that exclusionary practices, both at the level of individuals and as part of the wider Australian society, create barriers to any attempts by refugees or migrant children to form friendships with Australian-born children. The immigrant children encountered the challenges of acceptance, finding a social space and a struggle to create a new identity. As an excluded and marginalised group, there is a tendency that they feel inferior and inadequate. According to Wells (2011), the migration journey is almost impossible without social networks. Yeh et al. (2008) suggest that for many immigrant children, the process of migration entails loss of a familiar support network from friends, particularly in the school context.

Sadly in South Africa, Valji (2003) points out that despite the fact that South Africa is a democratic country with enlightened legislation and social policies; the hostility towards non-nationals is on the increase. Studies have shown that this spills into schooling contexts (Timngum, 2001; Qin, 2009). Timngum (2001), in his research in South Africa, found that immigrant learners do experience name-calling, physical violence and discrimination as they struggle to adapt to the host country.

In the USA context, Qin (2009) and Suarez-Orozco, Rhodes and Milburn (2009) highlight that the stress of coping with a new language, a new culture, school cultures that are not welcoming, racism and discrimination make immigrant children face the risk of developing learning, behaviour and emotional problems.

The issue of xenophobia is a concern globally, in particular, its impact on the social and emotional well-being of children. In South Africa, Osman (2009) conducted a study of immigrant students' experience of xenophobia in South African schools. Osman states that immigrant learners are children at risk in that they are vulnerable to incidents of xenophobia and other discriminatory acts.

The research by Landau, Ramkathan-Keogh and Singh (2005) and Harris (2002) highlight a rise in the intolerance, prejudice and hostility towards Black immigrants in South

Africa. In their research in the USA, Peguero and Bondy (2011) found that immigrant students report having the impression that their teachers construct them in a negative ways. Drawing from a study in the USA, Daoud (2011) explains that an analysis of informal social patterns in classrooms reflects the isolation of immigrant children from their English-speaking peers. In my study I aimed to examine how the participants navigate the complex social spaces at the school they attend.

2.3.3 The language issue

Language is a basic human right and is a critical issue in the social integration of immigrant children. Kamuangu (2006) highlights that the language difference is a key barrier that many immigrants' children face in the new country. The author holds the view that low levels of proficiency in the language of a host country are likely to affect the newcomer's academic achievement and their self-esteem.

Anisef and Killbride (2001) explain that a lack of language proficiency may result in immigrant children and youth experiencing feelings of inadequacy and may make them susceptible to negative judgement from their peers. According to Adedayo (2010), the ability to speak the dominant language in the host country may create opportunities for acceptance and may forge friendships between immigrant and indigenous learners. Fischer (2004) suggests that the accents of African immigrants in the UK may be a key identifier of difference and may create a barrier between immigrants and natives of a host country.

Esser (2006) contends that language represents a critical aspect of human capital for immigrant families and their children and is a key determinant of educational achievement. Hence, English as a medium of instruction, in many schools nationally and internationally, presents a challenge for many immigrant children. Research in the Netherlands found that the majority of first-generation immigrant children begin primary school with deficiencies in language and mathematics and this is often true of the second generation as well (De Valk, Noam, Bosch & Beets, 2009),

Schools should play a key role in fostering acculturation and language acquisition among children of immigrant parents (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2000). These researchers state that some countries accommodate immigrant children by providing programmes which support them through different levels of language at school. Rumbaut and Portes (2001) explain that there is need for education policies, programmes and curricula that encourage fluency, not

only in English or the dominant language in the host country, but also in home language of the children. Such an approach would foster bilingually spoken language and literacy.

Researchers, internationally, call for schools to expand the education mission and develop inclusive cultures and curricula practice that support the rapid social integration of immigrant children in early care, pre-school, kindergarten, primary and secondary levels of education (Karoly & Gonzales, 2011). Parmon (2010) contends that more must be done in the USA to assist immigrant children with developing language and literacy in English, the dominant language. Key areas for development was the improving of the professional skills of teachers, on how to instruct students with limited English Language proficiency in English; ensuring that children have access to books in the home to practice English; and more books in English should be offered to immigrant children so that they can practice English at home. Parmon (2011) states that often, immigrant families do not have books or other educational materials due to inadequate finances.

In South Africa, although official curriculum discourses in the national curriculum (Department of Education, 2011a; 2011b) appear to embrace cultural and linguistic diversity and promote the principle of inclusivity, immigrant children still experience alienation as the dominant languages are not their own, and they often have to adapt to a milieu dominated by English and the local language which in the province of KwaZulu-Natal is isiZulu.

2.3.4 Curriculum access and achievement outcomes

Rashid and Tikly (2010) state that curriculum is central to achieving a responsive and inclusive school. These scholars argue that the curriculum needs to reflect the contribution of different cultures throughout history to our understanding of the modern world. Govender and Muthukrishna (2012) explain that the curriculum is a political text and the content of the curriculum is ideological in nature. Their argument is that school curriculum is hegemonic in that it has the potential to reproduce and sustain inequality in society. The questions arguments raises are: Does the national curriculum in South Africa (for example, Department of Education, 2011a; 2011b) that foregrounds principles of social justice, inclusion, and the right to quality education for all, promote a positive learning experience for *all* students, including immigrant children. Do curriculum policies and practices enable the authentic integration of immigrant children or is mere assimilation the dominant school ethos? Does the curriculum promote anti-racism to address imbalances of power in schooling contexts with a diverse learner population?

Taylor and Sidhu (2012) contend that regardless of the presence of global policy frameworks that enshrine the rights of children to a quality education that is free of discrimination, in many countries, the curriculum makes it a struggle for immigrants to attain education. Research in Canada by Cummins (1996) reveals that the identities of bilingual students are devalued in schools as they are reprimanded for speaking their first language and made to feel ashamed of their cultural backgrounds. This kind of exclusion relates to the curriculum which reflects the values that underpin the school as a whole. Smyth et al. (2009) asserts that, in the Irish context, and due to its child centeredness approach, the curriculum in the primary school phase is seen as more inclusive of diversity than the junior or senior cycle curriculum.

The intersection of curriculum, social class and immigrant status has been the subject of recent research. The study by UNICEF (2007) shows that children of immigrants are more likely to end up in lower-performing schools or on low-ability tracks. The majority come from poor socio-economic backgrounds suggesting that socio-economic resources play a key role in the kind of educational outcomes achieved but this is dependent on the social capital of families. The crucial point is that the curriculum and the culture of schools fail to mitigate these effects for immigrant children. UNICEF (2007) states that the Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA) indicates that the children in immigrant families, who are in Grade 1-3, are four times more likely than the native-born German children to repeat a grade.

The issue of a curriculum for diversity is a key issue in debates internationally. A report by Ngo (2008) identifies several areas of need in the Canadian context which includes the initiation of policies and services to promote academic success, the right to language curriculum and support, professional development of teachers, accountability, the tracking of student progress and the socio-economic well-being of immigrant children and youth.

Rashid and Tikly (2010) support the above imperatives and point out that in countries such as Belgium, England Wales, the Netherlands, Scotland, Portugal, Malta and Spain, curriculum statements need to make explicit reference to the need for the curriculum to reflect diversity.

2.3.5 Parental involvement

According to Smyth et al. (2009), immigration, globally, has challenges for schools that have no prior experience of dealing with cultural and linguistic diversity. Often a lack of access to translation and interpretation services hinders communication and collaboration with parents. Hence, the language barrier contributes to lack of parental support to children in respect of school related tasks and activities such as homework (Hearth et al., 2008). There is little or no communication with the teacher about their children's performance in class. In addition, Hearth et al (2008) makes an important point; that knowledge of the society is also critical to immigrant parent's ability to support their children's schooling.

Crosnoe (2010) states that in the USA there have been programmes to address the issue of parental involvement, programmes that aim at improving the education of immigrant parents, in particular, their English language proficiency. Tannenbaum and Howie (2002) make an interesting point in that immigrant parents prefer to communicate with their children in their mother tongue. This suggests that any kind of intervention with parents has to be contextually relevant so as not to marginalise or diminish the status of the mother tongue.

2.4 Conceptual and Theoretical Framing of the Study

My study used a conceptual framework, the concept of *Children's Geographies* (Morrow, 2008) and I also draw on theoretical perspectives from debates in *New Childhood Studies or the New Sociology of Childhood* (James & Prout, 1990).

The field of New Childhood Studies has a significance impact on how childhood and children are researched. There had been a shift from conducting research *on* children to research *with* and *by* children (Gallagher, 2008). Such a focus foregrounds the view that children are ‘*meaning producing*’ members of society in their own right (Young & Barret, 2001, p.141).

Thus, the framework aligns with the new sociology of children, which argues that children should be understood as social actors and experts in the various power laden spaces of their own lives. Therefore, they have a right to participate in the research that aims to make the varied spaces and places of their lives visible (Clark & Moss, 2001). The immigrant children in the study were given a platform to voice their opinions about their schooling experiences in South Africa.

Holloway and Valentine (2000), in their research of this area of childhood geographies and spatiality, have investigated the ways in which children's spaces are used by children themselves and who are managed and supervised by adults who are keen to control, protect and

socialise children. Goodfellow (2012) argues that the school milieu is a space in which complex power relations play out involving learners, teachers, parents, etc. For example, second language learners may be constructed through deficit discourses that circulate within classrooms. In my study, 'place' is an issue of location such as the playground. Thus, in my study place is seen as a neutral, physical surface where social action happens. 'Space', on the other hand, is socially produced in multiple and complex ways, and is power laden (Barker & Weller, 2003).

In this study I sought to examine how social and learning environments within schools are not neutral spaces but are political spaces through which learners are constructed in complex ways. Van Ingen and Halas (2006) state that schools are 'contact zones' – in other words, they are spaces in which particular beliefs, norms, values and ideologies intersect. These scholars argue that the social spaces children occupy have an impact on their identity construction and the meanings they make about who they are.

Further, James & Prout (1990) argues that childhood is socially constructed and that children are social agents in the construction of their own childhoods. Goodfellow (2012) states that schools are power-laden spatialities. In schooling contexts, children rarely are given voice. Christensen and James (2000) argue that children's lives have been examined through the voices of adults' proxies. In this study, the aim was to give immigrant children voice and to listen to the stories they had to tell. As suggested by Kellet (2005), my aim was to engage my participants as partners in research rather than objects of study.

There has been a growing body of research examining the everyday experiences of children internationally, for example, Muthukrishna (2013); Ryan (2005); and Holt (2004). Studies have explored children's everyday spaces, including the lives of marginalised groups such as street children and children with disabilities (Ryan, 2005).

I have found, in my review of literature, that the voices of immigrant children have been ignored to a large extent.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter illuminated debates on the complex spaces of immigrant children's lives as documented in research in South Africa and internationally. I have also discussed the conceptual and theoretical framing of the study.

