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Immigration and Education: Changing identity and roles of teachers in schools that have enrolled immigrant learners in South Africa

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ABSTRACT

Learner demographics in South African schools is increasingly becoming diverse, as immigration push and pull factors continue to encourage and motivate foreign nationals to relocate to South Africa. Immigration is viewed and believed to be one of the global trends that is responsible for the injustice, and many forms of discrimination, that immigrants find themselves subjected to, and subsequently affecting them adversely. This thus takes us to the issue of teachers who are an integral part of this of

this study. Teachers are at the centre of education in schools, their identity and roles are investigated to understand how they are shaped by the presence of immigrant learners in their schools and classrooms, whether they perceive themselves as active players or not in the education of immigrant learners in South Africa. It further investigates how teachers interpret and perceive their identity and roles based on the social context.

The study exists in the backdrop of the history of the country which is mostly shaped by the ideology of racism and segregation, which bred hate and division among Black and White people but also went further and antagonised Black people against each other based on the "*Divide and Rule*" strategy, where Black people were separated along tribal lines. This act of domination ended officially in 1994 when South Africa obtained freedom with the first democratic elections, however, after 28 years of democracy, the legacy of apartheid still lingers. This is the reason why there is a

belief that the acts of xenophobia directed to immigrants of African descent are motivated by the idea that Black South Africans do not view themselves as Africans, because during apartheid, ties between the continent and South Africa, were not encouraged by the white apartheid government. Furthermore, apartheid festered an ideology of othering, which is why immigrants are continued to be viewed as outsiders who are in the country to compete with locals in the economic and social spaces. These attitudes raise questions about the role and identity of teachers, particularly Black teachers in classrooms with immigrant learners, if they are capable of remaining professional or not.

The study is premised in the qualitative research design with open ended interviews as a research method. Interviews were conducted in three provinces, Gauteng, Limpopo, and Kwa- Zulu Natal, in four secondary schools, respectively. Results and recommendations are presented at the end.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the Republic of South Africa (RSA) as a destination of choice for opportunities since the inception of democracy, has led to the country experiencing unprecedented populations of both African and other immigrants, entering the country; (Hirsch, 2024). The phenomenon of immigration is believed to be shaping the experiences of various structures of the South African society, including teachers, often finding themselves navigating complex cultural dynamics, leading to a reconstruction of their professional identities to accommodate diverse student backgrounds; (Vandeyar, 2010). Immigration is perceived to have ushered in changes believed to have shaped how some teachers perceive their identities and roles in the classroom, in schools that have enrolled immigrant learners. Critical concerns are observed mainly in township and rural schools, where according to literature, levels of poverty and other social ills are endemic. Based on this knowledge, appears to be a significant connection between how teachers perceive their identities and roles within the context of immigration, and how these perceptions are shaped by the legacy of apartheid in South Africa, a system that was institutionalised in 1948 and dismantled in 1994 with the dawn of democracy. This perspective can be examined through the lens of Samuel and Stephens (2000), who propose two key relationships: one between the self and identity, and another between identity and the surrounding cultural and professional contexts. They argue that a critical interplay exists between these two dimensions, both of

which are influenced by the forces of change that characterize societies grappling with a history of cultural, racial, and social division, such as South Africa. These forces continue to inform how educators navigate their professional identities in a transforming and often challenging socio-political landscape.

Since South Africa remains one of the most sought-after destinations in Africa for immigrants, as alluded to earlier, it has particularly become a home to immigrants of Black African descent, as well as others from Asia, Europe, and the Americas, perhaps due to its comparatively developed economy and relatively stable political and social environment, argue Manik and Singh (2013). An example of this is a Pakistani immigrant who expressed that South Africa appealed to him during a study conducted by Rugunanan (2015), where he voices his desire to bring his family members to South Africa to further their studies. Among African nationals residing in South Africa, Zimbabweans constitute the majority immigrant population. Since 2005, the number of Zimbabwean children entering the country has increased exponentially; (Crush & Tawodzera, 2014). This surge in immigration is largely attributed to Zimbabwe's deteriorating socio-economic and political conditions, particularly from the year 2000 onward. During this period, individuals who opposed the ZANU-PF government under former President Robert Gabriel Mugabe were subjected to political persecution. Simultaneously, the economy experienced a dramatic collapse, exacerbated by

internationally imposed sanctions; (Rutherford, 2020). As the government struggled to retain power, large numbers of Zimbabweans fled the country. While some sought refuge in neighbouring nations such as Botswana, the majority settled in South Africa. Between the year 2000 and 2015, an estimated three million Zimbabweans emigrated from Zimbabwe; (Hammar, McGregor & Landau, 2010), with over one million believed to be living in South Africa; (Crush et al., 2015). In addition, Statistics South Africa (2016) reported that, in 2016 alone, approximately 65,500 documented refugees and 230,000 asylum seekers, primarily from Somalia, Angola, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), resided in the country. Against this backdrop, and based on statistical and contextual immigration trends, the number of children from Zimbabwe entering South Africa, both legally and illegally, has also increased significantly since 2005; (Crush & Tawodzera, 2014). As a result, schools in South Africa, particularly those located in townships and on the outskirts of cities and towns, are experiencing an increasingly diverse learner population.

Darling-Hammond (1990) and Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond (1997) argue that while diversity is an inherent characteristic of multiculturalism and can be viewed as an asset, it also exposes deep-seated challenges and gaps in teacher professionalism, challenges that must be addressed by both teachers and the broader education system. Darling-Hammond (1990, p. 26) states, "*The*

basic problem in public education today is finding a way to meet the diverse needs of students who come to school with varying capabilities, learning styles, psychological predispositions, family situations, and beliefs about themselves and what school means for them." Although this observation was made in the context of the United States, it resonates strongly within the South African context. South African teachers increasingly face similar challenges in accommodating and effectively supporting immigrant learners in their classrooms, as evidenced by both literature and data.

Literature indicates that learners of Zimbabwean origin, along with their parents who participated in the study conducted by Crush et al. (2008), reported experiencing acts of discrimination in South African classrooms. These acts, often manifesting as xenophobia or Afrophobia, were perpetrated by both South African learners and teachers. It is against this contextual backdrop that the current study seeks to investigate how teacher identity and roles, particularly those of Black South African teachers, are shaped by, and operate within, classrooms that include immigrant learners. This inquiry is necessitated by recurring xenophobic incidents targeting African immigrants living in South Africa, many of whom have been subjected to physical violence, most notably during the xenophobic attacks of 2008. Further studies confirm that in 2008, 2015, and 2019, South Africans exhibited strong anti-immigrant sentiments, often accompanied by acts of xenophobic

violence; (Tevera, 2013). In addition to the academic interest in this subject, I bring a personal perspective to this study. As a Black South African teacher with experience teaching in both rural and township schools, I have developed a deep curiosity and concern about the intersection of teacher identity, professional roles, and the presence of immigrant learners in the classroom. My lived experiences have provided insight into the nuanced realities faced by educators in these contexts, further motivating this inquiry.

It is however important to acknowledge that while this study focuses on the attitudes of Black South Africans toward Black African immigrants, it does not suggest that all Black South Africans hold or have held xenophobic sentiments. Contrary to popular belief that South Africans are xenophobic, contrasting attitudes were evident during the 2008 xenophobic attacks, as some Black South Africans expressed profound shock, shame, and disapproval in response to the violence (Crush et al., 2008; Steinberg, 2008a). These reactions highlight the diversity of perspectives within the Black South African community and underscore the complexity of the social dynamics at play.

> *Shamed by association with their fellow citizens' display of barbarism, South Africans of all races took to the streets in protest marches reminiscent of the anti-apartheid struggle. They carried placards with slogans such as 'Shame on Us, Join the Fight Against*

Xenophobia, Don't Touch My Sista, and No Black in the Rainbow' (Referring to Archbishop Desmond Tutu and others' designation of South Africa as a multiracial rainbow nation.) (Dodson, 2010, p3).

While it has been acknowledged that not all Black South Africans are anti-immigration, the circumstances surrounding the outbreak of xenophobic attacks in 2008 largely reflect the historical and socio-political experiences of Black South Africans, particularly those rooted in the apartheid, characterised by complex economic, political, social, and cultural gaps. Therefore, eruption of xenophobic attacks figuratively symbolises a fire spark that found the grass dry. According to Crush, et al, (2008), this was a perfect 'cocktail' of events dating back to an era where Black South Africans were oppressed and used violent ways to protest oppression.

This study draws on data generated from teachers in five schools across three South African provinces, complemented by a narrative literature review and a guiding theoretical framework, to address the research questions. To develop a nuanced understanding of teacher identity, the study explores key dimensions such as teacher professionalism and professionalisation, teacher education, and teacher professional development. These aspects have shaped the trajectory of the interviews conducted as a primary research tool and have guided the study in interpreting how teachers perceive

their professional identities and roles in classrooms that include immigrant learners. Additionally, the research considers how broader South African societal attitudes toward immigrants influence teachers' conduct, expectations, and the challenges they encounter in navigating their professional responsibilities. I have been curious in understanding how teachers in township and rural schools respond to the presence of immigrant learners in their classrooms in relation to their teacher identity, teacher roles and professional identity. This is motivated by the realities of people who reside in these areas, mostly they are affected by socio-economic issues. "*Poverty and unemployment conditions of black South Africans played a part in post-apartheid xenophobic violence*" (Biereenu-Nnabugwu, & Ibeabuchi, 2024 p. 1).

To provide clarity for the reader, this study consistently employs the term *Black* to refer specifically to native African people of South Africa, as historically classified by the apartheid government. This includes the various *Bantu*-speaking ethnic groups indigenous to the country. The use of the capitalised term *Black* in this context is deliberate and restricted to this formal and historically grounded usage, functioning as a synonym for *African*. It is not intended as a collective term encompassing all groups who were denied full citizenship under apartheid, namely Black Africans, Indians, and Coloured people. Rather, it acknowledges the racial classifications that were institutionalised during apartheid and, to some extent, persist in post-apartheid South

Africa. As Chisholm (1999) notes, these categories were (and continue to be) socially and historically constructed. This study adopts the coined term *Black-Africans* to specifically identify and refer to individuals of African descent who possess darker skin pigmentation, a characteristic that may also be marked by distinct accents in their spoken English (Adibe, 2009). The term *African*, when used on its own, is considered too broad for the purposes of this study, as it may encompass members of the African diaspora as well as individuals of lighter skin tones, including white, Indian, or mixed-race persons, depending on their birth status and regional identification. For instance, in East Africa, there are Kenyan Indians; in North Africa, Afro-Arabs, whom Adibe (2009) refers to as *Afrabians*, also identify with African heritage. Such complexities in identity categorisation are equally observable in South Africa and other African countries, and they necessitate a more precise term like *Black-Africans* to foreground the specific racial and cultural identities relevant to this study. Adibe (2009) presents an important distinction between two types of African identities: "Africans of the blood" and "Africans of the soil." According to Adibe, "Africans of the blood" are individuals who, based on their racial and genealogical background, are traditionally referred to as Black Africans in this study. This group's African identity is grounded in their ancestral lineage and racial heritage. In contrast, "Africans of the soil" are those whose connection to Africa is primarily through their geographical heritage. These individuals are linked to Africa not through their genetic or racial

background, but rather through their nationality and ancestral land.

This distinction is critical as it enables the reader to interpret the complex dynamics surrounding social identities among Black South Africans, which are instrumental in shaping and influencing teacher perceptions of foreign Black Africans residing in South Africa.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

There is minimum doubt that the roles and identities of teachers have undergone substantial transformations in recent years, leading to shifts in the professional status of teaching and intensifying the expectations placed upon educators by society. According to Samuel and Stephens (2000), identity is a dynamic phenomenon that is constantly evolving. They conceptualise identity within a framework that is deeply influenced by historical, political, cultural, and social legacies. In this context, student teachers, during their pre-service training, develop a specific professional identity that undergoes a continuous process of deconstruction, construction, and reconstruction. In the South African context, this dynamic process can be understood through the following scenario:

> *The picture that emerges is of a changing teaching force working in and under very new and difficult circumstances. The South African teachers of the future,*

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now entering the University's Department of Education, bring with them cultural and personal "baggage" which will both promote and hinder the development of the nation's schools. (Samuel, & Stephens, 2000, p.748).

Teacher identity and the roles that educators are expected to perform, both by society and by themselves, are often narrowly perceived as being confined to curriculum delivery. However, Bukor (2014) argues, teacher identity is shaped by a complex interplay of factors, including culture, socialisation, education, politics, personal experiences, and religion. This multifaceted nature of identity highlights that understanding teacher identity and roles requires an exploration of the lived experiences of teachers. Within the context of this study, teacher identity and professional roles are examined through the lens of immigration and education and are critically situated within South Africa's apartheid and post-apartheid historical landscape. This informs us that teachers' identity is shaped by their past and present realities; hence it is not unconceivable that they can relate to immigrant learners based on the *self*, which is their identity and their expected roles. It is for this reason that instead of defining identity from a single truth or greater cosmic whole, and the modern belief in the central position of the individual teacher, should instead be seen in the context of the social environment of which the teacher is a part of.

Through the problem statement, the reader can identify the existing gaps within South Africa's education system. These disparities are

reflected in how teachers perceive their roles and identities, concepts that are deeply intertwined with the notion of professionalism in the context of this study. The problem statement emphasises that, given the inherently social nature of education and the reality that teachers are shaped by their past and present experiences, teacher identity and professional roles cannot be examined in isolation from the phenomenon of immigration. This section aims to present teacher identity not as a fixed or static construct, but rather as a fragmented and fluid phenomenon, constantly shaped by the lived experiences of educators. This perspective raises a critical question: are predominantly Black teachers in South Africa's township and rural schools immune to xenophobia or Afrophobia? The historical context is crucial here, as it continues to influence how teacher identity and roles are conceptualised. Even in post-apartheid South Africa, the legacy of apartheid casts a long shadow, raising persistent questions about whether teaching is viewed as a true profession or merely as a job.

These views are echoed by the work of the American psychologist Kenneth Gergen (1991, 1992, 1994), a leading figure in social constructionist theory, who emphasises the relational and context-dependent nature of identity. Similarly, Akkerman and Meijer (2011) offer a postmodern perspective on identity, highlighting its dynamic, multifaceted, and evolving nature. Both perspectives reinforce the notion that identity is not fixed, but rather continuously shaped through interaction with social, cultural, and

historical contexts. They argue that as society we cannot continue to view teacher identity as a predominantly unified framework, but instead, as being fragmented along the multiple social worlds that teachers engage in. Within this view, the idea of *self* is no longer seen as having a centre or one core, but as varied and dynamic. Based on this view of the fragmented *self*, it is therefore conceivable to assume that teachers are social beings and will be affected and respond in solidarity with other members of society, or if not so, empathise or sympathise in an event where there is a threat. This is not a distant human and pro-social behaviour, "*empathy plays a critical interpersonal and societal role, enabling sharing of experiences, needs, and desires between individuals and providing an emotional bridge that promotes pro-social behaviour*" (Riess, 2017, p. 74).

According to McLaren (1989), teacher education should prepare teachers to meet the complex demands of the global information age, an era characterized not only by rapid technological change, but also by deepening social inequalities. He advocates for a form of teaching that embraces activism and revolutionary praxis, one that resists compromising on principles of social justice and aims toward the emancipation of marginalized communities. Teachers are expected to teach for social change, which calls for framing teacher education curricular within the context of anti-racism, argues Villenas (1996). The question now is whether teachers can exercise a balanced view, because while they possess a fluid

identity, they are still expected to fulfil certain fixed roles, especially because they are at the core of education. That is if they exercise agency to teach for change or they are also contributing to immigration as being viewed and believed to be one of the global trends that is perpetrating discrimination, and many forms of injustice; Ibrahim (2005).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The Objectives of this study are:

(a) To investigate the role of immigration as a phenomenon, in shaping Black South African teachers' professional and personal identity as well as their roles in the classroom.

(b) To explore the extent to which apartheid is responsible for the hostility which Black African immigrants are subjected to in South Africa.

(c) To investigate the changes and challenges that have emerged in the classroom because of the presence of immigrant learners.

(d) To investigate possible ways which teachers and the department of Basic Education in South Africa, can employ to address challenges posed by immigration.

CRITICAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How is teacher identity and roles shaped by the presence of immigrant learners in South African schools?

    - *How do teachers perceive their teacher identity and roles to be, in the face of immigration?*

- *How is teacher identity and roles changing due to the presence of immigrant learners in schools?*

2. To what extent is apartheid responsible for the hostility and racism which Black African immigrants are subjected to in South Africa.

   - *How does the legacy of apartheid shape the views of Black South Africans about immigration?*
   - *What are the new developments based on how racism is perceived in South Africa?*

3. What strategies can teachers, in collaboration with the South African Department of Basic Education, implement to address the challenges posed by immigration in schools?

   - *Why is it crucial for school officials to address the matter of immigration with urgency?*
   - *How can initial teacher education address issues that arise from teachers having to decide about their identity and roles?*

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study emerges from a transformative perspective, aimed at informing teachers, teacher educators, and the South African Department of Basic Education. It seeks to advance theoretical understandings of immigration within the educational context, particularly at a time when contemporary concepts such as *new racism* are gaining traction in South Africa. Incidents of xenophobia underscore the need to critically explore

why, since the country's transition to democracy, South Africa has become both a preferred destination for immigrants and, paradoxically, a site of exclusion and hostility. A key concern is *Afrophobia*, a specific form of xenophobia targeted at African immigrants by other Black South Africans, often described as "Black-on-Black" violence. This new form of discrimination permeates various social contexts, including schools. As institutions of knowledge production and socialization, schools rely heavily on teachers, who, in turn, are embedded in broader societal realities. Yet, the existing literature often fails to adequately explore how immigration shapes teacher identity and professional roles.

