Re-Imagining Black Masculinity: Praxis of Kenyan Men in Toronto

By

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Abstract

This study examined Black masculinity, the representation of Black men, and by extension the Black community. Black men in North America historically have been racially targeted and profiled in employment and education (school/prison pipeline). Black masculinity scholarship has actively represented this demography through diverse scholarships. While this may be the case, the opposite is equally true; the scholarly lens does not provide the overall picture of Black men. This exploratory/descriptive qualitative Afrocentric Indigenous narrative study applied post-colonial, anti-colonial, and critical masculinity theoretical frameworks to argue that Black masculinity is implicated in epistemological violence and imperialism. The study encompassed semi-structured interviews with 10 participants (Kenyan men in Toronto), allowing for open expression of their experiences. The Kenyan story has been missing in action; that is, the Kenyan racial experiences in immigration, education, and labour remain expunged and absent. Black masculinity has not focused on accents as a racial and gendered concept of erasing Kenyan men from social and political processes. The study is framed around the limits of Black masculinity and looks at immigration, education, and labour policies in Canada and how they expel Kenyan men from the body politic. Kenyan men that were interviewed said that though they are Black they are also African based on the complex act of accent multiplier.
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“I am because we are” ~ Ubuntu

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Chapter 1: Introduction

To speak a language is to take on a world, a culture. The Antilles Negro who wants to be white will be the whiter as he gains greater mastery of the cultural tool that language is. (Fanon, 1967, p. 38)

This process consists of the artist taking his or her own body as the ‘canvas,’ light-sensitive “frame” or “screen,” so that the work of translation and re-appropriation is literally a kind of ‘re-writing of the self on the body,’ a re-epidermalisation, an autography. (Hall, 1996, p. 20)

When we speak of the African diaspora, we must recognise that we are really speaking of multiple, frequently overlapping diasporas. Each movement of people has unique characteristics; thus the story of migration must be told in all its specificity. (Pasura, 2014, p. 1)

What is at stake is not a categorical break with the past but the embryonic articulation of something new which does not fit a regimen category. (Mercer, 1994, p. 54)

Black masculinity studies have played a pivotal role in understanding Black men’s experiences in North America (McCready, 2012; Mercer, 1994; Walcott, 2006). The scholarship looks at how Black men are constructed (Mercer, 1994) and the effect that has on Black men. Mercer (1994) says that Black men are not men enough compared to their White counterparts. The conceptualization of Black men as violent, broken, social receptacles allows for the marginalisation of Black men as irresponsible and untrustworthy in the public space. Such White social processes of constructing (Marable, 2001) Black men have both material and symbolic consequences as seen with the high unemployment, institutional profiling (Kline, 2012) and increased mental health (Kubrin & Wadsworth, 2009) issues among Black men. Black masculinity has been vocal about construction of Black men as subhuman and calls for policy changes that will accommodate the Black man in the body politic.

While such works of anti-racism projected by Black masculinity are commendable, they fall short of including other forms of Blackness, one among them the Kenyan man. There is currently a research gap within Black masculinity in terms of Kenyan men’s experiences in
North America. Kenyan men present re-imagination of Black masculinity based on the unique experiences brought about by their accent. Mbembé and Dubois (2017) argue:

Clearly, not all Blacks are Africans, and not all Africans are Blacks. But it matters little where they are located. As objects of discourse and objects of knowledge, Africa and Blackness have, since the beginning of the modern age, plunged the theory of the name as well as the status and function of the sign and of representation into deep crisis. (p. 12)

This statement locates the very basis of this study in that as much as African men are Black men, they circulate in the world in novel ways. Kenyan men are unique in the ways they face racism in the West. One of these forms of racism is framed along the line of accent. Racism-based accent has not been represented in Black masculinity; this has created an impression that all Black men experience one universal form of anti-Blackness, meaning that all forms of addressing such issues fail to accommodate other forms of racism faced by continental African men. This study therefore calls for a reconceptualization of Black masculinity in ways that affirm Kenyan immigrant experiences with structures such as immigration, education, and labour in Toronto.

The study also seeks to reconsider Black masculinity and how it expunges Indigenous masculinities as broken and sentimental and as such not Black enough. Typically, Black masculinity has not represented Indigenous masculinities as a powerful site of anti-racism in North America. This study introduces Indigenous masculinities as anti-colonial forms of countering racial representations of African men as weak and damaged. The formation of independent schools to counter Western schooling is an important point of decolonizing the academy to accommodate different cultural beliefs. Current discussions within Black masculinity look at the inclusion of Black bodies within the Western educational system without having a conversation on the possibilities of self-determined educational spots that speak to the needs and aspirations of Kenyan people in Toronto. It is therefore critical for the Indigenous perspective to guide Black masculinity in ways that sustain and build on the desire of migrant Kenyan men.
The section that follows looks at the context which is more connected to the author’s experience in Kenya.

**Problem Statement**

Kenyans living in the USA are worried about the current Trump administration and its focus on the deportation of illegal immigrants. There are many illegal immigrants living in America, among them Kenyans. Other Kenyans living legally are concerned that they will be targeted in terms of access to government services. Canada being the closest neighbour expects to receive some of the immigrants deported from the United States. Canada has its own share of racial erasure of Indigenous people as well as racialized immigrants.

Kenyan men living in Toronto experience multiple forms of anti-Black racisms. On top of facing racism based on their skin colour, their accent helps locate them as Kenyans, hence labels them as incapable of working or seeking education in Toronto. Racial experiences among Kenyan men living in Toronto are found to exist in educational, immigration, and labour policies. The levels of racial discrimination faced by Kenyan men in these policy areas continue to be collapsed as Black experience, yet accent has been one of the contributing factors. While that is ongoing, it is equally assumed that Black masculinity theory can explain and solve their issues. This assumption has material and symbolic consequences for both Kenyan men and their families as services expected to ameliorate their struggles end up postponing them. This has led to increased cases of unemployment/underemployment and frustration among Kenyan men. This study seeks to look at the effects of accent in determining the educational, employment, and immigration success of Kenyan men in Toronto. The Afrocentric narrative study also uncouples the belief that Black masculinity can represent Black men. Finally, the study seeks to examine the transnational experiences of Kenyan men and how such experiences come to inform their lives and survival in Toronto, Canada.
Research Aims and Objectives

The aim of this narrative study is to attempt to understand the role of accent in racial elimination of Kenyan men in Toronto. The study also attempts to understand the representational limitations of Black masculinity in terms of experiences of Kenyan in education, labour, and immigration. With those limitations, the study reconceptualizes Black masculinity by including Indigenous masculinities as another way of representing Kenyan men in Toronto.

Research Questions

1. How does accent affect Kenyan men in Toronto in terms of labour, immigration, and education?
2. What are the limitations of Black masculinity in the representation of Kenyan men in Toronto?
3. What is the role of Indigenous masculinities in representing Kenyan men’s issues in Toronto?

Research Issue

This study aims to look at the limitation of Black masculinity and the place of Indigenous masculinities in Black social justice. This perspective is informed by McKittrick’s (2006) discussion on the role of Black women renegotiation of geography which notes that Geographies of domination, from transatlantic slavery and beyond, hold in them both the marking and the contestation of old and new social hierarchies. If these hierarchies are spatial expressions of racism and sexism, the interrogations and reamppings provided by Black diaspora populations can incite new, or different, and perhaps more just, geographic stories. That is, the site/citations of struggle indicate that traditional geographies, and their attendant hierarchies categories of humanness, cannot do the emancipatory work some subjects demand. And part of this work, in our historical present, is linked up with recognising both “the where” of alterity and the geographical imperatives in the struggle for social justice. (p. xix)

The study looks at the prevailing research gap in Black masculinity focusing on Kenyan men’s experiences in Canada. These gaps play a key role in terms of how Kenyan men, families, and
communities are—and experienced and come to experience others—and how services are provided to the community. A scholarly conversation on Kenyan families, and specifically the men, is necessary based on the ongoing cases of spousal abuse among Kenyan communities living in America. The current migrant eviction from America influences Canada, since it is its closest neighbour. With the expected inflow of Kenyan families to Canada from the United States of America, there is a need for the Canadian state to have a conversation with Kenyan communities living in Toronto and elsewhere on how they need to be treated.

This study is therefore a preliminary understanding of Kenyan men’s experiences in terms of education, labour and migration and the effects of their history, nationality and accent to address their daily challenges and needs. The study is an attempt to inform and effect policy change through conversations held between the Canadian state and the Kenyan men. While this study acknowledges the role of Black masculinity in anti-racism, it also opens up spaces for the organic experiences of Kenyan men to inform scholarship. As such, this study applies Kenyan men’s stories and experiences to inform, disturb, reimagine, and recontextualize Black masculinity studies.

The generalizability of Black masculinity scholarship on the experiences of continental African men in the diaspora is problematic and contested. There is an epistemological, methodological, and theoretical need for an eclectic understanding and complicating of Black masculinity beyond the universal colonial reference of Blackness. Blackness is complicated, transverses times and spaces, and is irreducible; therefore, Black masculinity cannot totalize Black men’s experiences. Such totality is contested by Kenyan men’s racial experiences in education, migration, and labour in connection to their accents. Border crossing and the global movement of culture, identities, and value systems continue to strain the arrival of Black masculinity and expand expressions of masculinities beyond America’s provincialism, traditionalism, and permanency.
This study looks at the Kenyan men’s experiences before they leave their country, while on transit and upon arrival in the West. This helps to understand the different changes and challenges they face at home, on transit, and upon arrival. In this study, transit is psychic, geographical, social, political, and economic (Bhabha, 1994; Mohanram, 1999). To transition is an expression of the self beyond the home (Bhabha, 1994). To understand these complex transitional stories calls for an understanding of the colonial history that continues to define the experiences of migrant others both at home and abroad (Mohanram, 1999). To understand the critical genealogical past helps clear the way for true self-determination, liberation, and empowerment of Black communities (Walcott, 2003).

Black communities must be understood variously, precariously, and differently in order that services offered to them meet their specific needs. Reviewing Fabien Boulaga’s argument on Black difference, Mbembé and Dubois (2017) say

Boulaga does not reject difference in itself. For him, recognizing the existence of what is not oneself, and what does not bring one back to oneself, goes hand in hand with the gesture of separation from others and identification with oneself. This moment of autonomy in relation to other humans is not, in principle, a negative moment. Because of the vicissitudes of history, such a moment, if experienced well, allows the Black Man to rediscover himself as an autonomous source of creation, to attest that he is human, to rediscover direction and a foundation for what he is and what he does. Positive difference is also an opening onto the future. It points not to an apologia but to the recognition of what each person, as a human, contributes to the work of the constitution of the world. In any case the attempt to destroy difference and the dream of imposing a single language on all are both doomed to failure. Unity is always just another name for multiplicity, and positive difference can only be a difference that is lively and interpenetrating. It is fundamentally an orientation toward the future. (p. 94)

The monolithic, reductionist, linear, and simplistic view of Black men denies their individuality and works to maintain capital power and wealth creation. In the eyes of the dominant society, Black is a community rather than communities. This view justifies the wholesome condemnation and internment of the Black communities through racial slurs and stereotypes, and the subsequent internalization of the same by communities, leading to the horizontalization of
violence and affording uninterrupted accumulation of wealth. To understand this claim, we need to understand the Affirmative Action Policy in the context of Black masculinity and Blackness. Tokenism has been used by the state to create a hierarchy of privilege within marginalized communities and the eventual lateralization of violence as each community tries to reach the standard. An example of this claim is the racial erasure perpetuated by Black bodies against their own. It is a form of self-hate expressed in the extermination and hatred for others who look like us. This study is familiar with the internal politics of Blackness and attempts to bring forth a renewed conversation to re-energize anti-colonial discussion within Black masculinity.

From an epistemological perspective, this study looks at Black masculinity scholarship as tokenized and tokenizing; it posits that this scholarship is implicated in the state eviction of migrant African bodies that live outside the national mythology of the American Black man. This study spits out the complex orientation of Black masculinity in terms of nationhood, citizenship, cultures, and language while connecting to the migration, labour, and educational experiences of migrant Kenyan men in Toronto.

To that extent, this study looks at the experiences of Black Kenyan men in Toronto. The study applies an interlocking analysis of race, imperialism, patriarchy, class, and citizenship, as expressed in masculinity coding, to explain the experiences of Kenyan men in Toronto. Interlocking investigation recognizes the complexities between different identities and how they work together in oppressing bodies considered dangerous and broken.

**Context and Background**

Kenya was a British colonial territory and attained its independence in 1963. Its first post-colonial African prime minister and president was Jomo Kenyatta. As this study was being undertaken, Kenya had four male presidents. Kenya continues to have close satellite links with
its colonial master in terms of how its legislative, executive, judicial, educational, and other administrative arms work. British culture is well-entrenched in these institutions, an example of which is the application of British judicial precedencies in judicial process, the use of English in all its institutions, and the fact that its institutions are male-centric.

The Kenyan school system is one example where colonial British culture is replicated. English as a language and culture dominates the learning and teaching space. The legislative process of making law is colonial, particularly the process of making a bill into an act of parliament, dressing, culture, and the fact that the process is dominated by men. Judges and magistrates in Kenya still wear colonial wigs and robes. The policymaking process and performance of law remain gendered. Even after the promulgation of the new constitution in 2010, which was hailed as progressive, women continue to play a marginal role in the public space. This is telling of the level at which social and political systems in Kenya are colonial and gendered.

**Implicating the Self**

Nyaga, you need to man up. Life is not easy. Be a man and finish your section. It is getting late and you haven’t finished tilling your section. You cannot sit down. Stand up and do what men do. You are now wasting our time. We have finished our part, but you now want us to help you finish your part. Stand up and work hard.

These words were directed to me by my uncle during one of planting seasons, which would mostly be around April of every year. For a family to have a bounty harvest, they had to beat the April rain deadline; otherwise, such a family faced the dangers of hunger and famine. The lands had to be tilled, harrowed, and ready for planting by March and April. Most families invited friends to come and help in the preparation and planting of seeds. I have argued in other works that farming was a communal undertaking, as well as a showcasing of masculinity. For example, the planting of maize and beans was set aside for men and women, respectively. Maize was planted in lines while beans were spread all over, which now makes sense of gendered land
in terms of rational and irrational space. The advantages of such organization were evident in that it was easier to weed in a maize plantation than the beans. One was more careful and needed to be vigilant not to slice the bean plant. Women used the *panga* (African machete) to prepare the bean section and as such would continuously be bowed. On the other hand, men used a forked *jembe* (hoe) and as such did not need to bow. This is a medical issue in that continuous bowing to the ground causes back pains and can lead to extensive nervous system injuries. This also has a social element of women bowing and being submissive to their spouses.

How could such gendered farming ever exist in a community that would otherwise be considered Indigenous? Maize (corn) is not Indigenous to Kenya and has a connection to the Portuguese. Maize is a representation of colonial culture, gendering being one among the many ways in which colonialism came to be incorporated into the everyday practices of Kenyan communities. While that is the case, the community’s ways of life and farming (e.g., farming as a community process) co-exist with the colonial expression of “maize.” The division between the bean and the maize plantation is a testament of this lived experience between Indigenous ways and colonial practice even in labour processes. It is interesting to identify the bordered expression of gendered land tenure cascading from political systems into simple farming practices. Kenyan men continue to control the land tenure system in ways that place women as workers of the land. This is fundamental in understanding the colonial and gendered ways that still exist in Kenya. The Kenyan man is constructed as the rational being through such practices. On the flipside, the women come to be defined as submissive, irrational, and broken. Such a colonial gendered perspective helps look at the effects of transnationalism and imperialism on the once-glorified Kenyan men. This also helps understand the changes (if any) manifested by Kenyan men when they arrive in Toronto. If there are no changes, then the need to explore such
failures to change is of the essence. This story helps examine cross border crossing as gendered but illustrates that transitional movements of bodies can help blur such colonial gender posturing. I have always acted opposite to the gender positioning of bodies. A case in point is how I would work in the maize plantation and cross over to the bean plantation to work with my aunt and grandmother. This was an act of deviance, especially when my uncle told me to be a man.

That said, my uncle’s statement to me to be a “man” speaks of gendered farming and accentuates masculinity built on hard work, responsibility, competition, and strength. On this occasion, my uncle subdivided the land into sections, and every man present (including me) was expected to identify a section and work on it. It was supposed to present a picture of men who were strong and competitive. I assumed that was not my bread and butter, and I would be criticized by my uncle for the failure to reach true masculinity. This practice provided was effective and efficient in that we would beat the April rain deadline. But on the flip side, it left a line of injured masculinities as espoused by a case of one man who sliced his leg in the process of exerting his machismo. Such an act of injury was constructed as a weakness, since strength is presented in a structured and orderly manner.

This subdivision also helped us to finish the work and head home early before the sun sets. My grandmother (whom I fondly called gaka) would prepare chapati as a reward for the job well done. Chapati is made from wheat flour and resembles the Mexican tortilla. The delicacy was imported from India. It is a special delicacy eaten only on holidays. It was an honour to have chapati on any other day aside from Christmas. The chapati was a reward that was differently expressed, in that my uncle, grandfather, and I would be served by my grandmother and my auntie. This speaks of women as ceaselessly engaged in labour while men can stop and reflect while they are being served. This is important in terms of understanding whether this patriarchal
colonial culture exists in Toronto. What happens to the home when both Kenyan men and women are engaged in the public labour process in Toronto?

One April holiday, my uncle failed to join us in the preparation of the land for planting. As a child, I noticed that my uncle had moved from the “headquarters” (my grandparents’ house) into a small hut. A “riot act” was read to me not to enter his hut under any circumstance. The reasons behind such a pronouncement were not explained to me. It was expected that I should “just understand” them and not question; otherwise, I would be constructed as deviant. I could not share the room with my uncle anymore. It was more like an abrupt graduation from our family house to his own house. He would stay incommunicado and hidden in his small hut for days on end. His only connection to us was through his godfather (mutiri), who was expected to introduce him to manhood. There were times that other older men would visit my uncle. There were times when my uncle would scream, which I would later hear was part of the graduation to manhood. Other times, a scuffle would ensue if the mutiri (godfather) and giciere (initiate) did not provide cigarettes or traditional liquor to the visitors. The friend was supposed to nourish and introduce him to real African Indigenous masculinity. But again, the process of initiation was mired with the colonial practice of violence that defined violence as a quintessential process of becoming a man. Boys became men by cutting themselves off from their maternal connection as expressed by my uncle’s breakaway from the headquarters to his own hut. Such a breakup is a statement that draws a line between the emotional maternity and rational masculinity, and the border is both physical (the hut) and invisible (the riot act). This gender bordering is violent and affirmed with consequences. The presence of colonial violence in the process of initiation does not preclude the traditions of Indigenous communities. The presence of other men depicts relationships, love reciprocity and redistributive aspects of African Indigenous values.
One day, I asked my gaka about the changes with my uncle: “Could uncle have eaten an expired or treated chapati that made him hate us? Was my uncle a victim of witchcraft?” It is then that Gaka told me that my uncle has gone through the traditional circumcision. The curious me asked, “What happens when somebody gets circumcised?” to which she responded, “You will know when you get there.” A few years later, my turn came, and I had my answer.

Even though my previous curiosity on circumcision was answered, I am yet to answer my uncle’s statement on “be a man.” What entails being a man, an African man, an African Black man, a diasporic or transnational diasporic man? What does hard work, competition, subdivision of shamba, and time have to do with masculinity and manhood? What does circumcision have to do with manliness and adulthood? How come Gaka could not answer me on the process of circumcision but allowed me to answer myself through my own experience? Now that I live in Canada, what does my African masculinity have to do with my being in Canada? How can it be used to open doors and determine my fate and destiny? These are fundamental questions that I seek to ask Kenyan men in Toronto to further understand their place in Toronto. I take this study as community-based, where the participants and I will engage in deeper conversation about our experiences both in Kenya and Toronto. My hope is that they can work with me toward answering the above questions.

This study is based on the experiences of the researcher as a Kenyan-Canadian. The investigator was born and raised in Kenyan. He was born in Nairobi but grew up in Embu; a rural part of Kenya. He was raised by his grandparents, who trained and educated him on Embu cultural histories and value. Though educated in formal catholic elementary, secondary, and college schools, his grandparent worked hard to teach him his cultural teachings as a reminder of his belongingness to Embu culture. Embu is an ethnic group found in the Eastern part of Kenya,
close to mount Kirinyaga (Kenya). They are mostly agriculturalist and grow coffee and tea as cash crop while subsisting on maize, bean, arrowroots, and sweet potatoes.

The researcher would spend most of his evenings with his extended family cooking and listening to traditional storytelling and singing. His extended family introduced him to Embu songs, stories, proverbs, riddles, and other cultural lessons and the meaning they had in life. This teaching taught him to treat others, nature, and things with respect and love, and above all to share. This was the most exciting yet challenging time in terms of walking the two worlds (traditional and official teachings) and being expected to balance his growth and development both socially and academically. Whenever the researcher did a formal exam in school, he would later review and seek his grandmother’s views on the exam in the kitchen. The kitchen was the quintessential point of understanding coloniality, teaching and learning. It was a representation of an encounter between the colonial classroom and the Indigenous classroom. It was in these moments that his critical growth was nourished and sharpened in ways that were holistic. The researcher still remembers his grandmother telling him that life is like an envelope in that there are those who open the letter and there are those who read it even before opening. This sociological perspective continues to define the researcher’s understanding of social issues pervading societies.

Since his childhood, the researcher has been keenly focusing on issues of women, children, and youth. This is because of the gendered ways in which his community was organized in terms of division of labour (check the storyline) and ownership. The majority of fixed assets were solely owned by men and possessed by women. The harvesting and selling of coffee and tea was the sole responsibility of women and children, while men received the due. Politics remain a special male-centric topic where men control the public and women reside in
the home. The marketplace was their coffee house, and it was in this space that men discussed current political issues facing the country. Boys’ education was encouraged while girls were pushed to submit so they could be marriage material. Spousal abuse/assault and other patriarchal behaviours were the norm.

The investigator started his elementary, secondary, and college education in Kenya. He later left for Canada, where he pursued higher education in social work at a Canadian university. Upon landing in Canada, he remained unemployed/underemployed, but he would later go back and follow his dream of getting a university degree. Even after finishing his first degree in social work from Ryerson University, his accent and skin colour made it impossible to get employed. Mercer (1994), speaking of social spatial regulation of Blacks in London, said:

This space simultenously circumscribes “the black community” as that domain of the social in which the policing of the black life is exerted with particular brutality by forces of both the market and state (employment, housing, education, policing, immigration), and over and above the ability to resist and survive such forces. (p. 9)

The thought that his degree would offer him the Canadian dream quickly came crashing down. He was bordered and interned in his rented racial body and accent, which he could not afford for continued stay.

To be bordered is to exist in a frozen state of nature and war, where law is non-existent and sanctions its own erasure. The university degree was absent when it came to providing the necessities of life for the researcher. Foucault (1979), speaking of biopower, says that the existence of some bodies is made possible through the disappearance of others. Some must die for others to exist in what seems to be the technology of social control built on the framework of race, classism, and sexism. One means of letting die the migrant body is the denial of the right to earn a living even after having attained the required education. Such a denial is rationalized through policy (immigration, education, and labour) as necessary since the immigrants lack
Canadian experience (CE), meaning they are aliens and dangerous to the existence of a rational Canadian White state. Undergirding Canadian experience is the role of accent in marking and expunging migrant bodies from employment and educational spaces. Accent is a technology of determining the entry of Kenyan men into the body politic and works in ways that identify, classify, categorize, and determine the alien other.

The process of identification, classification, categorization, and determination of the other through the accent ensures that bodies cease to be human and acquire the form of the sub-human or object of introspection. The process of that scientific introspection of Kenyan men through their accent is gendered and built to shame and remove them from the community of humans and into objects that are disposable and expendable. Anglo-Saxon culture continues to control the everyday operations of most policies in Canada. To lack the rational White Anglophonic accent is considered as lacking Canadian experience. This perceived lack speaks of the categorization of accents in ways that some are more equal than others, and they determine social class and life chances. Lack of the “right” accents is consequently the lack of such experience, leaving one unemployed or under employed.

Speaking on the role of language and power, Tomic (2013) says

Skutnabb-Kangas (1988, 1993) uses the concept of linguicism to discuss the connection between power and language. She defines linguicism as “the ideologies and structures which are used to legitimate, effectuate and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and non-material) between groups which are defined on the basis of language” (Skutnabb-Kangas 1988, 13). Linguicism produces the discursive creation of a binary opposition between Self and Other, where the native speaker, Self, represents the self-evident norm for which the nonnative speaker, Other, strives. For Others achieving the status of Self—the status of native speaker—is a process of self-annihilation. Indeed, “[a]s long as the Other is different, the Other is seen as deficient, as an undeveloped or underdeveloped Self.” (p. 5)

Language, and by extension accent, is a question of power in that those who do not have the rational Anglophonic accent come to be defined as deficient in Canadian experience. The
process of determining the other is gendered and assumes that they are too emotionally challenged to participate in nation-building. Moreover, labelling the other as deficient provides the rationale of medicalizing them. This system of linguistic medicalization has led to the mushrooming of schools that teach Canadian accent to immigrants as a way of becoming Canadian. Currently, language is an industrial complex where immigrants are processed with the hope of joining true citizenship. This explains why policy is not only gendered but is also a means through which profit and wealth are maximized at the expense of the immigrants.

While one may understand and comprehend the English language, their foreign pronunciation is applied to identify, mark, and expunge them from the community of humans. This study argues that accent is a social technology of power in that those who have the native Anglophone accent occupy levels of privilege and power while those who have a different accent come to be social excesses who cannot be trusted with the running of the state. Kachru’s (1985, 1992, 1997) work speaks of how the English language has constructed the work into inner circle, outer circle, and expanding circle, where Canada is positioned within the inner circle. To be in the inner circle comes with the privilege of being the centre of the dominant English language. The outer circle is mostly dominated by other countries that attained their independence from the inner circle. Kenya is therefore part of the outer circle and hence, its population in the diaspora is constructed as living in the shadows of linguistic power, thus untrustworthy.

Foreign accents are situated at the lower ebb of the hierarchy and earmarked for social elimination through the process of accent training for one to access employment. The process works toward self-inhalation and blame, which in turn works toward sanitizing a White system betrothed with colonialism and imperialism. Accent is an organizing technology that allows some people to appear while others continue to disappear. The process is suctioned by the state
as necessary for the developing of a broken migrant who by and large is seen as deficient. Of course everyone has an accent, but some accents are more human than others. Language is connected to colonialism, power, and social inequality, and confers material advantage and a sense of respectability to the native speaker while eliminating and categorizing the non-speaker as undesirable. It is in this linguistic currency where one comes to be regarded as a citizen or newcomer. The non-native speakers are constantly reminded of their foreignness and must labour to pronounce like a native speaker to be accepted. That labour works in ways that simultaneously erases them while galvanizing wealth creation. This study argues that accent and by extension language is gendered, in that those with foreign accents come to occupy emotional spaces; furthermore, their presence in the public space is treated with suspicion and the heavy enforcement of security measures.

In multiple instances, the researcher’s accent was questioned, and several attempts were made to locate it. On one occasion, somebody told the researcher that his accent sounded more like that of Kofi Annan. Of course, the first typical reaction is favourable, considering the likeable connection to the former United Nations Secretary General and diplomat. But such pride is short-lived when one realizes the simultaneous eviction of both Annan and the researcher. Even in his death, Annan is woken up and reminded of his foreignness. The researcher becomes the graveyard through which Annan is woken and reminded that he is the other. This speaks of accents as a technology that can determine who is to die and who must seek permission for death. The question of accent is political and meant to return the researcher and Kofi to their borderland.

The foreign body is constructed as dangerous to the survival of the public order, which necessitates the declaration of security control through policies measure (read immigration,
labour, education). The law/policies are recalled to protect the rational city from the emotional border through the proclamation of Canadian experience as a necessity for employment of the migrant other. It is through this proclamation that the racial card of accent comes to define who is worthy of citizenship. The accent interns Kenyan men in their brokenness in ways that deny them the necessities of life such that they have to either accept precarious labour positions or die. Consequently, the policy imprisons the migrant other into spaces of exception, where it cannot feed itself and must live under the mercy and welfare of the state. This phenomenon asserts the long-held belief that the African migrant is a childlike thing that needs perpetual help and benevolence of the state in what is now referred to as saviour syndrome.

The bordered immigrant is constantly reminded of its foreignness through the everyday questioning of the accent. Such violent reminders and encounters are institutionally and ideologically permitted and authorized by the state to keep the migrant other from settling in the city. The settlement of the migrant other is a threat to White mythology of the pure race. Language and accent accentuate this white mythology through the creation of the inner and outer cities, which, by extension, encourages the linguistic gentrification of some bodies as deserving while others are seen as undesirable based on their accents. This creates a state of normalized violence in such spaces and reasserts incarceration of the migrant other in linguistic prisons. Such spaces are linguistically marked as violent, which justifies the application of law and order to control the disorder and protect the inner cities.

Masculinity discourse verticalizes accents such that those originating from continental Africa come to occupy the lower levels of recognition. The African accent is defined as private, emotional, and dangerous to capital accumulation, which explains why they are placed in the hidden arenas of labour system. Immigrants from Africa are assumed to be inexperienced and
their foreign accents are assumed to scare customers, hence rationalizing their perpetual precariousness in the dark alleys of labour. In the case where they are employed, they are expected to remain behind the curtain, more like a ghost, veiled from the public appearance.

Biopower politics looks at bodies that are left to die in order for others to live (Foucault, 1997). This study argues that continental African bodies are marked as pathological through the accent for the survival of the White race. This argument explains the present-day economic apartheid and the racialization of labour in ways that keep the migrant other on the margins of social order. Accent is a technology used to expose and remove bodies from academic spaces. Those with foreign accents must die in order for others to live their educational desires. Dying is not just physical but also connects to the ways in which the necessities of life are stripped from Kenyan men to accommodate the existence of the White capital system.

The law watches over such spaces while masquerading as “improving them,” but the intention is to protect the pure race from the linguistic vulgarity of the outer city. Bordered bodies are considered violent and must be policed in ways that deter them from occupying the inner city. The law that is emblematic of protecting life and order steals and marks migrant bodies as linguistically disordered and pathological. The application of such scientific and gendered labels is invested in policies and laws, and keeps migrant bodies interned while simultaneously allowing profit accumulation to continue unabated. This is the dilemma that Kenyan men face in that they have to decide to work in precarious positions and forfeit their credentials or wait for an imminent death. This keeps them in constant circulation in ways that help blame the self while absolving the system from racial elimination and colonialism.

According to Anwar (2014),

The PBA measures Education as its first construct, awarding points that increase monotonically with each additional year of education, although the link between
increased years of education and better or more success in employment has not been clearly established (Teichler and Kehm 1995). Another construct measured by the PBA is Linguistic Ability, and it is assessed through self-report and evidenced by scores in standardized tests such as the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) that the applicants must provide as a part of their application package. IELTS was developed by the University of Cambridge and is widely used for assessing English ability in the UK and Australia. (p. 174)

This is very important in understanding the interweaved technologies of immigration, education, and labour in terms of colonial connection. The process of vetting the migrant other is White and borrowed from the United Kingdom, which is recognized as the inner linguistic city. Secondly, while education may be the key to unlocking opportunities, it is not clearly promised. The testing of English language ability was oriented toward testing the immigrant from the United Kingdom and Australia. The present policy lacuna between unpromising experience and language testing that is foreign provides a fertile ground for racism based on accent.

The researcher remained unemployed even after attaining a degree (which is an ascription of success). The main narrative is that when immigrants are educated in Canada, they can easily meet their dream at their doorstep. This is the narrative that continues to be trumpeted both in Canada and abroad. While education is key to someday achieving their dreams, it is equally important to recognize how it remains silent when you expect it to speak. But how can it speak when both education and the migrant are foreign to each other? How is one supposed to express the self without articulating their inner-city disorders? Simply, how can education speak without accent? Such an undertaking is problematic and agonistic. This is testified by Mutekwa (2013) who, speaking of the Black men in the city, says:

The colonial city mocks at the mission school education that some of the young black men regard as the “open sesame” for making headway in the colonial world, and transcending the racial divide whose original basis was the supposed uncivilised state of the black African. This is epitomised in the story “The Ten Shillings.” The backlash that this mission school-educated black African faces in the city is meant to reinforce the hierarchy of races and maintain the inscription of whiteness as power and privilege. As a result, a mood of frustration, of entitlement thwarted, pervades the narrative as the main
character, Paul Masaga, a missionary-educated young man, finds himself unemployed and virtually a tramp for years in the city, turning his dream into a nightmare, and seriously undermining his masculine confidence and sense of self-worth, culminating in his humiliation at the hands of a racially bigoted prospective employer. (p. 358)

The researcher assumed that his education would open the doors of opportunities, but his accent and skin colour locked him out. To be gainfully employed is one thing, but to lack opportunities for unpaid placement/volunteer position is another level of elimination. The researcher could not get a placement spot, which was a requirement for his bachelor’s degree and would provide him with Canadian experience. He was later to learn that an African-Canadian man denied him that chance because he had a foreign accent. Just one call for the placement interview sealed his fate. Accent became the marker of returning him to the outer city and incarcerating him to the home.

This story is an expression of the experiences of a Kenyan man in Toronto. We live storied lives, and through them we make meanings. Such meanings cannot exist if they are not affirmed and recognized. While there is existing literature on the experiences of Black men in North America, there is a gap concerning Kenyan men’s experiences in Toronto. This study looks at the migration, education, and labour experiences of Kenyan men in Toronto and how accents are used to evict them from participating in active social processes in Toronto. Little, if any, information is known about the effect of immigration, labour and education policies on the Kenyan man in Toronto. This study argues that the three policy frameworks are gendered in ways that keep Kenyan men bonded and occupied in perpetual precarity. Their movement is an ongoing security threat for the inner and outer city. Their accent raises questions from within the Black community and in the inner city. His accent is a pathological label of recognition and determines his existence. Policies are used to measure his existence and remind him of his foreign self. These policies are interlocked in ways that help maintain the narrative of the Kenyan man as broken, unreliable, dispensable, and expendable.
The immigration process/policy acts as the marketing blueprint of Canada as a welcoming and multicultural society. This narrative, coupled with the economic development of Canada, attracts a lot of immigrants from the global south, seeking to eke out a life. What is not revealed in this Western immigration narrative is the historical racial erasure of immigrants, and the gendered nature of the process. The Chinese head tax is one among many racial histories that has been collapsed by the multicultural white narrative (Cho, 2018). Even with a progressive Canadian immigration achievement, there still exist unwritten racial laws within the policy that mark particular racial bodies as undesirable and broken based on their nationality, culture, and, for this study, accent (Thobani, 2007). The immigration policy invites educated immigrants to fill the labour shortage in Canada, yet streamlines them based on their culture and accents. These educated immigrants are sent to school through public funds like grants and loans from their own country, yet end up as exports to the global north. Some of these immigrants are engineers, doctors, nurses, and other high-end professions, yet they cannot offer their expert knowledge to their countries of birth. It takes the state and the community to educate this demography so they can contribute to the growth of the country and the community.

With the rationalization of economies, brought about by the Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs), there has been heightened immigration of this group to the West in search of greener pastures (Galabuzi, 2006). It is in the interest of this study to understand the present-day shortage of this expert knowledge and labour to the exporting country while the West is flooded with very educated immigrants who are unemployed or underemployed. The issues of unemployment are tied to immigration and education policies in Canada. These three policies are interlocked in complex ways to incarcerate Kenyan men in the shadows of the world where they remain unemployed or underemployed even after having the right kind of education.
While the immigration process invites educated immigrants to relocate to Canada with a promise of a better life, it subsequently reminds them that Canadian experience is a requirement for such opportunities. They are assured that with the right education, one can succeed in Toronto. This provides initial hope to immigrants, and as such they are ready to handle the temporary discomfort of arriving, considering initial settling challenges as teething problems. These challenges become real when they cannot find a job in the area in which they were trained. Of course, the first issue is a lack of Canadian experience, for which they offer to volunteer their hours or go back to school. However, even with such undertakings, they remain in the dark areas of social participation since they cannot access employment. A look at the employment act reasserts the immigration policy that for immigrants to be successful, they must have Canadian experience under their belt (Anwar, 2014). What is not said in this determination of Canadian experience is the role of accent in classifying a body as foreign and as such not having Canadian experience. The accent is thus an effective racial marker of identifying bodies as desirable or undesirable to participate in economic and social processes.

The question of language, colonialism, and racial segmentation is well captured by Tomic (2018):

Within the discipline of applied linguistics, a substantial body of literature has interrogated the connections between English, colonialism and the dichotomous Standard/Non Standard English. Kachru’s (1985, 1992, 1997) influential work studies how English has experienced various processes of adaptation, institutionalization and nativization in the different localities in which it has settled. He theorizes three “concentric circles” of English in our contemporary world: an Inner Circle, an Outer circle, and an Expanding Circle. Countries such as England, the United States, and Canada constitute the Inner Circle; English is their first or dominant language. They are the “cultural and linguistic bases of English” (Kachru 1992, 356). The Outer Circle consists of post-colonial countries where English is not the first language (or mother tongue) of the population. Still, English plays a central role in areas as important as government administration, education, and popular culture. In the Expanding Circle English is widely sought and recognized as a lingua franca. (p. 3)
Classification of accents allows the verticalization of power in such a way that those who occupy lower levels of linguistic ladders are violently expunged from humanity. Accent works as a state-sanctioned colonial technology operating at ideological and institutional levels and made real through everyday individual interactions. To refuse to listen to the other based on their accent is an execution of the narrator in ways that allow the decoder to live. The death of the narrator allows a normalization of a White-based learning and teaching and the subsequent erasure of other multicentric learnings. Furthermore, it collapses other narratives into a single experience and facilitates the eventual commodification and marketization of the subjugated knowledges. This death has implications in terms of whose education is accepted in the labour space.

Accent is the effect of native language on the spoken language or production of sound (Carlson & McHenry, 2006; Edwards, 1997). Phonological and prosody also play key roles in accent (Cheng, 1999; Stewart & Vaillette, 2001). Accent is the hieratical arrangement of people’s pronouncement of language in such a way that some are designated as native speakers and accord power and privilege while others are designated as non-native and denied life opportunities. According to Carlson and McHenry (2006), accent plays a role in hiring practices. Ethnization of community is connected to accent or dialect such that Anglophones come to occupy superior positions of power while those others are treated as aliens. Individuals with lower accent ratings receive lower employability ratings. Accents are gendered and determine bodies as emotional and broken and in need of language training to save them. Accent is a technology of locating broken bodies for improvement. While volunteering and furtherance of education may be solutions to the immigration teething problems, they also work to marginalize this group through indentured labour and precarious educational practices that advance erasure of
migrant bodies based on their accent and ways of being. Such a perspective is rarely featured in Black masculinity even though it is the lived reality of Kenyan men in Toronto.

An attempt to understand the plight of Black Kenyan families in Toronto, Canada, calls for an interrogation of the gendered citizenship and racism in Canada. As stated earlier, Kenya was colonized by the British, which led to the erasure of Indigenous ways of life (Njambi, 2005; Odhiambo, 2003; Tabitha, 2005; wa Thiong’o, 2006). Through colonialism, women became the property of men. This gendered colonialism escalated after independence in ways that considered men as the “protector” and “breadwinner” of the family and women the receiver of male charity. On the level of race, Black men were seen as the property of the White man. This domination of Black men was based on the colonial narrative that Black African men were childlike, emotional beings that were supposed to be regulated in the public space (Mercer, 1994).

These sentiments continue to pervade the global system today, where well-educated Kenyan men in Toronto are considered irrational due to their connection to the emotional Kenya. Kenya is considered feminine and irrational compared to Canada in terms of socio-economic and political background. For example, Kenya’s inability to provide the basic necessities of living to its citizens, which forces them to migrate to the West, is construed as the incapability to undertake the masculine role of breadwinner and protector of its population. In terms of education, Kenyan universities continue to be ranked below other Western universities, making it impossible for Kenyan immigrants to transfer their credits to pursue higher education in Canada. With Kenyan education, many qualified Kenyan men cannot access employment. The process of certification is a mirage for professional Kenyans living in Canada. These defining factors of nation-state masculinity come to define the lived experiences of Kenyan immigrants living in
Toronto. Their gendered being denies them the rights to citizenship, leading to unemployment or underemployment.

The second issue for this study is the colonial performance of the breadwinning role by the Kenyan man in an environment that is unconducive and deliberately tailored to fail him. The majority of the available literature on Black masculinity looks at the racial erasure of Black men in school systems, incarceration and racial profiling, unemployment, substance use, and mental health (Adler, 2015; Anderson, 1999; Dei, 1998; James, 2012, Johnson, 2015). These experiences are institutional and historical and come to be trusted through the stereotype that the Black body is inferior and dangerous (Fanon, 1967; Yancy & Jones, 2013). These studies agree that the system is designed to fail the Black body, and sustain the grand narrative of the Black body as incapable of entering modernity (Anderson, 1999; Brooms & Perry, 2016; Byfield, 2008; Creese & Wiebe, 2012; Derrick & Armon, 2016; Dickerson, 2002; Hall & Pizarro, 2010; Hirsch & Winters, 2012; Hoch, 1979; James, 2012; Kuroki, 2016; McCready, 2012; Noguera, 2008). A network of systems work in ways that intern Black bodies in their place, characteristic of the prison pipeline design. For example, when a Black man fails in education it leads to unemployment and subsequent spiralling of other social issues, which rationalizes the Black body as unimprovable.

This has implications for the Black family’s financial, social, and psychological well-being, especially when the system impedes the individual performing the colonial gendered scripts (Anderson, Kohler, & Letiecq, 2005). Black men are raised and taught that real men should provide for and protect their family (Dickerson, 2002; Michniewicz, Vandello, & Bosson, 2014; Pasura & Christou, 2017) yet the economic imperative impede him. Economic downturns, however, make it impossible for Black men to exercise this gendered breadwinner script
(Dickerson, 2002; Michniewicz et al., 2014). The economic downturn is experienced differently among Black and White men, since the former group is marked as incapable and broken when they cannot make it.

The inability of Black men to be breadwinners is further complicated by the existence of Black women in the service industry, mostly in precarious labour positions. Black women are underpaid, yet expected to play the role of the breadwinner following the unemployment of Black men. This affects Black families and communities in myriad ways, such as the emasculation of the Black man. This has a large effect on Black families and their communities based on the level of mental health and substance use among Black men, family abuse, and many other social issues. Currently, there is a growing body of literature focusing on spousal abuse and health issues among African-American men (Huang & Gunn, 2001; Jon, Kathleen, & Akinyi, 2011; Kubrin & Wadsworth, 2009; Metzl, 2013; Neff, Holamon, & Schluter, 1995; Perkins, 2014). While that is commendable, more work is needed to understand the specific spousal abuse experiences within Blackness. The experiences of Kenyan men continue to be collapsed as Black experiences, yet they are informed by different circumstances such as education, immigration and labour and the role of accent in the devaluation of their humanity.

Studies on Black men have policy implications in terms of understanding institutionalized racism (Jones, 1991; Smith & Alpert, 2002; Staples, 1982). They also determine the kind of services that a community receives from the state. While some services may target Black communities, they fail to meet the specific cultural, social as well as psychological needs of other Black bodies as informed by their education, labour and immigration experiences. Pasura and Christou’s (2017) study of Zimbabwean men is an example of how state welfare, while well meaning, takes away the breadwinning role of these African men and subsequently
erases them from performing their masculinity. While welfare is a Western solution to poverty, it paternalizes and racially evicts Black male bodies by taking away their breadwinning role.

The third problem to be addressed in this study is the American White nationalism and traditionalism. American administration is currently focussed on border walling and surveillance. There has been heightened racially targeted security conscious, awareness and removal of undesirable immigrants in America since 9/11. This American traditionalism and nationalism are exacerbated by the election of the Trump government in 2016. It is geared toward maintaining a White pure race in what has come to be accorded as making America great again and entails securitization and militarisation of spaces, as recently witnessed with walling and the internment of the so-called illegal aliens and dangerous human caravan.

America remains traditional in terms of immigration, labour, and education of the Black race and more so the migrant other (Huber, 2011; Ortiz, Garcia, & Hernández, 2012; Rodriguez & Monreal, 2017). The American paranoia surrounding Black threat is historical and contemporary (Epp, Maynard-Moody, & Haider-Markel, 2017). The state cannot reconcile itself with the Black presence in its midst. At one point, it needs Blackness for self-affirmation while it loathes and expunges it for its emotions. This informs the present-day violent cultural securitization of space and walling as a necessary technology of getting rid of the immigrant other. The threat from within is connected to the without, which has led to institutionalized and ideological Islamophobia and racial bigotry and brutality (Iverson & Jaggers, 2015; Kaplan, 2006; Massey, Durand, & Pren, 2016).

Currently, the Trump administration is focused on walling the state and administering water-tight immigration measures to deter the Black, Muslim, and Latino Mexican from infecting the traditional White American state (Timmons, 2017). This speaks of the racial and
gendered construction of nation-states where some countries come to be referred as dangerous and emotional, and their populations identified as broken and unworthy to live in America. On the level of global politics, countries from the south come to be seen as the shitholes of the world and terror spots while their populations are seen as the wretched of the earth who cannot be trusted (Timmon, 2017). Law and policies are applied in ways that normalize mass deportation, internment, and incarcerations of the migrant others. The White city envisages the terrorizing effect of the Black pathology through legal, economic, and social walling as expressed in the education, immigration, and labour policies that continue to push the African migrant to spaces of violence and exception (Fenning & Rose, 2007; Mowen & Parker, 2017; Shirley & Cornell, 2012). Such security measures affect the citizenship rights of the continental Black body, going by the high levels of unemployment rates among African immigrants (Creese & Wiebe, 2012; Stewart et al., 2008).

Immigration is putting pressure on national policy, psyche, citizenship, and scholarship. This is typically based on the current eviction of immigrants by the Trump administration, supported and authorized by state machinery. The process of walling the nation-state has been there, yet it seems to be normalized by the current capital state. The ever-present fear of outside attack provides a rational point of securing the nation through walling and policy framework. We are in a place were global connection and community are under siege as nation-states erect walls to ward off the external pressure of terrorism. This has led to the massive deportation of immigrants and writing of policies targeting particular countries as terror spots. As the closest neighbour to America, Canada is affected by the eviction and walling of its southern neighbour.

This may sound like a southern narrative, but Canada cannot hide its face in the snow and claim that it is immune to it. Canadian multiculturalism vis a vis high levels of labour
discrimination among African immigrants is a testament of this racial narrative. Canada, being a close neighbour to the USA, will soon become the new home to some of the evicted immigrants, some of whom will be Kenyan men. Kenyan men have had a myriad of experiences and memories informed by their recent eviction but also their Kenyan histories and culture. Those living in the USA continue to face racial discrimination that is informed by their accent, and yet their representation is simplified and reduced as Black experience. Black masculinity scholarship supports such colonial simplicities by failing to name and do research on them. These colonial labels affect Kenyan men and their families in the USA in that they cannot receive services that are geared to their specific lived realities. Canada cannot hide to its racial share if the issues of incarceration of Black youths, police carding, shooting and profiling of the racially Black other in Toronto is anything to go by. This racial marking of the Black other is historical and is connected to slavery (Fanon, 1967; Mercer, 1994).

McKittrick (2006), speaking of the death of Marie-Joseph Ang’elique in New France (Montreal), draws a vivid depiction of anti-Black racism in Canada—a racist history that continues to be buried and unacknowledged. McKittrick says,

Because early Black communities in Canada are erasable (which is not only shown in the national imaginary but also replicated vis-à-vis the paucity of investigations of Black Canada during and after transatlantic slavery), Canada is often solely positioned as a safe haven (U.S. fugitive slaves) and a land of opportunity (for Black migrant workers, the Caribbean community, and migrants from the continent of Africa). Despite the extensive work by several theorists and activists in Canada, the Black community and the struggles that coincide with being Black in Canada, remain relatively unknown in the broader national discourse and non-Canadian Black diaspora studies. (p. 98)

The rise of Black Lives Matter (BLM) in Canada is a testament to the present-day institutionalized racism against Black bodies in Canada. The stand up of BLM during the pride parade in Toronto speaks of the different needs within the marginalized communities. The colonial government created these racial, gendered and classed hierarchies in order to maintain
its divisions of the other. It is important to acknowledge them in ways that truly liberate the Black communities rather than using them for self gratification. Black masculinity is yet to acknowledge such differences within Blackness. The study seeks to re-imagine Black masculinity by including the narratives of Kenyan men in Toronto.

The question of walling is both a humanitarian and economic question, yet the nation-state gives priority to capital and trade. Both Canada and the United States are focused on capital accumulation and protection of trade with little concern for immigrants. There is an intensified focus on balance of trade under the NAFTA agreements based on the number of government to government delegations sent to the southern borders. Canada is worried about trade deficits and embargoes emanating from changes to NAFTA trade policies. While such worries are valid, it is equally necessary to worry about migrant needs and the effect of policy thereof. While transnational trade is vital and central to NAFTA discussions, its equally imperative to discuss the humanitarian tragedy facing the world during and after the Trump regime. The world is contracting for some but expanding for others, in that while trade appears to be an important issue in the national narrative, immigrants’ issues are consistently and continuously disappearing from national debates. Transnational companies are given priorities by nation-states compared to immigrants (Galabuzi, 2006). It is out of this predicament that this study attempts to interrogate the voices of Kenyan men who are located in the dark shadows of this transnational debate. This study is a rebirth of a coffee house in that Kenyan men will speak of their needs in ways that speak to policies and laws in Canada. The study attempts to answer the question of whether Canada is ready to actively listen to immigrant Kenyan men evicted from America and seeking refuge in Canada.

This study looks at educational, immigration, and labour policies as racial technologies of power that mark Black immigrants as emotional and undesirable to enter North America. This
narrative of the broken racial other continues to be manifested in America through laws and policies that mark Black bodies as intruders, undesirable and unwelcomed visitors (Cadore, 2015; Jernigan, 2000; LaHee, 2016). Black bodies are treated with suspicion whenever the break the white racial encryption that (Evans & Evans, 1995) in Canada (Dei, 1994, 1998). Institutional and ideological racial profiling and carding are examples of institutionalized anti-Blackness supported by racially and politically motivated statements like, “we will spread them like cockroaches,” to allow gentrification of spaces like Jane and Finch in Toronto. These statements are not innocent and should be tied to the very narrative of expunging the racially dangerous other to allow profit accumulation while pretending to bring development to Black communities in those areas. Black men and boys are discriminately and disproportionally stopped (Payne, Hitchens, & Chambers, 2017), questioned and marked as security threats (Wright, 2016) in the street. The school system is Western and works as a pipeline to prison (Fenning & Rose, 2007). The high dropout rate of Black children from the Western schools for fear of revictimization (Thompson & Wallner, 2011) is a testament of how education is historically racial.