I present the research methodology and design of this study in the following chapter and provide a justification for my design choices. I show that the research design and methodology was influenced by my epistemological stance on children and childhood.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The overall aim of this chapter is to provide insight into how I explored the key research questions, which were: What are the stories immigrant children have to tell about their schooling experiences in South Africa? How do they negotiate the complex and varied spaces of schooling? In this chapter, I present the research methodology and the design choices made. I define the research methodology as the logical principles that guide my research inquiry. The design of the study refers to the strategy and the choices I made with respect to the selection of the research contexts, the participants, data generation methods, etc. (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). In this chapter, I discuss the study context and participants, data generation methods, my approach to data analysis and issues of reliability and validity.

3.2 Methodological Issues

As explained in Chapter 2, I came to this research with particular assumptions about children and childhood and how best to gain knowledge about children's lives. My epistemological stance was influenced by the debates emanating from Sociology of Childhood and New Childhood Studies. Morojele and Muthukrishna (2012) pointed out that the past decade has seen proliferations of research in the field of children's geographies of youth, for example, children's views of their neighbourhoods, the journey to school, urban conditions and school spaces.

3.2.1 Qualitative research

My study was qualitative in nature. I chose a qualitative approach as it allowed flexibility in data generation. Neuman (2003) explains that qualitative researchers remain open to the unpredictable and unexpected, are able to shift direction or the focus of the study and can even abandon an original research question during the study. In this study I intended to find out how and why immigrant children make sense of and experience schooling in South Africa. Henning (2004) contends that qualitative research aims to gain an understanding of social realities. Offering a further dimension, Henning (2004) suggests that social reality is a social construction. In this study I hoped to gain insight into how immigrant children in South Africa construct and make meaning of their schooling realities in South Africa.

Lauer (2006) explains that ‘quality’ in qualitative research refers to the *what, how, when* and *where* of the phenomenon being studied, in the case of my study – the schooling lives of immigrant children. This suggests that it examines the processes, meanings, patterns, forms and structural arrangements or configurations of a particular social reality. I was interested in making sense of children’s situated and concrete experiences in their temporal and local particularity. I hope to provide insight into the schooling lives of immigrant children in diverse spaces, places and temporal contexts.

3.2.2 Participatory research

I chose to follow a participatory research approach to generate data which is in line with perspectives from the New Sociology of Childhood (NCS) and Children’s Geographies. Participatory methods involve a range of data generation tools which have the common aim of actively involving research participants in the construction of data (Gallagher, 2008). A key issue is that in participatory research the agency of participants is acknowledged and encouraged and the research has a ‘reciprocal relationship in the research process’ (Gallagher, 2008, p. 138). According to Prout (2001, p. 34), it is important to enable children to ‘represent themselves’. In the process of ‘representing’, meanings are constructed, made sense of and shared.

I decided that the children in my study would be my *research partners* and that I would allow their voices to be heard. Lloyd-Smith and Tarr (2000) suggest that for us to understand children’s schooling experiences, it is crucial to listen and consult with children. Lloyd-Smith and Tarr (2000) argue that “the reality experienced by children and young people in educational settings cannot be fully comprehended by inference and assumptions” of adults (p. 61).

I used a children-centred approach to data production as far as possible so as to address the power dynamics between researcher and child participants, as suggested by Christensen and Prout (2002). The two key participatory methods used in this study were photo voice and focus group interviews. I elaborate on their use in the following sub-sections.

3.2.3 Narrative inquiry

My study was a narrative inquiry. The aim was to provide a space for my participants to tell their stories about their schooling experiences. Narrative inquiry has been used across many disciplines and research areas, for example, language studies, multiculturalism, gender studies, ethic studies and cross-cultural studies (for example; Bell, 2002).

Connelly and Clandinin (2006) state that researchers who use narrative inquiry believe that people, individually and socially, lead their storied lives. A key point made by these scholars

is that narrative inquiry is a reflexive study of people's lived experiences as a story. Other scholars raise the issue that narratives are representations and reconstructions of past memories (Clandinin & Huber, 2010; Reissman, 2007). Narratives that are told can either involve past experiences or present happenings and people tell stories that are unique to their contexts or situated in their own particular contexts (Reissman, 2007). Dhunpath and Samuel (2009) indicate that, in narrative inquiry, the narrator is encouraged to recall, reflect and re-live life experiences. Further, they tell their stories with a particular sequence and logic and the researcher has to make sense of the unfolding of events as they are told.

It is argued that a narrative inquiry is most appropriate when the researcher wants to examine deeply personal accounts of people's lives and experiences (Langellier & Peterson, 2004). Bell (2002) states that through stories, participants reflections and interpretations enable them to reconstruct their own images of their realities and these may be images that they were previously unaware of.

3.4 Research Design

3.4.1 Participants and research context

The study was conducted at a primary school in a Durban suburb that falls within the Umlazi District in KwaZulu Natal. My participants were six African immigrant learners (three girls and three boys) from Grades Four to Six (the intermediate phase of education). The school is a co-educational school with a strong Christian religious ethos, namely, Roman Catholic.

My sample was purposive as I focused on African immigrant children who have been in this country for more than two years. Children in the specific classes were briefed about the focus of the project, its aim and the nature of their participation. It was impressed upon them that participation was voluntary. Out of the pool of children who were willing to participate in the study, I randomly selected six students. Since the study was a narrative inquiry using a child centred approach, I decided to limit the study to a small sample size. One of the learners withdrew from the study at an early stage. English is the second language for all the participants. However, they are proficient in English.

3.4.2 Data generation

I tried to ensure that my data generation process was child-centred and in line with my conceptual and theoretical framing for the study. I explain below the various methods or techniques that I used to enable child participation in the data production. My key aim in using

the children-centred approach was to address the power dynamics between researcher and child participants (Young, 2002).

3.4.2.1 The individual semi-structured interview

I interviewed each of the participants individually. In line with narrative inquiry, the interview was constructed around a core stimulus sentence I put to them: Tell me the story of your schooling experiences since you and your family came to live in South Africa. I am very interested in listening to your story. I allowed the children to talk but probed for the details of the story throughout. I encouraged them to elaborate, recount critical incidents, give examples, etc. The flexibility of this kind of interview is valuable in a child centred approach and enabled a holistic understanding of the children and their schooling lives. The interviews were conducted in English and lasted for approximately 45 minutes each.

3.4.2.2 Focus group interviews

According to and Cassey (2000), the advantage of group interviews is that they draw out a range of opinions and perspectives. they contend that focus group interviews access collective accounts and participants are encouraged to discuss and interact with each other rather than the researcher. The role of the researcher is, in a sense, that of a facilitator. Thus, as Kvale (1996) and Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) explain, participants are engaged in an on-going process of collaborative meaning-making on a topic of mutual interest.

I acted as a facilitator in the focus groups sessions with the six participants and probed issues when it was necessary to obtain a fuller picture of experiences recounted. I also probed on some issues that emerged in the individual interviews. I held three focus group interviews of approximately 60 minutes each. In the first session, I began with the same open ended question: Tell me the story of your schooling experiences since you and your family came to live in South Africa. The second and third focus group sessions were devoted to photo voice as a research technique. I discuss this below.

3.4.2.3 Photo voice

I used photo voice in my study which has been considered a child-friendly approach to data generation (Morojele & Muthukrishna, 2012). Photographs reflect the ways in which social reality is constructed. Photo voice, as Caroline Wang (1999) describes it, is a grass roots approach to research and it enables the voices of participants to be captured through visual prompts.

Participants engage in taking photos that show particular spheres and activities of their everyday lives. The researcher requests the participants to take photos in response to a particular question, statement, issue or theme. In my study the stimulus was: I would like you to take photographs that will tell me the story of your everyday schooling life. The photographs were then used in the focus group session as a basis for discussion. Participants had to choose three pictures that best show their everyday schooling lives and then tell the group, including the researcher, what the photo captured and why it was taken. In other words, they had to interpret the photo image. The photos form the basis for dialogue. I was guided by the work of Wang (1999) and the empirical studies by Jacobs and Harley (2008) and Morojele and Muthukrishna (2012) in designing the photo voice process. Below, I outline the steps I followed with the participants:

- I explained the research project to participants once more – its aim, focus and purpose.
- I then introduced the participants to the disposable cameras and briefed them on how to use them.
- I explained to them the ethical issues related to photo-voice, for example, they had to have permission from anyone whom they photographed. I also obtained consent from them for use of the pictures that depicted their own images.
- I requested them to take photos that would tell me the story of their schooling lives.
- Participants were told to take the photographs within the schooling context over a period of three days.
- Some participants wanted the researcher to take the photos of them with their friends and others took photos of poor quality as they did not follow the steps given by the researcher.
- The above processes took place at the second focus group session.
- After this period, I collected the cameras from participants and developed the film.
- The third focus group session was a reflective group workshop session. Participants had to select three photos that best depicted their schooling lives.
- They were then asked to explain what the photographs were about, why they were taken and what it reflected. The rest of the group including the researcher probed and requested elaboration, where necessary.

The sessions were conducted in English and were audio-taped and later transcribed. The participants found the photo-voice activity fun, motivating and interesting. However, as the researcher, there were challenges I faced that I did not predict would occur. On reflection, I

believe my key problem was that I did not adequately train the participants on how to use the cameras. I should have been aware that this was a diverse group in terms of their skills and ability to learn camera use. The result was that certain participants had great difficulty and the quality of the photos that emerged was very poor. Generally, the outputs were blurred, poorly focused and failed to reflect clearly the issue they wanted to illuminate. Further, to my utter disappointment, one of the participants reported to me that he had lost his camera.

I had to revisit and redo the whole process in the case of some of the participants. I re-trained them on camera use. Three of participants lacked confidence and did not want to take the photos, indicating that they needed help. They suggested that they would identify the spaces and places that related to the issue they wanted to highlight and that I should take the particular photos. I conceded as I had to respect their wish and their right to choice. So, I had to deviate from the pre-determined steps I have indicated above. My whole experience points to the 'messiness' of qualitative research.

I am aware that researchers in the field of visual methodologies may be critical of the approach I followed here and this may be construed as a limitation to my study. I have to state that the photo-narratives that emerged from these pictures were rich, revealing and enlightening and I do not believe that, in any way, compromised the quality of the data yielded through the photo-voice method.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research involves an iterative and recursive process, according to Seidel (1998). It involves a reflective cycle: the researcher reads and studies the data, thinks about what is emerging, goes back to segments of data already read and notices new issues or topics. My data analysis reflected such a process and proved very time consuming.

I was also influenced by the work of Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) and Denzin and Lincoln (2003). I began my data analysis by reading and re-reading the data a number of times to familiarise myself with the key topics that were emerging. I then began using coding to help me organise the data, that is, using a word or a phrase, for example, the language issue; the kind teacher; mocking peers; academic achievement; supportive friends. I then began a more in-depth analysis by looking at similarities and differences between codes within and across data sets. I also searched for relationships between one or more codes and identified patterns in the data, for example, inclusionary and exclusionary pressures.