Furthermore, gaps in educational policy, particularly in language instruction, present additional barriers for immigrant learners, many of whom are expected to learn and be taught in English or Afrikaans, despite not being fluent in either. This presents both academic and social challenges. Significantly, this study calls for a critical re-evaluation of initial teacher education. Pre-service teachers must be equipped not only with theoretical knowledge but also with practical skills that bridge the gap between policy and the realities of diverse classroom contexts. Teacher education programmes must prioritise pedagogies that prepare future educators to navigate diversity and immigration, ensuring they are ready to engage meaningfully with the complexities of South Africa's multicultural school environments.

The study emphasises the significant gaps in academic literature regarding the connection of teacher identity, roles, and immigration. These gaps include the underrepresentation of African educational and socio-economic contexts. Additionally, there is a notable lack of studies examining how teachers' identities evolve in response to immigration-related challenges. The study underscores the need for more research that explores these areas in depth, offering valuable opportunities for future academic inquiry.

HISTORICAL CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

While the previous chapter introduces the study, the focus of this chapter is to present the historical and contextual background that underpins the research. This background is framed within the South African context, with particular emphasis on the ways in which the changing roles and identities of teachers are shaped by the intersecting forces of immigration and education. The historical context is essential in helping the reader understand how legacies of the past, particularly apartheid, continue to influence present-day attitudes, social structures, and professional practices. By tracing these historical developments, the chapter seeks to provide insight into the socio-political realities that inform teacher identity. It raises critical questions about how teachers, as both professionals and members of society, navigate their roles in the face of rising xenophobia and Afrophobia. This context challenges us to consider

whether teachers are justified in mirroring societal prejudices, or whether their professional mandate calls for ethical responsibility, inclusivity, and commitment to transformation in post-apartheid South Africa.

Relationship between apartheid policies and immigration

Significance looms large that we understand the interrelatedness between the history of the country and the changing teacher identity and roles, because the phenomenal of immigration in South Africa is often discussed against the backdrop of the socio-economic status quo of Black South Africans. It should be noted that immigration is not a new trend in South Africa, scholars are persuaded to believe that the topic of immigration has not been afforded the necessary and relevant attention in terms of a robust intellectual political debate, that will elevate it to a level where it receives attention from the political elites and decision makers, where immigration will be viewed and a addressed not as a white men's post-colonialism and Black man's post-apartheid legacy, (Kabwe-Segatti, 2008). Instead, the debate should encompass both eras, because throughout the history of industrial and economic development, South Africa has relied on immigrants, and this has had implications on the social, economic, and political fabric of the population. Evidence of such is in studies that mainly focus on Zimbabwean immigrants.

When Zimbabwean immigrants enter South Africa through Musina, whether legally or illegally, they often migrate to urban

centres such as Cape Town and Johannesburg, settling in townships like Alexandra and informal settlements such as Diepsloot, Orange Farm, and Ivory Park. These areas are rooted in the spatial and racial segregation policies of the apartheid regime, which aimed to exclude Black South Africans from white urban areas and limit their access to socio-economic resources. In many cases, Black communities were forcibly removed from urban centres to make way for white government infrastructure and development projects. The enduring legacy of apartheid is evident in these areas, where poverty, unemployment, and underdevelopment persist. Such socio-economic hardship, coupled with insufficient government service delivery, creates an environment where resentment can easily arise, particularly toward immigrants. This frustration often manifests as xenophobic attitudes, based on the belief that foreign nationals are competing for limited resources such as jobs, housing, and social services. This sentiment escalates into animosity and hostility, disproportionately directed at Black African immigrants, who are perceived not as fellow Africans, but as outsiders. These hostile attitudes can filter into school environments, where immigrant learners, especially in township schools, are sometimes subjected to discrimination by both teachers and peers. Documented incidents reveal that some learners have faced exclusion from classroom or curriculum activities, and in even more concerning instances, have been ridiculed or labelled with derogatory terms such as *ikwerekwere*, *igrigamba*, *izayizayi*, and *ikhalanga*;

(Osman, 2009; Muzondidya, 2010; Rutherford, 2020). These terms, while not translatable into standard language, are constructed slurs that mark individuals as foreign, based on the perception that they "speak strangely" or mix local languages with their own. The use of such language, especially by teachers, raises serious concerns about professional conduct and challenges the assumption that educators always uphold inclusive and ethical standards.

Immigration and education in other contexts

Immigration whether forced or voluntary, and the process of resettlement in a host country, often carry significant implications and challenges for immigrants; (Mawiri et al., 2020). One of the key areas impacted by immigration is education, which cannot be examined in isolation from global trends, government policies, and institutional frameworks. As Quin (2017) illustrates, the intersectionality between immigration policies, institutional responses, and state governance in countries like the United States of America (USA) significantly influences the educational experiences of immigrant children. In supporting this view, Turner and Figueroa (2019) argue that teachers play a crucial role in these dynamic as social agents within educational systems. However, many teachers find themselves ill-equipped to respond appropriately to the needs of immigrant learners, either due to a lack of training, cultural awareness, or the fear of acting in ways that may be deemed unprofessional. This reveals a fundamental tension: while teachers are expected to promote inclusive

education and social justice, they often operate within systems that do not fully prepare them to meet the complex realities brought about by immigration.

During the escalation of xenophobic, anti-immigrant, and anti-Muslim sentiments during the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign led by President Donald Trump, teachers found themselves tasked with a critical and complex responsibility: supporting immigrant learners through the trauma they experienced both inside and outside of school environments. As noted by Costello (2016), Harris (2017), and Rogers et al. (2017), educators were called upon to maintain schools as safe havens for immigrant children, while simultaneously cultivating classrooms that embodied peace, tolerance, and mutual respect. This scenario presents an ideal vision of the teacher's role in multicultural and politically charged contexts. However, a different picture emerges in the Spanish context, where the consequences of globalisation, particularly the increasing movement of people, have created unique challenges for the education system. Coronel and Gómez-Hurtado (2015) argue that since the 1990s, Spain has experienced a significant rise in immigrant populations, leading to substantial demographic, cultural, and social shifts. One of the most pressing challenges arising from this change is the lack of teacher preparedness to manage ethnically diverse classrooms. As such, the authors advocate for context-specific pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes that are responsive to multicultural realities

and aimed at equipping educators with the skills and knowledge necessary to support all learners effectively.

Role of teacher unions in dismantling the apartheid regime

It is fundamentally important that this study begins by exploring the "Black Box"—a metaphorical framework for unpacking the complex relationship between teacher identity and South Africa's political history. This is especially pertinent when considering that immigration has evolved into social, economic, and political dimensions over time, which continue to shape the attitudes of Black South African teachers, and citizens more broadly, towards Black African immigrants. As Dodson (2010, p. 3) observes, "*anti-immigrant attitudes and behaviours on the part of 'ordinary South Africans' toward foreign Africans are entrenched and systemic,*" underscoring the urgency of examining apartheid's legacy in shaping these sentiments. Historically, Black teachers have played a pivotal role in South Africa's political struggle, with many actively involved in anti-apartheid resistance movements. Under apartheid, education was both a site of oppression and of resistance, and Black teachers emerged as key figures in challenging the injustices of the regime. The apartheid government's Population Registration Act No. 30 of 1950 formally categorized citizens into racial groups, Black, Coloured, Indian, and White, leading to the segregation of professional structures, including education. In this context, alternative teacher unions and professional bodies were established as acts of resistance. For instance, the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of

South Africa (NAPTOSA), formed in the 1960s and 1970s, brought together teachers across racial groups to advocate for teacher professionalism within an unjust system. Later, the formation of the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) in the 1980s positioned teachers more overtly in political activism, aligning educational struggles with broader calls for democracy and human rights. These historical foundations are essential in understanding how teacher identity continues to be shaped, not only by professional mandates but also by the sociopolitical legacies of apartheid and contemporary challenges, such as xenophobia and Afrophobia.

While SADTU emerged from similar motivations as other professional bodies, namely, resistance to apartheid and the pursuit of educational justice, its origins were notably distinct. According to Chisholm (1999, p. 114), "*it began as a series of fragmented, locally based teacher organisations linked to oppositional movements which developed in civil society in the 1980s, eschewed racial forms of organisation and is now a trade union*." This historical trajectory highlights SADTU's deep-rooted connections to grassroots activism and its non-racial stance, which was a progressive departure from the racially segregated structures imposed by apartheid. Over time, SADTU evolved into a formally recognised trade union, playing a crucial role not only in educational matters but also in broader political discourse and policy advocacy in post-apartheid South Africa.

Amid diverging organizational ideologies, a new discourse emerged within SADTU, one that questioned the very identity of teachers, whether they should be viewed as workers or professionals. This debate symbolically underscored the political distinctions between NAPTOSA and SADTU, a divergence that remains evident today. SADTU has historically been, and continues to be, a predominantly Black teachers' union, rooted in the collective resistance against white political domination. As Sibiya (2017) notes, many Black teachers aligned themselves with SADTU as a form of political resistance against apartheid policies. Consequently, education began to be seen not merely as a neutral tool for instruction, but as a political instrument, a site of struggle and transformation. Teachers increasingly came to identify themselves as workers engaged in broader political activism rather than as detached professionals.

This militant and radical pedagogical stance contributed significantly to the struggles for social change, playing a notable role in the eventual collapse of apartheid and the transition to democracy in 1994; (Connell, 1995). Therefore, it is reasonable to assert that the roles of Black South African teachers extend well beyond curriculum delivery. Their professional identities are deeply intertwined with the socio-political history of the country, shaping how they understand and perform their roles within a continuously evolving educational landscape.

Since the downfall of apartheid South Africa, a regime that utilised racial segregation to govern the country, from 1994, South Africa become a major destination of choice for foreign immigrants, especially those of Black African ancestry, as alluded to in the introduction. Based on the push and pull factors associated with global immigration trends, South Africa is often perceived as an economically viable and relatively stable country; (Appleton, et al., 2006). This perception has contributed to its capacity to attract both legal and undocumented immigrants; (Weiner, et al., 1997). In the post-apartheid era, South Africa has come to symbolise freedom, opportunity, and prosperity; a place of refuge from conflict and poverty, as noted by Osman (2009). It is envisioned as a sanctuary where displaced individuals can find safety and stability, but also as a destination for those seeking economic advancement, career development, or access to educational opportunities. These multifaceted motivations underscore the complexity of immigration patterns into South Africa, where the promise of a better life continues to draw individuals from across the continent and beyond. It is therefore observable that immigration patterns and policies that existed pre-democracy were uniquely different from the present experience, both for the South African society and for immigrants.

Hostility toward immigrants in South Africa has historical roots, with its expression shifting across different political eras. During apartheid, such hostility was largely driven by systemic white oppression. In the post-apartheid context, although the political

landscape has changed, similar sentiments persist, albeit fuelled by different socio-economic and political conditions. The history of immigration in South Africa dates to the early 1900s, notably marked by the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand region of Johannesburg; (Vundla, 2020). This past sets the foundation for the current social attitudes that shape the immigrants' context in South Africa. The decision that the apartheid government took to promote regional migration by recruiting nationals of other countries in Southern Africa through the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA), as cheap labour, attracted hostility and negativity from native South Africans, who were grappling with the effects of political, social, and economic marginalisation by the apartheid regime. This created antagonist feelings, because the expectation, was that the governments of those countries that supplied immigrant mine workers would boycott South Africa, in solidarity with Black people.

It is this historical background that sets precedent for the present attitudes among Black people regarding Black African immigrants, Hungwe, (2013). While Black immigration was encouraged by the white apartheid governments' labour policies for cheap labour, but it did not carry the same status as white labour immigration, the policies vastly differed from each other, argues Brown (1987). White labour was believed to be valuable than Black labourers. That is the reason why in the 1970s foreign Black African male labour force accounted for only 15% of the entire employed male labour force in the country. It can be said that the apartheid

government in comparison to the current government had a vested interest in choosing which type of labour entered through the borders of the country. This shift in perception and policy led to heightened border monitoring and stricter immigration controls, culminating in the amendment of immigrant labour policies. By the 1960s, the government in Pretoria, South Africa's administrative capital, began implementing measures to restrict the entry of foreign Black workers; (Brown, 1987). These developments coincided with a growing Pan-Africanist consciousness across the continent, which further influenced migration patterns. Despite a temporal increase in foreign Black labour; rising to approximately 9%; this figure declined in the years that followed, as restrictive measures took effect and regional political dynamics evolved.

The distinctiveness of the apartheid system continues to attract scholarly attention due to its enduring impact on nearly all dimensions of South Africa's democratic journey. Scholars such as Crush and McDonald (2002), and Segatti and Landau (2011), argue that although South Africa is often viewed as a prime destination for immigrants, persistent studies have highlighted the prevalence of attitudes marked by intolerance and hostility, particularly among Black South Africans. As Muzondidya (2010) and Rutherford (2020) observe, these sentiments are often expressed through the development of vernacular discourses deliberately constructed to marginalise and alienate immigrants, as previously discussed. Evidence of such, was witnessed in the year 2008, 2015 and 2019, where violent xenophobic attacks were

witnessed in the country, (Harris, 2007; Steenkamp, 2009; Neocosmos, 2010; & Tevera, 2013). Scholars seem to be in unison in describing these hostile sentiments and reactions, as intense and irrational dislike, or fear of foreigners, which the *South African Pocket Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, (1994) defines as xenophobia.

While Zimbabweans are not the only foreign immigrants in South Africa, however, literature reveals that most immigrants found in South Africa, are those of Zimbabwean origin, both adults and children; (Netshidongololwe, 2016). There are immigrants from Ethiopia, Somalia, Angola, (who are largely asylum seekers or refugees), who generally conduct businesses, such as running clothing and food shops, Nigerians, Ghanaians and other West Africans, who are in professions such as medicine and education, business such as hair salons, Asians, such as Pakistanis and Chinese who specialise in food, clothing, food and electronic shops, Europeans, who are in the country for different reasons too, either in diplomacy, humanitarian, education and tourism and leisure, then there are Zimbabweans, who are found in professions such as education, medicine and the informal job sector, such as domestic work, farm work, truck driving and working in shops, as Rutherford, (2020), narrates in the ethnographic study he conducted, in the Limpopo Province among Zimbabwean immigrant who worked in a white-owned farm.

Crush, et al, (2008), argue a critical point, which is pivotal to this study, that xenophobia is not a random exclusive act, which probably could be associated with only certain social classes, such as the poor or the unemployed or with those who hold certain political dogma, but it is viewed as an inherently South African phenomenon, cutting across all social classes, including government/state/public employees, which among them are teachers. Xenophobic attitudes, which were first witnessed during the 2008 as physical attacks, particularly taking place in the large urban centres of South Africa; (Worby, Hassim & Kupe, 2008), largely shape the way in which immigrants view their stay in South Africa. According to (McNight, 2008; Amit, 2011; Sutton, & Vigneswaran, 2011), immigrants, especially those who have participated in studies and spoken about their plight in South Africa, where they have been subjected to acts of discrimination, confirm that Black immigrants are discriminated against by Black South Africans. Xenophobia is described by scholars as a new form of racism, not based on biological origins, challenging the idea that race, and racism are objective, fixed and a product of biological realities, but the ability of society to invent and manipulate race, when it is convenient; Adjai & Lazaridis, (2013).

The idea of race cannot be discussed in isolation from the history of apartheid. Seekings, (2008), argues that apartheid stood out as an extreme attempt to organise the South African society explicitly and systematically according to racial categories. This act, came with the prescriptive practice of privileging white identities, which

has remained a legacy in South Africa, that even though apartheid, is legally abolished, but in the subconsciousness of South Africans, the ideology of othering continues to exist, as an inherited trait of apartheid. Seeking, (2008) states that it would be surprising if post-apartheid South African society was not shaped profoundly by the experience of apartheid, remaining distinctive in terms of the social, political, or economic roles played by 'race', because apartheid was unique, it touched the very fabric of society. It was its systematic depth and breadth, as the powers of a modern state were deployed to order society along 'racial' lines, going far beyond racism and racial discrimination to generalised social engineering around state-sanctioned racial ideology and legislation. The racial structuring of society during apartheid resulted in complex and often arbitrary racial and ethnic classifications of South Africans, which, as Griffith and Zuberi (2015) argue, were deliberately manipulated to alter demographics for the purpose of dominating and controlling the Black population.

Demography of race and ethnicity in South Africa

The demographic profile of South Africa has attracted sustained interest from researchers, largely due to the enduring legacy of apartheid that continues to shape it. Griffith and Zuberi (2015) assert that, to thoroughly understand the formation of racial and ethnic groupings in South Africa, it is necessary to begin with the historical occupation of the Cape of Good Hope by the Dutch East India Company in the 1650s, as also noted by Khalfani, et el.,

(2005). These scholars emphasize that race and ethnicity were later instrumentalised as foundational constructs for both colonial and apartheid-era policies. It is also important to note that the system of racial classification was both confusing and complex, leading to frequent amendments in legislation, as highlighted by Davenport (1991), Pogrund (1990), and van Wyk (1984).