While Black masculinity has played a big role in antiracism and has brought changes in terms of policy change, it is important that such achievements don’t throw the Black community into the deep end of double absences in that we become thankful for having made it while concurrently placing European cannon as the rational measure of success (Mercer, 1994). Mercer (1994), quoting Stuart Hall, says

We have come out of the age of innocence (which) says, as it were, “It’s good if it’s there” and are now entering the next phase, in which “we actually begin to recognize the extraordinary complexity of ethnic and cultural differences.” (p. 56)

Black masculinity is in the thick of these racial conversations but its ontological forgetfulness (Pon, 2009) of how accents affect the education of Kenyan men in Toronto speaks of its implication in the colonial eviction of some Blacks who do not fit the traditional narrative of the
authentic Black. It is interesting that Black masculinity collapses Blackness without recognizing that all Blacks are equal, but some are more equal that others (Mercer, 1994). It is important to reformulate Blackness and Black masculinity in ways that acknowledge the difference from within instead of blindly expecting things will change while presenting the same solutions and problems. While the current white narrative of walling and securing the nation from the dangerous cultural other is a living reality for many African immigrants, Black masculinity remains silent and non-committal. Such silence is suspect and questions the authenticity of Black masculinity in the representation of Black bodies. Speaking of Black films (read Black masculinity), Mercer (1994) says

Further, although it is always necessary document and validate the authority of experience (who feels it, knows it), the selection of who is given the right to speak may also exclude other: the voices and viewpoints of Black women, for example, are notable by their absence from the films such as Blacks Britannica. Finally, the issue of authenticity, the aspiration to be “true to life” in narrative drama especially, is deeply problematic, as a given type of Black person or experience is made to speak for Black people as a whole. Not only does this reduce the diversity of Black experiences and opinions to a single perspective assumed to be typical, it may also reinforce the tokenistic idea that a single film can be regarded as representative of every Black person’s perception of reality.(p. 58)

Black masculinity is traditionally white and is spread throughout North America to mark Black bodies as unauthentic while others are marked as desirable (Staples, 1982). Black masculinity is White and does not need to prove its citizenship when on transit. The media and technologies of migration continue to present the Black American man as better than other Black bodies, which reasserts the narrative that the West is the land of opportunities for the broken other. It also creates the impression of hard work and success for those ready to speak in a particular accent that is white and rational. This affirmative White narrative works to remind the migrant other that their present problems are of their own making, hence absolving systemic racism. This being the case, Black masculinity as an affirmative action is implicated in the colonialism and eviction
of other bodies. Black masculinity scholarship in Canada is scanty and borrows from the American understanding of Blackness and masculinity. This is a dangerous historical trajectory in that it expels Black Kenyan men from America and those arriving from Kenya. It is inconceivable how Kenyan migrant men will be treated when they “settle” in Canada if available scholarship on Black men is traditional and looks at Blackness as inseparably uniform. Using the American Black masculinity studies’ understanding of Black men is detrimental to Kenyan men, their communities, and families, in that it does not look at the multifaceted experiences of Kenyan racial experiences as informed by their accent. Canada needs to embrace itself with these myriad ways through which Blackness is contextualized and performed.

**Affirmative Action and Black Masculinity**

Scholarship on gender has primarily focused on women’s oppression. Feminist studies and resistance led the way in socio-economic and political policy formulation and action plans that were geared toward social justice and equity (Gimenez, 2005; Lutwak, 2013). Though the issue of women led to other anti-colonial struggles, it is important to recognize how struggles are interrelated yet interlocked in complex ways. These struggles culminated in the introduction of affirmative actions (Baker, 2009; Busby, 2006). While the record number of women and other marginalized groups occupying public office is something to be acknowledged, with that recognition comes the responsibility of unpacking the hidden narrative within the policy.

Affirmative action policy seeks to correct historical injustices meted on marginalized communities (Hastie & Rimmington, 2014; Lippert-Rasmussen, 2017). The affirmative action policy supports quotas systems in fixing historical social problems (Morgenroth & Ryan, 2018). It is in the fixing of problems that affirmative action sanitizes and absolves heteronormativity, colonialism, and Whiteness from the histories of racial and sexual erasure of marginalized
bodies. This policy fails to question historical and structural issues that continue to marginalize and remove bodies from the state, and instead lays blame on individuals. Through this policy, individuals are problematized as broken and in need of the White saviour (Razack, 2015).

In these arrangements, employers are expected by law to employ a quota of marginalized persons in their establishment as a confirmation of their diversity. Though the policy has been hailed as “progressive” and emancipatory, it reverts to its original sin of evicting oppressed communities from the centre, as expressed by Fraser, Osborne, and Sibley (2015) in their work on benevolent sexism. It gives with one hand while taking away with the other hand. For example, women continue to hold token positions while real power and authority is held by men. In political circles, it was assumed that America was post-racial upon the election of Barack Obama. Such assumptions erase racial pain in ways that affirm Whiteness and White supremacy (Bhopal & Alibhai-Brown, 2018).

Affirmative action practice is a patchwork solution to social issues and works toward maintaining social inequality under the guise of liberation. The policy was written for the oppressed to absolve White guilt through judicial restitution of the marginalized. A historical problem was reduced and simplified to measurable variables of pain that could be paid to settle the past and move forward. Such a perspective is white and comes from a privileged position that commodifies historical pain as payable (Iyer, Leach, & Crosby, 2003). Such an argument that assumes that pain and death can be paid in order to reconcile the past is ill-advised and motivated by white shame and guilt. It can only work to placate the oppressed through social engineering of the social problem. Such a top-down solution is patronizing and paternalistic and assumes that communities have no power or resources for self-empowerment and determination.
Affirmative action packages the pain of the oppressed for sale in the market (Morgan, 2009). The policy applies the merit system to tokenize the marginalized groups. For example, the majority of organizations are still controlled by men, even though women are at the helm. The token is a marketing tool of progressiveness and is expected to labour to substantiate white claims (Morgan, 2009). For example, the question of ratio tension and implementation of affirmative action by the Reagan administration provided a candid example of how the policy came to maintain the status quo through administrative patchwork. Affirmative action is a standard of measurement that affirms neoliberal meritocracy and “hard work” as necessary for one to be successful, yet other technologies of racial policing continue to impact racialized populations (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Such a narrative blames women and racialized bodies as lazy when they fail. A token success story, though exulted, is also placed on the radar of surveillance and censorship. The token is a space invader and must be censored and policed. Such censorship is based on unequal pay and power to keep them submissive to the heteronormative system. Such success stories use marginality to maintain the status quo.

This study argues that these “success stories” are colonial capital and manufactured for consumption by the marginalized communities to justify equity and social justice, as well as sanitize Whiteness and White supremacy, patriarchy, imperialism, and capital. In a nutshell, the affirmative action policy is an industrial complex where mental work is left for the factory owner while the oppressed labour physically. The factory is alienating and objectifies the token. The token is alienated from the community and self. The token is made to believe that the dominant comfort is the only available experience, which denigrates its own resistance, agency and self-determination. This study looks at Black masculinity as another form of affirmative action.
This study is a recalibrating American conception of Black masculinity in the context of global migration, histories, and difference. Key to the disturbing of Black masculinity is the understanding that Kenyan men living in Canada have a different narrative and experience that cannot be collapsed into a one-size-fits-all Black masculinity scholarship. While this aspect is the main agenda for this study, it is imperative to understand that Black masculinity is not all about Black men and that not all Black men exude Black masculinity (Mercer, 1994). A case in point is the Kenyan men who showcase their African Indigenous masculinities as a way of challenging dominant power in the West. African Indigenous masculinity is diverse, overlapping and built on the framework of service to the community, respect for human beings, reciprocity and redistribution of wealth as well as kindness to humanity. While Black masculinity has paid homage to experiences of Black men in the West, it has failed to identify subjugated masculinities (Mercer, 1994). This study is a conversation with Kenyan men in Toronto to identify ways in which they apply their Africaness and Indigeneity as a form of subversion to global capitalism, imperialism and colonization in Toronto; as expressed in immigration, education, and labour processes in Canada.

Limitations of Black Masculinity: Submissions for the Reimagination of Black Masculinity

The majority of solutions to Black problems are framed from a dominant White perspective (Collins, 1997; Craighton, 1999). Such solutions allow colonialism to continue unchallenged through the belief that they are the only concessional and available means to historical problems, as if there is never another world beyond the present colonial one. The majority of Black masculinity studies look up to Whiteness for liberation, which denigrates local synergies of liberation (Mercer, 1994). Among some of the local means of community-based problem-solving are Indigenous and connected to the land, yet they never receive recognition.
Sometimes the battle against colonialism cannot be won through the master tool. There is time that the oppressed will have to innovate their own ways of countering dominant ways of knowing. Once my grandmother told me that I should smile back to the oppressor and make them redo their shit. For a while, women of colour applied this form of resistance to find local solutions to their problem. A case in point is the involvement of Kenyan Indigenous women in fighting colonialism and heteropatriarchy through Indigenous practices like circumcision and marriage (Njambi, 2005). There is a gap within Black masculinity on the roles of Indigenous practices and knowledge production as fundamental tools against anti-Black activism, education and liberation. This study looks at other forms of empowerment informed by local synergies that are equally important in the liberation of Black communities. The enticement of Black masculinity by affirmative action ideals is not true to Black liberation but denigrates and invalidates other experiences. This study unpacks Black masculinity to reimagine new Black futurity steeped in Indigenous and Black feminist forms of resistance.

Black masculinity, through affirmative policy, is variously counterproductive to Black empowerment. It looks at White power as the only true process of liberating the Black skin (Fanon, 1967; Mercer, 1994), which denied the agency and resiliency of local forms of empowerment. Affirmative action and Black masculinity are interconnected and work together to erase Blackness through labelling the problematic Black and fixing them within a White system. Black masculinity has been involved in calling institutional racism in North America. Changes are made to accommodate the other in ways that continue to assert the benevolent White syndrome, while disparaging the Black other. Black masculinity relies on White privilege, patriarchy, and hetero-normativity as the only road to emancipation, which vilifies local power and resiliencies. In the very act of justifying progressiveness, affirmative action through Black
masculinity reasserts Whiteness and White supremacy, patriarchy, homophobia, imperialism, and the nihilation of Black bodies.

In a characteristic reference to *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 2000), Mullaly (1999) says that the oppressed embodies oppression through multiple mechanisms, among them being self-hate and exultation of the oppressor through everyday performance. The assumption is that through the imitation of the oppressor, the oppressed comes to be like the oppressor. Such a vertical rush to the top leads to competition among the oppressed as they rush through the limited opportunities available to realize Whiteness. It streamlines the oppressed bodies into one-fit-all solutions. The oppressed cannot realize any other opportunity other than the one provided by the colonial system. Self-hate affirms the self-fulfilling prophecy of the Black skin as broken and in need of the White saviour. The rush toward Whiteness causes lateralized violence within the community. This is informed by self-hate and a toehold on respectability (Fellows & Razack, 1998), which alienates the community even further. Such a conversation is missing within Black masculinity.

Fanon (1967, 1968) argues that the Black body’s internalized colonialism provides a rationale for self-cannibalisation. Such a psychic focus of Blackness makes the Black man seek White respectability and exultation and consequently hate his Blackness. Black masculinity is reminiscent of this Fanonian conception of the Black man. Black masculinity is a creation of White hegemony that constructs Black bodies as either deviant or true Black. The study argues that Black masculinity is White and serves the interest of White masculine hegemony. It reasserts White purity as the true form of manliness.

Blackness in Black masculinity is a measure of arrival to whiteness (Mercer, 1994). Those who are well-educated and have the right White accent can access privilege and prestige.
The comfort of Black masculinity is the discomfort of the others (Black women, disabled, seniors, and continental African men and women; Mercer, 1994; Staples, 1982). The comfort of Black masculinity with a White form of empowerment serves to reassert Blackness as repugnant, a relic of the past and anachronistically out of touch with modernity. Black masculinity is implicated in the racial erasure of the other forms of Blackness based on its comfort with the White narrative of self-determination (Mercer, 1994). Black masculinity does not recognize the local resiliencies and agencies of Black bodies but rather rubber stamps White power as a true form of empowerment (Staples, 1982). Surprisingly, Black masculinity calls for the movement toward Whiteness and White power. For example, the call for institutional changes without effecting real change informed from the local spaces is not real change (Fellows & Razack, 1998). Such an arrival is contingent, pre-determined, and manufactured to civilize the Black body and not to empower it from their point of history and culture. It serves the White dream of exulting the “liberal” Black male subject and subsequently denigrating other Black bodies.

Fellows and Razack (1998), speaking of how the margins reaffirm the dominant, say:

The containment of the Other is a making of the dominant self. To exclude Others from membership in the human community, that is, to name, classify, and contain the Other through a number of representational and material practices, assures the material basis for domination while enabling the members of the dominant group to define themselves. Patricia Hill Collins makes this point in the context of the marginalization of African American women, showing how identifying the Other concurrently identifies the dominant group. As the “Others” of society who can never really belong, strangers threaten the moral and social order. But they are simultaneously essential for its survival because those individuals who stand at the margins of society clarify its boundaries. African-American women, by not belonging, emphasize the significance of belonging. Although the symbolic and material practices used to exclude are not the same for all groups designated as Other, the various strategies collectively enable the formation of the dominant group. (p. 343)

Affirmative action and the push for Black employment and education within a White structure is just but one example of how Black masculinity refuses to recognize local spaces as oracles of
power and knowledges. Such a move never seeks to look at the authentic Black self as a site of emancipation and power, but rather stamps whiteness as real and normal.

Black masculinity, through affirmative action policy, is a colonial satellite that creates racial order through regulation of the Black social fabric (Mercer, 1994). There is a White standard set by Black masculinity and expected to be performed by the Black other. For example, the Black man must be trained through a White system and work in a White system in order to be a breadwinner. It also normalizes the breadwinning man as the only form of living, hence collapsing Blackness into one simplistic community in the eye of the White subject. This has social and economic implications for anti-racist and anti-Black racism. Through this, Blacks come to live as the other through a performance of self-degrading scripts that never speak to their innate power and desire. Black masculinity is a satellite that entrenches and operationalizes affirmative action and its surrogates within the Black community. Black masculinity normalizes, simplifies, collapses, and reduces Blackness into one ordered and typical identity under which every Black should aim to achieve and from which they are judged as normal Blacks or disordered Black other (Mercer, 1994). Black masculinity is a colonial technology of regulation and censorship and expunges Black bodies who fail to embody true American Blackness. Black masculinity pathologizes Black skin, leading to self-hate and lateral violence, while sanitizing Whiteness, patriarchy, neoliberalism, imperialism, and other forms of oppression (Mercer, 1994; Staples, 1982).

Black masculinity has been vocal against institutionalized, ideological and individual forms of racism (Allen, 2017; Brooms & Perry, 2016; Craighton, 1999; Evans & Evans, 1995; Hoch, 1979; Pelzer, 2016). Black masculinity looks at institutional erasure of Black men through racial carding, economic, political and social profiling, unemployment, educational side-lining,
homelessness, mental health, and substance use among the African American youths (read boys) (Anderson et al., 2005; Broman, 2001; Brooms & Perry, 2016; Derrick & Armon, 2016; Dickerson, 2002). But such a representation had been questioned by Mercer (1994) who, citing Williamson, says

the invisible demand to “speak for the Black community” is always there behind the multiculturalism of the public funding”. There is, in effect, a subtle “number game” in play: if there is only one Black voice in the public discourse its is assumed that that voice “speaks for” and thereby “represents” the many voices and viewpoints of the entire community that is marginalized from the means of representation in society. Tokenism is one particular effect of this state of affairs: when films are funded with the expectation that they “speak for” a disenfranchised community, this legitimates institutional expediency (it “demonstrates” multiculturalism) and the rationing of access to meagre resources (it polices a group’s social rights to representation). (p. 92)

Though Black masculinity is commended for such anti-racist moves, a literature gap still exists in terms of understanding the interstitial difference within Blackness in terms of gender, migration, education, labour, citizenship, sexual orientation, age, and abilities. For example, there is a universal assumption that the continental African man is entirely Black; yet his Blackness is conflicted by his accent, which affects his immigration, educational, and labour experience. Black and Blackness have commonly been used as cultural technologies of determining and measuring belongingness, deviancy, recognition, and respectability in ways that benefit the dominant group (Mercer, 1994). American Black is a measure of authentic Black and determines who gets citizenship rights among Black communities. This study argues that accent has been used to expunge the African immigrant from Blackness and lead to an eventual removal from the state. Black masculinity’s silence on the role of accents and the erasure of the continental African results from colonialism and imperialism. So long as the status quo serves a Black American man, there is no need to trouble the system as presently composed. This is what Fellows and Razack (1998) call a toehold on respectability. Fellows and Razack’s (1998) points make sense in terms of understanding the fact that all Blacks are equal, but some are more equal
than others. The ever-present violence and threats meted to African immigrants within Blackness in terms of their immigration, education, and labour cannot be wished away and maintain business as usual. There is an ever-present ghost that Black masculinity must consider as important.

Black masculinity does not look at other forms of oppression (read accent), and by doing so it is implicated in the suspension of some claims because they do not fit the dominant definition (Mercer, 1994). When Black masculinity is skewed to consider the African American experience at the behest of other immigrants’ experiences, then it is guilty of the toehold of respectability. According to Fellows and Razack (1998), toeholds on respectability authenticate claims as important while marginalizing and dismissing others as illegitimate. Such kinds of respectability do not provide true liberation but rather destroy the Black community with manufactured comfort while allowing wealth to be accumulated by the dominant class—to live the White narrative of what is Black is to edge closer to Whiteness and freedom. But such a trend to freedom is temporal and contingent on how it serves the interest of the dominant class. Deviation from the normal conception of Blackness invites a special form of censorship and policing of the tokenized Black body to expose and remove the Black from the body politic. It is a case of manufactured freedom where the mestizo is invited into an already prepared ceremony of exultation which then can be used to expunge him from the city. The door for Black exultation is half open and closed but never ajar. The so-called recognized Black body stands at the entrance; his foot neither in the exulted space and removed from itself. The Black body is a reminder of the existing borderland (terror) in the city. Such a liminal spot denies the Black body its true freedom by providing censored exultation. The Black man is neither the possessor nor the owner of the Black masculine narrative, but rather the vehicle through which White power is
instituted within and without Blackness. Every Black sees their marginality as the real one and forgets how their position may contribute to the domination of the other.

Fellows and Razack (1998) note that

Given the benefits and necessity of concentrating on the sources of our own subordination, it is not surprising that each of us does not easily endanger our place on the margin by an examination of our complicity in the oppression of others. To acknowledge that we oppress other women not only feels like a risk; it is a risk. Our own claim for justice is likely to be undermined if we acknowledge the claims of Others—competing claims that would position us as dominant. The compelling reasons, then, for our race to innocence have to do with how the systems of domination operate among subordinate groups, limiting both what we can know and feel and what we can risk acknowledging about one another and about ourselves. (p. 340)

Troubling Black masculinity claim on White empowerment is risky but also necessary for Black liberation. As Mercer (1994) says, “Reluctant to disclose ‘the personal,’ one character says ‘I wish there was a way to show this film to Black people only, then I’d talk about my feelings.’ Similar responses, that we should not” (p. 154). Black masculinity works towards removal of other identities; examples being the refusal to consider continental Black African men experiences as authentic and valid. This scholarly denigration is one way through which Black masculinity laterally violate other forms of Blackness (Mercer, 1994). Black masculinity understands other Blacks from its dominant point and as such claims of oppression from the continental Black African men as unfounded.

To be Black is to consume American Black culture and speak in an accent. The American Black man is the quintessential indicator of the right Blackness and in consequence, dominates other marginalized groups within the Black community in terms of gender, race, and citizenship. They who cannot perform this universal kind of Black narrative are marked as social deviants, dangerous, and remnants of the past who deserve to die through unemployment. The dominant class provides the roadmap of exposing the Black other while the Black participates in making it
This study looks at how Black masculinity is implicated in the perpetual domination of other Black bodies in ways that serve the interest of the White institutions and bodies.

Black masculinity is built and seeks respectability on a colonial bedrock. Black masculinity is built on the framework of imperial and colonial bio-power and technology of regulation (Mercer, 1994). Foucault (1997) says that bio-power is watching and regulating the species in ways that allow some to exist at the death of others. Bio-power and regulatory technology sustain the norm that White supremacy and heteropatriarchy are necessary for the survival of the species being. The biopolitical death of some is necessary to sustain the true species. This theoretical conception depicts Black masculinity as a model of sustaining a species of Blacks through erasing of the other. Black masculinity provides a framework under which all other Blacks are supposed to melt and fit within the colonial conceptualisation of Blackness (Mercer, 1994). Failure is not an option since it leads to the death of the deviant other, either through unemployment or underemployment. One of the ways to fit into the colonial narrative of Black masculinity is through accepting a Black accent and way of living.

Black masculinity is a diagnostic instrument for measuring, defining, and determining Blackness (Staples, 1982). Indicators like dialects, accents, skin colour, experience, nationality, and citizenship are used to measure Black authenticity within Blackness. Outliers to these Black indicators are marked and labelled as pathologies and dangerous to Black survival, and hence are candidates for elimination. Such a labelled disorder is subsequently “medicalized,” becoming a candidate or a ground of profiteering companies. Medicalization is in the form of refresher courses taken by immigrants to change their accent and behave in a way that reasserts Whiteness (Tomic, 2013). The process of labelling and medicalization starts in the community and is institutionalized by the school system.
Black masculinity is a labour-intensive exercise that alienates Black men from themselves and others (Mercer, 1994; Staples, 1982). It is a rush to the top though the pain of others. In the plantation, a Black is exulted at the expense of another. It is a rush to the politics of respectability that is vertical and lateralizes violence within Black community. Tomic (2013) says studying the intricate connections between English and colonialism, Pennycook views English and its power in the present as a phenomenon fully embedded in multiple parts of the global system, thus probing in areas as varied as media, tourism, religion, finances, knowledge production, and “development,” pointing out that “when dealing with an uneven world, we do need to understand [English’s] historical formation within forms of nationalism and imperialism, and its contemporary roles in the inequitable distribution of resources, in the promotion of certain ideas over others and in the threat it may pose to other languages, cultures and ways of being” (2011, p. 523). Thus, his claim that understanding the one-ness of the world today demands that “we rethink what we mean by language, language spread, native speakers, or multilingualism” (2011, p. 515). (p. 5)

Language, accent, histories and citizenship work as instruments and technologies of allowing uninterrupted competition between Black communities. To be Black is to live the expected White conception of Blackness informed by an English accent. To be Black and masculine is to speak in an American accent and project a White demeanour. They who deviate from this White narrative of a Black are disabled and marked for elimination through the mechanism of denying them employment. They become the hoi polloi of Blackness. They become an example to others that without hard work, chances of success are minimal. Such a narrative never considers the role of the accent in the eviction of Kenyan men from getting gainful employment. Accent makes them live in the darkest alleys of economic, social and political margins because of their nationality, accent, and different culture.

Black masculinity is a criterion of classifying and regulating different shades of Blackness (Mercer, 1994; Staples, 1982). Black masculinity is a diagnostic and statistical manual of determining Black pathology. It assumes the role of securitization and border control of Black spaces and the determination of true Black (Mbembé & Dubois, 2017). As a result, those who
fail the test (having a foreign accent) of Blackness are quarantined from the healthy Black community and disposed of in borderlands. One of the criteria to Blackness is the birthright and being born in America.

Masculinity, and by extension Black masculinity, is implicated in the colonial universalism of Blackness and Black experiences (Clark, 2007). Every Black man is assumed to be synonymous to African-American men and the American story, which leads to the expulsion of other shades of Black and their histories. This denial has implications for social and political service delivery to Black communities. Service to the Black community patronizes and objectifies the continental African immigrant, in turn becoming a technology of surveillance and marking of such bodies as damaged and living in the past. Such are the limits of White charity, which by all practical purpose is a mode of social control masquerading as state benevolence. Suffice it to say, what seems to be charitable to the continental Black migrant is punitive and disciplinary. Black masculinity is focussed on the racial segregation, macro and micro aggression, and erasure of Black men in Americas and Europe while suspending other Black experiences.

Black masculinity literature looks at gender sparingly while prospering racial oppression of Black men (Staples, 1982) leading to epistemological imperialism and a toehold on respectability (Butler, 1990; Fellows & Razack, 1998). Such scholarships speak of the boy child and relegate women and girls to the shadows of Black community. Black masculinity is charitable to racism and issues facing Black men and boys and, in the process, erases gender and other forms of marginalities such as nationalities, citizenship, language, nationalities, and histories. This paternalizes and seeks to save the damaged other from the self, hence precluding the White necessity of reaping from the sorrows of others. It hides White complicity in the oppression of others and instead works toward cleansing and covering histories of oppression and colonization of the Black community. Black masculinity is a colonial cultural securitization
technology within Black communities that collapses Black bodies while pretending to them. In a nutshell, Black masculinity lives off of the misfortunes of others.

Black masculinity generalizes, simplifies, and reduces Black experiences in ways that silence other racialized masculinities, among them being Indigenous and African masculinities as sites of irrationalities (Mercer, 1994). Black masculinity is implicated in the racial oppression of other masculinities through its normalizing its focus on American Blackness and the denigration of other masculinities. Even with the recent inclusion of Black queer studies (McCready, 2012) within Black masculinity, a gap still exists within Black masculinity in terms of Indigenous masculinities, making it white (Clark, 2007). Such a focus is an important starting point of decolonizing Black masculinity from within and needs to extend to accommodate local understanding of resistance as framed on community values of respect, love, sharing, and freedom (Nyaga & Torres, forthcoming). Scholarships on masculinity (read Black masculinity) are White, hegemonic, and apprehensive to other masculinities (Boyd, 2015; Connell, 1995; Clark, 2007; Messner, 1997; Whitehead, 2002). Black masculinity constructs what is normal and abnormal within Black community (read Black men) in ways that serve White masculinity at the behest of Blackness (Mercer, 1986). The White mask (Fanon, 1967) cannot be the answer to Black freedom. It informs partly the morphology of the Black skin but cannot be the determinant of Black destiny. The Black body needs to die and resurrect as a ghost in order to start experiencing itself.

Blackness regulates itself in ways that serve the interest of a White capital. A Black body watches itself to maintain the Black norm; and save the operating cost of White surveillance over Blackness. This is what Foucault calls self-governing technology as a circuit of economies of power. The Black man (masculinity) fears and loathes himself (Fanon, 1967) and seeks White affirmation to prove his masculinity. He comes to believe the White construction of his being
and works toward uncontrollable reworking of his identity to suit the master’s standards (Odhiambo, 2007). The Black man (masculinity) wishes things will be changed, and that he will be accepted in the community of men. Such hope is dashed by the presence of the continental African male body who returns him to himself. The African man is a reminder of the unstable Blackness within American soil. The Black body comes to loathe himself and seeks to smelt himself from his bitter past. The continental body is a reminder of his original place, and yet he wants to transition to Whiteness. It is an uncomfortable encounter, where the Black man is held in the in-between with himself and his search for Whiteness. The presence of the continental body is a ghost rising from the grave, and the fear of reconciling with the bitter past.

According to Tomic (2018),

Based on Radhakrishnan’s (2007) concept of “worldliness,” the idea that “the very oneness of the world can only be understood on the basis of an irreducible perspectival heterogeneity” (as cited in Pennycook, 2011, p. 515), and on Edwards and Usher’s (2008) idea that globalization “reconfigures rather than supplants diversity” (as cited in Pennycook, 2011, p. 515), Pennycook’s main concern is to interrogate “what new forms of language, culture, and knowledge [globalization] brings about and what new ways of thinking about these it makes possible” (2011, p. 515). (p. 4)

This study argues that Black masculinity is the White mask in Black skin (Mercer, 1994). It is a race toward Whiteness and a distancing from Blackness. For Black masculinity to survive in this unreconcilable present, it needs to die and resurrect and find peace with its bitter past. It needs to celebrate its hidden subconscious past by killing its present masquerading self and forming alliances with its bitter and different self. It is therefore important to introduce uncomfortable conversations to understand how Black masculinity is implicated in White-washing Blackness (Mercer, 1994). This study argues that such systems of intra-separation are the new forms of racisms, sexism, sanism, and anti-Blackness working to maintain colonialism and imperial White power.
Black masculinity is a colonial vehicle driven by the Black men for the service of Whiteness and colonial/hegemonic masculinity (Mercer, 1994). It creates fields of power that regulate Blackness without necessarily investing power on Black communities. Foucault (1979), speaking of power and subjection, says

Furthermore, this power is not exercised simply as an obligation or a prohibition on those who “do not have it”; it invests them, is transmitted by them and through them; it exerts pressure upon them, just as they themselves, in their struggle against it, resist the grip it has on them. This means that these relations go right down into the depths of society, that they are not localized in the relations between the state and its citizens or on the frontier between classes and that they do not merely reproduce, at the level of individuals, bodies, gestures and behaviour, the general form of the law or government; that, although there is continuity (they are indeed articulated on this form through a whole series of complex mechanisms), there is neither analogy nor homology, but a specificity of mechanism and modality. Lastly, they are not univocal; they define innumerable points of confrontation, focuses of instability, each of which has its own risks of conflict, of struggles, and of an at least temporary inversion of the power relations. The overthrow of these “micropowers” does not, then, obey the law of all or nothing; it is not acquired once and for all by a new control of the apparatuses nor by a new functioning or a destruction of the institutions; on the other hand, none of its localized episodes may be inscribed in history except by the effects that it induces on the entire network in which it is caught up. (p. 27)

Black masculinity sustains White power and comfort through lateral censorship (Mercer, 1994; Staples, 1982). Black masculinity creates a classic division within Blackness in ways that undermine certain Blacks based on their skin tone, accent, hair texture, citizenship, and nationality. Such a lateral separation allows a system of rewards and punishment, solely operated by Black bodies from within. The closer one is to Whiteness, the higher the reward, and vice versa. Such a system violently eliminates malignancy (accent as cancerous) within Blackness through regimes of rewards and punishments. Consequently, other forms of masculinities become candidates of academic erasure based on gender, disability, age, shade, accent, nationality, citizenship, and histories (Clark, 2007; Gillen, 2016). Such a removal has implications for policy and service delivery to community’s needs, more so immigrant populations of colour.
Black masculinity studies are therefore the state-sanctioned violent expulsion of African bodies from the body politic (Staples, 1982). That said, it is important to understand and reimagine Black masculinity in the age of globalism and global conflicts. Black masculinity needs to die and reinvest itself by resurrecting its true self. There is a conceptual need to identify other ways of reimagining Blackness away from the colonial formulation. This means that we need to understand what African Indigenous masculinity is and how that can inform Black masculinity. It is also equally important to understand Africanness in the perspective of Indigeneity and African spiritualties in order to reconstruct Black masculinity.

Black masculinity is a regulatory machine within Black communities, defining normalcy within Black men (Mercer, 1994; Staples, 1982). It identifies social outliers based on their nationality, citizenship, language, and marks them as undesirable. Black masculinity discourse identifies the kind of Blackness that is worthy of citizenship rights in ways that maintain the traditional American narrative of Black and White society, and in which the two groups live in antagonism. This erases internal differences as also implicated in colonial erasure. Black masculinity silences other Black voices, sexualities, and masculinities (O’Brien, 2017) through minimal accommodation of the difference of the academic fabric and scholarships. Those who fail the test of the normal Black man are violently evicted from Black communities through the coded Black normalcy state doctrine facilitated by Black masculinity. The one-size-fits-all Black masculine culture and practice allows endless, unverifiable, and incessant surveillance of Black men from within. Questions of origin based on one’s accent are used as markers of evicting Black undesirables from Black communities.

These sentiments on Black masculinity speak volumes on its implication in transnational politics. As discussed earlier, Black masculinity is transnational and can access the world though the media and technologies. This makes Black masculinity part of immigration politics in terms
of determining who crosses the border and who does not. Those in the global south who do not look or speak like the North American Black are marked and policed at the border with the supervision of Black masculinity and authorized by the White state. Black masculinity is a security marker or radar that is used in the immigration process to determine the entry of other Black immigrants from continental Africa based on their closeness to American Black.

Experiences of “legal and policy” violence against Black spaces are different, complicated, contingent, and various, and cannot entirely be ordered through Black masculinity. Any ordering or rationalizing Blackness is equivalent to colonial marketization and commodification of Blackness. Ordering Blackness is a prescriptive and medicalized remedy of pathologizing Black and Blackness as broken and unable to join modernity. Ordering militarizes Blackness and creates a violent space for Black bodies (Walcott, 2003).

History of Racism in Canada

Canada has had its own share of racism in the past as testified by the constant racial profiling of youths in education (Dei, 1998) and labour, high numbers of Black children in the Canadian welfare system (Horton & Watson, 2015; King et al., 2017), the prison pipeline focused on the perpetual incarceration of Black people (Barnes & Motz, 2018; Salole & Abdulle, 2015), and many other forms of racial erasure of Black community members. This study seeks to bring forward the past ghost of racism in ways that inform policy and laws in ways that are multicentric. Consequently, the study looks at the different forms of erasure that target immigrant Kenyan men, apply accents as a form of surveillance, and position the different body on the borderlands. It looks at how accent is gendered and is used to evict Kenyan men from employment opportunities and educational possibilities, and how immigration applies the policy of Canadian experience and impliedly adopts accent as a signifier of that experience.
Canada needs to understand the specific and distinct needs of Kenyan immigrants based on their lived experiences and historical past. Such an understanding should not be an end in itself but rather a means of continuous discussion and engagement with the community in ways that honour their differences. This calls for a reflexive process of accommodating the community without necessarily inviting them to an already prepared space, as is core and foundational to this study. Critical self-reflection and reflexivity are transformative tools of understanding self-implication in colonial capital accumulation, as well as self-preservation for a small clique of individuals within a marginalized community on the back of others. This speaks of affirmative action and its limitation to social justice and true liberation. Such a form of social justice precludes other forms of liberation struggles by identifying a one-size-fits-all form of social justice. It identifies a token representation that pacifies marginalized communities, leading to their own subservience. This form of social justice buries internal forms of resistances and resiliencies. The token so identified is used as a code for internal censorship and regulation. Black masculinity is the colonial token of measure to regulate Black power and self determination.

This study celebrates the internal politics within Black masculinity as necessary for Black self-determination and liberation. Such a celebration of scholarship and praxis works to understand the different epistemological, political, and historical walls erected between the Black community, families, and individuals. The study acknowledges the pain of opening colonial wounds as presented by the hard facts of lateralized violence within Black community, as authorized by the state and supervised by Black masculinity studies, and seeks to look at these conversations as necessary to the process of community healing. It calls for self-driven,
uncomfortable in-house conversations as necessary for anti-colonial and anti-oppressive driven emancipation of Black communities.

Due to the prevailing literature, including theoretical and methodological gaps within the Black masculinity scholarship, it is necessary to invoke the experiences of Kenyan men living in Toronto as a way of disturbing Black masculinity in North America. This point is salient in the argument of Mercer (1994) who says that such experience talks back to the disparaging view of our foreparents as naïve or innocent by invoking the dreams and desires that motivated migrations from the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent. In this way, it “rescues the dead” from the amnesia and structured forgetfulness which haunt the English collective consciousness whenever it thinks of its crises-ridden “race relations” in the here and now. (p. 61)

Little, if anything, has been discussed on immigration, education, and the labour experiences of Kenyan men in Toronto. The majority of literature on Black masculinity focuses on Black men in America while subjugating other forms of racialized and African masculinities. While the study recognizes the racial experiences of Black men in American (Staples, 1982) and the role Black masculinity has played in social justice, little is discussed about the differentiated racism faced by Kenyan men in terms of their education, immigration, and labour experiences while residing in Toronto. While much has been discussed at different levels and scopes about Black men resistance, little is discussed on how African Indigenous masculinity can inform anti-racism in the West. This study seeks to centre African forms of anticolonialism as important form of resisting institutionalized racism in the West.

According to Mutekwa (2013), “black masculinity,” as differentiated from “African masculinity” (with its base in the rural areas and informed by traditional African institutions). The black masculinity is mainly urban-based and less informed by rural masculinity: “it was a masculinity in which men lost jobs, lost their dignity and expressed their feelings of emasculation in violent ways.” (p. 360)
Through the loss of jobs, dignity, and emasculation of the urban men, Black masculinity fails to see the local power of overcoming the colonial commodification of the man as breadwinner. Black masculinity is implicated in silencing other forms of masculinities—an example of this being African Indigenous masculinities. To that end, Black masculinity applies a colonial understanding of power as belonging on top, which denies the powerful role that other masculinities can play in decolonization. Such a conception erases other forms of power, hence diminishing the community’s power of true resistance and self-determination.

While Black masculinity discourse is considered the mouthpiece of Black men’s experiences, other forms of masculinity need to take a central role in the definition of Black men. This representational and colonial conception is contestable and claims that Black masculinity cannot represent the Black man’s full experiences in linearity, finality, and homogenously. Blackness is complicated, various, and never arrives (Dei, 2017) and as such should be visualized in those complexities.

This point is necessary in understanding existing lateral violence within the Black community, yet Black masculinity continues to deny existing the self-inflicted violence (Mercer, 1994). An understanding of this violence is fundamentally important in deconstructing Black. Black skin cannot conquer the outside without waging a psychic war in the within (Mercer, 1994; Staples, 1982). The biggest impediment to real decolonization of the Black skin is the mental walling and subconscious imprisonment of the Black mind in ways that accentuate self-hate and stop self-determination while supporting White accumulation of wealth (Mercer, 1994). The biggest battle to real Black liberation entails a facing of our implication in colonialism and imperialism. The Black skin cannot remain on the fence and watch without accounting its participation in the eviction of itself.
This calls for a reflective and reflexive process of examining the self in ways that call for a new Black power that is steeped in Indigenous perspectives that speaks Blackness. According to Mercer (1994),

the liberation of the imagination is a precondition of revolution, or so the surrealist used to say. Carnival is not “the revolution,” but in the carnivalesque aesthetic emerging here we may discern the mobility of what Bakhtin (1981) called “the dialogic principle” in which the possibility of social change is prefigured in collective consciousness by the multiplication of critical difference between a monologic tendency in Black film which tend to homogenise and totalise the Black experience in Britain (read Toronto), and a dialogic tendency which is responsive to diverse and complex qualities of our Britishness and British blackness—our differentiated specificity as a diaspora people. (p. 62)

Such a war entails community and individual critical self reflection and reflexivity exercises to identify who we are, our place in the society and our implication in creating an environment that sustains colonial control in Black community. Reflexive examination of the self entails re-imagining our practices and the role that Black masculinity afford capital to be accumulated at the pain of the Black community (Mercer, 1994). It entails acknowledging and celebrating our different resiliencies as steeped in our own practices and ways of life. The exercises look at who we are in the perspective of white institutions and ideological arrangements that come to define who we are and how we treat each other. It is the role of Black skin to be rewriting a new existence informed by values that speaks to Black experiences. Reflexivity looks at the self as colonized and implicates it to the elimination of others within the Black communities. It is a reminder of the privileged position that some within the Black communities may occupy, and how that may lead to the disappearance of others like Black women, and other minorities within the Black outer city (Staples, 1982). Such a reflexive exercise employs a spatial reconfiguration strategy that seeks to introspect the Black self as an extension of the colonial system, hence calling for an alternative narrative that speaks to the Black self and the community. This examination is community-led and guided by Afrocentric principles of unity, aim, community,
and passion. Afrocentric paradigm as a form of Black reflexivity calls for reimagining our self in ways that look at how power, economic structures, and psychic performances come to inscribe the Black skin as undesirable and problematic (Asante, 1998). It also looks at institutions and policies as implicated in anti-Blackness and how Blackness helps through toe-on respectability where some problems within the Black community are considered as unnecessary while others as desirable. Afrocentric reflexivity exercises believe that dominant and heteronormative ideologies and cultures support and rationalize violence through the application of divide and rule. Key to this reflexive exercise is to acknowledge self-implication. It is not a blame game but a space to unlearn colonial implication. As such, the Afrocentric decolonial and reflexive praxis is ideological in nature and must be steeped in community desires and aspirations (Asante, 1998).

Secondly, an Afrocentric reflexive exercise is part of Black consciousness and seeks to introspect in ways that acknowledge self-implication without necessarily dropping into self-blame and innocence. An Afrocentric reflexive exercise is steeped in community conscious raising practice in ways that open the role of colonial scars brought about by the internalization of oppression within our communities. Such a practice should be seen within the perspective of colonialism and the psychic control of the Black mind and body in ways that alienate them from themselves, others and their ways of being (Fanon, 1967).

Thirdly, such an Afrocentric Black community’s reflexive movement should be organic and steeped within the community’s desire for self-determination and true liberation. The process of Blackness and reflexivity is a call for the community to visualize power and resiliencies as informed by their own organic practices and ways of living, in ways that celebrate Black culture and counter praxes that affirm colonial definitions of the Black body as valid.
Fellows and Razack (1998) say the “race to innocence” will not help in dissecting self-implication to colonialism, but will rather further open avenues for the protection of the status quo that serve a few within the community at the pain of the other. Such tentative means to gain respectability are not true liberation because they are gendered and raced. It tokenizes through manufactured freedom and comfort that is suffused in coloniality. The oppressed communities look at their respective marginality as the only true oppression while disqualifying those of others. An Afrocentric self-introspection (read critical reflection) implicates marginalized communities in lateral violence. This may lead to the fear of losing the small gains and respectability within the marginalized community. Such a discomfort is necessary for renewal and re-imagination of new Black futurity. The pain of loosing the present self is necessary for the suppressed self to exist. Afrocentric reflexive introspection is a form of self death and the resurrection of suppressed other. Mbembé and Meintjes (2003) speaking of necropolitics while paraphrasing Georges Bataille say

Life itself exists only in bursts and in exchange with death. He argues that death is the putrefaction of life, the stench that is at once the source and the repulsive condition of life. Therefore, although it destroys what was to be, obliterates what was supposed to continue being, and reduces to nothing the individual who takes it, death does not come down to the pure annihilation of being. Rather, it is essentially self-consciousness; moreover, it is the most luxurious form of life, that is, of effusion and exuberance: a power of proliferation. Even more radically, Bataille withdraws death from the horizon of meaning. This is in contrast to Hegel, for whom nothing is definitively lost in death; indeed, death is seen as holding great signification as a means to truth. (p. 15)

While the fears of such death is valid, true liberation cannot be established without the discomfort of loosing the colonial self. Whatever freedom and comfort the Black protects and fear loosing is not self made and will never serve us but rather continue to serve the capital while denigrating the Black community. It is manufactured by the capital and consumed by Black communities.
The rise of BLM is a testament to the limits of Black scholarship in addressing the policy question at institutional, ideological, and individual levels. While such a campaign is necessary, it is equally important to look at the divergent ways of handling anti-Black racism in ways that do not surface but connect to the specific needs of the Black communities. There is a need to buttress scholarship with action and contextual stories for real change and liberation. This can only happen if diversity within and without Blackness is acknowledged and accepted as an important contributor to Black justice. This study calls for reflexive and critical thinking in terms of how Black studies meet the street in understanding Black needs. Such an encounter is decolonial and necessary violent for social change. It is a question of how the community can take a leading role in making real academic studies.

An Afrocentric process of community self introspection is labour-intensive, risky, and perilous, but necessary for true Black liberation. Fellows and Razack (1998) claim that

Failing to see one’s domination in another system, however, and acting from that basis not only leaves the systems that privilege us intact, but it leaves the system that subordinates us intact as well. Although we may believe we are advancing our own claim for justice by distinguishing ourselves from other women, we are assuring injustice for all. (p. 340)

The fruits of colonial injustice from within have far reaching consequences going by the reported levels of mental health, substance use, and unemployment issues among the Black communities (Edge & MacKian, 2010; Emeka, 2018; Memon et al., 2016; Rich & Grey, 2005). It can be argued that such issues appear to remind us of the agony of self-torture. The scar keeps opening through such issues, yet we keep wrapping it with a colonial band-aid measure of the now. An Afrocentric Black introspection is an on-going process of self affirmation and recognition of our resistances and agencies. Black masculinity does not sit comfortably in such discomforts. Instead it seeks to cover our wounds with a White bandage.
In Kenya, Canada is known as the land of opportunities, where dreams are made and realized. The researcher in this study remained unemployed in a country pictured as having plenty of success and the centre of ultimate human self-actualisation. He could not reconcile his predicament with the White mythology of a successful nation where opportunities are plenty. He resorted to self-blame and failed to look at how interlocking systems of oppression worked to incarcerate him. The researcher was in a dilemma of either going back to Kenya or biting the bullet of unemployment. His return to Kenya would emasculate him. He was an alien both at home and in Canada. For him to go back meant weakness but remaining in Canada meant lack thereof. This experience is not separate from structural social processes since it continues to create Canada as a welcoming society while denigrating the immigrant other.

Blackness is a relic of the White system. Fanon (1967) says that Black culture reminds the White skin of its childish past. The Black body is a private rented encloser and a hidden museum, whose public presence is temporarily required to meet the capital needs of an imperial White state. The Black skin cannot be public without the support and permission of the White, meaning that it cannot transcend itself but rather must rely on the benevolence of the White saviour. The fact that the White male body transcends and returns to and from its maternal childhood, and on its own terms and conditions, speaks of White (Whiteness) and male privilege (patriarchy). The White male body can enter Black spaces and remain private, while the Black skin becomes visible when in public spaces. A White male body crosses the border and remains private, while the Kenyan male body is bordered, fixed, grounded, and frozen in the border in ways that allow for the continued rape of Africa and for the exultation of the White system. Border crossing is a gendered process of White expression of state power. This study identifies such state performances in the world map as a form of rationalizing its masculinity. It is from
this experience that the researcher promised to follow through by opening up new conversations with other Kenyan men in order to understand their everyday challenges and expressions.

The chapter that follows will look at the literature review. In this section, the study will identify colonialism and competitive masculinity, and different studies that speak on Indigenous masculinities, histories of Canada and Kenya, anti-Blackness in North America, immigration, education, and labour policies. The next chapter will cover theoretical frameworks applied in the study. This section will look at anti-colonialism, post-colonialism, and critical masculinities—and their respective strengths and weaknesses. This will be followed by a chapter on research design that looks at the different methods and methodologies applied in recruitment, data collection, and analysis of the data. The chapter on findings will offer the voices of participants in terms of how they conceptualize representation and challenge resistance, agency, and resiliency. This will be followed by a final chapter presenting an analysis of findings as well as implications and conclusions.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

This study looks at the complexities of Black masculinity in terms of the representation of Black men by highlighting Kenyan men’s experiences. It also looks at how having an accent affects Kenyan men living in Toronto in terms of their employability, education, and immigration. This section is composed of the following areas for discussion: colonialism and competitive masculinity, post-independent Kenya, Indigenous masculinities, African masculinities, Black masculinity, African-American masculinity/Black masculinity, African identities in diasporic context, Canadian migration, education, labour, and the national mythology.

Colonialism and Competitive Masculinity

The process of colonizing society is gendered in terms of the violent occupation that come to define some bodies as either emotional or rational. Indigenous peoples of the world are thus seen as weak, damaged, and subhuman, which justifies colonizing for the sake of saving them from their barbarity. Colonialism expelled Indigenous peoples from their lands and ways of life (Young, 2001) in ways that would spread imperial power beyond the metropolis in what would eventually be known as colonial empires (Charitas, 2015; Strobel, 2005). In Kenya, Indigenous spiritualities and ways of being were undermined and replaced with Western religion. Moreover, the introduction of land tenure, taxation, official education, religion, and many other modes of colonial process led to a gendered society.

In Kenya, White highlands were emblematic of the British metropole. These fertile lands were taken away from Indigenous communities and became White settlement. Furthermore, Indigenous peoples of Kenya were pushed into less arable land and confined in settlement schemes. According to Mutekwa (2013),
Unlike the white designated areas, these communal areas were quintessentially pauperised, and therefore emblematic of the dispossession, emasculation, and marginalisation of the Africans. Mbembe (2006, p. 169) refers to such areas as “occupied and outlawed places,” to which black African bodies were condemned to underline the Manichean colonial binarism of subaltern (black)/superaltern (white). Mbembe’s statement suggests both the visibility and invisibility of the black African bodies in the colonial political economies of power. (p. 357)

Before the coming of the British to Kenya, Indigenous peoples (Gikuyu) practiced circumcision, herbal medicines, and spirituality (Njambi, 2005, 2011; Wane, 201; Wane, Torres & Nyaga, 2017). Indigenous practices respected everyone irrespective of one’s gender (Tabitha, 2005). The Kikuyu community practiced circumcision of both boys and girls as a way of introducing them to community teaching, warriorship and engendering resiliency to pain (Kessler, 2000; Muriuki, 2000; Njambi, 2005; Worthman & Whiting, 1987).

The process of civilization of Indigenous lands led to the gendered dispossession (Levien, 2017) and racial erasure of the Indigenous peoples’ land and culture (Frederiksen, 2014; wa Thiong’o, 1986). Westernization and colonialism created gendered and racialized Indigenous communities of Kenya (Jon et al., 2011; Karani, 1987; Njambi, 2011; Odhiambo, 2003, 2007; Tabitha, 2005) through the gendered land tenure, public positions, cultural practice, and many other social and economic aspects that favoured Black Kenyan men against their female counterparts.

Mutekwa (2013) says that

The “boy” label helped in the white patriarchal management of the representation of the emasculation and feminisation of the black man, bearing in mind the binary between homosociality and homosexuality, and the homophobia that Sedgwick (1985) claims is built in patriarchal institutions. This nomenclature helped in the management of the representation of colonial male homosocial relations between white men and black men, in which a feminisation of the black man in nomenclature would have carried in it allusions to homosexuality. This process also helped in preventing the “risk” of the masculinisation of the white woman vis-à-vis the black man, or alternatively the consignment of black men and white women to the same gender hierarchy of “feminine.” (p. 355)
In this colonial relationship, the Kenyan man was not a real man but a boy, which was a means of subjugating African masculinity as child-like and positioning White masculinity as superior. The Black man represented emotions and unregulated animal instincts that had to be checked using the metal neck tag. Neck tags, hut tax and the label “boy” were colonial bio-technology of protecting the public from Black infestation and pathology. It reminded the Black body of its degeneracy while subsequently freezing the body in violent borderlands. The tag was a technological means of censoring Black spatial movements while keeping the White woman in check.