The final stage involved identifying broad themes that would reflect the situated, contextual nature of the schooling experiences of immigrant children. The themes were informed by literature I had studied and the data itself. One of my supervisors served as a critical friend through my data analysis process and, in collaboration with her, I was able to critique my analytical process and outcomes.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The research presented in this dissertation was part of a larger project in the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, titled, *'The geographies of children's schooling experiences in six Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries: Narratives of children, parents/caregivers and teachers'* (School of Education, 2013). Ethical clearance for the project was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Appendix 1). Approval to conduct the study was also obtained from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education

The key ethical issues I paid attention to were: confidentiality, informed consent, anonymity and voluntary participation. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) argue that *informed consent* is an essential ethical principle. Morrow (2008) stresses that research with child participants requires negotiation with adult gatekeepers before children can be approached for their consent. I obtained informed consent from the school principal; the parents/caregivers of the participants and from the participants; respectively in that order (refer to appendix).

Confidentiality meant that immigrant children, the school and the parents/caregivers were assured that the data collected from the participants was confidential. *Anonymity* involved protecting the identity of the school and the participants. I used pseudonyms in this dissertation. I also made children understand that their participation was *voluntary* and that they could withdraw from the study at any stage if they wished to. The issue of power dynamics between a researcher and participants is also an issue of ethics. As I have explained, I used participatory techniques to jointly produce data with my participants to try to address the complex power dynamics.

3.7 The Issue of Trustworthiness

Validity is “concerned with the integrity of the conclusion that is generated from a piece of research” (Bryman, 2008, p. 30). A key validity issue in qualitative research is trustworthiness. Shenton (2004) contends that in qualitative research the researcher has to show “that findings

emerge from the data and not their own predispositions” (p. 63). Further, trustworthiness is about the extent to which the findings reflect the reality (credibility).

In this study, the triangulation of data collection methods, focus group interviews, individual interviews and photo-voice, assured a degree of credibility. I also studied the data generation and analysis processes in other empirical studies. Participants were told to be honest in all their responses as I was interested in their unique lived experiences.

Member checks were part of my data production and analysis process. The participant presentation of the selected photos was, in a sense, a kind of member check, as both the researcher and peers engaged in dialogue with the participant who discussed his or her selected photos. Member check also occurred during the data analysis process. My supervisors and members of the M.Ed cohort programme at the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, were involved in critiquing the data analysis and my interpretation and theorising of the data. My work was placed under scrutiny in this process.

The findings in my study involved a small group of immigrant children in one school context. So the issue of transferability may be called into question. However, generalisation is not possible in such research (Shenton, 2004). I try, however, to convey to readers and researchers the details of my research methodology and design; the boundaries of my study (Shenton, 2004). I also attempt to provide a thick description of the phenomenon under study, as suggested by Guba (1981).

3.8 Limitations of the Study

Two concerns arose: Whether my participants shared their total and authentic experiences with me and whether there were any silences in the data. It is hoped that the triangulation of the data generation techniques and the child friendly approach helped build trust and rapport with the participants. The language usage (English) was a challenge with two of the children. I felt that if the interview was undertaken in their mother tongue then I may have obtained richer data from these participants.

At times, in the focus group interviews, I found that certain children were dominating the discussion. There was tension between not wanting to silence them and wanting to give voice to all participants. As indicated earlier, I encountered various logistical and process-related complexities with the photo-voice method. On reflection, many of the challenges had to do with my own level of proficiency in using the technique and training the participants.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter presented the research methodology and design of my study. I present the findings of the study in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the research design and research methodology of the study were elucidated. In this chapter, I present the major findings. The study was a narrative inquiry and I used photo voice as a participatory technique to expand on the stories. As evidence, I use immigrant children's own voices to support my analysis and interpretation of the data and to expand on the key themes I discuss. In other words, selected stories of my participants are included in this chapter. I use pseudonyms (chosen by the participants) to protect their identity. My research questions were: What are the stories immigrants children have to tell about their schooling experiences in South Africa? How do they negotiate the complex and varied spaces of schooling?

In the following discussion, I focus on participants' experiences of schooling in South Africa, the host country to which their families immigrated. According to Cele (2006), the concept 'experience' entails a space that holds and captures special meanings for, and happens to, an individual. 'Experience' engages the individual in particular ways and is cumulative, collective and shared.

4.2 Profile of Participants

My participants (African immigrant children) were six learners; three girls and three boys who voluntarily agreed to participate in my study. I provide a profile of the participants at the time of the study. English is the medium of instruction at the school they attend and they also have exposure to isiZulu in social spaces at the school.

Reggie is a boy from *Nigeria*. He is eleven years old and in Grade Six. He arrived in the country six years ago with both his parents and two sisters. He began his pre-school education in this country in 2003. His early expectation was that, in South Africa, he would be able to access a good education. Two years ago both parents passed on due to illness. He is now living with his uncle. His siblings were taken in by an aunt who lives in the same city in KwaZulu-Natal. Reggie indicated that his uncle supports him and the family back home in Nigeria. Reggie's dream is to be a professional soccer player for his country after he completes school and graduates from university.

Sarah is a little girl from the *Republic of Congo*. She is nine years old and in Grade Four. She arrived in the country in 2011 with her mother who sought employment in South Africa. The other members of the family were left in her home country. Her mother is employed and supports Sarah and herself and the family in the Republic of Congo. Sarah began Grade Three with little knowledge of English. According to Sarah, she is now proficient in English. She is indebted to her teachers who are committed to help her grasp the language. Sarah stated, “*I came in . . . um . . . South Africa in 2011 with my mother because my uncle found the job for her. My uncle said, education here is much . . . better than that in our country.*”

Mafia is a boy from *Zambia* who arrived in South Africa in 2009 and who was placed in Grade Four. He is now eleven years old and is in Grade Six. Mafia indicated that his father assisted him with English. His father is the only person in the home who is employed. At home, he lives with his parents, and two brothers and two cousins who are older than him. Mafia explained, “*I came to this country because my parents wanted me . . . to have a better education and also the jobs as they were not working . . . err. . . back home.*”

Sadie is a twelve year girl from *Burundi*. She came to this country in 2010. Both her parents are employed in the city. She recalls that she was refused a space at the school her parents first approached. The reason was that she had no knowledge of the language of teaching and learning, English. She is a confident child and is in Grade Five. She is older than all her classmates. The reason being that she was admitted by school management on condition that she was placed in a class that was two years below her age group, again, because of her lack of English language proficiency.

Jamel is a boy from *Eretria*. He is nine years old and has been in the country for a period of two years, having arrived in 2011. He is in Grade Four. His family’s religion is Islam. The school has a strong Christian ethos. When he arrived in South Africa, he had no knowledge of English. In the photo-voice activity, Jamel took the following photo of his family (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Jamel with his mother and baby sister

Alwyin is a girl from the *Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)*. She is eleven years old and lives with her parents. She came to this country in 2011 and expected to be admitted into Grade Five. However, she had to repeat Grade Five at her previous school in South Africa because of her lack of proficiency in English. She was enrolled at the current school after a year. Alwyin stated that she is happy in her current school because there are many African immigrants who are willing to help and support other immigrants who are struggling with English. Her father is a motor mechanic and her mother sells fruit on the streets to supplement family income. She indicated that her family's motivation for leaving their native country was the experience of civil war.

4.3 Findings of the Study

I present the key findings of the study in this sub-section. Through my data analysis and interpretation process, I drew on my conceptual and theoretical frameworks on children and childhood, and children's geographies discussed in chapter 3. I also drew on literature that I studied to make meanings of my data.

My study shows that a child's experience of schooling in South Africa, and how they negotiate schooling spaces, is contextual and situated in nature and thus, nuanced and diverse. Similarly, Model (2011) explains that immigrants do not adapt to the host environment in the same manner but in unique ways. Studies have shown that the transition of immigrant students into a host country is shaped by multiple and intersecting factors which include experiences of:

discrimination, harassment, isolation, language barriers, cultural change, social changes, new teaching and learning contexts, and how they negotiate a sense of belonging and identity (for example, Qin et al., 2008). Many of these influences also emerged from my study, as can be seen below.

4.3.1 *Experiencing and negotiating the language barrier*

Rodriguez (2009) argues that learning the dominant language of a country, which may be English, is a crucial goal for the children of immigrants when they arrive in a host country. The reason is that language is critical to social assimilation and communication in the new society.

The study illuminates the experience of language as a barrier when they entered the country and the school system:

The first day I Johannesburg - we stayed there for two months. I did not go to school and I did not know the language. At home we spoke the home language. I met a white girl in the park where I used to play... she taught me English (Sarah, individual interview).

The first school refused to enrol me because. . . they said I cannot speak English. . They said that I should go to private classes then come back after I have learned the English language. Then I came to this school, I was happy to be accepted. They said I have go back and do the grade I have passed in my country. I was sad but I at least I was schooling. The first year I was really . . . really lost. The school was big, there were many class and I come from a village (Sadie, individual interview).

The language in South Africa is . . . so . . . hard. Before it was so . . . hard when I arrived in the school. Children will say some stuff to me which I don't understand. They bully us during break time and push us on the line to the tuck shop. My friend in class ... she taught me the language the ...language is hard (Sarah, individual interview).

I did not want to speak much . . . err . . . because I did not know the languages (Zulu and English). I did not have any friends, they would play in groups and I sat alone some will say things I don't understand and I think they called me names (Mafia, individual interview).

The above excerpts show that the language issue is linked to a sense of belonging or isolation; acceptance in social groups or not. Adedayo (2010) explains that the ability to speak a South African language predominantly spoken in a school creates opportunities for acceptance and friendship between immigrant learners and indigenous learners. Further, Chow (2001) argued

that language is essential for communication and for the acquisition of information in the host nation country.

It was evident in most of the narratives that the language issue is the crucial border between inclusion and exclusion. The participants recounted their experiences of how they were denied a space in a school on the basis of language proficiency and how they were forced to repeat a grade or enrol in a class that was two levels below the grade level they were functioning at in their native country. Such school policies contradict education policies and legislation in South Africa (for example, Department of Education, 2001), and violate the principles of the Constitution of 1996 and the South African Immigration Act (No.13) of 2002.

The findings, as evidenced in the above narratives, show that the support that they received from the few supportive peers in and out of school was highly appreciated and valued by participants, particularly in their early years in the country. Four out of five participants indicated that they are assisted by friends; they met at school or on the playground, to acquire the dominant language.

It is apparent that the participants come to South Africa with good proficiency in their native language and enrol in a school where English is the medium of instruction. They are expected to assimilate and access the new language and curriculum with limited support from the school as indicated by the narratives below. Further, Jamel's poignant story reveals how teaching methodologies can result in oppression and poor self-esteem amongst immigrant learners.

I started here in grade three, when I first came here . . . um it was nice. I was happy but I did not know English. the children from my class were helping me to study. So I learned English . . . and soon was able to read and write. Sometimes the teachers, .will make you say one thing many times because they see that you are struggling with the word and . . . I don't like it. It is like the teacher want you to feel there is something wrong with you. Sometimes pronounced it wrongly (frowning). Why can't they help us without . . . mm ...? Making us feel inferior (Jamel, focus group interview).

