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Carol-Ann Mitchell

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Review Committee

Dr. Susana Verdinelli, Committee Chairperson, Psychology Faculty

Dr. Matthew Howren, Committee Member, Psychology Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

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Abstract

Black Caribbeans' Experience in Transitioning from
Dominant to Minority Identity Status

by

Carol-Ann Mitchell

MP, Walden University, 2022

MS, School of Professional Studies, 2016

BTECH, New York City College of Technology, 2014

AS, LaGuardia Community College, 2012

Proposal Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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General Psychology

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Abstract

Black Caribbeans who are considered racially dominant in their native countries experience an identity transition from dominant to minority status when immigrating to the United States. Due to the United States assimilation culture, Black Caribbean immigrants are consolidated and expected to adapt to African American identity. Assimilation and consolidation cause Black Caribbean immigrants to transition their identity status from dominant to minority post-migration. Little is known about the experiences of Black Caribbeans' cultural identity transition. The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) study involved exploring Black Caribbeans' transitioning their identity from dominant to minority status. The acculturative stress theory was the theoretical framework used in this study. Data were collected through open-ended and audio-recorded semi-structured interviews with 12 Black Caribbeans. Interviews were analyzed using IPA procedures. The results of this study indicated that Black Caribbeans' cultural identity status transition is multifaceted. Physical environment, social environment, social status, and participants' cultural practices created substantial shifts in cultural identity. Internal and external factors such as cognitive reframing abilities and social interactions played a significant role in cultural identity transitioning, resulting in a positive or negative experience. Findings supported the need for social support from family and community members since stressors are inevitable in Black Caribbeans' cultural identity transition experiences. The results of this study have the potential to be used for positive social change in generating awareness and multicultural competency among clinicians who provide services to Black Caribbeans.

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Dedication

First and foremost, I dedicate this dissertation to God, my creator, who, amid my spiritual journey, has provided guidance, protection, knowledge, and understanding. This degree was completed with your will and blessings. I also dedicate this dissertation to the love of my life, my daughter, Car-Seana Carlos. Thank you for being my motivator, biggest cheerleader, encourager, editor, and light. You are my biggest blessing. You gave me purpose and the true meaning of living. I promised you and God that I would continuously work on becoming the best version of myself because I knew you deserved nothing less. I love you!

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Most Black immigrants in the United States are from the Black Caribbean region, which has seen substantial population growth between 2000 to 2019 (Hirschman, 2014; Tamir & Anderson, 2022; U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). This immigrant community in the United States (U.S.) has achieved the status of model minority group through dedication and efforts (Ifatunji, 2016; Jones, 2021; Lee, 1996; Sowell, 1979). However, despite fundamental differences between Black Caribbean immigrants and African Americans, America's assimilation culture assumes that immigrants should automatically adapt to African American culture post-migration (Dodoo, 1997; Freeman, 2002; Ghorbani, 2011; Logan, 2019; Maeder & McManus, 2022). Assimilation into African American culture poses many challenges for Black Caribbeans post-migration. Black Caribbeans are frequently mistaken for African Americans due to their physical resemblance. Consequentially the mistaken identity causes Black Caribbeans to lose their individual identity and be racially consolidated with African Americans. Black Caribbeans have a dominant identity status in their home countries (Benson, 2006; Foner, 1998). By contrast, in the U.S., African Americans are a minority. Therefore, Black Caribbean immigrants face changes in identity from dominant to minority status when they immigrate to the U.S., where they are expected to acculturate and consolidate with African Americans. Little is known about Black Caribbeans' cultural identity transition phenomenon. Researchers must explore this phenomenon to better understand Black Caribbean immigrants' experiences post-migration in the U.S. Therefore, I aimed to

investigate how Black Caribbean immigrants experienced the cultural transition from being dominant to the minority.

This chapter includes background information about various factors that played a role in Black Caribbean immigrants' cultural transition processes. This chapter also contains the research topic and theoretical framework that served as a guide. Also included is a description of the study's purpose and methodology. The chapter also includes a summary and information about the importance of the study.

Background

Immigrants in America

The U.S. has the largest immigrant population in the world (Hirschman, 2014; Parmet et al., 2017). In 2014, it was reported 42.2 million immigrants resided in the U.S. (Parmet et al., 2017). The immigrant population was recently reported in the 2021 U.S. census to have increased by 9% to 46.2 million immigrants residing in the U.S. (Center for Immigration Studies, 2021; Tamir, 2022). Central America and the Caribbean are the most prominent immigrant populations (Hirschman, 2014). The Black Caribbean immigrant population in the country has increased from 2.7 million in 2013 to approximately 13.4 million in 2019 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Black Caribbeans account for 46% of the Black immigrant population in the U.S. making them the largest Black immigrant group. The Black Caribbean population in the U.S. is predicted to significantly climb to account for roughly one-third of the U.S. Black population by 2060 (Tamir, 2022).

Immigrants are not always treated fairly in the U.S. (Abascal et al., 2021; Hendi & Ho, 2021; Parmet et al., 2017). The U.S. have a prevalence of anti-immigrants' sentiments dating back to the American Revolution (Abascal et al., 2021; Hendi & Ho, 2021; Parmet et al., 2017). Immigrants have been erroneously blamed for issues in the country and historically been perceived as troublesome due to widespread anti-immigrant attitudes (Abascal et al., 2021; Hendi & Ho, 2021; Parmet et al., 2017). Some political campaigns have fueled the notion that immigrants' presence in the U.S. has negatively affected the country (Blendon & Casey, 2019; Morey, 2018). This anti-immigrant rhetoric has made citizens of the U.S. to believe that immigrants have fueled crime, increased costs of public services, and led to overcrowding issues and economic instability (Blendon & Casey, 2019; Morey, 2018). Ultimately, anti-discrimination rhetoric and policies have influenced racial disparities (Morey, 2018).

Black immigrants account for a large portion of immigrant population in the U.S. (Tamir, 2022). Even though the U.S. society views English-speaking Black Caribbean immigrants as a model minority group (Ifatunji, 2016; Jones, 2021; Lee, 1996; Sowell, 1979), they still experience high levels of discrimination due to anti-immigration stigmas and racial issues (Taylor et al., 2019). As a result, xenophobic beliefs have caused a range of pressures for Black Caribbean immigrants (Foner, 2016; Taylor et al., 2019).

Stressors Specific to Immigrants

While some stressors, such as discrimination, and acculturation, are shared among immigrant populations, some sources of stress differ (Kim et al., 2018). Some immigrants experience stressors involving racism, migration, employment, finances, and personal

independence (Williams et al., 2007). By contrast, other immigrants experience stressors involving immigration status, employment issues and conflicts, language barrier issues, lack of social support, and cultural dissonance (Sternberg et al., 2016). Some immigrants demonstrate stressors involving multiple cross-cultural practices (Straiton et al., 2017). In addition, immigrants also have stressors associated with language and cultural barriers (Pinedo et al., 2021). Overall, immigrants from North America face stressors involving resettlement stress, isolation, trauma, and acculturative stress (Davis et al., 2021).

Ultimately, many immigrant groups experience increased stress from transitioning from their original cultural norms, values, and customs to another culture after migrating to the host country (Berry, 2006; Kim et al., 2018; Oppedal et al., 2020). Stressors unique to Black Caribbeans are acculturating to majority Black African American communities because the two ethnic groups have different historical backgrounds, immigration experiences, cultural norms, and identity status (Erving, 2022; Foner, 1999; Joseph et al., 2014; Rong & Fitchett, 2008). However, immigrant stressors are individually based and not universal among all members of a specific immigrant group (Kim et al., 2018). How the individual immigrants perceive the stressor determines their experience (Berry, 2006). The Black Caribbean's experience of transitioning their identity status from dominant to minority is based on how the immigrant individually appraises and copes with their stressors (Berry, 2006; Dow, 2011).

Immigrants' Stress-Coping Strategies

How immigrant groups cope with their stressors differs (Farley et al., 2005; Pinedo et al., 2021). Some common coping strategies for immigrants are social support,

social isolation, religious coping, and substance use (Adewunmi, 2015; Kim et al., 2012; Mak et al., 2021; Yakushko, 2011). Some immigrants find it comforting to use social support coping strategies by socializing with others with similar stressors (Mak et al., 2021; Yakushko, 2011). Immigrants who use social support coping strategies find them compelling because they can share techniques, feel understood, and gain a sense of community (Hombrados-Mendieta et al., 2019). Some immigrants isolate themselves to deal with their stressors (Mak et al., 2021). This preference is usually based on their fear of being judged by others (Mak et al., 2021). Social isolation coping strategies have effectively reduced immigrant anxiety (Mak et al., 2021; Valentin-Cortes et al., 2020).

Moreover, some immigrant groups use religion and spirituality to cope with life stressors because of their cultural traditional practices (Mantovani et al., 2017; Noyola et al., 2020; Straiton et al., 2017; Taylor et al., 2021). Some immigrants prefer to use substances such as marijuana to deal with stressors (Pinedo et al., 2021). It is crucial to highlight that cultural and personal preferences have an influence on how immigrants deal with stress (Yakushko, 2010). Negative stressors and stress-coping techniques of immigrants have significantly impacted them psychologically (Da Silva et al., 2017; Mantovani et al., 2017; Meng & D'Arcy, 2016; Pena-Sullivan, 2020).

Immigrants and Mental Illness

Immigrants are more susceptible to mental illness than citizens because of discrimination, acculturative stress, and family conflict (Sangalang et al., 2019). Immigration status and exposure to resettlement challenges (limited economic achievement and lack of social support) increase the prevalence of and susceptibility to

psychiatric disorders for immigrants (Rousseau & Frounfelker, 2019). Black Caribbean immigrants living in Western societies are more susceptible to mental illness than their White Caribbean immigrant peers because of their identity status (Bolles, 2000; Shekunov, 2017; Williams et al., 2007). Post-migration to the U.S., Black Caribbean immigrants' downward movement to minority status leads to raised pressures and limited resources, leading to health concerns and mental illnesses (Williams et al., 2007).

When compared to U.S.-born populations, immigrants are unlikely to meet criteria for lifetime psychological disorders or have a psychiatric family history (Jones et al., 2020; Salas-Wright et al., 2018). Although immigrants are less likely to meet these criteria, they showed higher rates of psychotic disorders than U.S.-born populations (Shekunov, 2017). Mental diseases were found in U.S.-born people and immigrants who arrived in the country as children (Salas-Wright et al., 2018; Shekunov, 2017). Immigrants who migrated as adolescents and adults had reduced rates of mental health disorders than U.S.-born populations. Ultimately, the chances of immigrants having psychological disorders increases significantly in relation with length of residence in their host country (Case & Hunter, 2014; Shekunov, 2017).

Unfortunately, Black Caribbean immigrants have issues involving seeking help from mental health clinicians, which leads to many disorders that are untreated or undiagnosed (Mantovani et al., 2017; Venner & Welfare, 2019). Some help-seeking issues in immigrant groups are due to clinicians' multicultural competency issues (Alfaro & Bui, 2018; Venner & Welfare, 2019). Clinicians in the U.S. frequently and mistakenly identify Black Caribbean immigrants as African Americans based on physical features

and skin color, even though the two races share different immigration experiences, cultural identities, and historical backgrounds (Venner & Welfare, 2019).

African Americans' Experiences Involving Oppression and Discrimination

In the U.S., African Americans face a high degree of discrimination, persecution, and injustice, which affects all aspects of their existence (Best et al., 2022; Sylvers et al., 2022; Williams et al., 2020). They experience discrimination involving employment, police interactions, microaggressions, and racial verbal attacks (Bleich et al., 2019). Ultimately, individuals in this minority population experience discrimination because of physical attributes such as skin color (Bleich et al., 2019). Consequently, disparities between Whites and African Americans places the latter in a position of feeling inferior and isolated in society (Bleich et al., 2019). Discrimination is directly linked to socioeconomic status disparities between African Americans and Whites (Assari et al., 2018; Mays et al., 2017). When African Americans experience discrimination, it increases the risk of poverty because it limits employment and education opportunities, negatively affecting socioeconomics (Assari et al., 2018; Mays et al., 2017).

Moreover, African Americans experience discrimination which affects aspects of their lives such as housing, employment, and education (Assari et al., 2021; Legewie, 2016; Taylor et al., 2019). In America, there are academic attainment differences between African Americans and their White counterparts (Assari et al., 2021). Ethnic discrimination causes an academic gap between African Americans and their White peers because there are differentials in teacher quality, education quality, and resources (Assari et al., 2021). The lower education, teacher quality, and resources African Americans

receive negatively affect developmental outcomes, perpetuating the educational attainment gap between Blacks and Whites (Assari et al., 2021). Inequality and discrimination towards African Americans in educational institutions have also made the educational attainment gap challenging to minimize, leading to employment issues for Blacks (Assari, 2018; Dumont & Ready, 2020; Weir, 2016).

The physical and psychological wellbeing of African Americans is seriously affected by discrimination and oppression (Assari et al., 2018). Discrimination increases the prevalence of schizophrenia, bipolar illness, obesity, high blood pressure, and heart disease among African Americans in comparison to Whites (Assari et al., 2018; Neighbors et al., 2003). Despite the fact that race-based discrimination has decreased dramatically in the U.S., discrimination against Blacks hurts their financial and identity status (Lee et al., 2019). Black Caribbean immigrants share a comparable experiences involving prejudice compared to African Americans in terms of being stopped by police, denied loans, and denied promotions (Slyvers et al., 2022), as well as daily microaggressions in the workplace (Best et al., 2022), and racism-related stress (Case & Hunter, 2014).

Immigrants and Identity Transition

Different groups of immigrants' experience identity transitioning differently. Migration poses many challenges for immigrants associated with subgroup identities with the dedication to their native culture (Fleischmann & Verkuyten, 2016; Foner, 2018). The subgroup identity challenges cause many immigrants to develop dual identities during identity transition (Fleischmann & Verkuyten, 2016; Simon et al., 2013). Immigrants

tend to develop dual identities to separate their native identity from the host country's identity (Li, 2020; Lin et al., 2022; Simon et al., 2013). It is common for immigrants to develop dual identities to avoid altering their origin and cultural values post-migration (Fleischmann & Verkuyten, 2016; Lin et al., 2022; Simon et al., 2013). Some individuals in this population have difficulty changing their traditional values to adapt to their host communities (Lin et al., 2022; Simon et al., 2013). Some immigrants feel like their identity transition is problematic because it involves disruption and loss of primitive cultural values, customs, and practices (Hale & de Abreu, 2010). Ultimately, some immigrants felt like they had to alter their entire cultural identity during the transition process post-migration to the U.S. (Hale & de Abreu, 2010).

Some immigrant groups could find cultural identity transition difficult (Mehta & Belk, 1991). Substantial changes to some immigrants' cultural customs and possessions pose challenges (Mehta & Belk, 1991). Some immigrant groups commonly use cultural customs and possessions to secure their native identity (Mehta & Belk, 1991). Therefore, relinquishing those cultural customs and possessions could cause a negative appraisal of the identity transition process (Mehta & Belk, 1991). Consequently, a negative appraisal of the identity transition process could result in acculturation issues because the immigrant could have difficulty assimilating into the host culture (Mehta & Belk, 1991).

There are still limited studies on Black Caribbean immigrants' identity transitioning processes. Most studies focus on identity as developed during the transitioning process. In addition, most studies on this topic focus on other immigrant groups and neglect to explore Black immigrant groups. There is little research that has

explored the Black Caribbeans' identity status transitioning from a dominant to a minority phenomenon. Therefore, by investigating Black Caribbean immigrants' experiences involving the cultural transition from dominant to minority status, this study filled a gap in literature.

Problem Statement

Americans perceive Black Caribbean immigrants based on their ethnic heritage and skin tone. Due to their physical characteristics, Black Caribbean immigrants are frequently mistaken for African Americans. However, there are differences in terms of immigration experience, cultural identities, and historical background between Black Caribbean immigrants and African Americans (Venner & Welfare, 2019). Racial consolidation forces Black Caribbean immigrants to acquire a second ethnicity (African American), which may result in experiencing adverse mental health effects, daily microaggressions in the workplace, and racism-related stress due to ongoing discrimination and racial inequality issues in the country (Best et al., 2022; Case & Hunter, 2014; Venner & Welfare, 2019). Moreover, segregation among Black immigrants and U.S.-born African Americans has caused Black Caribbean immigrants to feel rejected due to being mistakenly identified (Tesfai, 2019). Racial consolidation and mistaken identity are significant stressors for Black Caribbean immigrants who face the same discrimination and racial prejudice that African Americans face in the U.S. because of their skin color and physical features (Best et al., 2022; Venner & Welfare, 2019). Black Caribbean immigrants must adjust their identities from dominant to minority in the U.S.

There are two Caribbean Island groups: the Greater Antilles (large Caribbean islands) and the Lesser Antilles (small Caribbean islands). The Lesser Antilles consist of islands such as Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, Barbados, Grenada, and Monserrat. Unlike, most of the Lesser Antilles's islands, the Greater Antilles islands are not predominantly Black except for Jamaica and Haiti. The majority of the Caribbean islands have a predominantly Black population (Torres et al., 2015). However, unlike the Caribbean islands, the U.S. has a more diverse population. Black Caribbean immigrants who move to the U.S. are compelled to transition their identity from one in which they are dominant to minority status and are subject to persecution in their host nation.