In discussing public hysteria, Mbembe (2004) says that while the White abhors the Black, it requires Black labour to express its White power. This Black/White schism plays a major role in helping to maintain Whiteness and White supremacy. The White needs the Black in order to claim Whiteness. The Black Kenyan man was a necessary evil for White exaltation. Kenyan men were supposed to appear and disappear in ways that allowed for the control of White hysteria. Race is a means of policing the racially different bodies to maintain White power and control. White masculinity allowed for the temporal and manufactured acceptance of Black men, race subsequently evicted them from the public space. The public Black man became an object of state-authorized gendered eviction and surveillance meant to maintain Whiteness through social control and unpaid labour. In this process of gendering spaces, the Black man must be made public through shaming and punishment and subsequently made to submit to the White narrative that he is submissive, broken, and damaged, all of which makes it easy for the system to exploit his labour. The neck tag was a state-sponsored social border technology of regulating the emotional Black body from infecting the White highlands. Through this, the Black body comes to occupy the pathological other that must be removed and controlled. According to Mutekwa
(2013), “The same relationship of subject/male and object/female was transferred to the relations between colonisers and colonised, culminating in the masculinisation of the coloniser and the feminisation of the colonised” (p. 355). The colonizer asserted his colonial power by making the visible (public) invisible. The Black man was visible based on his race yet invisible based on his masculinity. His subjugated masculinity allowed White hegemony and privilege.

With the dwindling economic rationale of direct colonial rule, coupled with the rising world wars, the colonizer tactfully left the colonised lands, culminating in independence of the colonized lands ((Fahnbulleh, 2006; Gacheru, 2005). The process of giving back Kenyan independence meant that the colonizer had to appoint Kenyan men to overlook the colonial empire, with metropolis supervision and control. In this perspective, independence was gendered and meant that Black Kenyan women continued to occupy private spaces (Odhiambo, 2003). This gendered independence helped maintain indirect West-minister colonial power over the formally colonized lands through targeted control of women.

Elite Kenyan men were educated and trained on the administration of colonial empires. The education of Black men in the administration of the independent countries was a way the colonizers maintained and sustained colonial control of the formally colonized lands from a distance. Those who were trained and educated helped construct the post-colonial constitution of an independent Kenya, which was tailored in ways that embodied the colonial ways of administration (Odhiambo, 2003). Independence therefore entailed the removal and replacement of the Black with White body, while maintaining the same White colonial system. That said, the Lancaster constitution was not only colonial masterpiece, but also exuded masculinity and Whiteness. The constitution was replete with Westminster antidotes and sentiments that continue to be reflected in administration of services, justice, and legislation. This has been
considered flag independence that never truly looked at the authentic liberation of all Black people. Today, women continue to struggle for inclusion in political, social, and economic areas. While this is the case, such colonial practices were met with resistance. Njambi (2005) speaks of the formations of African independent school by women as anti-colonial measure that was to later inform the overall fight for independence. This study validates this kind of anti-colonial resistance as necessary in anti-Black resistance in the West.

**Post-Independent Kenya**

The constitution and institutions in the independent Kenya empowered men to the detriment of the Black African woman (Odhiambo, 2003, 2007; Tabitha, 2005). Black Kenyan men owned assets and controlled socio-political and economic facets of independent Kenya. Men were educated to prepare to take over the public space after the exit of the colonizer. Political aspects of independent Kenya were taken over by Kenyan men as they continued to fill in major public offices like the court, parliament, bureaucracy, and the executive arm of government. Odhiambo (2003) demonstrates how Kenyan men left for the urban centres to enjoy lavish lives with sex workers, leaving their spouses in the rural areas to take care of children and household. Independence in Kenya was gendered and supposedly led to deeper levels of women’s exploitation, violence, marginalization, and powerlessness.

According to Mutekwa (2013), referring to Zimbabwe’s independence,

attainment of independence goes together with moves and efforts by many of the black male characters to acquire the signifiers of masculinity, those formerly reserved for whites. These include, inter alia, the attainment of material wealth, power, breadwinner status, heterosexuality, and racial assertiveness, among others. These signifiers resonate with what Connell (1995) refers to as hegemonic masculinities, and most of the male characters in the text are complicit with these. (p. 361)

Men owned major assets like land and transferred the same to their sons (Odhimbo, 2007; Tabitha, 2005), thus perpetuating patriarchy unbated. Black men ran and held elective and
economic position (Odhiambo, 2003) to the detriment of Black women who were only supposed to undertake unpaid household chores like child rearing and nursing the elderly (Okuro, 2010).

When men took over the colonial mantle, women were relegated to the rural areas to care for children and the elderly (Odhiambo, 2003). Okuro (2010) says,

> African men always wanted to keep intact institutional values and practices which would continue to keep women within their subordinate position, silent and disempowered. In the post-war era, I argue that institutionalized patriarchy and traditional African culture played an important role in limiting women to the restricted social roles operating mainly as wives, daughters and mothers. African women who attempted to vent outside the prescribed social spaces attracted criticism and scorn from the African men, colonial officials, and other women who had remained trapped within the traditional order. I also argue that this form of institutionalized patriarchy became a threat to African women and girls seeking to migrate to the colonial towns in order to exploit and/or benefit from the limited economic opportunities that colonialism offered. (p. 524)

Gendered mapping continues to depict the Black man as the “breadwinner” and “protector of the family,” while simultaneously removing the Kenyan woman from the public space (Mercer, 1994). This mapping has largely influenced the way women are visualized within the Kenyan society even in the present-day independent Kenya. For example, to this day, there remains a disparity between women and men in terms of political representation. Even with the proclamation of the new constitution of 2010, political positions for women are extended as charity to women. While it may seem like the start of women’s emancipation, charitable political positions help sanitize a patriarchal Kenyan society while falsely conveying to the world that Kenya is gender sensitive. There are more men than women in parliament, which enables the passing of bills to laws in ways that assert patriarchy.

The fall of the Berlin Wall brought a new dawn of democratization and the introduction of new economic, political, and social measures, one of which was the Structural Adjustment Program (SAPs) in Kenya. According to Pasura and Christou (2017),

> Since the 1980s, many African countries introduced the International Monetary Fund/World Bank prescribed structural adjustment programs (SAPs) designed to restore
the economies to high growth (Davies, 2007). SAPs recommended the liberalization of the economy, the privatizations of state companies, and the cutting of state subsidies. The program brought severe hardships to the people and resulted in the retrenchment of workers. For instance, examining the impact of the neoliberal policy agenda on men’s identities, Gibbs (2014, 431) observes that “the last two decades of economic decline in Africa have drawn attention to the crisis of masculinities, to ‘failed men’ unable to build kinship networks and to ‘violent men’ who damage social networks whilst competing for scarce resources.” (p. 6)

In characteristic rationalization of public spending, Bretton Wood institution’s measures called for reduced government, opening of borders to trade, controlled government spending and price liberation (Gachuri, 2006; Read & Parton, 2009) in what has come to be known as governmentality and managerialism. The role of the government was to build a conducive environment for wealth creation as well as provide efficient and effective services.

These measures led to massive job losses and rolling back of social safety net for many Kenyan households. What followed was mass movement of Kenya families to the West in search of better lives. Such public management measures led to public service cuts as well as exacerbated gender violence in an already patriarchal society. The rise of unemployment levels has a deeply negative effects on families as more men found themselves unable to provide for their families which led them to start relocating to the West in search of greener pastures. This study argues that such movement were initially supposed to help men regain their masculinity yet ended upemasculating them instead.

To date, Kenyan families continue to relocate to bigger metropolitan cities in the west in search of jobs. According to immigration population in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2017), from 2011-2016, an estimated 1.2 million immigrants relocated to Canada; the majority of those immigrants came from the Philippines (188,805), India (147,190), China (129,020), Iran (42,070), Pakistan (41,480), the United States (33,060), Syria (29,945), the United Kingdom (24,445), France (24,155), and South Korea (21,710). The number of Kenyan immigrants in
Canada is low compared to the listed demographics, as the majority of Kenyans opt for America as their preferred destination. But following the election of Donald Trump as the president of the United States of America, there has been apprehension among Kenyans living in the U.S., with some worried about being deported.

According to the Kenyan daily newspaper *Daily Nation* (Walmalwa, 2017), Canada seems to be the new America for majority of Kenyan planning to immigrate to the West. In the wake of such intensified deportation orders from the new government, those living in America have also set their sights on relocating to Canada. Further research has revealed Toronto, Vancouver, and Calgary as the three cities that continue to attract the majority of African immigrant families. This study attempts to understand the experiences of Kenyan men who now live in Toronto, Canada, in ways that will help reorient immigration, education, and labour policies to account for the projected increase of Kenyan men coming to Canada. The study seeks to ask how easy it is for a Kenyan man to find a job in the West. What are some of the success and failure stories? What does the unemployment and underemployment of Kenyan men mean for their families in the West?

With the difficult contexts surrounding the Black men’s public appearance, there exists an increased push for them to undertake their role as breadwinner and protector of their families. As the number of Kenyan women in the diaspora entering the service industry increases, many Kenyan men continue to face traditional role conflict. These changes have given birth to a new shift in social roles of women and men, where the woman becomes the breadwinner and the man takes on the more nurturing role in the family. Such role reversal have led to intensified spousal abuse, substance use (alcoholism), family financial problems, and many other forms of social
issues. This study looks at the effects of social role conflict on the Kenyan men, their families, and communities living in Toronto.

In the Kenyan schema, West has been created as the land of opportunity for migrant communities. This narrative of milk and honey in the West is a contradiction as the levels of unemployment and underemployed create situation of the an emasculated Kenyan man in Toronto. According to Pasura and Christou (2017),

For most African men, migration has meant accepting work that is not seen as “suitable” for a man and work that is incompatible with hegemonic masculinity. By working in the health and social care sectors of the economy, most of these men talked of doing women’s work in order to fulfill their transnational obligations. (p. 11)

The West is a contradiction and supposedly takes away the dreams of Kenyan man. Once expected to provide a healthy means of exercising his masculinity, the West denied Kenyan men the opportunity to prove themselves to be real men. Unemployment or underemployment in the West steals the masculinity power bestowed to them in Kenya. While this is their unfortunate reality, they cannot return to Kenya since the employment opportunities available to them are limited. In addition, such a return would be emasculating, as they would then be considered weak and passive.

According to Pasura and Christou (2017),

Migration disrupts these cultural ideals as the transnational context has benefited women at the expense of men and displacing them from their traditional productive functions and diminishing the power, status, and breadwinning income they previously enjoyed. The changes in economic options of men come with the redistribution. (p. 10)

Kenyan women are employed in precarious labor mostly in the service sector where they receive meagre pay to support the family. With their men un/underemployed, Kenyan families live on the edge of an economic continuum. These low standards of living have have deeply traumatizing effects on Kenyan families as seen in the recent family killings and spousal abuse among Kenyan communities living in the West. Poverty affects the financial, social, emotional,
and psychological aspect of Kenyan men and their families. This has led to a high number of cases of alcoholism, depression, and family abuse in the United States. Cases of spouses and children abuse are also a common occurrence among Kenyans in diaspora. Such cases are quickly collapsed as a Black problem leading to a reduction in services for Black people without even discussing unemployment, migration, and educational to Kenyan families. This study attempts to fill the gap by interviewing Kenyan men for shared perspectives on their their accents, nationality, and skin colour to their employment, migration, and their education.

**Indigenous African Masculinities: Fluidity**

Masculinity is fluid in terms of space and time (Kimmel & Messner, 1998; Messner, 1997; Whitehead, 2002) and therefore with the current global movement of migrants, it is imperative speak of masculinities. Critical masculinity looks at masculinity as transitional, translocational and transcultural in connection with identity and cultural politics in the beyond. There is no arrival in translations of masculinity, as multiple forms of masculinities come to inform the conceptualization of traditional masculinity (Kimmel & Messner, 1997). Critical masculinity studies look at masculinity/ies as a colonial construct expressed and performed differently over time and space (Kimmel, 1994; 2010; Njambi, 2005; Spivak, 1999; Whitehead, 2002).

Masculinity and femininity are capillaries through which multiple forms performances come to inform policy (read education, immigration, and labour) and define people desires and needs (White, 2002). Individuals are vehicles through which masculine discourse is transmitted, exercised, performed and normalized (Walcott, 2006).

Pasura and Christou (2017), while looking at African masculinities, say

The expression “African masculinities” raises a prior question about what is “Africa”; what is “African?” Naming is not innocent. What defines Africa, as Zeleza (2005) tells us, are the attributes of its history, its geography, its material and imagined places, and its people. Beyond its geographical boundaries, Africa is also a product of colonial and
postcolonial inventions and constructions (Mudimbe 1988). For instance, we must be wary of racialized and restrictive construction of Africa as “sub-Saharan Africa” or treating Africa as a “country.” We argue that an in-depth and holistic understanding of African masculinities must be historically informed. We must be attentive to the historical role of slavery and colonialism as well as Western concepts such as modernity and globalization and the ways in which they shape the conceptions of Africa as the “other”—not just its peoples, its religions but also its cultural practices. (p. 5)

African masculinities cannot be understood to be devoid of the colonial legacy in Africa. With the continent identified as void and empty with a child-like configuration, conception of African masculinity comes from that colonial and post-colonial legacy. Through colonialism, the African man, communities, and their practice have come to be identified as weak, pathological, emotional, and sexually objectified (Fanon, 1967). For example, circumcision was demonized by the colonizer and seen as barbaric and against the reproductive rights of women (Muthoni, 2011). Moreover, the colonizer also criminalized and intensified policing of the Indigenous people to prevent them from performing such acts (Achia, 2014). This colonial gendered representation of the Black man as weak conflicts with the Kenya Indigenous communities’ conceptualization of community-based Afrocentric Indigenous masculinities that are formed on the premise of unity, community purpose, reciprocity, respect, and love (see Asante, 1980;1988;1998;2003a;2007, on principle of Afrocentricity). For example, Njambi (2005) looks at how Kikuyu women troubled colonial heteronormative representation of Africa as childlike and broken through the application of circumcision of men and women as anti-colonial praxis. Kikuyu women decided to perform the rite in secret as a way of subverting colonial regulation and control.

According to Njambi (2011),

a number of Kikuyu female leaders such as Wangu wa Makeri, Wairimu Wa Kinene, Njoki Wa Thuge, Njunguru and Ndiko Wa Githura, among others, are said to have demonstrated their power by conducting irua ria atumia na anake in their homesteads against Gikuyu customary law that prohibited individuals, both men and women, from taking such an action. Such determination was restricted to athuri a kiama or ruling elder men and members of a senior council, who had the right to decide when and where irua ria atumia na anake would be held. Njoki wa Githura, for example, not only made her
homestead a center for irua ria atumia na anake, but her influence was so great that when she decided to migrate from one region to another during colonial upheavals, the whole village would follow her. (p. 185)

These Indigenous women ceased to inform their Kenyan men of such rites as a form of countering colonial gendered communities where men came to be rational being. They also established their own women-led homes and had women-to-women relationships in what Njambi (2005) calls third gender. To that end, Indigenous women not only faced colonialism from within, but also external intrusion of their culture and well-being. On the level of institutional oppression, Indigenous kikuyu women formed independent schools to counter the formal colonial schools. These schools provided the ground for active anti-colonial freedom fighting that would later lead to Kenyan independence.

These perspectives provide a rich history of how cultures can be utilized as an institutionalized form of oppression. They form the basis to critique Black masculinity and its failure to recognize Indigenous masculinities as an anti-racist tool in the West. Black masculinity represents Black American men as the only normal representation of Black men, which simultaneously evicts continental men from Blackness. Indigenous Kenyan women teach us that issues of colonialism are both from within and without and that they need to be handled in their complexities. This perspective highlights the need to study the multiple issues facing Black communities in the West from multicentric prisms that respect other forms of practices as trustworthy and necessary in the fight against colonial oppression. In addition, the study of Indigenous Kenyan women explains the role of African women in anti-racism, an aspect rarely discussed in masculinity studies (Edgerton, 1989; Maloba; 1998; Njambi, 2005). Black masculinity needs to consider the role played by all Black people in anti-racism; in ways that liberate all, rather than celebrating manufactured forms of respectability. The Kenyan Indigenous women’s expression of their sexualities in terms of marriage choices is a clear expression of their
resistance to heterosexism and homophobia. This cultural process celebrates the distinct, non-compliant and different identities as an expression of freedom and self-actualization of individual desires. Through these different sexual and gender performances, a reconfiguration colonial heteronormativity and heterosexuality is made public. While such expressions have been captured in the literature, more is yet to be discussed in terms of how Indigenous sexualities come to inform the conception of Black masculinity. These expressions deconstruct the colonial African masculinity as fixed, broken and submissive to white masculinity based on the history of Indigenous women’s performances of their gender and sexualities. Such expressions help showcase the power of Indigenous women’s praxis in anti-colonialism, which is an important entry point for understanding the role of Indigenous masculinities in anti-racism.

Oftentimes, Black masculinity has not represented Indigenous masculinities as a powerful site of anti-racism in North America. This study introduces Indigenous masculinities as anti-colonial forms of countering the racial representation of African men as weak and damaged. The formation of independent schools to counter Western schools is an important point of decolonizing the academy to accommodate the different cultural beliefs. Current discussions within Black masculinity look at the inclusion of Black bodies within the Western educational system without having a discussion of the possibilities of having self-determined educational spots that speak to the needs and aspirations of Kenyan people in Toronto. It is therefore important for the Indigenous perspective to guide Black masculinity in ways that sustain and build on the desires of migrant Kenyan men.

**African Masculinities**

Mbembé (2001) say that

Africa is never seen as possessing things and attributes properly part of “human nature.” Or, when it is, its things and attributes are generally of lesser value, little importance, and
poor quality. It is this elementariness and primitiveness that makes Africa the world par
excellence of all that is incomplete, mutilated, and unfinished, its history reduced to a
series of setbacks of nature in its quest for humankind. (p. 1)

To understand Africa, one needs to look at the colonial construction of the continent as laid-back
and undetermined to develop, whose story is built from a clean slate and lacks its historical past.
Such a construction is necessary to understand how that history and the question of colonialism
feature when Africans translocate and walk in American and European cities. The gaze given to
Africa in the beyond is that of unfinished product that needs a White saviour to survive.

To speak of African masculinities invites complication, fluidity, redefinitions and multiple
politics of gender, race, citizenship, colonialism and imperialism. Pasura (2014), quoting
Ouzgane, says

African masculinities are not uniform and monolithic, not generalizable to all men in
Africa, and that masculine behaviours in Africa are not natural or unchanging—suggesting
the possible emergence of new (and less violent and less oppressive) ways of being
masculine. (p. 69)

This complication is imminent based on multiple forms of colonialism that African faced under
the tutelage of Britain, Belgium, France, and many other colonizing nations. To date, Africa is
pictured from the White gaze as a space that is needy, broken, and emasculated.

According to Shipley, Comaroff, and Mbembe (2010), speaking of Africa,

One of the dominant ways of accounting for the African present was presentism.
Presentism was neither a method nor a theory. It was a way of defining and reading
African life forms that relied on a series of anecdotes and negative statements or simply
turned to statistical indices to measure the gap between what Africa was and what we
were told it ought to be. This way of reading always ended up constructing Africa as a
pathological case, as a figure of lack. It was a set of statements that told us what Africa
was not. It never told us what it actually was. In that sense—and this the second point—
presentism was not a form of knowledge as such; rather it was a model of misrecognition
and dis figuration. It operated by segmentation of time, excision of the past and deferral
of the future. It was not interested in the points of articulation between different layers of
African social existence. In short, it was as if to theorize the African present required,
paradoxically, a shrinking of the social and the political and not an expanded idea of
these terms or categories. When the social was taken into consideration at all, it was
always defined as “custom” and “tradition”—the routine logic of difference (they are not like us; we are not the same) and repetition (they have been and will always remain the same) and the foreclosure of the present as such. In short, the belief that when it comes to Africa, there is, strictly speaking, nothing to theorize. (pp. 656-657)

Therefore, to discuss African masculinity is to understand the multifaceted colonial gendered histories of African countries. This is because each colonial control was informed by different gendered and racial cartographies. Take for example the case of Angola, Senegal, and Kenya, where Portuguese aimed to exploit natural resources without “developing” the colonized land. In Kenya, the British settlement and gerrymandering of arable lands was an important colonial plan. Imposing colonial language and culture well as taking away land was the core purpose of colonizing Kenya (wa Thion’o, 1986). Though the British were not entirely assimilationist, the entire plan of France in Senegal was to produce an African French man. These three examples explain the different ways through which masculinity was performed by the colonizer onto the native men, which continues to control the mind, bodies, and souls of the colonized. Every Black man seeks to be like the White colonizer (Fanon, 1967). One of the ways through which the dream of Whiteness is pursued by any Black man is through language as a standard of measure of men’s masculinity. wa Thiong’o speaks of how language (also read accent) is used as colonial measure of Whiteness and White privilege.

Such is the *modus operandi* of colonial masculinity. Africa is constructed as a dark continent that has nothing to offer and is in need of the White man to save it from itself. Mbembe (2016), discussing Africa in the new age, says

Africa’s future was echoed in 2000 when, building upon Hegelian tropes once again, the influential UK financial weekly The Economist declared that Africa was “hopeless.” In a famous editorial, titled “Hopeless Continent,” it conjured up images of destitution, failure and despair, floods and famine, poverty and pestilence, brutality, despotism and corruption, dreadful wars and plunder, rape, cannibalism, amputation, and even the weather to suggest that Africa’s future was definitely doomed. Foreign aid workers, peacekeeping missions, humanitarian agencies, and the world at large might as well give
up, so deeply “buried in their cultures” were the reasons for so much human misery, it concluded. (p.93)

Such a construction speaks of African continental masculinity and its salient feature on it people. Men of African descent are expected to submit and subdue their masculinity in the presence of the colonial hegemonic masculinity. This is key for us to understand the metamorphosis of the African diaspora man in Toronto in that he must change his accent in order to be accepted in the body politic. Tomic (2013), quoting Bourdieu, says

“Language is not only an instrument of communication or even knowledge, but also an instrument of power” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 648). I contend that in English Canada the politics of language is instrumental in the production of discourse and commonsense practices to reaffirm whiteness and the supremacy of Standard English. To speak English as second language—or rather, “to be ESL,” as this phenomenon is usually constructed—is fundamental in the formation of, and resistance to, a devalued immigrant identity. (pp. 2-3)

Language comes to define one’s masculinity and place in the society. To transform from an African accent to Canadian pronunciation calls for the death of your former self and the embracing of the necessary present.

The role of African Indigenous masculinities in diasporic resistance and resiliency present a counter narrative to the gendered racism in Toronto. As argued earlier, this change should be original and coming from their Indigenous self. African Indigenous masculinities are fluid and accommodates every member of the community (Odhiambo, 2007; Uyewumi, 2005). Mbembe (2016), quoting Hegel, says

The Negro . . . exhibits the natural man in his completely wild and untamed state. We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality—all that we call feeling—if we would rightly comprehend him. There is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character. Hegel then promises himself not to ever mention Africa again, for “it is no historical part of the World; it has no movement or development to exhibit.” What we properly understand by Africa, he concludes, “is the Unhistorical, Undeveloped Spirit, still involved in the conditions of mere nature.” (p. 91)

Today, most African men are expected to be an institution of authority in their families. Marriage is one of the areas through which men exude their masculinity. They are expected to provide a
continuation of the community by siring children. African men’s masculinity is enhanced through the payment of a dowry, which indicates that they can take care of the women. It is a statement and to and testament of their masculinity.

This kind of colonized masculinity is faced with global challenge as technology and communication to spread up social organisation of work and families. More men are losing jobs or are underemployed and so unable to perform and confirm their masculinity. On the other hand, women are now getting into the public sphere and consequently playing the role of breadwinners (Pasura, 2014). This social change has serious implication for the perception of the African man as the sole provider and protector of the family. It is therefore important to understand the role of Indigenous masculinities in reconciling the colonial inconsistencies of masculinity in global changes in technology and communication.

The continental African Black men and youths face an institutional and ideological form of racism in the West (Dei, 1994, 1996a, 1996b, 1998, 2006a, 2006b). That is, Black men are unemployed or underemployed due to their skin colour (Galabuzi, 2006). Coupled with skin-based erasure, the continental African Black man is also erased because of his accent, citizenship, nationality, and education. Lippi-Green (1994) discusses how accent/dialect is used to discriminate the other, even where the laws and policies expressly warn against such discrimination. Race and gender affect Black men differently. A continental African Black man is expunged from the public due to his accent and skin color, and then is instantaneously and temporarily reintroduced to the public through his gender (Odhiambo, 2003). The Black man must be placeless and temporal (Fanon, 1968). This discursive temporal movement denies him social ownership of spaces. He subjugates his masculine self and must be made public as means of punishing and disciplining him. Fanon (1968) argues that the Black male body is stagnated in
the genitals. Even when allowed to enter the public, he is bordered by his sexuality. Spatial fixation on the Black male bodies as sexual works toward restraining them from entering the civilized city. This is enhanced by identifying the Black body as pathological, receptacle, and sexual. The fear of the White is that Blackness can dilute Whiteness and purity of spaces. The Black man is thus a space invader (Ahmed, 2007).

The colonized continental African public man is a spectacle in the West. His colonial mapping disconnects him from his children (Tabitha, 2005). He constantly escapes maternity, for him to be a man. House chores are alienating to him. A contradiction arises when he is unemployed, and his spouse takes the role of the breadwinner. Black masculinity may identify race question but fail to look at cultural complexities. Theoretical eclecticism is necessary in attempting to understand the lived experiences of the continental African man in the West. Theoretical multiplication can explain the complex social dynamic of accent, citizenship, nationality, race, and education in the expulsion of the African man from community of men. When African man is hired, the White space places them in precarious positions or underemploy them. The aim is to deskill them and demonstrate their mental incapacity to work (Galabuzi, 2006). It is a punitive and disciplinary technology of bodies that do not matter (Butler, 1993; Foucault, 1975, 1980). When the Black man is recognized, there is an equal measure of surveillance on them (Fanon, 1967).

**Black Masculinity**

The current literature on Black masculinity replicates colonial sentiments, by re-victimizing and eraser of the colonized (Kenyan communities; Fanon, 1967; Mercer, 1994). Black masculinity silences other Black expressions through rescribing White and Whiteness as the normal and truth, and subsequently subjugating, obliterating, and erasing other masculinities
(Indigenous masculinities as a form of anticolonialism; Mercer, 1994). It fails to look at Indigenous understanding of race and masculinity as a tool of decolonizing colonial masculinity and racism. Black masculinity seeks inclusion into Whiteness; hence failing to see the resiliency and agency of Afrocentric Indigenous power of self-determination and desire.

This study is an attempt to centralize and celebrate the role of Indigenous masculinities in subverting hegemonic masculinities. It applies localized sense making to discusses racial profiling, unemployment, spousal abuse, and education of continental African men in diaspora. Such a study revises Black masculinity by introducing other subjugated masculinities into scholarly conversation of masculinities.

**African-American Black Masculinity**

The available literature on Black men in North America looks at institutional racial profiling in terms of unemployment, underemployment, mental health and substance issues, and spousal abuse among Black communities (Adler, 2015; Anderson, 1999; Anderson et al., 2005). The literature categorizes Black people (also read men) as living in the outer economic, political, and social limits of the state (Jernigan, 2000; Pittman, 2017; Teasley, Schiele, Adams, & Okilwa, 2018). Black masculinity looks at the ideologically state sanctioned racial segregation, censorship, banishment, and punishment of Black men, pinned between their gendered racial self and the national mythology of whiteness (Andler, 2015; Iverson & Jaggers, 2015; Johnson, 2007). The available literature on Black masculinity looks at institutional (laws and policies), ideological (culture and stereotypes) and individual racisms, and how these bio-technologies interlock in ways that maintain the perpetual expulsion of Black bodies from community of humans (Derrick & Armon, 2016; McCready, 2012). These studies focus on the racial oppression of Black men and boys in education (Iverson & Jaggers, 2015; McCready, 2012).
un/underemployment (Hall & Pizarro, 2010; Robinson, 2009; Wagmiller, 2007), cultural behaviours (Anderson, 1999; Liebow, 1969), health (Derrick & Armon; 2016), spousal abuse (Neff et al., 1995) and mental health issues (Joe & Kaplan, 2001; Kubrin & Wadsworth, 2000).

Michniewicz et al.’s (2014) quantitative study looks at the importance of employment in the construction of men and masculinity. Its focus is on unemployment of men during American recession with the closure of manufacturing and construction companies, and how it affected men’s masculinity as the traditional breadwinner. This study is strong in that it employs experimental methods to understand masculinity and its current precariousness. Its premise is that men’s status is more easily threatened than that of woman by an economic downturn, which leads to compensatory actions (assault, and abuse) of asserting masculinity. The study recognised changes in traditional male roles in the current neoliberal regime. However, it failed to look at the transnational complexities of labour in American. It also failed to account for the issues of institutional racism and colonialism in labour.

Huang and Gunn (2001) works is tasked with looking at women and spousal abuse. The bases of the study is on how women are faced by physical abuse (1.8 to 4 million women), rapes, sexual assault, robberies, and simple victimization (840,000). Women are also more prone to differentiated assaults than men; this is colonial and speaks of the multiple colonialisms that Black women face (Oyewumi, 2005). The majority of these assaults (intimate) are not reported to the police, and in fact are even considered culturally legitimate in some states. The study identifies patriarchy and victimization as the reasons why intimate abuses are not reported. This study introduces issues that Black women face in American. That said, the study does not focus on issues faced by Kenyan families in America. It collapses Black bodies and assumed the uniformity of Black experience as if they are one neat and uniform community. The study looks
at individualistic psychological explanation of abuse and instantaneously sanitizes Whiteness and institutional failures. The study fails to trouble institutional gendering and racism in public spaces in ways that inform abuse from a historical and institutional perspectives, thus pathologizing spousal abuse.

Anderson et al.’s (2005) article looks at African American men’s depression, in connection to income and familial relationship. It identifies unemployment and substance use as contributing to depression and bad relationships between African American fathers and their children. This study identifies masculinity and shame/fear of emasculation as the reason why Black men fail to report mental health issues. The study attempts to answer why Black fathers fail to provide necessities of life to their child. The study fulfills the requirement of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities and Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) meant to make Black fathers take up familial responsibilities, avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancies and encourage nuclear family formation while simultaneously blaming the individual and precluding institutional responsibility. Consequently, it is complicit to the normalization of racial oppression through sanitization of Whiteness and rational masculinity. The study is implicated in colonialism since it makes a sweeping recognition of institutionalized racism and Black men’s unemployment while refusing to unravel the multiple aspects of racism. It individualizes and simplifies personal issues, and in the process ignores institutional role in personal problems. The study collapses Black men’s experiences by switching of its lens on complexities within Black men in terms of histories, migrations, and identities. This study therefore addresses these gaps by including Kenyan men’s narratives in the understanding the transverse trait of Black masculinity.

Dickerson’s (2002) study looks at the gendered and racialized employment of African American men and women. It identifies different forms of racial segregation and how they come
to inform the employment experiences of African-American society. The article works through the complexities of gender and race to bring forth an interesting discussion of the labour market and the removal of the racial and gendered other. The strength of the study is in its position to invoke intersection of race, gender, and class in the labour market to explain the experiences of Black women and men. It looks at African American men and women and how they are stereotyped (men as violent and women as child bearers) and how they are applied to eliminate the community. This study helps elucidate how labour divides Black women and men leading to spousal abuse. This is key to the proposed study in that such dynamics helps explain the current spousal issues faced by Kenyan families living in North America. The study looks at employment and eventual negative relationships between families. However, even with such laser-eyed focus, the study fails to look at the effects of service industry and how it accommodates migrant women in precarious labor, turning them to precarious family breadwinners and subsequently eliciting spousal abuse within Kenyan families living in America. The study does not focus on transnational and migratory complexities and how they contribute to the un/under-employment of continental Black men and women. This article stereotypes Black men as incapable of caregiving. Brooms and Perry (2016), qualitative study looks at racial profiling and institutional racisms in America. The study focuses on ways in which Black African American men make meanings of their lives. It looks at the gendered-race construction of Black men in America by uncovering everyday forms of racial micro and macro aggressions. This study applies a critical race theory to understand experiences of Black men in America. This means that the study recognizes historical, experiential, and interdisciplinary conversations on endemic racism among Black communities in America. It recognizes that racial profiling of Black men leads to an
awareness of Black boy child to the detriment of their female counterparts. This is an interesting
twist that informs the proposed study in terms of understanding that the limits of affirmative
action and the toe-hold on respectability are not true liberation (Fellows & Razack, 1998). The
study recommends training of policy makers on culturally competence and diversity. While
understanding that different cultures are necessary in providing services to diversity, it falls short
of incriminating colonialism and White supremacy as the reason behind migrant pain in what has
come to be known as new racism (Pon, 2009). According to Pon (2009):

The term new racism refers to racial discrimination that involves a shift away from racial
exclusionary practices based on biology to those based on culture (Goldberg, 1993). Cultural competency, like new racism, operates by essentializing culture, while “othering” non-whites without using racialist language. (p. 60)

This means that migrant bodies cease to be human and come to be seen rather as cultural objects
of white consumption. Fanon (1967) speaking of experiences of Black men says that White
bodies look at Black bodies in ways that remind them of their childhood. This explains the limits
of cultural competency as a multicultural tool of liberation.

Collins (1997) looks at racial discrimination among Black men in accessing corporate
career goals. It focuses on Black men’s presence in decision-making spheres of the corporate
ladder in ways that centralize Blackness within the White institutional power. Though such a
move is important, it is equally counter-productive in that it erases the power of creativity, self-
determination in Black communities. This study focuses on corporate mobility and race question:
this is a key element for this study in that it helps to highlight the different barriers erected to
limit Black men from achieving their desires.

Wamwara-Mbugua and Cornwell (2000) look at complexities of Black experiences
through histories, integration and immigration. The study expresses the fluidity of culture in
transnational border crossing in ways that come to redefine people’s experiences in the West.
The authors identify four acculturative strategies applied by immigrants; which are assimilation, integration, separation and marginalization. The study complicates these strategies and calls for identification of sub-strategies from within Black communities. The study looks at the role of African American in acculturating of the African immigrant into American mythology. This is fundamental considering that Black masculinity is implicated in the acculturation of the continental African men in North America. The proposed study implicates the colonized in the colonisation of their own leading to lateral violence; allowing capital accumulation. The study identifies cultures complexities as decolonial and counter pedagogical performances against universalistic strategies of acculturation and adaptation (Berry, 1980, 1992, 1997). The study asserts that Black migrants operate both as immigrants as well as Black, held in the identity borderlands that allow them to submit easily to racism. This assertion has not been acknowledged in Black masculinity studies. This is study takes such claims seriously to understand effects of migration and skin colour on Kenyan men living in Toronto. The study notes the importance of gender and race in understanding social environments; and the politics of recognition. The study identifies accents and acculturation as playing a role in the elimination of Kenyans in Toronto. The study fails to connect accent to the discussion of gender and race in immigration politics. The article addresses issues in United States; and it is necessary to apply some of its assert while remaining courteous not to essentialize its claims into the Canadian context.

Skills development is a major immigration currency in the labour process. Identification of employees is focused on their language and intonation which is then assumed will help in customer service and consequently greater outputs and profits. Language proficiency and personality are core soft skill required in hiring employees. Moss and Tilly (1996) did a study
examining how soft skills racially profile and discriminate against Black men in job placements. This study is essential in understanding accent as a soft skill yet operating as a biotechnology of locating, classifying and eliminating Kenyan men from employment opportunities. The mother tongue can have a great affect on the soft skills rendering an individual unemployable. This study speaks of racial discrimination, yet it does not connect the same to masculinity/ies issues.

Pasura and Christou (2014) undertook a study on African men’s negotiation of masculinity in London. This qualitative study looks at the experiences of African men, with a focus on Zimbabwean men in London. The study identifies multiple ways in which continental African men perform, reconfigure, and reconstruct hegemonic masculinity to affirm different diasporic sensibilities (Walcott, 2003). In this study, the author interviewed Kenyan and other African migrant to identify ways in which African masculinity is performed and contested in London. Some of the participants argued that African men suffer mental health, emasculation, substance use, and unemployment while in London. While African men cannot access gainful employment, their female counterparts are easily accommodated in precarious service industry. In other interviews, the study spoke of how the government has taken the role of the breadwinner by providing welfare cheques to the family, which erases further the role of African men in their homesteads. This challenges the role of the traditional male provider and protector of the family.

A participant in Pasura and Christou’s (2014) identifies drugs, family violence, and returning to homeland as some of the ways of coping with the loss of respectable masculinity. The study identifies four ways of negotiating the lost traditional African masculinity in London as withdrawal, accommodation, resistance, and endorsement and subversion. Withdrawal happens when the African man goes back to Africa to recover his masculinity, leaving his family behind in London. That leads to separation and divorce, which is becoming common among
continental African families in the West. Accommodation is associated with embracing reconfigured traditional masculinity. Resistance is refusal to accommodates the changes and subsequent maintenance of African masculinity in the beyond. Endorsement and subversion are means of walking between the worlds of masculinities in order to survive the tyrannies of imperialism and emasculation. African men support and subsequently question respectable masculinity, as seen when men both support host masculinity but use social spaces and gatherings to renegotiate their lost African masculinity. On another level, African men support their extended families in Africa as a way of maintaining their hypermasculinity. This helps reassert their African masculinity as breadwinners in their traditional extended families. The study is important in that it identifies transnational negotiation of masculinity and implicate racism and imperialism. It focuses on Kenyan men and women as participants. The study looks at different challenges African men face in the diaspora, which is important in informing the present study. Though the study is important it is based in London, which makes it contextually impossible to make connection with Toronto. Geographically Toronto and London are similar in culture yet different in terms of how they conceptualize masculinities. Historically, Canada has played the soft forms of masculinity while London has applied hardline masculinity even though both countries pay allegiance to the queen. The current study will focus on Kenyan men in Toronto, while Pasura and Christou’s study is focused on African men and does not look at the question of Black masculinity.

Doyal, Anderson, and Paparini (2009) undertook a qualitative study to understand the effect of unemployment on masculinity among the African heterosexual men living with HIV/AIDS in London. The study also captured the effects of unemployment to their HIV status among African men. In the study, several participants said that their masculinity had been affected
by their HIV status. They noted that their HIV status left them unemployed and depended on
government welfare, which they claimed store their masculinity. The research focuses on the
unemployment/underemployment of African men in the diaspora provide, which provides this
study with relevant point of focus in understanding Kenyan men experiences in the labor market.
That said, the study does not pay deep attention to unemployment as a structural issue. Instead,
less is discussed on the issue of racial threat vis-à-vis the unemployment of African migrants in
the West.

Though these studies provide historical information on Indigenousness, Blackness,
masculinity, and statecraft, little is known about Kenyan men’s experiences in the diaspora.
Kenyan men’s experiences are collapsed into Black men’s issues, which leads to the over-
simplification and assumption of inter-ethnic expressions of masculinities and Blackness. The
experiences of Kenyan men in diaspora are complex and cannot be categorized as African
American experiences. Pasura and Christou (2017) argue that

The diaspora is increasingly becoming a space for reordering social categories and social
status as well as negotiating respectable forms of masculinities. Thus, this new human
geography of the receiving country with all its implicit postcolonial and neoliberal
dynamics becomes a social laboratory where men must reconfigure masculinities and the
sense of respectability that is interrelated with such gendered identities. (p. 11)

With the global body and cultural movements, Black masculinity faces a challenging future of
having to wrestle with the challenges brought by multiple cultural anxieties. Kenyan men’s
issues in American go beyond Black masculinity presentations and connect to the question of
citizenship, migration, language, accent, location, and cultures among others (Wamwara-Mbugua
& Cornwell, 2010). Available literatures on Kenyan experiences in the diaspora are found in
grey literature and newspaper commentaries, themed around issues of unemployment, spousal
abuse, institutional racism among Kenyan communities in the West (Wanjohi, 2018). Such
experience fails to see the light of academic discussion and subsequent accommodation into the policy framework because they are collapsed as Black issues. Such a focus fails to identify the specific pains (read unemployment, education, immigration) that Kenyan communities in the West face in connection to their Indigenousness, citizenship and nationality, language and accent, and cultures.

Cornileus (2013) looks at the role of gendered racism in the workplace. This qualitative study applies critical masculinity, critical race theory and career development theory. The study identifies racial discrimination in employment and career gaps among the African American people. Cornileus says that there is a bleak outlook for African American men compared to their White counterparts who wish to become chief executive officer for large corporations in America. This argument fails to look at how African women are ceremoniously placed in major position and exploited in sanitizing Whiteness and patriarchy in the name of affirmative action. The article fails to look within the community of Black women power of innovation based on their histories. Rather the focus is on how Black population can enter Whiteness, which is a devaluation of African Indigenous resiliencies and innovations. Such an argument reasserts Whiteness as the norm and consequently erasing other forms of knowing.

The writer says that the African American community is not a monolithic group, which helps conceptualize Blackness from multicentric prisms. The study looks at Black men as facing gendered racism and asserts that they cannot achieve their career goals because of their emotional skin colour and being “Black men.” The study looks at soft skill as playing a role in the elimination of Black men from the work place, which connects to the issue of accent and how continental African men are erased from labour processes.

Racial conversations are complex and not simply a representation of bodies. So when the
questions of citizenship, language, nationalities, and accent get involved in this discussion, the re-orientation of Blackness is established. Immigration and the transnational border crossing of identities, cultures, and bodies complicate the racial conversation in North America. Such racial borders are not discussed extensively in Black masculinity studies. No discussion or underdiscussion of these racial differences is an epistemological conundrum in Black masculinity, to which this study attempts to understand. This study addresses academic and lived realities of subjugated masculinities. The study attempts to fill existing gap in Black masculinity literatures by introducing Indigenous masculinities as robust area of subverting racism and sexism in America.

**African Identities in Diasporic Contexts**

Understanding diasporic African communities is complicated and complex in terms of their connections to their homeland and the host countries. While some have emotional, financial, social, and political connections mildly attached to their homeland, others have no connection to their homeland (Pasura, 2014). The diaspora is historically connected to the Jewish, Armenian, and Greek dispersion from their homeland (Pasura, 2014). The term diaspora comes from Greek word *diasperien*, where *dia* means across and *sperien* means “to sow or scatter seeds” (Pasura, 2014). The term currently refers to refugees, immigrants, or political exiles moving from their homeland and occupying other host countries, the majority of whom reside in the West. The term diaspora speaks of the “umbilical connections” (maternal attachment) of the migrant bodies with the home and the host countries. The term diaspora has been used in human studies to look at the exodus of African people to the West in search of greener pasture. Such movement is precipitated by political, social, and economic upheavals necessitated by war, unemployment, and natural disasters.
Pasura (2014) says that

the meaning of the term African diaspora has shifted from the forced migration of African captives of the old and New worlds to the voluntary emigration of free, skilled African in search of political asylum or economic opportunities; from a diaspora with little contact with the point of origin (Africa) to the one that maintain active contact with the mother continent. (p. 8)

While some diaspora communities have emotional attachment to their homeland, others cease to connect based on the reasons for their movement. Some of those who cut ties with their homeland do so because of war and persecution, while those who still connect to their homeland do so because they believe that at one point they will go back (Pasura, 2014). Diaspora communities can maintain or erase their emotional, economic, and political connection to their home country based on the circumstances of their immigration. Based on this argument, the questions to ask are: What happens to those who have no connection to the home? Do they cease to be diasporic? What happen to those who decide to emotionally disconnect from the home and immerse with their host cultures? These questions guide this study; in terms of looking at the cultural and social changes of the continental Kenyan men in Canada. Do Kenyan men maintain their relationship to their homeland? What could be the reason for their connection? What are some of the ways through which they connect to their homeland? For those who chose to immerse themselves with the Canadian culture, what is their reasoning and what are some of the chosen ways of connection? That said, some scholars claim that the diaspora should go beyond the traditional definition and accommodate new concept of movement brought about by intense internationalization, globalization, and technological changes. Such a conception classifies the diaspora into epistemic, dormant, silent, and core (Pasura, 2014).

The epistemic diaspora is also known as the academic diaspora. This group is connected to the world and sometimes is referred as world citizens. Though connected to the home, they can move within and occupy multiple host countries in ways that make them open to many
cultures. The free movement accords them minimal connection to their host and the home, hence making them the transnational diaspora. This study looks at this group in terms of their migration, education, labour, and settlement experiences in both the host and home countries and the implication that this poses for their masculinity. The study looks at their transitional changes in their identity, culture and values, and gender roles. Pasura also looks at their experiences in education both within the home and abroad.

The second type of diaspora is the dormant diaspora, which plays marginal role in terms of mobilization and action (Pasura, 2014) to affect change in their home countries, while residing there. This group posseses a weak connection to the home and hence cannot mobilize for political purpose. They lack linkages with their “home” countries, which may be caused by despair and apathy that nothing can change. They are mostly people who have been evicted from their home country by wars or natural disasters. Some leave their countries of origin as political dissenters or refugees, and the only memory they have from their homeland is pain and trauma.

The third group of diasporas is composed of the silent ones who have “assimilated, integrated or creolized in the destination countries and/ or conjure alternative identifications that do not emphasise connection to the real or symbolic original homeland” (Pasura, 2014, p. 21). This group is not transnational and has minimal connection to the home. The group embraces the host culture by creolization in ways that allow them to have minimal connection to the home.

The final group is the core diasporas, those who are socially, economically, culturally, and politically involved with their countries of origin while in the beyond. They make money transfer to their families back home, engage in the politics of their home country, maintain their national cultures in the host country through cultural ceremonies, national holidays, foods, national dresses, language, and histories (Pasura, 2014). The study looks at the core and
epistemic diaspora to understand the effect of accent and culture to their masculinity/ies and how that factors in education, immigration, and labour policies in Canada.

Transnational is an umbrella term that houses diasporic communities, through midwifing diasporic intimacies. That said, are all migrant bodies transnational? Are all diasporas transnational? This are fundamental and conceptual term/s fused with power, prestige and privilege and connected to the discussion of diasporic and transnational migrations. Transnational comes from two key words. One is trans, which means “a cross over” beyond the national physical, social, cultural, economic, and political borders. The term is connected to the bodies that move beyond their national comfortable grid and join the uneasiness of the beyond. Such is the case of bodies that cross geographic, cultural, identity, political, and ideological demarcations and come to embrace, through discomfort, the international cultural, economic, and social murky waters in cultures in what Bhabha (1994) calls the Salvadorian experience. This notion is connected to the post-colonial and structural conception of fluidity.

According to Pasura (2014),

while the diaspora may be accurately described as trans nationalist, it is not synonymous with transnationalism’. The diaspora is essentially a human phenomenon, while transnationalism includes the movement of information, goods, products, capital across political borders. Thus, not all diaspora communities are transnational but only those whose activities maintain a sustained regularity that transcend borders. (p. 17)

The difference between transnational and diasporic migration is power and privilege in that one group is free to move and remain private, while the other is checked and is made public (read shamed and disciplined). We live in a world where capital moves from one country to another with a touch of a computer key, while the human is slowed by the bureaucratic cheques and balances. These cheques and balances are defined by nationality, race, cultures, accents, and citizenship, in ways that some bodies identified as having a foreign accent remain in the border, while those others that are considered white and masculine unlimited access to the world. There
are those bodies that can move (transnational) and those that are “frozen” to their provincial “umbilical cord,” making migration a gendered process. Transnationalism and diasporic migrations go beyond physical borders and are expressed through the cultural, economic and political aspects of the migrants. The movement beyond provincialism is a psychoanalytic experience of maternal severance of boys graduating to men. Transitional and diasporic conceptions are gendered and look at bodies that are attached to their maternal instinct as irrational, weak, broken, and social excesses while others come to occupy the place of the rational invisible man. If such a conception holds water, then the transnational diaspora is masculine since it can sever its connection to the maternal homeland and the world.

For this study, transnational bodies are mostly epistemic, which raises the need for this study to ask several questions in terms of Kenyan men experiences in Toronto. Is continental African body transnational? What happens when race card come into the play of transnationalism and maternal breaking away? This conception of gendered migration seeks to look at the Black African body as constantly being reminded of its original point hence a return to maternity (Mercer, 1994; Walcott, 2003). The continental African man is manipulated in ways that are gendered and racialized (Pasura, 2014). To that end, all African bodies cannot truly be masculine and transnational, since they hold diasporic/maternal connection to the home (Pasura, 2014). Their maternal freedom is at the midpoint of transnational and diaspora and thus referred as transnational diaspora. This conversation helps delve into the immigration experiences of Kenyan men in ways that enlarge new conceptions of immigration process that accommodate the African diaspora.

The immigration process is key to this study since it allows the conceptualization of its gendered and racial perspective and how that works toward perpetual othering of the Kenyan
man. Pasura (2014) argues that transnational movement and diasporic politics are myriad, continuous and never-ending processes, that can only be understood in their specificity and complexity. With the same breath, Kenyan men in Toronto should be complex, intricate, and complicated both in culture, identity, and language.

This study seeks to understand the changes the Kenyan men undergo in terms of their bread winning role and their unemployment. What is the issue that Kenyan men face when their gender role is in crisis? The study looks at the history of pre-colonial Kenya, colonial Kenya, and how the Kenyan man comes to be constructed as the breadwinner, protector, and provider. This colonial gender construction of the Kenyan man is similar to the experiences of Zimbabwean men in London, who, according to Pasura (2014), when entering the metropolis take up the role of provider of the family in London. Pasura further states that

Feminization of migration, accelerated by the growing global demand for female workers in “high touch” occupations, is redefining the gender status of men and women in the diaspora. Hamadziripi explains: “the economic situation in this country has allowed for the switch of the roles where sometimes there is not work for men, the women will be working and the man will be looking after the children. According to Mncedisi, if both of you are working shifts and your wife works the early shift and you work a late shift, you have to cook and do household duties if she is not around.” (p. 73)

The African diasporic communities are gendered in ways that help navigate economic precariousness in the beyond, while maintaining capital accumulation. This affects African men in terms of their position and power both at home and in the metropole. To overcome the loss, diasporic Zimbabwean men rework their masculinity by investing back home and looking forward to going back and settling in Zimbabwe, hence regaining their lost masculinity. This explains their transnational temporality and maternal connection to home as place of solitude. While this is true for a couple of men, their female counterparts are “settled” in host land, because they have a job and can afford to feed their families, which raises the question: Are African women transnational? They live a manufactured freedom, since the feeling is temporary
and tied to their gendered colonial self. Galabuzi (2006) and Sawchuk and Kempf (2008) argue that migrants are mostly found in the service industry and racially embroidered in what is called the economic apartheid. Though Zimbabwean women may feel free, they are trapped between their gendered self and the national mythology of the nation-state as masculine. While they claim freedom through their service work, they lose it based on their gendered citizenship. Such freedom is controlled and their bordered self is used to remind them of their original home. Even though they may be free from African gendered-ness, they are trapped in transnational and imperial gendered processes. They are bordered by their gender, race, and citizenship.