This interest stemmed from the conceptualisation of race based on perceived physical differences, where skin colour and ancestral background became primary criteria for categorising and differentiating people. However, this caused further complexities because ancestry for white South Africans was sometimes questionable, based on the idea that many of these pieces of racial legislation, conflicted with each other. Notably, racial classification of South Africans was not a dilemma for the whites, it also induced a strain on the social, economic and political well-being, as well as the quality of life for the other racial groups; (Davenport, 1991; Pogrund, 1990; van Wyk, 1984).

Racial classification in South Africa persisted for over 80 years before the country transitioned to democracy. Between 1911 and 1996, racial identity was embedded as a collective identity marker, shaping social and political structures; (Zuberi & Khalfani, 1996). A notable example is the implementation of the Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act in 1970, which assigned Black South Africans to one of ten homelands, geopolitical areas created to serve the apartheid regime's strategy of segregation. One of apartheid's most

defining features, as noted by Smith (2003), was systematic exclusion. By 1989, census estimates of the 30.2 million total population excluded 6.5 million people residing in four homelands. In the same year, Black South Africans were estimated to constitute 25% of the total population, whites 16%, coloureds (people of mixed race) 10.5%, and Asians 3.1%. These figures underscore how race and ethnicity were weaponised as instruments of control, domination, and marginalisation, patterns that, worryingly, persist today in the form of exclusionary attitudes toward Black African immigrants in post-apartheid South Africa.

Black race as an identity
Just like the concept of race seems inconceivable to be discussed outside of apartheid, the same applies with the economy. These share an incredible interconnectivity. There is a strong link between race and access to the economy, which Halisi (1997) refers to as racial proletarianisation, which is a concept that deeply explains the social evolutions of Black people in South Africa, which ultimately shaped their political realities. The apartheid system utilised race as a tool for the white capitalist economic growth, therefore, the entire labour system of South Africa evolved around Black labour, either imported or locally sourced. This system is arguably have survived because of the continued racial oppressive political system. Consequently, racial economic domination and racial proletarianisation has shaped how Black people perceive their political culture, identification, values and consciousness; (Halisi, 1997). Although South Africa committed

to the principle of non-racialism as early as June 1955 through the adoption of the *Freedom Charter* in Kliptown by the Congress Alliance, a coalition of multi-racial organizations aligned with the African National Congress (ANC), which is now the ruling political party, this idea was not universally embraced. The *Freedom Charter* (Alliance, 1955), along with the 1996 Constitution, laid the foundation for a non-racial democratic society. However, ideological disagreements within the ANC regarding the Charter's principles led to internal conflict, rivalries, and eventual splinter groups. One significant outcome was the formation of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), which aligned itself with the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), advocating for a more Africanist and race-conscious political philosophy.

Meanwhile some of the BCM members sternly rejected the ideology of a multi-racial society as envisaged by the Freedom Charter and went to the extent of boycotting the 1994 first democratic elections, the ANC on the other hand successfully utilised the multi-racial approach and won the elections that ushered in democracy and freedom. These members continue even today to advocate for Azania, (a name for a liberated South Africa), because according to them Azania will be achieved only by united Black people forming alliances with each other; (Halisi, 1997). These divergent views also exist among Marxist thinkers. The South African Communist Party (SACP; before 1953, the Communist Party of South Africa, or CPSA) and the intellectuals of the Trotskyite non-European Unity Movement (NEUM, or

Unity Movement) both embraced Marxist politics, but differed on the basis of embracing Blackness as the only tool for liberation, because while the Unity Movement regarded black (all non-European) classes led by workers and peasants as the primary agents of revolutionary change, on the contrary the SACP, an ally of the ANC, actively advocated for an agenda of a multiracial working class unity as the basis of socialist solidarity. Although Black nationalist ideas continue to exist today, but they have little representation in parliament compared to those parties who believe in a multi-racial society.

Abdi (1999) argues that precolonial Africans possessed a clear consciousness of their Black identity. However, the advent of colonialism, and later apartheid, imposed an oppressive and dehumanising identity upon Black Africans, effectively relegating them to a status of inferiority. This process was not incidental but rather aligned with a broader racist discourse that had already taken root in early European philosophical thought. Prominent Enlightenment thinkers such as Montesquieu (1975), Voltaire (1826), and Hegel (1965) propagated ideas that reinforced racial hierarchies and justified European domination, thereby laying the ideological foundation for the subjugation of Black Africans:

> *Africa is not interesting from the point view of its own history .... Man [in Africa] is in a state of barbarism and savagery which is pre- venting him from being an integral part of civilizations .... [Africa] is the country of gold*

which closed in on itself, the country of infancy, beyond the daylight of conscious history, wrapped in the blackness of night. (Abdi, 2011, p. 247).

The erosion and limited emphasis on Black Consciousness by the populist African National Congress (ANC), along with the marginalization of Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) members, may offer insights into the persistent lack of acceptance of Black African immigrants by Black South Africans. However, a more significant factor lies in the enduring socio-economic consequences of colonialism and apartheid. In post-apartheid South Africa, being Black is often synonymous with poverty, a reality that Abdi (1999) suggests, is deeply rooted in historical injustices. This economic deprivation contributes to high levels of crime in major urban centres, where most of the Black population resides under harsh socio-economic conditions. Ash (1997a) poignantly captures this plight, illustrating how the legacy of apartheid continues to shape the experience of Black identity in contemporary South Africa.

I found a country of extremes, with some of the most beautiful and some of the most ugly human beings I have ever seen (...) Yet of euphoria, I tasted nothing, and most of what I found was grim. The inheritance is so terrible. Black poverty grinds against white riches (...) Central Johannesburg is Manhattan in its skyscrapers, but with a more violent version of the Bronx on the streets below.

The Cape is California with shanty towns. Economists say South Africa's pattern of income distribution is one of the most unequal in the world. (Ash, 1997a p. 8).

Similarly, Abdi (1999) identifies the emergence of a Black elite class in post-apartheid South Africa, individuals who have gained access to the benefits of a growing middle class. This development has resulted in a visible socio-economic divide within the Black population, effectively producing two distinct groups: the economically empowered and the economically marginalized. Consequently, economic access appears to transcend shared racial identity, suggesting that class distinctions increasingly supersede the unifying concept of Blackness across ethnic lines, a situation that exists among Black South Africans and African immigrants.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are six (6) approaches from which theory is applied in this study. The first one is studying immigration from two American sociological views, the Sociological and the Assimilation Theory. The second approach explores the role of capitalism in fuelling exploitation of African immigrants, is theoretically explored, how it has potentially contributed in the antagonization of immigrant labour force by aggrieved South Africans, through the lens of the Marxist Theory. The third one, is applying the Critical Race Theory (herein referred to as CRT) to explore the concept of race, the phenomenon of racism, discrimination, and xenophobia against the background of apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa. To

understand teacher identity, this study frames the concept within the Vygotskian Theory and Post Structuralist views. The final approach is framed within the Critical Theory of Multiculturalism.

The study employs different theories to explain, predict, and understand the phenomena being studied here. Grant & Osanloo, (2014), use a metaphor to describe a theoretical framework, suggesting that it is a blueprint for building a house. According to this analogue, the theoretical framework, of this study provides a structure and a guide on which to frame or premise it, philosophically, and methodologically, by relying on formal theory as Eisenhart, (1991) suggests. According to this suggestion, the theoretical framework consists of theories that are relevant to the topic of study, and in turn provide a world view from which the study is premised; (Merriam, 2001).

Immigration from a Sociological perspective

To fully understand the sociological theories, it is important to understand the phenomenon of immigration within the education context of South Africa, first. According to the South African Census of 2011, there were about 2.2 million immigrants in the country, that was about 4% of the entire population. This 2011 Census figure is supposed to include both documented and undocumented foreigners. While we acknowledge South Africa's unique contexts and historical background, it is however, of

significance to explore immigration from a USA viewpoint, particularly because of the shared historical similarities between the two countries, based on the policies of segregation, that targeted Black people. Therefore, the theories that will be explored here, are mainly from an American sociological perspective, but will consequently inform the study about what could be the experiences of immigrants in South Africa.

According to Portes, (1997), immigrants in the USA in the 1900s, were symbolically allowed the freedom to launch their American careers, with a new identity and anywhere in the country, they wanted to. The manner at which immigrants were given the liberty to express themselves in this way, symbolised the confident and careless way in which the country treated its newcomers then. Immigrants were given a powerful first shove toward assimilation into American society, during the time when the country was at its infancy, preoccupied with industrial expansion, and at a prime stage to dominate the world. In all this midst of developments, immigrants had a transparent role. However, as time progressed, grew new urban forms, new institutions, new social problems, and a changed concept of what the nation was about, and that meant a different trajectory for immigrants and their children.

Immigration has evolved into a hot topic in the USA in professional, social, and public realms, often causing heated debate regarding the situation and theory development, suggests Lee and Hernandez (2009). To understand this social position Robbins

(1998), explains societal processes that immigrants are subjected to by the host society. Robbins provides some insightful discussion about the impact of assimilation and acculturation processes on immigrants by addressing the influence of dominant majority culture on minority cultures living in the same environment. The extent to which immigration is explained, is mindful of human behaviour, the social environment, or the combination of both. Immigration has been viewed from a sociological point of view, where it has been presented as a subject of exploration, argues Heisler (2000). It is also solicitated a lot of interest from the psychology, Marxist and anthropology scholarships offering explanations of the individual, family, and group experience of immigration, while economics and political science emphasises perspectives of the social environment and its impact on the immigration process, Lee and Hernandez (2009).

Immigration from the Assimilation Theories

Understandably, with the large influx of immigrants into South Africa, which according to the 2011 census, was above 4% of the total population, sociologists, predict that consequentially, there will be many dynamics during the process of social incorporation or assimilation, Lee (2009). To understand immigration as it is discussed in the study, it is important that we familiarise ourselves with the traditional and modern theories of assimilation. According to Lee (2009), the contemporary sociological theories of immigration are founded upon the Classical Assimilation Theory (CAT), which is viewed as a traditional theory. This theory first

appeared in the field of Social Sciences through the efforts of scholars in the Chicago School of Sociology; (Alba & Nee, 1997). It is crucial that we scrutinise the original definition of the term, assimilation, as it was applied in the context of immigrants in the USA, so that we gain insights on how assimilation as a sociological process has evolved over the years, from the time of its inception, up until now, when there is a lot of activism, advocacy, agency and awareness around discrimination, racism, inequality, and all other forms of injustices emitted towards immigrants all around the world.

Like South Africa, the USA, is one of the popular destinations for immigrants due to factors associated with quality life. On the other hand, the Americans, from the CAT perspective, viewed their country as a melting pot for all ethnic minority cultures, where social processes such as assimilation, would eradicate distinctive immigrants' ethnic origin traits, and instead integrate them into mainstream typical American life; (Alba & Nee, 1997). This idea later receive criticism from the critiques of the classic assimilation theory; (Heisler, 2000). The CAT definition of assimilation presents a rather linear process which was considered to have only one outcome that which was to eradicate immigrant typical traits, since they had no room in their newly acquired American life, otherwise, they would have been an obstacle in achieving assimilation, argues Zhou (1999). Learning English was one of the models that were used to overcome the immigrants' shortfalls in Americanism Rumbant (1997).

However, modern day social scientists and sociologists have identified gaps in the CAT motivated definition of assimilation. Arguments rise from the fact that immigrants are subjected to assimilation to bridge the deficit in Americanism, consequently perpetuating ethnocentric ideology, and placing patronising demands on them, argues Alba and Nee, (1997), which will eventually lead to identity loss and cultural distinctiveness, according to (Heisler, 2000). This prescription of a linear assimilation process has been poked holes due to its unrealistic nature and approach in addressing diversity. It is viewed by modern sociologists as an inconsiderate and ignorant approach to the diverse nature of immigrant groups and their social context; (Portes & Borocz, 1989). This traditional view has since been described as a weak and unsuccessful approach which has not been able to account for continued injustices that have been experienced by immigrant groups (Heisler, 2000). Even though this theory is rejected as a weak theory, but I still find it useful, because it assists in explaining and justifying the theoretical reasoning and societal motivations that drive xenophobia in South Africa.

Unlike the CAT, Modern Assimilation Theories (MAT) turn to focus on the impetus of immigration and the promotion of a wider understanding of the social dynamics of ethnicity, particularly in the USA society (Alba & Nee, 1997; Portes, 1999). Coupled with that, Modern Assimilation Theorists, investigate the interactions that exist between the immigrants and the host society, and how these relationships pen out between the groups. It is from the

reshaping of the CAT that assimilation is viewed from a wider and deeper scope, where it is regarded as having been influenced either by proximate sources, which refers to the casual mechanisms of assimilation relating to individual and group relationships and characteristics, or distal causes, which are mechanisms of assimilation that are entrenched within the larger structures of institutions, such as the state and labour markets, argues Alba and Nee (2003). The reshaping of the classic assimilation theory has led to the emergence of a school of thought in sociology that disputes ideas of assimilation that tends to associate it with a universal singular path outcome, that expects all immigrants despite their unique individual circumstances, to conform to expectations. Instead, it regards assimilation as an incremental process that takes place across all generations, where each group is expected to react differently from the other, it is not one glove fits all approach.

Contextualising assimilation theories within South Africa

To put these theories into perspective within the context of South Africa, immigrants who arrive in South Africa, are generally blanketed under victims of war or any other form of conflict from their home countries. For many years, immigration has been studied from an angle of destination for migrants and 'war and poverty', which force people to flee in search of security and well-being and in the process "invade the host country's resources" (de Haas, 2008). It is such narratives and discourse that may lead to

negative attitudes among teachers and other members of society, leading to the stigmatisation of immigrants' education.

> *The conventional wisdom underlying such argumentations is that war and poverty are the root causes of mass migration across and from Africa. Popular images of extreme poverty, starvation, tribal warfare, and environmental degradation amalgamate into a stereotypical image of "African misery" as the assumed causes of a swelling tide of northbound African migrants,* (de Haas, 2008, p.2).

Stereotype ideas about immigrants according to studies is one of the contributing factors in the eruption of xenophobic attitudes among Black South Africans. Even though, there is a big presence of refugees and asylum seekers in the country, as mentioned in the introduction, but there is also a considerable number of other African immigrants who are in South Africa because they are motivated by different factors. It is such gaps in knowledge among Black people that renders assimilation, that is consistent with the Modern Assimilation Theories (MAT), attainable. Even though the ground is not fertile in South Africa to plant the seed of immigrant assimilation, particularly those who are possessing a refugee or asylum seeking, the government according to Vundla (2020) has been attempting to invest in policies and norms which are based on the immigrants' social, vulnerability and development statuses. This approach appears to be congruent with the Modern

Assimilation Theories, who advocate for immigrants to be viewed as unique individuals, and not as a collective who require uniform approaches of assimilation, each case needs a different and yet relevant method to each situation.

Assimilation is not a natural or automatic occurrence, argues Smit, (2015). This is because settling in a host country alone, does not guarantee successful integration, there are other contributing factors, such as access to means of survival. This resonates with what Coakley and Einri (2007) states. They argue that an additional hurdle towards a smooth assimilation could be that there are different levels at which assimilation occurs, at an employment place, and socially. This suggests that if an individual immigrant manages to assimilate into an employment environment, does not translate to or guarantee social assimilation, which in that case, could lead to examples of social exclusion. One of the reasons attributed to the above deficiency, is the language gap. In a study conducted among Arabic immigrants living in Malaysia, a similar conclusion was reached, based on their feelings of emotional distress due to failure to assimilate, because they could not speak the host country's language; (Vundla, 2020). Assimilation depends on numerous considerations; it is not just an obvious phenomenon. Racism and lack of access are some of the factors that can create an environment where immigrants cannot integrate in the host country; (Hindy, 2018). Congolese, Burundians, and Zimbabwean refugee women were found to be experiencing a similar challenge in Johannesburg, in a study by Smit (2015). These women found

assimilating into the South African community a quandary. One of the barriers was access to affordable housing, but also from the government's side, there are inefficient administrative processes, that cause delays in immigrants' case processing. Consequently, immigrants are thus forced to rely on other means to survive, because these setbacks in obtaining legal documents from the South African Department of Home Affairs, potentially prevents them from being employed, or accessing social services, and health care. This becomes one of their biggest dilemmas, because living in Johannesburg for immigrants who are without employment, could mean serious consequences. The lack of proper documentation caused by a backlog in case processing, leads to another problem, again. Immigrants without updated papers become vulnerable to a host of a vast range of injustices and even denied access to services such as education.

However, in cases where assimilation appears to have been achieved, and immigrants feel a certain level of acceptance, is found in a study by Rugunanan, (2015), where among his participants, are Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, and Indians from India. One of the Pakistanis stated that he is satisfied that he can practise his culture and religion without being harassed. Similarly, a Bangladeshi participant indicated that he felt welcomed at the mosque. Even a Malawian immigrant, who happens to be a Black African, echoed the same sentiments, as his fellow Muslim brothers, stating that in Islam, nobody treats the other person as a foreigner. This reveals another factor that influences immigrant

assimilation in South Africa. I would like to assume from this study and experiences narrated by participants that Black Muslim African immigrants, such as those hailing from Malawi and Somalia, Nigeria, Sudan, and Mozambique, residing in South Africa, appear to receive better treatment and acceptance from their South African Muslim fellows, compared to the reception that they receive from non-Muslim Black South Africans. This could raise questions regarding the ability of Muslims in South Africa to embrace immigrants better than non-Muslims do. In addition to immigrants of Islam orientation, there are also Asians, Africans of Arabic heritage, like those who originate from North Africa, like Egyptians or Moroccans and they appear not to experience any exclusions from Black South Africans. The term 'Muslim' can be interchangeably used by Black South Africans to refer to a member of the Islam faith, but also it could be used to refer to an individual who has Arabic ancestry.