I failed my grade because I did not know the language and the teacher were not able to help me. The teacher just asks other African immigrant children to help you (Alwyin, focus group interview).

Motha and Ramadiro (2005) explain that the most common languages spoken by immigrants in South Africa are Arabic, Swahili, and French. Lingana and Portuguese. Motha & Ramadiro point out that there are no common language structures between these languages and the official South

African languages. He suggests that there are not many programmes at schools which provide support to African immigrant children and that they struggle on their own to fit into the system.

Only one out of six participants applauded the support of the teacher in helping her to grasp the language. The teacher made time during school breaks to provide the extra support, for example, reading with the child in what was clearly a supportive space. Sarah's reflections revealed her happiness at the time. She explains:

When I came in this school I could not understand the language . . . so I would raise my hand to ask in my language. The teacher was very kind to me, she would ask in class if there is anyone who can help with the language. The one girl who helped me taught me the language. The teacher called me during break time and gave me picture books to read with her. . . . (Pause). .. Hey it was not easy but I always came to school to read different picture books so that I can read for my teacher during break time (smiling) (Sarah, focus group interview).

My study shows that complexities inherent in accessing the dominant language can jeopardise curriculum access and the integration of immigrant children into the schooling system in the host country. Brown and Chu (2012) stress the importance of the school and teacher characteristics in predicting positive school experiences and outcomes. My study shows that this is critical to how children and their teachers experience and navigate the language issue.

4.3.2 Negotiating social spaces: Inclusion and exclusion

Morrow (2008) and Skelton (2008) contend that social spaces that children occupy and navigate shape their sense of self and their identities. Brooker and Woodhead (2008) add that, as children interact with others, they begin to construct their own identities, have a sense of who they are and develop positive and negative attitudes about their emerging selves and their place in their worlds. Deslandes, Trudeau, Rivard et al. (2012) explain that immigrant children in the host country have to go through a complex functional and social adaptation process. The question one is provoked to ask is: What role does the school play in the social adjustment of immigrant children in the host country? What policies should be in place to support the social adjustment of children?

The narratives of the participants reveal how they had to navigate complex social spaces that were both inclusionary and exclusionary. The photograph Sadie chose to discuss in the photo voice workshop is presented below. She narrates her experience:

I sit alone during break . . . and . . . err . . . have my lunch. I arrived in this school in 2011. The children. . . . from my class call me names because I am not from this country. They play together and when I join them they . . . say go back to your country. I am afraid to go and err.... report to the teacher because in class she always say we must solve our problems. Sometimes it's pretty boring to sit alone. . . . but I am happy. When I came to this school I was hoping I will . . . make many friends because my aunt said the people in this country are nice. Some children are very . . . very mean. Some will come and ask for my lunch and . . . if I do not give them, they will call me 'ikwerekwere'. I do not like that name, they must stop using it because it is painful (Sadie, photo voice interview).



Figure 2: Sadie alone at break time

I did not have friends at school because they called me 'M'. I did not like that so I was alone most of the time. The other children will laugh when I talk. In class groups I was always the last to be selected and when I say something they will just ignore me (Mafia, photo-voice)

Narratives from the participants below reflect the challenges they have faced or still face in the schooling context, which include: bullying social isolation and racism. Sarah's narrative reflects pervasive myths which circulate and construct immigrant children in negative ways, for example, that they are capable of witchcraft. Threats to their agency

are revealed in stories such as Sarah's, who states that copying the work of another goes against the values she holds, yet she is powerless to act to address this behaviour in one of her peers and feels trapped in colluding in an act that is unacceptable.

The other children used to call me names and said I am 'navy' in completion and I am an 'untidy girl, clumsy and ugly'. They did not treat me well even in the class. Some will say when are you going back to your country? They copy my work and when I tell them I don't like it and it's not nice, they won't listen. Some will say I bewitched the teacher to give me high marks because foreigners are good at that (Sarah, individual interview).

The grade five teacher used to say to me "you Nigeria come here". I did not like it as I was able to speak English and Zulu very well. I began my pre-school in this country and I feel I am South African (Reggie, focus group interview).

The data suggests that immigrant children at the school are 'othered' by local learners through insidious name calling such as 'amakwerekwere.' According to Azindow (2007), the term 'makwerekwere' is intended to be derogatory. It represents people who come to South Africa from a country thought to be economically and culturally backward in relation to South Africa. Further, the term labels the people who lack proficiency in local languages. Thus, they are oppressed on the basis of language, country of origin and, most likely, their culture.

CoRMSA (2008) found that immigrants also face discrimination in the host country, the first being the difficulty in accessing a place. Once enrolled, they still face other forms of discrimination and exclusionary pressures of a social nature. For example, their accent tends to become a major identifier that separates them from native learners (Fischer, 2004; Aikhionbare, 2007). The extract below indicates how class teachers may perpetuate discrimination on the basis of the spoken language of immigrant children who are in the process of acquiring the dominant language. Taylor and Sidhu (2012) argue that the education system has to create policies and structures that work to ensure the inclusion of all children, irrespective of diversity. Providing support to refugees in schools would be the essence of inclusive education.

There was one time when the teacher punished me because I could not recite a whole prayer in Zulu. I said "ushwebile, ushwebile" (meaning missed), the class laughed at me and the teacher was angry. I was supposed to say "ucwebile, ucwebile" (meaning holy), Again I was sent to the school Chapel to pray and ask for forgiveness from God (Mafia, individual interview).

Despite the picture in the narratives above, studies internationally have shown that many immigrant children have strong social skills, are motivated and have the agency to build support networks around them (for example, Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2000). For example, Sarah narrated,

Did you see that girl I was with downstairs? She is the one, who is helping with my work and everything in school (Sarah, individual interview).

It must be mentioned that, in the narratives, there were very positive experiences with particular teachers who supported them emotionally and who were attentive to their social and academic needs. Sadie highlights the fact that the teacher treats immigrant children in the same way as he does local children; she intimates that he does not practice any form of exclusion or discrimination. Sadie seems to appreciate the inculcation of values in the curriculum by one of her teachers.

My teacher is very kind and helps me with my schoolwork and the language if I don't understand (Sarah, focus group)

My teacher who is a male, err. . . . treat us alike. He is . . . very nice (smiling). When I am quiet in the class, he asks what is wrong, and do I understand what is said. Mr X is like a father to us all in the class. He gives us advises . . . and and always tell stories with moral lessons (Sadie, focus group).



Figure 3: *My teacher makes me happy*

In the photo-voice workshop, Alwyin had this to say about the photo above that he selected for discussion:

I love my class very much. The teacher teaches us to respect and love one another as a family. My classmates are younger than me because the principal said I must repeat the class I passed in my country. I did not know the English so I had to do the class again. I like the . . . the school uniform and the way my teacher talks with us. She does not shout at us but stands next to you and ask what is the problem. My friends in the class help me if I don't understand the work in the class. I do the homework at the class with my friends because my mother comes home late after work. There are many charts in my class which display the work we have done. I do not like the ANA (Annual National Assessment) , the English is not easy and the paper is long. I love my teacher very much, she is beautiful and loving (Alwyin, photovoice).

Sarah, in the narrative below, expresses the positive and inclusionary ethos in his class as generated by the teacher:

My teacher encourages us in class to tolerate and love one another, I love my class very much because they accept me as one of them. I don't feel as an outcast as other immigrants in their classes. I have made many friends here at school and some are attending my church in South Beach, in Durban called the Kingdom of God (Sadie, focus group interview).

In examining the geographies of the children's schooling through their narratives, it becomes evident that inclusion and exclusion are processes that operate simultaneously, in various schooling spaces, and children actively make meaning of how these processes play out. This suggests that in developing school policies for immigrant child, teachers and school management should actively engage children as resources as they have knowledge that may be valuable to any intervention programme. It becomes clear once more, that children appreciate a teacher who instils values of respect, love and learners supporting one another emotionally and academically. Salinas (2006) also found that use of good teaching methodologies and the building of trust and good rapport between teacher and the students enables immigrant students to bridge the complex adjustment to schooling in a new country.

The study also provides a picture of a supportive and caring teacher and healthy social relationships amongst learners.. For example, Reggie explains:

Mr X take his time to teach us (immigrant children) five to ten minutes after school. When I say Hi or Sawubona to other children at school . . . they say keep quiet and laugh at me. I like Zulu but I like to speak Zulu but I don't know the language. they don't teach me. I want to be cool like them
(Reggie, focus group)

According to Den Besten (2010) belonging is a vital mental health and affective concept and is critical to identity formation; it involves a sense of connection, an affinity with others, a sense of security and a sense of being part of a social group. A sense of belonging is shaped by a person's experiences. African immigrant children feel accepted when they are able to communicate with other children in a native language. Taylor and Sidhu (2012) suggest that providing support to refugees in schools constitutes inclusive education. Sadie, in her account below, explains how she values her connectedness to other immigrant children and her sense of belonging. Rodriguez (2009) explains that often immigrants from the same country can come together to form groups in their host country.

My two friends are from my country and three are from this country. I feel like I am among my sisters when I am with them. We also stay in the same flat and attend the same church. Most of the time we are always always together. They help me with my school work as they are in grade six. Break time we play as a group. At first I did not do well in class but this year I have managed to pass all the subject including English. My friends help me a lot (Sarah, photo voice).



Figure 4: Sarah with her friends

My study revealed that group membership can contribute positively or negatively to an individual's social identity. Reggie's tells of his prowess at soccer, and his emerging identity as a good soccer player. It is clear that this enabled him to access a particular social group and its identity:

We spend more time playing soccer at school. I was popular with my friends as I was good in soccer
(Reggie, individual interview).

According to Wohlwend (2007), the playground is a significant site in which children learn social hierarchies and encounter cross-sections of society and new children they may meet for the first time. Vandeyar (2012) provides a further dimension when they state that identity is a construct that changes with time as it is produced and reproduced within changing and fluid social contexts.

4.3.3 Experiencing curriculum spaces

In this sub-section, I examine the children's reflected stories; how they experience teaching and learning at the school, curriculum access, and broadly, education in the host country. Researchers have stressed that schools have a crucial role to play in the adjustment of immigrant children socially, emotionally and academically (Den Besten, 2010; Rodríguez, 2009; Taylor & Sidhu, 2012).

International studies reveal a contradictory picture regarding this issue. Meda, Sookrajh and Maharaj (2012) highlight the exclusionary pressures immigrant children experience when trying to access schooling in the host country and that a particular lack of support is noticed once they are admitted into schools. Rodrigues (2009) contends that many of the teachers very seldom take, or find, the time to understand their learners in terms of their diversity, in regard to culture, language, social background, etc. In a study in South Africa, Sookrajh, Gopal and Maharaj (2005) found that teachers affirmed immigrant learners and constructed the learners as hard working, goal oriented and who overcome many odds to excel academically. My study revealed positive and negative stories from the participants' experiences of education in South Africa. The narratives below reflect the meanings children actively construct from their experiences and how they navigate teaching and learning.