The African epistemic diaspora lies in the liminal part of transnationalism and the diasporic continuum. They are respected because of their education but like Fanon would say, their Blackness, accent, nationality and culture reminds them of their bordered self. Education is gendered in forms and processes which formal colonial education used to prepare “boys” to public men (Odhiambo, 2007). Education is an industrial complex that classifies, disciplines, and creates bodies for production and profit maximization. The classroom is a laboratory where student is measured, ordered and operated to enter the market place. Bodies are tested, improved, and defined in the classroom to prepare them to enter the rational city. The classroom is a nourishing and militarizing space of the mind to follow instruction comparable to solder following commands and instruction while performing the codes. Pacification of the mind is core aim of the gendered education.

Portelli, Shields, and Vibert (2007) identify the classroom as a political space of controlling the mind to observe and perform dominant presentations. That said, the classroom occupies the very conception of a prison, laboratory, industrial complex, and asylum in ways that maintain hegemony and capital accumulation. Those who cannot enter the civilizational space of
the classroom are emptied into the society of deplorables. The process of improving and emptying the deplorables creates a dual conception of the classroom as pure and clean and devoid of pathologies. This creates a fissure between the educated and those who come to be defined as uneducated, frozen, and pedestrians.

Those who are educated are provided with a passport of accessing the “free” world but must be returned to their home based on their race, gender, citizenship, and accent. They are well connected and politically and economically conscious, yet their racial and gender markers come to return them to their homeland. How then can we conceptualize African migrants as a citizen of the world when their accent, nationality, and skin colour constantly remind them of their home? Can the gendered racial pain make you the world citizen and to some extent a transnational body? This study seeks to answer this question through the narratives of Kenyan men living in Toronto.

According to Fellows and Razack (1998),

Systems of oppression (capitalism, imperialism, and patriarchy) rely on one another in complex ways. This “interlocking” effect means that the systems of oppression come into existence in and through one another so that class exploitation could not be accomplished without gender and racial hierarchies; imperialism could not function without class exploitation, sexism, heterosexism, and so on. Because the systems rely on one another in these complex ways, it is ultimately futile to attempt to disrupt one system without simultaneously disrupting others. (pp. 336-337)

Identities are complex and their operations on bodies are unquantifiable (Butler, 1993). To interlock means that identities work together in complex, multifaceted and intricate ways that allow perpetual control and subjugation of the social body. To understand such a complex interplay of identities calls for an analysis that acknowledges the complicated working oppression without being charitable to one identity (Butler, 1990; Toft-Nielsen & Nørgård, 2015). Such analysis denies arrivals or conclusions of analysis since such process of oppression is colonial and ongoing. Every arrival becomes a stop over to a new and emerging question of
elimination and militarization of the migrant others. Interlocking operationalization and methodology do not separate identities but rather look at them simultaneously in connection to systems of oppression. They look at how identities latch onto each other to suppress, erase, subjugate, simplify or reduce, and culturize social bodies. This means looking at education as community-based and oriented.

**Canadian Migration, Education, Labour, and the Nation Mythology**

Canada is built on the backs of immigrant communities (Nyaga & Torres, 2017; Walia, 2011). For example, the Chinese community is historically known to have participated in railway building (Chow & Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia, 2014). Filipino/a, Mexican and African communities have played a role in building the socio-economic and political fabric of Canada. Nonetheless, immigrants from these countries continue to receive pushback and elimination from Canadian immigration, education, and labour policies.

Immigration in Canada is a key identifier of belongingness and citizenship, in the sense in which it erects borders for some while allowing other immigrants to flourish based on gender, race, disability, and many other forms of push outs (Krysa, Mills, & Barragan, 2017; Wong & Guo, 2018). Language, nationality, accent, education, and experience is used to deter prospective Kenyan immigrants from flourishing and meeting desires. An example to this historical suppression of racialized immigrant is the Chinese head tax, the Live-in Caregiver Program, Indian continuous journey and Black experience in Canada (Gabriel, 2015; Hanley, Larios, & Koo, 2017; Walia, 2010; Winter, 2008). Though Canada immigration policy has evolved over time to include racialized and marginalized groups, more needs to be done in terms of settling racialized immigrant bodies in Canada (Winter, 2008).

The initial immigration policy allowed only European immigrants to participate in
national building and simultaneously removed the racialized other. According to Taylor (1991), the leadership of the then Prime Minister of Canada (John A. McDonald) ensured that Blacks, Chinese and Indians were kept out of Canadian body politic. Chinese head tax was a Canadian immigration policy that prevented Chinese from immigrating to Canada. The policy was based on heavy taxation to any prospective Chinese immigrant. The exclusion act made sure that Chinese wives could not enter Canada. These two policies (head tax and exclusion act) worked together towards maintaining the white Canadian society. The Indian continuous journey immigration policy made sure that prospective Indian immigrants had to ride in a ship without stopping anywhere on the way to Canada. Climatic conditions were also used to curtail prospective immigrants from stepping to Canada, with the claim that they were not strong enough to survive the rigid environment of Canada.

Until recently, immigration policy has undergone progressive changes, allowing checked entry of marginalized communities to Canada. Immigration to Canada is based on a strict restriction of education, skills and experience. The point immigration system checks entry based on solid education (preferably at the post secondary level), language proficiency and public working experience.

Even with the progressive changes to the immigration policy, issues of racial bias based on language and nationality continue unabated. The revised policy calls for language proficiency to keep off populations that are not anglophones or Francophones from entering Canada. Language proficiency is applied to block immigrants with foreign accent and determine them as not having Canadian experience. Such an institutionalized immigration policy finds its face in other facets of the city and is exercised by the population to protect the Canadian society from the immigrant other. One’s accent is used to remind immigrants of their foreignness and
subsequently deny their participation in the body politic.

Such a policy affects Kenyans living in Canada whose accent, education, nationality, and skin colour are used to expunge them from labor, education and immigration policies, leading to other social issues such as family abuse within the community. The issue of accent as a form of racism is pervasive in educational and labor and migration policy, yet a gap remains in terms of how it alters the migrant communities. This study attempts to look at accent as a racial marker of evicting Kenyan men from participating social, economic and political development of Canada. It ties to the question of immigration and labour insistence one must have Canadian experience for one to be employed. Immigrants pursuing higher education are restricted, watched over, and disciplined based on their accents. For example, some immigrant may be forced to remain silent in class so that they are not marked and fail their exams. What is hidden under the narrative of Canadian experience is the question of accent that is used to mark communities of immigrant as not deserving to enter the body politic.

Studies on Black masculinity and education seek to look at the question of Black youths and racial eviction from the classroom. Dei (1998) says that the current school system in Canada is not healthy for Black students since it is based on White concepts of learning and teaching. He says that education in Canada is colonial and seeks to punish students who look different, the majority of whom are Black students. Dei further suggests that education in Canada is based on the history of racism. He says that the curriculum and spaces of learning are not conducive to incorporating other ways of knowing. That said, Dei seeks to look at the role of Afrocentrism and schooling and support the concept of education as community based. Dei (1998) looks at Afrocentricity as a powerful tool for counteracting the racial elimination of Black students from schooling and learning. He calls for learning that is connected to student’s lived experiences and
ways of being. This work provides this study with an understanding of the different ways in which Kenya men face racial removal in the classroom. It theoretically guides the study to conceptualize and understand Afrocentricity as a teaching and learning tool of decolonising contemporary classroom. The article does not focus on Kenyan immigrant, and as such, brings a twist to this discussion of Afrocentric school by opening up the narratives of Kenyan men and education.

On the other hand, Blackburn and McCready (2009) speak of the experiences of queer Black male students in school systems. While celebrating Black non-conformity and the issue of education among Black youths, the studies lays claim to the racially state-authorized elimination of queer Black male students from the school system. The study ties to issues of sexuality and race to discussion the prevailing system of educational erasure of queer Black youths in North America. The study looks at urban Black bisexual, gay, questioning, and queer youths and also explores homophobia while tying the question of race in education. It identified the different homophobic experiences and how they affects such students. The article calls for an understanding of the various intersecting aspects of the student in terms of gender and sexuality, and why teachers need to address these diversities with care. The study further clarifies and theorizes the multiplicity of Black identities in the class, however it does not look at the effects of accent in education.

Johnson (2015) looks at creating safe spaces for Black boys in schooling, and says that the school system is mired with a racist history that removes Black boys from the system. Johnson also states that racial elimination of Black boys is based on the stereotype that Black bodies cannot succeed and that they are broken bodies. Though this is important, it is equally important to reflect on how those spaces are oriented and disoriented (Ahmed, 2006). While the conversation connects to the educational experiences of Kenyan men in Toronto, it does not
provide key issues reflected by the participants in this study.

James (2012) speaks about racial stereotypes applied to evict Black boys from the class. Such racial stereotypes look at Black students as being underachievers, troublemakers, and broken, hence providing the rationale to evict them from learning space. James (2012) and Dei (1998) illuminate salient racial issues Black communities face in Toronto in terms of education. Yet while that is the case, the discussion does not focus specifically on the experiences of Kenyan immigrant men in schooling. In fact, the majority of these studies focusing on Black education have not delved deep into issues pertaining to accents and social elimination of the Kenyan African Black men in the academy.

The majority of the studies focus on young boys and youths, which begs the question as to why Black older men in academic space are not studied. Could this be connected to the racial stereotype that Black men cannot learn and as such are unable to enter modernity? This study brings issues of Kenyan men’s experiences within and outside of the school system. There is minimal study of Black men experiences in the classroom, which is why the present study attempts to bring such voices into the discussion of academic erasure of Black communities in education systems. This study incorporates the experiences of Black men (Kenyan men) to the question of age and Blackness in school system. These issues are cyclical and pervasive in ways that impact the health and economic prospects of the Kenyan immigrants in Canada.

Bhuyan, Jeyapal, Ku, Sakamoto, and Chou (2017), speaking of systemic racial profiling in the immigration policy, say:

In August 2012, emphasis on “Canadian experience” was further institutionalized in a major overhaul of the Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP), Canada’s main economic immigration class. The revised FSWP, commonly known as “the points system,” reduced the value of international education and work experience but added Canadian experience as a key criterion for immigrant selection. (p. 48)
The point system removed one barrier and replaced it with another to maintain immigration racial control while maintaining white Canadian purity. How can immigrants in Canada have Canadian experience, if they are not provided with opportunities that connects to their professions? This question speaks of history of racial erasure of immigrants through what Galabuzi (2006) calls economic apartheid. It is a form of governmentality that keeps migrant racial other in their spaces of exception while blaming to them for their misfortunes.

Canadian immigration policy calls for immigrants to have Canadian experience for them to be successful in Canada. Accent becomes the central code through which an immigrant is determined as having Canadian experience. The policy prioritizes Canadian-born citizens, while subsequently eliminating the immigrant other because they have a foreign accent that is a threat to accumulation of wealth. While the racialized immigrants face eviction because of their skin colour and accent, those of anglophone descent can easily access gainful employment since their accent is higher in hierarchy compared to the racialized. Skin colour confirms the location of any racialized bodies and consequently determines whether they will receive employment offer or not.

Bhuyan et al. (2017), commenting on Canadian experience, say: “Hawthorne reported that while both Australia and Canada have a high percentage of foreign-born and focus on recruiting immigrants with ‘skills,’ immigrants in Canada have higher levels of unemployment due to a misfit between immigrants’ skills and the job market” (p. 48). The majority of racialized immigrants are well-educated in their country, yet when they arrive in Canada, their education is not recognized as rational enough for the labour systems. This explain the level of disparity born out of the immigration policy that censors immigrants from accessing gainful employment. Canada continues to lag in terms of incorporating immigrants’ skills into employment policy, thus, creating employment gaps between those born in Canada and immigrants. This disparity
maintains Canada as a White space where immigrants must choose to settle in precarious worlds of labor, allowing capital accumulation to go unabated. Educated immigrant must work in precarious jobs to support their family, who see such employment as a favour and state benevolence. This maintains nation-state in gendered communities, creating the impression of other countries as broken.

The majority of educated immigrants come to Canada with the dream of improving themselves and their families, yet the examining board bars them from practising. The narrative of Canada as the land of opportunity ends disorienting immigrant who now must work multiple shifts in labour systems that fail to appreciate their educational background, just to make ends meet. It is a case of survival of the fittest where the state maintains White dominance through elimination of the migrant other. Canadian immigration is implicated in brain drain from other developing countries, who spend a lot of public money to train and educate their professional, only for them to be poached and reduced to “cabbage” lives in the West. Such prospects are shuttered by the tight and unresponsive immigration, labour, and education policies which believe that Canadian experience is more rational than other experiences. This form of racial erasure has global, glocal, and local repercussions as well as some knowledge exporting to other countries thus, their population remain in abject poverty. While this article delves deep into immigration issues in Canada, little is discussed on the effect of immigration for Kenyan men living in Toronto. This study attempts to fill that existing gap with the narratives of Kenyan immigration experience. The study does not look at the gendered aspect of immigration and as such, attempts to identify how immigration determines certains societies to be belonging, while other as emotionally challenged to participate in economic productivity of the nation state. While the article looks at the issues of Canadian experience, it does not delve deep into understanding
how it is connected to accent, and the racial modalities of eliminating the migrant other. The study sheds preliminary light into understanding the interlocking aspect of accent, immigration, imperialism, and economic apartheid in Canadian society.

Tannock (2011) notes that immigration affects “exporting” countries’ brain basket. Canada is known for fishing for the best brains from developing countries. Tannock says that many educated immigrants leave their countries for better lives in Canada. This affects the socio-economic development of exporting countries. Such countries are known for producing professionals who then are poached and made to live in poverty. The exporting country relies on the service of inexperienced and less-qualified personnel as its best brains live a lie in the west. For these countries, there is not return to investment for training the professionals. The introduction of Structural Adjustment Policies marketed by Bretton Wood Institutions as effective, efficient, and accountable rather invokes public management, governmentality, and managerialism; thus, it discourages educated Kenyan men from living and working in Kenya. Such policies work towards reducing government spending and increasing efficiencies, leading to the expulsion of the common people into the social and economic shadows of the world. Such people immigrate to other countries such as Canada in search of better lives. Such immigrants are then placed in the economic borderlands in Toronto, where their dreams are shattered. As previously discussed, Canadian experience singles them out and expunges them from the body politic in ways that make them hate, question, and blame themselves for the problem they are facing. This absolves institutional participation in the issues the immigrant face while allowing untamed accumulation of wealth using immigrants’ cheap labour. It also leads to the underutilization of immigrants’ skills (Reitz, Curtis, & Elrick, 2014). While this study presents crucial points on brain drain and its risk to developing countries, it does not look at how these
issues affect the specific Kenyan man living in Toronto. The present study therefore brings the Kenyan twist through the narratives of Kenyan men living in Toronto.

Canada looks at immigration from a market value system (Thobani, 2000). As this report is being written, Canada remains accused of barring immigrants from other countries, mostly from Africa. Due to the recent Syrian refugee case, the liberal government has tightened the immigration nose on other parts of the world mostly Africa in ways meant to balance the immigration “trade.” The premise is to control the border for some immigrant while taking (read importing) Syrian refugees in ways that create the impression that is a welcoming society. This speaks charity and state benevolence as a product to be sold in the world market. Canada’s international fame (read competitive masculinity) in the world market is that of a diplomatic and welcoming nation state. The Syrian case is an example of how Canada takes advantage of migrant pain to showcase its masculinity mythology as a welcoming society. This precludes the implication of Canadian state as colonial and implicated in the production of refugees in the world.

Immigration looks at filling the employment deficits in Canada by importing cheap labour from other countries Africa and Asia (Galabuzi, 2006). Recently, the increased focus on work visa permits and reduced visitor visas tells of the dominant narrative of an economic based immigration policy. This visa permit disparity supports private business interests at the behest of family reconnections (Thobani, 2000).

This marketized social capital does not look inside to understand the issues faced by Aboriginal and Black communities. Thobani (2000) adds that the immigration policy in Canada seeks to build Canadian image in the world while creating internal divisions among immigrants. The study also says that the creation of Canadian experience as a requisite of immigration policy bars some immigrants while allowing others access to social and economic resource. Thobani
notes that this policy when applied by employers, work toward eliminating particular immigrants claiming they’re lacking soft skills (accents). Thobani (2000) says that the policy is supposed to bring in skilled immigrant in ways that precludes existing historical, ethnic, and racial discrimination in Canada. Thobani (2000) says, “While employers deem ‘soft skills,’ including values, behaviours, identities and forms of communication, necessary to operate in the so-called ‘Canadian workplace culture,’ the discourse of CE discursively intertwines soft skills with explicit knowledge” (p. 52).

The immigration policy’s focus on Canadian experience works towards racializing immigrants from the job market. Thobani’s work and arguments illuminate some of the experiences that majority of Kenyans living in Canada face in the immigration processes in terms of the role accent plays in eliminating them from the body politic. The works lay bare the hidden racial erasure in the policy and how it is applied to purge the broken immigrant body, while making sure that the already existing immigrants are fixed and regulated in the precarious service industry in what Galabuzi (2006) calls economic apartheid. The study provides an insight on the marketization of the social aspect of immigration. While this work sheds light on immigration issues, it does not specifically focus on Kenyan immigrants, as does the present study.

According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission (2013), introduction of the Canadian experience in immigration policy is discriminatory and against human rights. That is, the denial of employment based on someone’s nationality, citizenship, and racial identity is against human rights. While it may not be stated explicitly, Canadian experience is connected to language proficiency and by extension accents, and it is used by employers or communities to locate, classify, and determine the fate of immigrants. Therefore, such persons so located as having declassified accents cannot participate in the social economic aspect of the body politic,
hence denying them experience and keeping them in economic internment. Canadian experience is an institutional immigration racial profiling meant to measure, classify, process, and spit away unnecessary bodies from the state. This study shares this view since majority of Kenyan men living in Canada find it hard to secure well-paying jobs.

Bragg and Wong (2016) look at the reunification criteria of migrant families in Canada. As the number of people admitted as family-class immigrants and refugees drops, the number of economic immigrants keeps rising. The recent reduction of visitors’ visas and the decline of family reunification program is a testament to the claim. Instead there is an increased focus on economic visas. The changes in immigration are focused on poaching young and language proficient immigrants to fill economic and labour shortages. This study paints a picture of a gendered immigration policy that identifies particular immigration classes as more masculine and rational than others. For example, the business class and work visas are presented as independent while family reunification and visitor visas are seen as emotional and broken, an unnecessary social excess. Such a gendered immigration policy locks out families and seeks to work in ways that support corporate and business interests. Such a conception is necessary for this study in terms of understanding Kenyan family re-unification in Canada. Though the study presents a candid point of understanding issues facing immigrant families as supposed to those of businesses, it fails to present the Kenyan men and their family’s experience in Canada.

Reitz et al.’s (2014) study looks at the underutilization of immigrants skills and shows that immigration policy is an industrial complex for processing, classifying, categorizing, and marking the racialized immigrant other. Such an immigration factory looks at the immigrant as damaged, broken, and crude in their deeds, speech, language, and culture and rationalizes their processing as a necessary evil for entering the White Canadian polity. The process of
credentialization works toward identifying, assessing, documenting, and evaluating prospective migrants’ emotional and foreign education and experience in ways that reduce them to subjects of experiment and knowledge production. Those without Canadian experience become the guests of settlement programs that process them in ways to increase their language proficiency, offer skills training, and improve their accents. Such programs, though well meaning, serve to assimilate and alienate them. The authors argue that aside from the language assistance, professional help for educated immigrants is provided, which works toward institutionalizing the notion that Canadian professional education is superior to others. This professional assistance spans licensing regulations, mentoring, and bridge training. This study provides very relevant experience of immigrant communities in Canada particularly laying bare the steps undertaken to process the migrant other. The study also provides the interlocking aspect of education, labour, and immigration and how they work together to further lock out, regulate, and discipline the emotional immigrant other while creating a gendered nation state image of Canada as being more rational and masculine. While this is important for the current study, the inclusion of Kenyan men’s stories provide another diverse twist to this immigration issue.
Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

Theories are lenses or perspective that help magnify social issues to understand, make sense of, explain and predict social phenomenon (Bhabha, 1994). A theory is an explanation of social happenings and processes. Theoretical translations are a complex, contingent, and temporal process of understanding and explaining social issue (Bhabha, 1994). A theory is work in progress and changes based on time and space. Therefore, it is a means to an endless understanding of social processes and the effect on human beings. A theory does not arrive but keeps changing to accommodate new knowledges and ways of life, as well as to accommodate multiple interpretations over time and space. Theory is reflective and reflexive to social change and seeks to explain issues of power relations within and without a given community (Bhabha, 1994).

This study seeks to reimagine Black masculinity through the praxis and experiences of Kenyan men in Toronto. The aim and objective of this study is attempt to understand the role of accent in the racial elimination of Kenyan men on Toronto. The study also looks at the limitations of Black masculinity in the representation Black men. The argument to this study is that Black masculinity cannot entirely explain the lived experiences of Kenyan men in Toronto. This is because Kenyan experiences of racism based on their accent have not be a factored in Black masculinity studies. Consequently, the study employs anti-colonialism, post-colonialism, and critical masculinity in understanding Kenyan men in Toronto. Through the three theories, the study attempts to fill the prevailing gap in Black masculinity by introducing Indigenous masculinities as a new form of fighting social justice within and without Blackness. Consequently, this study validates subjugated knowledges as key towards development of new theoretical assumptions.
Anti-Colonialism and Black Masculinity

Black masculinity looks at the racial elimination of Black men in North America (James, 2004, 2010; Jernigan, 2000; Johnson, 2010; Isaksen, 2017; Iverson & Jaggers, 2015; Mercer, 1994). Black masculinity is grounded on the history of slavery and how it is manifested in today’s life. Black masculinity looks at the construction of a Black man as a lesser man than the White man and how that construction removes the Black man from both the public and private space. Mercer (1994) says that in the eyes of the White man, the Black man is not supposed to take up the role of the breadwinner. Systems are tailored in ways that disable him from acting fatherhood. This is because Black men remain the property of the White man. Fanon (1967) says that the White man understands the Black man from his phallic stage. Such a conceptualization of Black is emotional and also comes to place him as a danger to the existence of the White nation. The Black man is seen to be broken and pathological and in need of the White saviour.

Black masculinity lens applies an anti-colonial lens to question racial profiling of Black men in terms of their education, health, employment, and many other social aspects. Key to this lens is the question of power and its material and symbolic impact on the lives of Black men.

The study also employs an anti-colonial lens and praxis to understand colonialism and how it shapes national and transnational spaces. Anti-colonialism is action oriented (Dei, 1998, 2006a, 2006b, 2010; Dei & Kempf, 2006; Dei & Simmons, 2012; Fanon, 1967, 1968; Kaempf, 2009; Memmi, 1965; Njambi, 2005). It also celebrates Indigenous ways of living and knowledge production (Dei, 2002, 2011; Manley-Casimir, 2012; Shahjahan, 2005; Wane, 2008; 2014). The theory identifies Indigenous practices as sites of active resistance and resiliency against colonialism (Dei, 1996a, 1996b, 1998; Fanon, 1967; Memmi, 1965; Muriuki, 2000; wa Thiong’o, 1986). This is important in troubling a generalized and gendered colonial
understanding of Black men by including Kenyan Indigenous knowledges as sites of complicating Black masculinity. This study seeks to include Indigenous knowledges and practices as important tool of decolonizing masculinity (Njambi, 2005).

Anti-colonial theory is associated with scholars such as Edward Said, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, George Dei, Frantz Fanon, Chinua Achebe, Linda Smith, Ali Mazrui, and Albert Memmi, among others. Anti-colonialism is as old as colonialism (Memmi, 1965). Anti-colonialism is an anti-thesis to colonialism, which believes in subjugated voices and praxis as sites of decolonization (Fanon, 1968; Mawby, 2015). This means that anti-colonialism respects local spaces as powerful points of decolonization. Accordingly, anti-colonialism looks at decolonial encounters between the local desires and the Western capital as violent and vehement (Memmi, 1965). Fanon says that decolonization is a violent representational process between the colonizer and the colonized; and that it is a process of the margins retracing their root (Todorova, 2015). Anti-colonialism looks at Indigenous communities rebellions, agency, and resilience against colonial rule (Agozino, 2003; Anderson, 2003; Atieno Odhiambo & Lonsdale, 2003; Dei, 2006a, 2006b; Derrick, 2008; Fanon, 1968; Gacheru, 2005; Kaempf, 2009; Kempf, 2009). Anti-colonialism looks at the complex ways in which colonialism is invested and manifested in Indigenous land even after colonial independence. It looks at imperialism and neocolonialism as sites of oppression and eviction of Indigenous peoples from their lands and ways of life. Among some of the present-day colonial presence is the introduction of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs), occupation of Indigenous lands by transnational companies, American occupation in the Philippines, Chinese control of Tibet, and the Gaza strip occupation (Efrat, 2006; Jones, 2013; Sautman, 2001). Anti-colonial theory believes colonialism is ongoing, and as such emphasizes the need to decolonize (Coddington, 2017; Dei, 2006a, 2006b).
Dei (1996b) identifies present day schooling as colonial, in that it is based on Western thought and works towards erasing other forms of knowing. Consequently, Western education is a process of social production of bodies for capital accumulation (Portelli et al., 2007). This continues to be institutionalized and politicized in United States of America as Black students fall off from the Western education. The blame is placed on the Black students with the claim that they irredeemably broken and cannot succeed. Black students are thus irredeemably broken and cannot survive in the classroom. This greatly affects Black youths in terms of job opportunities and which leads to high levels of social problems such as substance use and other forms of social vices. This has led to Black resistance and the intensified incarceration of Black youths in the justice system as well as racial profiling, high unemployment rates, and substance use (Kline, 2012; Tanovich, 2006). The majority of those who face institutional racism are Black boys and men (Smiley & Fakunle, 2016). Black masculinity scholarship leads the way in explaining the racial experiences of Black youths in American society. Black masculinity employs an anti-colonial praxis of resisting institutionalized racism and calls for changes within institutions to accommodate the Black other. Though commendable, Black masculinity has fallen prey to the Western hegemonic homogenization and single storying of Black men. The assumption that Black masculinity can explain Black men’s experiences is far-fetched. This study introduces Kenyan men experiences as leftovers within Black masculinity scholarship. Black masculinity seeks to enter the White space and subjugate its own resiliency grounded in its roots (Matlon, 2016). For so long, Black masculinity has subjugated Indigenous masculinities as form of resistance against racial profiling of Black men. It fails to recognize the complex and interlocking dynamics of Black immigrant men from continental Africa.
Using anti-colonial theory and praxis, this study identifies Indigenous praxis as sites of power and resistance against racial sketching of Black communities. Black masculinity has some fundamental slippage and cannot entirely explain the lived experiences of the continental African man in the diaspora. This area is informed by the conversations brought about by anti-colonialism, post-colonialism, and critical masculinities. The racial experience of the African man is myriad and complex and cannot be explained by Black masculinity as currently constituted (Azrael, 2007; Soudien & Botsis, 2011).

Anti-colonial theory looks at the violent eviction of original people from their land and subsequent resistance. According to Dei and Simmons (2012), “Colonialism has been about racist relationships with particular geographic bodies with the aim of material profit. The body read as raced, classed, sexualized and gendered is also central to the articulation of anti-colonial theory” (p. 73). Anti-colonial praxis and theory looks at race as materially produced through colonialism and how race becomes the capital for social accumulation of wealth by the colonizer. Colonialism is a process where gender, class, race, and masculinity interlock such that capital is accumulated leading to the suppression of marginalized communities. Anti-colonial theory believes in active resistance (Fanon, 1968). Anti-colonialism calls for social justice and respect for the Indigenous communities. An example of anticolonial praxis is the Mau Mau movement in Kenya which fought for recognition of the African as human being and for return of land to the original owner. Mau Mau originally was referred as Kenya Land and Freedom Army (KLFA). Led by anti-colonial luminaries such as Dedan Kimanthi, Jomo Kenyatta, Bildad Kaggia, Paul Ngei, and Achieng Oneko, the Mau Mau movement sought rights for the Indigenous communities. In Kenya, the Mau-Mau used military strategies and tactics to fight colonial power. The anti-colonial movement varied in most African countries ranging from violent to non-violent tactics and strategies (Walter, 1981). The use of press, literary writing, art forms, and trade
unionism were some of the ways in which anti-colonial movement in Africa took shape. These Indigenous points of resistance are an important point of entry in this study. As much as Black masculinity employs an anti-colonial resistance, there is a need to consider Indigenous masculinities as sites of anti-racism and anti-imperialism.

Studies on Black unemployment rate cover up and hide the experiences of Kenyan men. Consequently, there is a theoretical and literature gap in Black masculinity in explaining the experiences of Kenyan men. This study calls for a new theorization of continental African men in the West. This is because they face a different kind of racism that cannot be understood using Black masculinity. It calls for multi-theoretical prisms that recognize the cultural and Indigenous grounds of African peoples as robust and valid grounds for anti-racism in North America. Theories around this issue should look at culture and identity politics as fluid and complicated. Overall, the theories should look at gender and race as complicated identities that work together to oppress the continental African body. This study employs a postcolonial theory to understand the complicated identities and cultures in Canada and how they either impede or help the Kenyan man. Post-colonial theory helps to understand the mix of cultures in spaces like Toronto, and how they work toward removal of Kenyan men from within Blackness and overall citizenship.

Post-colonialism looks at the complexities of border crossing in terms of education, migration, and education of immigrant bodies. Anti-colonialism identifies education, immigration, and labour as steeped in colonialism. Critical masculinity looks at policies and laws as gendered and works toward marking some Black bodies as emotional, irrational, and undesirable, hence evicting them from the body politics.

Anti-colonialism looks at how colonialism is replicated in modern day global society (Dei & Simmons, 2012; Derrick, 2008; Dickerson, 2002). In a globalized world, colonialism seeks to exploit migrant bodies through precarious labour positions in what is known as
economic apartheid (Galabuzi, 2006). Anti-colonial looks at slavery as a colonial erasure and sub-division of human through the bio-technology of race and racisms (Dei, 2006b; Fanon, 1967, 1968; Fahnbulleh, 2006; Galabuzi, 2006; Goldring & Landolt, 2013; Hoch, 1979; Jagire & Morad, 2013; James & Benjamin, 2010; Kline, 2012). Anti-colonialism will help in identifying the precarious conditions under which Kenyan men live in Toronto, more so in terms of their education, labour, and their immigration processes. These transnational experiences of migrant communities in Canada are midwifed by Bretton Wood Institutions through policy and laws that systematize the racial and gender suppression of Kenyan men in Toronto. The precarious position experienced by Kenyan men in Toronto is tied to racial and gendered social structures and institutions that deny migrant bodies the benefits of citizenship. To that end, anti-colonialism helps explain the racial and gendered aspect of the migrant Kenyan man in Toronto (Dei, 1996a, 2010; Fanon, 1967, 1968; Memmi, 1965).

Anti-colonial studies look at masculinity as colonial and imperial tablet of social organization of the colonized (Fanon, 1967; Karani, 1987; Njambi, 2005; Odhiambo, 2003; Tabitha, 2005). The theory looks at colonial histories of racial and gender segregation. Anti-colonialism excavates the historical construction of colonial masculinity to identify how Indigenous masculinities are expunged from social production and representations (Kjartan, 2006; Njambi, 2005; Odhiambo, 2003; Okia, 2012; Oyewumi, 2005, 2006, 2011). The theory implicates the matrix of race and masculinity in the oppression of Kenyan men in Toronto. The study present identifies different concepts in anti-colonialism which are resistance, power, Indigenous knowledges, race, colonialism, as well as the colonized and the colonizer and works with them towards a deeper understanding of Kenyan men both provincially and internationally. The study identifies the different weakness and strengths of anti-colonial and Black masculinity to offer a deeper understanding and explanation of Kenyan men in Toronto. The theories look at
citizenship, accents and cultures as implicated in the oppression of Kenyan men in the diaspora (Azrael, 2007; Cargile, 2000; Soudien, 2011).

**Anti-Colonialism**

This section of the study discusses some key concepts relevant to anti-colonial theorizing for understanding the question of masculinity. The key concepts of anti-colonial theory to be applied in this study are: power, decolonization, anti-racism, colonialism, imperialism, and language and stories/narratives.

**Power.** Anti-colonialism looks at power as both from the top and bottom (Dei & Simmons, 2012; Memmi, 1965). This perspective recognizes local powers of resistance as necessary in counteracting colonialism. Such powers are steeped in Indigenous cultures and practices (Asante, 1980, 1998, 2003a, 2003b, 2007; Dei, 2006a, 2006b, 2011; Memmi, 1965; Smith, 2012). Dei and Simmons (2012) say that “Working with the anti-colonial framework means engaging such concepts as colonialism, oppression, colonial encounter, decolonization, power, agency and resistance, as well as claiming the authenticity of local voice and intellectual agency of people’s” (p. 75).

Anti-colonialism recognizes Indigenous perspectives as central in presentation of local desires. Such a conceptualization helps in understanding ways in which Kenyan men in Toronto overcome racial and gender oppression in labour, education and immigration policies. It also helps understand how Indigenous masculinities can works towards institutionalized racism in the West. This conceptualization of power understands the local knowledges of Kenyan men as fundamental in decolonising immigration, education, and labour in Toronto. It also provides a stage to understand Kenyan men resiliencies and agencies in overcoming racial profiling within the Black community and White institutions. Such Kenyan power of resistance is situated in their
culture and identity, which borrows from Indigenous masculinities and ways of being. This conception looks at how Kenyan culture remains resilient and continues to define Kenyan men in the West. Such cultures are defined through reciprocity, love, respect, and relationship building.

Such power is in their everyday story-telling, which decolonizes everyday erasure of Kenyan men from spaces. Through the power of stories, Kenyan men come to question the taken-for-granted construction of them as undesirables’ bodies. It also helps build a community of purpose, with the aim of representing their needs and desires. This conceptualization of power also helps question biases in education, immigration, and labour, while providing local solutions that meet their specific needs. Additionally, this perspective helps identify gaps that prevail in Black masculinity studies. For a while, Black masculinity has presented American Blackness as the only form of Black power. From the perspective of anti-colonialism, the study presents another form of power that is steeped in Indigeneity.

**Decolonization.** Anti-colonial frameworks work toward unravelling colonialism through decolonization. According to Dei and Asgharzadeh (2003), the desires of the colonized are key factor in producing anticolonial praxis and theorizing:

The anti-colonial discursive framework is a counter/oppositional discourse to the repressive presence of colonial oppression. It is also an affirmation of the reality of re-colonization processes through the dictates of global capital. It is a way of celebration of oral, visual, textual, political, and material resistance of colonized groups, which entails a shift away from a sole preoccupation with victimization. It engages a critique of the wholesale denigration, disparagement, and discard of tradition and culture in the name of modernity and global space. There is a site of/in tradition, orality, visual representation, material and intangible culture, and Aboriginality that is empowering to colonized and marginalized groups. The anti-colonial perspective seeks to identify that site and celebrate its strategic significance. (p. 301)

Anti-colonialism looks at decolonization as a violent process (Fanon, 1968). As a framework and praxis, anti-colonial theory looks at the present day colonial manifestation as witnessed in the constant eviction of Indigenous peoples, racialized others, women, and children by state
authorized laws and policies (Fitzhenry, 1979; Galabuzi, 2006; Germond-Duret, 2014; Nyaga, 2015; Nyaga & Torres, 2017; Piotrowski, 2013; Yakovleva, 2011) and seeks to recognize Indigenous subversion as necessary forms of decolonization. This perspective in understanding how Kenyan men resist eviction in Toronto will help identify different forms of countering colonial eviction in immigration, education, and labour. This ways of thinking looks at how Indigeneity is applied by Kenyan men to overcome hate and institutionalized racial evictions based on accent. Decolonization also seeks to look inward and identify how marginalized communities oppress each other and how modalities of internalized oppression work to sanitize Whiteness and racism. This study benefits from such conceptualizations in that the narratives of Kenyan men will help identify ways in which Black masculinity is implicated in colonialism of Black communities in North America.

With renewed transnational movement of the continental African men into the Americas, racial activism needs to be reconfigured to accommodate other masculinities, more so Indigenous forms of masculinities and their role in decolonizing institutionalized racism in North America. The issues that continental African man faces today in America are complex and cannot be explained in toto through the Black masculinity lens. The role of Indigenous perspectives among the migrant African man can works towards decolonizing Black masculinity and invoking new genres of anti-racist work. Subsequently, transnational Indigenous masculinities offer requisite guidelines for understanding African men in the diaspora while centering new forms of Blackness as valid.

Anti-racism. Race is socially constructed term that maps racial bodies as emotional, pathological, and dangerous based on their skin colour, hair texture, accent, and other features. Colonialism is based on how bodies comes to be defined as racially inferior and how such a
construction works to confirm White power. In this study, Kenyan men are evicted from employment, education, and immigration spaces. Consequently, the application of race and racism in this study helps elucidate how accent is applied as a technology of marking Kenyan men as not belonging in the body politic. The conception of race also helps identify the different forms of racisms that Kenyan men face in Toronto. Finally, this perspective helps to clarify how educated Kenyan men are sent into precarious labour and how the policy of labour denies them opportunities to contribute in nation building.

**Colonialism and imperialism.** Anti-colonialism looks at policies as colonial tools that work towards asserting White power while vilifying other marginalized groups like Kenyan men. Anti-colonialism looks at immigration, education, and labour as steeped in colonialism (Galabuzi, 2006). Through immigration, countries lose their manpower to the West. This perspective explains how Structural Adjustment Policies define migration patterns of Kenyan men from their country to Toronto. It also illustrates brain drain from Kenya to Toronto and the effect it had on the perpetual oppression of developing countries like Kenya by developed countries like Canada. Such a perspective looks at labour and the question of economic apartheid, where Kenyan men and their spouses work in precarious position, while companies accumulate wealth from their labour.

**Language and stories/narratives.** In his book *Decolonizing the Mind*, wa Thion’o celebrates the role of local languages as sites of decolonization. He identifies language as critical in decolonizing the mind. Language has the power to give order, create, and destroy. According to Foucault, language and discourse are performed by populations in ways that assert dominant narrative (Crampton & Elden, 2007). Dei (2010) calls for recognition of “language, identity and national cultures into anti-colonial debates for political and intellectual liberation” (p. 11).
Language is political and creates, maps, produces, understands, and reforms social geographies (Paustian, 2014). This is an important point of focus since most Kenyan men are marginalized based on their language and accents. This is also institutionally articulated in law through what is referred as Canadian experience. Accent works to identify those who have not Canadian experience and thereafter facilitates their expulsion from citizenship, through unemployment or underemployment.

The anti-colonial lens looks at stories as told in different Kenyan dialects as transformational (Baskin, 2005; Manley-Casimir, 2012). Anti-colonialism recognizes local narratives as cultural representational tools. Dei and Simmons (2012) note, “As anti-colonial education continuously implicates historical and present knowledge production about difference, we can ask questions about identity, identifications and the politics of representation to present day issues about materiality, social justice and political action” (p. 78). The anti-colonial lens believes in celebrating Indigenous languages and narratives in decolonial praxis (Dei, 2011). Anti-colonial theory looks at racial difference, liberation, and recognition of Indigenous right of sovereignty and land ownership (Dei, 2004).

**Strengths.** According to Dei (2006a), the “Anti colonialism perspective is also deeply anchored in indigenous ways of knowing and an understanding of the spiritual sense of self and the collective. This knowing situates the philosophy of holism as a key idiom of anti colonial practice” (pp. 5-6). Anti-colonialism looks at colonialism as having negatively affected the Indigenous peoples of the world (Dei, 2000; Memmi, 1965; wa Thion’o, 1986). The anti-colonial lens re-centres Indigenousness at the border crossing and beyond. Anti-colonial is at the centre of the transnational and transcultural locations and dislocations (Schulze-Engler, 2008) of migrant bodies.
**Weaknesses.** When applied to a study of Black masculinity, anti-colonial theory is activated in ways that defy racial profiling of Black men. While that may work towards social justice, it may simultaneously erase other forms of resistance steeped in community praxis. This form of resistance may also assert Eurocentricity as the only rational cannon (Mercer, 1994). Conventional anti-colonial theory looks at colonialism as a fight between the colonizer and colonized (Memmi, 1965; Mugheri, Kalyar, & Solangi, 2016). This dual focus on colonialism reinvents new forms of colonial oppression and fails to look at the interstitial differences between marginalized populations. The reference of the migrant communities as oppressed describes oppression in that the oppressed must desires; and that they are irredeemably on the receiving end. Failure to identify marginalized forms of resistance and reciliencies help inscribe colonialism as the standard. Such terms universalize the experiences of the marginalized yet not all immigrants undergo similar oppression. Experiences are complex realities that cannot fit within the dual conceptualization of colonizer and colonized. Dei (2010) warns against this colonial split and says that it depersonalizes “the colonized and simultaneously makes the colonizer inhuman” (p. 12). The lens also looks at cultures and identity from a fixed position and calls for a revisiting of that culture to inform immigrant ways of life in the West (Asante, 2007; Baskin, 2005). While the lens recognizes cultures as resilient, it does not recognize that in the transnational movement cultures undergo changes. This would pose a challenge when discussing how Kenyan men would change through mimicking or infusing other cultures into their practices. It may also be misconstrued as a fixation of cultures in the past as if they cannot change.

**Post-Colonialism and Black Masculinities**

This section on theory looks at post-colonial theory and how it speaks in connection to Black masculinity. Post-colonial discourse offers additional insights into the understanding of
Black masculinity by invoking questions of migration, hybridity, mimicry, and culture, border crossings, as well as the saliency of culture and identity in representational politics of the global market. It is also important to note that in this study, post-colonial theories will provide a supportive role to anti-colonial theory. Post-colonialism is relevant to the study based on its interest in transnational and border crossing, which are core elements of discussion in this study. Post-colonialism also provides the rationale of questioning Black masculinity’s role in the colonization within Black community. The issue of culture is important to this study when speaking of how Kenyan culture moves from Kenya to Canada and the different moments of trans culturalism that come to define the multiple identities of Kenyan men in Toronto. The question posed to Black masculinity through postcolonial theory pertains to who is free to cross Black borders so regulated by Black masculinity.

Post-colonial theory emerged from the reference of Africa, Asia, and other upcoming countries as dependent and third world. Said (1979) says that the “third world” was psychically created in the mind of the West as space where death was inevitable and that the West had a responsibility of saving the East from itself and others. In 1966, third world countries met in Havana to disclaim this colonial representation, and thereafter identified themselves as Tri-continental, which lead to the birth of post-colonial thinking (Young, 2001). Since then, post-colonialism has invested itself in learning about the power of language and discourse creation. Post-colonial theory is also focused on understanding cultural representations (hybridity and mimicry), transnational border crossing, and the politics within communities.

Among the renowned scholars in this area are Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivac, Edward Said, Siva Kumar, Iris Young, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Derek Gregory, and Ngugi wa Thiong’o. The post-colonial conceptual framework is focused on the questions of power, deconstruction,
discourses, subalternity, language, subversion, resistance, hybridity, trans-nationality, agency, resiliency, and cultural re-orientations. Post-colonial theory focuses on anti-colonial struggles and their present-day manifestation, hence it is anticolonial writ large (Nkomo, 2011; Roberts, 2009; Young, 2001). Post-colonialism looks at colonial vestiges and how they appear in present day experiences of migrant communities (Onar & Nicolaïdis, 2013; Young, 2001). For example, most Kenyan migrant men in the West are well educated, yet they are underemployed or unemployed. Their female counterparts can easily access precarious service work. This means that their women become the breadwinners and their husbands must take care of the house chores.

Alternatively, both Kenyan men and women are underemployed and must find ways of juggling both their home responsibilities and work, since they do not have families who can help them. In the majority of cases, Kenyan men must subjugate their masculinity and undertake the caring role. This is in opposition to situations where men are not supposed to undertake caring work. These processes and cultural changes have effect on both the families and capital. Post-colonial theory helps understand the complexities of those changes and how they affect migrant families and subsequently help in capital accumulation. The theory looks at the effect of multinational and transnational companies in colonized lands, the introduction of policies that regulate governments, and how populations are pushed out of their lands and their labour invested in the West. This is relevant to the present study since it focuses on immigration, education, and labour policies that work toward expelling migrants from their countries while keeping them in precarious positions in the West. Post-colonial theory prioritizes conversations of translocational, transnational transidentities and transcultural movement of immigrants in metropolitan cities such as Toronto (Bhabha, 1994; Skerrett, 2012). Among them are key concepts in post-colonialism cultural representations and identity politics, power language and
discourse, hybridity, mimicry and transnationalism, and third space and emancipation. In this section, the study looks at each of the concepts and argues why it is important to incorporate them into the study.

**Cultural representation and identity politics.** People are vehicles of cultures (Bhabha, 1994) and they can model such culture to meet their everyday needs. From a post-colonial discussion on transnationalism, culture is conceptualized as changing over time and space (Coleman, 1998). The post-colonial is interested in transculturalism as a point of emergence for migrant bodies in that their mixedness disturbs the regulating effect of policies on their bodies (Bhabha, 1994). The transcultural movement is political (Bhabha, 1994) in that it troubles the normalization of identities. This cultural transitioning has the power to dislocate static colonial narratives, among them the Victorian masculinity (Coleman, 1998). That said, culture is a powerful tool of orienting bodies and spaces in ways that allow continued existence. These aspects help the study look at how changes in culture come to model the identity of Kenyan men in the West. Such a way of thinking looks at cultural changes as points where Kenyan men re-emerge and through that come to trouble existing racial narrative in the West. Post-colonial studies identify Kenyan men’s cultural agencies and resistance (Bhabha, 1994) as point of power and self-determination.

Bhabha says that:

Culture becomes as much an uncomfortable, disturbing practice of survival and supplantementarity—between art and politics, past and present, public and the private—as its resplendent being is a moment of pleasure, enlightenment or liberation. It is such narrative positions that the post-colonial prerogative seeks to affirm and extend a new collaborative nations and peoples. (p. 250)

Bhabha identifies transculturalism and hybridity as transformative to immigrant bodies. Bhabha says that such moment is zone of emergence and transformation. Post-colonial take these contradictions as an emergence from frozen self. The subaltern population decide to rerepresent
themselves using familiar narratives that connect to their experience (Bhabha, 1994; Foucault, 1980; Spivak, 1999, 2003). This is an important point of connecting Kenyan men’s stories to self determination while in Toronto. Such narration are also sites of innovation.

Post-colonial theory is keen on culture, identities, citizenships, and power to locate transformative sites of representation and reformation (Bhabha, 1994; Coleman, 1998; Spivak, 1999; Van Oyen, 2013). Consequently, as a lens, the post-colonial conceptualization of representational politics helps this study in understanding the different cultural and identity changes that Kenyan men undergo while in transit. This perspective provides a framework of looking at how changes in gender and cultural performances help Kenyan men overcome institutional racism in Toronto. This post-colonial conceptualization works towards decolonizing Black masculinity in ways that allow other Black voices to inform Blackness. For a while, Black men have been constructed as bad fathers. The application of post-colonialism helps deconstruct this narrative by insert the different cultural perspectives of fathering and parenting. This perspective is important part of understanding Kenyan men in terms of how they manipulate their culture in order to survive in Toronto. Most Kenyan men lived in patriarchal systems that defined what kind of jobs and chore they can do. Post-colonial perspectives on cultural politics helps understand Kenyan embodiment of patriarchal changes overtime and space. This way of thinking also clarifies cultural conversation between Kenyans and their host come to redefine their identity and ways of living.

**Hybridity, mimicry, and transnationalism.** Post-colonial theory looks at bodies in transit (Bhabha, 1994; Spivak, 2003). This lens will help in understanding the spatial, cultural, and identity transitioning of Kenyan men from their national to international spheres. For example, how are identities of Kenyan men influenced by cultural changes? It also helps
understand how Kenyan men manipulate their cultures in order to survive. Post-colonialism is concerned with the imperative of the lost/gain effect in creating new identities and cultures for migrant survival. Such a way of thinking demonstrates the effects that results from the loss of breadwinner culture due to unemployment and how these disorient Kenyan men in Toronto. With the rise of the service industry, Kenyan women can easily get a job, hence taking up the role of the breadwinner. Though this may look gainful, it is also important to look at the effect of the role reversal on the family. Post-colonial theory guides this study by identifying ways through which imperialism and neo-colonial subject immigrant bodies to cultural changes that are heavily invested in capital accumulation. It also helps understand how such gains work towards imperial accumulation of wealth by corporate bodies. It illuminates racial and economic apartheid (Galabuzi, 2006) in labour. Border crossing is both literal, and real, and ties to the physical, emotional, cultural, political, and psychological ambivalence of the migrant other (Bhabha, 1994). This perspective helps understand how Kenyan men are denied employment because of their accent and the effect that has on their well-being. It involves a movement or changes in citizenship, cultures, and identities. Post-colonialism seeks to ask questions of who gains when Kenyan men’s cultures undergo changes.

Such borders are skin deep and have some far-reaching consequences in terms of unemployment, education, emotional issues, and family breakups. To be diasporic is a psychic attachment to the border in ways referent to refugee internment. The transnational comes with the freedom to break away from colonial borders for self determination. This post-colonial focus helps identify ways in which Kenyan men are fixated in their national memories while in Toronto. It looks at how accent, as a border technology, helps deny Kenyan men gainful employment. Border crossing pedagogy attempts to understand how people are frozen and
bordered. It looks at the politics of mobility—that is, who can move and who remains, who is employable and can access socio-economic citizenship (Margo, 1995; McManus, 2001; Muhammad, 2010; Soudien & Botsis, 2011; Smiley & Fakunle, 2016). Post-colonial theories attempt to interpret how the study’s participants are bordered in Canada. It looks at the role of skin colour, citizenship, nationality, policy framework, and accent as a bio-technology of control and regulation.