Identity transition is fluid; it is not processed or developed smoothly from one identity to another in a logical way (Benson, 2006). Cultural identity transition involves uncertainty and drastic alterations that can change immigrants' lives (Cooper, 2018; Foner et al., 2018; Szabo et al., 2016). During cultural identity transition, immigrants are placed in a position where they have to adjust to new and unfamiliar cultural norms that can significantly alter their daily lives (Bethel et al., 2020; Szabo & Ward, 2015). Such adjustments can place many immigrants at risk of cultural and identity bereavement, significantly negatively affecting their transition (Bhurgra & Becker, 2005). When significant negative changes such as environmental, social, financial, and cultural cooccur during the cultural transitioning process, immigrants could experience bereavement, which makes them more susceptible to mental illnesses (Bhurgra & Becker, 2005). Loss of identity status, resources, support, social mobility and discrimination increase risks for psychological distress (Bhurgra & Becker, 2005; Oppedal et al., 2004;

Shooter, 2008; Stambulova & Ryba, 2020; Szabo et al., 2016; Szabo & Ward, 2015). The risk of mental illness is highly dependent on immigrants' experiences, coping abilities, and appraisal of their changes during the cultural transitioning process (Berry et al., 2006; Bhurgra & Becker, 2005; Phinney et al., 2001). Many immigrants enter their host country with different views about retaining their origin culture or acquiring the dominant host culture (Berry, 2006). Significant shifts to one's cultural identity can exacerbate the transitioning process regardless of if immigrants accept or refuse the dominant host culture (Cooper, 2018; Foner et al., 2018).

Immigrants' cultural identity transition has been increasingly explored in recent years, advancing western society's understanding of immigrants' experiences. Specifically, research on Caribbean immigrants' identity transition explored socioeconomic, social, or developmental perspective (Arneaud et al., 2016; Hordge-Freeman, 2020; Joseph & Hunter, 2011; Malcolm & Mendoza, 2014; Sowell, 1979; Thomas, 2018; Waters, 1999). Little is known about Black Caribbeans' experiences involving transitioning their cultural identity from the dominant to minority racial group. This study involved exploring Black Caribbean immigrants' experiences involving transitioning from dominant to minority identity status.

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative research examined how Black Caribbean immigrants experience the cultural transition process involving acquiring a new identity as minorities post-migration. Interviews with English-speaking Black Caribbean immigrants residing in the U.S. were conducted using the qualitative design. As the dominant culture members in

their native countries, Black Caribbeans possessed influence and power (Crary, 2017; Devos & Mohamed, 2014). Being the dominant culture in their native country allowed Black Caribbeans access to more resources and power (Crary, 2017). Minorities have little influence or authority in American society and generally live in substandard conditions. Therefore, when Black Caribbeans migrate to the U.S. and transition their identity status to a minority, they risk having less power and resources than they possess in their native country. Having a minority status in the U.S. could also subject Black Caribbeans to unequal treatment that restricts their access to resources and socioeconomic advancement (Juon, 2020). However, little is known about the experiences of Black Caribbeans' cultural identity transitioning from dominant to minority. Ultimately, this study will increase resources, awareness, and multicultural competency for Black Caribbean immigrants, leading to social change.

Research Question

The following research question was used for this study:

RQ1: How do Black Caribbean immigrants experience cultural identity transition from being dominant in their country of origin to minority status in the U.S.?

Definitions of Terms

Acculturation: The practice of cultural transformation wherein individuals or groups replace their native culture with traits and identity of the dominant culture (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2003, 2006).

Acculturative stress: Mental and emotional challenges of adapting to a new culture (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 1999, 2003, 2006).

African Americans: Individuals who are U.S.-born citizens and have African ancestral origins (Davis, 2020).

Assimilation: The process through which immigrant groups and individuals adopt identities and cultural standards of the prevailing culture in their new nation and give up their own identities and culture (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 1999, 2003, 2006).

Black Caribbean immigrants: Caribbean natives of African heritage who migrate from islands in the Caribbean Sea to other countries (Rogoziński, 2000; Venner & Welfare, 2019; Warner, 2012).

Cultural Bereavement: The grief reaction to losing primitive cultural values, customs, norms, social structure, and practices (Bhurgra & Becker, 2005)

Cultural transition: The process of moving from one culture to another (Bethel et al., 2020; Ward & Szabo, 2019).

Dominant culture: Group that establishes standards for cultural norms, values, and identities for society (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 1999, 2003, 2006; McIntosh, 2008).

Downward assimilation: Experiencing social and economic low-level movement into underclass status postmigration (Akresh, 2006; Castro et al., 2010; Le, 2020; Matthew, 2014; Model, 1999).

Identity Transition: The process where individuals disengage from their original identity and explore new possible selves, and eventually integrate alternative identities (Foner et al., 2018; Ibarra, 2007; Lin et al., 2022).

Model minorities: Minority groups with notable socioeconomic success achievements in the U.S. (Ifatunji, 2016; Jones, 2021; Lee, 1996; Sowell, 1979).

Xenophobia: Hatred, discrimination, and prejudice against people from other countries (Esses & Hamilton, 2021).

Theoretical Framework

The acculturative stress theory was the theoretical framework used in this study. Immigrants experience psychological and social stress when adapting to cultures in countries where they migrated (Berry, 2010). During this process, immigrants can experience distress. Acculturative stress can affect individuals' lived experiences and stress management strategies. Various factors can trigger acculturative stress, including feelings of inferiority, discrimination, language barriers, immigration status, and poverty (Da Silva et al., 2017). Acculturative stress can adversely affect individual lived experiences, mental health, and coping with stress. The acculturative stress theory was used in this study to provide the context for studying Black Caribbean immigrant participants' experiences when transitioning into a new identity. The objective was to develop the acculturative stress theory further to gain more thorough insights regarding experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants.

Nature of the Study

For this study, I used interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). Understanding Black Caribbeans' individual experiences with cultural transition as they go from dominant to minority identity status was the main goal of this study. Phenomenological studies commonly have a sample size of 10 or fewer participants (Moser & Korstiens, 2018; Smith et al., 2009). I used a sample size of 12 English-speaking Black Caribbean immigrant participants to gain insights regarding cultural

transition experiences. This approach facilitated the opportunity for participants to share their subjective experiences via semi-structured interviews. Participants were selected using the purposeful snowballing sampling method. Through snowball sampling, researchers can find new volunteers by asking existing participants who fit the study's eligibility requirements for referrals (Patton, 2015). For this recruitment process, flyers were posted in community immigration centers throughout the five boroughs in New York City and Miami, Florida. Flyers were also distributed by family members and close friends. In addition, a Facebook group was used to recruit participants for the study.

Assumptions

The goal of this research was to raise awareness of the struggles faced by Black Caribbean immigrants as they go from being dominant to a minority. As a result, a slew of assumptions was made concerning this study. I assumed the Black Caribbean participants were honest and shared valid details about their cultural transition experiences. I ensured that the participants felt safe and comfortable sharing their experiences by building rapport and assuring them that all information was confidential. I assumed all participants could read and comprehend information. I assumed all participants had the same or similar cultural identity transition experience. I assumed that participants' participation was sincere and had no hidden motives. Due to the considerable underrepresentation of Black Caribbean immigrants in research, these assumptions were crucial to the study.

Limitations

Potential limitations of this study were the data being exclusively dependent on individual-level information the Black Caribbean participants provided about their perception of their experiences transitioning their identity from dominant to minority. The study was also limited by the recollection of the Black Caribbean participant's experience of their cultural transition. The study was limited by the participant's ability to share rich, detailed information about their cultural transition experience and engage in the interviews while being guided by open-ended questions in a semi-structured interview. If the participant withheld rich details about their experiences, this resulted in a limitation for the study. The study relied on the accuracy and honesty of the participants' self-reporting of their experience transitioning from dominant to minority in the interviews. The study's findings are limited to the extent to which the Black Caribbean participants were truthful in their interviews.

Scope and Delimitations

Answering the research question and providing knowledge regarding experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants living in America were the main goals of this study. The Black Caribbean immigrant population is rising quickly in the U.S. (Parmet et al., 2017; Tamir, 2022). Additionally, a substantial portion of Black immigrants in the country originates from the Caribbean (Tamir & Anderson, 2022). All participants in this study were English-speaking Black Caribbean immigrants who were at least 18 years old and Caribbean natives who migrated from a predominantly Black Caribbean Island at the age of 14 or older and lived in the U.S. I was able to gain a comprehensive grasp of

experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants involving transitioning from a dominant to minority identity status after migrating to the U.S. through interviews with people who fit those criteria. Those who did not meet these criteria were not included in research. Friends, relatives, and close associates were also excluded from the study to uphold ethical integrity.

Significance of the Study

Black Caribbean immigrants living in the U.S. have rapidly increased by 50% between the years 2000 and 2019 (Parmet et al., 2017; Tesfai, 2019; Venner & Welfare, 2019). This surge happens at a time when there are disagreements about how immigrants will live in the country in the future (Moreno et al., 2021). However, there is little information about alterations in the identity status of Black Caribbean immigrants. This study was essential because it contributed to limited information about experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants who must go from belonging to the cultural group that dominates in their home country to the minority. These immigrants may experience oppression, racial inequality, discrimination, social injustice, and systemic racism due to their identity transition (Teskai, 2019).

Consequently, this puts them at risk for increased detrimental effects on their psychological health due to acculturation, culture transition, and mistaken ethnic identity (Teskai, 2019; Joseph et al., 2013). There was an urgent need to narrow the gap in current literature concerning cultural transition and experiences of this group of immigrants in American communities. This study will increase awareness, support, resources, and

services for Black Caribbean immigrants. Research will also help clinicians become more culturally competent while interacting with people in this community.

Summary

In this chapter, I described the problem that was explored and purpose and significance of understanding Black Caribbean immigrants' culture when transitioning from dominant to minority status in the U.S. I also presented the study's research question, background information, theoretical framework, and key definitions. In addition, assumptions, delimitations, and limitations were detailed in this chapter.

Chapter 2 includes the literature review and theoretical foundation of the study. This includes information about experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants and identity status post-migration. This chapter also includes information about the strategies for conducting literature searches, including keywords that were used.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Black Caribbean immigrants are individuals who migrate to another country from the Caribbean islands (Venner & Welfare, 2019). They are variously referred to as Afro-Caribbean, West Indian immigrants, and Black immigrants. In this study, the term Black Caribbean immigrants refers to English-speaking individuals of African ancestry who emigrated from a Caribbean Island that was or is now a British colony. Islands such as Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Jamaica, British Virgin Islands, and Trinidad & Tobago were all British territories or are still governed by the British (Lewis, 1967; Pons, 2012). These islands have predominantly Black populations (Archibald, 2011; Augier & Gordon, 1977; Benson, 2006; Venner & Hunter, 2014; Warner, 2012; Waters, 1999).

It is customary for Black Caribbean immigrants to migrate to developing nations such as the U.S., Canada, Spain, and Britain (Zong et al., 2019). The U.S. is the largest host country for Black Caribbean immigrants. However, due to some similar physical features, Black Caribbean immigrants are mistakenly identified and consolidated with dominant Black American cultures in the U.S. (Benson, 2006; Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Thelamour, 2017; Thorton et al., 2017; Warner, 2012; Waters, 1999). The consolidation of both cultures poses many challenges for Black Caribbean immigrants because it ignores fundamental differences between the two cultures (Benson, 2006 Foner et al., 2018; Thelamour, 2017; Venner & Welfare, 2014; Waters, 1999; Warner, 2012).

One significant challenge is social identity status transition. Black Caribbean immigrants previously held a social identity status of being majorities in their home countries (Benson, 2006; Gordon, 1964; Joseph et al., 2013; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Tesfai, 2019; Thelamour, 2017; Venner & Hunter, 2014; Warner, 2012; Waters, 1999;). African Americans are minorities because of historical circumstances and racism in America that positioned them at the bottom of the social scale (Akresh, 2006; Model, 2008). Consolidation and expectations of the acculturation process force Black Caribbean immigrants to transition their culture from dominant to minority status (Benson, 2006). However, no scholars have explored this phenomenon extensively.

Literature on immigrant culture transition is sparse. Most researchers focus on other immigrant groups (Lin et al., 2022; Mehta & Belk, 1991; Menjivar, 2006), and there are limited studies on Black immigrants. In addition, studies that did explore Black Caribbean immigrants' culture transition only focused on identity development as well as social and cultural norms of Black Caribbean immigrants' identity transitioning process (Benson, 2006; Foner, 1998; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Malcolm & Mendoza, 2014; Warner, 2012; Waters, 1999). No studies have explored this population's experiences involving transitioning from dominant to minority status extensively. Using Berry's theoretical framework of acculturative stress theory, I aimed to comprehend experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants involving culture transitioning from dominant to minority identity status.

Literature search strategies, the acculturative stress theory, a review of literature, and a summary are included in Chapter 2. After describing literature search strategies, a

thorough analysis of the acculturative stress theory was given. Relevant literature on racial consolidation and the historical background of Black Caribbean immigrants and African Americans were addressed in literature. I also explained racial segregation and factors that could affect the cultural transitioning process between Black Caribbeans and African Americans. Lastly, literature pertinent to Black Caribbean acculturation, acculturative stress, and identity transition was synthesized.

Literature Strategy Search

Primarily, Google Scholar and the Walden University Library were used during the literature search. I used the following databases for this study: EBSCOhost, Thoreau, PsycARTICLES, PsycBOOKS, PsycINFO, PsycEXTRA, SAGE Journals, ProQuest, and ScienceDirect. Additionally, open-source articles were located using Google Scholar and the Pew Research Forum. Also, the Migration Policy Institute and U.S. Census Bureau were used to access updated statistical information. Search terms and keywords were *identity development, identity formation, identity transition, identity construction, ethnic identity, immigrants, immigration, immigrant, acculturation, acculturative stress, acculturation models, acculturative stress theoretical framework, cultural assimilation, cultural adoption, cultural integration, cultural transition, racial consolidation, racial segregation, socioeconomics, Black, minority, Caribbean, and list of Caribbean islands*. Variations of these terms were used to complete an exhaustive search. Initial searches were restricted to books and peer-reviewed publications that were published between 2018 and 2022. However, I had to expand the search to as early as 1962 due to limited literature and books on the phenomenon and population. Expanding search publication

dates allowed me to identify more literature and books pertinent to Black Caribbean immigrants' experiences involving culture transition.

Theoretical Foundation

To entirely understand the acculturative stress theory, it is essential to have a comprehensive grasp of acculturation models. American anthropologist Theodore D. Graves coined the term psychological acculturation. Psychological acculturation is changes in individuals' psycho-cultural orientations that develop due to exposure to other cultures, ethnic groups, and social influences in the host countries (Berry, 1992).

Acculturation Unidimensional Model

Acculturation is linear in the unidimensional model (Berry et al., 1987). Immigrant groups integrate into their host country's dominant culture and abandon their own culture (Berry et al., 1987). When immigrants do not conform to their host country's cultural norms and decide to retain their original culture, they are constantly criticized for being unacculturated (Gordon, 1964; Schwartz et al., 2010). However, not all immigrants have a lower social status than their dominant culture when they enter the U.S. (Bourhis et al., 1997). Therefore, if the immigrant groups with different social statuses upon entry to the U.S encounter difficulties adapting to the dominant cultural norms, they will be viewed as failures (unacculturated), which could be detrimental to the immigrants' mental health (Berry, 2006; Berry et al., 1987). As a result, there are several acculturation challenges (Berry, 2006).

The rigid model view caused some researchers to criticize if it accurately captured immigrants' acculturation process (Berry, 1992; Berry et al., 1987). Psychologist John W.

Berry believed that acculturation is more complex than what was presented in the unidimensional model (Berry et al., 1987; Schwartz et al., 2010). Berry believed that the lack of versatility was damaging to the experience of acculturation for immigrants (Berry, 2006). Subsequently, it inspired Berry to develop his bidimensional model.

Berry's Psychological Acculturation Model

The immigrants and the dominant culture are separate aspects in Berry's bidimensional psychological acculturation paradigm (Berry, 1992; Berry, 2006). The paradigm contends that the prevailing host identity and that of the immigrants are separate throughout acculturation (Berry, 1992; Berry, 2006). Berry's acculturation model from 1992 provided two dimensions for the acculturation process as a result (Berry, 1992). One factor is whether the immigrant chooses to reject or embrace their original culture (Berry, 1987; Berry, 2006). The second aspect was how the immigrant adapted to or rejected the mainstream culture in their new nation in order to preserve or establish ties (Berry, 2017, 2006, 1992). In the end, the immigrants determine using the two dimensions whether it is worthwhile to keep the prevailing host culture or to reject it (Berry, 2017, 2006, 1992). The acculturation process makes use of four different sorts of reactions (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2017, 2006). These are referred to as acculturative strategies (Berry, 2006). Assimilation, segregation, integration, and marginalization are the four acculturative techniques (Berry, 2017, 2006).

Assimilation Strategy

When an immigrant adopts the cultural traditions of the prevailing dominant culture or identity and rejects native culture and identity, this is known as assimilation

(Berry, 2017). In light of the pervasive anti-immigrant views that date back to the American Revolution, research have discovered, that immigrants have a history of being seen as troublesome in the United States (Hendi & Ho, 2021). Given this, most immigrants will use the assimilation method to amalgamate to the host cultural practices and give up their original identity in order to avoid stereotyped perceptions (LaFromboise et al., 1993).