Sadie's photo-narrative is illuminating in regard to what she considers a good teacher. It is clear that she actively evaluates her experiences as a student in search of quality education. Embedded in her narrative are critical issues related to teaching methodologies that are responsive to diversity; building a supportive class in which children are resources to one another; closely monitoring learners and supporting learning.

My teacher try to be clear when giving instructions, she uses gestures and talk slowly. The teacher asks Amanda (not her real name) to explain to me as she is from Africa as well. She used to attend extra classes for English on Saturday. In class we read in groups most of the time so it is easy to follow the group. I love the way my teacher teaches us. She. . . moves around a lot between the rows to see if we are doing the work. There are different groups in the class and the teacher attends to each group and gives help. You can't dodge . . . my teacher's work. She gives us the opportunity to ask if we are not clear. If all teachers can do like that, it would be nice (Sadie, photo voice).



Figure 5: Sadie, Miss X with her class group

The narratives of other participants were similarly insightful:

I have the best . . . best . . . teacher in the whole . . . whole world. In the morning she asks me to read for and helps with the new words I cannot read and pronounce. She would give me books to read at home. The books have different levels and it makes it easy to go back to the lower level if I . . . problems with the book I am reading. She listens to my reading every time I am reading a new book (Sarah, focus group interview).

Mm . . . (smiling) But when I am not clear about what is taught in the class, I raise my hand to get the teacher's attention. I ask him to repeat again and he explains in different ways. He is very patient with us who are struggling with the language. When they laugh at us he disciplines them. He is a good teacher and that make his lessons easier to understand (Reggie, focus group interview).

No . . . My teacher does not help me all the time . . . but my friend in class does too. After school . . . while we are waiting for the car that fetch us, we sit down and do the homework and read . . . nice story books. Before I used to copy my friend's work so that I do not get shouted to . . . by the teacher. I wish

teachers can be more tolerant of the children who are struggling with the language in the class. Sometimes other children laugh at you when you are trying (Jamel, focus group interview).

Arnot and Pinson (2005) stress that teachers need professional development so that they can be responsive to the social, emotional and learning needs of immigrant children in schools. My study points to the fact that professional development could be school based as the participants stories suggest that there are caring, effective teachers at the school who could be used as a resource to others members of staff.

The study provides an interesting perspective on how parents could provide curriculum support in a space outside the school context. The following narrative provides evidence of this:

My mother helps me with the schoolwork at home. She would listen to me when I read story books for her at home, my father is the only one who speak English, so every time he will teach me the language (Jamel, individual interview)

The study points to the importance of schools partnering with parents and families to support immigrant children. A Canadian study by Beazley (2012) draws attention to the importance of parental involvement and partnerships with schools. In this study, parents lacked basic knowledge of the school system and were unaware of what was required of them as parents. An eye-opener was that any communication that was sent to parents was not translated into the spoken language of parents. In South Africa, the nature, degree and quality of parental involvement by immigrant parents and the barriers to involvement would be an important area for future research.

4.3.4 Cultural diversity

Cummins (2001) emphasised that schools must take account of the fact that cultural diversity is the norm in schools, institutions and society globally. African immigrants come to South Africa with their on cultural values, beliefs and norms. They meet different cultures in the new country and this is likely to shape and re-shape their identities. It is critical that schools are responsive to the diverse backgrounds of learners and that all cultures are equally affirmed.

The children in the study come from interesting countries, backgrounds and cultures as evidenced in the following excerpts from the focus group interviews:

Hi I come from Eretria in Africa by Egypt. I speak Tigre (Jamel)

My name is Sarah. I am from Congo I speak French; Swahili and now I speak English (Sarah)

I am from Burundi - I speak French and Portuguese (Sadie)

I am from Nigeria; I speak Igbo (Reggie)

Hi, I come from Zambia; my home language is French (Mafia)

My name is Alwyin, I come from Democratic Republic of Congo and I speak French (Alwyin)

Another issue examined was whether the school is responsive to this diversity in the learner population. In the photo voice activity, learners took pictures of spaces and places that reflected the Christian ethos of the school. The school in this study has a strong Roman Catholic ethos. The narratives of the participants reflect the meanings they make of the dominance of the Christian religion.



Figure 6: The Grotto at the entrance of the school foyer



Figure 7: Inside the school chapel

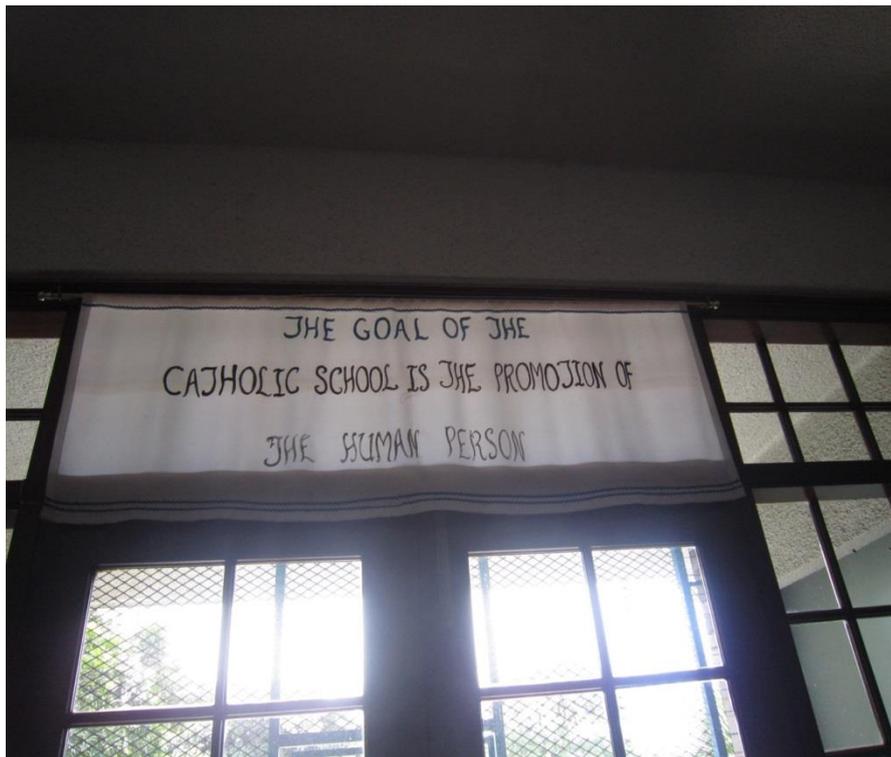


Figure 8: A banner at the school entrance

The photo voice narrative below is illuminating:

I used to copy my friend's work and ask my mother to sign it. At school we do not submit work which is not signed by parents. My teacher would ask me to read loudly and I always hesitate . . . hesitate, when asked who has helped me with the work I would say my mother until the teacher called her. My mother told my teacher she does not know the language and that I come home with the finished homework. I got the detention for cheating, I was sent to the chapel to pray the rosary. Praying the rosary takes about 35 minutes. I am Muslim and I am expected to say the prayer as I am in the Roman school. I don't like it but I do it (Jamel, photo voice)

Other learners also drew attention to the dominance of the Christian ethos at the school. The reasoning around this issue highlights children as active in their construction of meanings. They do have views around issues that concern them and on influences that are shaping their lives. This is in line with debates emanating from the New Sociology of Childhood (Prout & James, 1990). The importance of examining such power-laden spaces in children's lives is stressed by scholars in the field of children's geographies as:

When I fight with the girls in the class because they pick on me, the teacher will send me to the chapel to pray. She would say go and ask for God's forgiveness (Reggie, focus group interview)

I believe in God but I don't see why there should be statues and the cross all over the school. When I am sent to the chapel to pray and ask for God's forgiveness, I just sit there . . . and do not pray because I don't understand why I had to be sent to the chapel to pray. I believe that God is everywhere and I don't have to see the red light and the cross to know God (Mafia, focus group interview)

One can see the clash of religions that Jamel experiences. Disciplinary measures are linked to the Roman Catholic religion and Jamel is clearly unhappy about this. He has to adhere to such disciplinary measures as he is obviously powerless to resist. The questions this raises are: Are families equally powerless to challenge such school policies? Do such school policies violate the principles in South African legislation and policy, for example, the South African Schools Act of 1996? Can schools create spaces for children's voices to be heard on issues of cultural diversity and how schools can be more responsive?

However, the study reveals another picture of the school. Teachers are trying to make the curriculum responsive to the diversity in the schools and in classrooms, for example, through collaborative research project work. The following narratives are evidence of this:

When we are doing projects like heroes we know, in the class the teacher mix us (African immigrant, Indians, Coloureds) and she move from one group to the other to check if we are all contributing. I like my teacher because she displays our work on the back of the class wall (Mafia, individual interview)

In Life Skills period we had a task to share our culture with the rest of the class. I was happy to share how we celebrate in my country. The food we eat and how we dress is different and when we eat we sit down and form a circle as a family. We hold hands as we bless the food we are to eat. The class was laughing; it was a nice lesson as we learn what other countries celebrate in their culture. I passed my presentation because I was confident (Sadie, individual interview)

Pappamihel (2004) contends that the topic of cultural diversity in the curriculum is an effective strategy for helping students to make connections to other cultures and build respect. However, the question this raises is whether the kind of multicultural education practiced in the school addresses the real issues, in particular, issues of power and power relations. The findings of the study suggest the need for whole school development and professional development on the issue of making the school responsive to diversity. Drawing on research in critical multicultural and critical anti-racism debates would assist teachers and school management to examine institutional barriers, inequalities and power imbalances in the schooling experiences of immigrant children (Nieto, 1992).

4.4 Conclusion

Research in South Africa shows that, despite exclusionary pressures that play out, the majority of immigrant children integrate successfully in schools (Imtoul, Kameniar & Bradley, 2009). This is also the picture created by my study. The school is still faced with the challenges of responding more strongly to the diverse needs of immigrant learners. My study suggests that the critical exclusionary space is the language issue in their early years of schooling in this country as this impacts curriculum access and social and emotional wellbeing. I present the conclusion and implications of the study in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

5.1 Introduction

The study presented in this dissertation explored the geographies of the schooling experiences of immigrant children within the South African context. Six children at a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal were participants in the study. Their families migrated to South Africa from the following African countries: Nigeria, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritria, and Zambia. The children come from a range of language backgrounds including Tigré (spoken by the Tigré people, an ethnic group in Eritria); Swahili; French and Portuguese.

My key research questions were: What are the stories immigrant children have to tell about their schooling experience in South Africa? How do they negotiate the complex and varied spaces of schooling? In this chapter, I present the conclusion and the implications of the study as I reflect on the key findings, methodological issues and implications of the research.

5.2 Conceptual Framework and Research Methodology

As I have explained in earlier chapters, my study had a conceptual framework, the concept of "Children Geographies" framed my study... This framework aligned with the theoretical lens referred to as New Sociology of Children which constructs children as social actors and experts on their own lives. Hence, they have a right to participate in a research study that examines the varied spaces and places of their lives (Christensen & James, 2000; Christensen & Prout, 2002).