**Power, language, and discourses.** According to post-colonialism, power, language and discourse are not fixed terms (Bhabha, 1994). Language defines who is to become a citizen and who is an alien. Language defines policy and how particular discourse comes to identify the society. This perspective looks at the role of the Kenyan accent and its affect on employment and educational opportunities. Language defines which discourse come to shape institutions of power and therefore inscribes and marks undesirable bodies for eviction. For example, if one does not have Canadian experience (CE), they cannot be employed. CE is inscribed in ideologies that come to define individuals and institutions. The language of CE mark particular bodies as being emotional and lazy and unable to be trusted with positions of power. This study is keen to discern how accent is interlocked in the White narrative of CE to expunge Kenyan men from realizing their desires. It also helps explain how Black masculinity is steeped in colonial discourse that work towards evicting Black bodies from spaces of power.

**Colonialism.** Post-colonial studies look at contemporary colonial manifestation and migrant precariousness in the West (Goldring & Landolt, 2013; Nyaga & Torres, 2017; Potter & Phillips, 2006; Thornley, Jefferys, & Appay, 2010). This is salient in that it gives insights into Kenyan experiences in the West in terms of their education, migration, and labour. What are the effects of colonialism on Kenyan men in Toronto? Post-colonial frameworks look at the state-
authorized eviction of migrants from their ancestral land through Structural Adjustment Programs. It also helps to understand the internationalization of labour and the construction of the economic internment of Kenyan men in Toronto. Post-colonial theory and Black masculinity work together towards understanding how racism and gendered institutional policies necessitate unemployment of Kenyan men in Toronto. Post-colonialism will help explain the metamorphosis of colonialism and how it suppresses the migrant while allowing capital accumulation. The theory helps explain the globalization of labour exploitation and capital flow (Bhabha, 1994; Galabuzi, 2006). According to Bhabha (1994),

> Transnational capitalism and the impoverishment of the Third world certainly creates the chain of circumstance that incarcerate the Salvadorean or Filipino/a. In this cultural passage, hither and thither, as migrant workers, part of the massive economic and political diaspora of the modern world, they embody the Benjaminian ‘present’: that moment blasted out of the continuum of history. Such conditions of cultural displacement and social discrimination—where political survivors become the best historical witness—are grounds on which Franz Fanon, the Martinican psychoanalyst and particular in Algerian revolution, locates and agency of empowerment. (p. 12)

It will also help illuminate how nations are focused on trade rather than humanitarian crises facing the world today. This is key in understanding the predicament of Kenyan men in Toronto in that their issues are not viewed as being as important as the trade deficit between Canada and United States. This lens therefore present alternative ways employed by the Kenyan men to overcome the imperial and colonizing power of institutionalized oppression.

**Third space and emancipation.** Bhabha says that:

> The intervention of the Third space of enunciation, which makes the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process, destroys this mirror of representation in which cultural knowledge is customarily revealed as an integrated, open, expanding code. Such an intervention quite properly challenges our sense of the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force, authenticated by the originary past, kept alive in the national tradition of the people. In other words, the disruptive temporality of the enunciation displaces the narrative of Western nation which Benedict Anderson so perceptively describes as being written in homogeneous, serial time. (p. 54)

According to Bhabha, the “third space” is a point of emergence and can work to limit or to
expand horizons for the migrant (read Kenyan men). It is a point at which one has nothing to lose. This point can transform Kenyan men to new levels of recognition and success and speak on the issue of how Kenyan men caught in the downward spiral of poverty. The third space is the site of exclusion from political economy (Galabuzi, 2006), which helps to demonstrate how Kenyan men are left out of the productive economy or introduced and interned into precarious or hidden economic spaces (Galabuzi, 2006). For example, the claim that one has to have Canadian experience for them to be employed is enshrined in laws and policies and contribute to the erasure of foreigners from body politics. The migrant body is abject of desire and disavowal. Foucault (1998) identifies it as a technology of locating and dislocating the migrant bodies. This perspective looks at the different mechanism applied by migrant Kenyan men in resisting and countering imperial control.

**Strengths.** Post-colonialism helps understand identities of Kenyan men as ever changing over time and space, which allows them to resist Western control. This also helps to emerge in ways that will give them the capacity to survive volatile colonial spaces in the West. Through this lens, culture is changing over time and this transcultural movement is redefining how politics of culture work in representing the desires of Kenyan men in Toronto.

**Weaknesses.** One of the weaknesses of post-colonialism is the claim of fluid identities and culture in the perspective of Kenyan men. How would it explain circumstances where some Kenyan men refuse to change and apply their former national culture as a form of powerfulness? This position is well laid-out by Mutekwa (2013) in the research undertaken in London, where Zimbabwean men refuse assimilationist cultural agenda of the West.

**Critical Masculinity**

Critical masculinity theory looks at masculinity as a colonial project and practice (Connell, 1995, 2000; Kimmel, 1994; Messner, 1997; Whitehead, 2002). Scholars who are
known in this area include: Michael Messner, Robert Connell, Stephen Whitehead, Michael Kimmel, Michael Kaufman, Tom Odhiambo, James Messerschmitt, and many others.

Critical masculinity looks at masculinity as colonial technology of controlling and regulating populations (Connell, 1995, 2000; Coleman, 1998; Kimmel, 1994; Kimmel & Mosmiller, 1992; Messner, 1997; Njambi, 2005, 2007, 2011; Nyaga, 2015; Nyaga & Torres, 2017; Odhiambo, 2003, 2007; Oyeyumi, 2005, 2006, 2011; Parada, 2012; Whitehead, 2002). This is important in connecting colonial histories in the becoming of Kenyan men. The study looks at the masculinity as a culture and a discourse define the everyday life of Kenyan men. For example, men raised in Kenya are supposed to work and provide for their families. They are expected to be rational, competitive, and macho (Odhiambo, 2003, 2007).

On the other hand, Kenyan women are expected to be submissive and caring (Odhiambo, 2007). This gendered society in Kenya is a colonial masterplan of controlling the Indigenous peoples of Kenya. Before colonialism, Indigenous people held both men and women in high esteem. For example, both women and men underwent circumcision to introduce them to warriorship and adulthood. Colonialism used the rite to only allow men to undergo the rite while deterring women from undergoing the same. On the other hand, the colonial system introduced the hut tax as a form of forcing the Kenyan men to be public men. To that end, this study applies critical masculinity to understand the introduction of the gendered Kenyan society. The lens also seeks to look as masculinity from a colonial point of view. This lens provides the ground for understanding how gender freezes some while allowing others to citizenship rights. The framework allows this study to interrogate how colonialism was gendered and raced. The lens looks at the gendered aspect of race in terms of how Kenyan men could enter public space because of their gender, yet be all together removed because of their dark skin. The theory also helps identify ways in which colonial laws and policies were engraved on the skin in the form of
a “colonial pass.” The pass came to represent the emotional and feminine other. To that end, the lens also looks at laws as gendered.

The study looks at the interstitial changes of masculinity while on transit and upon arriving in Canada. This is important to this study in that it helps identify the changes that Kenyan men undergo when they arrive in Canada. Does geographical border crossing also affect their gendered self? If their masculine self changes, what are the different forces that affect the changes? What is the role of culture in these changes? These are fundamental question that are answered by this theory. The theory helps in understanding the effect of a gendered transnational movement on Kenyan men in terms of migration, education, and labour (Suttner, 2014). Accent as culturally oriented defines how Kenyan men access citizenship. To that end, the study looks at accent as gendered as define the social upward movement of immigrant populations, among them Kenyan men. The theory also helps look at migration as a gendered process; some populations are under the radar of the state because of where they come from. In this sense, Kenyan men are watched over with a keen policy eye because of the assumption that they are irredeemably broken. This is since their country of origin is considered feminine and as such emotional. For example, the fact that Kenyans come to Canada in search of a better life depicts Kenya as an irresponsible country that cannot provide for its population (reading masculinity and breadwinner). Such depiction becomes the linking point in identifying Kenyan men in Toronto. The nation state emotional femininity comes to haunt Kenyan men in Toronto, in ways that deny them sources of employment. Accent is used to identify the origin of the Kenyan man and simultaneously denies him livelihood.

Masculinity is fluid and is a performance of difference (Adams, 2007; Ashe, 2007; Beasley, 2008; Butler, 1993; Carrigan, Connell, & Lee, 1985; Coleman, 1998; Connell, 1995; 2000; Walcott, 2006; Whitehead, 2002; Williams, 1995). In border crossing pedagogies, identity
is contextual, conceptual, transitioning, transcultural, contingent, and spatial (Bhabha, 1994). Gendered identities are negotiated between and beyond the original and host cultures. This helps to understand Kenyan men’s masculinity as complex, desiring, and transitioning in ways that challenge and substantiate coloniality. Critical masculinity looks at masculinity as transitioning, complex, translatable and non-foundational (Coleman, 1998; Connell, 2000; Messner, 1997; Whitehead, 2002). Masculinity is not an arrival or a settlement but rather a translational and translocational passage. This ideal conceptualizes Kenyan men in the diaspora as provincialized and fixated to the origin through their accent. The lens subverts taken for granted dominant aspects of gendering. This is critical in understanding how Kenyan men negotiate their gendered and raced self while in Toronto. The lens looks at mechanisms that are applied by the Kenyan men to survive institutional racism.

To that end, critical masculinity is a post-colonial and anti-colonial understanding of the colonized Black man (Bhabha, 1994; Messner, 1997; Njambi, 2005; Odhiambo, 2003, 2007; Oyeyumi, 2005). This theory looks at colonialism, race, and gender as interlocked systems of oppression. This is important in understanding Kenyan men in Toronto and how these social identities police, censor, erase, and discipline bodies that do not matter (Butler, 1990, 1993, 1995, 1996; Razack, 2015; Venzant-Chambers & McCready, 2011).

Critical masculinity theory disturbs gendered colonial concepts and discourse in the translation and understanding of Black men. The theory connects to Black masculinity to explain the lived experiences of Black men in the United States. While that is an important point of connection between Blackness and critical masculinity, a gap still exists in terms of understanding how accents are gendered and used to deny citizenship to immigrant populations. This study seeks to employ critical masculinity scholarship to fill existing gap within Black masculinity. The study identifies the key concepts of critical masculinity in connection to
understanding Kenyan men experiences in Toronto. These concepts are power, fluidity, masculinity/ies, colonial, and subversion. The study identifies the strengths and weakness of this theory.

**Critical Masculinity Concepts**

**Power/discourse.** Masculinity discourse splits the society into private and public spheres and provides material advantages to those deemed rational while marginalizing those marked as emotional and pathological (Connell, 1995; Connell & Messerschmitt, 2005; Kaufman, 2001; Kimmel, 1994; Kimmel & Mosmiller, 1992; Messner, 1997; Whitehead, 2002; Williams, 1995, 2009). This mapping is gendered, raced, and classed. This means Kenyan men are emotional and broken based on their accents and citizenship and cannot be trusted by educational and labour spaces. Their education is never considered rational enough to work in Canada since it lacks the definition of Canadian experience. It defines how people will behave through unending iteration of everyday heteronormativity that works to racially suppress Kenyan men through underemployment while allowing wealth accumulation by multinational companies. It also looks at how men came to be constructed as strong and how such process of social production is raced and gendered. This allows a clearer understanding of how Kenyan men come to be located outside the community of men.

The continual perception of Kenyan men as “boys” and internment in the phallic stage speaks of modalities of power that works to deny the existence of Kenyan men in Toronto. Such a perspective helps look at Kenyan men as fixed in their rented bodies and how their bodies come to be defined as assembly line for the accumulation of wealth by big corporations. This perspective also looks at the gendered aspect of the law and policies that evict Kenyan men from immigration, education, and employment spaces. It also helps conceptualize the gendered power of accent in the social control and eviction of undesirable Kenyan immigrants in Toronto. This is
critical in understanding how Kenyan men are made “men” and how women created to submit to men. It also seeks to look at how Kenyan men and their role as breadwinner leads to the denigration of their female counterparts. Through this, the theory explains the complexities of gender performances in Toronto, more so when Kenyan men must subjugate their masculine self against the hegemonic White masculinity.

Racial signification attest to the claim that men are not equal (Fanon, 1967). White men enter the public space while Black men are made public. For the Kenyan man in diaspora, his subhuman nature is complicated by his accent. Consequently, he is evicted from the community of men due to his skin colour and accent. His masculinity must be subdued through racialization. The Black man must be fixated on his genitals (Fanon, 1967).

Colonialism. The history of colonialism and the making of the Kenyan men both in Kenya and Canada helps the study understand the interlocking systems of imperialism, colonialism, patriarchy, and racism in the construction of Kenyan men. It is imperative to engage critical masculinity in comprehending the myriad ways in which the Kenyan man negotiates masculinities and institutionalized racism in Toronto. How do Kenyan men rework their identities to fit within a society that obliterates them? Why is it impossible for them to get a well-paying job in Toronto? How come some of them work in precarious position yet they are very well educated? What happens when they cannot access the dream job? What happens when circumstances force them to remain in the house as caregiver and homemaker?

Kaufman (2001) connects masculinity and colonial violence to the plunder and rape of environment in ways that comes to assert the strength of the heterosexual White male. This perspective looks at gendered colonialism in Kenya and how it defines migrant bodies both at home and in Toronto. This helps look at how Kenyan men behave in one way while in Toronto
but change when they are back in Kenya. What are the forces that allow these multiple forms of
identity to prevail and be renegotiated? This also demonstrates the internment of Kenyan men in
racial borders because of their emotional accent. The perspective looks at identity points of
Blackness and how they have come to be regulated through the gendered policy in ways that aid
the unquestioned exploitation of Kenyan men and women in Toronto. It also helps to understand
how Kenyan men engage in bouts of self hate and project the same to one another. This
perspective helps provide a framework of understanding how Kenyan men are depicted as
subhuman and how that works to define their position in society. This perspective also helps
define the gendered colonial institutions and their power to evict undesirable migrant bodies
through indentured labour. Finally, it demonstrates how spaces are gendered and bordered to
mark Kenyan men as emotional and hence rationalize the militarization of work and schooling.

**Heteronormativity.** Heteronormativity looks at the normalization of the experiences and
the subsequent erasure of other ways of experiencing the world. This standpoint looks at how
Black masculinity is colonial and used to generalize Blackness. It also looks at how Black
masculinity is gendered and meant to espouse a White narrative. Through this lens, this study
imagines Black masculinity as a form of biopower that seeks to let Kenyan men die while
maintaining the “authentic American Black.” This helps identify other forms of masculinities
(read indigenous masculinities) as forms of resistance and resiliencies that can renew anti-racist
movements in the West. This perspective also helps understand how Black masculinity is
normative and works toward sanitizing Whiteness as well as capital accumulation on the backs
of Kenyan immigrants. The framework also helps to identify ways where policies normalize a
White narrative through Black masculinity in ways that evict the undesirable other.

Heteronormativity as a concept also helps understand the gendered aspects of policies, accents,
spaces, and bodies. This aspect further informs on how accent comes to depict Kenyan men as emotional and undeserving.

**Strengths.** Critical masculinity provides a place of looking at how accent, policies, cultures, and colonialism are gendered processes of defining bodies as either desirable or broken. Such a perspective helps to uncap such taken for granted social processes in ways that bring new Black futurity. This is very important in understanding how Kenyan men are gendered through their accent and how that works to expunge them from employment, education, and immigration spaces.

**Weaknesses.** Critical masculinity theory looks at masculinity as complex and transitional. Though this may explain transformation and multiple masculine configuration, it fails to account for men who are tied to their national culture and who may not negotiate their masculine self with the host culture. Critical masculinity is White and looks at Blackness as one neat identity. This denies the different configuration of Black, which is the core focus of this study.

Masculinity studies are White and alienate other masculinities. A case in point is the footnoting of Indigenous masculinity (Kikuyu cultures and ritual) when discussing mythopoetic masculinities (Messner, 1998). It makes public (shames) other discussions of masculinity. One would expect that the lens would extend a discussion of such rituals in ways that open a wider discussion of Indigeneity as a form of anti-colonialism.

**Convergences of Post-Colonial, Anti-Colonial, and Critical Masculinity**

**Power.** The three theories agree that colonialism and masculinity work together to construct Black men as uncivilized, irrational, and barbaric (Bhabha, 1994; Messner, 1997; Odhiambo, 2003, 2007; Oyewumi, 2005). Consequently, the civilization of the broken Black body from itself and others becomes the role of the White man. This charitable process of improving the wretched other is paternalistic and meant to institutionalize White supremacy.
Power also is localized and emanated from communities. These frameworks therefore agree that marginality is a powerful and robust site of decolonization (Bhabha, 1994; Dei, 2010; McKittrick, 2006; Messner, 1997; Spivak, 2003). They recognize the agencies and resiliency of subjugated knowledges (Bhabha, 1994; Dei, 2000; Parada, 2012; Spivak, 1999).

The theories look at colonialism and its present-day manifestation among Indigenous peoples, migrants, and other marginalized communities (Bhabha, 1994; Dei, 2010; Galabuzi, 2006; Odhiambo, 2003). The three theories look at culture and narration as subversive and transgressive to colonialism. These theories centre other masculinities as disruptive to colonial narratives (Bhabha, 1994; Butler, 1990; Coleman, 1998; Fanon, 1967; Messner, 1997).

Language. Language is key in cultural and identity formation as well as in the creation and operation of masculinity discourse (Bhabha, 1994; Spivak, 2003; wa Thiong’o, 1986). Language orients what is acceptable and unacceptable in the political economy (Razack, 2015). For example, policies apply language to define and create social limits and censorship (Foucault, 1980). The three theories converge at the level of language and agree that “authentic” decolonization starts with language (Bhabha, 1994; Dei, 2000; Oyewumi, 2005; Spivak, 1999; wa Thiong’o, 1986). To decolonize entails deconstruction of the taken-for-granted use of language in everyday conversations and performances and the performances of colonialism in policies in ways that evict Kenyan men from the productive process of the state. An example of this is the application of Canadian experience and its enshrinement in policies and law, without imagining the impact of the use of such a term and the eviction of Kenyan men because of their accent.

Cultural representation. Representation is a reformatory and ethical process of conversion of the criminal. The process seeks to redefine the behaviours of the convict in ways
that prepare him to enter civilized society. According to Foucault (1975), representational process does not focus on the crime but on hindering the criminal from repeating the crime. To that end, representation is an iterative process of moralizing the convict to curtail the urge to commit the crime and introduce them to virtuous living. The process of representation is stamped on the body of the convict to symbolize the power of the magistrate to remind others not to commit the crime (the school of virtuous living) and to announce and make public (shaming) the offender. Such a process is gendered and built on colonial control of the degenerate other. Such control is raced and gendered in ways that immigrants such as Kenyan men come to be designed as unable to assimilate into White Canadian mythology hence the need to mark them as social undisirables.

Furthermore, the three theories focus on colonialism differently. Post-colonial theory looks at colonialism as just another historical socio-cultural moment (Young, 2001). Critical masculinity being apost-colonial understanding of masculinity is also implicated, in that it essentializes experiences of men. On the other hand, anti-colonial theory looks at colonialism as the fundamental point of its analysis. Such divergencies help understand the study differently, and thus work to strengthen the argument presented.
Chapter 4: Methodology and Research Design

Though theory may guide and inspire us in composing a lay summary, designing interview questions, or coding data, it is not theory but a methodological process that directs the completion of the task. The relationship between theory and method has a long and provocative history reflected in disciplinary boundaries and research traditions privileging one over the other, as well as defining them as exclusively separate spheres. (Madison, 2005, p. 12)

The way studies on Black/African communities have been undertaken in the past is hegemonically colonial and gendered. Colonialism utilizes positivist paradigm to measure and gender knowledge production as either rational or emotional (Faulkner & Faulkner, 2014). This colonial representation is replete with colonial dualism of knowers and objects of study, and provides the rationale to subjugate and colonize communities through the civilizational process Western rational knowledge. Mbembé (2001) says that Africa is identified as a needy child whose story must be told by the rational other (Webhi, 2017). Colonialism researchers have constructed African communities as intellectually broken, therefore rationalizing the need to write stories on behalf of Africa/ns (Mbembé, 2001, 2004). Historically, research has been used to define communities as backward and uncivilized (Smith, 2012). This patronizing and devaluing representation of the Black other is under scrutiny from Black scholars who call for research based on cultural humility (Chavez, Duran, Baker, Avila, & Wallerstein, 2008). With this colonial past, Black scholars are now calling for African-centred research that pays attention to African/Black context, histories, and experiences (Asante, 1998, 2007; Dei, 2011; Jones, 1991; Kubrin & Wadsworth, 2009; Kukushkin & Watt, 2009).

Madison (2005) says that theory and research require a change in paradigm when doing research among communities (Chavez et al., 2008). If theory is tailored in ways that speak to the experiences of participants, then the fabric of social justice in knowledge production is realized. A social justice researcher needs to provoke and blur the neat division created between the
researcher and the participant in ways that reflect both as knowers and creators of knowledge (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001). This is process of decolonizing knowledge production in ways that acknowledge that power between the researcher and participant are critically reflective and reflexive and allow other ways of knowledge to be respected as authentic and truthful. Theories of decolonization applied in this study (anti-colonialism, critical masculinities, post-colonialism) help to look at research as an active oriented exercise that is mired with power and recognize the role of research as a colonial process of representation. These theories look at research as a process of colonial interplay and work to blur the rational knower and the emotional subject as well as recognizing and acknowledging the power between participant and researchers.

Critical masculinity looks at knowledge production as gendered in ways that create the knower (mostly White and men) as more masculine and rational than the participant (Indigenous African other). Post-colonialism looks at knowledge production as a hybrid process of iteration (Bhabha, 1994), where both the researcher and participant are considered co-creators of knowledge. The anti-colonial perspective looks at research as an active and violent process of co-creating knowledge between the researcher and the participant as a decolonial process (Asante, 1988). The question of breaking the expert/object dualism is a violent process; therefore, all the theories acknowledge the role of discomfort and emotions in knowledge production as necessary decolonial moment.

To decolonize the process of knowledge production means blurring power (Foucault, 1980), positions (Webhi, 2017), language, and discourse hegemonically used in research (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2017; Gegeo & Gegeo, 2001). According to Tomic (2013), speaking on the gendered research,

Unless feminists dared to think independently from the dominant ideas in sociology, a sociology highly dominated by patriarchy, it was not possible to contribute meaningfully
to the discipline. I am a feminist academic with an immigrant background writing at the beginning of the 21st century. English is my second language (ESL). My life and work are inseparable from the dichotomy of Standard English/ESL. While through Lemert’s influence I integrate my life experience into my teaching and research, through Acker’s metaphor of “getting the man out of [one’s] head,” I have been encouraged to get the power of Standard English and whiteness out of my head to be able to reflect and write on the connections between Standard English, colonialism, whiteness, and the ESL immigrant experience. (p. 2)

This perspective of getting the “man out of the head” is a decolonial process of dispositioning rational knowledge production as the only way of truth-making. This form of decolonizing knowledge production troubles the researcher to identify how they are implicated in colonial, patriarchy, and Whiteness. The process of decolonial research means analyzing the researcher’s implicit and unconscious epistemological, visceral, and lateral violence and imperialism toward the marginalized (Butler, 1990). A well-meaning researcher may well suppress their community in ways that espouse colonialism and capital accumulation. To undertake a decolonial research, a researcher reflects on their biases in ways that are critical and reflexive (Creswell & Poth, 2018; George, 2017; Webhi, 2017). The researcher acknowledges participants are knowers and experts of their experiences (Gegeo & Gegeo, 2001; George, 2017). The researcher is made aware that they are facilitators of knowledge production (George, 2017). Decolonial research is participant-led, and it benefits communities in meeting their daily needs. Research becomes a process that is organic and grounded on the needs of the community (George, 2017).

This study identified participants as experts of their own life and therefore considered them co-producers of knowledge (Gegeo & Gegeo, 2001). The researcher acknowledged their position and power as researcher in ways that allowed them to be vulnerable and humble to learn from the participants’ lived experience. The interviews became more of a conversation between the researcher and the participant. This was a way to break the historical ice brought about by determination of the researcher as the expert and the participant as a template of knowledge
production (Foucault, 1975). The role of the researcher was to actively listen to the participant without interrupting them. Interview questions were based on the conversation but tailored in ways that would help answer the interview question while maintaining the conversation between the researcher and participant. This means that the interviewer had to understand the interview questions and find a way to balance what the participant said and how that answered the interview question. The key is to break the horizontal power between the colonial role the interview schedule plays in directing researcher interviews. The role of the interview question was to learn from the experiences of the participant.

While the interviews were ongoing, the researcher found time to critically analyze some of the comments of the participants with them. Participants had time to reflect on their comments and their implication to Kenyan communities both in Canada and the world. This played the role of subverting the colonial depiction of African bodies as incapable of making sense and writing their own stories (Mbembé, 2001). This aspect also helped break the colonial order and system of research process. According to Faulkner and Faulkner (2014), the research process can take multiple forms that allow the subaltern subjects to speak (Spivak, 1998, 2003). In this sense, research becomes a process of representational politics and uncoupling the colonial gendered metanarrative that the participant is irrational and incapable of writing their own story. From this perspective, the researcher takes the role of facilitating the process of researcher while the participant directs the process. This study was participant-led and accommodated participants’ views in deconstructing and subverting the design, tools, and process of study (Harrington, 2005). This way of looking at data collection as also analysis (conversational interviews) was decolonial, efficient, and effective while also allowing the participant to open up to their hidden and coded experiences (Chavez et al., 2008). The interview process took the form of a dance
where the researcher kept reflecting on when to get in and when to withdraw, when to ask questions, and when to allow conversations to continue. This reflexive back and forth process of critical reflection is necessary in terms of affirming and validating participants’ points of view. This process allowed the feminization of the research process in ways that also allowed emotions to take central role. The interview was more of a coffee-house discussion between the researcher and the participant, allowing democratization of representations and knowledge production (Habermas, 1984, 1987, 1989). This is core in the Afrocentric research perspective which looks at knowledge production as being steeped in communities’ needs and experiences (Asante, 1998).

Such measures erase the voices of participants through their reductionist process. Such processes do not consider communities’ agency and resiliencies as forms of resistance. Some Black scholarship (also read Black masculinity) is embedded on colonial national metadata which erases the emotional role of inquiry. Such records do not represent fully subliminal voices of marginalized communities, hence misrepresent the experiences of Black community. Much of the data does not speak to, account for, or represent the “hidden transcripts coded defiance” communities (Chavez et al., 2008) but rather presumes to understand the experience Black community as though Blackness was one straight and neat jacket. Certainly, such data cannot explain or even attempt to understand the experiences of Kenyan men, let alone Black communities.

It is important to bring on board the voices from the margin by integrating and validating their complexities and iterative incompleteness through the narrative qualitative form of data collection (Creswell, 2013). This study looked at the experiential stories of Kenyan men as an essential form of reimagining their needs and aspirations. The researcher decided to focus more on the voices of participants and how they inform the interview schedule. Rather than the
interview questions leading the conversation, the participants spoke to the question in ways that deconstructed and reinvented new forms of understanding Black communities and Kenyan men. Narrative is an important component that connects the researcher and the participant in producing knowledge (Clough, 2002; Czarniawski, 2004; Fenstermacher, 1994; Harrington, 2005). It accommodates and validates participants’ emotions in decolonizing the research process (Borland, 1991; Fontana & James, 1998; Franzosi, 1998). This process of data collection and analysis is pegged on validation, respect, and creating long-lasting relationships with communities, which is a core aspect of Indigenous and Afrocentric knowledge production.

**Afrocentric Indigenous Research**

This study sought to deconstruct the methodologies and methods used to “study” Black men in America. Based on the distinct experiences of Kenyan men in Toronto, this study applied a Transnational Afrocentric Indigenous (TAI) qualitative narrative methodology. According to Penner and Saperstein (2013), “qualitative research methods are the most appropriate means of studying the intersectional complexity of social difference, in part because they tend to be better suited to identifying mechanisms and process rather than broad patterns” (p. 321).

Qualitative methods look at the complexities of communities based on their experiential stories and narratives steeped in their context and histories (Baumeister & Newman, 1994; Berg, 1998; Cohler, 1994). Qualitative narrative study decolonizes through feminization of the research process as a dance (Chavez et al., 2008) and recognizing subjugated bodies of knowledge like songs, cultural beliefs, values, and poetic knowledges (Butler, 1993; Elliott, 2005; Hickson & Hickson, 2016; Reinharz, 1992; Stanley & Wise, 1991) as fundamental to the research process. A qualitative study questions, disturbs, and decolonizes the taken-for-granted ivory tower position of the knower as the essence of knowledge (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000) by
invoking local narrative as a powerful point of knowledge production (George, 2017). Madison (2005) says

Critical social theory evolves from a tradition of "intellectual rebellion" that includes radical ideas challenging regimes of power that changed the world. As ethnographers, we employ theory at several levels in our analysis: to articulate and identify hidden forces and ambiguities that operate beneath appearances; to guide judgments and evaluations emanating from our discontent; to direct our attention to the critical expressions within different interpretive communities relative to their unique symbol systems, customs, and codes; to demystify the ubiquity and magnitude of power; to provide insight and inspire acts of justice; and to name and analyze what is intuitively felt. (p. 13)

A qualitative narrative methodology validates experiential knowledge of both researchers and the participants in ways that allow multicentric bodies of knowledge production to appear (Cajete, 2000; Chilisa, 2012; Craig, 2009; Dei, 2000, 2011; Fraser, 2004; Gardner, 2003; Gegeo & Gegeo, 2001; Gergen, 1999; Graham, 1999, 2005; Reyes Cruz, 2008). Such knowledges are holistic and meet the well-being of the participant by centralizing and authenticating their self-esteem and determination (Smith & Sparkes, 2009). A qualitative narrative study is participant-led and galvanizes local powers as necessary in decolonizing normalized knowledge and firming local needs (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Gegeo & Gegeo, 2001; Labov, 2006; Lawler, 2002; Nelson, 1998).

Narrative research approach troubles the dominant discourses on research (Fraser, 2004; Mazama, 2003; Reviere, 2001). Bhabha (1994) says

In keeping with the spirit of the “right to narrate” as a means to achieving our own national or communal identity in a global world, demands that we revise our sense of symbolic citizenship, our myths of belonging, by identifying ourselves with the “starting point” of the other national and international histories and geographies. It is by placing herself at the intersections (and in the interstices) of these narratives that Rich emphasizes the importance of historical and cultural re-visioning: the process of being subjected to, or the subject of, a particular history “of one own”—a local history—leaves the poet “unsatisfied” and anxious about who she is, or what her community can be, in the larger flow of transnational history. (p. xx)

Storying, which is central to Afrocentricity, is the research process of knowledge production, that
recognized that social justice, “truth,” and harmony are necessary points of looking back to self and others (Asante, 1988; Fraser, 2005; Mazama, 2003; Reviere, 2001). A social justice researcher who employs narrative approach recognizes, acknowledges, and disturbs power, discourse, and language use in knowledge production (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This decolonial process breaks down the prevailing power dynamics between the researcher and participants in ways that centralizes, recognizes and acknowledging historical injuries and collective trauma meted on participants. To that end, the participants and the researcher work together in mutual respect and make relationships built on those histories. Consequently, the participants have a sense of ownership in the research process and its outcome, and the researcher takes the responsibility of facilitating the processes of knowledge repatriation. Through the Afrocentric narrative research process, the participant stands apart from their stories, sentences, and words in ways that allow a rethinking of what they say. This provides a space for both the researcher and the participants to question what has been presented by the participant while allowing the participants to be critical of their presentation. Such a process is back and forth and never seeking to arrive. Each participant adds their contributions into the fabric of narratives in ways that enrich the understanding of social life while transforming research into an artistry.

An Afrocentric research methodology ties to the principles (canons) of Afrocentricity, which are Umoja (unity), Kujichagulia (self-determination), Ujima (collective responsibility); Ujamaa (cooperation), Nia (aim), Kuumba (creativity), and Imani (faith) (Asante, 1988, 2007; Reviere, 2001). These principles examined, guided, and facilitated the processes of this study. Afrocentric research unites people in producing knowledge, hence making the process relational rather than individualistic. This makes research an organically oriented knowledge production process that affirms participant experiences as truthful and believable (Faulkner & Faulkner,
Such aspect is steeped on the needs of the participants and the role the research plays in social justice.

This ties to Asante’s (1980, 1988, 2003, 2007) calls for Ma’at and Nommo in community processes. According to Reviere (2001),

Ma’at is “the quest for justice, truth, and harmony,” and in the context of this article it refers to the research exercise itself, in harmony with the researcher, being used as a tool in the pursuit of truth and justice. The ultimate goal of Ma’at is that of helping to create a more fair and just society. Nommo means “the productive word,” and here it describes the creation of knowledge as a vehicle for improvement in human relations. (p. 711)

This study sought to identify ways in which education, labour, and immigration are tailored to marginalize continental Kenyan men in Toronto based on their accent and histories. Afrocentric studies focus on issues faced by Black communities in the West (Asante, 1988, 2003). As such, Afrocentric research methodology provided a relevant way of understanding injustice meted on one form of Blackness (Kenyan men) at the behest of the other. Afrocentric methodology includes the participant as a stakeholder (collective responsibility) in the research process (Asante, 1988, 2003, 2007). Afrocentric methodology works with and celebrates the Indigenous process of knowledge production guided by relationship building, love, respect, and reciprocity. The seven principles of Afrocentricity work under the guidance of the Indigenous framework.

Afrocentric Indigenous research brings people together to share themselves to each other (Reviere, 2001). Research is a community-based project (Ujamaa) rather than an individual endeavour (Gegeo & Gegeo, 2001). This methodology looks at the research process as collaborative work where knowledge production is in situ. It politicizes how knowledge is produced and disseminated. These principles orient research as a transformative praxis meant to bring change in communities (Asante, 2006; Borum, 2007; Graham, 1999, 2005; Reviere, 2001). For example, participants were engaged in deeper analysis of their narrative in ways that transformed their thinking but also allowed collective imagination between the researcher and
the participants. This made the interview process communal and acknowledged the participant as knowers based on their own experience. The role of the researcher was to facilitate their new formations of knowledges to appear and disturb taken-for-granted metanarratives (Gegeo & Gegeo, 2001). On the other hand, Indigenous qualitative methodology actively listens to subjugated voices in ways that allow the researcher to learn while validating experiences of the participant. Reviere (2001), quoting Alice Walker on Afrocentric research methodology, starts by saying “I believe that the truth about any subject comes when all sides of the story are put together, and all their different meanings make one new one. Each writer writes the missing parts to the other writer’s story. And the whole story is what I am after” (p. 709). This connects to Bhabha’s (1994) role of iterative process of narration. Knowledge production comes to be oriented as a process of connected relationship between knowers, which disorients the dominant knowledge production processes. The role of an Afrocentric Indigenous researcher is to actively listen, validate, facilitate, and acknowledge localized bodies of knowledge as expressed through the stories given by the participant. In this sense, knowledge comes to be a gift to the community by participants.

An Afrocentric Indigenous narrative methodology looks at narration as transformative, subversive, and a counter discourse to colonial metanarrative (Asante, 1998; Dei, 2000; Gegeo & Gegeo, 2001; Reviere, 2001). It seeks to deconstruct totalizing discourse and language (Foucault, 1980) that look at participants as broken and damaged by identifying them as co-producers of knowledge (Gegeo & Gegeo, 2001). It seeks to actively involve the participant in the process of knowledge production (Reyes Cruz, 2008). An Afrocentric Indigenous narrative methodology identifies the participant as the expert and the researcher as the learner. It seeks to inconvenience the colonial rational order of producing of knowledge by complicating the dual relation between
the researcher and the participant (Chavez et al., 2008; Dei, 2001; Gegeo & Gegeo, 2001; Smith, 2012). This methodology is guided by a decolonial process of research as representational politics (Baskin, 2005; Bhabha, 1994; Dei, 2000; Smith, 2012). The Afrocentric research paradigm troubles the taken-for-granted ideals, thoughts and feelings.

This methodology is grounded on Black and African experiences and the racial and gender ordering of knowledges and knowledge production. It is a philosophical understanding of material and symbolic racial and gender expulsion of Kenyan men in knowledge production. It celebrates the diversity of cultures and knowledge as sites of strength rather than weakness. It seeks to centralize the desire of Kenyan men in the diaspora as an important point of emergence and counter discourse.

Indigenous qualitative methodology validates the power of storytelling in transforming the socio-cultural needs of communities (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Stories come to be modes or avenues of sharing the experience of research participants to trouble the colonial representation of the African other as broken (Mbembé, 2001). Such sharing is based on a concerted effort on the part of the researcher to actively listen and affirm participants’ experiences as expressed in their stories. Active listening is key in building respectful relationships with participants. Indigenous methodology asserts respect, reciprocity, relationship-building, and love as the framework of storying and knowledge production between the participant and the researcher. It troubles the language, power, and discourses that control the research process (Cajete, 2000; Dei, 2000, 2011; Gegeo & Gegeo, 2001; Reyes Cruz, 2008) by introducing subjugated voices as truthful and powerful sites of decolonization. Through active and respectful listening, researchers and participants form alliances that trouble the taken-for-granted research processes.

The researcher in this study paid attention to what the participants were saying as well as
their gestures and body language to make sense of participants’ stories. He did not interrupt the participant and would seek clarity to understand the participant. The researcher was patient with the participant and would not interrupt. In his study, the researcher applied paraphrasing and questions as reflective and analytical pieces of bringing attention to the importance of participants’ comments. Such points allowed the speaker (participant) to analyze and bring forth a new dimension to their story (analysis) while learning new information (epiphanies) from their story (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Through this approach, Kenyan men living in Toronto provided this study with rich data that explains their experiences and those of others in ways meant to bring social justice in labour, education, and immigrations process in Canada. This approach created a relationship of purpose between the researcher and participant (Asante, 1988; Chavez et al., 2008). According to Madison (2005),

Conquergood frames dialogue as performance and contends that the aim of “dialogical performance” is to bring self and Other together so they may question, debate, and challenge one another. Dialogue is framed as performance to emphasize the living communion of a felt-sensing, embodied interplay and engagement between human beings. For Conquergood, dialogue resists conclusions. It is intensely committed to keeping the meanings between and the conversations with the researcher and the Other open and ongoing. It is a reciprocal giving and receiving rather than a timeless resolve. The dialogical stance is situated in multiple expressions that transgress, collide, and embellish realms of meaning. Dialogue is both difference and unity, both agreement and disagreement, both a separation and a coming together. For Conquergood, ethnographic, performative dialogue is more like a hyphen than a period. Dialogue is therefore the quintessential encounter with the Other. (p. 9)

The process dialogic interviewing democratizes research in ways that include and affirm subjugated voices, while recognizing the complexities and violent encounters between the researcher and the participant. This research process allow researcher to enter the participants’ spaces with an open mind, validate their voices, and acknowledge them as experts. Knowledge production is not an end but a means of creating relationship through respect and love. The
researcher guides or facilitates production of knowledge (Reyes Cruz, 2008) while the community take the lead and ownership of knowledge production. A researcher works with the participants in ways that effect social change and justice (Harrington, 2005). Narrative study decolonizes Eurocentric determination of the participant as damaged by celebrating interstitial points of emergence as important points of strength (Tuck, 2010). Research comes to be seen as a celebration of community (Smith, 2012).

This study critically reflexed and reflected on the colonial politics of knowledge production. The study looked at the relations of power between colonial state institutions and their interaction with Kenyan men. The study looked at the effect of accent and how the Kenyan men are racially profiled in education, labour, and immigration. The study applied an Afrocentric Indigenous perspective to decolonize policies using participants’ stories. Their voices (read accents), once defined as emotional, became the central pillar of decolonizing a masculine rational form of knowledge production. Their stories feminized the research process by celebrating emotions as a form of decolonizing rational process of knowledge production. The powers of migrant Kenyan men as expressed in their stories came to trouble the totalizing and normalizing processes of knowledge and production of truth in ways that affirmed alternative ways of visualizing the migrant Black other as capable of writing their stories. This disturbed the settled sites of gendered knowledge production in ways that validated migrant accents, histories and ways of life as relevant in knowledge production while effecting policy change.

**Sampling**

The study applied a snowballing sampling and recruitment technique to identify Kenyan men (Creswell, 2013; Faulkner & Faulkner, 2014). Snowballing is a non-probability sampling technique (Faulkner & Faulkner, 2014). It is used to identify participants who are hard to locate
(Faulkner & Faulkner, 2014) and is a recruitment technique used when populations in the study are scarcely spread. The number of Kenyans living in Toronto is very small. Kenyans in Toronto are widespread and it is hard to locate them. It is therefore important to apply the snowballing technique to reach out to the hidden population of Kenyan men in Toronto. It is a referral technique in which the researcher identified one Kenyan man and the participant provided reference to other prospective participants. The advantage of employing the snowballing technique is that it is cost effective and efficient in that you can reach several other Kenyans through the initial reference of one participant.

This recruitment process is applied when participants are afraid of being public, based on the issues they face. The majority of Kenyan men would like to remain anonymous because of the issues and challenges they face in Canada. In Kenya, men are trained through their culture to handle their issues privately, otherwise they are deemed as weak. The snowballing technique helps maintain confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. While the researcher sought referrals from participants, he gave them the impression that their choice may not necessarily be part of the study. The researcher also did not reveal the identity of the referring participant to the referred participant. The researcher assured the participants that their information would remain confidential and their identity anonymous. For example, in the writing of this report, the researcher used pseudonyms, deleted any identifying statements, all the data was encrypted, and the computer kept safely.

**Recruitment Process**

This is a qualitative study that is explorative and evaluative of issues facing Kenyan men in Toronto. Not much is known about this group and as such the study was the first step toward understanding Kenyan men and masculinity, and how it affects them in education, employment,
and immigration. The researcher interviewed 10 participants. The sample size was expected to provide enough narratives that would later provide the ground for a bigger study that would explain the needs of this demographic. Participants’ ages ranged from 18–70 years of age. The legal working age in Kenya starts from 18 years. This is considered the period under which somebody can enter into a working contract. It is equally the age at which somebody can have a passport. This age bracket supported the fact that any participant must be born in Kenya but living in Toronto. That means, one must have the Kenyan passport and be of Kenyan legal working age. It is also important to know whether they worked in Kenya before they came to Canada and how that has changed since arriving in Canada. They were all Black/African men born and raised in Kenya and now living in Toronto. This is key in understanding how Kenyan Black men are different from other Black men in Toronto, more so in terms of their migration, education, and employment. They must be unemployed or underemployed in that their work does not fit what they were trained for in Kenya. This would help understand how brain drain has affected other exporting countries. It would also help explain the gendered nation-states and how some countries act as providers while creating others as irresponsible and broken. This aspect helped in understanding how Kenyan men are oppressed by the labour and education policy that focuses on Canadian experience and the denigration of other experiences.

After interviewing the participant, the researcher asked him whether he knows any other man who is undergoing similar challenges. If he has somebody in mind, he would refer the researcher to the next participant. The referring participant provided the email address or telephone number to reach the prospective participant. The researcher reminded the referring participants that their choices may not participate in the study. This helped protect the anonymity of the participants. The researcher did not disclose the name of the initial participant to the new
participant. This is in line with the anonymity clause of the research process and ethical guidelines.

The researcher also attended some Kenyan gatherings where music and Kenyan delicacies were served. The majority of Kenyans in the gathering seemed to speak in Kiswahili and expressed excitement when listening to Kenyan Kiswahili old tunes which seemed to remind them of their Kenyan culture and values. Some Kenyan revellers I spoke to said that the songs reminded them of their childhood when they would be preparing to go to school. Other Kenyan revellers seemed to connect with Kenyan delicacies like chapati and Ugali in ways that reminded them of their Kenyan roots.

**Ethical Principles**

The researcher explained in simple and accessible language the purpose of the study and the role of participants. Due to the ethical consideration, the study used pseudonyms in order to keep participants anonymous. The study also removed all identifying information like demographics to keep information provided confidential and maintain anonymity. The researcher made sure that the written consent form was signed and dated.

The researcher informed all participants that they could decide not to answer part or all the questions and that such a decision would not interfere with the relationship they had with the University of Toronto. They were also told that they could withdraw from the study at any time, that they could withdraw their comments at any time, and that such a move would not interfere with the relationship they had with the University of Toronto. The researcher also explained to the participants the benefits and risks of the study. This study had minimal risk as passed by the University of Toronto Ethics Board. The researcher provided the participants with the consent form and allowed them to go through it and ask questions or seek clarification. It is after the participant signed the consent form that the researcher commenced the interviews.
Interview Process

Most interviews were done at the University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) library. The interview schedule contained 11 questions. The interview time was between 45 minutes to 1 hour. Before the interview, the researcher introduced himself and the study and had the participants sign the consent form. After that, participants introduced themselves. This provided time to build rapport and relationship with each participant (Faulkner & Faulkner, 2014). The interview focused on creating initial relationships with the participants; thus, the researcher would spend the first few minutes discussing something that was not connected to the study but which interested both the researcher and the participant. Topics would range from family issues to Kenyan politics, which would help break the ice and create familiarity between the co-creators (i.e., participant and researcher). In Indigenous and Afrocentric research paradigms, relationship building is key in interviewing (Reviere, 2001; Smith, 2012). It denotes respect through interest in participants’ ideas and thoughts and humanizes the interview processes. The researcher read actively the participants’ body language to determine their comfort levels. Then, discussion would slowly orient to the focus of this study. It is at this point that the researcher would remind the participant about audio recording. Such an interruption was made when the researcher realized that the discussion was delving into the research focus. The interruption was respectfully and ethically done in ways that maintained the relationship. For example, the researcher allowed the participant to finish what they were saying and then show interest in what they had said by paraphrasing it and informing them that what they had said was part of the study. It is also at this point that the researcher would discuss the study, its purpose, and the content of the consent form.

Since the study was audio-recorded, the interviewer would then gently remind the
participant that they would record the conversation and explain why it is necessary. Most of the time, the researcher informed the participants that he needed to concentrate with the conversation they were having and as such recording would help document the conversation in ways that would retain its authenticity. All the participants agreed to be audio recorded. From then on, the researcher also told the participants that this was more of a discussion-based interview, which provided the participants the space to be open and analyze some of their comments. In Indigenous knowledge production, participants are producers of knowledge rather than consumers; as such, the interview process was designed to allow co-production of knowledge. When participants analyzed their comments, it allowed them to create knowledge that humanized their experiences, which is a key decolonial interview praxis. Sometimes the researcher asked candid and critically reflective questions and the participant would look removed and lost in their thought. The role of the researcher in such moments was to remain silent, present and comfortable. The presence of the researcher provided assurance and support to the participant that they “get lost.” This was not just respectful to the participant but also allowed authentic relationships to flourish. Such a process of losing the self is necessary in reliving participants’ experiences in ways that allowed them to introspect on what was hidden in their unconscious through colonization. A good researcher waits for participant to own the journey and when the participants come back, they find familiarity and support from the researcher.

This moment is crucial in analysis processes of knowledge production. Such moments elicit discomfort in researchers in that they are losing the participant or that they are losing their expertise since they cannot control the emotional participant. A decolonial interview praxis allows the researcher to remain comfortable in such discomfort. It is at this point that silence becomes a tool of decolonization. To the researcher, this is an important point at which the
participant reaches out to their suppressed self and present it as authentic knowledge. This instant allowed them to reflect on their comments, and the interlocking power engrained in them, to overcome and create knowledges that speak to them. To get lost is a privilege in that those who take the journey come to be defined as human, while those who cannot come to be determined as broken. This means that the interruption of such a process of self-searching is not only disrespectful but also goes against ethical practices of human right. Most researchers, scared of losing their role as rational thinkers, ask irrelevant questions rather than allow the participants to introspect themselves.

The researcher had a hard copy of the interview schedule but instead memorized it. The interview schedule provided questions to be asked but did not orient the interview process. All questions were guided by what the participant was saying. The questions were asked in ways that reflected the discussion but also would answer interview question. These transitional modes of interviewing allowed deconstruction of interviews in ways that the interview schedule and the researcher came to occupy the role of a listener. That meant that the interviewer did not follow the order of questions in the interview schedule. This allowed the researcher to create a comfortable environment for a discussion that was not regulated by the document. This also allowed a reflexive discussion that questioned colonial tools of introspection like the interview schedule and its implications for colonial research and representation.

This form of epistemological disruption is necessary in any research process. The interview schedule is built on subjective lived experience that may not speak to the participant. To suspend its appearance from the discussion means decolonization of interviewing process. It is also ethically allowed in that it reduces pressure on the part of the participant because most people are scared of questions and questioning more so when somebody is using paper material
as a point of interviewing. It also allowed the researcher to ask questions that were relevant to the
discussion and that would help answer the research question. Such a decolonial interviewing
allows the complication of the research process in ways that embed and connect data collection
with its analysis.

**Challenges in Data Collection**

It was also frustrating to get participants for the study. There are very few Kenyans in
Toronto, which meant that the researcher had to apply a snowball technique to reach them. There
were times the researcher felt that the study would not take off due to lack of participants. There
was one time when the study participant decided to cancel the interview at the last hour. Other
times the participant would just say that they needed to be paid right away before they started the
interview. Even after explaining to them the importance of the study, they would still decline,
which I had to respect. There is a belief among people that any study is a money-making venture.
The researcher validates and acknowledges such a sentiment since the majority of studies are
industries where people make money on the backs of participant. This narrative about research as
a process of wealth accumulation has defined today’s participants and as a researcher I had to sit
comfortable with that fact. While such sentiments are valid, they also put pressure on researchers
who do not receive funding for their studies.

**Data Analysis**

Analysis of the data is a political process of meaning-making and representation of what
the participant has said (Fraser, 2004; Gegeo & Gegeo, 2001). In this study, the process of data
collection was also a time where the researcher engaged with the participant in deeper
conversation and analysis of their statement and content. This is fundamental in decolonization
of research because it engages the participant in unsealing the neat research process. It also
provides a space for participants to engage in knowledge production. Such a break from traditional knowledge production counters the dominant belief that the participant is an object of introspection and cannot perform rational work. As discussed earlier in the interview section, data analyses started in the data collection section. The researcher provided a comfortable environment that made participants introspect their comments.