Separation Strategy

The separation strategy occurs when immigrants reject the dominant cultural identities of their host country (Berry, 2006). Instead, the immigrants retain their original cultural identities after migrating to another country (Berry, 2006; Lechuga & Fernandez, 2011). Some immigrants use this strategy due to maladjustment to the dominant host cultural identities (Berry & Sam, 2006). Additionally, when immigrants are made to fit into the prevailing culture of their new nation, individuals of that society may reject them and desire isolation, which can lead to the immigrant's maladjustment (Berry, 2006; Berry et al., 1987).

Integration Strategy

Integration strategy occurs when the immigrant can fully adapt to the cultural identities of the dominant culture in their host country and still have the ability to retain their original cultural identity (Berry, 2006; Lechuga & Fernandez, 2011). Integrating the host cultural identities and cultural identity of origin can lead to biculturalism (Berry et al., 1989). The immigrants gain the capability to effectively integrate certain important

components of their original cultural identities while also assimilating the attitudes and characteristics of the host culture (Ünlü Ince et al., 2014; Berry, 2006).

Marginalization Strategy

When immigrants reject their native culture as well as that of the dominant host nation, they are implementing a marginalized strategy (Berry et al., 1987; Berry & Sam, 2006). The immigrant does not think it is worth maintaining their culture of origin (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2006). The rejection of their original cultural identity is to separate themselves from being an immigrant (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2006). The selection of rejecting the dominant host cultural identities alludes to the immigrant not favoring any of the cultural identities (Berry, 2006). Consequently, the immigrant isolates themselves from the dominant culture and their peers from their home countries (Bourhis et al., 1997). However, the immigrant may struggle to maintain a culture outside the origin and dominant cultures (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2006).

Ultimately, immigrants can select any of the above strategies in acculturation (Berry, 2006; Berry et al., 1987). The integration and assimilation strategies allow the immigrant to retain the dominant culture and identity (Berry, 2006). Assimilation and marginalization strategies force immigrants to reject their original cultural norms (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2006; Ünlü Ince et al., 2014). Self-awareness and a low tolerance for obscurity influence the selection of the assimilation strategy (Lechuga & Fernandez, 2011). In contrast, low socioeconomic status significantly influences immigrants to use separation, integration, and marginalization strategies (Lechuga & Fernandez, 2011).

However, there are levels of stress associated with the acculturation process and the strategy utilized.

The assimilation strategy requires high participation and maintenance of the dominant host cultural identity (Lechuga & Fernandez, 2011). The separation strategy has low participation and high maintenance in their original culture and identity (Lechuga & Fernandez, 2011). Both assimilation and separation have been associated with moderate stress levels (Lechuga & Fernandez, 2011). There is stress in both these strategies because they require the immigrant to select one cultural identity over the other, which could consequently affect interpersonal relationships (Berry, 2006).

In contrast, utilization of the integration composes of a combination of high participation and maintenance of both the dominant and their original culture and identity (Lechuga & Fernandez, 2011). The integration strategy imposes the lowest stress levels out of the four strategies because the immigrants have managed to find a balance between their host culture and identity and their original native culture and identity (Berry, 2006). Marginalization has the highest stress level since immigrants are forced to acculturate without their native or dominant culture (Berry et al., 1987). Berry developed the acculturative stress hypothesis in response to this mental distress brought on by acculturation.

Acculturative Stress Theory

Berry proposed acculturative stress theory as an alternative to culture shock (Berry, 2006). Berry believed that the word shock implies that immigrants will only experience negativity when they acculturate to another culture (Berry, 2006). In the

theoretical theory, the word stress refers to how immigrants deal with their negative experiences in the acculturation process by utilizing different coping strategies, which ultimately lead to some sort of adaptation (Berry, 2006). Berry believes that instead of having a psychological breakdown, as culture shock implies, in the acculturative stress theory, immigrants can cope effectively with various acculturation stressors and achieve different outcomes (positive or negative) (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2006). Acculturative stress is associated with stressors that occur from the immigrants feeling pressured to assimilate or reject the dominant host culture (Berry, 1999). The acculturative stress theory ultimately focuses on how effectively immigrants manage acculturative stress elements and the assessment and coping mechanisms employed to deal with them (Berry, 2006). The above elements predict a positive or negative outcome and the adaptation process.

Factors Affecting Acculturative Stress

Acculturative stressors could occur in the social and physical environment or at a personal level (Berry, 2017). At a social and physical level, the immigrants could encounter stressors related to new government bureaucracies and acquire new job skills, cultural values, and identities (Berry, 2017; Berry et al., 1987). The complexities associated with crossing cultures are changes that could be continuous stressors for immigrants that could increase acculturative stress (Berry, 2017). Contrarily, acculturative stress that arises at the individual level of the immigrant is characterized by personal characteristics, distinctions, abilities, personal aspirations, and the chosen acculturation approach (Berry, 2017). Utilizing assimilation or marginalization strategies

could result in the sense of isolation and alienation as they detach themselves from their native culture (Berry, 2017; Berry et al., 1987).

Researchers have discovered that integration raises the saliency of prejudice, increasing acculturative stress on both a societal and a personal level (Berry, 2017). Assimilation enables immigrants to lessen contact with their native culture and identity while adjusting to the new culture and identity of their host nation (Berry, 2006). However, reducing contact with their heritage culture and identity can be viewed as a sellout by those in their home culture (Berry et al., 1987). In addition, they can also feel rejected by individuals in the dominant host culture due to cultural identity differences (Berry, 2006; Berry et al., 1987). Immigrants who refuse to acculturate therefore face significant levels of psychological discomfort, which causes high acculturative stress (Berry et al., 1987).

Acculturative Stress Theory and Appraisal

The acculturative stress levels vary based on the immigrant's perception, appraisal, coping abilities, stressors, and experience (Berry et al., 1987). As aforementioned, acculturation stress is not always negative. Some immigrants have a positive experience in acculturating (Berry, 2006). They feel safer and have more social support or enjoy discovering new cultural norms in their host country. Since stress is inevitable in the acculturation process, some immigrants may become benign to their acculturative stress and see their acculturative stressors as opportunities for change (Berry et al., 1987). The positive experiences could lessen the impact of their acculturative stress. As such, these individuals have more ability to cope with

acculturative stress since it is moderate. Researchers argue that immigrants' positivity dissipates over time due to inevitable perceived discrimination, socioeconomic issues, and cultural conflicts (Berry, 2006). Immigrants heightened acculturative stress is inevitable (Berry, 2006).

Although acculturative stress is inevitable in the acculturation process, an individual's assessment of acculturative stressors has a significant impact on whether the outcome is positive or negative (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2006). If the immigrant is evaluating and appraising the acculturative stressor as challenging or problematic, they will have a heightened level of acculturative stress (Berry, 2006). Consequently, the negative appraisal creates difficulty for the immigrant to acculturate to the dominant host culture and assimilate, which leads to high levels of acculturative stress (Berry, 2017, 2006). Some immigrants see the dominant Black culture negatively since it occupies the lowest socioeconomic strata (Joseph et al., 2013; Rudmin, 2003). Therefore, the downward mobility post-migration is associated with high acculturative stress for this population (Rong & Fitchett, 2008).

When an immigrant evaluates and appraises the acculturative stressor positively as an opportunity or not problematic, then their acculturative stress is minimal (Berry, 2006). Subsequently, the positivity of their appraisal of the acculturative stressors allows them to go through the adjustment process of adapting to the new dominant host culture smoothly with minimal difficulties (Berry, 2017; 2006; Berry et al., 2006). Some difficulties may still arise in these immigrants' adjustment process (Berry, 2006; Berry et al., 2006). However, the immigrant can efficiently resolve them since they have a

positive outlook on assimilating to the host culture and identity (Berry, 2006; Berry et al., 2006).

Acculturative Stress and Coping Strategies

Furthermore, it is safe to say that outcomes of acculturative stress are probabilistic and not deterministic (Berry et al., 1987). Individuals' acculturative stress coping strategies are influenced by their traits as well as those of their groups (Berry et al., 1987). Some immigrants have a variety of coping mechanisms that let them acculturate successfully with little psychological adjustment (Berry et al., 1987). Contrarily, some immigrants struggle with acculturation because they lack the necessary coping mechanisms (Berry et al., 1987). The most common coping mechanisms employed by immigrants are problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidance-oriented coping (Berry, 2006; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Additionally, immigrants tend to use passive or active coping strategies (Berry, 2017; 2006). The active coping strategy (similar to problem-focused coping) allows the immigrant to adapt to the host culture smoother than the passive strategy. The active strategy is similar to the problem-focus because it makes the immigrants face and adjust to the acculturative stressor by making adaptive adjustments (Berry, 2006). However, regardless of whether the immigrant utilizes active or passive coping strategies, the success depends on the members of the dominant host culture's positive attitudes and willingness to accept the immigrant group members (Berry, 2017; 2006). If African Americans are reluctant to accept the Black Caribbean immigrants into their culture and

identity, no matter what coping strategy the immigrants utilize, they will face increased acculturative stress that could cause adverse outcomes (Berry, 2006).

Acculturative Stress Outcomes

High acculturative stress, which exceeds the immigrant's coping abilities, makes the individual more susceptible to mental health challenges (Berry, 2006; Ying & Han, 2008). Acculturative stress has been associated with identity uncertainty, psychological symptoms, anxiety, sadness, marginalization, and alienation (Berry et al., 1987; Berry & Sam, 1997; Lechunga & Fernandez, 2011). Factors such as the immigrant's age, financial achievements, social position before migrating, mobility after migration, cognitive style, and level of engagement with the dominant culture all have a role in high acculturative stress, which can cause psychological issues (Berry et al., 1987).

Adaptation

Adaptation is the last stage in the acculturative stress theory. It entails the immigrant making stable changes and settling down to a more advantageous or less favorable existence when the two cultures (host and original culture and identities) acquire sustained contact (Berry, 2006; Berry & Sam, 1997). It is essential to acknowledge that adaptation can be positive or negative (Berry, 2006; Berry & Sam, 1997). Therefore, adaptation does not always mean that the immigrants found an improved fit during their acculturation process, which reduces their acculturative stress (Berry, 2006; Berry & Sam, 1997). Adaptation lies between psychological and societal adjustments (Berry, 2006; Ward & Chang, 1997). Learning the host culture is necessary

for adaptation, and maintaining that adaptation depends on the ethnic group, specific people, and environment (Berry, 2006).

The psychological adaptation aspect involves the immigrant's mental and physical state (Berry, 2006). By contrast, sociocultural adaptation pertains to the extent to which the immigrant manages life after adapting to the new host culture (Berry, 2006).

Problems in the psychological area tend to dissipate over time with increased social support and the occurrence of life-changing events. Sociocultural adaptation linearly improves over time when the immigrants' cultural knowledge increases and cross-cultural contact (Berry, 2006). However, both psychological and sociocultural are based on economic adaptation (Berry et al., 1987; Berry et al., 2006). Economic adaptations are associated with variables such as the immigrants' motivation, perception of their deprivation, and loss of original identity status (Berry, 2006). Therefore, A Black Caribbean immigrant will have a better chance of assimilating into the African American culture if they regard the loss of their identity status as a big improvement from being the dominant to the minority post-migration (Berry et al., 1987; Berry & Sam, 1997). However, if the Black Caribbean immigrant views the loss of identity status negatively, they will have difficulties in the adaptation process (Berry et al., 1987; Berry & Sam, 1997).

Ultimately, the acculturative stress theory was the best tool for illustrating how Black Caribbean immigrants appraise and cope with the unavoidable acculturative stresses connected with their transition from being dominant to the minority. The acculturative stress theory also provided a greater understanding of how this population's

loss of identity status influences their adaptation to the dominant culture. Clinicians who work with this population will increase their multicultural competencies by learning about the Black Caribbean immigrants' culture transition experience, stressors, and potential psychological distress caused by acculturative stress. More details on the Acculturative Stress Theory's potential to offer a theoretical framework to address the study's research issue are provided in the next section.

Literature Review

Historical Context

Black Caribbeans and African Americans have many similarities because of their African ancestral background (Thornton et al., 2017). African Americans and Black Caribbeans' ancestors were trafficked in the transatlantic African slave trade in the mid-16th century (Davis, 2020; Mendisco et al., 2015; Thornton et al., 2017). Commonalities between these two ethnic groups' ancestral backgrounds cause them to have many similarities (Thornton et al., 2017; Venner & Welfare, 2019). Individuals in the Black Caribbean and African American ethnic groups share physical features because of their African enslaved ancestors (Venner & Welfare, 2019). The physical attributes these two ethnic groups share sometimes bond them and create a sense of closeness (Thornton et al., 2017). Even though individuals in these ethnic groups share similarities, there are also distinctive differences in their historical background, which separates their experiences in the U.S. (Thornton et al., 2017)

African Americans and Black Caribbeans experience acculturation in the U.S. (Joseph et al., 2014). However, there are distinctive differences in how these groups

experience acculturation (Dodoo, 1999; Thelamour, 2017). Black Caribbean immigrants enter the country voluntarily through migration, whereas African Americans enter involuntarily through the slave trade (Hacker, 2020; Hirschman, 2014). Immigrants who voluntarily enter their host country have less difficulty acculturating to their new cultural identity and tend to have a more positive outlook on the assimilation process than those who enter involuntarily (Berry, 2006; Berry et al., 1987; Bhurga & Becker, 2005; Kuo, 2014). Therefore, when immigrants voluntarily attempt to assimilate into a culture with involuntary entry, they encounter a conflict that increases acculturative stress (Berry, 2006, 1992; Kuo, 2014). As such, the differences between Black Caribbeans and African American historical backgrounds could exacerbate the cultural identity transition process for the immigrants.

Black Caribbean Immigrant History

Black Caribbean immigrants are individuals who migrate to another country from the Caribbean islands (Venner & Welfare, 2019). Black Caribbean immigrants' culture was highly influenced by the indigenous Indian Tribes who first inhabited the Caribbean Islands (Mendisco et al., 2015). The Taínos occupied the Greater Antilles (large Caribbean islands), and the Arawaks occupied the Lesser Antilles (small Caribbean islands) (Mendisco et al., 2015). However, the Indian tribes weren't the only ones who influenced the culture and identity of the Caribbean descents (Archibald, 2011; Darity, 1997; Williams, 1984).

The Spaniards and European colonization and the transatlantic slave trade also significantly influenced the identity and culture of Caribbean descent (Darity, 1997;

Williams, 1984). Approximately six million enslaved Black Africans were sold into the slave trade in the Caribbean islands to labor on sugar plantations owned by European and Spanish colonists (Augier & Gordon, 1977). Subsequently, their enslaved African ancestry also influenced Caribbean descent's culture and identity (Augier & Gordon, 1977; Mendisco et al., 2015). Hence, some Black Caribbean individuals are commonly called Blacks/Afro Caribbean. Following the abolition of slavery, enslaved Africans relocated to the vast bulk of Caribbean islands, contributing to the islands' substantial Black population (Archibald, 2011; Augier & Gordon, 1962; Mendisco et al., 2015).

Consequentially, most Caribbean islands have a predominantly Black population with little diversity (Archibald, 2011; Augier & Gordon, 1977; Venner & Hunter, 2014). The British governed most English-speaking Black Caribbean islands who are predominantly Black (Augier & Gordon, 1977). Therefore, Black Caribbean immigrants stood the risk of losing their identity status when intergovernmental agreements between the British and the United States permitted people from British colonies in the islands to immigrate to a more diversified residents in the United States (Augier & Gordon, 1977). Ultimately, the diversified population in the host country caused Black Caribbean immigrants to experience culture transitioning from their dominant identity status held in their home countries to a minority post-migration.

African American History

Many different races, ethnicities, and civilizations in America have assimilated and contributed to shaping the country's distinctive Western culture (Ghorbani, 2011; Logan, 2019; Maeder & McManus, 2022, Painter, 2007). Black Caribbean immigrants

entered the nation voluntarily under the United States Immigration Act, while others arrived involuntarily through the slave trade (African American culture). Many of these immigrants made significant contributions to America's diversity (Ghorbani, 2011; Logan, 2019; Maeder & McManus, 2022). African Americans are individuals who are U.S.-born citizens who have African ancestral origins (Davis, 2020). Even though African Americans are U.S.-born, they are the only ethnic group whose population started with the slave trade in America (Hacker, 2020).

During the 17th and 18th centuries, White settlers in the United States turned to buying and enslaving Black Africans because they were cheaper than the poor European indentured servitudes (Davis, 2020; Hacker, 2020; Painter, 2007). The enslaved people were bought to work in the tobacco and cotton plantations throughout the U.S. (Davis, 2020; Painter, 2007). However, enslaved Blacks weren't treated fairly (Davis, 2020; Hacker, 2020; Painter, 2007). Enslavers utilized harsh restrictive codes to control enslaved Black people, severely limiting their rights (Davis, 2020; Hacker, 2020, Painter, 2007). Enslaved Black people in America were not allowed to attain education or live freely (Davis, 2020; Hacker, 2020; Painter, 2007).