In this study, I allowed six immigrant children to be active participants in a piece of research that explored their schooling lives. The strength of the study was that it exposed my participants as active agents and critical thinkers who were able to make complex meanings of their school lives. My study adhered to the call by scholars such as Kellet (2005) and Skanfors (2009) who argue that children need to be listened to and viewed as partners in research than as objects of a study.

5.3 Synthesis of the findings

The study revealed that all six immigrant children interviewed in this study had experienced exclusionary pressures in one way or the other in the schooling spaces. The key exclusionary issue was the language factor. Both schools, at which they initially sought a place and the current school, have various pervasive practices that excluded children on the basis of language, primarily because they were not proficient in the dominant language, English. The informal

policies and practices are in violation of education policy and legislation in South Africa. CoRMSA (2008) drew attention to the discrimination that migrants within the schooling system face, such as the difficulty obtaining a place in schools based on their lack of language proficiency. The key barrier that participants experienced in curriculum access was the lack of proficiency in English. Participants navigate the language issue through sourcing help and support from peers, particular teachers, parents and networks in, and outside, the school.

Children also experienced exclusion and oppression perpetrated by peers at the social level that impacted on their sense of belonging at the school, for example, name calling, social isolation from peer groups and bullying. However, it does seem that much of the experience of exclusion occurs in the early years at the school. All participants told positive stories of their experience at the school. It is likely that once they become proficient in English, they excel academically and, in sport activities, they are able to form healthy friendship groups within the school. Learners also had good stories to tell about specific teachers by whom they were affirmed and who supported them out of their own personal initiatives such as working with them during school breaks. The participants were able to share their constructions of what it means to be a good teacher from their own lived experience, for example, one who responded to diversity through inclusive teaching methodologies and strategies; one who is attentive to their social and emotional development; one who has clear rules and monitors teaching and learning; one who affirms learners and one who is patient and caters for individual needs of her learners.

The issue of the school and its responsiveness to cultural diversity emerged in the study. Although multiculturalism appears to form part of the curriculum, the manner in which it is interpreted and the practices used is questionable. From an analysis of the children's narratives, it seems that the curriculum reflects a traditional multi-cultural education that focuses on celebrating diversity and understanding other cultures, in particular their religious beliefs, foods, dress, etc. There needs to be a shift in the curriculum, from engaging with cultural diversity from a traditional multicultural education approach to a critical multiculturalism and anti-racism perspective in which the focus is on identifying and disrupting unequal power relations and systemic barriers to children's healthy development (May, 1999), for example, the dominant Christian ethos that impacts the lives of children.

The study revealed some evidence of parental support of their learning in their academic work. However, there is no evidence from the narratives of school- parent partnerships. This is an area that requires further research.

5.4 Researcher Reflections on Methodology

My research methodology (narrative inquiry) and my data generation techniques such as focus group interviews and photo voice succeeded in giving voice to my participants. Using narrative inquiry fitted perfectly with what I was studying. The participants narrated their stories via three data generation techniques: the individual interview, focus group interview and photo voice. I chose a qualitative methodology as it allowed flexibility when researching the phenomenon under study. Neumann (2003) explains that such an approach allows the researcher to remain open to the unpredictable, to change direction in the course of the research, and even abandon an original research question. As I have explained in Chapter 3, due to challenges I faced, I had to change the photo voice process, which was contrary to what has been followed in other empirical studies with which I engaged.

The rich stories I was able to access were valuable source of data and enabled me to gain deep insight into the complexity of the children's schooling experiences and how they navigate access to education. I used a narrative inquiry methodology to obtain a view of experiences as the phenomenon under study, in my case the schooling experiences of my participants (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). I was able to explore the spaces and places of experience such as sociality, teaching and learning and the institutional ethos. Participants shared with me their living stories which revealed who they are, who they hope to be and how they experience their lives.

The innovative methodology that I used was photo voice. Although I did have challenges with the method, as I have explained in Chapter 3, I was pleased about the rich data the method yielded. Prout (2001) explained that it is essential to allow children to represent themselves and share meanings about themselves and their lives. This is what occurred in my study through the children's participation in photo voice. Photo voice provided a platform for the participants to negotiate their social construction of schooling spaces.

5.5 Implications of the Study

More research needs to be undertaken in South Africa to examine the schooling experiences of immigrant children in a range of contexts. This body of research will prove useful to inform school policies and practices and to put in place accountability and monitoring mechanisms.

Research is required to explore how the school curriculum deals with the issue of cultural diversity. This could inform teacher professional development programmes. I pointed out the need to shift the focus to the perspective of anti-racism and critical multiculturalism which should inform school policies and the curriculum. My study also suggests need for a host country to come up with policies which would ensure access to school culture and its curriculum. There should be explicit school policies that can enable assistance with learning the language of teaching and learning, appropriate inclusive assessment procedures tailored to children's needs such as previous schooling; and protection from any form of discrimination.

A further issue that emerged from the study was the school involvement by immigrant parents. Internationally, studies show that immigrant parents are less likely to be involved in their child's education, as examples: to attend meetings; participate in school activities; failure to communicate with teachers because of barriers they face, such as lack of proficiency in the language; for lack of knowledge of the mainstream culture, the school system and curriculum; and time constraints due to work commitments and other responsibilities (for example, Turney & Kao, 2009).

The findings of this study have implications for school development and teacher professional development. The question that needs to be engaged with is: How do we create a school ethos and culture that affirms and supports immigrant children emotionally, socially and academically. Allowing natural assimilation is a pervasive strategy in view of the stories children that the children told. It is conceded that there are good social and academic practices by some teachers and those learners imply that the school has access to resources so as to bring about change. The key partners in any school transformation process should be the immigrant children themselves and their local peers. This study shows that children have the capabilities to contribute to school based policy development. Their voices must be heard - this is their right.

REFERENCES

- Adedayo, A.C. (2010). *Education and socio-cultural challenges of immigrant students in a school in South Africa*. (Master's dissertation, University of Pretoria).
- Aikhionbare, C.E. (2007). *Transition of African adolescent immigrants into urban or suburban schools*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cincinnati.
- Anisef, P. & Kilbride, K.M. (2001). *To build on hope: overcoming the challenges facing newcomer youth at risk in Ontario*. Toronto: CERI.
- Arnot, M., & Pinson, H. (2005). *The education of asylum-seeker and refugee children: A study of LEA and school values, policies, and practices*. Retrieved August, 19, 2013
<http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/people/staff/arnot/AsylumReportFinal.pdf>
- Asanova, J. (2005). Asanova, J. (2005). Educational experiences of immigrant students from the former Soviet Union: a case study of an ethnic school in Toronto. *Educational Studies*, 31 (2), 181-195.
- Azindow, Y. M. (2007). *Insiders and Outsiders: Citizenship and Xenophobia in Contemporary Southern Africa*. Book Review: Retrieved October 17, 2013, from London: ZED Books.
- Bajaj, C. S. (2011). Informing immigrant families about high school choice in new York City: challenges and possibilities. Retrieved June 30, 2013, from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED509551.pdf>.
- Barker, J. & Weller, S. (2003). 'Never work with children?': the geography of methodological issues in research with children. *Qualitative Research*, 3(2), 207-227.
- Bazley, M. (2012). *Immigrant parents' involvement in one Ontario school: A case study*. Unpublished thesis. Retrieved November 15, 2013, from:
http://qspace.library.queensu.ca/bitstream/1974/7195/1/Blazey_Miranda_H_201205_*MED.pdf
- Bell, J. S. (2002). *Narrative inquiry: More than just telling stories*. *TESOL Quarterly*, 36 (2), 207-213.
- Brooker, L. & Woodhead, M.(2008). *Developing positive identities: diversity and young children. early childhood in focus*. Milton Keynes: Open University.
- Blunt, A. (2007). Cultural geographies of migration: mobility, trans-nationality and diaspora. *Progress in Human Geography*, 31(1), 685-694.
- Brown, C. S. & Chu, H. (2012). Discrimination, ethnic identity, and academic outcomes of Mexican immigrant children: the importance of school context. *Child Development*, 83(5), 1477-1485.
- Bryman, A. (2008). *Social research methods*. Third edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Cele, S. (2006). *Communicating place methods for understanding children's experience of place*. Sweden: Intellecta Docusys AB.
- Chow, H.P.H. (2001). English language use among Chinese adolescent immigrants. *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, XLVII (2), 191-195.
- Christensen, P. & James, A. (2000). *Research with children: Perspectives and practices*. London: Falmer.
- Christensen, P. & Prout, A. (2002). Working with ethical symmetry in social research with children. *Childhood*, 9(4), 477-497.
- Chundamala, J., T, M., & Peng, I. (2006). *Older immigrant women's health: from the triple jeopardy perspective to cultural competency*. Toronto: Ontario Women's Health Network and South Riverdale Community Health Centre.
- Clark, A. & Moss, P (2001). *Listening to young children: the Mosaic approach*. London: National Children's Bureau for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Huber, J. (2010). Narrative inquiry. In B. Mc GAW, E. Baker, & P. Peterson (Eds.), *International encyclopaedia of education* (3rd ed.). New York: Elsevier.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (2006). Narrative inquiry. In J. Green, G. Camilli, & P. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research*, 375–385, Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996.
- CoRMSA. (2008). *Protecting refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants in South Africa*. [Electronic Version]. Retrieved on 23 rd November, 2010, from: www.cormsa.org.za.
- Crosnoe, R. (2010). Two-generation strategies and involving immigrant parents in children's education. Retrieved December 21, 2013, from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED511766.pdf>
- Crush, J. (2008). *South Africa: Policy in the face of xenophobia*. Retrieved on April 10, 2013, from <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=689>.
- Cummins, J. (1996). *Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society*. Ontario: California Association for Bilingual Education.
- Daoud, A.M. (2011). Providing equitable instruction for high school English learners: how teacher candidates define and enact social justice. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1(7), 14-22.