In any interview, questions are political. How you pose a question determines the trajectory of the study. For this study, questions invited the participant to take part in enriching their comments. For example, the researcher would apply questions to challenge participants standing on social issues. The researcher applied paraphrasing as a tool of making the participants reflect on their statement. Paraphrasing is key in terms of opening new perspectives on the part of the participants. The researcher mirrors back participants’ comments so that they can start making sense of what they say. The researcher is expected to open discussion on where the sentiments are coming from and the effect they bring to the lives of other people. The interview process should not be all about validating the participant but also about challenging held-for-granted thoughts and notions as expressed by the participant and researcher.

Analysis was also defined by the context of the interview. After interviewing the participants, the researcher would immediately transcribe the interviews. This was supposed to maintain the authentic and emotional aspects of the data collected. After the researcher finalized collection and transcription of the data, he engaged with the data in ways that brought new meaning. This was the second level of analysis following the data collection/analysis with the participant. He started with providing synonyms to participants. This is necessary to protect the anonymity of the participants. Those who participated in this study were diversely distributed in terms of their age, academic work, marriage, social class, careers, and arrival time.
For the sake of ethical principle, this report did not diverge their specific work spaces, where they live, their ethnicity or their demography. For the sake of ethics, this study provides minimal comments on the identity of the participants. Kerwa is a student and works in one of the universities in Toronto. He is married and has children. George works in the service industry. He is also married and has a child. Roysam is also engaged in service industry and has a position of overseeing and supervising employees. He is married and plans to join higher education soon. Kasee is married and has children. He works in the technology sector. Spanta is married and has children. He is an educator in one of the schools in Toronto. Lipapa is a community worker. He is married and is a parent. Sangi also works in the Kenyan community. He is also married and has children. Mike is a former student and is working in the service industry. He is engaged and plans to return to school. Jackson is a student and works in the service industry. Totokazi is a student in one of the universities in Toronto. He is married and has children.

Having provided the pseudonyms for each participant, the researcher engaged in the process of coding. This process led the researcher questions, research paradigms, theoretical frameworks, and patterns of data.

The research questions that guided this study were, how does Indigenous and colonial histories of Kenya and Canada affect Kenyan men and masculinity? How do Kenyan men express their masculinities in Toronto? How are gendered policies (education, immigration, and labour) implicated in oppressing Kenyan men living in Toronto? How are accents, citizenship, migration, colonialism, imperialism, nationality, and skin colour gendered in ways that evict Kenyan men in Toronto? What coping mechanisms do Kenyan men employ in negotiating the impact of gendered racism in Toronto? This means that any statement that answered any of the
above research question had a chance to be included in the study. The researcher was led by an Afrocentric and Indigenous paradigm in choosing statement that would be included in the study.

This study applied thematic coding by applying participants’ qualitative texts in identifying themes. The researcher went through the transcripts to determine patterns of the data that would help initiate the initial open codes/categories of some of the statements made by the participants. From the open code/categories so identified, the researcher detailed them to axial coding to form a wider understanding of each code. Themes (selective coding) were formed at the intersection of the axial codes. These themes celebrate participant capacity to create knowledges that truthfully connect to their lived experiences. The themes were: (a) Immigration process; (b) We share a lot, but my accent kills me; (c) I assert myself differently; and (d) My Blackness is African.
Chapter 5: Findings

The findings were coded into the following themes: (a) Immigration process; (b) We share a lot, but my accent kills me; (c) I assert myself differently; and (d) My Blackness is African. These themes put into perspective the lived experiences of Kenyan men living in Toronto and identified multiple gaps existing in Black masculinity policy issues facing this demography. They also help meet the main objectives and aims of this study which are looking at how accent affects Kenyan men in Toronto as well as the prevailing limitations within Black masculinity in the representation of Kenyan men in Toronto. Through the resiliencies, agencies, and resistances of Kenyan men, the study provides Indigenous forms of overcoming institutionalized racial erasure as well as informing Black masculinity scholarship.

Immigration Is a Process

The majority of the participants interviewed looked at the visa processing office as a powerful institution, and they felt the responsibility to protect their families from its ravages. Such consequences happened in the form of family separation, time consumption and finances. Kerwa, a student and working as a research assistant with the university, expressed his experience with immigration:

When you look at all this thing, as an African man you are leaving your family behind you. You feel like you have to make a very strategic choice. If you don’t leave you will miss out a lot. You also need to come and fix the systems like the house and know where you will sleep. Also, you feel you are leaving your very young family to struggle with an institution like the embassy.

He has the responsibility to wrestle with the immigration institution for his family to come to Canada. To Kerwa, immigration is a tussle/war that only men can handle. This speaks of the gendered immigration process which works toward shaping men to be protectors of the home. Participants said that visa application, documentation, and other administrative aspects were costly.
According to Kerwa, getting a visa to Canada is rigorous and time consuming in terms of the red-tape and documentation. The participant contends that the process exposes them to shame and punishment because they must inform the office of their financial standing. This is a key concern for Kenyan men, who believe in financial confidentiality. The participant is not comfortable that his private financial status must be exposed for him to come to Canada.

The challenges of coming here through a student visa mean you have to jump so many hurdles. The application required write-ups and submitting a host of documents, getting some background checks, getting a visa from the embassy so that they can approve your documents. The process of getting an appointment means you have to go to the bank to get a bank statement, you have to have money in the account to show them that you are in a position to take care of yourself. At the same time, you need recommendation letters from peers. So, if you look at all those things combined, it means that you are leaving Kenya to come and visit this country, they ask you so many questions so that financially you are exposed. It is documented that this is your financial position; something you did not have to reveal when you were in Kenya. Nobody would ask your statement so that you can access your education.

Kerwa says that financial matters are a private issue and submitting such information to an institution is an attack to his identity. This is made worse because he must provide them to immigrate to Canada. Obviously the visa office looks at such information as a necessity for any immigrant to determine their survival when they land. To Kerwa, these manipulative mechanics of the embassy take away his self-esteem. The fact that he did not submit them voluntarily makes the whole process seem designed to expose him.

It may be argued that such information is kept private and confidential. While such claims may be valid, one needs to ask whether the same immigration criteria is applied to other immigrants from Western countries. On the second claim, one needs to see the levels of system hacking to acknowledge the worries of Kenyan immigrants.

George, who works in service industry and is married to a Kenyan woman attending a university in Toronto, said:

Coming to Canada as an immigrant took so long. The immigration process is too long. I
have to pay and again something is forgotten, and I have to pay again for the Visa. I almost told my spouse to go because it is eating my pocket and is wasting my time.

This excerpt identifies two key issues the participant faced while coming to Canada. He was worried about amount of money needed to pay for the visa. The participant also says it took long to process the papers for him and his family. Such issues worried George since he feared losing his family unit, which is a huge component of being a Kenyan. To George, family is an important structure and determines his identity and values.

This assertion is supported by Netro, who also works in the service industry:

My relocation to come to Toronto and leaving my family back home for one month felt like dislocation because of the immigration requirements that extended beyond our anticipated schedule. After that things have been easier. A lot of time was used coordinating and checking how my family was doing. I wasn’t worried to the extent that they will miss it or they will be suffering there. What worried me was that it was open ended, like when will the document be ever given? The high commission said that it can take as short as two weeks or as long as four months. So I didn’t know when that would happen and that cost us economically because we had to keep cancelling tickets because we were thinking let’s buy a ticket for this date, then we had to extend it with the travel agency. And you keep extending to a point that you have to make a decision on it.

From this quotation, Netro identifies the emotional and financial pain they had to undergo to come to Canada. Though there is a timeframe set for provision of the visa, he could not tell when they would get the visa. This caused a lot of anxiety since they kept cancelling their travelling tickets. This was also a financial burden on the participant and his family.

Lipapa, who is a community leader in Toronto, supports the above sentiment and says:

I applied for a visa and got it without any issue. I came here as a student and even so, it was good because moving here was exciting but on getting here that is when the reality sunk on me and I realized that am starting all again from scratch. I came here first by my self. I sponsored them (his wife and children) and that was close to seven years down the line. I kept going back and forth. There were some financial challenges and I was working here and supporting family and paying the bills here.

To Lipapa, applying for visa was not complicated. It is upon arrival that he faced immigration issues when he tried to bring his family to Canada. It was expensive for him to go back and forth
visiting his family in Kenya while trying to prepare for their immigration papers. Immigration of Kenyan men has not been factored in Black masculinity.

Immigration shapes how an immigrant will settle in the new home. The majority of Kenyan men came to Canada in search of better live; but instead they had to deal with racial elimination from the system based on their accent, culture and skin colour.

**We Share a Lot, but My Accent Kills Me**

According to Lipapa, being a Black student in Canada is a struggle that is measured and undermined by agents of education to the extent that those who fail end up paying more. The institution of higher education reduces the Black body into a factor of production. This is the corporatisation of education and survive through the blood of Black students. Lipapa argues:

In education, the same issue is there. Let’s begin from admission. When you get admitted to a particular program the issue of race comes into play. As a Black student, it is hard to get a good mark. I went to university here. One of the things I learnt from here is that it was hard for a Black student to get an A grade because there is something they call grade curving that makes Black student score lesser. Black students are casualties of the grade curving. They want to curve so that other students can fail so that they can redo the subject and by so doing the institution will make money out of it.

In this part, Lipapa identifies race, accents and accreditation as the main issues he faced as a student. From this excerpt, Lipapa says that race is salient feature in Canadian school system.

Issues of Blackness is a feature in terms of performance of students in a classroom. According to Lipapa, to be a Black student translated into lower grade and hence paying more to repeat a course in case of a failing grade. Blackness, to Lipapa, is a cash-cow for the school’s industrial complex.

The same appears to exist in terms of support. According to Totokazi:

You do not get the kind of opportunities and are not represented in the types of opportunities that are taken out at various levels. Things like scholarship, mentorship. Like we are not that many. So, when we have a few Black students, you would think that it would seriously affect those professors to take a very keen interest in them early enough to really mentor them closely. That is not what happens. You are left with the
dogs and given less support. For me, it was that way for the last 8 years. Very little support and professional support in the sense like, hey, I think you should apply for this. I started getting more traction recently.

As previously shown, one’s skin colour also affects mentorship and student transitioning.

According to Totokazi, he was not supported by the administration and the faculty, a claim he associates with the faculty and administration being White.

In addition to faculty failures to mentor and support Kenyan student, Totokazi claims that Kenyan students are sometimes expected to paint a picture of a multicultural university. Totokazi, speaking of his objectified self and the role he plays as a symbol of diversity, says:

“You fill the quota of diversity in town, in friends’ circles, the university. So, you get invited to very many things because you are the diversity sort of.” Totokazi explains this phenomenon through his commodification to satisfy the university’s quest for multiculturalism and gentle space for diversity.

The migrant body is a public spectacle or a consumable thing that creates social wealth for the master. Kerwa claims:

I am the only Black man in our class. Our class is composed of 22 students and I am the only Black person there. So, it is very clear to you. Like you look at a parking lot and there are 10 cars. Nine are white and one is red. It stands out. But maybe the question would be. Does that red car know that it stands out? For my case you will know that you’re the only one because there is something inherent in all of us because we want to know who is next to me or who is in my class. When you look around and ask from which country and they say Canada, turkey. Then you realize, I am the only one from Africa. All of them are White apart from me who is Black. In the office I am also the only Black person.

To Kerwa, being Black determines who is to occupy spaces like a classroom and work spaces. He also says that the class is a gendered space. It is very interesting how he equates the classroom with a parking lot and how the Black person occupies the space of the red car to stand out. In this interview, the participant seeks to ask whether the Black can know itself. This conversation seeks to also identify the classroom as a social and relational environment.
Totokazi, who is also a student and working with the university, attempts to speak on the gendered aspect of the school system. He claims that:

Black ladies are not even represented at all. They realized very quickly. One of them realized early enough and left. She realized that this is a very polluted space for her academic success. She went for greener pastures thankfully. It is pervasive institutionally and is not unique to my department. The fact that they have acknowledged it is a sign that it is a problem. It is more of a problem than even the sciences. It is sad that it is represented in the social sciences which are even supposed to be centres of critical studies on race, gender, sexual orientation.

From this comment, Totokazi says that education is a very gendered spot. Black women are not represented in the classroom. The Black community becomes synonymous with Black men. This is key in understanding masculinity and issues of epistemological imperialism as will be analyzed later.

On the level of labour and employment chances of Kenyan men living in Toronto, participants discussed how they are racialized through their accents, culture, and skin colour. While some men expressed having faced hardship in getting their first job, one said that it was easy.

On the job front, George says he did not have challenges getting a job and this he equates to his previous exposure in the United States of America job market. He reasons:

It was not challenging to get a job. Just because of my experience in the USA, they thought ok, I would be a good pick. I was a chef in America for fourteen years, so they saw that I can do the stuff in the back—I can do the fish and meat, and it wasn’t a problem. It was because I understood the product. The advantage that I had was that when I went to the states, my brother was there. My brother’s girlfriend sorted me out to get a job. She was a White girl. I stayed in that job and they took care of me.

This excerpt shows that his exposure to American job market gave him headway to be employed in Canada. This shows that American experience is more acceptable than Kenyan experience in Canadian workplaces. He claims that his brother’s White girlfriend helped him get a job in America. It also matters to him the kind of job that he does in Canada compared to what he used
to do in America. It was only after deeper thought about the kind of job that he does that George realized that it does not fit his dream job that would enable him to employ a nanny. Employment of a nanny comes with status. To George, having a career that would help him not do baby sitting and as such be the man he wishes to be would be his ideal. To this, George argues:

If I had a better paying job when I came to Canada, I wouldn’t be baby sitting. I would have been able to pay for a nanny. But the small money could not afford to pay the nanny. The current job cannot pay for the nanny. Not really. When you work check to check, you are not doing anything. I work as a butcher. Doing this work is far removed from my career. I actually should be doing real estate stuff.

In this extract, George seems to say that living and working in America and Canada has denied him a chance to focus on what he was trained in. In a nutshell, he says that he is underemployed. The participant says that he cannot afford somebody to help raise his child and take care of home chores because the work he does is not enough to meet those costs. He seems to wish he had a nanny to help in the house.

Kasee, who came to Canada with his family, says that it was a problem to find a job. He had an offer before he came to Canada, but then when he arrived, he was informed that he did not have any Canadian experience. Currently, Kasee, who is employed in one of the telephone companies in Toronto, says,

I had already started the interview with my company here with a telecommunications company. It made sense to use the same skills here. But again I went through it and for some reason this did not measure up even today. I don’t know why. But at some point, I contacted the agency and they said that here you know there is an international labour policy that you cannot move from one market to the other because of the non-competitive clause. But again, that was one way of dismissing my experience.

As previous discussed, Canadian experience has been used to deny Kenyan men work opportunities. It is not that the Kenyan men are not experienced and educated, but the system is made in such a way that it spits out the immigrant under the auspices of Canadian experience. This is because the work space and rules are controlled by the white bodies through normalized cultures and policies.
That said, George identifies key issues that he faces while working;

When I am working, I face different challenges, like co-workers who think that work is doing less and someone else doing more. They don’t do their part. I end up doing their stuff. Those are my main challenges. Even the respect from customers is challenging sometimes. They think that they own the place and so they speak the way they want and do what they want. Funny thing is that I have had challenges from Blacks and whites. Where you have not done anything wrong, but they still want to go cry to the owner. Somebody went and told the owner that I am sweating. I coughed and told them that I have a cold, and I was surprised they reported that. I was angry because I am trying to work at the front and back and I am all alone. This aspect is in their system. They have been taught to behave like that because some of them are very rich people. They can do whatever they want. Most of these people are white rich people.

In this statement, George identifies areas of racial undertones and seems to implicate Black and White bodies in his experience. He says that he is under constant surveillance from Black and White people who keep reporting him to his manager because he is sweating a lot, or he is coughing. He also claims that he is overworked and ostracized in his workplace. He recognizes that Whiteness and racism are inscribed in the systems and that people participate in such racist and anti-Black sentiments.

Kasee also said that after getting the job, there are other obstacles one must pass through. He said that sometimes people in his workplace are disrespectful. Kasee said:

For example, you can see in a meeting like the way they are talking to some teams is different than when they are talking to you. You can tell it, but I don’t know how to express it. You can feel it. You can tell the difference when A is talking to B; there is that language of respect. For example, the change of tone and the way you are given instruction—there is a different tone. I can clearly tell because I have that intelligence to distinguish between the two. Some keep asking for my clarification and you can tell that they heard what I am saying, only that they just want to embarrass me.

From this discussion, Kasee identifies ways in which he feels, and is made aware of, his presence. There is different treatment between people based on their accent. He identifies clarification, giving instruction, or in normal discussion. He says that the tone of voice is key to him in identifying the difference in treatment.
Lipapa discusses how he was able to negotiate himself through the system to achieve what seemed to be his dream job.

Canadian experience is another hurdle. When I got the job, I was working at the airport. I had struggled to apply for a white-collar job. I helped one man in an organization and having seen what I had done, he asked me whether I had any sort of education. I said yes. Later I gave him my credentials from Kenya and surprisingly enough, I was offered a job where I was earning 40 dollars an hour. Think of it—moving from minimum pay to 40 dollars. This White man believed in me and I was able to ride in his clout. I was treated differently and perceived like I knew even though sometimes I did not know. It felt good. I left from minimum to 40 dollars where I am managing myself rather than being micromanaged. No one was looking at the camera to check whether I was doing things alright. Later, I left the job and went back to school.

In this excerpt, he equates his success to having helped somebody who then helped him get a well-paying job. While he enjoyed the job, he later left to pursue his other dreams. This depicts Indigenous masculinities on respect, reciprocity, love and relationship building as an important forms of overcoming racial erasure and everyday surveillance of Black bodies.

While the above forms of anti-Black racism are salient to Black bodies, Kenyans face an additional struggle with accents. Roysam, who works as a manager, says the following on his job experience:

I manage a big company and we have so many employees. It happens that whenever customers want to complain, they want to talk to the manager. So when I am called, they always don’t see me. I come and they tell me can you call me the manager. I say I am the manager. How can I help you? And they would ask: you? And I would say yes. This happens every week. I don’t blame them because the stereotyping is the manager should look different. Again, my accent when talking to them it would be like whaoo. You? Even when they are looking for jobs, they fill the forms and they want to hand over the forms to the manager. I get called and told that a customer wants to fill up the form for work. When I come, they try to look for somebody behind me. They are trying to look if somebody is coming to pick up the forms. That happens every week at my workplace. Sometimes I stand talking to one of my junior employees on the floor and they will come and ask him a question and not me. Most of the time they will bypass me.

From this excerpt, Roysam says that customers do not recognize him as the manager. Even after the introduction, the customers are hesitant to open up to him because their expectation is that he cannot be the manager. Roysam can recognize that it is racism and accent.
According to Mike, who just finished his university education in Toronto,

In school I was not talking. I did not have that confidence. The thing I hated most is when people did not understand what I had just said. I had to relearn English. You know the funniest thing—the English you are taught in Kenya is not the English that people are taught here. For example, in Kenya when you were learning English, were you ever taught silent words? For example, the word “work” we were told letter “r” is silent in Kenya. But here the “r” is active.

While Lipapa seems to say that Kenyan English and by extension school system is superior to Canadian English, Mike blames the Kenyan school system for not teaching him to be a cosmopolitan speaker. From this verbatim, Mike claims that accent was a key issue that made him not talk. Accent affected his self esteem to such an extent that he had to unlearn himself so that he could fit in the classroom. The participant identifies accent as another issue he faced as a student. The participant says that he resisted speaking in Canadian English because to him Kenyan English was equally important. He also faced accreditation issues and says that Kenyan degrees are considered less accreditable than Canadian ones.

Lipapa says that accent played a big role in his education. He says that through accent, schooling was difficult and that it affected most of his social life. Lipapa, speaking on accent, says:

I came to know that it is very hard for Black students and especially African students to get a good grade. In class, I was one of those students who did not accept the Canadian accent. It sounded like broken English. It took me like five years to realize that unless I was like them and speak like them then my survival is going to be bad. It took me longer and my accent even now is close to Canadian. It stands out and when you speak to other people, they could say you are not born here. I was fighting back because I came from a proper English-speaking country and Canada is also a colony of Britain and I would expect them to speak in proper English.

Lipapa says that accent determined his success in class. He says that he resisted acculturation, but circumstances forced him to toe the line of the right accent. In his resistance, Lipapa shows the politics of accent by saying that his Kenyan accent is powerful than Canadian. This politics have a historical colonial lineage where both Kenya and Canada were colonized by Britain. Both
countries speak English, but it is at the level of accent that their level of influence is determined in the world.

Mike says:

To make things worse, this thing of accent is not even my problem. It was what I was taught in school. Most Blacks do not want to be associated with us. Because we are in a point where being Black is already bad.

Mike seems to say that his current predicament is cultural and has nothing to do with him. He blames the Kenyan school system for the issues he is facing today. He recognizes the fact that accent is a double jeopardy to his Blackness.

Mike tried to analyze accent and its effect to Kenyan men by saying:

The Africans are okay when it comes to doing their work. There are some things that are much more important than just hard work. First of all—the voice. Most of them do not speak out and they are submissive. I was told that I can know if someone is from Africa because of the volume of their voice. Africans are cowards. You see somebody talking to someone and that someone says, “Excuse me I can’t hear you.” It not that they can’t hear you. Most of the time you think that this guy does not understand my accent. But that depends because some West Africans are projective. Maybe it is our culture because we have been trained to lie low to the people in authority.

Mike’s comments depict upbringing as the reason why Kenyan men have low self esteem. It puts blame on upbringing.

I Assert Myself Differently

While Kenyans face differentiated forms of racism, they have come out with ways of overcoming racism in Canada. An example of resistance to racism is presented by Roysam, who says:

I came to realize that I had to make my presence known. So, every time that happens, I tell them that I am the manager and I am here to help you. I will assert myself, be firm and say how I can help them. If they ask for a junior employee, I will be the one to answer. If they insist to ask the same person again, I will say that I am the one who does the orders. I am in charge of the order and I will stand firm with it. The reaction is that people who have not known me would not and would feel that they would want to talk to somebody higher than me. When they realize that there is nobody higher than that is the
moment they change, and when they change, they warm up toward you. When they hit the dead end, they realize the person they have to deal with. Some of them will apologize. From this statement, Roysam says that he must constantly claim his space, by reminding people that he is the one with power and prerogative to help them. Most of the time customers will assume that his juniors are the ones who have the power to help them.

Kasee goes on and says that after failing to get a job:

I started having a lot of stress as to why I did not get a job. This time it is close to seven months since I came here, and I do not have a job. What is the problem? I started doing my self-assessment. But then I knew that there is not way I can change myself. I cannot change the environment and I need to get the job. That is who I am, and I cannot change. I cannot change the environment and so the only thing I am looking for is I don’t know the reason why I am not getting the job.

From this conversation, Kasee says that failing to get a job had an emotional effect on him. This pushed him to evaluate himself to see whether he had any problem that was hindering him from getting a job. In the final analysis, the participant recognized that the power of overcome adversity lies in accepting the self and that it must be maintained for them to succeed.

The question of silence as a tool of resistance is discussed by George;

For me not to face a lot of these issues, I don’t talk a lot at work. I decided to keep silent. It is easier. I don’t need to talk. Let it be the way it is, but I will be fine. My father has always said that you know, the less you speak the more you know because you are not blocking your ears. Here when you say stuff, people are learning more about you. They have the advantage. Maybe that is where I got it from. This has helped me stay out of trouble. Because there are a lot of people who I could have become acquainted with and spend time with, but I listen to them and I know now that when somebody talks a lot, I can let them talk and they will lose that battle. I do it subconsciously.

From this conversation, George says that he uses silence as a protection from work issues. He takes silence as resilience and hope. He says that he learns more when he is silent. George says that the more one stays silent, the more one learns more and the more they are prepared. This reasoning was passed over to him by his father. To him, knowledge is an economy that should be efficiently shared and protected. He takes conversation to be a war front believes that those who
talk more lose the “battles.” He speaks of situations being left the way they are because to him this is a point of finding personal peace.

Kasee, speaking of racism, said:

I think it could have been racism, but I don’t have the evidence to support my claims. When somebody tells you, we don’t want to continue, you have no idea why unless they told you it is because you are Black. I can only blame [racism] but I don’t know. Even when you get employed, there are those things that you see but again you don’t have facts. You don’t know why some things are happening to you. I don’t like thinking a lot about people’s opinion and thinking of racism. I assume it is not there. Because if I start thinking about it, I may not do anything. Because even if it is there, what can I do? Can I remove it? Why spend too much time with nonsense? Of course, you can see it, but I let it go.

Echoing George’s point on handling racism, Kasee seems to claim that even though he may sense that racism has played a role in his unemployment or failing a job interview, he decides that he is better placed to keep looking for job prospects rather than occupying himself with the issue of how race got into him not getting the job. He points out that to him, it is hard to identify how race and racism work to deny him opportunities. He says that to survive racism, he assumes that racism is non-existent.

On the other hand, another participant called Spanta says:

Sometimes my junior wants to show the clients that they are the one who run the show. I allow them and sit back to watch the show. Sometimes you have to allow them to do what they feel they can and when they are finished, remind them all that you are the boss. Sometimes it helps because they can do most of what I was to do and in the final analysis I advise them on what may happen and what they can do. So sometimes I use that time to mentor the junior but also remind them that I am the one who runs the show.

From this comment, Spanta says that he can allow his juniors to feel the power but also claims that he must assert his power and control. He says that he allows that to mentor juniors but also to delegate duties. He equates such moments as theatrical in that he looks at racism from the perspective of an audience for him to understand and overcome it. He seems to say that through such racial moments he shares with others his power.
To overcome racism, Kenyan men also work as communities with other African men. Kasee says that to be resilient, you need community. He says that through helping each other, the men can overcome oppression.

For example, just before I left, my boss told me they are looking for people and the agency was calling me to find out whether I want the job. I told them of course and that I am working there. They asked me whether I can refer somebody, and I did that, and he is till there. He is my friend and he was here from another country and he had stayed more than a year without a job. I referred him here, but you see how long it had taken him to get the job? It took long.

This comment seeks to underlie the role of community in helping another immigrant. This is resistance to economic marginalisation in Canada and a key definition of Indigenous masculinities as composed in community building. Kasee says being part of a community helps him overcome the troubles of racism.

**My Blackness is African**

This section is heralded by the comment made by Kerwa, who said:

The Black people in the USA vote people who will perpetuate that (oppression)in Africa. They don’t look beyond the boarders. They look at what is happening here. They don’t see how their choices in the USA affect the brother back in East Africa or West Africa. A lot of Blacks in the USA in their own imagination they are much better to read beyond what is reported. The connection between me and other Blacks is through shared experiences around the idea of Blackness and how people have seen the Black people.

This comment is an important one in terms of understanding how global politics determines Black politics. According to Kerwa, politics in America determine how Africa and Africans are conceptualized. He says that Black voters are implicated in the livelihood of African people. Kerwa recognizes the fact that he shares a lot with other Black men but to him it is important for open discussions of Black politics beyond state borders.

Black men have been constructed as emotional and failures in fathering. This colonial depiction of Black men was challenged by Kerwa, who said:
People expect things to work like a straight jacket. What they don’t question is the social role people play. If your wife is working, it means that you have enough money in the house which you can now use to spend. I have to work extra. I don’t have time to think about where children will go for afternoon painting. But that will be constructed as not being a good father. The fact that I have to work so much to make sure that the family is under a roof should be seen as I am sacrificing my time with family for money. If you want me to have more time with the family, pay me more. You will see that I can play with the kid much better than you.

This perspective speaks volumes on the question of male privilege and whiteness. Kerwa equates the issues he faces to the fact that he does not earn enough for him to perform his role as a father. He sarcastically says that if he is given the same level of privilege like other men, he will do better parenting. On the other level, Kerwa says that the fact that Black men are constructed as bad fathers should be contested because the majority of the time a Black house has only one income that is supposed to take care of the family. This means that the Black man must work multiple jobs to make sure that his family is well off. This steals the time that they may have to expresses their emotional connections with their families. He says that Blacks should not be viewed as one neat group.

According to Lipapa:

There shouldn’t be compartmentalizing of all Black men because somehow most studies say Black men are baby fathers which is not my case. I love my children and would do anything for them. They are the reason why I travelled this long to get a place and a good life for them and the reason why I have to wake up and go to work. As a Black man, I am already compartmentalized as that person who is prone to crime. You don’t do well when it comes to life and lie in-between baby father, petty crimes, selling drugs and such issues. I consider myself a Black man because I consider that people see that. The content of my character is not what people are seeing as what I am. I see that at work where people want to trigger me to see certain reactions, but they don’t get it. There is compartmentalization of Black men being put in one box and told they are violent, stupid, and all others. But out of that basket there are those who are caring and bright.

From this discussion, Lipapa says that Black men should not be categorized and seen as one universal body of humans. To him, such a process of collapsing Blackness is political and is mostly used to simplistically lump all Black men as not family-oriented and as criminals. He
says that he is a Black man and he loves and takes care of his children. To him, Blackness is what people see, but there is more that is not visible and that never comes to be considered as part of the same Black.

This conception is repeated by Roysam, who says:

People see the Black community. But in that Black community, I see the African community as the one that has to fight for their acceptance. Even within the Black community, the African person has to fight to be accepted the way he is, the way he dresses, his accent and his food and as such, other than seeing the Black.

This speaks of the differences within the Black men and communities. The participant says that his accent and culture (read Indigenous masculinities) are added struggles he needs to overcome beyond his skin colour definition. Roysam seeks to look at Blackness as a complicated entity based on its cultures. He is quick to identify the fact that a continental African man struggles with multiple forms of racisms based on his food and accent.

When asked whether he considers himself Black, Roysam said:

The society sees us as Black men, I see myself as an African living in Canada. I do not see myself as a Black man. Black men are a different culture and I will not call myself just as a Black man because of the many cultures that define me. I have my ethnic culture and my African culture. There are other people born in Canada, America, or Jamaica. They have a different culture and way they do things.

From this extract, Roysam considers his African self first before being called a Black man. His point of origin is an important component of his identity. While others agree to be called Black men while paying caution to their continental identify, Roysam says that his continental side should be bolded and recognized before his Blackness. Roysam is calling for a bottom-up identificatory politics in Blackness. To him, being Black is an external identification and his Africanness is a salient feature of his uniqueness.

While discussing Black men, Sangi says:

For me if it is defined as Black, it means Caribbean. I don’t mind being called Black because if you look at me and this is what you define as Black, then I am Black and I am
proud of it. If you engage me, then I will let you know that I am Black but also a Kenyan. This is because our cultures are different.

From this conversation, Sangi says that Black men cannot be compartmentalized. He accepts being called a Black man, but a consideration of his cultures, nationality, environment and experiences should come into play. He says that people need to know beyond what they see. He is quick to identify his complexity as a Black man that should not be compartmentalized and essentialized.

Most participants claimed that they had extended family who would help raise their children. In a colonial nuclear family, a man and woman are responsible for raising the child. In an Afrocentric system, the community plays the role of bringing up children. The majority of participants said that they had discussions with their spouses to reorient their parenthood so that they could raise their children in ways that were Afrocentric and Indigenous.

Kerwa says:

I had to leave my family behind. When you look at all this thing, as an African man you are leaving your family behind you. You feel like you have to make a very strategic choice. If you don’t leave, you will miss out a lot. You also need to come and fix the systems like the house and know where you will sleep. At the same time, you feel you are leaving your very young family to struggle with an institution like the embassy. You have to leave them with the extended family. That throws you out. You are rootless. You are floating somewhere.

This shows the role of the extended family in providing help to nuclear family. This is anchored in the Indigenous perspective of reciprocity.

According to George, African Indigenous masculinity is a connection with the community. He says:

This would have affected me. Life is different when you don’t have the family structure, especially if you are living in Kenya. Kenyans live like other Kenyans. Kenyans are social people. We go do this and that together. If you don’t have that family structure, it is very easy to go south—to lose yourself. You lose that focus. I am happy that I am with my family. I feel that family is very important. If you respect the family structure, it opens things for you and protects you as an individual from so much.
What George seems to say is that family is an important unity in understanding Kenyan Indigenous masculinity. To him, family trains people to connect with other people. He says that family plays a big role in maintaining somebody’s mental and emotional self. The family helps a person to pay attention and be rational (key concept in masculinity) and avoid losing the self (emotional). Family is an important unit of defining the self. It also protects family members from outside influence.

According to George (study participant), it is hard for couples to migrate to Canada which can make “one can go south” (have mental health issues). This statement speaks of ways in which the migration process affects the Kenyan man when the spouse is left behind. George treasures the family unit, which is in contrast to the dominant narrative of Black men as irresponsible. While the participant referred to their nuclear family, it is equally important to recognize the role of the extended family in their journey of becoming “men.” To him, the family is an important social unit that asserts his status as a man. The colonial and dominant representation of the Black man as an irresponsible father and family man is troubled by the narratives of the study participant. Participants in this study understand that Black men have been represented as “baby mama.” Such a conception collapses Black men into sites of irresponsibility and damage and subsequently fails to see the complex Blackness morphology.

Participants in this study identified the different kinds of masculinities that exist among Kenyan men. This section seeks to explain them according to how each works in asserting their masculinity. Most men interviewed agreed that Kenyan men do have control of their masculinity in Kenya and that they change their masculinity when they arrive in Toronto. The majority of those men agreed that they ought to change their cultural beliefs on gender so that they can make it in Canada. They were all in agreement that the change in their masculinity was because it would be expensive in Toronto.
An example given by the participants was that hiring a nanny would be more expensive in Canada than in Kenya. The majority of those interviewed agreed that there are some house chores they undertake in Canada would be culturally a misnomer in Kenya. Some of the participants said that they can perform house chores in Canada but would change when they go back. That said, others said that over time they have embraced the Canadian culture on gender responsibilities and that they would not change when they go to Kenya. Some men appreciated that they can do house chores and that they are better than they would be in Kenya.

All Kenyan men interviewed in this study say that they have changed their ways of living. They said that the cost of living, coupled with the social environment in Toronto, forced them to change. Some said that the change was a survival tactic and others said that the change has become their daily life.

Roysam had the following to say on his masculinity in Toronto:

To be honest, I had to realize that my traditions are in the past and that tradition would hold me back. So, I had to embrace where I am going to. So that from inferiority, I said that for me to survive I had to be superior. What I mean by inferiority is this – my culture was not inferior, but when I came here it was inferior. This is because it is a minority culture that very few people practice. So the superior culture would dwarf me in everything that I do. So, I said that I have to move from an inferior culture to the superior culture here. Now when I go back to Africa, I know how to switch to the other culture. The big thing is that I know how people back home take these things. I can somehow try to switch a little bit but not fully.

Roysam seems to claim that for him to succeed, he had to do away with his traditions (meaning gendered colonial traditions). He says that such a move helped him be open to new possibilities of achieving his Canadian dream. He equates such traditions as inferior and that he had to embrace the superior Canadian culture. He says that such traditions are not practiced by many people in Canada and as such the need to reorient his focus on gender performance. To him, culture is transitional in that he can switch from one to the other.
Totokazi said that they would break the gender boundary in their homes by not choosing what they did in the house. For example,

Originally, we were taught that women could stay home and take care of the family. I think that was a good thing. But with a single income you cannot manage to do that. As a man, do I have a problem taking care of my children? No. Am I pushed to do it? Yes. If I am asked to take care of my children, I will do that. I am a responsible person.

According to Totokazi, gender traditions had to be broken in Canada. This is because financial challenges made it impossible to sustain such traditions. He seems to engage in gender conversation and makes the decision to take care of his children rather than pay for a caregiver with their meagre pay. This reoriented gendered house work in ways that opened other possibilities for “boys” to become men. To these men, doing house work in Toronto helped them experience their hidden emotional self.

Kasma, a participant in this study, said:

I have to be at home early so that when my wife is cooking, I am helping the kids to finish their assignments. You know, it is not a very good thing to have your children go to school without having finished their assignments. The school will follow us and find out if we are responsible parents, and when the institution starts following you up it never stops.

This statement identifies financial circumstances and the institutionalization of disciplinary technology as the reason for the change of the Kenyan identity. While Totokazi identifies income as the reason of their gender role change, Kasma looks at how the school system is used to regulate their gender performances.

According to Lipapa:

I have to step in and help with children. For example, if my daughter needs help with homework, I have to step in and help with her homework. I try to put them to sleep and do other things if my wife is not able to do because if she fails it will be costly. She had to wait a whole academic year to redo the course. Kids become difficult to take care of when the other parent is sitting there. Picking them up from the day care is another nightmare. You have to pay a lot if you are making a certain bracket. You also have to hurry up and pick them up plus you cannot have some luxuries at work, for example
having a drink with workmates. Priorities also change and it’s no more about the marriage but how you can sustain the lifestyle.

According to Lipapa, he had to help with raising the children because his spouse was busy. He also says that he misses friends’ parties because he is obliged to take care of his children. From this excerpt, Lipapa looks at the party as something that he must sacrifice for his family. The party reminds him of his Kenyan masculinity, but being in Canada makes him lay that identity down for the sake of his family. Lipapa shows different ways Kenyan men sacrificing their lives for the sake of their children. At one point, Lipapa identifies how his spouse sacrificed her schooling and how he also sacrificed attending parties. To him, prioritizing is key in gender performances.

When asked about his masculinity, Sangi said:

This is Canada. Things are different. For example, your wife works and you cannot afford to hire a house girl. So basically, the kid is at school. So, when you leave work you have to go early to pick up the kids. You will come and prepare food for them. If they have school work, you will have to do that with them. If you sit back and put your feet on the table and start reading the newspaper and say you are waiting for the wife to come and prepare food, you will wait forever. You will not eat.

Sangi seems to connect economics to his masculinity by saying that since he cannot afford a house girl (nanny) and his spouse is also working, he needs to step in and help with child care and household chores.

These sentiments are also supported by Jackson, who says that:

Here is not like in Kenya. I know of some people in Kenya who can afford several house girls. They also have families who support them. Here it is you and your wife. We do not know many people. And even if you knew people, you cannot leave your children with them. It is either you pay them or else take care of your children. My wife is busy at work and so we decided when she is cooking or doing another household job, I can support by making sure the children do their schoolwork. You see here children need parents’ support, which is not the case in Kenya. Here, if a child is not doing their assignment or goes to school without eating, they will come for you.

This statement by Jackson shows that Kenyan men change their identity because systems make
them do it. He says that in Kenya, families can afford a nanny because it is cheap. He also says that extended families also help in childrearing. This is a stark different to Canadian culture where caregiving is an industry. He equates that to his Canadian experience and says he cannot afford a house help. To Jackson, to have a house help would be costly.

According to Lipapa,

My wife and I had an agreement and I did recognize that time has gone where everything was done by her, but the fact that she had a military background made it easier for me because she was able to handle most chores because of her background. Ideally, we were supporting one another by bringing up our first born. Also, back home we had a house help and occasionally relatives were there.

From this excerpt, Lipapa draws a picture of life in Nairobi. Working and having a family in Nairobi allows for the construction of Indigenous masculinities that allow reciprocity, respect, and relationship building between family members as a subunit of the community. One among them is the sharing of responsibilities between the man and the woman. This is because both are earning, and as such the level of consultation is expected from both spouses. Lipapa says that he must find a common ground with his partner. Indigenous masculinities allow for social transactions that respect the needs and desires of others. He says that his wife’s military background enables her to undertake chores. But he also says that they had a nanny (house girl) and relatives who would help them with house chores.

In Kenya, family members also help in household chores and the majority of the time they are not paid. It is expected that they play a role toward raising the family of their kin. Relatives and community members are part of constructing the Indigenous well-being of the family as a unit of the community. Indigenous masculinities are relational and extend beyond an individual. Having a nanny in Kenya is common because they are not costly, and they take up all the household chores. Indigenous masculinities do not pay attention to the economic aspects of
labour but rather the relational part of helping a family grow and be healthy. This point is reasserted by Kerwa, who said:

To be an African man is not something that you pack in a suitcase when you are leaving. These things are with you wherever you are going. Sometimes you suppress those ideas to allow you to adapt to the situation that you are in. Like we cannot afford a house help. You need a lot of money to do that which we don’t have. My pay is not enough. I say that my authority as a Kenyan man is under test. In Kenya, my wife was not working. She was doing part time work which was for paying house hold goods. I used to pay all the bills less whatever she could afford. We had a house help and at one point family also came and helped and so such things were somehow taken care of.

To Kerwa, being African is not something that can be switched on and off at will. He says that sometimes you must be strategic in terms of overcoming challenges. To him, the traditional role of a breadwinner is under siege. This is because he cannot afford to remain the family authority figure under his current financial circumstance. He seems to be reminded of his Kenyan lifestyle where he could afford to provide for his family.

On the question of loss of masculinity for Kenyan men in Toronto, Sangi added that:

There are some family challenges. It all depends on the kind of relationship you have with your wife. If you are someone who has self esteem issues, for example, and you are supposed to be a breadwinner and because the business is low and your wife is the main bread winner, it might make you uncomfortable. But all this is related to how you relate to your spouse. If she is understanding and she knows that at this time I have to hold the family and she does it without showing you I am the one who is doing this, then it is okay.

From this discussion, Sangi says that women and men reciprocate each other. This is key in Indigenous masculinities. He says that communication and the relationship between spouses helps the man to remain calm and collected even when their breadwinner role is taken away by their female spouse. He says that his spouse understands him better. He also says that he is calm because other men also face the same situation that he is in.

Lipapa, while discussing Indigenous masculinity, says,

In Kenya, we are taught to be humble and private. African men are very private and are expected to handle their private issues. Here people are open. In Kenya, we are taught to
respect the elder. When you are here people think you are stupid but in essence I always do that to protect myself since a stupid mistake can make me punished.

According to Lipapa, being humble and private is a key value of being African man. This is a stark opposite to men in North America, who more open and expressive. He says that African cultures call men to respect elders and authority (both men and women). This aspect is misconstrued as naivety in North America. However, this is a major aspect of Indigenous masculinities.

This conception of Indigenous masculinities is supported by Sangi:

The women were actually the herbalists. They would go to the forest and get the herbs. The problem with the Caucasian feminist is they [African women] took up their fights. So, you see the African woman is fighting the African man for things that the African man had no power over. Here you have taken somebody’s culture and made it your own.

According to his Indigenous culture, women are nutritionists, herbalists, and provide nourishment for the community. He is critical of White feminism which claims that African women are oppressed. He says that their role is respected and helps to define community health.

While all agreed to gender changes, Mike seemed to create the impression of the changes as survivalist and temporary:

The issues of gender still with me. There is no way I have changed. Do you know in Kenya when a guy is a chef you will cook in your job but no way you will cook in your house? If anything, he cooks better than his wife. It is the same thing here. Here my dad would try to cook but he will never do the same when we go back home. Here your wife will ask you to help with the cooking and you will not think twice. Imagine you are back home and relaxing and your mother is with you and your wife and then your wife tells you, “Hey, go and cook.” Your mother is the one to look around and question that. My boy is finished [laughter]. Here it does not bother you because you are here, and it is not a big deal. But you see when you go back, those people there they will not understand, and you don’t have time to explain. So, you better adjust to the system.
Chapter 6: Broad Philosophical, Theoretical, and Practical Implications, Analysis, and Considerations

This study sought to understand Kenyan men’s experiences in Toronto, Canada. The aims and purpose of this study was to reimagine different expression of Black masculinity as well as to identify how accents work in complex ways to affect Kenyan men in Toronto. The conversation between the researcher and the participants (read co-producers of knowledge), identified prevailing gaps and provided culturally appropriate tools to understanding Black masculinity beyond its colonial, White, and essentialist measures in ways that would enhance true liberation. The conversation in this study attempted to fill the prevailing gap in Black masculinity in terms of universal understanding of Black bodies’ experiences in education (James 2010, 2012; McCready 2012; Sakamoto, Tamborini, & Kim, 2018), unemployment (Hudson, Neighbors, Geronimus, & Jackson, 2012; Sakamoto et al., 2018) and immigration. While Black masculinity is sensitive to issues around anti-Black racism in North America, this study extended more discussions on the politics within Black bodies as a counter-revisioning of Black masculinity and Black studies.

Though Black masculinity is antiracist in its praxis, it collapses Black men’s issues, which erases other experiences like those of Black women, and Kenyan men’s, as expressed by the study participants. Such a conception works toward maintaining toehold respectability (Fellows & Razack, 1998), where Black men’s issues override other marginal Black experiences, as if they do not matter. Such a focus normalizes heteronormativity in that men’s experiences come to be seen as synonymous to the community’s, in ways that those that do not fit within such lateral conceptions come to be pathologized and labelled as disorderly. It also works in reinforcing and reinventing lateral violence, and consequently sanitizing heteronormativity and white supremacy. The expression of the study participant contests the claim that Black is neat
construction. Majority of participants concur that they are Black men, but they also want their different African/Kenyan identities respected, acknowledged, and recognized. Those identities are expressed and embedded in their resistance, agency, and resiliency as expressed in their experiences with migration, labour, and education in Canada.

This section of analysis identifies key areas of contestation and how Kenyan men are misrepresented or erased within the narrative of Black masculinity. To undertake such an analysis, the researcher looks at participants’ discussions as points of reimagining Black masculinity. This section of the study looks at the interlocking analysis of migration, education, and labour based on the narrative of Kenyan men living in Toronto. The narratives of participants shed light to Black masculinity to look beyond its traditional self and accommodate other marginalized bodies in a liberative movement.

**Immigration**

Participants in this study agreed that immigration visa processing was expensive, time consuming, intrusive and contributes to family separation and divorces (Bragg & Wong, 2016; Daniel, 2005; Joly et al., 2017). This explains the gendered immigration process in visa application, in that the countries that are sending immigrants to another are identified as irrational, broken, damaged, and in need of supervision (Torres & Nyaga, 2017). Such construction strips away the masculine formation of the human exporting country by labelling it as the irresponsible “father” who cannot provide opportunities to its citizen (read breadwinner). In this gendered nation-state gradation, Kenya comes to occupy the place of maternity while Canada arises to the benevolent guardian of the Kenyan children. This constructs Kenya and its populations as broken and unable to provide rational parenting. This narrative of expression by the study participant who said that institutions like the school in Toronto police even in their
home. Kenyan men said that they have to do homework with their children, otherwise the school and teacher will use their failure to assert that they are bad parents.

Hegemonic masculinity employs its institutions to operationalize a white masculine ideology or culture agenda of fixing and freezing the migrant other to the home. Institutions return the immigrant to their borderlands through rationalizing caregiving. The home becomes an extension of the classroom, and the submission of the undesirable migrant other. The Kenyan man seeks to protect the family from the macho school system by making sure that his children’s homework is finished on time. While chores are shared, it seems that they are gendered in that the rational man provides rational knowledge to the child while the woman nourishes the family. This explains the gendering of the home by the school system. Men caregiving also works in ways that maintain gender disparity in public spaces such that women remain private even in public spaces. Women are scripted to worry about their children, hence absolving the male counterpart. This explains why there is still inequality within the household, where women continue to undertake major house work and childcare, even when both spouses are working in public spaces (Hochschild, 1989; La Rosa, 1988; Russell, 1983).

The participant also spoke of the racial profiling of migrant families that fails to provide rationalized caregiving to their children. The participant identifies the technology of documenting and recording of such families as an ever-present threat to their life and survival. In most instances, gender has been used to define civility and subsequently, the rational man. Those who cross to Whiteness come to occupy the site of civility and masculinity. From the perspective of Toronto, men are considered gentlemen if they can help with house chores and rationalize their parenting skills. To rationalize parenting skills is to apply science to caregiving in ways that modernize a feminine field. While that may seem progressive, it maintains
Whiteness and masculine hegemony even in private spaces. A lot of work has been written on fathers who while helping in child care, take them to the public spaces like their workplaces or the playground. This enhances their masculinity in complex ways, in that they can perform their gentle masculinity in public while maintaining their whiteness (Szinovacz, 2003; Szinovacz & Davey, 2008). This is sharply different from African men who are predetermined as irresponsible.

This kind of performance is supposed to be accepted and performed by the migrant other. Men who fail to help in house chores are uncivilized, degradable and damaged. Gender is the new form of neo-liberal currency meant to mechanize and rationalize the private space. In the context of contemporary society, the world has entered the home in ways that vaporize further other forms of caregiving as broken. Black men have been labelled as subhuman due to their failure to fit a prescribed North American gender norm of caregiving. According to Lipapa, “Black men are seen as baby mama.” In this instance, the public space enters the home in ways that defines parenting for some while affirming white parenting as rational.

The study submits that the changes the Kenyan men experience in the West in terms of taking up household chores is innate and Indigenous. There can never be anything to manifest from nothingness. The current manifestation of the self is connected to the repressed self in colonial yesteryears. This is true of the changes that the Kenyan man is undergoing. Some of them said that they feel free and comfortable in their new skin when providing familial services.

The majority of participants said that they do not have communities or extended families who can help with caregiving. Their work makes it impossible to have enough time with their loved ones. This contrasts with Kenya where family and affordable nannies can provide caregiving for working couples. The role of community and extended family support for child
rearing has been eliminated or censored through the tight immigration process that is geared toward settling and normalizing nuclearism of the family. This leads to the majority of men manipulating their masculinity to meet the current need of caregiving. The majority of interviewees said that they cannot afford to hire a nanny and as such, their masculinity must be renegotiated for economic reasons.

They share (form of Indigenous masculinities) household chores with their wives, which makes them feel free and liberated. Participants said they would still share the chores with their unemployed spouse since they considered house work a noble activity. Others said that they had to change their cultural beliefs on gender in order to survive caregiving challenges through filling the gap left by the absence of their extended families and community. Some participants spoke of identity manipulation based on time and space as necessary to suit the new environment, while others said that they appreciate their “newfound identity” and the self-determining freedom it brought with it. Identity is a complicated, complex and variant concept in that some are able to cross the cultural border, while others must walk through the border continuum. Those who cross gender borderlands, connect with their newfound culture while others resist and create a hybrid culture that employs both the host and the home cultures. Both forms of the transcultural movement are subversive and works against imperial hegemony on masculinity. Such a crossing is economically informed as said by the participants that they cannot hire a nanny while others are institutionalized.