The acceptance of Afrabians, who may be coming from Egypt, Syria, Morocco and or Lebanon by Black South Africans, is probably because of the history of Islam in the country. The first group of Muslims to arrive, were from Malaysia in 1658, and settled in Cape Town, and their descendants were categorised as Coloureds under the apartheid racial policies; (Mahida, 1993). Closely after them, followed Indonesians, who became very influential in spreading the Arabic Language among Muslims in

the country. They arrived in 1699 and settled in Cape Town again. Almost a century later, in 1860, a group of other Muslims arrived as indentured labourers at the cost of Durban, from Bombay, Gujarat and Bengal; (Mohammed, 1998). A few years later, in 1870, and 1880, a group of 508 liberated slaves by the British Navy, on the Indian Ocean cost of Durban, freed slaves abducted from Zanzibar by Arab slave traders, destined for Pemba Islands and Madagascar slave markets, (Kaarsholm, 2014). These Zanzibaris distinctively identified themselves as Arab Muslim descendants, distinctly marking themselves different from the locals, who were Zulu-speaking Africans. The Zanzibari's assumed identity had implication on the social status that they were afforded by the government. By excluding themselves as Africans, they were suggesting that Zanzibar was not part of the continent of Africa, and its inhabitants were descendants of Arabs; (Kaarsholm, 2014). This exceptionality in identification came to the spotlight again in the 1950s when the apartheid regime struggled to racially categorise them, thus having to re-classify then under the apartheid Population Registration Act, as other Asians, leading to their relocation from Bluff (which became a white suburb after) to a residential land next to an Indian Township, Chatsworth. It was through this Zanzibari community that Durban became a magnet for Muslim immigrants; (Kaarsholm, 2014), but also, they created a platform for Muslims to earn recognition and preferential treatment. This could suggest that those who associate with Islam automatically earn immunity from xenophobic attitudes, and Islam

becomes a springboard for their socialisation, because of the social status that Muslims have acquired over the years, in the country.

While assimilation may appear as a form of control, and to be a one-sided and restrictive concept, because those who are socially dominant tend to prescribe the terms of assimilation, (Young, 2000), but when we pay close attention to the Modern Assimilation Theories, we can agree that immigrants do need to integrate into the host country to avoid social exclusion and emotional trauma, especially in a country like South Africa where the majority of perpetrators of xenophobia, are former victims of the history of exclusion. Based on this background and issues of immigrant assimilation, we can assume that even in classrooms teachers could be experiencing challenges in assisting immigrant learners to seamlessly fit into the school environment.

Marxist Theory
Marxist ideas are open to various interpretations, either it is the orthodox or the contemporary version, Marxist's ideas hold two basic ideas, that of basic classes of capitalism, the bourgeoisie, and the proletariat. While there are two separate social classes, they are however connected by two forces, social and political formations; (Cottrell, 2019). While there is no systematically organised definition provided by Marx's, evidence shows that the pivotal concept with the Marxist Theory is the class concept, in its conceptualisation to portray class structure as a central determinant of social conflict, Wright, (1980).

The principal tenet of the Marxist Theory is that "…*the form which class division and class struggle take on in particular epochs is fundamentally determined by the mode of exploitation or mode of extraction of the surplus product, which characterises the successive modes of production which arise in the course of historical development*" (Cottrell, 2019, p. 2). Yet another profound piece of Marx's position in what he refers to as the 'guiding principle' according to Cottrell, (2019), in his *Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, (1859), is in the analysis of the concept of class division and class struggle. He states that man is not free to decide how to sell his labour. Capitalists who own the means of production do so instead, because of their power and ability to control the social, economic, political, and intellectual platforms, which consequently deprive workers the choice to determine their worth. He continues to say, "*it is not the consciousness of man that determines his being, but his social being is the one that decides his consciousness,*" Ladson-Billings, (2009, p. 105).

The interconnectedness in the structure of society and labour gives us an insight on the potential attitudes that Black South Africans may display towards immigrants, because De Genova, (2016), claims that immigration and labour are not mutually exclusive. To support this, a case of Europe is cited, where post-colonial Europe is experiencing an influx of immigrants, which is an era that redefines he politics of race, and fortifies Europeanness or whiteness, as it appears on the text, as racial formation of

superiority. Furthermore, European immigrants are in a way redrawing the lines of global neoliberal politics of transnational labour mobility and capitalist labour subordination, which is responsible for the racialisation of labour, which is one area of capitalisation by Europe; (De Genova, 2016).

From 1972 to 1993, South Africa experienced a widespread use of cheap migrant labour system especially in the mining and agriculture sectors; (Harington, et al., 2004). Scholars argue that without a doubt migrant labour had dire consequences and impact on the social fabric of the country. Cheap migrant labourers from Southern Africa began as little as fourteen thousand (14 000) at the beginning of 1890 upon the discovery of gold in Johannesburg. By 1986, the population exponentially increased seven folds, to five hundred and thirty-four thousand (534 000) and dropped to two hundred and fifty-five thousand (255 000) people in 1998. The white apartheid government benefited extensively from cheap migrant labour because it contributed to foreign exchange income for RSA; (Harington, et al., 2004). When apartheid finally collapsed, new forms of migrant labour began to emerge. Due to new labour migration policies that the new democratic government had adopted at that time, there was a noticeable growth in irregular labour migration from the SADC region, especially from Zimbabwe. This has precipitated discourse, that labelled South Africa as the new African economic hub; (Segatti, 2011). However, this came at a cost, because according to Boynton (2015), the democratic government began to experience major

pressure in trying to manage immigrant mobility, which gave rise to exacerbated xenophobic tensions.

Even before hostility towards immigrants could be termed as xenophobia, in the 21st century already, as early as the days of cross border mining labour recruitment, immigrant workers were seen as traitors, by the native South African. Their willingness to work for white capitalists, was interpreted as supporting and adhering to the system of oppression by the natives who were actively involved in fighting to democracy; (Neocosmos, 2010). It is however argued still, that even though, the situation might have been viewed in this light, migrant labour enabled and developed peasant agriculture among the native Blacks. It is against this background, that immigrants are accused of undermining the freedom of Black people in South Africa, even at post-apartheid. They are viewed as 'those' Africans who are only in South Africa to take away, and not to contribute, in the welfare of Back people.

In light of the above history of cheap migrant labour and its role in shaping social attitudes among Black South Africans, I am persuaded to include Kabwe-Segatti, (2008) arguments. The point of departure on his claims postulates that there is a need for robust debate that will position immigration as a post-apartheid phenomenon instead of being an apartheid legacy, to eliminate the capitalist motivations that have contributed to the fuelling of xenophobic or Afrophobia acts that subjects African immigrant to

violence and discrimination, as point raised it in the problem statement.

While the capitalist class benefits from exploiting the cheap labour of immigrants because their labour serves as an industrial reserve army, (Portes, 1981; Petras, 1987), literature reveals that antagonism, racial tensions, and xenophobia is encouraged in the process. Another important claim to consider is that when the capitalist class encourages immigration trends in a country, also divides the working class. This is achieved by encouraging racism through education, media, and the racialisation of labour, (Bonacich, 1989). The racial divisions that are created when immigrants' labour is preferred over natives' labour is also discussed by Marx & Engels (1962). They describe a situation where two different racial groups are set up against each other by the system, the English and Irish proletariats, which eventually helped to elevate the bourgeoisie. The Marxist approach to immigration argues that capitalist capitalise on immigrants' labour through exploitation, in the process maximise on profits; (Beard & Beard, 1994; Gorz, 1970; Marshall, 1973; Marx, 1973, 1976; Castells, 1975; Nikolinakos, 1975; Castles, & Kosack; 1985; Niles, 1986, 1987, 1989; Bovenkerk, et al. 1990, 1991). This therefore suggests that capitalism as an idea and practice that dares to maintain the status quo, including oppression of the proletariat and encouraging divisions. Racialisation of labour according to Bonacich, (1989), is a product of capitalist oppression and conquest.

In Dodson (2010), the analysis of the origins of xenophobia in South Africa, displays the role played by the economic status of Black South Africans, who in the main are still subjected to poverty. Their economic situation drives them to see Black African foreigners as a threat and competition in the various aspects of life, from job opportunities to access to resources and services. Paradoxically, wealthy Black and white South Africans, while they do not condone xenophobia; (Dodson, 2010), they are also not willing to pay taxes that will ultimately support immigrants whose entry into the country is unregulated (referring to illegal immigrants), when they are fleeing from their own social and political challenges; (Sharp, 2008a). Manzi & Bond, (2008) introduce another dimension to this picture. They argue that such attitudes first begin or exist at a community level where they produce ethinicised political economy, in which microeconomic friction escalates to hate-filled nationalism. Access and lack of access to jobs thereof, is regarded as the cause for such attitudes. Whether it is perception or reality, Black South African men who are unemployed tend to blame Black African male immigrants for using money to lure Black women; (Dodson, 1998, 2008). Male immigrants seem to be the ones who are steering conflict, because they are deemed as those who are all out to 'steal' every opportunity, including jobs; (Madue, 2015). There could be some element of validity in this, argues Dodson, (2010), because illegal immigrants are willing to accept any wage; (Neocosmos, 2010). This causes competition but also benefits the employer. We can

therefore assume that xenophobia cannot be entangled with single logic, the Marxist Theory illuminates how deep entrenched these xenophobic attitudes are.

Migrant labour has always led to citizens resorting to decisive dominant decisions, such as the Brexit Referendum of 2016. One of the cornerstones of the European Union (EU), since the Treaty of Rome, was to establish a common market for its member states, that they would be free of obstacles that hinder the free movement of labour, capital, goods, and services. However, the existence of the EU was fraught with a looming exit of the United Kingdom (UK), famously known as Brexit, which finally occurred, because of the debate on the principle on free movement of workers, from other member states into the UK; (Doherty, 2016). The Treaty of Rome among other things, stipulated that the freedom of movement of workers from member States would be secured within the EU. This ultimately meant that any form of discrimination based on nationality of workers, pertaining to their employment, working conditions and salaries, would be abolished. However, before the Brexit took effect, the political debates of the UK centred around the issue of EU immigrants taking jobs from UK citizens, which was an act attributed to the unemployability of UK citizens. There were claims that cheap labour particularly from East-Central Europe flourished. Brexit was supported by various groups of the UK population, such as taxpayers. They were aggrieved that foreigners were entering the country as they wished and found "… *a nest well feathered by the British taxpayers,*

whereas they – as 'genuine' British subjects – have to accept shortages and cuts in essential public expenditure. Why should immigrants be entitled to social benefits, and why do they have access to the NHS without ever having contributed to its spiralling costs?" (Adam, 2020, p. 202 -203).

Scapegoating Black African immigrant

As a result of long-standing patterns of labour migration in South Africa, caused by social and political instability to SA's neighbouring countries, South Africa over the years has assumed a new status and role in the continent and the SADC region, that of being a host country or transit gate for Europe, USA and Australia. Landau, et al. (2005) argue that although negative attitudes towards African immigrants depends on the socio-economic and ethnic contexts of Black South Africans, evidence however shows that immigrants do face discrimination regardless, which includes the police and government officials. This leads to the assumption that this group includes teachers as well, because they too are members of society. Studies reveals that these discriminatory attitudes are often based on stereotype ideas, where African foreigners are generally viewed as inherently criminals and people who are benefiting illegally from the South African social welfare system. Discrimination is also fuelled by scapegoating attitudes that are used to justify the limitations of the ruling party, the African National Congress, (ANC), in fulfilling service delivery. Monson (2011) argues that the government's inability to devotedly provide

service delivery to the people of South Africa has created social division amongst South Africans and foreigners.

Based on the economic capitalist nature of South Africa, immigrants stand to be blamed for the loss of job for native Black South Africans, because they are described as desperate people who are eager to accept any job, even if it may be exploiting in nature. These accusations levelled against immigrants, seemed to be fuelled by economic trends and behaviour by the post-apartheid government. One of the promises of democracy was to bring equality among citizens, yet 27 years later, only the affluent minority can lead a decent livelihood, while the majority is still trapped in the claws of poverty, marginalisation, and injustice, jostling for meagre resources with immigrants for survival. Solomon, & Kosaka, (2013) argue that this creates a feeling of resentment and bitterness towards foreigners, who unfortunately find themselves at the receiving end because of their vulnerable status in society. Harris, (2001) concurs with this argument, by stating that in a society where there are long pending and overdue service delivery promises and expectations from the democratic government, immigrants are likely to bear the brunt and become scapegoats. This state causes much concern from different human rights watch organisations. Human Rights Commissioner, Ramcharan (2004), expressed deep concerns about an emerging reality dominated by newer, more subtle forms of racial discrimination and xenophobia, that had elements of blame shifting.

Refugees, asylum seekers, migrant workers, undocumented immigrants, and other so-called 'non-citizens' are being stigmatised and vilified for seeking a better life. They are made scapegoats for all kinds of social ills, subjected to harassment and abuses by political parties, the media, and society at large. (Ramcharan, 2004, p. 117).

In my attempt to adequately put the Marxist Theory into perspective, I discuss the migrant labour history, and the economic status quo of Black South Africa. It is important that we discuss teachers from this background because the way in which they would display their identity and perform their roles teaching immigrant learners, is not an act that is isolated from their social identities, based on the history of the country, and external influences. We understand that xenophobia is one of the contributing factors to hostility towards African immigrants, by linking this South African context to accounts of xenophobic violence elsewhere in the world as Hobsbawm (1992); Malkki (1995) and Appadurai, (1998) discuss them, should give us an insight on globalisation as a primary influencing force of local affairs. African immigrants among other immigrants who find themselves in South Africa are a product of global trends. Marxist or political economy perspectives, "*holds that neoliberal policy and structural adjustment undermine livelihoods and spur violent competition over scarce resources such as jobs and housing,*" (Hickel, 2014, 104).

> *In the post-apartheid epoch, while people's expectations have been heightened, a realisation that delivery is not immediate has meant that discontent and indignation are at their peak. People are more conscious of their deprivation than ever before .... This is the ideal situation for a phenomenon like xenophobia to take root and flourish. South Africa's political transition to democracy has exposed the unequal distribution of resources and wealth in the country*. (Tshitereke, 1999, p. 4).

Finally, I present the relationship between teachers, capitalism, and racism. In the context of this study, racism refers to the discrimination of Black African immigrants who live in South Africa. When Karl Marx says, "*it is not the consciousness of man that determines his being, but his social being is the one that decides his consciousness,*" (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p.105), he means that a person is not a passive player in the historical events that unfold in a particular historical period, humans are active beings, while circumstances help to form human beings, humans help to form circumstances too. This logic prompts Marx to postulate that human nature is a notion that cannot be excluded from its contribution in historical eras. The human aspect of human creates a vacuum for certain human needs in society, which leads to the production power. However, paradoxically when society begins to develop the need to produce the human in humans begin to cease, because society will begin to be driven by materialistic outlook to life.

In the context of this study, this view on capitalist attitudes, reveals a struggle that teachers could potentially face in developing a critical pedagogy approach that can not only assist learners but also equip teachers with the consciousness and ability to build alternative "*conceptions of ontology and epistemology*," (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p.105), to render fallacies about immigrants invalid or "*the uncritical consciousness critical*" (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p.105) . The inability for teachers to develop such a revolutionary awareness, according to Ladson-Billings, (2009), is a struggle for humanisation. This school of thought could be useful for the reader to spot the relationship between the Marxist Theory and Critical Race Theory against the background of teacher identity. Therefore, capitalist ideologies cannot be fully understood without the discussion of social and economic histories.