Consequently, the restrictions hindered their socioeconomic achievements in the U.S., which created a lot of hardship, discrimination, and inequality for African Americans (Davis, 2020; Hacker, 2020; Konkel, 2015). Even after slavery was abolished with the 13th amendment in 1865, African Americans still had to fight for equality (Davis, 2020; Hacker, 2020). After slavery was abolished, African Americans had to endure segregation and the Civil Rights Movement with hopes of one day becoming

equal with their White peers (Hacker, 2020; Painter, 2007). However, there is still a disparity between African Americans' socioeconomic status and their White counterparts because of racial discrimination (Alba, 2018; Konkel, 2015; Painter, 2007). White Americans continue to make up the majority in the U.S. (Alba, 2018; Konkel, 2015). Ultimately, involuntary enslavement and severe dehumanized and uncultured treatment led African Americans to become minorities (Alba, 2018; Konkel, 2015).

Furthermore, since America's culture is built on assimilation, the Black immigrants were automatically expected to adapt to the African American culture when they entered the country because that is the dominant Black culture in the land (Dodoo, 1999; Freeman, 2002; Ghorbani, 2011; Logan, 2019; Maeder & McManus, 2022). However, this notion poses a challenge for Black Caribbean immigrants because when they enter the U.S., they are forced to transition from dominant to a minority because of the assimilation culture in their host country (Dodoo, 1999; Thelamour, 2017; Thorton et al., 2017). Consequently, the differences between the two ethnic groups' historical backgrounds creates many challenges for Black Caribbean immigrants. Although research on the historical origins of Black Caribbean immigrants and African Americans has risen, there is little data on the discrepancy in identity status. Black Caribbean immigrants' experiences culture transitioning from dominant to minority was examined in this study.

Black Caribbean Immigrants in the U.S.

Black Caribbean natives arrived in the U.S. in the early 20th century under an immigration employment program that was a requirement of the conditions of the

intergovernmental agreement between the United States and the British (Augier & Gordon, 1962; Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Marsella, 2009; Painter, 2007). Under the employment program, Caribbean descent voluntarily worked in the agriculture industry as laborers (Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Hirschman, 2014; Tormala & Deaux, 2006; Zong et al., 2019). However, the United States' newfound immigration policy didn't allow many immigrants to migrate under the employment program (Amussen, 2007; Bryce-Laporte, 1972). The United States didn't change its immigration strategy until the 1960s, when it made a concerted effort to attract more Caribbean immigrants from British colonies (Amussen, 2007; Painter, 2007). Following the abolition of slavery, the Immigration Act was amended, and as a result, the population of Black Caribbean immigrants increased (Amussen, 2007; Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Painter, 2007).

Moreover, unlike the previous small group of Caribbean descent who migrated under the initial employment immigration program, the larger groups who entered in the 1960s were skilled professionals, not agriculture laborers (Amussen, 2007; Zong et al., 2019). In addition, removing the restrictions from the immigration policy and allowing individuals with high socioeconomic achievement entry created incentives and opportunities for more Black Caribbean immigrants to enter the country (Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Zong et al., 2019). However, the United States has a racial construct, and it is common for individuals to be identified by the color of their skin (Benson, 2000; Iceland & Ludwig-Dehm, 2019; Rong & Fitchett, 2008).

In America, an individual's social standing is decided by their complexions (Alba, 2018; Benson, 2000; Konkel, 2015; Rong & Fitchett, 2008). Whites are considered the

majority, and Blacks are minorities (Alba, 2018; Iceland & Ludwig-Dehm, 2019). In addition, immigrants who have a White complexion tend to get treated better than Blacks regardless of their achievements (Abbott, 2010; Dhillon-Jamerson, 2018; Reece, 2019). This is a foreign concept for the Black Caribbean since they are accustomed to climbing the social ladder in their home countries based on achievements and not physical attributes (Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Waters, 1999). Consequentially, despite previous achievements in their home country, many Black Caribbean immigrants feel devalued based on physical features (Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Venner & Welfare, 2014). Therefore, the disparity and feelings of being downgraded from being pushed to the bottom of the social ladder can create challenges that could potentially affect the Black Caribbean immigrant's culture transitioning from dominant to a minority (Sowell, 1979; Waters, 1999). However, this is a notion that was yet to be explored.

Racial Consolidation: Black Caribbean Immigrants and African Americans

In conjunction to the assimilation culture, society often mistakes African Americans and English-speaking Black Caribbean immigrant groups because of similarities in their physical features (Venner & Welfare, 2019). The similarity in physical features derives from both ethnic groups being a part of the African diaspora (Rong & Fitchett, 2008). African Americans and English-speaking Black Caribbean have African ancestral backgrounds (Joseph et al., 2013; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Smith, 2020).

Even though fundamental differences distinguish the ethnic groups, society still consolidates the two cultural groups. Due to the substantial disparities between Black

Americans of African descent and Black Caribbean immigrants that society ignores, scholars are divided on their compatibility (Gordon & Anderson, 1999; Pierre, 2004; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017; Thorton et al., 2017). However, scholars' concerns are ignored because the consolidation of the two ethnic groups is still perpetuated in many ways. Consequently, the merger between the two cultures poses many challenges to Black Caribbean immigrants' acculturation and identity transition process.

U.S. Census Role in Racial Consolidation

The U.S. census also played a role in merging the two ethnic groups. All Black populations (e.g., Africans, African Americans, Afro-Latino, and Black Caribbean immigrants) are only allowed to self-identify as Black (represented by one category in the census) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). Consequently, this makes it difficult for the U.S. Census Bureau to track different distinctive Black populations (Waters et al., 2014). Blacks or African Americans are defined as individuals who have Black African ancestral origins (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). That definition is broad and could fit different groups in the African diaspora (Tamir, 2021). Since African Americans and Black Caribbean immigrants have origins in Africa, both groups have no choice but to select Blacks in the census questionnaire (Davis, 2020; Jackson, 2003). Consequently, the two ethnic communities' racial diversity was consolidated.

Ultimately, the racial consolidation doesn't acknowledge the differences between the two race/ethnic groups' immigration experiences, cultural identities, and historical backgrounds (Venner & Welfare, 2019; Waters, 1999). Despite having African origin and being slaves, Black Caribbean immigrant groups and African Americans experienced the

slave trade networks in a variety of ways that affected their race, worldviews, beliefs, culture, and daily lives (Jackson, 2003; Waters, 1999). Black Caribbean immigrants and African Americans have different historical contexts, life experiences, social statuses, and acculturation processes (Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017; Venner & Welfare, 2014). Consequently, the consolidation complicates the Black Caribbean acculturation and identity status transition processes (Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017).

African American and Black Caribbean Immigrant Population Statistics

Overtime, the Black Caribbean immigrant population, raised significantly (Batalova et al., 2020). Approximately 60% of Caribbean immigrants who migrate worldwide reside in the United States (Lorenzi & Batalova, 2022; World Population Review, 2022). Throughout the years, Black Caribbean immigrant populations have rapidly increased in the country (Lorenzi & Batalova, 2022). With the exclusion of the Latinx population, the Black Caribbean population has risen from 2.7 million in 2013 to approximately 13.4 million in 2019 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

Furthermore, the percentage of Black immigrants in the United States who are from the Caribbean is around 46%. (Tamir & Anderson, 2022). Subsequently, making the Caribbean the birthplace of most Black immigrants (Tamir & Anderson, 2022). Approximately 90% of Caribbean immigrants—outside of those from Cuba and the Dominican Republic—self-identify as Black (Tamir & Anderson, 2022). The majority of self-identified Black Caribbean immigrants resides in New York City and Miami regions (Tamir & Anderson, 2022).

From 2010 to 2020, the percentage of African Americans and other Black people increased from 38.9% to 41.1 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). As such, between 2010 and 2020, the African American/Black population increased by 5.6%. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). In 2020, 12.4% of the United States population was African American, a decrease from 12.6% in 2010 (US Census Bureau, 2021). However, throughout the years, the Black population has diversified (Tamir, 2021). Recently, instead of differentiating African Americans from Black immigrants, the United States consolidated the racial/ethnic groups by identifying them as Blacks and not by their race/ethnicity (Tamir, 2021).

The African American population increased to an estimated 46.9 million, coupled with immigrants who identified as Blacks, making up 14.2% of the overall population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). This percentage will significantly climb since minorities in the United States, notably Black Caribbean immigrants, are expected to increase significantly in the future (Hickling & Andersen, 2015; Paisley, 2012). The number of difficulties faced by Black people in America has not decreased despite the population's increase. Therefore, after arriving in the United States, Black Caribbean immigrants faced a few difficulties due to the racial convergence between African Americans and them. Ultimately, the racial merger between Black Caribbean immigrants and African Americans does not consider issues such as socioeconomic status, culture transition from dominant to minority identity status, or immigration struggles (Ifatunji, 2016; Venner & Welfare, 2019).

Black Caribbean Immigrants and African American Socioeconomic Status

In the Black Caribbean culture, economic prosperity is paramount (Rong & Fitchett, 2008). Black Caribbean immigrants are considered a model minority group because of their achievements in America (Ifatunji, 2016; Jones, 2021; Sowell, 1979). The model minority label was given to Black Caribbean immigrants because they were perceived to outperform and achieve more success than other Black minorities, such as African Americans (Ifatunji, 2016; Sowell, 1979). There was a divide between African Americans and Black Caribbean immigrants because the immigrants had a higher employment rate of 82% than the American-born (Doodoo, 1999).

In addition, Black Caribbean immigrants out earn African Americans (Manuel et al. 2012). The Black Caribbean immigrants' median annual income is \$53,000, while the Black United States born have a median yearly income is \$34,000 (Manuel et al. 2012). However, scholars argue that Black Caribbean outperforms African Americans only because they are from English-speaking countries and have more transferrable soft and hard skills (Ifatunji, 2016; James, 2002, Model, 2002). Black Caribbean immigrants being called a model minority group is more of immigrant success, not Black success (Model, 2008). Some scholars believe that Black Caribbean immigrants' socioeconomic status before migrating played a pivotal role in becoming a model minority (Model, 2008).

Additionally, some Black Caribbean immigrants experience downward assimilation that significantly affects their socioeconomic achievement (Akresh, 2006; Model, 2008). Downward assimilation occurs when individuals experience low social

stratification and lose their original economic position into a lower class in their host country due to the economic hierarchy structure and racial discrimination (Le, 2020). The United States does not always recognize education and occupational experience attained in the Caribbean (Akresh, 2006; Model, 2008). Therefore, many Black Caribbean immigrants with high socioeconomic status in the islands have to downgrade post-migration because of racial consolidation (Mouzon et al., 2019). Approximately 51% of Black Caribbean immigrants are forced to devalue their socioeconomic status after migrating to the United States because of racial consolidation (Akresh, 2006; Mouzon et al., 2019; Model, 2008). Additionally, 75% of Black Caribbean immigrants with high-paying professional jobs before migrating are employed in low-level positions than they possessed before migrating to the United States (Akresh, 2006).

Furthermore, many Black Caribbeans tend to settle in Black American communities to live around others who look like them (Model 1991; Tesfai, 2019; Warner, 2012). Consequently, this causes the Black Caribbean immigrants to experience comparable socioeconomic outcomes as African Americans, which are plagued with inequality, oppression, and discrimination (Kalmijin, 1996; Manuel et al., 2012). In addition, the racial consolidation caused hardship for Black Caribbean immigrants who had a higher socioeconomic status before the racial merger (Rong & Fitchett, 2008). The difficulties many Black Caribbeans experiences after the racial consolidation caused them to reject the African American race (Park & Iceland, 2011; Rong & Fitchett, 2008). In contrast, African Americans also resent Black Caribbean immigrants for their label of prestige and them having higher socioeconomic status (Joseph et al., 2014; Kalmijin,

1996; Manuel et al., 2012; Park & Iceland, 2011; Rong & Fitchett, 2008). Ultimately, the resentment caused racial segregation among the two consolidated groups.

Racial Segregation

There is still a lot of racial segregation in the African diaspora, despite research showing that African Americans and Black Caribbean immigrants got along and interacted with each other better than Black African immigrants (Park & Iceland, 2011; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Tesfai, 2019; Thornton et al., 2017). Black immigrants and African Americans were the most segregated groups in the United States (Park & Iceland, 2011; Tesfai, 2019). Black Caribbean immigrants are highly concerned about how society views their Black Caribbean immigrant groups (Joseph et al., 2013). Therefore, since society has negative stereotypes against African Americans, some Black Caribbean immigrants refuse to acculturate (Joseph et al., 2013).

The refusal to accept the African American culture makes Black Caribbean immigrants feel protected from racist stigmatism associated with African Americans (Joseph et al., 2013; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017; Waters, 1999). Additionally, the Black Caribbean immigrants do not want to be identified with African Americans since they had a different experience on the islands than African Americans have in the United States (Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Venner & Welfare, 2014). As aforementioned, Blacks are the majority in the Caribbean (Augier & Gordon, 1977; Venner & Welfare, 2014). Therefore, Black Caribbean immigrants fight to maintain their heritage and separate themselves from African Americans because they never experienced racism, police brutality, discrimination, oppression, or socioeconomic

disadvantages in their home countries as African Americans participate in the United States (Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Rong & Fitchett, 2003; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017; Venner & Welfare, 2019). Ultimately, the Black Caribbeans refusal to accept the African Americans is based on whether they see the engagement as being beneficial or detrimental to their lives in America (Joseph et al., 2013).

Furthermore, the Black Caribbean immigrants gained the model minority label, making them look down on African Americans and think they were inferior to them (Ifatunji 2016: Lee, 1996). Hence, the label of being a model minority given to Black Caribbean immigrants only perpetuated conflict among the two Black populations because the label insinuated that African Americans are an unsuccessful group (Lee, 1996; Jones, 2021). Therefore, their prestigious title has threatened African Americans, continuously experiencing economic setbacks in the United States because of slavery, segregation, oppression, discrimination, and injustice (Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Sowell, 1979). The heart of the conflict between the two ethnic groups is the fear of the immigrants taking away the limited employment opportunities because of their higher socioeconomic status (Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Tesfai, 2020). Consequently, African Americans resent and reject the Black Caribbean immigrants, even the ones who have worked hard to assimilate into the African American culture, to feel like an insider instead of a foreigner (Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Jones, 2021; Joseph et al., 2013).

Additionally, African Americans view Black Caribbean immigrants' high socioeconomic achievement as being brainwashed during colonization, creating animosity among the two groups (Ifatunji, 2016; Jackson & Cothran, 2003). Black

Caribbean immigrants adjust more to the American education system and White middle-class, which increases their employment and earning potential (Ifatunji, 2016; Jackson & Cothran, 2003). However, African Americans view Black Caribbean immigrants' adjustment as being brainwashed by White European colonizers, which perpetuates the immigrants' hatred, disappointment, and rejection (Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Tesfai, 2019; Thornton et al., 2017). Ultimately, rejection by the culture that society identifies them as can negatively impact Black Caribbean immigrants' assimilation (Berry et al., 1987).

Existing studies identified various reasons why the two ethnic groups experience racial segregation. However, there is limited studies on the root cause of the segregation experienced between the two ethnic groups. One potential disconnect between the two Black groups is the different experiences of identity status (Rong & Fitchett, 2003). Black Caribbean immigrants experienced both ends of the social ladder (dominant in their home country and minority in their host country). Therefore, they have an advantage over the African Americans who only experienced being minorities. Consequently, this can cause a disconnect between the ethnic group's experiences. As such, scholars need to understand the culture transition Black Caribbean immigrants experience to assess racial segregation issues better.

Black Caribbean Immigrant Acculturation Process

Acculturation is the process through which a person adjusts to another different group's cultural norms, practices, and values (Berry et al., 1987). African Americans serve as the dominant host culture for Black immigrants (Ferguson et al., 2012; Freeman,

2002; Joseph et al., 2013). During acculturation, Black Caribbean immigrants are expected to adapt to the dominant African American cultural norms (Berry, 2006; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017). However, the Black Caribbean immigrants' acculturation is not unidimensional as one would hope (Ferguson & Bornstein, 2014). The Black Caribbean immigrant acculturation process is complex (Ferguson & Bornstein, 2014). Some studies have found that Black Caribbean immigrants utilize different strategies in the acculturation process (Ferguson & Bornstein, 2014; Guy, 2001; Joseph et al., 2013; Schwartz et al., 2010; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017).

Some Black Caribbean immigrants use the assimilation strategy described in Berry's acculturation model (Ferguson & Bornstein, 2014). Black Caribbean immigrants' acculturation process is based on public perception (Joseph et al., 2013). Therefore, if the public views African Americans favorably (e.g., African American cultural contributions to the United States, which are streamlined throughout the world), Black Caribbean immigrants will assimilate to the dominant culture (Joseph et al., 2013). By contrast, if the public views African American culture as problematic, which causes discrimination, oppression, inequality, and racism for Black American-born individuals, then those Black Caribbean immigrants will most likely utilize the separation strategy (Ferguson et al., 2012; Joseph et al., 2013). Therefore, to circumvent the negative stereotypes associated with African American culture, the immigrants prefer to retain their native culture, reject the dominant Black culture post-migration, and retain their home culture (Jones, 2021; Joseph et al., 2013).