These contestations presuppose that it is only the white institution that is the source of the change. This study argues that the repressed self survives generational and collective subjugation, and its manifestation in the West is a reminder of Indigenous resiliency and resistance over time. From a cultural-psychoanalytic perspective, the human lived the repressed
experience psychically and its manifestation in the present is a testament of its resistance to colonial control. The ghost of the past comes to disturb the present, powered and fuelled by inconsolable grief of colonial repression. The Kenyan man lives through connection to his repressed past in ways that question and disturb the present construction of the Black man as irresponsible. This explains the psychic transitioning of the Kenyan man from colonial toxicity to present day malleable identities that can allow them to cross gender and racial borderlines. Due to the contemporary currency of gender parity and equality in determining socio-cultural and economic civility, the White institutions come to occupy the tower of change, hence eliminating other forms of cultural and Indigenous migrant power as an authentic space of empowerment and social change. Such a view was contested by the study participants who claimed that they can also provide better caregiving provided they have well-paying jobs. Such a contestation has been absent in Black masculinity scholarship.

Caregiving is the new form of public racial performance and a reincarnation of boys to men as they go to and from maternity. Those who can walk out and return to their maternity come to be considered as rational and strong. They take their children to the playground or their workplaces, while their spouses undertake house work (Russell, 1983). The narrative of rationalizing caregiving is supported by White women who support the modern man as helpful in caregiving as if it is a favour done to them. To them, their husbands are better caregivers than them, which led to hierarchies of caregiving. On the other hand, an unemployed Black man’s fathering is mired with structural discrimination (unemployment, racial profiling, prison pipeline), making it impossible to express their emotional self to their children and partners (Williams, 2009). To express rational masculinity is constructed as a disorder and pathology for any Black man, hence, non-expression of their desires and suffering in silence. But as Messner
(1997) states, Black men are engaged more in caregiving than their White middle-class male counterpart, only that institutions of power pathologize them as irresponsible through the denial of opportunities. Messner (1997) says,

centrally to the belief that it is white, professional-class men who are on the cutting edge of a movement toward more egalitarian relations with women, research on men’s household labour time indicate that Latino men do more housework, followed by black men. (p. 47)

Structures support White men to have public presence hence have part-time participation in housework and child care, which helps to characterize Black and Latina masculinity as sexual, lazy, irresponsible, and volatile (Messner, 1997; Parada, 2012).

Institutions and other state agencies control and regulate the abnormal emotional racial migrant body from contaminating. Black masculinity is the wheel through which colonial institutional power is operated and realized and works toward erasing other forms of power from below (read immigrants cultures and identity politics). Colonization suppresses and subjugates other forms of living, but Foucault (1980) reiterated the fundamental necessities of local subjectivities as a site of anti-totalizing narratives. For a while, scholarship on Blackness subjugates Indigenous knowledges as if they may contaminate and render its theorizing untrustworthy. They fail to see the power that is organically Black and that can work toward true Black liberation. Such cultures come to be seen as uncontrolled ego and subsequently the superego suppresses them into the state of unconsciousness away of public order. Their manifestation is a threat to the unity and order of the society, and as such securitization of border crossing for such knowledges is rationalized as the necessary evil. The process of cultural and identity erasure and conditioning is done through punishment and rewording. Bodies come to embody change through self capitation and the performance and experiencing of external colonial scripts. The processed body live and experience others through self-induced
management. This study submits that the suppressed Indigenous self is considered damaged, receptacle and living in the past and kept from public self-presentation. Its manifestation elicits a psychological panic of the city, necessitating mental walling and securitization of the borderlands.

Such a reflexive perspective is silenced within masculinity studies and more so in Black masculinity conversations. Black masculinity is therefore implicated in toehold on respectability, lateral violence and epistemological violence of other forms of knowing and praxis. This study claims the power of the Kenyan people to bring forth their suppressed self to the public for overcoming economic suppression. It is imperative for this study to locate local powers as forms of anticolonialism as expressed by application of indigeneity in overcoming economic control, suppression, and manipulation. Kenyan men lay claim to their home culture as a form of economic and social survival, even in an environment of institutional racial erasure.

This subtle racial stereotypes deny racialized men emotional self expression, since they look inwards and blame themselves for the circumstances that they are facing. This helps assert White hegemonic masculinity as superior to racialized which provides the rationale to deny Black men to take up public opportunities. This makes Black women disappear in both the rational and emotional space, keeping them interned in themselves and their pain.

Whitehead (2002) says that most White, middle class men undertake familial caregiving to enhance their masculinity. This time, being a man is not severing the maternal umbilical cord, but also how a man can connect and disconnect with both the rational and emotional world and the capacity to come out of that movement unscathed. Those who can cross maternal borders and survive come to be regarded as real men. Such a movement is gendered and raced, in that some bodies cross while others are regulated at the intersecting point. It also speaks of how some
bodies can be transgendered without being questioned. Such crossings are state regulated and sanctioned so that masculinity comes to be the standard of emulation for other broken bodies. For example, White men have well-paying jobs which makes it easy for them to undertake caregiving as a way of stamping their Whiteness and masculinity as more civilized than migrants’. As a result, fathering for a White man is an expression of their rational being and gentleness. For racialized men, the state suctions their censorship because they cannot be trusted. From this perspective, fathering becomes a White performance of gender sensitivity, which works toward maintaining the stereotype of the Black man as insensitive, irresponsible, and broken. At this point, this study would argue that the absence of Black the father is socially contracted to design them as irresponsible. But on another level, it can also be argued that Black men resist nuclearism of family and look forward to family as an extended form of the community. But at the same time, we have to be conscious of how systems have created a prison pipeline that incarcerate Black men and thus make it impossible to have time with their loved ones.

This conception was challenged by Kerwa, who said that such a representation of Black men does not recognize the economics of masculinity on caregiving. He said:

> Some people will say that we do not take care of our family. Well they can because they have a good job that afford them to visit places but also to have time with their children. I wish they would give me the opportunity and see what a great father I would be.

Such a statement speaks of the economies of parenting and gender performances. Parenting is a question of socio-economic justice and works in ways that design the migrant underemployed Kenya man as irresponsible. Fatherhood is intractably connected to the economies of gender, in ways that White parenting is rationalized and mechanized, while migrant caregiving is designed as emotional and broken. Consequently, systems like schools and welfare, are created to watch over migrants and how they take care of their children. This speaks of the high representation of Aboriginal and migrant children in such systems as welfare (Kim et al., 2011; King et al., 2017).
History has recorded instances of apprehension of Aboriginal children by their social workers and their placement in residential schools (MacDonald & Hudson, 2012) in ways that have been construed as genocidal by united nations. This transitioning of the migrant to Whiteness is another form of public-shaming and punishment and meant to collapse such communities into oblivion.

It also speaks to the level of surveillance applied within high commissions in the global south as expressed by the study participants. The cutting-edge processing of papers is supposed to record the levels at which Kenya is unable to take care of its own. For example, the information that the Kenyan men said that provision of information to the immigration was very intrusive and sometimes overly introspective. Countries in the global North place barricades (censorship) to prospective immigrants as a measure of applicants’ masculinity and to determine their strength (financially, socially, linguistically), as a requirement to surviving in the true North. But such intrusiveness is beyond personal, since it is supposed to provide statistics of shaming the paternity of Kenya and subsequently providing the rationale why Kenyan parenting in Toronto should be watched since a history of poor parenting has been established right in the border. This is an impression not only impressed in the global South, but is also made possible through the construction of other Black men as irresponsible. For this argument, immigration comes to affirm the colonial affirmation of the Black as irresponsible and broken, while precluding the role of colonialism and imperialism. This explains a lot why participants kept reiterating the importance of family when speaking of their immigration experience. It speaks of the border as a contested space of parenthood and construction of masculinities.

In masculinity, for boys to be men, they cut their umbilical cord from their mother, which explains the mass movement of Kenyan immigrants to the West. The process of immigration comes to be seen as a breakaway from the irresponsible other parent, followed by the entrance
into the community of humans. This reasserts the impression of Kenya as a space of nurturance, while Canada remains as the place where boys are made men. Immigration is gendered in the way the exporting country become emasculated without ever implicating the role of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) in the movement of Kenyan men to the West. Kenya comes to be a place of producing raw brains for export to the global north. The fact of rawness explains why such brains, even though a lot of public funds have been used to train it, is left to live a life of squalor in the West. The process of credentialism does not recognize Kenyan education and labels it as broken and half-baked.

The growing brain drain and the present-day economic apartheid (Galabuzi, 2006) experienced in the West makes it hard for new immigrants to help the community they left behind. In 2017, Kenya received more than $1,382 billion (14,330 billion KES) in terms of direct money transfers from the diaspora (Munda, 2017). This is projected to increase in the year 2018. The money has helped stabilize the shilling against other world currencies, hence, helping in community and national development. While this may sound like a success story, one only needs to look at the lifestyles and experiences of the Kenyan population in the West to appreciate the pain they go through in order to regularly send financial help to their families back home. Such remittances would be higher if at all Kenyan education and labour experiences were recognized in the host countries.

This indicates the level at which the West continues to exploit developing countries. The increased deskilling, exploitation of migrant labour, brain drain, and immigration censorship allows for a continued separation of the rational state versus the irrational spaces. This means that one country can import another’s best brains and dump them in a pariah state of being. According to Bhabha (1994), Kempf (2009), and Spivak (1999), colonialism in immigration is still rife and its pressure of censorship, disciplinary technology of exploitation and pain is felt in
local spaces. Such experiences are treated as a non-issue in Black masculinity scholarship.

The expression of this fact speaks of the interlocked system of immigration, education, and employment. Participants in this study spoke of their education from Kenya and how it cannot provide them with the right employment. They said that the impression put out in Kenya is one where immigration is thought to be that of countless possibilities in Canada for educated Kenyan men. That narrative changes when they come to Canada. One participant intimated that the company that he had worked with in Kenya was supposed to help him settle in Canada, but the tune changed when he arrived in Canada. He said he was unemployed to the point where he started blaming himself for his misfortunes. It was very hard for the participant to express the role of accent and the hardships he had faced. It is through the intervention of the researcher on the role of accent and the revealing of his own challenges, own that the participant started expressing how he could not get an interview even thought he had the “right education.” The process of immigration is supposed to internalize the impression that the immigrant was lucky to have been chosen and so the issues they are facing is of their own making. Obliviously, the immigration may protect itself through claims that it provides the immigrant with information of the skill sets required for one to get employed, but the question is whether the explained has been clear to understand and has proven to demonstrate the role of accent and employability chances.

The immigration process genders Kenya in ways that creates the impression that those who cannot immigrate are childlike, while immigrants are rational, macho, and strong beings. While this is true, Black men are gendered in their racial category, which points to the impression of them being irresponsible in parenting. This narrative is made possible by breaking the immigration periods of families. Participants expressed their experience of having to come to Canada alone and going back to and forth to make sure their spouse and children received their immigration papers. It should be remembered that the gendering of nation-state is violent and
informed, as well as operated and regulated by colonialism. It borrows its ethos from a historical moment of racial separation of the migrant other from their spouse as expressed in the immigration process of the Chinese.

While it may be argued that violent gendering damage the immigrant, it is equally important to recognize critical antithetical and counter praxis tactics and strategies applied by the Kenyan immigrant in resisting colonial gendering. According to Kerwa, immigration is a strategic process of deciding whether to leave behind the family so that you can prepare things in Canada and then come back for them. I look at this as an *astavista* moment where the Kenyan man strategically decides to lose some ground to win others. He says that the process of immigration is a tussle of titans, which claims the fact that the process of immigration is met with resistance from the would-be immigrants. It also speaks of immigration as the process of birthing of men from boys—those who can come to be defined as macho. But such a White definition of the Black is tentative based on their racial embodiment. This is testified by Kerwa who said “it feels like you are leaving your young family to struggle with an institution like an embassy.” This reasserts the Black men as the only men who can battle out the institutions, while leaving the woman as a dependant to the man. According to some participants, they would leave their spouses and children with their family as they went out wrestling the immigration institution. This helps divide the society through gender-based lines. The man goes hunting for immigration papers while the docile woman is left in the house. This helps maintain the gendered African society where the Black man is the protector and provider of the house. This is colonial and supposed to keep the woman in the private space while maintaining the narrative of men as strong and risk takers.

The majority of the participants in this study said that immigration causes family separation and divorces. Lipopo says:
While Canada claims to take pride in reuniting families, on the other side they take responsibility on separation of families because the immigration system takes longer to reunite. I believe right now it is streamlined a bit but then it took longer and other people gave up and took on with their lives because other people cannot travel because of immigration status and things like that.

Such a claim is a vivid reminder of the historical point of Canadian immigration policy and the Chinese head tax and subsequent family separation. The practice was supposed to maintain Canadian white purity from migrant vulgarity. The need for Chinese men in building the Canadian railway line was followed with the policy of their return. Such liminality helps regulate and control the movement of the migrant other. The racial is included and excluded based on the need of the white state. It is a form of biopower where racial bodies are made to live to serve in the making of the white state (Foucault, 1997). From the discussion of the participants, spouse visa processing takes time and may lead to family separation and divorce. The Canadian immigration policy on Chinese was supposed to help men come to Canada while curtailing the entry of the women. This seems to have been replicated based on the narratives of participants.

While this is true, George goes ahead and says that the battle cannot be won without the community. He says that he must leave his spouse and child with the family. This is strategic and a tactical withdrawal to win other battles. This also speaks of Indigenous masculinities that believe in community reciprocity, respect and love. The community is an oracle of strength for most would be immigrants in the battle with the immigration institution.

Canada is traditionally White even with the progressive and inclusive immigration policy (Bhuyan, 2017; Joly et al., 2017; Wamley, 1999). The cost of visa application is exorbitant which curtails the prospective racialized immigrant other. According to the Canadian immigration visa platform, visa application costs ranged from $155 (work permit), $1,040 (relative sponsorship), and $200 (temporary resident permit) (Government of Canada, 2019). The fee is non-refundable, making the process of immigration exploitative and a form of social
elimination of the emotional racial immigrant other. The participants in this study claimed that the process of immigrating to Canada is expensive, time-consuming, and intrusive. These mechanisms work toward blocking entry of the racialized African into Canadian society (Krysa et al., 2017; Wong & Guo, 2018). The immigration is out of reach from the undesirable others and this makes it an economic and classed process of defining who is human and subhuman. The questions are introspective and objectifies the migrant other. The migrant comes to occupy the space of an object whose utility is to produce knowledge (Foucault, 1975) for public consumption and wealth creation. The migrant other is made public through technologies of body shaming and punishment, which then works toward keep them away from applying for immigration. The fee is out of reach to prospective Kenyan families, which creates a class-based immigration industrial complex that works toward market rationality of demand and supply. Modern day immigration is imperial and grounded on market rationalities (read masculinity and rationality) and the economic worth of the migrant other. Immigration is a place where men are manufactured, processed, and separated from boys based on financial ownership.

Kenyan immigrants look at Canada as a place for realizing their dreams and aspiration. This success projection is constructed through the everyday media description of Canada and the United States of America as the land of immeasurable possibilities and opportunities. But such a socio-economic construction genders citizenship, in ways that depicts some countries as providers of “bread” while others as emotionally broken. Immigrants coming from countries imagined as irrational come to be needy children whose survival depends on the benevolence of the West. The immigration process is tailored in ways that re-assert the racial construction of Africa as a childlike thing that needs white charity for its survival. This colonial guardian becomes a technology of denying Kenyan men employment opportunities, with the claim that
they lack Canadian experience, and that the only way to save the broken other is by nourishing their broken spirit. Such nurturance comes in the form of training and mentoring, which is supposed to improve their Canadianness which instead leads to the collapse and death of Kenyan men in terms of them underemployed. The death of the migrant other is predicated by the benevolent state that usurps the role of the other as the self-determining being. This is expressed by one participant who says that upon coming to Canada, he was mentored on how to clean his clothes and house and reminded that such duties can employ him. Such kind of charitable practices work toward paternalizing the migrant body and confirming the dominant narrative that racialized bodies are half-baked and should be processed to enter White civilisation. While it can be argued that the dominant body helped the migrant other to see the “light,” it is the process of lighting that is of interest in this study. The “how” of the process of lighting helps shed light on the determination of empowerment. Whose empowerment came to be asserted and affirmed? Who benefits in this “lighting”?

Immigration is an economic plan (Bhuyan, 2017) supposed to accumulate wealth through the classification and tokenism of immigrant populations, such that particular racial bodies come to be seen as desirable in the eyes of their own people through their economic power. But such a reflection of Black freedom is manufactured and short-lived and meant to create psychological and emotional borders between the immigrant population and those left behind in the global South. For example, one participant said that when they were unemployed, they contemplated to return to Kenya, but they couldn’t because they must maintain the narrative that they are doing well. This affected their relationships with their immediate families both at home and in Kenya.
Migration is also class-based in that families can cross borders of poverty into wealth so that now they can own a good stone house and a car. The picture painted back in Kenya is of an opulence and luxury for the migrant body, which is supposed to be replicated on their extended families. Such narratives of the West as a provider of opportunities and prosperity for the rest of the world, though well meant, affects immigrants’ health more so if they are un/underemployed. The immigrant living a lie to satisfy the White impression of success is common knowledge. They perform hyper-masculinity (send money back home) even in their precariousness just to satisfy the white success lie. Pasura (2014) discussed this diasporic contradiction among Zimbabwean men in London who exercised their hypermasculinity by sending money and property back to their relatives in Zimbabwe as a way of regaining their lost masculinity. Some of the immigrants (read men) cannot go back to their home countries because it is viewed as meekness and weakness. To return is associated with loss of manhood or a return to maternity, in that one cannot handle the fast life (read competition) of the West (public space). Their gendered performance of immigration helps prove and stamps their masculinity and capacity as providers to their extended families. In the process of such performances Kenyan men suffer mentally and psychologically. Kerwa said,

Being in the West, one is a heavy load since we have to send some money to our loved ones. Remember that I have to work multiple jobs to make a living and yet I am expected by my family to send them something at the end of the month. I do this because if I don’t they will be worried that I am not doing well.

Pasura (2014) says that transnationalism is a matter of those bodies that can cross the border without hindrance of race, gender, disability, citizenship, and other socially constructed barriers. This study views border crossing beyond the physical and comes to occupy the psychic, emotional, socio-economic, and political aspects of the immigrant.
Immigration process censors the admissibility of a person into the community of settlers, in ways that perpetuate the narrative of Black men as boys who must be helped to enter community of men. As an economic program of wealth accumulation, immigration looks at the financial capability of immigrants as the currency of admissibility to human community, therefore, producing men from boys. Those without financial capability remain emotional and maternal while those who can afford are exalted as humans. The economic admissibility is complex and complicated in that while some have the economic might to fly, their racial and gendered self follows them in the West as a bio-technology of censoring their social movements in employment and education facets.

This allows the creation of a gendered and raced form of respectability between populations, such that those who “cross the border” come to occupy the world of “rationality” and are well to do so, while others are constructed as economic savages, deplorables, and dependants. This works toward sustaining capital accumulation, exploitation, and marginalization through the standardized categorization of the Black community as desirables and deplorables. The application for a visa becomes a ticket toward transitioning them from the past to modernity. This false consciousness makes marginalized communities compete for the available space of civilization, allowing for wealth accumulation. This competition helps sustain the migration market economy, which impoverishes exporting country through brain drain and maintaining the West as powerful and the city in the sun.

In the moment of lateral competition within communities, poor families fundraise (*harambee*) and sell their assets to send their children to Canada, with the hopes that they will help in the economic uplifting of their society upon their return. From this vintage point, the immigration process is idealized by Kenyan peoples as a community endeavour of boys
becoming men. It is about an individual who goes hunting and brings back the spoils to his community. Participants spoke at length on the role community and family played in the immigration process. Some provided financial support while others offered space for their spouses and children. This is what defines Indigenous Afrocentric masculinities, in that the process of becoming men is connected to the community needs and aspirations. This speaks to Njambi’s (2005) assertion that circumcision was a process where men and women became community warriors. The process of becoming men is community-based and supposed to empower and prosper the community. This contrasts with the individualized Western thought of immigration, where men wrestle with the gendered immigration system to expand colonial fiefs.

Participants in this study had a comfortable life in Kenya and expected better life in Canada. Instead they faced racial discrimination in employment, making it difficult to survive in Toronto. Participants said that they left Kenya so that they could help the extended families that they had left behind. From the African standpoint, crossing the border means going beyond the self and supporting community. This is done through money transfer between the diasporas and their homeland. Border crossing is about relationships beyond colonial walling. Migration also allows for the performance of hyper-masculinity for most migrant men, who find gender role conflicts in the West (Pasura, 2014). While this maybe construed as toxic, its can also reflect points of resisting colonial squeezing of the Indigenous extended family into nuclear family. This study looks at such moments as point of breaking the shell and the rising of an independent and self-determining racial other.

Critical masculinity (which is White and hegemonic) and to which Black masculinity borrows its theorization, would claim that hypermasculinity (Kimmel, 1994; Messner, 1997; Pasura, 2014) is toxic. However, according to the Kenyan men, they send money because they want to share their success with their families in Kenya. Their masculinity is community-based
and meant to share their success with their extended families. This conception is connected to the discussion of Indigenous masculinities which looks at sharing, love, respect, and redistribution as key determinants of a human being (Nyaga & Torres, 2017). Indigenous masculinity is enhanced and directed by its symbiosis, in that community and the individual benefits from each others’ strength and power. This forms of masculinities have been alienated and footnoted in mainstream masculinity scholarship in order to support a white argument of Indigenous Black as toxic (read mythopoetic) (Kimmel, 1994; Messner, 1997).

According to the immigration portal, visa processing time is between 8 (Visitors’ visa in Kenya) and 40 days. This official pronouncement does not consider other timelines, such as cases where the applicant may not have enough application documents. If a prospective immigrant has insufficient documents or makes a mistake on their application, they must start from the scratch, hence incurring no more charges. Immigration is an economic decision that the immigrant has to contend with. According to participants, they had contemplated stopping the immigration based on accumulated charges. Immigration office applies time and financial charges to censor the immigrant, in what comes to be mechanics of welfare system. This is historical based on the experiences Chinese immigrants who were charged the Chinese head tax to control their entry in the White Canadian society (Chan, 2014).

It is important for this instance to juxtapose immigration process to the welfare process. To think of it from this perspective helps us understand immigration as surveillance and a process of shaming and disciplining the undesirable other. It also helps to understand how documents come to occupy a space of managerialism and governmentality of space considered as broken (Moffatt, 1999). It also helps reimagine the role of the immigration officer in unlocking gendered immigration process. According to one participant, some of the information that they were required to produce was so personal and private. They said that they had to
provide that so that they could immigrate to Canada. But with the production of that information, the participant said they felt naked. The current economic immigration process is conceived along the welfare social system that constructs the Black body as a welfare receiver/cheat/disease; hence rationalizing the intensification and securitization of data collection to protect the system from the Black pathology. This argument rationalizes the application of technologies of punishment and shaming on the bodies of Black migrant as a form of maintaining public order and purity of inner city from the troubles of the outer city. The Black body comes to be seen through documentation and serialization of its existence.

Such processes allow immigrants to be objectified through classification and introspection and mining of the data to produce knowledge (Foucault, 1979) which is then sold in the market to determine who can work and who will remain unemployed. According to Moffatt (1999), welfare office, records keeping, and documentation and the welfare workers operate in complex ways to militarise and intensify surveillance, censorship, and processing of the welfare receiver (read prospective immigrant) into a cheat. Documentation is used to watch over and determine, classify and categorize, and serialize the authentic receiver as a serialized cheat. For one to qualify for the welfare, they must produce their private information, which is then used to determine their authenticity. The process of intake is one of dehumanisation of the welfare receiver into an object of introspection.

The visa applicant is expected to provide financial proof that they can support themselves in Canada. It is meant to protect the system from unnecessary financial baggage in the form of the incapable immigrant other. Financial records work toward the authentication of their rational masculine power to survive in the harsh environment of the truth north. Such records provide the ground of visa acceptance or denial to any aspiring migrant. Immigration recording and documentation are form of foot prints and biotechnology of visa application, that
work toward maintaining a narrative of control and watch over the broken other. Case management, recording and documentation create an impression of an efficient, effective and transparent neoliberal immigration process; while veiling the pain of visa applicant. Immigration process is a neoliberal project that maximizes wealth for Western nation and while objectifying and dehumanizing the other. A visa applicant will “open themselves” for scrutiny in exchange for admission to Canada. Though voluntary, the exposure is done under duress and manipulation. It seems a voluntary process of presentation yet behind it is desperation of the immigrant caused by manipulation of the third world economies by the West, that force immigrant populations to give themselves up for exploitation in the name of economic freedom. From this conception, visa application is a laboratory where the pathological other (read Black body) is exposed and consumed in public through technologies of punishment and disciplining. Such an exposure opens the Black body for public scrutiny and eventual punishment. These immigration experiences of Kenyan men are non-existent in Black masculinity scholarship. This implicates Black masculinity to epistemological violence and imperialism (Butler, 1999), toehold on respectability (Fellow & Razack, 1998), and lateral violence toward continental Black Africans. Black masculinity scholarship disclaims other Black experiences as non-existent and emotional, when these are lived realities that are edged out in Black studies.

The majority of participants said that accent was the reason why they were un/underemployed. They must do odd jobs to pay bills and send some money back home to their families. Kasee while supporting the question of unemployment said, “you know Kenyans are social and like helping their families back home.” To be bordered is to be caged or tethered to the home in ways that precludes and hides public punishment. One is unemployed and incapable of survival and as such the state provides charity as supplement of survival, which is then used to collapse the receiver and maintain capital accumulation. The migrant other is placed between
death and life, in ways that capitalizes on saving and erasing them. A Kenyan immigrant may physically be in Toronto, but their national identity, accent and skin colour returns them to their original point. They are systemically and systematically marked as returnee bodies whose settlement must be contested and regulated. Their presence is a constant reminder of the terrorizing borderlands in the city, hence rationalizing the securitization technologies build on the skin and accent as tools of protecting the public order and keeping safe those considered as desirable.

Education

Kenyan men spoke of their experiences in school by expressing how their skin colour and accent affected their learning in the Canadian school system. Blackness and visibility/invisibility was a key reflection of the study participants, in that being visible in a class has a connection with race. One of the participants equated his visibility to a red car in a parking spot, and said that it can easily be identified and profiled for elimination. Kerwa consciously chose the analogy of the red-coloured car to paint a picture of how racism paints some Black bodies as dangerously broken and in need of fixing. Black male body terrorizes the comfort of a White classroom, which necessitates and authorizes immediate lockdowns to secure the city through expunging and labelling Black bodies as pathologically emotional and eventual medicalization (Ellis, 2009; Fanon, 1967; Henry, 2017). The presence of Blackness in the city (read classroom) elicits spatial hysteria (Mbembé, 2004) in that the city want to be multicultural in the eyes of the world, yet the Black ghost keeps reminding him of historical racial erasure. This was expressed by one of the participants who said that his presence in the university affirms to the world that it is multicultural. It is at the level of where they vanish and become a symbol of multiculturalism that the participant felt evicted. It was expected of them to take up the role as a way of giving back for having been given scholarship. This study argues that benevolence is the art of making
Black gendered bodies disappear, while others appears. Such charitable acts patronize and steals Black academic self determination toward true liberation. On this, Black masculinity is White charity to save Blackness from self-cannibalization.

Every space is securitized and sanitized from the Black terror and pathology, using academic polices meant to keep Black bodies at bay. Red portrays the Black body bloodline (emotional) connection to maternity, irrationality and meant to pathologize such bodies as irredeemably broken. Red connotes a connection the past or a return to maternity, and subsequent failure of Black body to transcend and enter modernity. The fate of the Black skin is based on its irrational and uncontrolled animal instincts that require White benevolence to remove them from their dark past. Such is the narrative that rationalizes the mechanics of militarizing and saving Black body from itself, which works to evict such marked bodies from communities of learners.

For the study participants to identify a student as a car speaks of the objectification of students in the classroom, as well as the discourse of industrial complex economics in teaching and learning (Nyaga, 2017; Nyaga & Torres, 2018; Sawchuk, 2006, 2008). Education employs a Ford system of processing and marketing students. The presence of these cars in a parking lot speaks of the competing rationalities of masculinity in the contemporary industrial classroom. Its visibility is a point of analysis for this study, in terms of understanding the discourse of colonial eviction and White man’s burden in that the visibility of the red car is its own undoing.

The participant posed whether the car knows of its visibility or how it is presented in the public space. The objectified car (Black body) cannot understand itself and knows of its belonging and identity through the manufacturer (colonizer) (Fanon, 1967). The Black body is processed by damaging and erasing its past and creating its now. This is done through the
administration and prescription of Western cultures as an antidote for Black pathology, which works to shame and punish the colonized. Over time, the colonized is ashamed of itself and its past and seeks to be exalted to Whiteness (Fanon, 1967). The identity of the Black skin is dictated and managed by the maker. It cannot see its alienated self based on its manufactured identity. The red car is alienated from its own community, hence, does not understand the self but rather stays in loneliness. The lack of the community is to estrange the student from the self and others. To that end, the red car’s manufactured visibility is a technology of governing it efficiently and effectively in ways that serve the interest of the colonizer and capital. The colonized is a public spectacle and serves to remind the colonizer of its past (Fanon, 1967). The red car comes to occupy the tokenized space of measuring other cars of its ilk.

In manufacturing business, colour is not innocent in that it determines the price tag of a given car. The visibility of the red car works toward its low pricing. Buyers avoid the car because of its visibility and the subsequent public traffic profiling. The academic processing of the Black student does not immunize them from career profiling. This speaks of the experiences of some of the participants who claimed that it is very hard for them to get the jobs that they were trained and educated in. The Black student is frozen in their parking spaces and come to occupy the place of the dummy or the unreal. The red car tries to be normal by slowing down, but its colour betrays the trust. This racial alienation of the Black student is marked by their accents and skin colour as expressed by the participants.

The analogy of the red car sheds light to the understanding of the politics of vocalism, representation, and White privilege. As previously discussed, the colour of the red car works toward its undoing. Its engine sound works in multiple ways, among them being identification of the car in cases where the car is physically invisible from a distance. The accent leaves a trail of
marks that replaces the colour. The car is trailed and profiled even in its absence. The engine sound determines the decision of the buyer. A foreign engine sound works toward returning it into the processing site. One of the participants spoke of how he was profiled and made to repeat a class because he was Black and had an accent. The participant identified ways in which systems worked to mark Black students as incapable and ordered them to repeat the course. Such markings have an economic purpose of accumulating wealth at the backs of the marginalized student, since they have to pay for the repeated course. This is the double tragedy befalling Black Kenyan male students in the Canadian school system.

Participants also spoke of the gendered classroom where Black women are unrepresented and consistently discouraged. The study participants spoke of failures by the administration and faculty to support and mentor them. Participants spoke of gendered racial profiling of Black women from the academic space. Totokazi eloquently spoke of how Black women are pushed out of the school system in order to maintain a racial and gendered order of the system. He said that there are few Black women in the University and that the system still looks at ways of erasing their presence and visibility on the campus. He argued that even though the language of social justice is omnipresent in the social science department, the university is notorious in expunging women of colour from its space.

Oyewumi (1999, 2006) speaking on colonization in Africa and present-day multiculturalism, says that Black women were colonized twice due to their gender and race. There are multiple walls erected to fail and push out the Black woman from achieving freedom and self-determination. It is equally important to discuss the plight of continental Black African women in Western academic circles in that while Black African men face elimination through accent, culture, nationality, and skin colour, Black women face multiple gendered anti-Black
racism. Continental Black African racial profiling is based on their accent, nationality, immigration, and cultures, and makes them occupy the shadows of Black masculinity scholarship. Black masculinity is concerned with the experience of Black men born in North America and fails to recognize other forms of racial marginality and erasure as valid. Black masculinity joins the White mainstream narrative through asserting its existence as authentic and true Black expression. While such a claim may work toward temporal acceptance, it also reduces other expression as unnecessary and emotional. The marginality of one community works toward the elimination of the other in what Fellows and Razack (1998) calls toehold of respectability, which works toward mainstreaming whiteness and false liberation.

The participant reflection on Black academic erasure points to the question of faculty composition and connection to Black experience in schooling and learning. According to Tomic (2013),

Historically, he argues, ELT must be understood as both a tool and a product of the British imperial expansion. In a sense, “ELT is a product of colonialism not just because it is colonialism that produced the initial conditions for the global spread of English, but because it was colonialism that created many of the ways of thinking and behaving that are still part of Western cultures” (Pennycook, 1998, 19). He further reminds us that “from our conceptions of the dichotomy native speaker/non-native speaker, to the images constructed around English as a global language and the assumptions about learners’ cultures, much of ELT echoes with the cultural constructions of colonialism” (Pennycook 1998, 19). Thus, the images of Self (native speaker) and Other (non-native speaker) that have been created in the history of English language teaching and the unequal relationships that have been established between English and other languages and cultures in this long and spread-out journey, have had a significant influence on the ways in which the contemporary post-colonial social order has been structured and understood. (p. 4)

While this is true for the Black student, Kenyan Black male students had to deal with their accent as they continued to negotiate themselves in Western academy. Participants in this study spoke of being silent in the classroom due to the shame of having to repeat themselves to another student. Asked to comment on this issue, the participants claimed that their education back home
is the reason of their present suffering. It is interesting to look at how racism is internalized in such a way that the oppressed blames themselves for their misfortunes while leaving white systems blameless.

Participants also said that they are here because they want the best for their families. Kerwa says that as an African, being in a community is inherently ingrained in our African Kenyan culture. Every aspect of an African body is a site of community sharing and relationships building. To them learning and schooling is relational, and students come to recognize the inherent power of humanity in themselves when they share and work as a community. Having a community in schooling is fundamental to African students (Dei, 1994, 1998) in terms of creativity and knowledge production in learning and teaching. The African Ubuntu in education has played a role of centering African-oriented learning and teaching in classroom, in ways that celebrate the individual and community inputs in knowledge production (Murithi, 2009; Oviawe, 2016). Oviawe (2016), while discussing Ubuntu and education, says:

Ubuntu is envisioned as a framework that is part of the humanist traditions of broader African belief systems, although this specific term originates in Southern Africa. Ubuntu is a philosophy of being that locates identity and meaning-making within a collective approach as opposed to an individualistic one. As a result, the individual is not independent of the collective; rather, the relationship between a person and her/his community is reciprocal, interdependent and mutually beneficial.

Students come to recognize the role of others in their academic growth and well being. Ubuntu teaching is fundamentally crucial in Afrocentric education and teaching. Dei (1998), commenting on Afrocentric community schooling, says “The present school system is monocultural. Afrocentrists aim to expand the curriculum to include the valid achievements and knowledges of all societies and to use the voice of the community/culture itself to present a people's histories and struggles for affirmation” (p. 2). This perspective is supported by Kerwa, who says that learning is a community process and seeks to connect students with multicentric
teachable. According to Dei (1996), the present-day Western classroom is monocultural and fails to respect the social and cultural composition. The current process of learning stamp Eurocentric universalism as the only true knowing, hence, erasing alternative knowledge systems as emotional and deranged.

Skin colour and accent are neoliberal technologies of individualizing students and curtail the community of learners (Dei, 1996). Such technologies create a gendered and raced classroom that works toward surplus maximization and meeting capital interests (Ross, 2009). The neoliberal classroom is a site of silencing dissent through the singling and problematizing foreignness (read accent and skin colour) while sanitizing the role of capital in the collapsing experiences. The African Black man is erased through his accent, skin colour, culture, and nationality.

Kenyan men spoke of how they are made to repay and reseat a course that they believe had been prepared for them to fail, as another challenge they have to deal with. Though Black masculinity studies covers the racial militarization of the school system with a focus to race, it fails to look at the experiences of Kenyan men in academic circles. The application of nationality and accent as the face of the same coin that work toward further marginalization of Kenyan men in Canadian educational spaces is fundamentally and epistemologically necessary to understand the multifaceted aspects of race and racism. For example, the effect of having to repay and redo a course because of one’s nationality speaks of global inequality in learning and school. It is a testament to neoliberal academic racial apartheid, capital accumulation, and the subsequent racial marginalization that continues to exist in the school system. The participant connected learning spaces to production processing of the migrant who has to pay for their “incapacitation.”

Education as an industrial complex looks at students as raw material whose processing is
necessary to sustain the market and improve surplus. The market comes to occupy the quintessential position of learning and teaching in ways that park migrant students, which keeps them from being employed.

Spivak (1983) and Hall (1996) speak of colonial representational politics and how it works toward creating a culture of racial elimination of the subaltern subject. Subaltern discourse originates from the work of Antonio Gramsci on intellectualism written in his popular book: *Prison Notebook*. The Gramscian (1971) reference of the subaltern as the “low rank” of the society or populations living on the fringes of the world order and whose accessibility of citizenship speaks of the experiences of Kenyan men in metro Toronto. Participants are constructed as convicts of the world where they cannot access better living conditions (unemployment and racial engineered educational policy) and continue to collapse in abject poverty.

According to Spivak (1983), subalternity is the cultural eviction and misrepresentation of the other or lack thereof as intellectually corrupt and living in desolation which justifies why they need the benevolent White saviour. The subaltern other is objectified and socially designed as premodern, cultural, and an object of self-gratification and public consumption (Fanon, 1967), whose hope depends on the charity of the White system. This cultural representation connects to Aristotle’s perspective on knowledge and human rights (Kaczor, 2015).

According to Aristotle, to produce knowledge is to claim the right to humanity. From this conception, knowledge production is gendered and is a process of joining the human community. Those who consume knowledge are subhuman, maternal, and dependant. This explains the gendered classroom where bodies are constructed as emotional and broken as consumers, while others as rational because they activate their mental powers to produce knowledge. Education
systems are created in ways that make it possible for barricades to exist, which hinders racialized bodies from producing knowledge. Their place is to consume and experience others. To that end, knowledge production and the subsequent language of rights is gendered and raced in ways that help sustain capital accumulation while simultaneously evicting other bodies so considered as undesirable. Marx equates consumers of knowledge to the oxen or what Aristotle refers to as pigs, whose happiness is in the body (stomach). The ox is an object of labour or property to be owned and assist in the accumulation of capital. The power to cognition is human, while physical labour comes to be equated to animal instincts or maternity. The failure to control emotions defines one as living in the past and unable to join modernity, subsequently rationalizing tools and instruments of punishing and disciplining them.

The presence of the Black skin elicits instant militarization and securitization of the classroom, to remove the racial other. Among the ways of securing spaces is the constant and continuous return of the Black male body to borderlands, in order to maintain the public order. The Black body is constructed as emotional and dangerous and occupies the private space (Fanon, 1967). Fanon (1967) says that the White man conceptualizes the Black through their genitals. This is the basis at which the White man controls the Black male body since it cannot control its nature. Charity, which itself is an emotional act, is then utilized to bring order to the emotional Black body, but ends up collapsing him to his violent borderland.

This means that the presence of the racial other in and by itself, represents disorder. Even without the physical death, the Black skin’s survival is minimized through the technologies of skin and accent. The Black skin must be made to exist to sustain the empire with its labour, and simultaneously erased when not in need. Though the Black migrant is reviled, the system needs them for its own survival, which speaks of the biopower system of life and death (Foucault,
Black bodies are placed in the life/death interchange, in that they can be recalled and expunged when needed. Mbembé (2004) speaks of this hysterical need of the Black labour while abhorring the labourer. The Black body is an object of use and has no human value. But while this may be true of the White, it is equally true of other Black bodies born and raised in Canada. The xenophobic fear of the African migrant being able to take away their jobs is ever present.

Participants identified ways in which their fellow Black men instigated fear and distaste of them and identified them as not capable to do “rational” jobs. These levels of perspectives have not been discussed within Black masculinity discourse. It seems like Black masculinity seeks to maintain simplicity by sweeping lateral violence under the carpet, which implicates it in colonialism.

The death of the Black skin must be seen through the lens of incapacitation to transcend itself, and therefore, help justify the process of improvement as the only necessary process of introducing them to themselves. This explains why the history of the wretched of the earth is written by outsiders, since they are considered broken and uncivilized. The Black is incapable of writing its own story, which justifies the white narration of the Blackness as a site of darkness and in need of light.

But such death must also be seen from the point of subaltern resistance (Spivak, 1999).

One of the participants said,

You start feeling victimised and you know you are working against a context that is against you. So, you compensate with everything. I compensate from the minute I leave the door of my house. You make sure you present an image of somebody who does not fit into the stereotype. Threatening is just oblivious. The image I present is supposed to make it hard for an individual to box me in or classify me. It is a lot of work. It is even more accentuated more in this institution. A university like this is also where you are not supposed to be. It prevents the conversation that I would have if I was not misrecognized. The work to correct the misrecognition take away time I would have spent giving you some form of information about who I am. In our department, there are few Black men. Most of them are from Africa. The problem with fitting in is compensation. I have to
compensate because the society is racist internally. I have then to do something to present myself in a way that is not easily legible for system.

The participant says that they must labour in creating a different identity which is unreadable and unrecognizable by the system. It is a form of killing the self to disturb the system. Through self-sacrifice, they limit state censorship and consequently can survive institutional racism. This statement is key in reimagining resistance. In most instances, we have gendered resistance in ways that have reasserted the dominant narrative on resistance. The participant is strategic in terms of how they want to counter racism. To them they disguise themselves in ways that they cannot be recognized. At this point, I speak on the role of Indigenous women’s form of resistance as constructed by my grandmother. She once told me that sometimes being angry with the enemy is like drinking the poison and expecting them to die. This speaks a lot on resistance born out of love and respect. She told me there are other alternatives of resisting the oppressor in ways that compel them to resolve the problem they have created. She said a small act of kindness can melt the enemy and make them realize their own faults, though this can easily be misconstrued as an implication to the colonial system.

From my perspective, the more we argue, the more we continue applying the master tool of resistance and erase ourselves. Anything that comes from the people living the pain has historically come to be construed as emotional and unnecessary. This includes even the forms of resistance. There are moments where silence has been constructed as a form of implication to colonialism. But according to one participant, they use silence as a tactic in resisting colonialism. According to one participant, the use of silence was an important strategy in making the oppressor think they are taking charge, but they are actually doing the cleaning of their own acts.

The statement also speaks of the necessary death as a form of resistance. I also want to argue that a self-inflicted death is necessary in order to resurrect the subjugated knowledges from
below. The death of the subaltern (Spivak, 1999) Black student is a presentation of a resilient and resisting power from below and above. The death born out of the colonial academic processing of the resilient Black student is a statement of resisting from the within. It is a death born of self-sacrifice and supposedly meant to introduce social justice dosages into a White academic space. It is a cultural representation of the difference in academic circles, in way that centres the true and authentic self as self-sustaining and empowering. It comes to define alternative knowledge as sites of decolonizing the systemic oppression of Black students in academic spaces. Such a sacrifice is necessary for the future of other Black students. In this perspective, the masculinity of the self comes to serve the needs of the future and those of others. This is the African Indigenous form of masculinities, which resists colonial erasure over time through resiliency and selfless service to the community.

From this perspective, death is a necessary process of decolonizing the self. It is a process of unwrapping and disengaging coloniality. This form of decolonization is spiritual and believes that the hidden side of life can only be seen through death and resurrection of the self from the grave. Decolonization through death believes that the spiritual is more real than physical, and as such and to be able to visualize colonial oppression, they must embrace a spiritual embodiment. Death comes as a way of crossing borders in ways that one ceases to be under the control of the leviathan. The burying of such a body is a return to the authentic self (rebirth) or a form of stepping out of the scripted life of the prison or asylum and recalling or resurrecting subjugated knowledges. To look at the physical death of the subaltern is to agree that the subjugated knowledge has something to speak in their death. Foucault (1997) says that, in death, subjugated knowledges comes to liberate themselves from industrial colonialism, managerialism, and
governmentality. It is a movement from the comforts of today and envisions the possibilities and opportunities of tomorrow.

This reasserts Gramsci’s contextualization of subalternity in term of creating its own state or in this case its own intellectual space of speaking back to the White and hegemonically masculine educational system. To speak back through death is to celebrate the resurrection of locally subjugated knowledges and the affirming of self-governance and determination.

Foucault’s work on biopolitics explains how the self-inflicted death of marginalized bodies (read Black student) leads to the emasculation of the leviathan. The physical death of the subaltern subject challenges the colonial bio-technology of regulation (traditional intellectualism from Gramsci) since it is beyond the physical legal control of the ruling class.

Spivak speaking on “strategic essentialism” says that minority groups apply shared identities for the sake of realizing social justice. Black students employ this mechanism in ways that help them survive and overcome racial denigration. This explains why they have become the university’s symbol of diversity. It also explains why the Black student opts to repeat and repay the course. It is important for them to understand and fight from within, rather than without.

Going through the school system is a form of resistance through self-exposure to colonial oppression in ways that are sacrificial. It is a way of acting border to protect the living. In African societies, warriors are expected to be at the forefront, and put their lives on the line, in order to protect the future generation. This kind of death is futuristic and is meant to expand the border beyond what is held for granted demarcations. This is a key African perspective of masculinities, in that the strength of any human being is tested through selfless submission and commitment to the community’s well-being. Such a perspective crystallizes the subaltern power of disturbing the colonial industrial academic complex through the application of multiple ways
of knowing and practices, which in some academic quotas may be misconstrued as meekness. This perspective of presenting the local desires as a decolonial tool has not been represented within the Black masculinity scholarship.

While some Black students remain within the system, others are violently evicted from the school system. Those students who drop out of the Western school system should be seen as resisting a colonizing education, while affirming their ways of being as valid. Under normal circumstances, such students would be tagged as weak and broken. This study argues that such students believe in self-inflicted pain and death, rather than the shaming from the colonial-led system. The death brought about by the refusal to be processed mentally takes away the power from the leviathan.

The colonial industrial complex and a market place (read classroom) maximizes profits through the processing of the Black bodies under the guise of the civilization of the broken soul. The Black student’s mind is supposed to fit neatly into the capital program of profit maximization and supply of cheap labour to the market. I look at the school system like I do the mincing of meat, where children are pressed into a mincing machine through the streaming of the classroom and expected that when they are done, they should all look alike and be reduced to small pieces of meat that can easily be digested by the market. The process of mincing meat is gendered, classed, and raced, and allows some meat to remain whole while simultaneously breaking others into small pieces.

Black educated men are targeted for improvement in order to provide cheap labour to the capital system. The education system is tailored in ways that creates self-doubt for Black bodies in preparation for labour exploitation. The majority of participants said that they could not talk in their classroom, which helps them understand the internalization of racial doubt among Kenyan
men in Toronto. Accent was a major deterrent in voicing their thoughts, which provides a
platform of keeping them docile and silent, hence, makes it easier for them to be manipulated by
the system. Such silence leads to low self-esteem and disengagement from the class, which also
affects their employability in the future. With time, disengaged Black students are
systematically and systemically pushed out of the school system and subsequently become
candidates of precarious labour. This is because their self-esteem and mental well-being is
affected and tempered through the technologies of accent while they are schooling, causing them
to be exploited and violated. The education of the Black student comes to be the production of
meek and submissive students whose presence helps reduce the operating costs of the
corporation. That said, Western education is the opium that keeps Black bodies under control.

On the level of exploitation, Totokazi said,

Because you are so unique, it is easy to mingle because everyone is looking for the
diversity. You fill the quota of diversity in town, in friends’ circles, the university. So,
you get invited to very many things because you are the diversity sort of. It was very
boring. I used to work on summer. The job was being a tour guide and because I was an
elite student, when I walk to the administrator’s office, they already know me. They
make things up for you. I was also in the poster board for the university. They also hired
me for their brochures for their diversity quotas because the university could not present
itself as just a white and Asian university in their student recruitment because they go to
other countries to recruit. So, they have to present this pleasant picture and they always
brought us in. The administrators need to do this. They call upon you. Really you cannot
say no because they are giving you the funding. This was basically a positive racial
profiling where you are profiled to demonstrate that this place is actually not what it
seems. It was expected even though not written that you have to perform the work.

The Kenyan student’s appearance in the university brochures is a stark reminder of its caged self.
They are the grounds of gendered exploitation, performance, and capital accumulation. This
speaks of the way Black bodies are conceived and constructed as cultural geographies that create
a particular social order. Tokakazi says that his emblematic public performance is
unquestionable and works in making him the symbol of diversity and a product of public
spectacle and consumption. He is expected to know his space and perform the same. This is
historically documented and recorded, going by the ways in which colonized bodies were shipped out of Africa for public consumption in metro cities like London. One example is the fetishization of Sarah Baartman, a Southern African Khoikhoi/sa slave woman in public spaces. She was promised a better life in the West, but ended up being a commodity of public and male consumption. She was shamed, punished, and sexually objectified.

Basically, the participant identifies ways through which he was exploited so that the university could project the image of a very diverse institution. The student became the point of advertising the institution as a multicultural space. This perspective was embodied by the student, and based on the student’s comments, he had to do it as an appreciation of the charity provided to him by the school. The Black male student embodied the diverse marketspace through which the university came to be known to the world as the centre of multiculturalism. Such are ways in which the university attracts other racialized students who then provide financial power to the institution, but also social standing of the university as multicultural. As previously argued, education is the new frontier of capital accumulation through the exploitation of marginalized students. Precarious education is imminent for Black students coming from continental Africa, in terms of paying the price of diversity for a white school system. These scenarios depict the education system as a market place where Black students become targets of exploitation and violence to sanitize White academic guilt and shame.

According to Pon (2009),

At this juncture in history, cultural competency bears striking similarities to new racism (Barker, 1981). The term “new racism” refers to racial discrimination that involves a shift away from racial exclusionary practices based on biology to those based on culture (Goldberg, 1993). Cultural competency, like new racism, operates by essentializing culture, while “othering” non-whites without using racialist language. (p. 60)

The migrant Kenyan man is a signifier of state and university benevolence to the incapacitated and broken Africa. Historically, Africa has been constructed as the needy, damaged, and wild
continent whose survival hangs on the benevolence of the white saviour. This colonial inscription allows for the performance of masculinity in the provision of bread and erasure of the needy child. By helping needy Africa, Western nations can prove their gentle masculinity in the world social order. Africa is a ground or an arena where Western nations come to exercise their heterosexual gender performance. What in the eye of many seems like a charitable practice by the Western nations, ends up working toward self-gratification through the disappearance of the broken African. The collapsing of the African child works to reminds the Western nations of their machismo and male potency of overcoming their childhood. The Kenyan student is an embodiment of the ground under which Western male performance is stamped and leaves traces of marked colonial geographies on the body. Charity reminds him of his necessary submission to Western violence and exploitation. Through charity, the Black body is violently and constantly evicted from citizenship right through bodily forms of punishment expressed in the daily reconfiguration and culturalization to fit a multicultural and diverse white university system. The broken African other is objectified and owned through benevolence. He is subjected to submission and reliance to West magnanimity for his manufactured survival.