Critical Race Theory
Human relations are characterised by fundamental discourses that include economies, history, context, group and self-interest, feelings, and the unconscious. Based on these issues, the Critical Race Theory (CRT) places its interest in studying and transforming these relationships within the lines of race, racism, and power. Parsons, (2017), introduces her chapter by defining the CRT. She claims that it is a framework that centralises race, which simple means that race is at the core of this theory. But it also centralises the concepts of racism and power when a particular phenomenon of interest is being explored or investigated. In supporting this view Chapman, (2007), states that the size or magnitude of a phenomena

being studied, will determine the depth of the focus. Scholars appear to be in unison in portraying the CRT as a force that challenges the status quo. Instead of race to exist as a race class, it is presented as a point of departure in the understanding of inequality and injustice, from a broad and expanded perspective; (Delgado, & Stefanic, 2012). Regrettably, CRT has seen some splits in the past, where we see an emergence of different groups, but on the positive side, in 1995, Ladson-Billing and Tate, (1995) introduced CRT to the field of education, which gave rise to another group, but also CTR became popular within education. Figure 1 below demonstrates the depth and the broad scope of the CRT.
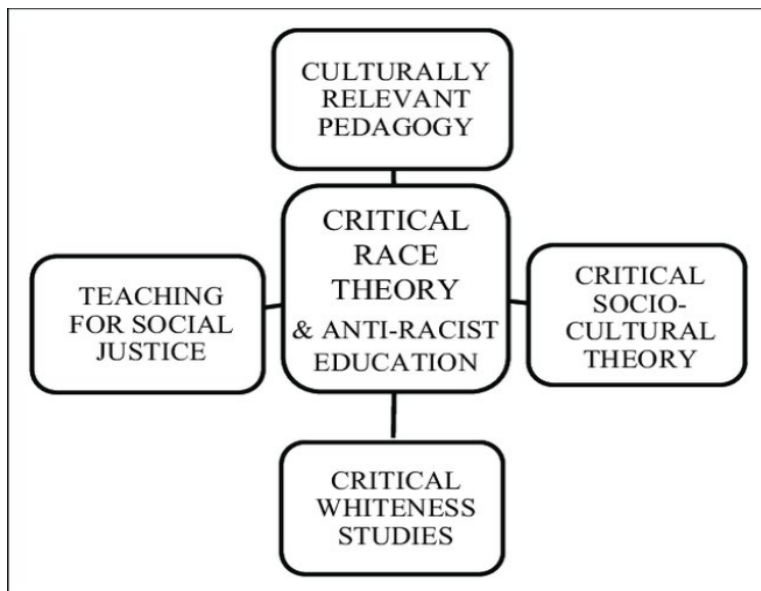
Figure:1 Theories and pedagogies that augmented the critical race theory framework. Source: (Nash, 2013)

There are also sub-groups, which include the Latino and Asian scholars who concern themselves with studying immigration policy, language rights and discrimination based on accent or national origin. Even though there are these splits, that at some point define CTR from different debatable accounts of origin, but all these accounts are united by common themes; (Matsuda, et al., 1993). The first tenet of the CTR argues that race is an endemic ideology, argues Constance-Huggins, (2012). This suggests that racism is not confined to isolated incidents but can emerge across various contexts and moments. As Solórzano and Bernal (2001) argue, racism is embedded within social structures, customs, and everyday experiences, making it a persistent and systemic issue. In the South African context, racism -remains one of the deeply rooted social challenges that continue to affect the societal fabric. Therefore, it is essential to recognise that pre-service teachers enter teacher education programmes as individuals who may already hold preconceived notions or misconceptions about immigrant communities. It becomes the responsibility of teacher educators to critically address and deconstruct these fallacies to foster more inclusive and socially conscious teaching practices. Given its endemic nature, CRT suggests that the functions and effects of racism are often invisible to people with racial privileges, which could also mean the same attitude for which could also mean the

same attitude for Black South Africans, who may not consider xenophobia as a form of racism, because historically, racism is known to exist between white and black people Black South Africans, who may not consider xenophobia as a form of racism, because historically, racism is known to exist between white and black people.

The CRT emerged at a time when the civil rights movement of the 1960s that was spearheaded by Martin Luther, seemed to be stalling, while slighter forms of prejudice were gaining ground, hence the need for new and radical theories. It owes its existence to different movements where it has drawn its inspiration, such as the critical legal studies and feminist insights, exploring the relationship between power and construction of social roles, coupled with the hidden, invisible collection of patterns and habits that are responsible for the existence of patriarchy and other forms of control. Borrowing from the conventional civil rights philosophy, CRT seeks to address past historical injustices, with the belief that such should have consequences. During the process of pursuing justice in an environment that does not allow it, the CTR aims to implement social changes as well as explore how society organises itself along racial lines and hierarchies, and at the heart of that, transform it for the better.

South Africa is a society founded on past racially dominated fallacies. This legacy still lingers over, which presents the need to

challenge race-based ideologies that are woven into the societal fabric. It is an irrefutable that South Africa racism appears to be a phenomenon that transcends beyond biological lines, due to the influence of changing demographics over the years. An influx of immigrants into South Africa makes it a host country of choice for many nationals from many different parts of the world, Asia, Europe as well as Africa; (Adepoju, 2003). However, recently, the country has witnessed xenophobic motivated attacks directed to immigrants of African descent. Previous civil rights movements have viewed race as an objective, fixed product of biological realities, which is the very reason that has encouraged critical race scholars interested in the field of transforming relationships among race, racism, and power to approach the subject from a broader perspective which includes economics, history, context, group and self-interests and feelings, which further distinguishes CRT from its predecessors.

Based on the traditional notions of race, the CRT seeks not only to understand the social status quo and how society organises itself along racial lines and hierarchies, but also to change it for the betterment of society. It is for this reason that the CTR holds the view that race is a social construct, product of a social thought and relations. According to this thesis, race is not objective, not inherent or a fixed concept, but instead, it does not conform to biological or genetic reality. CRT claims that race is an idea that develops from societal inventions and manipulations, convenient for a particular context. While it is true that people of the same and

common origin share certain physical traits, but these only account for an extremely small genetic make-up.

The CRT is interested in demystifying these perceptions about race, where society chooses to ignore scientific truths and instead creates races, with pseudo-permanent characteristics. Similarly, in South Africa, Black African immigrants find themselves discriminated against due to their economic and citizenship background, by other Blacks. This example leads us to other developments within the CRT; the racialisation of minority groups by dominant society, at different times, in response to shifting economic needs, such as the labour market, according to Crush, & Pendleton, (2004). This view aligns with the sentiments that are raised by most respondents in this study, regarding the entry of immigrants into South Africa, which in many cases is referred to as an illegal entry, which is attributed to the job threat for locals.

The re-conceptualisation of the sociology of race is responsible for the much-needed progress in the scholarship of interdisciplinarity of programmes, such as African American, Asian Pacific American, and Chicana/o studies; (Romero, 2008). These developments in racial studies facilitated advances in the racialisation process of race, which had excluded groups that were previously identified in terms of ethnicity instead of race, which led to the idea of "white" as race, and the assimilationist of immigrants being challenged; (Ignatiev, 1995; Steinberg, 1981;

Takaki, 1979). The interdisciplinary approach according to Romero, (2008), is instrumental in immigration research, particularly for scholars to conceptualise race and ethnicity as not fixed genetic realities, but as socially stratified perceptions constructed by law, public policy, and people's daily practices. Romero, (2008) claims that with the CTR in place, it is now easier to study immigration because the CTR does not view race in isolation from the existing status quo. It is from this backdrop that CTR is viewed as a bridging platform for growing conflict emanating from immigration sentiments, globally.

Immigrants generally find themselves on the receiving end in society because for example, over the last three decades, the scholarship of CTR has shown that racism particularly in the USA can be understood from studying immigration policies towards minority racial groups. Johnson (2004) brings to the fore most commonly cited socially constructed immigration statuses in the USA; the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the Gentleman's Agreement of 1907 between the USA and Japan, the 1923 USA Supreme Court case *United States v. Thind*, the 1924 national origins quota system, and the Immigration Act of 1965, the analysis of these immigration laws, (Johnson, 2004) is able to present to us the relationship between legal construction and the social construction of immigrants as the "other". This provides a powerful tool to understand how the subordination and marginalisation of immigrants is established and maintained, particularly in the USA, which provides this study with useful

insights, into the relationship between racism and immigration. To further understand the relevancy of the Critical Race Theory in this study, we are going to discuss real life scenarios where Black African immigrants in South Africa have found themselves subjected to racism by other Black Africans. But the crucial axis here is my ability to adequately associate racism to xenophobia, and the history of South Africa, so that we can draw the connections between xenophobia, teachers and immigrants.

CTR in the context of xenophobia and racism in South Africa

Throughout the above sections, the term "New Racism" has been used but not extensively explained. While the events of 2008, 2015 and 2019 are undoubtedly acts of xenophobia, but do not capture the essence of the South African scenario. Sometimes scholars try to associate the tern, *xenophobia* specifically with the South African context, because otherwise it can be a general term, applicable anywhere in the world, but Afrophobia or Nigrophobia; (Gqola, 2008; Mngxitama, 2008; Fanon, 1967; Chinweizu, 1994), are depicted as the fear and dislike of black people and their culture. To narrow the definition down, *Afrophobia* is a term that conveys the fear and/or dislike of Africans and their culture. These descriptions however do not detail all the actions that unfold when immigrants are subjected to xenophobic attitudes. It for this reason that in the context of this study, the term xenophobia is not only limited to attitudes of hostility but also encompasses the actions

that are accompanied by those attitudes. Tafira, (2011) argues that the definitional deficiencies associated this term limit the reader to grasp the complex social realities that are experienced by Black South African communities, which propel xenophobia. Some scholars have called for the deconstruction of the term xenophobia and repurpose it to refer to culturally based racism, because as Tafira (2011) states, Black South Africans attitudes or hostility is not only founded on hate or fear of foreigners alone but based on the differences that exists between them and Black African immigrants, which is noticeable on the basis of nationality, dress, customs, social and territorial origins, language, speech patterns and accent.

Upon analysing the areas where the xenophobic inspired attacks erupted in 2008, we see that Alexandra in Johannesburg, was the first hot-spot, and then they spread out into other areas of Gauteng Province and eventually to other parts of the country, like UMlazi Township in Durban which is home to people of different ethnic, racial and religious influences, Magwaza, & Edmore, 2020). Other scholars describe uMlazi as "*a classified, a multi-cultural township with a diversity of ethnic groups coexisting within a society*" (Lubbe, 2008. p.20). The historical establishment of this predominantly Black township is the same as that of Alexandra. The living conditions in uMlazi are poor, as residents are prone to violence, hunger, denigration, and homelessness, where Black African foreigners are accused of crimes such as drug dealing, robbery, rape and exposing the community to unsafe conditions as

stated by Lubbe (2008). Similarly, immigrants are blamed for over competition for resources and limited employment in the country; (Yakusho, 2008; Vromans, et al., 2011; Haymen, 2013).

The thrust of these events is based on the extensively motivated hostility by racism, and precisely a new form of racism, where we see black on black violence and hate, which is a similar situation of what characterised the apartheid era, where the white government is said to have encouraged tribal and political parties' hostility among each other, as a divide and rule tactic; (Ntshoe, 2002; Glaser, 2008; Taylor, & Shaw, 1998). In the historical background of the study, I present Alexandra and other townships and their socio-economic status. It is also in Alexandra where Zimbabwean immigrants live side by side South Africans. However, living together has created social challenges between these groups, because South Africans tend to perceive Zimbabweans as socially, culturally, and economically inferior, basing their reasoning from the economic and political situation in Zimbabwe; (McGregor, & Primorac; Matsinhe, 2011). The crux of the matter under the CRT is that race is a social construct, therefore it would not be a far-fetched idea to associate xenophobia in South Africa with 'Black on Black' hate, because Tafira, (2011) claims that racism is not always necessarily based on the skin pigmentation, but on differences necessitated by an individual's or group's social status, language, nationality, habits, and ethnicity.

Even though we cannot eliminate the use of the term xenophobia, but there is enough evidence suggesting that the hostility that is displayed by Black South Africans towards Black Africans, should be understood in the context of racism. I would also like to bring the readers' attention to the interconnectedness of the Critical Race Theory and the Marxist Theory in the context of this study. After analysing the racism inspired xenophobia in SA, we can thus assume that the nature of these events is deepened by the capitalist nature of the South African economy, pre- and post-apartheid.

The final matter I would like to discuss under the South African context pertains to the very structures of language which deeply impacts society and shape the way in which it thinks. Language can profoundly evoke different frames in the mind or perceptions about people; (Cervi, 2008), hence we tend to have labels of primary potency in the way in which we perceive others, which potentially can reinforce stereotype ideas that are responsible for the way in which we reduce immigrants to non-humans. To conceptualise this phenomenon, Lakkof (2009) argues:

> *Every action our body performs is controlled by our brains, and every input from external world is made sense of by our brains. We think with our brains. There is no other choice. Thought is physical. Ideas and the concepts that made then up are physically "computed" by brain structures. Reasoning is the activation of certain neuronal groups in the brain given prior activation of the*

other neuronal groups. Everything we know, we know by virtue of our brains. Our physical brains make possible our concepts and ideas, everything we can possibly think is made possible and greatly limited by the nature of our brains… (Lakkof, 2009, p. 2).

This neurological analysis of linguistics, I believe can also be applied in the South African context to analyse the racist attitudes that Black South Africans have towards Black African immigrants. The feeling of othering that I have exhaustively described above, is in line with this notion of frames, considering that racism is rooted in alterity, or the idea of othering, which is an idea that is intrinsically linked to the notion of identity; (Cejas, 2007) which produces words such as "us and "them" which inevitably leads to the invention of naming with labels that depict inferiority for those being named. "Racism as a process needs legitimating mechanisms and semantic constructions of meaning in the act of naming the other in order to exclude it, thereby creating a "*rejection of the other'' and at the same time naturalizing the inferiority of the other and immobilizing them*," (Cejas, 2007, p. 475), hence the widespread use of derogative words such as *ikwerekwere, igrigamba, izayizayi, igoduka,* to refer to Black African immigrants. These concepts or names are semantically and linguistically meant to homogenise or to normalise the concept of foreigner, that foreigner, the ''other'' is constructed as the antithesis or contrast of an ''us,'' is black and comes from other African countries; depicts him illegal by definition and, most

probably, a criminal. He cannot speak any of the lingua franca, so he is defined by the derogatory term *kwerekwere* which means unintelligible sounds of a foreign language; (Cejas, 2007).

Teacher Identity Theory

It is crucial that we first understand teacher identity from a general identity perspective. Identity as a concept, has many definitions, we can then deduce how teacher identity is shaped, based on these. Below is a table that displays the different definitions. The common thread that runs throughout these definitions is that identity is a continuous relationship of an individual to the world, which is characterised by his/her experiences and interactions with others in certain contexts. Moreover, identity is an embodiment of discourses, knowledge, power, and social values which can be used as an analytic tool to study society and schools. Varghese (2006) claims that teacher professional identity is defined as based on how a teacher sees him/herself, and gets influenced by relationships with the world, and how she/he responds in such a context. Therefore, below I attempt to present to the reader with a (Miller, 2009) analysis of the different definitions of *identity* as a concept, in *Table 1*, followed by the Vygotskian approach to teacher identity through the lens of teacher professional development, and a post-structuralist view. I am employing these perspectives to justify the claims that I later make regarding this concept.

Teacher Professional Identity Definitions

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"how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how that person understands possibilities for the future"	Nor
"a constant ongoing negotiation of how we relate to the world"	Pen
"relational, constructed and altered by how I see others and how they see me in our shared experiences and negotiated interactions"	Joh
(Re: teacher professional identities) "defined here in terms of the influences on teachers, how individuals see themselves, and how they enact their profession in their settings"	Var
(Re: professional and personal identities) "instantiations of discourses, systems of power / knowledge that regulate and ascribe social values to all forms of human activity"	Mo
"transformational, transformative, context-bound, and constructed, maintained and negotiated via language and discourse"	Var
"being recognised as a certain 'kind of person' identity is connected not to internal states but to performances in society. It is also 'an important analytical tool for understanding schools and society."	Gee

Table 1: An analysis of Identity definitions (Miller, 2009)

Vygotskian Theory on professional teacher development

Teachers stand at the centre of the fundamental goals of education, which is improved learning for all students; (Eun, 2010). This thus characterises teacher professional development as a route or platform for quality teaching. However, literature shows that

professional development appears to be failing at the implementation stage, and the question to ask is how to integrate professional development with classroom reality. Literature claims that the level of challenges associated with teachers failing to exercise skills acquired during professional development programmes, largely have to do with students' population diversity, as demographics change due to globalisation, we also see the nature of classrooms globally constantly changing in terms of the matter that students bring along, such as language and culture; (Scarcella 1990; Leyba, 1994; Samway and McKeon, 1999; Ariza, et al., 2002; Miller, et al. 2009). The emerging nature of immigrant learners in many classrooms is steering teacher professional development to a direction where an urgent need has been identified for teachers to be developed to deal with student diversity; (McLaughlin, 1994). To address this gap in teaching from a theoretical background, a Vygotskian perspective presents to us different principles that focus on the mediational nature of human development and learning, according to Eun (2010). This theory appears useful when addressing teacher professional identity, especially in classrooms with immigrant learners.

For purposes of this study, we are not going to discuss all the six principles associated with human development and learning, but we shall select those that resonate with the research topic. The first tenet posits that during learning, there is a more competent or capable person, who can support the development of a less competent person. In this case, this could both apply to teachers

and learners. A teacher is more competent and capable to support a learner, but also a teacher needs the same support from a more competent colleague/s. Within this general premise, mediation and internalisation are the mechanisms that explain why and how development occurs; (Eun, 2008). Vygotsky and Luria (1994), claim that children do not have the ability to directly interact with their surroundings or environment, until a teacher facilitates the interaction in the situation, with her/his skills, and required knowledge.

Through the mediation process, children begin to internalise the acquired knowledge that the teacher is transferring or modelling. Over time, children will begin to independently and cognitively learn and interact with peers. This therefore tells us that human development is dependent on the presence of a more knowledgeable or competent person, who constantly guides and supports the less competent person with necessary cognitive tools and cultural skill, which Vygotsky refers to as symbolic mediators. A key observation in this Vygotskian principle, is that development occurs in a specific social, historical, and cultural context, it is not an abstract occurrence, argues Gauvain, (2001) and Rogoff, (1996, 2003). This translates to the notion that there is no one-size fits all development approach or a universal claim, because what is considered as aims and purposes of educational development, is based on the needs of a current educational context.

The same theory is also true for teacher professional development programmes. Teachers as life-long learners, evidently require guidance as well. A less competent teacher can only reach her/his potential level of development if guided by a more competent colleague. Vygotsky argues that both novice and the expert teachers gain from this process. However, opportunities for feedback and follow ups should be made available for both teachers to arrive at their own co-constructed ideas; (Eun, 2010). Teacher collaboration involvement processes and models are key in professional development, not only to allow teachers to generate valuable knowledge and skills, but also to support the development of teachers' capability to work collaboratively in achieving a common goal; (Guskey,2000). This model of professional development encourages the idea that schools are communities of learning, and that teachers and their students are both striving to learn.