Due to racial similarities, the negative problematic situations that African Americans face might overlap with those that Black Caribbean immigrants endure (Ferguson & Bornstein, 2012; Freeman, 2002; Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Thornton et al., 2017; Thelamour, 2017). Discrimination is multifaceted in Black Caribbean immigrants' acculturation process (Archibald & Rhodd, 2013; Ferguson et al., 2012; Guy, 2001; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017). One facet can lead to the Black Caribbean immigrant utilizing the integration strategy (Freeman, 2002; Ferguson & Bornstein, 2012; Guy, 2001). Black Caribbean immigrants and African Americans experience indistinguishable discrimination because of racial similarities (Sylvers et al., 2022; Taylor et al., 2019). The discrimination both groups experience can serve as commonalities that could motivate the Black Caribbean immigrant to integrate the African American culture with their original culture (Ferguson & Bornstein, 2012; Freeman, 2002; Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Thornton et al., 2017; Thelamour, 2017). Therefore, in hopes of retaining their culture, the immigrant may see it beneficial to utilize integration because they also feel the closeness to the African Americans due to shared experiences (Freeman, 2002, Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017; Waters, 1992).

Integration is a popular strategy used by Black Caribbean immigrants (Ferguson et al., 2012; Venner & Welfare, 2014; Waters, 1994). 70% of Jamaican Black Caribbean immigrant's favor integration over other strategies (Ferguson et al., 2012; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017). Jamaicans are the largest group of Black Caribbean immigrants in the U.S. (Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Thornton et al., 2013). Using an integration method, Black

Caribbean immigrants can adapt to African American society while preserving their own culture (Berry, 2006).

Additionally, second and later generations of Black Caribbean immigrants tend to utilize the integration acculturation strategy more than first-generation Black Caribbean immigrants (Ferguson & Bornstein, 2012; Freeman, 2002; Peña-Sullivan, 2020). The longer Black Caribbean immigrants reside in the country, their chances are increased of assimilating into the dominant Black culture and preserving their own culture (Archibald & Rhodd, 2013). Using the integration strategy has minor psychological adverse effects (Nguyuen et al., 2007; Schmitz & Schmitz, 2022). Even though integration selection is common among Black Caribbean immigrants, some individuals feel forced to use other strategies (Waters, 1999). Another facet of discrimination can lead to marginalization if the Black Caribbean immigrants want to avoid the bias altogether.

When a Black Caribbean immigrant rejects both dominant and native culture, marginalization results (Berry et al., 1987; Berry & Sam, 2006). The Black Caribbean immigrants will select this strategy if they do not believe it will be beneficial to retain or acculturate to either culture. Black Caribbean immigrants experience discrimination from multiple angles (Thelmour & Johnson, 2017). Black Caribbean immigrants are subjected to discrimination that stems from prevalent anti-immigration sentiments in the United States (Enns & Jardina, 2021; Kende et al., 2022). These immigrants also experience racial discrimination associated with their dominant culture.

Consequently, the discrimination associated with African Americans, along with discrimination experienced by anti-immigrant sentiments in the United States, the

immigrants can prefer to select the marginalization strategy instead of any other strategy (Freeman, 2002; Jackson & Cothran, 2003). As such, the Black Caribbean immigrants who use the marginalization acculturation strategy reject the African American culture to avoid experiencing their struggles of discrimination, stereotypes, and low socioeconomic status (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2006; Freeman, 2002; Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Rong & Fitchett, 2008). However, they don't retain their native culture; they also reject their culture of origin to avoid anti-immigrant sentiments associated with being a foreigner (Berry et al., 1987). This tactic is linked with heightened acculturative stress because Black Caribbean immigrants will find it difficult to establish a culture distinct from their native or host culture (Berry, 2006).

Overall, this population's individuals must utilize various acculturation strategies because various factors complicate their process (Thelamour & Johnson, 2017). Even though Black Caribbean immigrants and African American cultures can coexist successfully, different aspects complicate their relationship, leading to acculturation and adaptation difficulties (Gordon & Anderson, 1999; Thorton et al., 2017). Ultimately, the factors that complicate the relationship between the two ethnic cultures serve as deciding elements of the acculturation strategy the immigrants will utilize. Since Black Caribbean immigrants enter the country voluntarily, African Americans can view Black Caribbean immigrants as having an easy time because entry to the country was a personal choice, they did not have the luxury of having (Thelamour & Johnson, 2017). Consequently, the cultural incompatibility issue can lead members of the African American group to reject the Black Caribbean immigrants (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2003; Berry, 2006). The

rejection from the dominant culture is considered as pressure against acculturation (Berry et al., 1987). Pressures against acculturation can influence Black Caribbean immigrants to select separation or marginalization strategies (Berry et al., 1987; Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Joseph et al., 2013; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017). African Americans face pressure against acculturation, which effectively heightens acculturative stress (Berry, 2006). The pressures against acculturation can also complicate the Black Caribbean immigrants' identity status transition.

The multifaceted nature of the Black Caribbean immigrants, as demonstrated through the literature, creates many complex difficulties for this population. The rejection from the dominant culture affects their acculturation process and how these individuals perceive their identity status loss (Berry et al., 1987). However, no scholars explored how this can also affect their identity status transition. Acculturation is easier to be attained when it requires less culture shedding or the creation of serious culture conflict (Berry, 2006). Serious conflict usually arises during acculturation when individuals have to transition their identities (Berry, 2006). Therefore, scholars need to delve into the experiences of Black Caribbean culture transition, especially since immigrants can have increased acculturative stress from this process (Berry, 2006).

Black Caribbean Immigrants and Acculturative Stress

Acculturative stress is the psychological response individuals experience during the acculturation, adaptation, and transition process due to intercultural contact in their host country (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2006). Acculturative stress usually occurs when immigrants are undergoing difficulty in the acculturative process (Berry, 1987, 2006).

Fear, discrimination, culture shock, guilt, and homesickness are some indicators of acculturative stress (Erving, 2022; Ndumu, 2019). Acculturative stress is common among Black Caribbean immigrants (Erving, 2022). Most individuals in the Black Caribbean population tend to try to retain their cultural beliefs, traditions desperately, and norms after migration instead of integrating the dominant African American culture, which consequently increases their acculturative stress levels (Da Silva et al., 2017; Fanfan & Stacciarini, 2020; Henriquez & Lopez, 2021; Jackson and Cothran, 2003).

Intersectionality and Acculturative Stress

Black Caribbean immigrants have various intersectionality that increases their chances of acculturative stress (Dixon, 2019; Fanfan & Stacciarini, 2020; Ndumu, 2019). Black Caribbean immigrants experience intersectionality between their cultural identities and acculturation stressors, making them more susceptible to acculturative stress than other immigrants (Dixon, 2019; Erving, 2022; Fanfan & Stacciarini, 2020; Ndumu, 2019). Since Black Caribbean immigrants' acculturation process after migration involves painful, intense emotional feelings attached to their cultural identity (e.g., social group) transition, which ultimately alters their lives, they usually experience increased levels of stress which leads to high acculturative stress (Dixon, 2019; Erving, 2022). Studies have found that it is inevitable for Black Caribbean immigrants to experience heightened acculturative stress since their acculturation process is multifaceted (Dixon, 2019). Black Caribbean immigrants experience Black Caribbean Immigrants experience xenophobia (anti-immigrant discrimination) and racism (associated with African Americans) (Rong

& Fitchett, 2008; Hordge-Freeman & Veras, 2020). These are high-stress scenarios that can harm Black Caribbean immigrants and lead to increased levels of acculturative stress.

Immigrants suffer an intersectionality between downward assimilation and cultural rejection from their receiving country. Black Caribbean immigrants place high importance on economic prosperity. Hence, economic prosperity is one of the main reasons this population migrates to developed countries such as the United States. Therefore, downward assimilation that causes a downgrade of social identity will increase acculturative stress for this population (Akresh, 2006; Manuel et al., 2012; Waters, 1999). In addition, some individuals in the African American community usually reject Black Caribbean immigrants because of cultural differences (Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Park & Iceland, 2011; Tesfai, 2019; Thornton et al., 2017).

Consequently, Black Caribbean immigrants tend to have heightened acculturative stress when they choose to assimilate (Berry, 2006). Caribbean immigrants who experience rejection from the dominant host community separate themselves from their culture of origin (McIntosh, 2008). In addition, those with compatibility issues that hinder assimilation to the host cultural identity demonstrate higher levels of acculturative stress because they feel isolated and alienated (McIntosh, 2008). Even though Black Caribbean immigrants experience an exponential amount of stress in the acculturation process, how they cope with these stressors is the ultimate determinant factor of the outcome (Berry, 2006).

Coping Strategies and Acculturative Stress

Even though acculturative stress is inevitable for Black Caribbean immigrants, coping strategies play a significant role in the outcome (Berry, 2006). Black Caribbean immigrants tend to use religion as a stress-coping strategy to deal with various stressors (including acculturative stressors) (Mantovani et al., 2017; Taylor et al., 2021). Black Caribbean immigrants usually utilize prayer and rely on God to cope with stressors (Mantovani et al., 2017; Taylor et al., 2021). Religion is an emotion-focused coping strategy (Agbaria & Abu-Mokh, 2022). Emotion-focused coping allows immigrants to manage acculturative stressors appropriately, potentially decreasing acculturative stress levels (Berry, 2006). Black Caribbean immigrant's preferred coping strategy could become advantageous in combatting the adverse effects associated with acculturative stress (Berry, 2006). However, not all Black Caribbean immigrants utilize religious coping strategies (Mantovani et al., 2017; Taylor et al., 2021). Increased acculturative stress that is beyond the immigrant's control might make it difficult for them to adopt religious coping methods (Mantovani et al., 2017; Taylor et al., 2021). Ultimately, the increased acculturative stress, the immigrant may have a negative acculturation outcome (Taylor et al., 2021).

Psychological illnesses have been connected to acculturative stress (Berry et al., 1987). Due to immigration issues, acculturative stress, intersectionality, and changes in cultural identity, Black Caribbeans living in Western countries are more susceptible to mental illness than Whites (Bolles, 2000; Shekunov, 2016). Poor adaptation, excessive acculturative stressors, poor coping mechanisms, incompatible cultural identities, and

poor economic adaptation increase immigrants' risk of mental illness in the acculturation process (Berry, 2006). Since economic adaptation involves how well the immigrant perceives losing their identity, scholars must examine the Caribbean immigrant's identity status transition. Studies need to explore the experience of Black Caribbean immigrants' cultural identity regarding their identity status transition, especially knowing that it is one of the challenges which increases the chances of poor mental health for this population due to high acculturative stress (Berry et al., 1987).

Identity Transition Overview

Throughout life, human beings experience many different transitions. We go through developmental, personal, academic, and professional changes. Some individuals excel in their transitions and gain healthy outcomes, while others struggle during the process (Foner, 2018). Consequently, when these individuals struggle, they have identity confusion (Carbajal, 2020; Castro et al., 2010; Han, 2020). Identity transition works similarly for immigrants. Identity transition poses the question, "who am I?" As such, it involves the process of individuals altering their current identity and acquiring a new one (Ibarra, 2007; Kupiainen et al., 2004; Sussman, 2012). Identity transition is defined as the process where individuals disengage from their original identity and explore new possible selves, and eventually integrate an alternative identity (Ibarra, 2007; Kupiainen et al., 2004; Sussman, 2012). Identity transitions are triggered by individuals going through a significant life-changing situation that forces them to adapt to a different way of life (Sussman, 2010). For immigrants, identity shift is driven by migration and the demands

of integrating to the dominant culture's identity post-migration (Foner et al., 2018).

Identity transition can be negative or positive (Foner et al., 2018, 2016).

Identity transition is fluid (Benson, 2006; Foner et al., 2018; Warner, 2012).

Immigrants must continuously alter their identities post-migration (Benson, 2006).

Continual experiences and relationships post-migration shape immigrants' identity development in transitioning (Hale & de Abreu, 2010; Lin et al., 2022; Szabo & Ward, 2015). Immigrants must find a balance during this period (Foner et al., 2018; Halle & de Abreu, 2010; Szabo et al., 2016). However, various experiences can sometimes complicate immigrants' identity transition (Hale & de Abreu, 2010; Kaalsen, 2021; Lin et al., 2022; Szabo & Ward, 2015).

Some immigrants' reason for migration plays a significant role in how they perceive the changes experienced during the transition (Benson, 2006; Klaasen, 2021; Warner, 2012). An immigrant who migrates for asylum reasons may have a different experience than one who migrates for social reasons, such as reuniting with loved ones during the identity transition process (Klaasen, 2021; Zettl et al., 2022). Ultimately, the immigrant who migrates for asylum has more trauma and less preparation for the migration than the one who is reunited with loved ones (Klaasen, 2021; Lin et al., 2022). Consequently, individuals who are less prepared for the changes during the identity transition will experience increased acculturative stress because they will most likely struggle with losing primitive aspects of their original identity (Berry, 2006; Berry et al., 2006; Bhugra & Becker, 2005). Ultimately, these types of immigrants may feel forced to denounce the host identity or acquire dual identities (Simon et al., 2013).

The dual identities are two separate identities, one which allows the immigrant to adapt to the host and the other to retain their native identity to avoid stress (Lin et al., 2022; Simon et al., 2013). However, it is crucial to differentiate dual identities from integration (Lin et al., 2022). Immigrants who develop dual identities tend to separate and utilize the two identities for different purposes (Lin et al., 2022; Simon et al., 2013). Many different groups of immigrants prefer to develop a dual identity during the transitioning process instead of only adapting to the host identity (Simon et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2018). The identity development of dual identity among immigrants is due to some individuals in this population not wanting to alter important origin values to adapt to the host identity (Lin et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2018).

Furthermore, identity transition is not one-dimensional (Benson, 2006; Kupiainen et al., 2004). Identity transition involves many factors of uncertainty and drastic alterations that can change the immigrants' life (Foner et al., 2018; Kupiainen et al., 2004). Significant shifts to one's identity exacerbate the transitioning process (Foner et al., 2018). However, the outcome could be negative or positive (Berry et al., 2006). Immigrants can fall into downward or upward assimilation trajectories (Castro et al., 2010). Downward assimilation possesses many drastic changes that are not favorable for immigrants (Castro et al., 2010). Immigrants on the upward trajectory have more advantageous experiences, such as increased socioeconomic achievements (Castro et al., 2010; Le, 2020). Studies have shown that many immigrants with black skin tone tend to experience downward assimilation than their White peers (Castro et al., 2010; Han, 2020).

In addition, scholars have found that Black experiences more difficulties in their identity transition than other immigrant groups (Benson, 2006; Foner et al., 2018; Freeman, 2002; Vickerman, 1999; Waters, 1992). However, the literature on Black immigrant populations' identity transitioning process is limited. Most researchers focus on other immigrant groups (Flum & Buzukashili, 2018; Lin et al., 2022; Mehta & Belk, 1991; Menjivar, 2006) and neglect to expand the studies on Black populations. Researchers must explore this phenomenon, especially for Black immigrants, because several researchers (Benson, 2006; Freeman, 2002; Rong & Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Vickerman, 1999; Waters, 1992) have stated that their race affects their identity transition process.

Additionally, migration to this country is not always linear, and some individuals lose essential aspects of their lives when they transition to becoming American (Iceland & Scopilliti, 2008). Some scholars have mentioned that Black Caribbean immigrants lose their original social status post-migration (Benson, 2006; Joseph et al., 2013; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Tesfai, 2019; Thelamour, 2017; Venner & Hunter, 2014; Waters, 1999; Warner, 2012). However, this phenomenon is an aspect of downward mobility in the identity transition process that is yet to be explored. Little is revealed about the experiences of immigrants transitioning from one identity status to another. Ignoring this phenomenon can be detrimental to the immigrants who experience this phenomenon. As aforementioned, downward mobility makes the immigrant more susceptible to mental health challenges (Berry, 2006). As a result, I examined Black Caribbean immigrants'

experiences culture transitioning from dominant to minority in order to narrow the literature gap.

Black Caribbean Immigrant Identity Transition

Historically, the Black Caribbean population has gone through many different eras that caused them to continuously go through identity transitions (Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Foner, 1998; Painter, 2007). Black Caribbean immigrants' identity transitioning process is complicated (Benson, 2006; Warner, 2012; Waters, 1994,1999). Post-migration to this country, Black Caribbean immigrants must redefine race (Benson, 2006).

Unlike in America, the Black Caribbean islands do not view skin color as being a part of one's race (Benson, 2006; Foner, 1998; Waters, 1999). Race is not defined or reduced to an individual's physical appearance (Benson, 2006). However, in Black Caribbean islands, race is delineated by aspects such as an individual's origin, culture, and language (Benson, 2006). Since Blacks are the majority in the Black Caribbean islands, skin color is not highly important when constructing their definition of race (Benson, 2006; Foner, 1998; Waters, 1999). Race holds a different meaning and consequences in the black Caribbean islands (Benson, 2006; Foner et al., 2018; Model, 2008). Race is not a direct indicator of an individual's socioeconomic achievements or lived experiences in Black Caribbean islands (Benson, 2006).

In contrast, the United States is very racialized. The United States defines race by skin color (Benson, 2006; Waters, 1994, 1999). Subsequently, the country also ranks individuals' race as an essential aspect of their identity (Phinney, 1996; Kupiainen et al.,

2004). Hence, this explains why African Americans automatically became default as the dominant race in Black Caribbean immigrant's acculturation process (Bolles, 2000; Foner, 1998; Warner, 2012; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Watters, 1994, 1999). Differences in the United States and Caribbean definitions create difficulties for Black Caribbean immigrants in their identity transitioning process because they must redefine their construct of race and its importance post-migration (Benson, 2006; Warner, 2012; Waters, 1999). Ultimately, the new concept of race is a barrier in the identity transition process of this immigrant population.