- Den Besten, O. (2010). Local belonging and 'geographies of emotions': Immigrant children's experience of their neighbourhoods in Paris and Berlin. *Childhood*, 17(2), 181-195.
- Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2003) *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Department of Basic Education(2011a). *National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Department of Education. (2011b). *National Curriculum Policy Statement (NCS) - Grades 4 to 6. English Home Language*. Pretoria: Department of Education.
- De Valk, H. A. G., Noam, K. R., Bosch, A. M. & Beets, G. C. N. (2009). *Children in immigrant families in the Netherlands: A statistical portrait and a review of the literature*. Innocenti Working Paper, No. 2009-16. Florence, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.
- Department of Education (2001). *Education White paper 6: Special Education - building an inclusive education and training system*. Pretoria: Department of Education.
- Deslandes, R., Trudeau, F., Rivard, M., Lemoyne, J. & Joyal, F. (2012). Role of family, school, peers and community in the adaptation process of young immigrants. *International Journal about Parents in Education*. Retrieved July 15, 2013, from <http://www.ernape.net/ejournal/index.php/IJPE/article/viewFile/185/123>.
- Devine, D.; Kenny, M. & MacNeela, E. (2008). Naming the other children's construction and experiences of racism in Irish primary schools. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 11 (4), 369-385.
- Dhunpath, R. & Samuel, M. (Eds.) (2009). *Life History Research: Epistemology, Methodology and Representation*. Rotterdam: Sense.
- Esser, H. (2006). *Migration, language and integration*. AKI Research Review. No. 4. Berlin: Social Sciences Research Center.
- Fischer, M. (2004). *Emergent forms of life and the anthropological voice*. Durham: Duke University.
- Foner, N. & Alba, R. (2008). Immigration religion in US and Western Europe: bridge or barrier to inclusion? *International Migration Review*, 42(2), 360-392.
- Gallagher, M. (2008). Power is not an evil: Re-thinking power in participatory methods. *Children's Geographies*, 6(2), 137-150.
- Garcia, E. (2005). *Teaching and learning in two languages: Bilingualism and schooling in the United States*. New York: Teachers College.
- Giralt, M. R. (2011). In/visibility strategies and enacted diversity: sameness and belonging among young people of Latin American descent living in the North of England (UK). *Children's Geographies*, 9. 3-4:331-345.

- Goodfellow, A. (2012). Looking through the learning disability lens: inclusive education and the learning disability embodiment, *Children's Geographies*, 10(1), 67-81.
- Govender, R. & Muthukrishna, N. (2012). Towards sustainable learning environments: Deconstructing discourses of social justice in the English Home Language classroom. *Communitas*, 17(1), 21-44
- Government Gazette (1998). *The Refugee Act of 1998, No. 1558*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Guba, E. G. (1981). Criteria for assessing trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Educational Resources Information Center Annual Review Paper*, 29, 75-91.
- Harris, B. (2002). Xenophobia: A new pathology for new South Africa. In D. Hook & G. Eagles (Eds.), *Psychopathology and social prejudice*, (169-184). Cape Town: University of Cape Town.
- Hearth, A.; Rothon, C. & Kilpi, E. (2008). The second generation in Western Europe: Education, unemployment and occupational attainment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 34, 211-235.
- Henning, E. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaiks.
- Holloway, S. & Valentine. (2000). Spatiality and the new social studies of childhood. *Sociology*, 34(4), 763-783.
- Holt, L. (2004). Childhood disability and ability: (Dis) ableist geographies of mainstream primary schools. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 24(3). Retrieved July 16, 2013, from <http://www.dsqsds.org/article/view/506/683>.
- Intoual, A., Kameniar, B., & Bradley, D. (2009). Bottling the good stuff: Stories of hospitality and yarnin' in a multi-racial kindergarten. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 34(2), 24-30.
- Jacobs, S. & Harley, A. (2008). Finding voice: The photo voice method of data collection in HIV and AIDS related research. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 18(3), 431-438.
- James, A., Jenks, C. & Prout, A. (1998). *Theorising childhood*. London: Policy Press.
- James, A. & Prout, A. (1990). *Constructing and reconstructing childhood: contemporary issues in sociological study of childhood*. London: Falmer.
- Kamuangu, G. K. (2006). *Language, immigration and ethnicity: The choice of language in DRC immigrant families*. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand.
- Kao, G. (2004). *Social capital and its relevance to minority and immigrant populations*. Retrieved July 11, 2013 from

<http://www.jonescollegeprep.org/ourpages/auto/2013/11/13/43962814/Social%20Capital%20and%20Minority%20Populations.pdf>.

- Karoly, L. A. & Gonzales, G.C. (2011). Early care and education for children in immigrant families. *The Future of Children*, 21. Retrieved August 10,2013 from http://www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/publications/docs/21_01_04.pdf =74
- Kellett, M. (2005). *Children as active researchers: a new research paradigm for the 21st century?* London: ESRC.
- Krueger, R. A. & Casey, M. A. (2000). *Focus Groups. A Practical Guide for Applied Research* (3rd Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Landau, L. B., Ramkathan-Keogh, K., Singh G. (2005). Xenophobia in South Africa and problems related to it. *Forced Migration Working Paper Series*. Johannesburg: Wits University.
- Langellier, K. & Peterson, E. (2004). *Storytelling in daily life, performing narrative*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Lauer, P. A. (2006). *An education research primer: How to understand, evaluate, and use it*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lee, I. & Koro-Ljungberg, M. (2007). A phenomenological study of Korean students' acculturation in middle schools in the USA. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 6(1), 95-117.
- Lincoln, Y.S. (1995). Emerging criteria for quality in qualitative and interpretive research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 1, 275-289.
- Lloyd-Smith, M. and Tarr, J. (2000). Researching children's perspectives: a sociological dimension. In A. Lewis and G.Lindsay. (Eds.) *Researching Children's Perspectives*. Buckingham, Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Mackenzie, N. & Knipe, S. (2006). Research dilemmas: Paradigms, methods and methodology. *Issues in Educational Research*, 16(2), 193-205.
- Magnuson, K., Lahaie, C. & Waldfogel, J. (2006). Preschool and school readiness of children of immigrants, *Social Science Quarterly*, 87(5), 1241–1262.
- May, S. (Ed.) (1999). *Critical multiculturalism: Rethinking multicultural and antiracist education*. New York: Routledge/Falmer.
- McBrien, J. L. (2005). Educational needs and barriers for refugee students in the United States: A review of literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 75(3), 329–364.

- Meda, L., Sookrajh, R., & Maharaj, B. (2012). Refugee children in South Africa: Access and challenges to achieving universal primary education. *Africa Education Review*, 9 (1), 152-168.
- Model, C. (2011). Host countries and the immigrant experience: Do destinations matter. Retrieved November 12, 2013, from <http://2011.paoftwn.org.tw/static/docs/Model.pdf>
- Morojele, P. & Muthukrishna, N. (2012). The journey to school: space, geography and experience of rural children. *Perspectives in Education*, 30 (1), 90-100.
- Morrow, V. (2008). Ethical dilemmas in the research with children and young people about their social environments. *Children's Geographies*, 6 (1), 41-61.
- Motha, S. & Ramadiro, B. (2005). *Education Rights of Migrants in the Inner City of Johannesburg, South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits Education Policy Unit.
- Muangu, G. K. (2006). *Language, immigration and ethnicity: the choice of language in DRC immigrant families*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand.
- Neuman, W. L. (2003). *Social Research Methods*. New York: Pearson.
- Nieuwenhuis, J. (2007). Qualitative research designs and data gathering techniques. In K. Maree (Ed.). *First steps in research*. (8-19). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Ngo, H. V. (2008). *Cultural Competence: A guide for organizational change*. Calgary: Citizenship and Immigration Canada.
- Nieto, S. (1992). *Affirming diversity: The socio-political context of multicultural education*. New York: Sage.
- Osman, R. (2009). *The phenomenon of xenophobia as experienced by immigrants' learners in inner city schools of Johannesburg*. Unpublished Master's dissertation, University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Palmar, I. (2001). *Training needs of the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department*. Unpublished survey findings: City Safety Project, Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation. Braamfontein.
- Parmon, P. (2010). *Educating immigrant children: Bilingualism in America's schools*. Retrieved May 17, 2013 from <http://repository.wcsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1075&context=ssj>
- Pappamihel, N.E. (2004). Hugs and smiles: Demonstrating caring in a multicultural early childhood classroom. *Early Child Development and Care*, 174(6), 539-548.
- Peguero, A. & Bondy, J. (2011). Immigration and students' relationship with teachers. *Education and Urban Society*, 43, 165-183.
- Pinson, H., Arnot, M. & Candappa, M. (2010). *The Politics of compassion and belonging*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

- Prout, A. & James, A. (1990). A new paradigm for the sociology of childhood: Provenance, promises and problems. In A. James and A. Prout (Eds.). *Constructing and reconstructing childhood*. (79-98). London: Falmer.
- Prout, A. (2001). Representing children: reflections on the children 5–16 programme. *Children and Society*, 15 (3), 193-201.
- Qin, D. B., Way, N., & Rana, M. (2008). The “model minority” and their discontent: Examining peer discrimination and harassment of Chinese American immigrant youth. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 121, 27–42.
- Rashid, N. & Tikly, L. (2010). *Inclusion and diversity in education: Guidelines for inclusion and diversity in schools*. Madrid: British Council.
- Republic of South Africa (1999). *White Paper on International Migration Government*, Gazette 406 (19920), Notice 529 of 1999. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Riessman, C.K. (2007). *Narrative methods for Human Sciences*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Rodríguez, T. (2009). Family, schooling, and language learning in a transnational context. *The High School Journal*, 92(4), 16-33.
- Rumbaut, R. & Portes, A. (Eds.). (2001). *Ethnicities: Children of immigrants in America*. Berkeley: University of California.
- Ryan, S. (2005). Busy behaviour in the land of the golden m: Going out with learning disabled children in public places. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 18 (1), 65-74.
- Salinas, C. (2006). Educating late arrival high school immigrant students: A call for a more democratic curriculum. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 8(1), 20-27.
- Sanchez, P. (2007). Urban immigrant students: How transnationalism shapes their world learning. *The Urban Review*, 39(5), 489-517.
- Schmitt, I. (2010). “It's just a name”? Young people in Canada and Germany discuss ‘national’ belonging. *Childhoods*, 17(2), 15-23.
- Seidel, J. V. (1998). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Retrieved October 14, 2012, from: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/7129360/Seidel-1998-Qualitative-Data-Analysis>.
- Shenton, A K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22. Retrieved December 15, 2012, from: http://www.angelfire.com/theforce/shu_cohort_viii/images/Trustworthypaper.pdf
- Skelton, T. (2008). Research with children and young people: exploring the tensions between ethics, competence and participation. *Children's Geographies*, 6(1): 21–36.
- Smyth, E. et al. (2009). *Adapting to Diversity: Irish Schools and Newcomer Students*”, ESRI Research, Series No. 8. Dublin: The Economic and Social Research Institute.