These models, and principles of effective teacher professional development can be viewed from a classroom perspective, because any classroom at any point in history and society will consist of uniquely diverse group of learners. Diversity presents itself in different forms. Among them, there are developmental levels needs, interests, race, background knowledge and many more. Globalisation is one of the catalysts for growing learner diversity. Education researchers according to Eun (2010) note that teacher education programmes appear to be encouraging pre-service teachers to dilute academically challenging curriculum to

accommodate linguistically and culturally minority students. This approach is criticised by scholars because the argument is that professional development programmes are supposed to empower teachers with skills and knowledge necessary to reach out to any student regardless of his/her background. It is for this reason that Gonzalez, et al. (2005) and Eun (2010) argue that future teachers should be equipped with cultural tools to enhance the instruction process.

Based on the above ideologies, the school environment ideally should be able to develop cultural tools that are relevant to the culture of the school. Therefore, teachers are expected to modify forms of instructions and curricula material to adapt and respond to the specific education contexts in their classrooms and ultimately, schools. Cultural tools are the means of mediation between students and teachers. The cultural tools are also brought into the classroom by students themselves. This provides a springboard for teachers to bridge the cultural gap, that potentially exists between them and students, by manipulating these foreign cultural tools to develop a curriculum that is multi-cultural. By borrowing students' cultural resources is key in developing new understandings based on student background knowledge. However, while applying this principle is useful, but also teachers are advised to be cognisance of the non-static nature of culture and being careful of not reducing student cultural experiences to only special events or typical foods and customs; (Kramsch, 1991) and (Amanti, 2005).

To understand teacher identity, it is crucial for this study to validate the relationship between teacher professional development and classroom practices. DiPardo and Potter (2003) state that teacher emotions and feelings are perhaps the glue that binds all Vygotskian principles of development, however, because of the great emphasis prevailing on cognitive aspects of human functioning, it appears to be neglected. Within this development theory, cognitive, emotional, physical, and motivational aspects of development are integrated into a unified system. This means that each aspect cannot be addressed independently without considering its development outside the influence of the other. It is against this background that a teacher's life should be studied from this standpoint. Eun, (2010) argues that teacher intellectual and cognitive aspects of teacher knowledge competence and expertise have been prioritised at the expense of emotional and ethical dimensions of teaching.

To appreciate teacher identity, it calls for a deeper understanding of the theory of development, and its tenet; that all aspects of human functioning are intertwined, hence, teacher subject knowledge and his/her social interactions, will all be influenced by feelings, motivations, beliefs, and values that each teacher holds. With the stressful nature of teaching emanating from the constant dynamism of the educational context, teachers are faced with a great demand of adapting and professionally developing. This calls

for professional development programmes to address the emotional and motivational aspects of teacher's work.

A post-structuralist view

Teacher emotions undeniably play a significant role in the development and construction of teacher identity. From a post-structuralist lens, emotions and teacher identity is constantly embedded in power relations, ideology, and culture; (Zembylas, 2013). At the centre of professional teacher identity, lies the concept of identity. Researchers have relied on various theories from different disciplines to define the concept, because there is no single theory responsible so far, to explain and describe it, hence many scholars have taken the liberty to draw knowledge from different theoretical perspectives. To reinforce this view, Zembylas (2013), for example, utilises theories from three different viewpoints; Ericksonian and Neo-Ericksonian identity theories, the socio-cultural approach, which is founded on Vygotsky's work and seals the argument with a post-structuralist view, based on the work of Foucault, Butler and Bhada.

Like Zembylas, it is crucial to compare the different theories to formulate a well-rounded argument, therefore, we shall start with the Ericksonian and Neo-Ericksonian Theories, so that we can establish how such views influenced post-structuralist ideas. The former together with Development Theory, are associated with the psychological and philosophical traditions of identity, which is a

type of identity formation based on the interaction between an individual and culture. However, according to the post-structuralists claim, professional teacher identity is not exclusively a traditional psychological or sociological perspective. It is for this reason that according to post-structuralism, teacher identity is not independent of power and agency; (Zembylas, 2013). Power is critical in the formation of identity and the trajectory it follows thereafter. Identity according to Zembylas (2013), hinges directly on emotions and their situatedness and involvement in the context. Considering these claims, post-structuralism undermines any presumed essentialism of teacher roles and identity. This challenges the idea of a single narrative about teacher identity and roles, as it has been previously presented traditionally and orthodoxically, as a grand account.

This perspective puts teacher identity in a light that portrays it as a fluid concept, that changes depending on teacher's experiences, emotions, school context, beliefs, socio-cultural, socio-economic, and political factors. Ozbarlas (2008) argues that teacher identity could be consistent with contextual factors, classroom practices, however Karathanos (2009) states that there could also be a contradiction in the relationship between teacher professional identity and practices, displaying incongruency. With careful consideration of this knowledge, teacher identity appears to be a significant subject to explore, seeing that there are education reforms implemented globally and locally, altering familiar classroom demographics.

Zembylas (2013) discusses the importance of investigating the role played by emotions in the subject of teacher identity. This yields a deeper understanding of what is referred to as "*teacher-self*" in this work. Britzman (1986,1991) argues that the idea behind such a task is to develop an analysis that could possibly inform us about the role of emotions in teacher resisting change or even embracing self-transformation. In challenging the assumption that there is a singular teacher-self and teacher identity narrative, popular in how teachers are described, Zembylas (2003) refers us to the post-structuralist perspective which proves to be useful because it addresses many traditional dichotomies in such a way that other theories have failed to. From this path, we also gather that to effectively make a connection between emotions and teacher identity, it involves interpreting teacher narratives of their own experiences. This is so because according to Connelly and Clandinin (1998, 1995,1987), Connelly, et al. (1999), Carter (1993), Feuerverger, (1997), teacher narratives are crucial to the study of how teachers put their thoughts together, their culture and behaviour, which could be manifested in the classroom.

A critical analysis of teacher identity

Teacher identity involves making sense of the past and present experiences of teachers; (Lee & Schallertb, 2016) and being able to connect teacher agency and teacher professional development argues Ruohotie-Lyhty and Moate (2016) and even more crucially, being conscious of the idea that education and teaching to a certain extent, is a political undertaking; (Mockler, 2011). Considering

this aspect of teaching, that it is a social, cultural, moral, and political practice, it is not a far-fetched idea therefore to cluster it under a socio-cultural context; (Burns & Richards, 2009; Crookes, 2010; Freeman & Richards, 1996; Golombek, 1998; Kubanyiova, 2006, 2012; Yuan, & Lee, 2014). This social aspect of teaching grounds it under the sociohistorical ontology. This means that teaching is a response to the demands of a certain historical epoch, where teachers do not only teach, but also apply their minds during the process of teacher knowledge construction; (Breen, et al., 2001; Feryok, 2012; Golombek & Johnson, 2004; Golombek & Doran, 2014; Johnson & Golombek, 2011; Tsui, 2007, 2003). Basing our understanding on this perspective, teacher identity can be defined as a social activity. This is a process whereby teacher knowledge is developed with the incorporation of new knowledge, as a continuous process. The environment or context on which this knowledge development occurs, is said to be characterised by cultural and linguistic heterogeneity. Therefore, this implies that teachers should be sensitive to learner diversity, particularly social diversity. In other words, part of what teachers need to learn during teacher education, and implement during in-service, is to always respond to the pedagogical needs that are created by the contextual factors of the teaching landscape. While this critical analysis of teacher identity in teacher education, was for the context of Brazil; (Sanchez, et al., 2018), but it also fits into the SA education scenario, where the sociohistorical aspect of teaching has

tremendously shaped teacher identity, in many areas, including trade unionism.

The Critical Theory of Multiculturalism (CTM)

The previously discussed theories generally give us the impression that teachers are intrinsically connected to aspects of teaching that go beyond the curriculum, which ultimately further contribute towards the shaping of their identity. In the historical background section of this study, we see that Black South African teacher during apartheid South Africa, the circumstances that they faced at that time, forced them to redefine their identity either as professionals or workers, and they chose the latter. The development of this neoliberalist discourse among Black South African teachers, is today rebuffed by critical scholars who believe that teaching should be responsive to diversity, cultural and even economic inequalities that are present in classrooms, which are marked by increased economic and social gaps between the poor and he rich, as well as geopolitical displacements, leading to multicultural classrooms; (Sanchez, et al., 2018). It is for this reason that a belief exist that teacher identity has the potential to shape classrooms and schools to transform into a multicultural and multiracial society and sites for cultural democracy instead of perpetrating new forms of nativism and racism. While teacher identity can be viewed through the lens of cultural diversity, this perspective should be approached with caution. Focusing solely on cultural diversity without critical engagement risks undermining the broader agenda of social transformation and may inadvertently

deepen existing societal inequalities. Kanpol and McLaren (1995) argue that teachers operating within culturally diverse environments must engage in a process of re-learning and reconstructing their professional identities. This reconstruction should specifically address issues of unequal power relations, which, in the South African context, includes confronting racism directed towards immigrant learners.

In this study, I am not advocating for the complete rejection of a multicultural approach to teaching, particularly in the context of South Africa. Even without the influence of immigration, South Africa continues to grapple with the challenges of addressing its inherent cultural diversity. Thus, a form of culturally responsive pedagogy remains essential. However, it is equally important to critically examine how neoliberal ideas reinforce inequalities between the privileged and the marginalised or disempowered in society. These dynamics inevitably extend into classroom settings, influencing both teaching practices and learner experiences. This view is consistent with the perspective that capitalism favours established racial, ethnic/cultural and gender biases; (Giroux, 2008). The crux of the argument within the CTM is questioning the ability of teachers to recognise the unequal power relations that exist in their classrooms, which are responsible for the limited cultural interactions, that are meant to occur or that are weaponising culture to isolate others. In the context of African Black culture, an adult occupies a position of power, and that is still the case with teachers; (Hammett, & Staeheli, 2011; Mokhele,

2006). Even though, constitutionally, South Africa has made considerable progress strides in addressing the issue of rights for learners through the South African Schools Acts; (SASA, 1996), through the country's constitution, but it is still difficult for Black teachers to acknowledge that learners also have certain parameters of power. This position of power is not only problematic for South African learners but could be even more detrimental for immigrant learners. Immigrant learners are subjected to multiple layers of marginalisation: first, by virtue of their age and limited agency as children, and second, through their societal positioning as immigrants. Their cultural and social disempowerment places them at a heightened risk of exclusion and inequality within the educational environment.

In the context of South Africa, where the past is framed within the concepts of diversity, and heritage, and social hierarchies are primarily characterised by culture and race, poses a challenge because such is perceived as a norm, and not something that requires society to commit itself to do an introspection about the potential challenges of diversity. At the core of diversity is the difficulty of concept definition and diversity management, coupled with a question of transformation strategies that adequately address intolerance; (Vandeyar, 2006). These challenges are extended to schools, which are regarded as sites that encapsulate the characteristics of the wider South African society. It is against this view that while they are expected to transform to accommodate

diversity, but they themselves are battling with institutionalised marginalisation of certain learners based on their social status.

Empirical evidence suggests that education in SA is still fraught with race-based desegregation; (Vandeyar, 2006). Desegregation is defined by Zafar, (1998) and Rist (1979) as system process that involves establishing the physical proximity of members of different groups in the sane school, without paying much attention to the quality of the relationships. The end goal of desegregation is assimilation, a concept and theory we have discussed at length, in the previous sections. Closely associated with the expectations for minority groups to acquire the culture of then majority group, is the colour-blind approach to diversity by teachers. White teachers in schools that the desegregation study was conducted in Vandeyar (2006), appeared to suppress the negative images they held for Black learners, by saying that they did not see colour. This is one way of hiding racial sentiments, suggests Vandeyar (2006). Colour-blindness is one of the ways that can overtly reinforce marginalisation of learners by teachers, in the name of multicultural education or assimilation. Therefore, if a school symbolically embraces transformation without making meaningful efforts or investments in improving the quality of contact, attitudes, institutional arrangements, policies, and the overall ethos of the school, a multicultural approach to teaching risks becoming a tool for the depoliticisation of culture; (Sleeter, 1996; May 1999; Banks, 1993, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Such an approach overlooks the power dynamics and structural dimensions of

racism, thereby failing not only South African learners but also immigrant learners, who experience compounded forms of marginalisation.

RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Research Paradigm

I position this empirical inquiry within the Constructivist and Interpretivist paradigms. These perspectives enable the researcher to examine the phenomenon of education and immigration in their natural context. An interpretivist stance, epistemologically linked to Constructivism, seeks culturally developed and historically grounded interpretations of the social world (Crotty, 1998; Gray, 2014). This paradigm views the world as an interpretation shaped by how participants interact with it. In this study, I focused on teachers within their natural teaching environment, the school, allowing me to interpret the concept of teacher identity based on the meanings that teachers themselves attach to it.

The construction of meaning and knowledge according to constructivism is a societal driven process through interaction with reality; (Schmuck, 1997). Therefore, this view places the study in the Constructivist Paradigm. The rationale behind the constructivist lens is that knowledge creation is constructed by a researcher together with the participants of the study, through beliefs, values, meaning making and self-understanding; (Henning, et al., 2004). It is from this view that knowledge, meaning and

reality vary and are viewed from different perspectives, which makes them multiple, hence there is no single one truth according to the constructivism, argues Mouton (1996). I interviewed teachers from different provinces, with different ethnic groups, and it would not be far-fetched to assume that under these two paradigms, they responded in a way that they personally perceive teacher identity based on their own experiences with immigrants. This thus leads us to the next discussion, an ontology in which this study wishes to apply.

Based on the lens of the study, and the methodology, the study postulates that there exist multiple, socially constructed realities, where the truth is defined as a consensus construction. The ontological position of interpretivism is relativism. "*Relativism is the view that reality is subjective and differs from person to person*" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110). Teacher identity and the roles that they are expected to assume, or that they think, they should assume, inform each other, and in the process, construct interpretations about who they are, conceptually, professionally, and personally; (Zembylas, 2003). Teacher identity is not independent of emotions and their situatedness or involvement in the context. The study therefore seeks to challenge the idea of a single narrative about teacher identity and roles, as previously been traditionally or orthodoxically presented by society, which teachers themselves have been subjected to. An Interpretivist paradigm rooted in the post-structuralist perspective, seeks to undermine these presumed idealisms of teacher roles and identity.

This study wishes to present that teacher identity can be studied in a setting like a classroom where teachers are emotionally engaged in forming their identities, and where personal, social, and cultural/historical aspects for teacher identity formation are explored, and where the role of power relations and teacher agency in identity formation is also explored. From an epistemological aspect, it is argued that research participants cannot be objective or present a natural reality about their experiences, instead they are bound to present the researcher with a social reality perspective, which when analysed, a dialectical or hermeneutic method is applied. "*The world does not exist independently of our knowledge of it*," (Grix, 2004, p. 83), hence subjectivism. To arrive at a connection between teacher identity and teacher roles, involves a great deal of interpretation. Narratives of teachers' own experiences is a crucial lens to study teachers' thinking processes, culture, and behaviour; (Connelly & Clandinin, 1987). The construction of teacher personal stories, images through their narratives, offer the researcher an interpretive reconstruction of the teacher's life, hence the use of semi-structured interview questions.

Research Design

The study uses the Qualitative Design because it attempts to make sense and interprets the phenomena of immigration and education in terms of the meaning teachers put on them regarding their identity and classroom roles. Denzin and Lincoln, (2011) describe qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive material practices

that clearly present the world to the researcher. As an activity that locates the observer in the world, it has a transformative agenda. Through this approach, it turns the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos.

> *It crosscuts disciplines, fields, and subject matter. A complex, interconnected family of terms, concepts, and assumptions surrounds the term. These include the traditions associated with foundationalism, positivism, post- foundationalism, post positivism, post-structuralism, post-modernism, post-humanism, and the many qualitative research perspectives and methods connected to cultural and interpretive studies.* Denzin, & Lincoln, (2005, p. 3).

Population of the Study and Sampling

The study employed both Purposeful and Snowball Sampling. Purposive sampling requires one to think carefully about the parameters of the population being studied and to choose sample cases based on this reflection (Silverman, 2010). I purposefully selected schools located in Limpopo specifically in Musina, for the obvious reason, for its proximity to Zimbabwe, and being the gateway to other cities in the wider South Africa. Schools in Gauteng were also selected for being in Johannesburg, an African economic hub. While I was conducting interviews at Gauteng Jeep School (GJ) in Johannesburg central business district (CBD), one

of the participants suggested that I visit schools in Alexandra, and she was able to directly link me with one of the Heads of Department (HOD) at Gauteng Alexandra School (GA), precisely because it is her former high school, and Alexandra is her home township. The HOD was subsequently tasked by the deputy principal of GA School to oversee the interview process. After learning about my study, he provided me with contacts of the deputy principal of Gauteng Ivory Park School, (GIP) and for the HOD of Limpopo Musina School (LM) in Musina. He was once a teacher at GIP, and the deputy principal of GIP comes from Musina as well, which is also the HOD's hometown. On the other hand, LM School is located close to his village, and his sister-in-law is residing close to the school, which made my stay in Musina much easier than I had anticipated. I then selected Kwa-Zulu Natal Pietermaritzburg School (KZNP) based on my personal knowledge of schools in Pietermaritzburg.