The new notion of race and identity can create issues for Black Caribbean immigrants to successfully adjust to a society they believe are incompatible (Benson, 2006; Warner, 2012; Waters, 1999). The differences in the race definition between the host and home countries influence some Black Caribbean immigrants to develop dual identities in transitioning (Rong & Fitchett, 2008). Most Black Caribbean immigrant students develop a dual identity in transition (Malcolm & Mendoza, 2014). The students explained that they found it challenging to navigate socially in America by possessing one identity (Malcolm & Mendoza, 2014). After the development of the dual identity, Black Caribbean immigrant students explained that they experienced stress and struggled to maintain two separate identities after transition because they felt they had to alter primitive aspects of their original identity (Malcolm & Mendoza, 2014). However, no studies have explored how altering specific primitive aspects such as identity status during transition plays a role in these individuals' stress and struggles after the identity

transition. Therefore, the notion of how identity status loss affects Black Caribbean immigrants needs to be explored.

Additionally, another factor that causes challenges in the Black Caribbean immigrant transitioning is the expectations of the acculturation models (Benson, 2006; Foner, 1998; Warner, 2012). The expectations for Black Caribbean immigrants to adapt to the African American identity pose many challenges (Benson, 2006; Waters, 1999). Even though issues such as downward assimilation threaten Black Caribbean immigrants to transition their identities and adapt to the identities of African Americans, they are still expected to acculturate (Benson, 2006; Le, 2020; Model, 2008; Waters, 1999). Black Caribbean immigrants believe that the challenges African Americans experience with socioeconomic achievement are self-inflicted (Benson, 2006; Model, 2002; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Waters, 1999). Those views result in Black Caribbean immigrants resenting African Americans for their post-migration experience of downward mobility (Benson, 2006; Foner, 1998; Waters, 1999). Those issues could potentially affect the Black Caribbean identity transitioning process. However, there is limited research on Black Caribbean immigrants' identity transitioning process.

The literature on Black Caribbean is sparse. In addition, most scholars only focused on specific areas of the Black Caribbean immigrant's identity transition. Most researchers focus on the development and social aspects of Black Caribbean immigrants' identity transitioning process (Benson, 2006; Foner, 1998; Model, 2002; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Malcolm & Mendoza, 2014; Waters, 1999; Warner, 2012). No studies have explored this population's experiences of transitioning their identity status from dominant

to a minority. As aforementioned, Black Caribbean immigrants are majorities in their home countries. However, this social class affects not only this population's definition of race (Benson, 2006; Foner, 1998; Waters, 1999).

The identity status of being a majority also affects how this population transitions from being dominant to minority post-migration to the United States. An individual's perception of losing status significantly affects their acculturative stress levels (Berry, 2006). If they view the loss negatively, they can experience psychological distress and poor adaptation issues (Berry, 2006). However, more is needed to know about this population of immigrants' identity status transitioning post-migration. As a result, scholars must investigate the experiences of the Black Caribbean's culture transition. Exploration of this phenomenon sheds more insight into this population's experiences (significantly since they are proliferating), increases resources, and improves clinicians' multicultural competencies for working with this population. Improved clinicians' multicultural competencies allow them to retain individuals from this population, provide more effective treatments and increase help-seeking.

Summary

This chapter included a review of literature on Black Caribbean immigrants' experiences involving transitioning their culture from dominant to minority status. Black Caribbean immigrants experience significant challenges that could affect their identity status and transitioning experiences. One of the biggest challenges is expectations that acculturation models place on them. They are expected to assimilate into a culture that makes them lose aspects of their identities. Despite major variations in terms of historical

origins, Black Caribbean immigrants are expected to conform to African American cultures post-migration to the U.S., despite issues such as downward assimilation.

As demonstrated in the literature, adapting to African American culture increases acculturative stress because this population endures several challenges associated with assimilation and consolidation with the dominant host culture. Black Caribbean immigrants experience discrimination, socioeconomic achievement challenges, and rejection associated with the host culture, which heightens their acculturative stress. When immigrants have high acculturative stress and difficulty adapting to host identities, they increase their risk for mental illnesses (Berry, 2006; Berry et al., 2006). Literature on Black Caribbean immigrants' identity transition is sparse. Most scholars who have explored Black Caribbean immigrants' identity transition only research the phenomenon from socioeconomic, social, or developmental perspectives. There is limited information about this topic.

There is an urgent need for researchers to examine experiences involving this topic. In this study, the gap in literature was narrowed by investigating experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants as they transitioned from one identity status to another. Understanding this will boost societal awareness, Black Caribbeans resources and clinicians' multicultural competencies.

Chapter 3 includes a discussion of the research methodology that was employed to address the research question for this study. Research techniques, instrumentation, data analysis strategies, and study trustworthiness are addressed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The Black Caribbean immigrant population has rapidly grown in America (Hirschman, 2014). This immigrant community is a sizable fraction of the Black immigrant population in the country (Tamir & Anderson, 2022). Strenuous effort and dedication post-migration have enabled this immigrant group to earn the distinguished distinction of becoming a model minority group (Ifatunji, 2016; Jones, 2021; Lee, 1996; Sowell, 1979). However, despite fundamental distinctions between Black Caribbean immigrants and African Americans, these two ethnic groups are forced to assimilate because of acculturation culture in the U.S. (Benson, 2006; Dadoo, 1997; Freeman, 2002; Ghorbani, 2011; Logan, 2019; Maeder & McManus, 2022).

Assimilation into the dominant African American culture and racial consolidation poses many challenges for Black Caribbean immigrants postmigration (Benson, 2006; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017; Venner & Welfare, 2014; Waters, 1999). Black Caribbean immigrants have a majority identity status in their home countries (Augier & Gordon, 1977; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Venner & Welfare, 2014). By contrast, African Americans are minorities in America (Alba, 2018; Konkel, 2015). As a result, when Black Caribbean immigrants emigrate to America, assimilation culture and racial consolidation causes these people to undergo an identity status change from dominant to minority status (Benson, 2002; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017; Thorton et al., 2017; Venner & Welfare, 2014; Waters, 1999). However, there is a lack of information about the cultural transition phenomenon that Black

Caribbean immigrant's experience. Researchers must explore this phenomenon to understand Black Caribbean immigrants' experiences post-migration better. I explored experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants involving culture transitioning from dominant to minority status.

This section includes an outline of the IPA research design and reasons for using it to achieve the study's objectives. In this chapter the research question and definitions of key terms are reiterated. This chapter also includes a discussion of my role, followed by a description of the methodology. This includes information on how participants are chosen, data gathering instrumentation, data collection protocols, data analysis plan, and trustworthiness issues. Chapter 3 concludes with a summary and transition to Chapter 4.

Research Design and Rationale

Research Question

One of the most important components of a study is the research question. The research question serves as the study's foundation. The research question is used to address a specific problem through data analysis and interpretation (Creswell, 2018). One unexplored area in research is the identity status transitioning experiences of immigrants such as Black Caribbean immigrant populations. I aimed to narrow a gap in literature by investigating Black Caribbean immigrants' identity status as they transition from dominant to minority cultures. The following research question was answered in this study:

RQ1: How do Black Caribbean immigrants experience cultural identity transition from dominant in their country of origin to a minority in the U.S.?

Ultimately, the research question not only served as a guide for the study but also determined the research methodology. The qualitative methodology was the best fit for this study as opposed to a quantitative method because the research question involved gaining an in-depth understanding of Black Caribbean immigrants' identity status and transitioning experiences post-migration to the U.S.

Qualitative Research Approach

There are various reasons why the qualitative approach was suitable for this study. A quantitative approach is commonly used to measure and test causal relationships among variables by focusing on how much or how many, and results are usually presented numerically (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The quantitative approach allows the researcher to quantify, discover a chain of events, or predict (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015). Since my goal was to explore Black Caribbean immigrants' experiences with identity status transitioning, it would have been difficult for a quantitative approach to quantify this population's experiences.

The qualitative approach is used to address meanings of a phenomenon for individuals involved and not just test and measure causal relationships (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The qualitative approach is used to meticulously gain new insights regarding a phenomenon, acquire new concepts, and ascertain information about participants' experiences (Creswell, 2018). The qualitative approach involves offering comprehensive information on how and why individual experiences, perceptions, and behaviors develop (Tenny et al., 2022). This approach is commonly used to address unexplored phenomena. Since little is known about Black Caribbean immigrants' identity

status when transitioning from dominant to minority status, the qualitative approach was best because there was no causal relationship to test or measure.

Additionally, the quantitative method involves numerical measures and lacks sensitivity to examine participants' perceptions of the phenomena involved in this study. Since this study involved exploring a sensitive issue a qualitative approach was a better fit because it allowed participants to have a voice and speak about their experiences. The qualitative approach was used to present new theories and perceptions about the phenomenon in this study by gaining detailed information from Black Caribbean immigrant participants with firsthand experience of their cultural identity transitioning from dominant to minority. Ultimately, since the qualitative approach is used to understand how people interpret what they experience, I used this method to explore Black Caribbean immigrants' experiences with their identity status transitioning. An IPA qualitative research design was ideal for this study.

IPA

As aforementioned, a qualitative research approach best fits this study. A basic qualitative research design could be employed in this study as a type of qualitative approach. A basic qualitative research design explores how people describe their experiences, create their views, and what significance they place on those experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The basic qualitative research design focuses on what practical knowledge can be learned from exploring Black Caribbean immigrants' identity status transitioning from dominant to a minority in their host country (Patton, 2015). In

comparison, an IPA qualitative design has an additional dimension, making it a more suitable fit for this study.

In addition to the objectives and purpose covered by a basic qualitative design, an IPA qualitative design seeks to understand the essence and underlying structure of Black Caribbean immigrants' identity status transitioning from dominant to a minority post-migration (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Smith, 2015). An IPA is ideal for this study because it takes an idiographic approach to the phenomenon in this study. IPA adopts an inductive methodology that enables the researcher to first focus on eliciting the innermost thoughts of each Black Caribbean immigrant participant with reference to their experiences of changing their identity status post-migration before going on to the broader group (Love et al., 2020). I comprehended the participants' efforts to interpret the specifics of their experiences using the IPA design (Smith & Osborn, 2015). Therefore, IPA was ideal when the researcher wanted to examine how Black Caribbeans interpreted the events they experienced (Smith & Osborn, 2015).

Additionally, this method aids in examining the phenomena, which is complicated, confusing, and emotionally charged (Smith & Osborn, 2015). Since this phenomenon is complicated and may be emotionally charged, this technique was utilized to study the structure and essence of the experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants who experience identity status transitioning from dominant to minority (Smith, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2015). Ultimately, IPA allowed rich information and understanding of Black Caribbean immigrants' identity status transitioning experiences through the eyes of those who experienced the phenomenon (Love et al., 2020; Smith & Osborn, 2015). Therefore,

using IPA enabled me to pinpoint the shared elements of the phenomena of identity status transitioning as well as how it was perceived (Smith, 2013). Overall, IPA is most fitting for a study that desires to uncover experiences of life transitions, making it an excellent fit for this study (Smith et al., 2009).

Role of the Researcher

Study Design

The researcher's role in qualitative research is the most important aspect of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015). It was my responsibility to plan the study and make sure it was coherent. I designed a study with alignment to enhance logic, coherence, consistency, and transparency (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The study's design aligned vital components, such as the research question, problem, purpose, and methodology (Patton, 2015).

Participant Recruitment

I recruited participants for the study. To recruit participants for the study, I created and handed out flyers through friends, close acquaintances, community immigration centers located throughout the five boroughs of New York City, Miami, Florida, and a Black Caribbean Immigrant Group on Facebook. Recommendations were requested from Facebook group members for anyone who fit the study's criteria. Once I received direct responses and referrals from the Facebook group members, potential participants were contacted via email for pre-screening and rapport-building purposes (Smith et al., 2009). Taking the first step to establish a rapport before starting the data

collecting process boosts the chances of amassing valuable data that shed light on the experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants as they transition to their identity status.

Interview Questions

IPA interviews elicit a personal description of participants' lived experiences to describe the phenomenon in detailed and lived-through terms (Patton, 2015; Smith, 2000). Therefore, another role of the researcher was to design interview questions that allowed the exploration of the essence of Black Caribbean's experiences transitioning from majority to minority post-migration (Smith, 2009). Therefore, it was my duty to create interview questions centered on the research question and the study's aim and include the study's theoretical framework (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Ultimately, the data-collecting procedure of interview questions complemented the created research design.

Interview Guide

This study collected data through interviews held via Zoom based on the participant's preferences. As a result, an interview guide (Appendix A) was created to make it easier to establish rapport and answer the research question in order to gather information that gave rich details of the experiences of the phenomena (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The interview guide served as a helpful tool that enabled me to explore many participants more systematically and comprehensively and maintain the focus of the interview on the study. Even though the data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, the interview guide allowed for the arrangement of the inquiries to guarantee that each participant had the same experience during the data-gathering procedure. The guide structured conversation with each participant. To build rapport with the Black

Caribbean immigrants, I structured the semi-structured interview as a conversation where the interviewer engaged with the participants by asking probing questions that promoted participation and increased the sharing of rich information about the phenomenon (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Interviews with Participants

Additionally, in qualitative studies, the researcher is the primary tool for data gathering and analysis, in contrast to quantitative studies (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015). In an IPA design, using interview methods is more feasible and favorable because it allows the researcher to capture idiographic accounts (Love et al., 2020). Therefore, I was the main instrument in this study which collected the data through the interviews. In addition, the interviews in an IPA study requires personal deep dives into participants' lived experience (Love et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2009). I created a safe place where the Black Caribbean participants felt comfortable sharing their cultural identity status transition experiences in the interviews (Smith et al., 2009). Since the researcher was the primary instrument in the study, it was equally important for me to establish and maintain a relationship with the Black Caribbean immigrant respondents. Building rapport with participants facilitated an environment where Black Caribbean immigrant participants felt safe to open up and share details about their experiences in the interviews (Smith et al., 2009).

Data Collection and Transcription

Audio recordings of the interviews were used to collect data. In order to authentically represent the participant's experiences, the interview data were transcribed

using verbatim transcription. By using verbatim transcription, I precisely replicated the information from the interviews by reproducing verbal communication in written form (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006). I transcribed the data manually because of the role of being the main instrument in the study who had first-hand knowledge of the interviews (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006).

Data Analysis

I manually analyzed transcribed interview data. IPA data analysis strategies were appropriately used to analyze collected data. It was imperative in IPA for me to gain a close relationship with the data and try to step into the participants' shoes to analyze the data successfully (Smith et al., 2009). The guidelines commonly used in the IPA approach were utilized to document the accuracy of Black Caribbean immigrants making sense of their identity status transitioning from dominant to minority post-migration (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).

Analytical interpretations in IPA studies are a dynamic process that allows the researcher to utilize double hermeneutics (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2015). Double hermeneutics allowed me to take a holistic approach when analytically interpreting the data by continually moving between the parts and the whole (Montague et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2009; Tuffour, 2017). The "parts" refers to me making sense of individual participants' data and the encounter with the participant in the data collection process (Montague et al., 2020; Smith & Osborn, 2015; Tuffour, 2017). The whole refers to me drawing on my knowledge and considering not just parts of an

individual's sentences or words but the entire transcripts as a whole (Montague et al., 2020; Smith & Osborn, 2015; Tuffour, 2017).

Moreover, the double hermeneutics allowed a dual positioning role in the study, where I was able to make sense of the Black Caribbean participants sense-making of their experiences transitioning their cultural identities (Alase, 2017; Montague et al., 2020; Smith & Osborn, 2015). One role allowed me to put myself in the participant's shoes to make sense of their experiences while analyzing the data (Alase, 2017; Smith & Osborn, 2015). In this role, I gained an idiom of perspective of the studied phenomena by immersing in the Black Caribbean participant's experience. I drew on everyday human knowledge and made sense of their individual experiences of Black Caribbeans transitioning their cultural identities (Alase, 2017; Smith et al., 2009). In the other role, I took the approach of applying critical questions to the participant's data to make sense of them making sense of their experiences transitioning identity status (Alase, 2017; Smith & Osborn, 2015). In this role, I only had access to the participant's experience transitioning their identity status post-migration through the information they shared in the data collection process (Alase, 2017). Therefore, analyzing the Black Caribbean participant's transitioning experiences was an intuitive process of investigating the underlying meanings by reading between the lines for a deeper understanding (Mills et al., 2010). Ultimately, the roles of the participants and the researcher were two points I had to rotate continuously to expand the understanding of the studied phenomenon (Montague et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2009). As such, the researcher's role was to

document their sense-making of the phenomenon (Love et al., 2020; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).

Findings

Once the data was collected, transcribed, and analyzed, it was my role as the researcher to present the findings of this study. Presenting the findings was one of the most significant roles for me in the study (Anderson, 2010; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The presentation of the findings allowed the participants' experiences to answer the research question in the study (Anderson, 2010; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Sutton & Austin, 2015). It was my duty to summarize the study results to show how Black Caribbean immigrants interpret their experiences of transitioning from a dominant to a minority identity status after immigrating to the United States. Readers were provided excerpts from the participants to support the findings. The excerpts from the participants served as evidence that the superordinate themes emerged from the participants and were not based on my assumptions (Anderson, 2010; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Sutton & Austin, 2015).