Participants in this study recounted several instances where the university professors did not provide mentorship to Black students. Totokazi, one of the participants, says,

They don’t understand the things that you are suffering. The kind of sense that me as a Black student I am necessarily handicapped by virtue of background which comes along very easily in the Canadian context even on paper. You do not get the kind of opportunities. You are not represented in the types of opportunities that are taken out at various levels. Things like scholarship, mentorship. Like we are not that many. So when we have a few Black students, you would think that it would seriously affect those professors to take a very keen interest in them early enough to really mentor them closely. That is not what happens. You are left with the dogs and given less support.

The participant expressed the fact that they are there to be seen and not to be heard. They are to take and perform the orders in ways that makes them non-existent. This explains why they are
not mentored and supported in their academic processes. This shows the levels of elimination of the Black student from the academy in terms of future opportunities and prospects.

Asked about his university experience, Totokazi says he felt left out and lonely. This claim is repeated by Kirwa who says that he is the only Black student in his class. To Kirwa, being among other students yet alone and lonely is key to understanding Foucault’s (1997) claim on biopower and the Black African student. The sovereign has the power over death and life, and that Black students are held in the midpoint of the two systems of being. Totokazi says the loneliness is propagated by institutionalized whiteness and white privilege as manifested in faculty and administrative composition in the University. He says that such a faculty constitution pays little attention to the needs and desires of the racialized students. To demonstrate his frustration, Tokokazi says that his experience speaks of a faculty and university that is distant and leaves them to the dogs. In Africa, the dog represents security and protection and is used in the police system to sniff and identify criminals. The participant’s claim that they have been left to the dogs, speaks of a policed and profiled body. Their bodies are broken and can be fed to the dogs. This speaks of the academy as a hunting ground of those marked as undesirables.

Lipapa says that due to racial shaming, he had to change his job from a call attendant to a security guard. Even in a precarious position, the Kenyan man was an item of racial fantasy and erasure. There are multiple forms of oppressions that keep the migrant other at bay. These are racial marginalization, exploitation, violence, imperialism and powerlessness (Mullaly, 2008). The migrant other lacks tenure in his first job caused by the constant racial slurs brought about by his clients. The Black other must be denied the right of settlement and ownership of space, through the constant movement of precarious labour. Such movements cement and normalize the narrative of the white as a settler and owner of the space, while maintaining the Black nomad on
the move as he searches for greener pastures. It rips away the arrival of the migrant and displaces them in the violent borderlands and concentration camps, where their statehood is questioned.

Secondly, the migrant other downgrades himself to the lowest employment levels based on his education and experience, in ways that he thinks will make him less visible and thus, better survive racial expulsion. As a security man, he uses more of his gestures than his speech. This is a form of linguistic disabling of the other, which affects their self-esteem, and which allows for easy exploitation and violence upon their bodies. His insecurities helps secure his precariousness, erasure and further exploitation, built on the framework of the pacification of the labour. His silence alienates him from himself and others, and as such they are overworked without creating any resistance to the capital. A social labour is a collapsed and regulatable subhuman whose involvement allows for the capital to be accumulated uninterrupted. This is the technology of robotics, where the human ceases to exist and experience the master. To lose the social human is to embrace the objectification and eventual loss of citizenship and the rights to be human. They come to occupy and live in a symptomatic pathology that is diagnosed, medicated, or expunged for the security of the universal speech.

The Black other self-manages in ways that reasserts the colonial normalization of a White accent, and consequently, rubber-stamping of a White single story. In this instance, the participant’s silence and invisibility provides a fertile ground of the stamping of the colonial narrative that says that migrant other cannot tell their story, and thus submits to the writing of their history by the White man. His social labour movement dips him into more vicious cycles of precariousness. His security is his insecurity. The saliency of skin colour has been an important feature in Black masculinity. That said, it is equally important for Black masculinity to centre the role of accent in the racial removal of the continental African man from his citizenship rights.
Accent sifts social desirables and disposes racial remnants in ways that are complex and complicated. The skin is the oblivious and overt racial signifier, while the accent provides a subtle covertness of the racial operation of Black bodies from continental Africa. Accent allow for an economical removal of the broken racial other in the comfort of invisibility. The technology of accent allows for the veiling of a blatant and deliberate racist act and the actor, in ways that mark them from invisible positions of power. This study investigates how racial technologies maintain and normalize colonialism and the narrative of capital accumulation, through hidden racism perpetuated by the verticalization of accents. The invisibility of race and racism is inconceivably possible through the technological-based process of concealing the personhood.

The Kenyan man is complicated in terms of his experience and history, and through that, he challenges the universal understanding of Blackness and Black masculinity in America. Of course, his presence elicits questions such as: “Who is this Black that does not look like other Blacks? How come he cannot eat oxtail like other Blacks do? How do we refer to this thing?” There is an expected formal accent of a Black man in America. Those with a different accent are punished through joblessness or other forms of social evictions. They occupy the pariah spaces within Blackness and are rendered readily disposable and pathological. The deviation from the Universal Blackness is pathologized, and becomes a site of racial erasure, punishment, and disciplining in unemployment or underemployment. The Kenyan man’s deviation from the norm invites penalty and disciplining, as if their luck is a security risk. Black masculinity is implicated in the very silencing of the experiences of Kenyan men and families in the United States of America.

The majority of continental Africans living in the West are unemployed or underemployed due to their accents. This was affirmed by the study participants who asserted
that the claim for Canadian experience as a requirement for their employment targets their accent as a site of their racial erasure. Anti-Black racism against continental African Black men has variously connected their foreign accents, which is supposedly used to remove them from educational, immigration, and labour systems. Such experiences that connect accent to the racial expulsion has not been discussed within Black masculinity scholarship.

It is through the skin that we are hailed and hail others, and meanings about the being are made. This spatial conception looks at the body as a site of danger, emotions, dependency, and in a constant state of nature and war. This gives credence to imperial surveillance and regulation of the migrant Black other than through the technology of Western benevolence which works to repulse them from the community of humans. This gives the onus to the very toxic performances of masculinity, knighted as charity. This was expressed by Lipapa and George, who claim that they got a job through a White individual. This mode of saving the bordered bodies creates the impression of a dependant child that need the help of the rational guardian, which paternalizes the migrant. While benevolence is important and supposed to be human, it is the unconscious intent of harvesting on the pain of the receiver that creates the impression of how the appearance of some leads to the disappearance of others. The African body is spatially stilled and frozen and seeks the mercy of the White saviour for its survival. This accredits the colonial rupture of the skin as a necessary evil and a requirement of saving the broken others from themselves and others. Charity and the civilizational trend imprints colonial masculinity on the colonialized bodies in ways that affirms Whiteness as necessary in the emancipation of the Black other. This impression was made clear through the narratives of the participants whose employment was made possible by the White.

Through everyday rehearsals, space comes to embody and submit to the characteristic of the rational and charitable saviour. This spatial orientation and repetition are enhanced through
the technology of punishment and, rewording characteristic of human conditioning. This explains the experience of Lipapa, who needed to act in a way that affirmed the Whiteness in order to achieve his dream job reward from the White man. While his credentials and accent may have determined his employability before, these indicators lost their credibility when the White man helped him. His accent had to change in anticipation of “occupying” the White space. His pay cheque worked toward white-washing him from his dependant self, which finally provided the White man with the required sense of strong masculinity vis à vis the dependant immigrant other.

This charitable act of nurturing the immigrant other can be looked at through the lens of the egg and the embryo. The egg shell locks or imprisons the embryo from nature (read nurturance and the politics of charity), which if not troubled may lead to the death of the embryo. The body is the irrational endo-sphere while the skin is the epicentre of racial violence on Black bodies. The survival of Black bodies depends on the levels and duration of violence meted on the skin, such that with time the organs die in what is termed as a natural death, which precludes the history of colonialism. Such violence is state-authorized and creates and sustains the lives in the public and private space through the deliberate eviction of the social undesirable as emotional and ownership by the rational White subject. This is the reality in the educational processing of the Kenyan man in the name of development. Black bodies are expected to perform Whiteness and gentlemen masculinity, a process sanctioned through policy, curriculum, and the ideological underpinning of the Canadian school system. Lipapa says that if one fails to perform the military drill of the White classroom, they are made to repeat and repay the whole course as a form of punishment for their incapacitation.

Like George Orwell’s animal farm, all men are equal, but some are more equal than others. There are those who are boys because of their accent, and through the improvement of
their articulation, they are then able to tentatively enter the community of men. I say “tentatively” because their return is imminent, in the case that they seem to return to their maternity. They can only stand in the doorway and wait for the invitation to the party. It is in the door point where they remain as submen who can be sent and used at the will of the White system. This tells of the experience of one of the participants whose presence as a manager was always questioned by the customers. He said that even with his assertion that he is the one in charge of the facility, customers would still ask for a White manager. To be in the doorway is labour-intensive. You ought to constantly claim the space. While affirmative action has helped elevate the marginalized groups, it cannot envision the violence in the doorway. This is also connected to the limits of Black masculinity in terms of understanding the improvement of Black bodies into White spaces.

While such segmented doorway removal of the migrant other is justified by law and policy, participants in this study claimed that such categories cease to exist when a White body offers to help. Whiteness and White supremacy happens when an individual act of charity stops an institutional practice to open routes of helping the needy, and the eventual exaltation of the saviour. It is a patriarchal practice that allows for the White body to patronize the system to submission for the affirmation and the confirmation of White masculinity. Such charity satisfied the taken-for-granted belief that the White man is the sole provider and protector, while the Black species is the everlasting receiver of White benevolence. It speaks of the differentiated gendered racial power between men and how it works toward maintaining the narrative of the Black man as the needy and dependant child, while the White Cartesian subject is a necessary saviour.

**Disposable Racial Other**

Black man’s entry in the city is pathologized, controlled, censored, and regulated (Anderson, 1999; Derrick & Armon, 2016; Dickerson, 2002; Dilts, Rubison, & Paul, 1989;

Then there is the question of labour which, at least in the history of capitalism in South Africa, cannot be unlinked from the histories of race and of the body—especially the black body, the body that is at the same time a body and a commodity, but a body-commodity which enters in to the realm of capital under the paradoxical sign of the superfluous-superfluity. But what does the superfluous designate? In the history of race and capital in South Africa, the superfluous means, on the one hand, the valorization of black labour-power, and on the other hand, its dispensability—the dialectics of valuation and dissipation, indispensability and expendability. (p. 660)

Blackness is a border that limits the movement of African men in Toronto. In addition to skin colour, Black men of continental African descent are faced with accents as limits of their desires. Their inflections situate them on the outer limits of the society in ways that they cannot earn a descent living. Such limits are made possible by hegemonic laws and policies. Among those policies are those connected to immigration, education, and labour. The interlocked systems of these policies work in complex ways to deny and dispose African men into borderlands. The limits are set in motion in the port of entry, where intensified securitization and documentation of the immigrant is prioritized. Education is a major determinant of immigrating to Canada. As argued before, Canada seeks to bring in educated immigrants who can help in nation-building. There is massive studies of how educated immigrants have ended in precarious jobs, trying to make ends meet. Expert immigrants have been reduced to shadows in that they cannot work in Canada, since their credentials are not recognized or are invalidated. This study seeks to recommend a change in the immigration processing, such that it is expedited and is less intrusive. The labour laws should recognize overseas certification and provide a road of returning immigrants back to productive life. The accreditation process should be cognisant of its own discrimination and organize ways of accrediting immigrants as they continue working and providing necessities of living to their families.
Law is a necessary evil of control and overcoming of the emotional urges of the degenerate other. Law is racially implicated in profiling and the incarceration of Black bodies into the state of exception and violence (Anderson, 1999; Brooms & Perry, 2016; Dickerson, 2002; Dilt et al., 1989; Evans & Evans, 1995; Galabuzi, 2006; Hall & Pizarro, 2010; Huang & Gunn, 2001; Joe & Kaplan, 2001). You cannot speak of Black men’s issues without implicating the White structure. The White man must protect his space, life, and property (White woman is White man’s property and space) from the sexually explosive Black man (Fanon, 1967). Mbembé (2004), while discussing public hysteria, looks at biotechnology as a limiting and complex process of definition and determination of geographies and bodies. The Black skin lives in liminality, respected when needed but expunged when not on need. Blackness in the city is a necessary representational evil, in that without Blackness, the White ceases to exist. This representational narrative comes with limits. The White man fears racial dilution and infection from Black pathology (Fanon, 1967), yet he needs the same for his own becoming.

Black man is an object of public eviction and surveillance through racial and gendered biopolitics. He is made public through technologies of shaming and punishment. The Kenyan colonial neck tag is a social border control (Law) expected to bring order in the frontier while protecting the city from social undesirables. Protection and order politics of violent missions of a state under siege, applies law to cleanse itself of borderland pathology.

The colonizer asserts his power by making visible (public) the invisible. Race and masculinity are a colonial technology of making Blackness visible and invisible simultaneously, and serves the interest of the capital. A Kenyan man must subjugate his masculinity to access the public space. The Black man is underemployed/unemployed in what Galabuzi (2006) calls economic apartheid, yet he is expected to fulfill his breadwinner duties. His submission is
necessary for his survival. Kenyan men face continuous and consistent erasure from citizenship because of their accent. Citizenship is a technology of control and regulation of bodies that do not matter (Kenyan men).

Masculinity as a discourse looks at state policies and how they come to expose immigrants to spaces of violence brought about by unemployment and underemployment. According to Connell (1995), state is a masculine entity and works toward affirming the hegemony of the ruling class. Those outside such a dominant hegemony are marked for elimination. The colonial masculine gaze of the Other is necessary to control their spatial ownership. In Toronto, White hegemonic masculinity controls and orients immigration, education, and labour systems. It orients and shapes institutions of government and other private spaces. That said, hegemonic masculinity in Toronto helps define where one’s resides, works, and socializes with, when, and where. The entry of any Black immigrant in White spaces serves the interest of the capital and is detrimental to the immigrant Black other (Galabuzi, 2006).

The White space expunges the Black skin in ways that help to maintain White purity. The look from the White male body makes the racialized male body question their capacity and capability in such a space. The gaze is also performed by the other Blacks, which speaks of Freire’s conceptualization of pedagogy of the oppressed. On this end, this study recommends a conversation between Black communities to identify ways in which they are implicated in anti-Black racism. It is necessary to identify ways in which we look to the toehold of respectability as the only form of empowerment. In the same breath, it is important for Black masculinity scholarship to adopt new forms of masculinities (Indigenous masculinities) as necessary forms of anti-colonial praxis. Whitehead (2002) and Fanon (1968) speak to the White fear of the Black man in that they cannot be trusted and are emotional. Such existing fears have made it
impossible for continental African men to be unemployed/underemployed. As a recommendation, this study seeks to look at different ways that anti-Black education and campaigns can be included in the policy and daily conversation of all Canadians. Educators have a role to speak of to the effect of anti-Blackness among Black communities. This should be done by Black scholars, whom we understand and have lived anti-Blackness. It is also equally important to have continuous studies that are geared toward anti-Black education.

African Indigenous communities have a cultural connection to the land (Smis, Cambou, & Ngende, 2013). Land has a cultural dimension and measure to a people. Colonial land tenure erased this relationship. Fanon (1968) has connected land loss and mental walling. He also says that the African man must always seek the affirmation of the White man. Colonialism is mental walling. Gendered and raced colonial policies determine what is rational, competitive, conscious, and public, as well as what is whole versus what is emotional, docile, unconscious, private, damaged, and receptacle. It determines who belongs and does not belong in the community of human beings (Razack, 2015). Those determined as irrational are erased from the political community. Those who are rational are determined as citizens. Being a woman, racialized, and Indigenous is pathological and dangerous. (Muhammad, 2010). Indigenous knowledges and practices are erased and pushed in the unconscious (private) and identified as a mental pathology that is dangerous to the existence of the public. There is a strict censorship of such practices using the mental bordering and walling. Resistance against walling is met with an equal measure of violence.

Cultural colonialism is psychic (Butler, 2013; Fanon; 1967; Koopman, 2013; Oyewumi, 2006). Education, science, and religion surveys Indigenous geographies and determines them as outdated, uncivilized, irrational, and emotional (Bhabha, 1994; Dei, 2000; Oyeyumi, 2006; wa
It is this scientific mapping of communities as savages that the agency to improve and colonize is hatched. Bodies come to be defined as remnants of the past that need to be saved from self-cannibalization (Razack, 2015). Colonialism become an act of saving the relic from self-cannibalization. Anti-colonial lens looks at these colonial processes and their manifestation in the present-day society (Dei & Kempf, 2006; Shahjahan, 2005).

Global movement of bodies and capital has unsettled the homeliness of the nation-state as the marker of identity. One needs to looks at how the community seeks to maintain its value system even under such external attack from the world defined by market and profit maximization. In the current global arrangement, value systems are to be seen to exist in ways that are complex, hither and thither—a back and forth process. Both colonial and Indigenous aspects combine in complex ways that inform how people live, make meaning, and experience health.

While bodies transition from their earlier formation to their projected selves, they constantly look back, more like a baby seeking parental guidance and confirmation for adventure. It is a mix of nature versus nurture—a back and forth, hither/thither movement of spatial growth and development. The nurture controls while nature frees the movements.

While the majority of Kenyan men did agree the change was necessary for their survival, Roysam saw it from an economic point of view. Through the change, he could now earn a living from utilizing the change. Roysam says that his home culture could not afford him his lifestyle and so he had to change to survive. He says that he had to shed off his culture. The participant says that he can switch from his culture to the host culture and back based on the need of the time and space. According to Roysam, his identity is situational and contextual, and he can move from both his superior and inferior culture. At one point, while discussing the superiority and
inferiority of culture, he reflected and seemed to rationalize his terminology on the ‘inferiority’ of the Kenyan culture.

The argument on inferiority and superiority comes to define colonial repression of Indigenous cultures. The question of colonizing Indigenous cultures is equated to the disability of Indigenous cultures to provide rational scholarly leadership. When the participant identifies the inferiority of cultures, he calls out the emotional and less economical aspect of such a culture. When a culture is identified as uneconomical, it returns to its past. The cultures that have economical power come to occupy the space of the rational and hegemonic masculinity.

The participant says that his Kenyan culture is inferior to his host culture. Later he rationalizes his word choice, which shows his respect to his home culture while recognizing the role of the host culture. The point of rationalization is a tidal wave, where he goes back and forth in ways that disturb his arrival as an end. Later in the conversation, he says that he can switch from each culture based on circumstances. This perspective is important in two ways. One is to showcase the anti-colonial resistance of Kenyan men immigrants to cultural control and suppression. Two is to explain that institutions may play a role in identity change but cannot be considered as the overall determinant of the change. Kenyan men have overt and subtle forms of resisting colonial power to maintain their cultural authenticity. The back and forth rationalization of inferiority and superiority by the participants works toward disestablishing coloniality and imperialism while asserting the power of Indigenous power as a site of decolonization.

Active resistance happens when Kenyan men decide not to settle in the host culture but instead flow between the home and the host points. This unsettled and slippery movement makes it impossible for the institution to regulate or control them. On the other hand, subtle resistance allows the Kenyan man to undertake house chores in ways that are economically and culturally
sensitive. The key issue in this analysis is to showcase the power of subjugated knowledge and
the presentation of the participants’ desires in ways that make sense to them. In fact, Roysam
sums up this conversation by saying that he feels better that he can do certain domestic chores
that he couldn’t do in Kenya. He is happy to find and live his subjugated self in ways that serve
him and his family. Such an African migratory cultural analysis is missing in Black masculinity
studies. Black community and more so Black men are presented as in need of White power and
privilege, hence dismissing their local power of resiliency, agency, and resiliency. Such a
colonial focus of damage and charity revictimizes and makes invisible Black bodies, while
making institutional White power more visible. Black masculinity fails to see the underlying
power of the local systems, and by that measure it rubber-stamps colonial power. This study
attempts to understand local knowledges as sites of power against colonial and imperial control.
Since colonial power applies economic power as an edge of dividing and controlling migrant
bodies, participants apply their repressed selves to overcome economic control and present their
desires in ways that are clearly understood to them.
Chapter 7: Conclusion

The aim of this study was to look at how accent affect Kenyans in Toronto in terms of their employability, education, and immigration. Through that, the study also sought to understand whether Black masculinity can universally represent all Black men and by extension the Black community. Before discussing the success of the study, it is important to identify limitations of the study. It should be known that this study was a small-scale qualitative study which makes not generalizable. This study was possible due to the limited studies that focused on Kenyan men in the diaspora and by extension in Canada. Except for some newspaper column highlighting spousal abuse, mental health, and substance abuse among Kenyan families in the West, less is known about effects of unemployment or underemployment to the Kenyan families. The existing literature gap affects Kenyan men in terms of their employability in Toronto. On top of that, there is limited studies that focus on immigration, education, or labour issues among Kenyan men in the diaspora. That said, the study had some surprises such as the analogy of the ‘red car in the parking lot’ to depict the Kenyan man in Toronto. This analogy is a clear manifestation of how the Kenyan man is capable of looking inwards (reflexive self) in multiple metaphorical lens, and yet the state defines him as incapable of any intellectual work. The other surprising thing on this study was how one participants used silence to break social and economic barriers presented in work places. While silence may be presented as implicated in oppression, study participants recognised the multiple contribution of silence.

In migratory politics, back and forth movement between nature and nurture reformulates transnational imaginaries and the experiences of migrant bodies and value systems more like cultural tectonic movement that comes to shape how migrants experience life in the West—in what Walcott (2003) calls diasporic sensibilities. The nations are conjoined by unstable yet
stationary cultural, economic, and social water mass, to which the migrant other must swim into mysterious seas of possibilities and opportunities and still hold on to the hopes of harboured success. Migration is an expansion and contraction of nation states, cultures, and identities. Expansion allows transparency, commodification, and capital possibilities of the rational state actors while interning migrant bodies in violent borderlands. In retrospect, contraction is the home for unchecked expansion. While some national realities can expand and contract, others are frozen in borderlands; so, referred as protected, failing ontologies or the home.

To return home is to find a vintage point of understanding the beyond; a vocal or theoretical point of focusing on the crudities of the West. Mbembé and Dubois (2017) speaking of migration say:

No matter how far they travel, mi grants maintain tight links with their places of departure. Something of the nature of an image attaches them to their places of origin and compels them to return. Identity, then, is created at the interface between the ritual of rootedness and the rhythm of distancing, in a constant passage from the spatial to the temporal, from the imaginary to the orphic. (p. 99)

The home brings back the memories of yesterday into the now of the uncomfortable and unknown threatening images of global terrain brought by migration and transnational mix and flux of cultures, all battling for recognition in the beyond. The maternal national memories are the launching pad for stabilizing yet propelling the migrant other over the unstable waters of the West. In transnational movement, the migrant other seeks to break away from maternal national self yet return for solace and affirmation during strong and overbearing tidal waves.

Migration is subject to memory—a going back to the home. Such a return comes to question the host culture in ways that allow new forms of understanding identificatory politics of the beyond. The now cannot be without the past. Memory is a violent encounter between the past and the present, a rising of the ghost to remind the now of its incapacitated totality and fundamentalism. Memory is a coming to terms with lateral and epistemological migratory
violence meted on carceral bodies so considered as emotional, broken, and dangerous. Such memories are gendered in terms of transnational intelligibility and presentations. Transitioning is a back and forth movement that creates unending experience which fails to submit to imperial collapsing and commodification of social bodies.

In such unstable terrains, mired with multiple forms of inequalities, migrant survival is fluid and in concert with the tidal migratory sea waves. It is the art of dancing in the dark-shadow areas of the seas, never coming close to the leviathan but believing in your instinct (maternity) to deflect you from harm’s way. To be fluid is a violent and a strategic encounter, a competitive dance of some sort between internationalism and provincialism, such that some bodies expand and embrace diasporic imaginaries while others are held in national detention cells due to their failure to match the dance moves. Transnational spaces come to be occupied by the rational world citizen, who can dance beyond the cultural and economic borderlines, while diasporic bodies remain held in their national maternal imaginary space even in international spaces, in what Shipley et al. (2010) refers to as international concentration camps or shadows of the world.

This study argues that the world cannot exist without the home. It is equally imperative to think of beyond as unsettling the home. This question begs how you find home in unsettled seas. How can one settle in unpleasant tides of the ocean? How can the migrant self find comfort in uncomfortable and unstable waters that threaten to flood and decimate the home with its hypermasculinity, and hegemonic tendencies as expressed through the socio-economic and cultural power? Where does the migrant Kenyan man belong? Can the home speak in the beyond?

Cultures that are held in their maternal national memory are pathologized, medicalized,
and policed due to the failure to break away from their emotional-visceral self. This psychoanalytic view looks at immigrants who cannot assimilate to the dominant Western culture as broken and socio-cultural waste. This reasserts colonial Western Euro-American ways of living as more rational and macho compared to other cultures. This viewpoint speaks of the gendered transnational movements that define some cultures as maternal and provincial while defining others as rational and true; these definnation simultaneously creating a cultural and economic borderlands that continue to further aggravate unemployment/underemployment rates among African immigrants in the west (Mutekwa, 2013). This transnational processing and coupling of bodies as unemployable/employable reiterate colonial and racial narrative of Africa as childlike (Shipley et al., 2010; Webhi, 2017), and unable to break from its maternal/animal instinct; and as such untrustworthy of participating in employment processes (Galabuzi, 2006). Migrants are incarcerated in rented bodies whose doors remain locked and blamed for their failure to enter modernity. Such carceral bodies are faced with economic, social, and psychological hardships (Galabuzi, 2006), brought about by systems that work together in complex and interlocking ways to keep them interned in subservience and brokenness, and their only way to break from this international cycle of poverty is the help from the White subject. This restates the West as the saviour of the wild African child and the subsequent technologies of improvement.

This transnational conception of bodies and actualities is necessary in today’s increased state sponsored evictions of immigrants’ bodies due to their language and accent, nationality citizenship, cultures, and social status, which underpin migration, education, and labour policies and the law. Immigrant bodies are considered impure, pathological, diseased, damaged, and social excesses and legal evictees (Razack, 2015). These expulsions of undesirable bodies
supplant state masculinity, necessitating an interlocking system of patriarchy, Whiteness, and imperialism to work together in ways that are complex and variant and consequently covering mass genocides of marginalized communities.

Language literacy is one of the civilizational missions that aims to accommodate the Black migrant into the body politic but simultaneously collapses such bodies into economic oblivion in what had come to be named as economic apartheid (Galabuzi, 2006). The Kenyan man is removed from home by imperial rational measures of Structural Adjustment Policies, yet he cannot settle in the West because he is incarcerated by his accent as expressed in migration, education, and labour policies. His accent works intractably with these policies to position him in the borderlands of never-ending racial violence, marginalization, and exploitation. Such linguistic experiences, though not yet expressed in Black masculinity narrative, are necessary discomforts of questioning the traditionally held believe of the authentic Black bodies. Such instabilities brought by the expansion and shrinkage of the world transnational cultural movements help break away from the North American traditional knowledge basket and imaginations. To transcend the comfort of the home (read self, nationality, culture) is both a going forward and a looking back to memories as forms of resistance, agency, intervention, and resiliency. This varying movements are contradictory, overlapping, and confound each other in ways that trouble normalcy both at home and abroad. Such ambiguities complicate the existing totalizing knowledge basket, more so the understanding of Black masculinity as a sum explanatory lens of Black men’s experiences.

International porousness excites the entry of subjugated migrant knowledge that inform the everyday contradictory conception, experience, and contextualization of the traditional Black subaltern subject. This has an ontological, axiological, epistemological, methodological, and
theoretical implication for practice and research—more so among African immigrants in Toronto. In this respect, migration of Kenyan men’s experiences in the West create a scholarly and practical discomfort on how Blackness is visualized, imagined, and conceptualized. Kenyan immigrant brings with them a different way of re-coding of Black men and masculinity based on their cultures, histories, and accent, in ways that challenges the now of Black masculinity.

This study looks at the lived experiences of Kenyan men in ways that excites, expands, and re-imagines Black masculinity. With globalization, any society faces a daunting challenge to remain traditionally at home. This is the reality that Canada needs to come face to face with in order to work with rather than for the migrant or Black communities. That said, a lot of insights were able to be gleaned from this study. One was that Kenyan men had a different way of looking at the world based on their culture. The Kenyan men interviewed expressed the painful, tedious, and expensive immigration process, which affected negatively their social and financial well-being.

Based on our conversations, Kenyan men said that immigration was not just an individual process, but that their family played a large role. This aspect clearly showed immigration as a gendered process where men were supposed to prove their masculinity. Such a process was not just an individual act of becoming, but was also supported by their community through acts like taking care of their children and families when they left the country. This aspect of Indigenous masculinity has not been considered in Black masculinity.

This study also gave insights on the ways in which accent affects Kenyans’ employability, and their education. While some were well-educated in Kenya, they still were not able to land a job suited to their qualifications. Some of the participants complained of a racially defined process of accreditation. However, one of the participants spoke about the help he
received from his White friend, which broke the accreditation barrier. This is telling of how spaces are created and oriented and the process through which such spaces come to listen to their masters. It also shows how such a process is connected to Whiteness and White supremacy. That until a White body provides charitable support to the Kenyan man, the door of employment remains closed. This is historical and provides the rationale that the Black Kenyan man is “a White man’s burden.” On the level of work, Kenyan men spoke of racial erasure based on their accent. One participant narrated the ordeal he underwent when working at a call centre. He was constantly asked where his accent came from. This acted as a reminder of his foreignness.

Some of the participants decided to go back to school after arriving in Canada. While the intent behind such a plan was to help get them a good job, they continued to suffer even after finalizing their education in Toronto. Some claimed that they faced racism from the school system, fellow schoolmates, and administration. They said that their presence in the university was questioned through their accent. They were also made to act “diversity” to portray to the world that the university is a multicultural space. One participant said that faculty did not help connect them with good opportunities, such as paid internships. While such examples are not recent, it is now clear that immigration is interlocked with education and labour in such complex ways that Kenyan men are put on the edge of social and economic survival. That the immigration starts the wheel that in turn influences other policies is telling. According to the Canadian body of literature, immigration speaks of Canadian experience as a necessary part of the migrant’s success in Canada. The policy lacuna is the fact that accent remains the biggest determinant of Canadian experience. Immigration policy determines how immigrants are going to relate to other policies and their success levels. Interesting enough, if a white body provides help to the immigrant who possesses the accent, the policy’s power to mark them goes silent. This speaks of
the gendered reality of the society.

Men come to be identified as public and rational actors, while women are seen as private, emotional, broken, and damaged social excesses. The public is paid while the private provides emotional unpaid labour to the public. Accordingly, those who occupy the private and public spheres are punished and rewarded, respectively. Masculinity scholarship goes beyond gender conversation and occupies conversations around race, sexuality, sexual orientation, and disability, and put to question the different forms of social inequalities brought about by whiteness, patriarchy, homophobia, sanism and ableism (Affleck et al., 2018; Connell, 2000; Messner, 1997; Whitehead, 2002).

Black masculinity has had a great voice in masculinity discussions. While it is imperative not to draw a dual split between feminisms and masculinity studies, it is equally fair to say that feminism study is open to discussion of Indigeneity as a form of agency and resistance (Read Torres, 2012; Wane, 2003). Feminist studies has included Indigenous women’s power as a powerful decolonial praxis (Nyaga & Torres, 2017; Torres, 2011, 2012; Wane, 2008, 2014; Wane & Kavuma, 2001). This Indigenous feminist scholarships looks at how Indigenous women acts as field of power in their actions. For example, Torres and Nyaga (2017) look at the healing practice of Aeta women healers in the Philippines as a decolonial praxis. Black and Asian feminisms have taken the lead in decolonizing middle-class feminism (Alinia, 2015; Das, 2016; Ellapen, 2017; Samuel & Wane, 2005; Wane, 2009b).

On the flip side, masculinity studies and by extension Black masculinity have suppressed the voices of the Indigenous focus on masculinity. Based on the study, little has been done to accommodate other subjugated masculinities such as Indigenous masculinities (Nyaga & Torres, 2018), except for the footnoting of local narratives on masculinities (Kimmel, 1994; Messner,
Black masculinity remains captive to American traditionalism and hegemony of reducing Indigenous masculinities as docile, subculture, and without rational stand. While this is salient based on the narrative of Kenyan men, there is hope with Kjartan’s (2006) work that looks at Indigenous rituals as fundamental in the formation of men and their Indigenous masculinities. This was also expressed by Kenyan men in terms of how they can resist anti-Blackness using their Indigeneity. Some spoke of their community as a source of power and support. Other spoke of silence as a powerful strategy of overcoming race and racism. These aspects need to be included in Black masculinity in order to re-imagine activism and anti-racism. Black masculinity studies are hegemonically White and seek to work for capital accumulation and imperialism (Malton, 2016). Minimal studies have ventured into a place where Indigenous masculinities are viewed as subversive and a source of resiliency for continental African men in the diaspora. The majority of diaspora/transnational masculinities focus on racial and gendered citizenship, and fails to address the ways in which indigeneity helps address transnational problems among African immigrants.

The presence of multinational companies and organizations testifies to the widespread present-day colonialism and imperialism (Oppong, 2017). African states have been affected by rationalizing policies brought about by transnational organizations. The introduction of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) led to deplorable living standards for the African people. Transnational organizations are the capillaries of imperial power over the wretched and broken African lands. This rationalization and governmentality policies carries with it accountability, transparency, transferability, and efficiency. To embody these politico-economic and social rationalized policies is to be gendered (Nyaga & Torres, 2017) and a race toward masculinity. This means a measure of social welfare through reduced government. Ironically, companies
receive state welfare disguised as a stimulus package under the pretext of job creation. Coincidentally, the policies germinate high levels of unemployment and subsequent movement of populations to other countries in search of greener pastures. This has led to massive brain drain and the underdevelopment of African countries.

In the West, the African migrant population receives third-class citizens’ treatment as testified by underemployment, unemployment, and precarious employment (Galabuzi, 2006 Goldring & Landolt, 2013; Lewis, Dwyer, Hodkinson, & Waite, 2015; Vosko, 2006). Kenyan men are among the most affected population in terms of unemployment. Kenyan men are all lumped together as Black men. Yet, their unemployment experience is complex and cannot be adequately articulated by Black studies and masculinity. Black masculinity explains Black men’s experiences in the West but fails to consider their complex experiences in cities such as Toronto. For example, immigrant’s accents, education, cultures, and values have often led to unemployment among continental African migrant men (Cargile, 2000).

The history of Canadian immigration process is replete with instances of constraining the settlement of the gendered racialized African immigrants, securitization, and militarization of the borderlands (Joly et al., 2017). This maintains Canada as the pure and macho state that keeps the undesirable other from stepping in. Other racially and gender-motivated immigration cases are the continuous journey for prospective Indian immigrants and Chinese Japanese head tax (James, 2004; Michael et al., 2013; Winter, 2008). The then-government policies argued that racialized immigrants would dilute the purity of a White Canada. Whiteness comes to be regarded and safeguarded as the standard of measuring strength, competitiveness, and power of those within statehood and the eviction of the undesirable others. Such an eviction is a gendered violent encounter meant to assert and inscribe the national mythology of a rational White society. This gendered narrative defines the policy and laws of such a nation-state. Canada and White women
come to occupy a thing that can be owned and protected from the weak other by the White male figure. This may sound like an old narrative, but one which participants in this study have confirmed the continuity of in a rather a different means.

This study applied a multi-theoretical prism that recognizes the cultural and Indigenous backgrounds of Kenyan men as robust and valid in the anti-racist praxis in North America. This provides a fertile ground of theorizing and birthing new ways of understanding Black masculinity. The study recognized the fundamental role played by gender and race in counter-positioning the Kenyan man as different through their accent and gendered self, and how such framing works toward informing Blackness and Black masculinity scholarship. From the participants’ discussions, Black masculinity is implicated in epistemological imperialism (Butler, 1990), the toehold of respectability (Fellow & Razack, 1998) and lateral violence. As such, anti-colonial, post-colonial, and Black/critical masculinity provided a relevant theoretical base for a deeper conversation of the experiences of Kenyan men in the diaspora. This theoretical matrix appreciates the role of Afrocentric Indigenous cultures as necessary in anti-colonialism and anti-racist work.

Afrocentric Indigenous masculinity theories are applicable to the lived experiences of continental Kenyan men in the West in that they respect the saliency of culture and difference. They also worked toward informing Black masculinity differently in ways that allowed the voices of the migrant Kenyan to speak. This study is an important building block for understanding Blackness and masculinity studies. Indigenous masculinities are built on the framework of a community (Nyaga & Torres, 2018). Speaking on Apache Indigenous masculinities, Kemper (2014) states, “These Apache representations give more attention to character and community than the representations by scholars who examine Apache masculinity through research of the Apaches instead of research by the Apache” (p. 92). Indigenous
masculinity is built on the African Ubuntu and its reciprocal, respective and loving community. Identity is subject to how one connects with other members of the community. The community comes before the individual. To be masculine and strong is to serve your community with diligence. Kemper (2014) states, “it appears that the Apache ideology of masculinity includes an idea of doing what is best for the people, which contrasts with the individualistic heroism depicted in colonial representations of Geronimo” (p. 93).

This has been clearly depicted among participants in this study. Kasee said that he helped a friend from another African country get a job by referring him to his boss. This speaks to the essence of Indigenous masculinity as revealed in cherished connection to others, and the intentional mindfulness of others’ interests and welfare. It is about acknowledging each other’s pain in ways that bring community healing. Indigenous masculinity is framed within the concept of sharing our deepest thoughts and concerns with each other.

This study proposes Indigenous knowledges as sites of decolonizing systemic racism in the West. This helps to define how education and labour is constructed in North America. Based on the participants’ comments on education as expunging Kenyan men, it is equally important to include Indigenous forms of masculinities in ways that decolonize the classroom. This brings multicentric forms of learning and teaching in ways that does not centralize Western rational thinking as the only form of learning. The study applies circumcision as an anti-colonial practice and analogy of placing Indigenous praxis as resistance. That should not be taken to be the only practice, but rather, should be seen to be an ideal example. This practice was an active anticolonial process by the Indigenous women in Kenya (Njambi, 2005, 2011). This looked at other practices through a transnational and transcultural perspective as tools of decolonization.

This study interrogated Black masculinity. The study also looked at narratives of Kenyan men in Toronto as a discursive framework of troubling Black masculinity and state-sponsored
racial expulsion. Their stories questioned the taken-for-granted notion of being a Black man. The study prepares Canada on how to handle Kenyan families in the wake of the American state-sponsored expulsion of migrant bodies. Such expulsion has led to an influx of migrants seeking protection from persecution. Some of these immigrants are Kenyan men who migrated to the United States and are now being evicted by the Trump administration. Consequently, this study prepares the Canadian system on how to understand Kenyan immigrants differently.

For a while, Black masculinity has been identified as the sole representation of Black men. This study unpacked this “representational truth” by applying Kenyan experiences to revise Black masculinity. The study looked at theoretical representations of Black men and their limitations in understanding Kenyan men. It also identified prevailing gaps in literature, moreso on Kenyan men in the diaspora. The study also looks at the limitations of the different methodologies and methods that had previously been used to study Black men. This helped provide a new research design that would speak to the lived experiences of Kenyan men. Qualitative Afrocentric Indigenous narrative research design spoke closely to the experiences of Kenyan men. This study argued that Black masculinity scholarship needs to decolonize by involving new methodological and theoretical tools of understanding Black men.

Kenyan men expressed their daily experiences in terms of how their masculinity is affected by their accents and how immigration, labour, and education work together to remove them from body politics. Kenyan men who were interviewed identified different forms of racisms that could not be captured through Black masculinity, and their complexity needed to be highlighted and validated. The voices of Kenyan men in the diaspora have been missing in Black masculinity. This study sought to decolonize Black masculinity by including and validating other subjugated masculinities. It provided different representations of Black men and the limitations they have in explaining the Kenyan men in the diaspora. This study argues that Black
masculinity scholarship needs to die and reinvent itself in ways that recognize other forms of knowledge as important and relevant in anti-racism.

Based on this study, it would be imperative for Canada to devise new ways of understanding Black men. This study sought to caution Canada from systematically and systemically erasing Kenyan men from meeting their desires and aspirations. As discussed earlier, Kenyans leave their countries and look forward to having prosperous lives in the West. The majority of Kenyans in the West want to also help their kin back in Kenya. From the discussion with Kenyan men in Toronto, they face multiple barriers toward meeting those aspirations. Many of these challenges revolve around education, labour, and migration issues. While it would be important to look at educational, labour, and immigration as separate entities, it is equally imperative to look at how they interlock in ways that marginalize and impinge upon their masculinity.

Participants said that they are racially removed from the educational system. This academic racial erasure works in a way that helps to fix them in the border. For example, there is less representation of Kenyan and Black students in education. This maintains minimal graduation rates for Kenyans, leading to lower absorption in the labour market. This has an effect in terms of any future students in terms of mentorship. For example, few Kenyan youths can negotiate themselves around university. Many of them fear to apply to the university based on the narratives they have heard from their parent(s) who went through the system. Even when they are willing to go to university, they lack a role model to inspire them. In a nutshell, there is a wider disconnect between the Kenyan community and the university. Consequently, many of these youths end up taking lower level and precarious labour positions. This is because there are no Kenyans in better positions in Canada who can mentor and support them. This becomes the case when education comes to determine who is to enter the labour market.
The participants who were interviewed for this study also said that they are not supported in terms of career mentoring. Some of the participants said that the university system is tailored in ways that do not provide them with future opportunities. This helps maintain the Kenyan community in Toronto on the edge of society, in terms of future educational and employment prospects. This makes it impossible for them to get a well-paying job even after finishing a degree in Canada, which coincidently would be part of what is required for one to get a well-paying job. The participants said that the majority of faculty members were White men, which made it impossible to connect with them. Such a faculty composition did not see the issues that these Kenyan men were facing, and thus, failed to do their part in helping to provide future opportunities for Black students. The claim from Kenyan students was that the White faculty members were lenient to White students and provided opportunities to them in ways that put them ahead of them, upon graduation.

The participants also said that they were used as multicultural representations of the university to the world. This kind of work is unpaid and they are expected to take it up without question, since they have been given scholarships. This aspect is key in terms of the definition of labour precariousness manufactured from education processing and preparation of the African other as belonging to the section of labour process. It is more of education that conditions the mind to accept a racist labour practice. They also said that they get lower marks that their White counterpart. This leads to high dropout rates of Kenyan men from top academic spots which in turn, affects their future employability. This allows for the academic to be an industrial complex, which ends up profiting from the pain and manufactured failures of the Kenyan students.

As a recommendation, the student called for faculty that reflected the racial composition of the university. But based on the minimal presence of Black students in the university, the
participant called for the increased enrollment of Black students in universities. This means that immigration policy needs to be revisited to allow more Kenyan and Black students to enroll. The participant also said that the university needs to offer more scholarships to aspiring students both at home and abroad in ways that makes it possible for them to worry about the costs of their Canadian education. Other recommendations offered by the participants were that the Canadian High Commission in Kenya should work toward reaching out to low-income aspiring students in Kenya to challenge the commonly held belief that education in Canada is inaccessible. There is also the need to stop the rampant exploitation of students in universities so that they can serve as representation and thus, show that the Canadian university is multicultural.

Borrowing from Whitehead (2002) on trust and masculinity, this study posits the need for understanding trust in a renewed global economy. Whitehead says that trust is a very important component among families, friends, communities, states, and nations. It brings comfort and consistence within families and their communities. With the constant and unverifiable global flux, trust is something that can be impossible to visualize and understand. It is therefore important to understand the role of Indigenous praxis as relevant in reorienting our understanding of trust in a fluid global environment. The need to form communities of purpose among Kenyans in the diaspora cannot be overemphasized in a world that is shrinking and expanding simultaneously. The effect of such a world to the home is erosive and recalibrates social processes. It is equally important to solidify the social fabric of Kenyan communities in the West, since they face similar problems. There is a need of the retheorization of masculinities as well as to identify the toxic element that erases self-esteem and removes power from Kenyan men in Toronto.

Black masculinity and Black-led conversations on racial oppression have research and policy ramification on Kenyan men living in the West. Policy and research are an important
point of political representation. Policy plays a role of expunging Black skin from citizenship as expressed by participants in this study. Studies on masculinity strongly condemn racial expulsion and call for the involvement of the Black community in policy management. Such involvement is important in terms of who speaks and how services are rendered in Black communities. As argued before, Black masculinity is White and cannot speak on behalf of the Black community. Black masculinity is slippery and makes some identities disappear, hence affecting policy and specific service delivery. Policy outcomes from such simplified participation affects the spirit of social justice. Such policies serve a section of the Black man while erasing other Black demographics. The policy gives Black masculinity the wheels to stamp colonial power of improvement on the outer limits of Blackness. It is in that operation of purifying Black spaces that the Black remnants are erased from human community. In what Fanon (1967) calls Blackman self-hate, Black masculinity analogizes Blackness as dangerous, social spillage, and unclean. This process of in-house cleaning and cleansing implicates Black masculinity in colonialism and imperialism.

There is a need to look beyond and within Black masculinity in ways that complicate and reflex conversation within Black communities on the lateral violence meted within from the without. This study recognizes the discomfort of understanding and addressing internal politics within a community. I argue that such discomfort is necessary and works toward addressing lateral violence and identifies ways in which we are complicit in anti-Blackness. This study seeks to bring forth a new dialogue of reconciliation between Black communities for a true anti-colonial movement and social justice. A divided army is the best reward to an opposite colonizing force. It is important to recognize the differences from within, and how they work toward sustaining dominant hegemony.
The study recognizes the rage, fury, and anger from within Black communities when such historical wounds and scars open. Rage is necessary and fuels change. As Memmi (1965) says, colonialism is violent, and so is decolonization. Rage is necessary for transformative and eventual Black freedom and liberty based on emerging social realities. For a while, these conversations have been securely private, and have served the interests of the White capital (Mercer, 1994). Black masculinity has been used to regulate and silence such conversations in ways that protect the status quo that serve a few Black men at the behest of others (Mercer, 1994). In the characteristic of Oedipus complex, the Black man fears coming out of his shell. The Black man hides himself from himself and others. Blackness is violently regulated and resides in the subconscious under a colonial mental walling. For any tangible resistance and freedom to be established, Blackness needs to be public on its own terms and conditions. There is a need to break the colonial shackles within Black men’s communities, in ways that are reflexive (recognizing our implication in the death of the other and how we work toward self-preservation and erasure of others).

It is imperative to start a conversation on the different shades of Blackness informed by citizenship, histories, cultures, language, and accent. Black masculinity is implicated in epistemological imperialism and violence (Mercer, 1994). Black masculinity re-invents colonialism by being charitable to an identity and subsequently relegating other identities (Johnson, 2010; Schnyder, 2012). Being charitable to a section of community implicates Black masculinity scholarship to the toehold of respectability (Fellows & Razack, 1998) and lateral erasure. It is important to have conversations of institutionalized and everyday anti-Black racism, in ways that validate other voices from within Blackness. It is also equally important to discuss and validate issues faced by Black girls and women in anti-racist and anti-oppressive praxis.
Study participants spoke of their pain in terms of their experiences in workplaces and schools, and learning how they navigate gendered work in the home. It was previously argued that the current gender change in masculinity in terms of caregiving was innate, unconscious, and suppressed through colonialism. I also argued that systems are not the only factors that necessitated the coming out of participant feminine self, but that the migrant bodies realize his lost self. The suppressed self is made to rise from its unconscious slumber. The migrant other dies and rises up to reclaim his formerly suppressed self. I argue that the rising ghost is more powerful, resilient, and seeks social justice for all, as expressed by participants. This transitioning gives them power to save on employing a nanny, and makes men enjoy their formally subjugated self. This was attested by the majority of participants who said that the change made them live again.

This study sought to understand the role of masculinity and Whiteness in the oppression of continental Black African men in the West. The three triads of violence—violence against women, other men, and self (Kaufman, 2001)—help to reflexively understand the experiences of Kenyans in Toronto. Kaufman says that masculinity discourses makes men work hard toward reaching a set social standard. The process of reaching such standards is labour intensive and dictated by the White hegemonic masculinity. Masculinity is an industrial complex where men are processed for sale in the marketplace. Such a process of manufactured freedom alienates the man variously in ways that they hurt themselves, other men, and women. Gender violence, homophobia, and anti-Black racism is a common phenomenon within the Black community. This is as a result of competition and a rush toward a toehold of respectability. Black men compete in ways that alienate and estrange them. Such estrangements have an emotional and psychological effect on his own being, as well as that of others and society. The estrangement is psychic and
has social consequences. This study identified Indigenous masculinities as anti-capitalist and helps respect, love, and reciprocity to counter competition within Black communities. According to Mutekwa (2013),

The phrase “some kinds of wounds” is a reference to the psychic destabilisations and traumas resulting from the perpetual humiliation that African and black masculinities are accustomed to in the colony. The effects of these are manifest in the violence—which is either directed inwards, resulting in drunkenness and debauchery, or outwards resulting in physical or sexual violence toward others, especially women. (p. 360)

Decolonization of the mind and spirit and subsequent focus on respect, reciprocity, and love is necessary toward countering the colonial, imperial and neocolonial agenda of capital accumulation and estrangement of Black populations. It is about reaching and representing the repressed self as a necessary form of decolonization.

African men in the diaspora continue to be represented as incapable and inexperienced. For example, men raised in Kenya are expected to be the breadwinners, yet they are unemployed or underemployed. This creates a conflict of identity, which is detrimental to their relationship with their spouses and children and the society at large. Cases of spousal abuse and co-current mental health and substance abuse are on the rise among Kenyan families in the West. Such cases can be prevented if the society learns their different Black expressions. Participants in this study said their identity changed upon landing in Kenya. For example, they expressed themselves as performing daily household chores. To them, this helps them economically, emotionally, and socially. One participant said that he had a discussion with his wife about sharing the house chores. Others expressed their satisfaction with embracing domestic duties and responsibilities. Even with these changes, some participants said that they look at these changes as necessary for their survival. They said that they can change based on time and space. For example, Roysam said that when he goes to Kenya, he changes his masculinity to accommodate what is practiced in Kenya. Others expressed their satisfaction with their present self and said
that they are contented and cannot change. This explains the multiple anti-colonial process of becoming by embracing Indigeneity as anti-capitalism. This dismantles patriarchy, authoritarianism, heterosexuality, classism, and racism as the breeding grounds of violence.
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