The selection of township, city, and rural schools was influenced by socio-economic factors prevalent in South Africa, particularly wealth distribution and access to economic opportunities. Cities, as hubs for employment and essential services, naturally attract both local and immigrant populations. Townships, due to their proximity to urban centres, become desirable residential areas for many, including immigrants who are seeking accessible housing and education for their children. As a result, township schools emerged as a logical choice, not only because of their geographic

proximity but also due to their ease of access, being located within close reach of residential areas.

The data was generated from twenty-six (26) Black South African teachers in four (4) public secondary schools in Midrand, Alexandra, Ivory Park, Musina and Pietermaritzburg and one (1) private school which is both primary and secondary, in Johannesburg CBD. To protect the identity and anonymity of the participants, I have used codes instead of the real names of the schools, as they appear on the table below:

Province	Town	Location	School Name	status
Gauteng	Johannesburg	Alexandra Township	GA Secondary	Public school
Gauteng	Johannesburg CBD	Jeepe	GJ Secondary & Primary	Private school
Gauteng	Midrand	Ivory Park	GIP Secondary	Public school
Limpopo	Mussina	Musina Township	LM Secondary	Public school
KwaZulu Natal	Pietermaritzburg	Pietermaritzburg	KZNS Secondary	Public school

Table 2: Research Participant, geographical locations, gender, and number of participants per school

Research Instrument

I used both semi-structured face to face individual interviews, with a maximum duration of sixty (60) minutes, and a minimum being (forty) 40 minutes. Conducting semi-structured interviews assisted me to generate information from the participant in a manner that I was able to probe and ask clarifying questions. Cohen, et al. (2000) assert that interviews are one of the best methods of generating data because, a researcher can always return to the participant and ask

for clarifications or even ask more questions based on the previous response. In addition to this, Cohen, et al. (2000) argue that the researcher through interviews, captures the reality of the participant's lived experiences and thoughts about a particular situation, and in this instance, I was attempting to capture the view, reality and meaning that teachers hold and attach to immigrants, and how that informs the way they perceive their identity and roles in classroom with immigrant learners/students.

The reason for using interviews is justified by the paradigm of this study, which informs us that participants cannot be objective or present a natural reality about their experiences, instead they are bound to present the researcher with a social reality perspective, which when analysed, a dialectical or hermeneutic method is applied, which calls for a great deal of data interpretation in order to respond to the research question, address the objectives or the purpose and critical questions. Interviews are effective in understanding the relationship between individual and his or her relationship or interpretation of the world. With this approach, as a researcher I can interpret how teachers perceive immigration based on their identity and roles.

Initially, the data was going to be generated from teachers teaching in schools located in the Limpopo Province only, but upon reflecting on the diversity of Black people in terms of ethnic groupings, which was a critical criteria in designing the apartheid laws, I decided to involve two more provinces, Gauteng, which is

the hub of trade, which has been attracting immigrants from time immemorial, and Kwa Zulu Natal, where the phenomenon of immigration exists, but, teachers seem not to be aware of, as per my observations during the time when I was a teacher myself in the province. This approach, allowed me, to understand teachers not only from a professional point of view, but also from an ethnicity perspective. The proposed number of interviews was thirty (30), but I ended up interviewing twenty-six (26) teachers, due to delays in the issuing of the ethical permission coupled with Covid-19 Lockdown restrictions.

During the interviewing process in Limpopo, I discovered that the proposed reason for choosing Limpopo was justified after all. As I was interviewing different teachers, I gathered that Limpopo was like a "little Zimbabwe" in South Africa, probably not only Zimbabweans, because there is also a sizeable number of Malawians and Mozambicans, but Zimbabwe nationals seem to be the ones who are dominant, including professionals, such as teachers and other categories of immigrants. All interviews were recorded in English, even though, I had anticipated that some participants may code switch or even respond in either Venda, Tsonga, or Pedi, which did not happen. This has afforded me with ease because there is no need for translation. I paid special attention to all the responses including meta communication from the respondents to analyse and interpret the data. From this data, I am

identifying common emerging themes, which I discuss in detail in the data analysis chapter.

Literature Selection

I consulted various database when I was performing a literature search. Even though Google Scholar is not a traditional database, but it enabled me to find indexed scholarly literature across the education discipline and other disciplines that are relevant in the study. Google Scholar is useful because it can draw data from diverse sources including university repositories, conference proceedings, research organisations and academic publishers; (Mikki, 2009). Importantly it provides links to external sources where the full text may be accessed, sometimes for free of charge. I used key words such as "immigration, teachers, apartheid, teacher roles/teacher identity, teacher education," and others, which later got expanded to refine the search into specific subheadings and enable me to structure my review.

I also utilised the Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC) for sourcing literature. However, this database presented limitations, as it contained a relatively small number of articles that included my key search terms. Furthermore, many of the relevant articles I located were behind paywalls, restricting full access to the materials. I had to exercise the exclusion criteria, which included eliminating papers that discuss immigrant teachers' experiences, because my focus is on immigrant learners. I primarily focused on literature published between 2008, a period

marked by the eruption of xenophobic sentiments in South Africa, and 2024. However, I also considered earlier works, dating back to the 1980s, that address relevant theories related to teacher identity and second language acquisition. In total, I reviewed approximately 250 sources, ultimately selecting 101 key references for inclusion in this study. These sources primarily consist of journal articles, book chapters, and master's theses.

Winchester and Salji, (2016) suggest that researchers should search for literature by conducting a comprehensive bibliographic search of peer reviewed articles and books. Based on this suggestion, I skimmed through abstracts, claims, conclusions, and findings of different articles online to get the gist of these literature sources, to decide whether to include or exclude them. I was also interested in the gaps and contradictions that appeared on these literature sources because this informed the study holistically. Finally, I coded the literature into themes, which I have used as headings in this article.

Data Analysis

Data analysis according to McMillan and Schumacher (1993, 1997) is a process of organising, analysis and interpreting data. This view is supported by Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) by stating that data analysis is a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the information that the researcher has generated. Data in this study is organised in three (3) stages that I expand below:

During data generation

During the interviews, I took detailed notes on the proceedings. After each session, I carefully examined the data and wrote summaries to capture the key issues and emerging themes. This reflective process allowed me to refine subsequent interviews, adjusting the questions and focus based on the insights gained from earlier sessions. Notes that were taken during the interview are useful because they support the oral interviews, since it is impossible to recall each participant's reaction/s, during the time, when he/she was responding to the questions, hence I found it crucial to corroborate interviews with notes, where I jotted down every reaction, surroundings, and any other information that I regarded important.

Data reduction

Data reduction is a strict selection, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transformation of data, that is in a form of field notes (Creswell, 1994). Through this process, I fine-tuned themes that emerged from the interviews so that they became meaningful. In other words, I looked for patterns in the data. These patterns are useful during the construction of recommendations, because they inform the researcher about the common issues that participants raised out of concern or dissatisfaction and need to be addressed by relevant authorities.

Data categorisation

Finally, I categorised data according to themes derived from research questions. This allows me to see if all the research questions had been addressed. Researchers can also generate data that goes beyond addressing the research questions; she/he might also want to categorise it properly, because data generation is not limited by the research question. Concisely, data is generally interactive, moving from a more general to a more specific observation; (Creswell, 1998). Data analysis may begin informally during interviews and continue during transcription when recurring themes, patterns and categories are occurring; (Silverman, 2000). I adopted this approach as well, where during an interview, I picked up common sentiments among the participants and made a note against it. This assisted me when I was engaged in formal data analysis.

Ethical Considerations

McMillan and Schumacher (1997), define the term *ethics* to generally refer to the idea that something is good or bad, right, or wrong and proper or improper. Therefore, I had to adhere to ethical considerations by obtained permission from school gatekeepers and obtaining ethical clearance. From Eotvos Loránd University Faculty of Psychology and Education Ethics Committee, I was granted the ethical permission. The Limpopo Department of Education also granted me the permission through the Limpopo Province Research Ethics Committee (LPREC). Over and above, permission was obtained from the schools' deputy principals where

the study was conducted. I obtained informed consent from all the participant, through the consent forms that they signed. I assured them that their anonymity, privacy and confidentiality is protected by using pseudonyms for each participant and school during data analysis.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a way in which the researcher can persuade the reader that the findings in the study can be trusted and that there are of a high standard; (Johnson and Turner, 2003). In qualitative research, trustworthiness minimises biases and errors. To ensure this, I have included direct quotes in the presentation and discussion of data in Chapter Four.

Limitations of the Study

Apart from the previously anticipated limitations, such as a language barrier since the data collection also took place in Limpopo, where about five native languages are spoken, which I speak none, did not happen unfolded, instead, I faced a new set of challenges that posed limitations during the data generation stage.

- The sensitive nature of the research topic may have limited the participants' full engagement since this topic is surrounded by controversy, taboos, and social sensitivity.
- Time was another serious limitation, because I had allocated 60 minutes to every interview, but because teachers were busy with the trial examinations, and

others with "*catch up*" revisions, since it was just after schools had reopened after a national Covid- 19 Lockdown, some participants could not avail themselves for the whole hour, such that other interviews took about 45 minutes.

- I found some participants digressing a lot from the questions that I posed, which to some extent the entire interview became an off-topic discussion, therefore challenging to generate responses that addressed the purpose of the study, and its research questions, it was not easy to include their responses in the data analysis.

- In the private school setting, participants were selected by the principal, which may have influenced their responses, potentially limiting the expression of their independent views.

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

There is an undoubtedly unlimited connection between education and the socioeconomics of countries, world over; (OECD, 2011). The South African education landscape is largely shaped by the past events; (Wills, & Hofmeyr, 2019). Apartheid policies forcibly removed Black individuals from locations that were deemed suitable for white people, according to the Native Land Act of 1913 and other subsequent land and resettlement policies. This piece of legislation was passed mainly as an interim mechanism to maintain

the status quo of racism; (Beinart, & Delius2014). Its consequences included allowing white people to amass more than 80% of land and a situation that led to mass relocation Black people to poorly planned townships and homelands. The understanding behind the existence of this historical context is not only for those who want to understand a South African greater complex history, but it is also relevant to those who wish to frame contemporary debates such as the relationship between immigration and teacher identity. Schools in South Africa can either be categorised as rural, township or urban schools in terms of their location.

Rural areas are a product of a configured economic formations by the apartheid government. The discovery of gold in Johannesburg, induced a South African industrial revolution, which gave rise to a new class of Black farmers in the countryside. For some time, this situation persisted without the intervention from the colonial authorities; (Bundy, 1977). However, as the need to safeguard the interests of colonial agriculture and the mining industry grew, as well as to secure a steady supply of cheap labour, the economic landscape of rural South Africa, also transformed; (Bundy, 1988). Black people were forced to abandon their native lands and exchange their labour for an income in the mines, argues Wolpe, (1980) and Ndlovu, (1917). In addition to this, the loss of rural arable land to the white farmers through the Native Land Act of 1913, rendered the countryside burdened with poverty.

On the other hand, townships are another form of settlements that emerged during apartheid. They were low-cost houses that were meant for housing Black labourers. The Townships reflect and represent a dilemma and tensions that existed among the decision makers of the apartheid regime, "*between the need to keep Black people close enough as cheap labour supply, but far enough away to ensure a safe social distance, with an option of rolling out the blade wire to maintain that distance if it was ever at risk of being breached*" (Philip, 2014, pg. 31). Townships are a product of a uniquely South African concept of urban and housing planning policies. They had a unique architectural structure that resembled a dormitory style house built far away from the city centre and white residential areas. They were uniformly built, in rows. The first South African township was built in Cape Town in 1901, to keep Black people at bay, for fear that they were going to spread the Bubonic Plague, after o its outbreak; (Philip, 2014). Today after two decades of democracy, South Africans still live-in housing that is reminiscent of apartheid, and to this day townships still suffer from the burdens of poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to services, argues Schatz et al. (2011).

Therefore, rural and township schools typically face serious challenges based on the lack of infrastructure, sanitation, electricity, learning and teaching resources; (DuPlessis, & Mestry, 2019). These challenges according to Hlalele (2014) are not unique to South Africa, they can also be identified in other developing and some developed countries. These challenges present rural and

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township education in a disadvantaged light when compared to urban schools. They are largely servicing poverty-stricken communities, argues Lindeque &Vandeyar (2004). This characterisation of rural and township education is directly linked to apartheid and colonial policies that systematically excluded Black people from access to opportunities; (Hlalele, 2014).

Location background of schools

Johannesburg Jeepe

Jeepe is not far from the once famous Carlton Centre, in Johannesburg. The streets are not quite clean, but better compared to other parts of the city, that I had seen. Along the streets, stand people, whom most spoke foreign languages, selling second-hand clothes and shoes and hair wigs, while others seem to be just loitering around. I made a few stops, enquiring both in English and South African native languages, about some items that they sold, but I was also interested in establishing the background of people who hanged around this part of the city. On the busy street of Jeepe, is Gauteng Jeep (GJ). It is a private (independent), both a primary and secondary school. It is in a high-rise building with numerous floors. From outside, you would not be able to recognise its existence right away, because it looked like a typical everyday residential or business buildings that are in big cities in the country. Based on the information gathered during the interview sessions, it appears that teachers at this institution are either professionally unqualified or retired. One participant, a retiree from a public

school, managed to secure new employment at GJ. From the discussions held, it seems that a significant number of the teachers are unqualified, viewing their positions at GJ as temporary while they pursue part-time education qualifications or search for more secure employment opportunities.

The principal of the school is a foreigner/none South African. In his office, there are CCTV cameras, that display every action in every area of the school. The school is situated in a pulsating area of the city of Johannesburg in a multi-storey building. The learners that I was able to interact with, while waiting for the principal or for the next participant teacher, appeared to be South Africans, because they have typical South African names, which suggests that the school caters for South African parents and children who cannot be admitted to other schools for various reasons. But also, again, I picked up from casual conversations that I had with the staff, that those learners who have not passed Matric, are admitted into this school, to restart their secondary schooling. Matric is a short form for Matriculation, which is a South African system of education for the final year of high school and the qualification received on graduating from high school, and the minimum university entrance requirements. On the walls, indeed I could see photographs of young men and women who were either in the top achieving categories or in the school's leadership roles, displayed. The school was described to me, as being one of the famous schools around Johannesburg City for obtaining high Matric results.

The (five) 5 teachers that I ended up interviewing, were exclusively selected by the principal himself. He either phoned them on their mobile phones and summoned them to his office or sent one of the administration staff to call them. Upon meeting me, they immediately made it known that I had caught them at a remarkably busy time of the year term. Some were conducting revisions, grading scripts during their free periods, and conducting exams and tests, others teaching, catching up with lost content during the Covid 19 Lockdown. Participating in the interview, was visibly delaying them, an information that was plainly communicated to me by the first interviewee, before the interview began.

Gauteng Alexandra

Gauteng Alexandra High (GA) is a public school, one of the high schools located in one of the oldest townships of Johannesburg, Alexandra. This is one of South Africa's oldest apartheid townships situated outside Johannesburg's wealthy suburbs.

> *Alexandra is a poor black dormitory township located in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg. Its low socio-economic status and lack of racial desegregation is in complete contrast to its geographical neighbour, Sandton, which a wealthy, multiracial elite call home* (McKay, 2015, p. 100).

Originally, Alex, as affectionately known, was situated away from the city centre, which explains why it was rejected by white business owners, which led to its late development in 1912 into a

native township (McKay, 2015). It became one of the few South African townships where Black people could live within legally designated white residential areas enabled by the 1923 Native Urban Areas Act; (Bonner & Nieftagordien, 2008). To separate Alexandra from the urban areas of Johannesburg, the apartheid government used spatial barriers (see Map below), such as roads, highways, and industrial areas; (Lipton, 1989).