Bias Management

The nature of an IPA study is personal, and it could sometimes be difficult for the researchers to separate themselves from the data (Pannucci & Wilkins, 2010; Smith, 2013). Bias can occur and affect various phases of the study (Pannucci & Wilkins, 2010; Patton, 2018). Therefore, I controlled biases at every level of this study. Hence, all necessary steps were taken to manage and eliminate any potential bias that had the

potential of decreasing the validity of the findings on Black Caribbean immigrants' cultural identity status transition experience.

I am a Black Caribbean immigrant who has experienced the studied phenomenon. Therefore, as the researcher in this study, I took the necessary steps to eliminate any biases. It was highly recommended for researchers in an IPA study to utilize reflexive bracketing to see beyond their personal experiences, prior knowledge, assumptions, and biases to focus directly on the participant's experience of the studied phenomenon (Alase, 2017; Tufford & Newman, 2012). Memos were a reflexive bracketing method utilized throughout the data collection and analysis stages in this study. Using memos allowed me to pay close attention to personal experiences, assumptions, and biases during the engagement with the data (Tufford & Newman, 2012). In addition, bracketing interviews were utilized to explore my subjectivities, biases, and assumptions. Lastly, journals were used as a bracketing technique throughout all stages of the study to be reflexive, manage, and eliminate bias that could negatively affect the study's results.

Moreover, an interview schedule was used to avoid assumptions and biases. It is proposed that interview schedules be used in IPA research because it promotes specific questions grounded in the research question and previous literature that allows participants to deliberate (Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Orsborn, 2015). Using the interview schedule allowed the focus to be placed on the participant's experiences rather than relying on my assumptions. Ultimately, using the above bracketing methods and the IPA interview scheduling techniques allowed me to successfully set aside all

preconceptions and direct the focus on the participants to reveal their lived experience of the studied phenomenon.

Methodology

Participation Selection

Participant Criteria

Even though the Black Caribbean immigrant population is rapidly growing, there is a lack of information on the studied phenomenon in this research. To fill the gap in the literature, people who fit the study's criterion were actively solicited. IPA studies should utilize a homogenous sample to acquire rich information to answer the research question (Smith & Osborn, 2015). Therefore, the following criteria were used to enroll participants in this study: (a) English-speaking Black Caribbean immigrants who were at least 18 years old, (b) a Caribbean native, (c) migrated from a predominantly Black population Caribbean Island, (d) age of migration was age 14 or older (e) lives in the United States.

Additionally, it was strongly advised that IPA studies use a small sample size to give the researcher a micro-level comprehension of participants' experiences, which offers in-depth knowledge about the phenomena being explored (Smith & Osborn, 2015). The sample size of this study comprised of 12 English-speaking Black Caribbean immigrant participants. A small sample size of Black Caribbean immigrants supported the depth of this study because it produced rich data that answered the research question (Patton, 2015). This sample of Black Caribbeans provided details that expand the knowledge pertaining to how people in this community experience cultural identity status transitions.

Sampling Method

An appropriate sampling method was utilized to increase the chances of recruiting participants that meet the study's criteria (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study used a combination of purposeful and snowballing sampling methods. Researchers can combine sampling strategies to increase their chances of recruiting viable participants who can answer the research question in the study. Snowballing sampling enabled me to enlist new participants by requesting recommendations from current participants who satisfy the requirements for the research. This sampling method increased the chances of locating English-speaking Black Caribbean immigrants who experienced the phenomenon. In addition, purposeful sampling is usually used in qualitative identity transition studies (Palinkas et al., 2015). The purposeful sampling approach is a non-probability sampling technique that enables researchers to choose volunteers who satisfy particular requirements and have first-hand experience with the topic under study (Lodico et al., 2010). Purposeful sampling strategies increase understanding of the information-rich phenomenon (Palinkas et al., 2015; Patton, 2018). Ultimately, the study's criteria and sampling strategies allowed the selection of participants that provided insight into Black Caribbean immigrants' identity status transitioning from dominant to minority.

Recruitment Strategy and Setting

Most Black Caribbean immigrants reside in the Greater New York and Miami metropolitan areas (Tamir, 2022). Therefore, participants were recruited from community immigration centers throughout the five boroughs in New York City and Miami, Florida. Flyers were posted on bulletin boards in community immigration centers for the

recruitment process. Placing flyers in areas highly populated with Black Caribbean immigrants increased the chances of recruiting English-speaking Black Caribbean immigrants who provided information about the studied phenomenon. Interested participants contacted me by email. All potential participants were contacted through email.

Additionally, recruitment assistance was solicited from family members and close acquaintances through the distribution of flyers in their communities. Flyers were also distributed in a Facebook group for Black Caribbean immigrants to reach more participants. Forum users were asked to contact me via the contact information on the flyers if they or anyone they knew fit the study's criterion and wanted to volunteer to participate in the study. Invitation emails were sent to all interested potential participants, which included details about the study, the study's criteria, procedure, and their right to deny participation. A pre-screening questionnaire and informed consent were attached to all invitation emails.

Screening Procedures

Participants were pre-screened to confirm they satisfy the eligibility requirements. As the potential participant's contact information was acquired from a direct response to the flyers or from Facebook group members, they received an invitation email that included the pre-screening questionnaire. The pre-screening questionnaire included criteria information. The collection of the demographic ensured that a homogenous sample was created as recommended for IPA studies. When the pre-screening questionnaire revealed that the participant satisfied the study's eligibility requirements,

arrangements were made with the Black Caribbean participant to review their signed informed consent in more detail and perform the interview.

Instrumentation

This IPA study aimed to analyze how Black Caribbean immigrants perceived and made sense of their identity status, transitioning from dominant to a minority in the United States. Therefore, a flexible data collection method was required for this IPA study (Smith & Osborn, 2009). Semi-structured interviews were employed as a flexible data-gathering technique. Semi-structured interviews are controlled and organized because I used an interview guide (Lodico et al., 2010). Semi-structured interviews are frequently used in IPA investigations because they allow the researcher and the subject to interact. Compared to structured interviews, semi-structured interviews enabled conversational data gathering with the participants (Smith & Osborn, 2015).

Open-ended questions were used in semi-structured interviews to explore the research phenomena because they assist me with establishing rapport with participants. Open-ended questions enabled the opportunity to see the broader picture of the topic under study (Patton, 2015; Smith et al., 2009). Rapport was built with participants in the semi-structured interviews by asking follow-up and incisive questions (Smith et al., 2009). Semi-structured interviews' exploratory character ultimately enabled the ability to close gaps in the body of existing material. The semi-structured interviews were flexible; the Black Caribbeans who participated in them provided rich information regarding their experiences transitioning from dominant to minority after migration.

Data Collection Procedures

Semi-structured interviews were used to obtain data. Semi-structured questions that promoted dialogues with the Black Caribbean subjects were used in each interview (Smith & Osborn, 2015). This data collection instrument allowed me to gain insight into 12 Black Caribbean participants' identity status transitioning from the dominant to a minority (Smith & Osborn, 2015). The interview setting was based on the participant's comfort and preference (Creswell & Creswell, 2016). Black Caribbean immigrants chose whether to do the interview in person or through video call (Zoom) to recognize reflexivity. Those that meet the requirements received an invitation to a 45–60-minute interview. To use in the data analysis process, the interviews were audio-recorded. In-person interviews were to be recorded with an audio recording app. In contrast, Zoom Local recording was used to record audio of interviews held on Zoom. The audio files from the interviews were kept on my laptop in a password-protected folder.

Setting

In this study, the experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants who went from being the dominant to becoming the minority in the country were explored. The nature of the study was sensitive. Participants participated in the semi-structured interviews in person or on Zoom. Allowing participants to choose the interview setting increased the chances of gaining more detailed information about the phenomenon (Elwood & Martin, 2000). The Black Caribbean immigrants chose the interview setting in this study. When the Black Caribbean immigrant participants chose the interview setting, they felt more empowered in their interaction to disclose rich details about their experiences of the

studied phenomenon (Elwood & Martin, 2000). However, before choosing the setting, the Black Caribbean immigrant participants were briefed about the study's objectives and acquired consent, so they were mindful when choosing a place where they felt comfortable speaking freely.

Informed Consent

This study's informed consent was essential. The informed consent advised the Black Caribbean participants that they could enter the study voluntarily or deny participation. The whole study design, IRB ethical standards, the APA Code of Ethics, and the risks and benefits of the study were all included in the informed consent form. After being enlisted, each participant received a copy of the informed consent prior to the interview. The informed consent form was discussed in detail with the participants, who were allowed to ask questions regarding the material in the document. Before consenting to the interview, I confirmed that all participants understood the information presented in the informed form. All signed copies of the informed consent were stored in a secure file to maintain participants' confidentiality.

Data Analysis Plan

The data analysis process involved segmenting and disassembling, and reassembling the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As such, a holistic approach was taken when analyzing the data in this study by continuously moving between the "parts" and the "whole" of the data. Data analysis in IPA has various stages where the researcher first analyzes the data individually and then as a whole (Smith et al., 2009). It required immersion into the data in the IPA data analysis process (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).

Immersing into the data was accomplished through the dual positioning in the analysis process due to double hermeneutics (Alase, 2017). In one role in this stage, I positioned myself as the participant by putting myself in their shoes to fully conceptualize their experiences transitioning identity status post-migration (Alase, 2017; Smith et al., 2009).

I also positioned myself as the researcher in the study by asking critical questions about the transcripts. Asking such critical questions allowed me to intuitively probe for underlying meaning to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon in this study. I relinquished all preconceptions about the phenomenon and focused mainly on the data presented by the Black Caribbean immigrant participants to capture their experiences from an outsider's perspective. Ultimately, in the IPA data analysis process, I consistently moved between emic and etic perspectives to successfully capture the Black Caribbean immigrant participants' experiences with transitioning their identity status post-migration to the United States. As such, the data analysis process began in IPA when I transcribed the Black Caribbean immigrant's verbal information collected in the semi-structured interviews into written data.

IPA Data Analysis

Data analysis in IPA necessitates immersion in the data. Therefore, the data analysis was conducted manually. Once I immersed myself in the data during the transcription process, I gained new insight into the studied phenomenon because I made initial noting (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith, 2015). Initial noting was then transformed into emergent themes (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). I identified emergent themes from the initial noting of each item (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). I used the

deconstruction method to understand the complex nature of each Black Caribbean immigrant participant (Smith et al., 2009). In this analysis stage, a detailed exploratory analysis was conducted on each line of the data.

The next stage that was taken in this data analysis process was to seek a relationship in the emergent themes and group them to create superordinate themes for the entire transcribed dataset based on the research question. Abstraction was utilized to assist with grouping how all the Black Caribbean immigrant participants experience transitioning their identity status from dominant to a minority post-migration. Patterns and linkage between the exploratory notes and the original transcript were organized to conceptualize emerging themes. The next stage in the analysis consisted of identifying the relationships in the themes. Themes were connected across the entire dataset to identify the relationships. In the final stage of the analysis, a list of superordinate themes and themes was organized by utilizing enumeration techniques that identified the frequency of the themes. A visual guide was also used in this process to organize findings of the study.

Data Transcription

Data transcription is the most significant component in an IPA data analysis (Smith et al., 2009). The audio recording from the semi-structured interviews in this study was transcribed verbatim. Using verbatim transcription to transcribe the Black Caribbean immigrant participants' verbal information ensured that the data accurately captured the lived experiences of individuals in this population. Since it is crucial to gain an intimate connection with the data in IPA studies, this study also used verbatim

transcription (Smith et al., 2009). The transcription process was repeated several times in this IPA research design to ensure that the Black Caribbean immigrants' experience was captured accurately (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006; Smith et al., 2009). The repetition of the verbatim transcription process allowed me to gain a level of closeness with the data that played a significant role in the data analysis process (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006). That closeness was established through verbatim transcription.

In addition, the verbatim transcription allowed me to begin the IPA data analysis process by focusing on each Black Caribbean immigrant participant individually and making initial notes on each data item transcribed (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith, 2020; Smith et al., 2009). The initial notes allowed the reflection of the observations and experience in the interview and recall thoughts/comments (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). Data were transcribed for each participant as soon as the interview was completed to reflect on the experience accurately.

Moreover, most English-speaking Black Caribbean immigrants tend to retain their accents from their home country to reduce their mistaken identity as African Americans (Joseph et al., 2014; Rong & Fitchett, 2008). Therefore, it would have been difficult for transcription software to accurately capture the words said by the participants because of their accents. Since the goal of qualitative research is to study participants' experiences, manual transcription was most appropriate (Patton, 2015). Accuracy in the data transcription allowed the understanding of how Black Caribbean immigrants perceived and made sense of their experience transitioning identity status post-migration (Smith & Osborn, 2015). Manually transcribing the verbal data into a written form was conducted

using Microsoft Word and Excel. In addition, once the transcription was completed with both methods to verify its accuracy, transcripts were given to each Black Caribbean immigrant to verify the data before the coding process. To preserve participant privacy, all transcriptions were kept in a password-protected system.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in qualitative research is obscure. For readers to have faith in the study's written output, a qualitative researcher must establish trustworthiness by showing that their data analysis procedure upheld integrity and complied with research guidelines (Hays & Singh, 2012; Nowell et al., 2017). Essential measures were taken to prove the study's trustworthiness by establishing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability because qualitative research does not use instrument metrics that can provide validity and reliability (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Lincoln & Guba, 1984). Researchers can increase trustworthiness. As such, I showed that the data analysis procedure used in the study was accurate, thorough, and consistent (Nowell et al., 2017). To increase the trustworthiness of this study, I disclosed all the methods used in the data analysis process to enable readers to accept the study's credibility (Nowell et al., 2017).

Credibility

The measurements of actual value in the study's results of Black Caribbean immigrants' experiences transitioning their identity status from dominant to minority are credibility measures in qualitative research. Credibility ensured that the study effectively captured Black Caribbean immigrants' identity status transition based on the proposed research question and methodologies. In this study, a variety of techniques were

employed to create trustworthiness. Saturation was utilized to assist with credibility being achieved in the study. Saturation occurs when a researcher believes that no fresh data may give new insight into Black Caribbean immigrant experiences of identity status transition since the same information is repeated.

In addition, I used member checks and triangulation to increase the study's credibility. Member checks allowed me to provide the Black Caribbean immigrant participants with the transcribed data to validate accuracy. The member check strategy allowed me to increase accuracy, trustworthiness, and credibility. Also, triangulation was used to increase credibility.

Triangulation increased the credibility of the research discoveries because I used multiple methods or data sources to understand the studied phenomenon comprehensively. To increase credibility, I used several recruitment and data analysis methods. I used social media, family members, close acquaintances, and flyer distributions through immigration centers to recruit participants. In addition, verbatim transcription and participant data and member checking was used to ensure accuracy of findings. Triangulation obtained through the data sources and participants' demographic information also protects the credibility of the findings in the study. Ultimately, given that this study was conducted through a university, each stage upheld high academic integrity and validity.

Transferability

In qualitative research, transferability relates to how successfully the researcher explained that the study's findings might be duplicated and that readers can draw parallels

for comparable situations in other regions. It is crucial to highlight that the concept of transferability sets the burden of evidence on the individual attempting to apply the findings elsewhere rather than on the researcher in this study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). However, the theoretical construct of this study served as support for further understanding of the experiences of other populations in society. Therefore, to increase external validity and transferability, detailed information about how the findings could be pertinent to other populations who experience similar situations was provided (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015). Ultimately, the disclosure of sufficient descriptive information about this study provided insight that allows readers to determine the effectiveness of the findings for their unique circumstances.

Dependability

Dependability guarantees that the findings in this study were consistent and could be replicated (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015). Since human behavior and experiences are not static, it would not be easy to yield the same results if the study is replicated (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). However, to increase the study's dependability, I recorded and shared descriptive details about the procedural approaches and protocols used to ensure that readers can attempt to replicate the study and yield similar results (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Shenton, 2004). Descriptive information on data gathering, data processing, and interpretation procedures could improve the reliability and consistency of the findings if duplicated (Creswell & Creswell, 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015). Such information increased the study's dependability because the

reader will have knowledge of the deciding factors and methodology used throughout the study.

Confirmability

The degree of objectivity in the study findings is referred to as confirmability in qualitative research (Patton, 2015). An audit trail allows researchers to establish confirmability in a study. Audit trails throughout the study provide visibility and comprehensibility, allowing readers to link interpretations and conclusions to the data (Kleijin & Leeuwen, 2018). Therefore, I created and maintained an audit trail throughout the entire data analysis process to confirm that I did not influence the findings. Ultimately, the maintenance of an audit trail proved that the findings in this study are accurate and supported the data collected from Black Caribbean immigrant participants.

In addition, all necessary steps were taken to manage bias to increase confirmability. I relinquished all preconceptions about the studied phenomenon. To manage and eliminate bias, I used reflexive bracketing methods such as memos, bracketing interviews, and journals throughout all phases of the study. Reflexive bracketing is the ability to recognize how one's involvement affects the procedures and results of a study (Tufford & Newman, 2012). Bracketing allowed me to increase confirmability by managing my presuppositions, subjectivities, and assumptions (Alase, 2017). Reflexive bracketing methods ultimately managed bias from affecting the research process because these strategies enabled me to be reflective (Alase, 2012; Tufford & Newman, 2017).