- Sookrajh, R., Gopal, N., & Maharaj, B. (2005). Interrogating inclusionary and exclusionary practices: Learners of war and flight. *Perspectives in Education*, 23(1), 1-13.
- South African Children's Act 38 of 2005.
- Stainton-Rogers R. and Stainton-Rogers W. (1992) *Stories of childhood: shifting agendas of child concern*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester/Wheatsheaf.
- Skånfors, L. (2009). Ethics in child research: Children's agency and researchers' 'ethical radar.' *Childhoods Today*, 3 (1), 1 – 22.
- Statistics SA (2012a). *The 2011 Census database*. Pretoria: Stats SA.
- Statistics SA (2012b). *Documented immigrants in South Africa*. Pretoria: Stats SA.
- Suárez-Orozco, C. & Carhill, A. (2008). *Afterword: New directions in research with immigrant families and their children*. Retrieved July 31, 2013, from https://www.academia.edu/1444887/New_Directions_in_Research_with_Immigrant_Families_and_Their_Children.
- Suarez-Orozco, M. & Suarez-Orozco, C. (2000). Some conceptual considerations in the interdisciplinary study of immigrant children. In E. T. Truebe & L. I. Bartolome (Eds.). *Immigrant voices: In search of educational equity*, (17-36). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Suarez-Orozco, C.; Rhodes, J.; & Milburn, M. (2009). *Unravelling the immigrant paradox: Academic engagement and disengagement among recently arrived immigrant youth*. Retrieved 23rd November, 2010 from: <http://yas.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/41/2/151>.
- Tannenbaum, M. & Howie, P. (2002). The association between language maintenance and family relations: Chinese immigrant children in Australia. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 23, 408-424.
- Taylor-Powell, E. & Renner, M. (2003). Analysing qualitative data. Retrieved June 14, 2013 from <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/assets/pdfs/g3658-12.pdf>
- Taylor, S. & Sidhu, K. (2012). Supporting refugee students in schools: What constitutes inclusive education? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 16(1), 39-56.
- Timngum, D. (2001). *Assisting urban refugees children in South Africa: Humanitarian challenges to state and non-state actors*. (Master's thesis, Johannesburg, University of Witwatersrand).
- Turney, K. & Kao, G. (2009). Barriers to school involvement: Are immigrant parents disadvantaged? *Journal of Educational Research*, 102 (4), 257-271.
- UNHCR. (2002). *United Nations High Commission for Refugees*. Retrieved on April 10, 2013, from: <http://www.unhcr.org>
- UNICEF (1989). *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children*. Retrieved on April 4, 2013, from: <http://www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm>.

- UNICEF (2007). Education for Some More than Others? A regional study on education in Central and Eastern Europe and the commonwealth of independent states (CEE/CIS). Geneva: UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent State
- Valji, N. (2003). *Creating the nation: The rise of violent xenophobia in the new South Africa*. (Master's Thesis, Toronto: York University). Retrieved on March 11, 2009, from: <http://www.wits.ac.za/csr/papers/papnrl.htm>.
- Vandeyar, S. & Vandeyar, T. (2011). Articulating cultures: Socio-cultural experiences of black female immigrant students in South African schools. *Gender & Behavior*, 9 (2), 4161-4188.
- Vandeyar, S. (2012). Immigrant students' shifting identification in South African schools. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 32, 232-240.
- Van Ingen, C. V. & Halas F. (2006). Claiming space: aboriginal students within school landscapes. *Children's Geographies*, 4 (3): 379–398.
- Walker, S. (2011). *Something to smile about: Promoting and supporting the educational and recreational needs of refugee children*. Retrieved on February 27, 2011, from: http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/Resources/Refugee%20Council/downloads/research-reports/SMILE%20report_3.pdf.
- Wang, C. (1999). Photovoice: a participatory action research strategy applied to women's health. *Journal of Women's Health*, 8, 185–192.
- Wells, K. (2011). The strength of weak ties: The social networks of young separated asylum seekers and refugees in London. *Children's Geographies*, 9 (3-4), 319-329.
- Weller, S. (2010). Young people's social capital: Complex identities, dynamic networks. *Ethnic & Racial Studies*, 33 (5), 872-888.
- Wohlwend, K. E. (2007). Friendship meeting or blocking circle? identities in the laminated spaces of a playground conflict. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 8(1), 73-87.
- Yeh, C.J.; Okubo, Y.; Ma, P.W., Shea, M.; Ou, D.; & Pituc, S.T. (2008). Chinese immigrant high school students' cultural interactions, acculturations, family obligations, language use and social support. *Adolescence*, 43 (172), 775-790.
- Young, L. & Barrett, T. (2001). Adapting visual methods: Action research with Kampala street children. *Area*, 33 (2), 141-152.
- Yuval-Davis, N. (2006). Belonging and the policies of belonging. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 40 (3), 189-195.

Appendix 1: Ethical clearance: University of KwaZulu-Natal

 **UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL™**
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

26 April 2013

Professor A Muthukrishna 845
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/0250/013
Project title: The geographies of children's schooling in six Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries:
Narratives of children, parents/caregivers and teachers

Dear Professor Muthukrishna

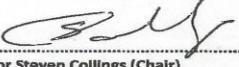
Expedited approval

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval through an expedited review process.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully


.....
Professor Steven Collings (Chair)

/px

cc Dr P Morojele
cc Academic leader researcher Dr MN Davids
cc School administrator Ms B Bhengu

Humanities & Social Sc Research Ethics Committee
Professor S Collings (Chair)
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 3587/6350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0)31 260 4609 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za /
snymanm@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS



Appendix 2: Consent letter for school principal

Date

The Principal

----- School

Dear Sir

Re: Request for permission to conduct research at your school

I plan to conduct a study on, plan to undertake a study titled: *“The geographies of the schooling experiences of immigrant children at a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal.*

I hereby request your permission to conduct a study at the _____ Primary School. The participants in the study will be learners from your school. They will be required to participate in individual interviews and focus group interviews that are expected to last between 90-120 mins in two sessions.

Please note that

- The school and participants will not receive material gains for participation in this research project.
- The learners will be expected to respond to each question in a manner that will reflect their own personal opinion.
- The school’s or the participant’s identities will not be divulged under any circumstance.
- All learner responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.
- Pseudonyms will be used (real names of the participants and the institution will not be used throughout the research process).
- Participation is voluntary; therefore, participants will be free to withdraw at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to them.
- The participants will not, under any circumstances, be forced to disclose what they do not want to reveal.
- Audio- recording of interviews will only be done if the permission of the participant is obtained.
- Data will be stored in the University locked cupboard for a maximum period of five years thereafter it will be destroyed.

I thank you.

Yours sincerely

Professor Nithi Muthukrishna

Dr Pholoho Morojele

Tel: 084 2459096

Tel: 071 0410352

031 2603499/2494

031 2603234

Email: muthukri@ukzn.ac.za

Morojele@ukzn.ac.za

CONSENT FORM:

If permission is granted to conduct the research at your school, please fill in and sign the form below.

I,, (Full Name) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project. I hereby grant permission for the researcher to conduct the research project at the _____ Primary School. I understand that learners are free to withdraw from the project at any time, should they so desire.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Professor Nithi Muthukrishna

Zonke A . Ngema

Tel: 084 2459096

Tel: 0784704220

031 2603499/2494

Email: muthukri@ukzn.ac.za

email: zonkengema85@gmail.com

Appendix 3: Consent letter for learners

Dear Learner

Date

Re: Request your participation in a research project

I would like to do a study called, *“The geographies of the schooling experiences of immigrant children at a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal”*

I kindly ask your permission to participate in the project. I value what you think about your schooling and how you are experiencing schooling. You will be required to allow me to interview you individually and in focus groups. The interviews will be approx. 90-120 mins. We will meet in two sessions on two different days that is convenient for you. We will be requesting permission from your parents/caregivers to work with you on the project. .

Please note that

- The school and learners will not receive material gains for participation in this research project.
- You will be expected to respond to each question in a manner that will reflect your own personal opinion.
- The schools or your identities will not be divulged under any circumstance.
- All learner responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.
- Pseudonyms will be used (your real name and the name of the school will not be used throughout the research process).
- Participation is voluntary; therefore, you will be free to withdraw at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to them.
- You will not, under any circumstances, be forced to disclose what you do not want to tell us.
- Audio- recording of interviews will only be done if you give us permission.
- Data will be stored in the University locked cupboard for a maximum period of five years thereafter it will be destroyed.

I thank you.

Yours sincerely

Professor Nithi Muthukrishna
Tel: 084 2459096
031 2603499/2494
Email: muthukri@ukzn.ac.za

Dr Pholoho Morojele
Tel: 071 0410352
031 2603234
Morojele@ukzn.ac.za

CONSENT FORM:

If you agree to take part in this project, please fill in your full name and sign the form below.

I,, (Full Name) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project. I hereby agree to take part in the project at my school. I understand that I can withdraw from the project at any time I want to.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Professor Nithi Muthukrishna

Zonke A. Ngema

Tel: 084 2459096

Tel: 0784704220

031 2603499/2494

email: zonkengema85@gmail.com

Email: muthukri@ukzn.ac.za

Appendix 4: Consent letter for parent/caregiver

Date

Dear parent/caregiver

Re: Request your child's participation in a research project

I would like to do a study called, *"The geographies of the schooling experiences of immigrant children at a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal."* as part of my studies for a masters degree.

I kindly ask your permission for your child, _____ NAME, to participate in the project. I value what your child thinks about his/her schooling and how he/she is experiencing schooling. You will be required to allow us to interview your child individually and in focus groups. The interviews will be approx. 90-120 mins. We will meet in two sessions on two different days that is convenient for the child. We will also be requesting permission from your child to work with him/her in the project. .

Please note that:

- The school and learners will not receive material gains for participation in this research project.
- Your child expected to respond to each question in a manner that will reflect his/her own personal opinion.
- The school's or your child's identities will not be divulged under any circumstance.
- All your child's responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.
- Pseudonyms will be used (your child's real name and the name of the school will not be used throughout the research process).
- Participation is voluntary; therefore, your child will be free to withdraw at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to him/her.
- Your child will not, under any circumstances, be forced to disclose what he/she do not want to tell us.
- Audio- recording of interviews will only be done if you and your child give us permission.
- Data will be stored in the University locked cupboard for a maximum period of five years thereafter it will be destroyed.

I thank you.

Yours sincerely

Zonke A. Ngema
Tel: 0784704220
Email: zonkengema85@gmail.com

Consent

If you agree to take part in this project, please fill in your full name and sign the form below.

I, (Full Name), the parent /caregiver of _____ (Name of child) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project. I hereby agree to my child taking part in the project. I understand that he/she can withdraw from the project at any time I want to...

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Professor Nithi Muthukrishna
Tel: 084 2459096
031 2603499/2494
Email: muthukri@ukzn.ac.za

Zonke A . Ngema
Tel: 0784704220
Email: zonkengema85@gmail.com

Appendix 5: Turnitin report

Turnitin Originality Report

Dissertation by Zonke Aura Ngema

From M ED Dissertations Jan and Feb 2014 (MED Cohort)

- Processed on 31-Jan-2014 10:11 AM CAT
- ID: 392301018
- Word Count: 17389

Similarity Index

7%

Similarity by Source

Internet Sources:

4%

Publications:

3%

Student Papers:

4%

Sources:

1

1% match (student papers from 24-Dec-2013)

Appendix 6: Letter from language editor

D.G.Naidoo
84 Capricorn Crescent
Orient Heights
Pietermaritzburg
South Africa
3201

sirgay@mtnloaded.co.za
C: 083 481 5747
H: 033 3915242

08 February 2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to record that I have carried out language editing on the dissertation:

**THE GEOGRAPHIES OF THE SCHOOLING EXPERIENCES OF IMMIGRANT
CHILDREN AT A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN KWAZULU-NATAL**

by

ZONKE AURA NGEMA



D.G.Naidoo
(Language Editor)