The present state of Alexandra presents the extent of inadequate service delivery from the government, and its ensuing consequences. Generally, the situation in the education sector around Alexandra, is that schools suffer from limited infrastructure and facilities, such as school toilets, libraries, laboratories, and computer centres. Teachers and learners continue to endure overcrowding from high enrolment, where learner-teacher ratio is relatively high, coupled with a low matriculation success rate. From this context, learners appear not to have a way of escaping poverty, instead, they are trapped into the cycle of abject and intergenerational poverty, (McKay, 2015). This situation is described by (Nattrass & Seeking, 2001; Crankshaw, 2008; Bond, 2011), as precipitated by former racial policies, but also argue that there is specific post-apartheid, and post democratic policies that can be blamed for the continued inequality and poverty in Alexandra.
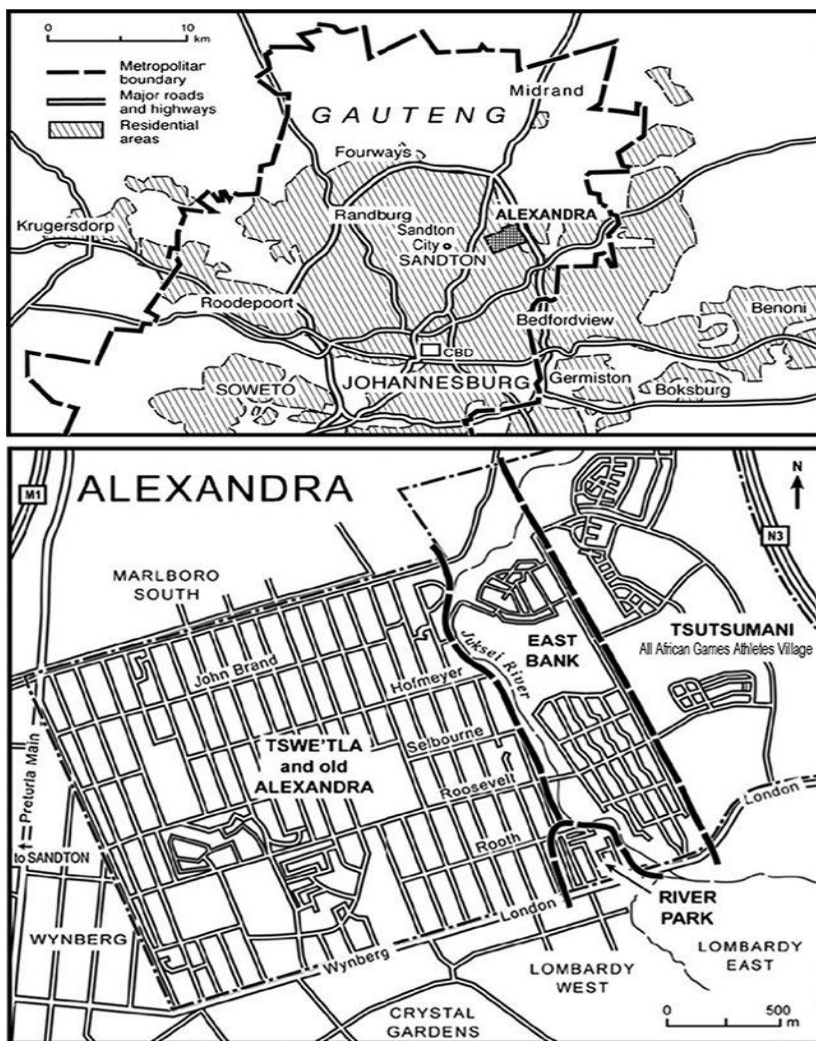
Map 1: Spatial layout of Alexandra Township Source: (Kotze, Mathola, 2012)

As I entred the township, travelling from Johannesburg city, I was met with piles and piles of waste lying and lining the road. The houses are old, some well-maintained but most of them, are informal, built on the pavement, leaving pedestrians with little or no place to walk. Although I did not go to all the sections of the township, but based on what I saw, it gave me a general picture of poverty and overcrowding, as a South African myself. I also spotted some spazas or tuckshops (typical township convenience shops) belonging to Pakistanis and Somalis. The general mood that I detected, was that of poverty and unemployment. At the school, I met two local ladies, one works as a toilet paper distributor to the learners, and the other one, works at the school kitchen. While I was waiting for the participants, because they used their free periods to participate in the research, I had a conversation with them, trying to get the sense of immigration from their perspective. Although they spoke in Tsonga and Sesotho, I could understand a few words, describing the effect of the impact of immigrants on the community, which was aggravated by the lack of food, jobs, and services from the municipality. The extent of the perceptions about the topic of immigration in Alex could be detected from the reaction of some teachers. When they were approached to participate in the study by the senior Head of Department, who was tasked by the deputy principal, to facilitate the interview process, others declined, and others agreed. This also shows that at GA School, the participants could exercise their right to refuse, unlike at GJ School.

Gauteng Ivory Park

Gauteng Ivory Park High School (GIP) is also a public school, located in Ivory Park, a residential area that began as an informal settlement, located in the north-east of the city of Johannesburg; (Masuku, 2015). It is specifically situated between Midrand (suburbs), the industrial areas of Olifantsfontein and Tembisa and Kempton Park. Originally, Ivory Park is a product of a squatter settlement, which was a project of the then apartheid Transvaal Government. In 1990 it had set aside land that was supposed to be developed as a residential area for middle-class Back people, however, this decision was reversed, hence appropriating 700 hectares of land with the intention to settle squatter domestic workers (who had no desire to reside on their employees' servants' quarters), former hostel, and shack dwellers, therefore, Ivory Park became a transit camp for squatters; (Mmakola, 2000). At its inception, it was designated for 95 000 squatters, however as the squatters became permanent residents, with no intention of moving, the population increased from 186 000 to 250 000, these are statistics are provided by the Midrand Metropolitan Local Report (1996). This background presents us with a view that two years after the inception of democracy, already, disadvantaged Black South Africans were living in squalor, living in over-crowded informal settlements like Ivory Park, which was accompanied by high levels of unemployment and limited-service delivery. A study conducted by Masuku (2015) reveals that Ivory

Park since its establishment in 1990, has suffered socio-economic challenges.

> *Most people live in a state of dire poverty. The area is geographically remote from the stronger economic nodes in the city centre, and the settlement is plagued by myriad socio-economic challenges, including illiteracy, child-headed households, and hopelessness. There is a battery of social ills, like drug and alcohol abuse, peer pressure and petty crime.* (Maduna, 2010, p. 8).

From the taxi-rank (designated station for public transport), I walked to the school, and along the way, I spotted women who were dressed like AmaShangane from Mozambique, (the Shanganes in Mozambique dress slightly like the South African Tsonga. Shangane is sometimes interchangeably used with Tsonga, but of course, this ethnic labelling is politically and historically challenged in South Africa), selling mainly vegetables like cassava, which is common in Mozambique, tomatoes, green leafy vegetables, and fish. These food items are very common in the staple diet of Mozambicans; hence I was able to conclude that they were from Mozambique, a country I have visited a couple of times. On the final day of the interviews, on my way home, I went to one of the stalls, to buy cucumber. The elderly woman who was in charge, offered me some fried fish, which I accepted, and she insistently offered me more and more, until I decided to sit down and eat. It was at that point that I began to ask questions related to

their nationalities and how they found Ivory Park. This interaction offered me important insights about immigrants in the country.

Map 2: Map of Johannesburg, showing the location of pre-dominant Black residences, including Ivory Park. Source : (https://https://aidc.org.za/ivory-park-occupation-ends-tragically/)

Limpopo Musina

Limpopo Musina School (LM) is one of the public schools located just outside of the small town of Musina, in the Limpopo Province, in the Vhembe District, about 18.3 km from Beitbridge boarder gate, separating South Africa from Zimbabwe. Musina is a transit town for Zimbabweans who are travelling from Zimbabwe to South Africa, Pophiwa and Rukema, (2018). However, among these immigrants are also unaccompanied children, as noted by Netshidongololwe (2016). The phrase *unaccompanied minors* is

commonly used in immigration law and in airlines policies to describe foreign nationals who are separated from their parents, either on arrival or during their stay in a host country; (Levison, 2011). Unaccompanied children are generally vulnerable to be being abused and exploited sexually and through forced cheap labour. They also become victims of loss of culture and social networks; (Eshia, 2010; Magqibelo, et al, 2016). Those who are lucky to continue with their education, experience challenges in their education progress.

Zimbabweans are estimated to be more than any other African immigrant nationals in South Africa; (Harris, 2001; Muzondidya, 2008; Polzer, 2009). Some come through legal means, and some, utilise the illegal access. Illegal immigrants often get stranded and destitute, sleeping in taxi ranks sometimes, while some find ways of earning an income, through selling sweets and fruit on the streets. There are many of such Zimbabweans in Musina, both young and old. Mussina, historically, if we trace its colonial history, movement between South Africa and Zimbabwe was already taking place facilitated by apartheid economy's demand for miners in Johannesburg. However, even after the inception of democracy, South Africa continue to see the influx of Zimbabweans, emanating from the collapse of their economy back in Zimbabwe; (Netshidongololwe, 2016). Generally, Musina is treated as a gateway to Johannesburg and other South African cities that offer prospects of a better life for immigrants. Therefore, the

dynamics of immigrants in Musina should be understood in the context of a wider history.

At LM School the staff is mixed, there are Musina local immigrants, and foreign immigrant teachers. The domestic immigrants come from neighbouring villages, one of them is called Venda, and commute every day by a staff bus. The foreign ones, come from Zimbabwe and they have been living in South Africa for many years, some are even married to local women. The main local languages spoken in Musina are Tshivenda/ Venda, Xitsonga and Sepedi.

KwaZulu Natal Pietermaritzburg

Pietermaritzburg is the capital city of KwaZulu-Natal Province in South Africa. It serves as a significant administrative, educational, and economic hub for the surrounding region. The city is bordered by several historically Black townships, including Edendale, Imbali, Caluza, Sobantu and Ashdown as well as Indian and coloured townships, like Eastwood, Woodlands and Raisethorpe; each with its own unique historical and socio-economic characteristics. Of these, Sobantu is geographically closest to the city centre, which makes it the most accessible township from Pietermaritzburg itself, as well as from adjacent rural communities and informal settlements surrounding the city. The establishment of Sobantu Township was a typical product of the former South Africa's apartheid laws. Sobantu Township is originally a Black location; (Beinart, 2001; Christopher, 1994), situated about 5KM

to the East of Pietermaritzburg City's CBD, in the Province of KwaZulu Natal; (Napier & Mthimkhulu, 1989). It is for this reason that children residing in informal settlements on the outskirts of the city, such as Kwa Jika Joe, tend to go to school in schools located in nearby townships. One of the schools like this, is Kwa Zulu Natal Pietermaritzburg School (KZNP).

Settlements such as Kwa Jika Joe exist because of the continued inequality in the country. Big and small cities exhibit a clear line of divide between those who own wealth and those suffer from the pangs of poverty; (Huchzermeyer, 2003). Kwa Jika Joe by 2018 had a population of about 5000 people, of which females were the majority. According to Mkhize (2018) the residents in this settlement, predominantly speak South African languages, such as Sesotho, siSwati, isiZulu, IsiXhosa. However, there are other groups of residents who are not South Africans, and live here as well, such as the Basotho from Lesotho and Emaswati from Swaziland and Malawians who speak Chichewa. Therefore, informal settlements in South Africa, are also home to foreign immigrants. Like any other informal settlement in South Africa, Kwa Jika Joe among many of its social challenges, also faces high levels of unemployment; (Mkhize, 2018). Even though such a location inherently is a hub of poverty, but other residents have found alternative ways of earning an income, through self-employment, but also earning the government's social grant. Mkhize (2018) reveals that some foreign immigrants have illegal

access the social grant, which are otherwise reserved for South African nationals.

Emerging Themes

I present the findings in accordance with the themes that emerged from the data analysis process. I was able to deduce from all the 26 interviews eight themes that attempt to present the participants' views. These themes are interwoven in most of the cases. The chapter unfolds through the following themes:

- o Role of teachers in nation building and the curriculum
- o Language teaching and challenges
- o Teacher commitment
- o Knowledgeable teachers and diversity responsive curriculum
- o Teacher Professionalism and challenges
- o Xenophobia and teacher frustration
- o Interpretation of teacher identity
- o Change, teacher autonomy and teacher agency
- o Gaps in the education system
- o School context
- o Teacher attitudes
- o Teacher flexibility

Participants responses show that teachers are aware of the educational changes that are precipitated by the presence of immigrants in South Africa. They are also conscious of the fact that

their identity and roles cannot remain unaffected by these changes. However, the key theme that cuts across the thematic areas, is that teachers should strive for professionalism. It appears that the participants primarily understand that teachers need adapt to change, however, the challenge is that they do not think that the government has programmes in place to assist teachers and schools embrace changes that can potentially change their identity and roles. Furthermore, teachers believe that the history of apartheid largely contributes in the way in which Black teachers in particular respond to immigration, particularly when the immigrant is a Black African. In addition to the historical legacy of apartheid, some teachers believe that the ANC government is responsible for the Afrophobia and xenophobic attitudes that exist among Black South Africans towards Black African immigrants. This is because of lack of service delivery, unemployment and poor government policies, particularly, with issues of border and immigration regulations. The issue of language was raised several times by the respondents, citing the burden it puts both on teachers and immigrant learners, however, this challenge can be addressed by revising the Department of Basic Education language policy, and as well as investing in teacher education and training, so that teachers are prepared for real life context.

RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS

Results and implications for teachers

Teacher practice is not an activity confined to the classroom; rather, it is deeply embedded in broader socio-political and institutional contexts. Many participants emphasise that their roles as educators extend far beyond instructional duties. In response to shifts in the educational landscape, such as increased learner diversity due to immigration, teachers are often expected to adopt new roles and identities to meet emerging challenges. However, this expectation is complicated by a lack of adequate support from the government, and school management. Participants expressed that the heavy workload, coupled with insufficient systemic backing, limits their ability to be responsive and flexible in their practice. These constraints can contribute to teacher frustration and, in some cases, unprofessional conduct, particularly when navigating complex issues such as immigration in schools.

Despite these challenges, some teachers maintain that professionalism must be preserved, regardless of the context. They argue that teachers should strive to demonstrate adaptability and uphold professional standards, even under difficult circumstances. Significantly, teacher attitudes and practices are not formed in isolation; they are shaped by broader social, economic, and political realities, as well as by individual histories of socialisation.

Understanding these factors is essential in any effort to support teachers in addressing the realities of increasingly diverse educational environments.

Teacher identity and roles are bound to change because they are shaped by contextual factors, as it came up quite a few times in the interviews. Teacher professional identity is not independent of their personal identity and social context. Teachers need to monitor their own beliefs and strive to cultivate professionalism regardless of the circumstance. Although this may not be a practical approach due to contextual issues, it can be achieved through continuous professional development programmes. It was also sternly mentioned by participants that teachers are not effectively participating in the curriculum implementation, yet it is crucial that they understand it as a guideline, and that they can use it to effect change not only in schools but also in the world. Teachers should familiarise themselves with the political landscape of the country and international issues. Participants believe that one of the reasons why some teachers are xenophobic, is because they do not understand global issues, and how these issues affect South Africa, like any other influential country in the world. Therefore, implications range from lack of professionalism, which is believed to be the driver of other teacher attitudes, such as discrimination, racism and xenophobia. The implication also extends to the need for teachers understanding the historical legacy of apartheid, for instance, is crucial for teachers working in township and rural

schools, where educational disparities continue to reflect systemic inequalities. In this way, contextually informed teaching becomes a vital component of meaningful and socially responsive pedagogy.

Results and implications for teacher educators

While there are divergent views on this issue, but a prominent view states teacher education in South Africa suffers from deep deficiencies, hence pre-service teachers seem to be clueless about real life situations, even though they are mentored during teaching practice. These gaps suggest that candidate teachers learn theories that do not address the reality of South Africa' education context. On the other hand, institutes of teacher education should also invest in knowledge development and improvement for in-service teachers need regular development programmes. The history of Black teachers' education still shapes the way some teachers view teaching. Some of the participants were trained in former apartheid teacher colleges that deemed Black teachers unprofessional, which is a legacy that still lingers on. Therefore, teacher education curriculum should be positioned to addressed such.

This therefore implies that teacher educators' practice should not be limited in the faculty but should physically visit schools and assist teachers often. Their visibility and action in schools is believed to have the potential of improving teacher identity. Furthermore, these results are of the view that teacher education should incorporate the Critical Race Theory in the syllabus,

considering that South Africa is a country built on the foundation of racism, which is assuming a different trajectory, with the presence of immigrants. Teachers should be trained in a curriculum that addresses real life situations.

Results and implications for the government

Teachers are aggrieved with how the government is handling immigration issues. Teachers believe that the immigration crisis that exists in the country is the fault of the government. Some South Africans are of the notion that immigrants are stifling an already crippled service delivery system. It is important for the government to take these issues as a matter of priority and urgency because the ramifications create a vicious cycle of violence which also finds its way into schools and classrooms. Teachers are concerned with the enrolment of immigrant learners that do not have relevant documents to live in the country, they believe that the department of education is not taking the matter seriously, and while this issue lacks urgency, it is teachers who are supposed to pick up the pieces.

This therefore implies that the government of the republic should have policies that regulate immigration in South Africa as well as address the socio-economic collapse, so that immigrants do not find themselves scapegoated. These policies should be extended to school by putting programmes in place, where the department of education makes a follow up on how schools and teachers cope with immigrant enrolment, as well offering immigrant learners support., particularly with language learning.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMMENDATIONS

The education system of South Africa is embedded on a deep history of apartheid that is still responsible for the way in which by and large Black South Africans perceive an *outsider,* which is an attitude that could be extended into the classroom as well. Even though some participants did not air their views strongly about the presence of immigrants, nevertheless, it is evident in their responses that immigrant learners in Black South African public schools pose a challenge to teacher identity and teacher roles. However, some of them believe that if there could be structures provided by the department of education and school principals, teachers can develop new competences and learn to address change, without feeling that it is an extra burden to teach immigrant learners. The belief that some immigrants, particularly, illegal immigrants, are in the country to commit crime, is prevalent among some teachers, which is position that does not warrant xenophobia, according to them, but government swift action both in designing effective immigration policies and improving social-economic conditions of the country, because on the main, the deteriorating economy of South Africa is believed to be fuelling xenophobic attitudes.

Recommendations

Based on this summary, I make the following recommendations:

- o Teacher education should prepare teachers for the real teaching context, and immigration studies

should be part of the teacher education curriculum.

o Government through the department of education from national to provincial and district offices, should visit schools physically and find out about immigrant learner enrolment, and thereafter design context responsive teacher professional development training programmes.

o Teachers should strive to understand the composition of their learners at the beginning of the year, and upon finding that there could be African immigrant learners, then design the lessons accordingly.

o Teachers should be knowledgeable about global trends such as immigration, so that they may be able to teach in a way that is responding to the challenges that come with it.

o Teachers should always strive to uphold professionalism regardless of their personal sentiments.

o The Departments of Home Affairs and Basic Education should design policies that meaningfully address immigration in the country.

o As professionals, teachers can design the curriculum through "deliberationist" approaches, that is why the government should revise using experts who have no knowledge of the classroom to design a curriculum that teachers are expected to teach

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