Ethical Procedures

Trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of a study are influenced by the researcher's ethical rectitude (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I made a number of decisions to improve the study's ethical protocol. In order to obtain institutional approval, I disclosed sufficient information regarding the study, as stated in the APA Ethical Code of Conduct 8.01. Before conducting the study, I provided adequate information about the study to the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Approval from the IRB ensured that I conducted the study with ethical integrity and appropriate steps were taken to protect rights of participants. I maintained confidentiality by protecting their private personal information from being disclosed in the study. A number was used to represent each research participant (e.g., Participant #1, Participant #2, Participant #3, etc.).

A copy of the informed consent form in accordance with APA Ethical Code of Conduct 8.02 was also given to each Black Caribbean immigrant participant in the study (APA, 2017). The informed consent included information on the study's purpose, expected duration, and methods. In addition, the informed consent provided details of the participant's rights. Each Black Caribbean immigrant participant obtained information about their rights to decline to be in the study, rights to withdraw or discontinue, confidentiality procedures, and potential risk/discomfort associated with participating. Knowing their rights was important since IPA studies require the participants to disclose details about their personal lived experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2015). All signed informed consent forms were stored in a secure file.

Moreover, to conduct the study ethically, I committed to not harming participants in the study (Smith et al., 2009). Therefore, to conduct the study ethically and maintain ethical integrity, I underwent ethics training by completing the online Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) research training. The CITI training taught me how to conduct the study ethically by learning how to respect the rights, safety, and well-being of the study's Black Caribbean immigrant subjects. Also, to maintain ethical integrity in the study, no recruitment or data was collected before the official IRB approval.

Limitations

One major challenge and limitation of this study was getting Black Caribbean immigrants to open up and share their experiences transitioning from dominant to minority identity status. It is rare for researchers to obtain individual-level data from immigrants. Therefore, given the sensitive nature of the study, some Black Caribbean immigrants may have underreported their identity transitioning experience to a stranger because of fear of judgment. As a result, it was crucial to ensure that the participants in the semi-structured interviews were at ease and aware that they were in a safe environment when answering the questions. The primary barrier to the study was recruiting participants from this population. Past research has encountered recruitment issues from various races and ethnicity, such as Blacks (Slowly, 2020). However, it was unknown if similar problems existed in studies of Black Caribbean immigrants. Therefore, innovative ways were used to recruit participants from this population to eliminate this barrier.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants involving identity status transitioning from the majority in their home country to a minority in their host country. A qualitative IPA research methodology was ideal for answering the research question. An IPA methodology was used to gain a better understanding of Black Caribbean immigrants' identity status transition experiences post-migration. Participants had to be residents of Black Caribbean islands, at least 18 years old, residing in the U.S., and must have immigrated at 14 or older.

Additionally, semi-structured interviews enabled participants to give insightful details about their personal journeys involving transitioning their identity status. Semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded, and data were transcribed using verbatim transcription. Before data analysis, all participants had the chance to confirm the veracity of their data. Once data were verified, I used IPA data analysis strategies to gain an in-depth understanding of Black Caribbean immigrants' identity status transitioning post-migration to the U.S. I took all required measures to ensure the study was credible, reliable, transferable, confirmable, and ethically sound.

Findings of the study will be presented in Chapter 4. Results filled the gap in literature. Results also provided a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, which could increase awareness and resources for this population, as well as clinicians' multicultural competencies.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This qualitative IPA study involved exploring experiences of Black Caribbeans transitioning their cultural identity status from dominant to minority in the U.S. post-migration. U.S. culture places high expectations on individuals in this immigrant group in terms of assimilating into Black African American culture. In America, African Americans have a minority status. By contrast, Black Caribbeans have a dominant identity status in their country of origin. Black Caribbeans are forced to transition their identity status from dominant to minority post-migration. I used the following research question:

RQ1: How do Black Caribbean immigrants experience cultural identity transition from being dominant in their country of origin to minority status in the U.S.?

Results of this study will lead to increased resources and support for Black Caribbeans who transition their identity status from dominant to minority. This study can contribute to social change by understanding and spreading awareness about various ways Black Caribbeans alter their lives and psychological effects of transitioning from dominant to minority post-migration in the U.S. Awareness of Black Caribbeans' experiences involving transitioning their identity status will also help clinicians increase their multicultural competence for working with immigrants from this population, which could lead to social change.

This chapter includes the setting, participant demographics, data collection, and data analysis. Information was provided about how superordinate themes, themes, and

theme clusters were identified during data analysis. The chapter also includes evidence of trustworthiness. Results of this qualitative IPA study are also presented in this chapter. A summary of Chapter 4 will close this section.

Setting

I obtained access to community immigration centers throughout the five boroughs in New York City and Miami, Florida. Flyers were posted on bulletin boards of centers to recruit participants. Friends and family members also distributed flyers in their communities. Flyers were also posted in an Afro-Caribbean community Facebook group. Interested participants contacted me. Invitation emails and prescreening questionnaires were sent to each potential participant. Once eligibility for the study was confirmed through prescreening questionnaires, each participant was emailed a copy of the consent form. Participants then gave me their availability dates, times, and preferred interview locations. All participants knew the study's title, theoretical framework, purpose, procedures, participant eligibility factors, and my contact information.

Participants were provided with research guidelines that detailed their rights in the research. Research guidelines included information about the voluntary nature of the study and their rights to deny or withdraw from the study. Information was also provided to participants via consent forms about benefits and risks of the study and steps that were taken to protect their identity. All participants reviewed and consented to guidelines before data were collected. Participants were allowed to choose to be interviewed in person or via Zoom. All participants in the study were English-speaking Black

Caribbeans who were at least 18 years of age, Caribbean natives, migrated from a predominantly Black Caribbean Island at age 14 or older, and resided in the U.S.

Participants were informed that they could stop the interview or skip a question during interviews that they believed may cause psychological distress without consequences. However, no participant skipped questions or asked to stop the interview because of potential psychological distress. All participants completed interviews successfully without any psychological distress. All participants' private information was concealed in the study to ensure confidentiality. Duration of interviews was approximately 45-60 minutes. Interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions.

Demographics

Data were used to explore and summarize how Black Caribbeans experience their cultural identity status transitioning from dominant to minority in the U.S. All participants were born in a predominantly Black populated Caribbean Island and identified as Afro-Caribbean or Black West Indian. All participants in this study migrated from their native country in the Caribbean. They were all over 18 and emigrated to the U.S. at age 14 or older. Eight of twelve participants in the study migrated as adolescents, and the other four participants migrated as adults. Six participants reported their child rearing occurred in both the U.S. and their native country because they migrated at a young age.

By contrast, all other participants believe they were raised solely in their native country. Participants' ages ranged from 29 to 62 years ($M = 47.8$, $SD = 10.8$) with 67%

identifying as female and 33% identifying as males; 92% were heterosexual and 8% preferred not to disclose their sexual orientation, Participants' marital status varied. 50% of participants were married, 42% were single, and 8% were separated. Participants in this study had different education levels, with 58% who had a bachelor's degree, 17% with a master's degree, 17% with a high school diploma, and 8% who graduated eighth grade. 59% of participants had full-time employment, 33% retired and 8% unemployed. Their incomes ranged from below 25k to over 200k; 17% were below 25k, 33% were between 25k and 100k, 33% were between 100k and 200k, 8% made over 200k, and 8% preferred not to disclose their annual household income.

No participant in this study had a disability or chronic condition. Participants migrated from different predominantly Black Caribbean islands. Participants came from the following countries: 33% from Antigua, 25% from Grenada, 25% from Jamaica, 8% from Barbados, and 8% from Monserrat. Except for one participant who first migrated to Florida, all other eleven participants migrated to New York City from their native country. All participants were first-generation migrants. They all reside in the U.S. Participants resided in New York, Connecticut, Mississippi, Florida, New Jersey, Virginia, and Georgia. There were differences in terms of participants' living status in these states, 50% of participants were homeowners, 42% were renters, and 8% had unique situations where they owned and rented because of living between two states.

All participants in this study confirmed they experienced the studied phenomenon. Participants' real names were concealed in this study to protect their

identities. Pseudonyms were used to identify participants. All participants volunteered for the study, and no compensation was given for their participation (see Table 1).

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Participant	Gender	Participants' age	Place of Birth	Age of Migration
Participant 1	Female	48	Grenada	23
Participant 2	Male	39	Antigua	16
Participant 3	Female	29	Antigua	18
Participant 4	Female	42	Monserrat	16
Participant 5	Female	39	Jamaica	15
Participant 6	Male	52	Grenada	15
Participant 7	Female	58	Antigua	33
Participant 8	Female	60	Jamaica	25
Participant 9	Male	57	Grenada	14
Participant 10	Female	62	Barbados	27
Participant 11	Female	53	Jamaica	14
Participant 12	Male	35	Antigua	14

Data Collection

Data collection occurred over 4 weeks. I received approval from Walden University IRB to conduct research on February 6, 2023. My approval number is 02-06-23-0738327. I collected data from twelve participants. I followed my procedures for the recruitment and data collection process presented in Chapter 3. Data collection began with recruitment flyers posted on the bulletin boards of community immigration centers throughout the five boroughs in New York City and Miami, Florida. I reached out to

administrators at the community centers, introduced myself, and explained my position and the concept of my study. I shared the flyer with the administrators and requested permission to post it on their bulletin boards. Once I received approval from the administrators, I posted my flyers on the bulletin board of various immigration centers throughout Miami and New York City. Friends and family members also distributed the recruitment flyers in their communities. Flyers were also posted in an Afro-Caribbean Community Facebook group. I kept a spreadsheet record of the date and time when flyers were distributed to friends, family members, bulletin boards, and the Facebook group. The spreadsheet allowed me to keep track of the flyer distribution. The spreadsheet also allowed me to organize and follow up on comments from potential participants in the Facebook group. I posted the flyer every Monday on the Facebook group to ensure it was noticed in the comment section. The reposting of the flyer every Monday allowed me to recruit fifteen participants. However, three potential participants were disqualified from the study in the prescreening process because they did not meet all the study's criteria. Data were collected successfully from the twelve participants who met the study's criteria. The data collection process lasted for four weeks.

All 12 participants had the option to either have their interviews in person or on Zoom based on their preference and comfortability. All participants in the study chose to have their interviews conducted virtually via Zoom Communications. At the date and time selected by the participant, the participant clicked the link Zoom link sent to them via email to join the Zoom meeting for the interview. Before each interview began, I reminded the participant of the voluntary nature of the study, their right to refuse or

withdraw from the study at any time with no consequences, and their option to skip questions or stop the interview if they feel any psychological distress during the interview process. Once the participant indicated they were comfortable beginning the interview, I informed them of when the recording would begin. I started the Zoom local recording and asked questions in the semi-structured interviews.

Each participant was identified using a number to maintain confidentiality by protecting their private personal information from being disclosed in the study. A number represented each research participant (e.g., Participant #1, Participant #2, Participant #3, etc.). The length of the interviews ranged between 45-60 minutes. However, a few Black Caribbean immigrants shared more than others. Two Black Caribbean participants exceeded the 60-minute range. Once the interviews were finished, the recordings were stopped, which ended the data collection process. The audio recording from the Zoom local recording was stored in a secured file on a password-protected system to preserve participant's privacy.

Data Analysis

IPA took an idiographic approach to Black Caribbeans' experience transitioning their identity status from dominant to minority. IPA adopt an inductive methodology that enabled me to first focus on eliciting the innermost thoughts of each Black Caribbean immigrant participant with reference to their experiences of changing their identity status post-migration before going on to the broader group (Love et al., 2020). This idiographic approach was utilized in the data analysis process of this study. Stage one of the IPA data analysis consists of getting to know the data, allowing me to look at each Black

Caribbean immigrant's experiences with the studied phenomenon individually (Smith et al., 2022). This stage allowed me to immerse myself in the data to uncover how individual participants make sense of their experiences (Smith et al., 2009). In this stage of the IPA data analysis, which consists of getting to know the data immediately after each interview is completed, I began the data transcription process to allow me to immerse myself into each data while the interview experience was still fresh in my memory. I manually transcribed the audio-recorded semi-structured interviews verbatim in a Microsoft Word document. I repeated the transcription process several times to ensure I accurately captured each Black Caribbean participant's experience, which allowed me to become familiar with the account. Repeating the transcription process provided new insight into the participants' experience each time the data were transcribed and reviewed.

After I completed the verbatim transcriptions, I provided each participant with a copy of their transcripts to verify the accuracy of the data before proceeding to other stages in the data analysis process. After the participants verified their data, I then transferred the data line by line into column A of a Microsoft Excel document. Each participant's data was transferred into separate tabs labeled Participant #1, Participant #2, participant #3, etc. The repetition of the verbatim transcriptions and the transfer of the data into the Excel spreadsheets allowed me to gain closeness to each participant's experience, which played a significant role in the following stages of the data analysis process, which is the initial note-taking process.

Stage two of this study's IPA data analysis process was initial notetaking. This stage consisted of a detailed exploratory analysis. I created line-by-line codes for the data to conduct the detailed exploratory analysis in this stage. The line-by-line codes were placed in column B of each participant's transcription in Microsoft Excel. The line-by-line coding was crucial to the data analysis process because it guided the analysis and provided insight into the participants' experiences. In the exploratory analysis, I read each line in individual participants' transcripts in Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. Reviewing the data line-by-line allowed me to dig deeper into each participant's descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual comments (Smith et al., 2009). The line-by-line coding performed on each dataset were active and specific to uncover the participant's detailed account of their experience transitioning their cultural identity status with no biases or preconceived notions applied (Charmaz, 2004). I applied critical questions to the participant's data to make sense of them making sense of their experiences and uncover underlying meanings. Reviewing each line in the transcripts, I asked what this participant was trying to say. Asking such critical questions allowed me to develop line-by-line codes which provided a deeper understanding of each participant's experience based on their account of the studied phenomenon. Ultimately, the line-by-line codes provided valuable insight into the next step, the third stage in the IPA data analysis (see Table 2).

Table 2*Sample of Line-by-Line Coding*

Raw data	Line by Line Coding
Q: Tell me about your experiences regarding your cultural transition when you came to the United States.	
My transition in Florida was difficult. Where I lived only had a sprinkle of Blacks, which was a culture shock for me. The majority of the community population was White.	Location played a role in the transition. Predominantly White community

Stage three of the IPA data analysis used in this study was identifying emergent themes. Patterns and linkages between exploratory notes and the original transcript provide emergent themes (Smith et al., 2009). This stage consists of organizing the work done in stage two. In the identifying the emergent themes stage, I organized the line-by-line codes and identified focus codes. The focus codes were placed in column C of each participant's line-by-line transcription in Microsoft Excel. To develop the focus codes, I took line-by-line codes developed in the previous stage of the analysis process, which continually appeared in the participant's account of their cultural identity status transition experience and categorized them. Making analytical sense and categorizing the line-by-line codes allowed me to identify emergent themes in each participant's data (Charmaz,

2004). The focus themes developed in this stage were more direct than the line-by-line codes, which were open-ended. This stage of the IPA data analysis allowed me to organize the codes and narrow my analysis on each participant's data that were relevant and insightful in conceptualizing emerging themes (Charmaz, 2004). Ultimately, the focus codes developed in this stage were helpful for the next stage in the data analysis process (see Table 3).

Table 3

Sample of Focus Code

Raw data	Line-by-line Code	Focus Code
Q: Tell me about your experiences regarding your cultural transition when you came to the United States.		
My transition in Florida was difficult.	Location played a role in the transition	Geographical location
Where I lived only had a sprinkle of Blacks, which was a culture shock for me. The majority of the community population was White.	Predominantly White community	Community ethnicity

Stage four in the IPA data analysis used in this study was identifying relationships in themes. This stage consisted of me consolidating the analysis performed in the previous stage. First, I moved each participant's line-by-line codes and focus codes into a new Microsoft Excel worksheet in the same workbook and labeled it "Participant #

(placed the identifier) codebook." I then consolidated points in the focus themes to identify how the emergent themes fit together meaningfully. I connected emergent themes across the entire dataset to identify the relationships. Consolidating the emergent themes based on relationships allowed me to create theme clusters.

Stage five of this study's IPA data analysis process was to repeat steps one to four for each participant. Repeating stages one to four on each participant's data individually allowed the formulation of the emergent themes. IPA studies are a dynamic process that allows the researcher to utilize double hermeneutics (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2015). The double hermeneutics allowed me to analyze the participant's data individually first and later as a whole to make sense of the entire Black Caribbean group's experience transitioning their cultural identity status post-migration to the United States. Stages one to five allowed me to conclude the individual portion of the IPA data analysis before identifying superordinate themes in the twelve participants' data as a whole.

Stage six of this study's IPA data analysis process was to develop a list of superordinate themes and subthemes. This stage of the analysis allowed me to take a holistic view of the twelve participants' experiences transitioning their cultural identity status from dominant to minority as a whole. To conduct this step in the analysis, I first consolidated all the codes from each participant into one Microsoft Excel tab. The tab was labeled "Codes Masterfile." I copied all the line-by-line codes, focus codes, and emergent codes from all the individual participant's codebooks to one sheet. Each participant's emergent codes were placed in column B, focus codes in column C and line-

by-line codes in column D in the Masterfile worksheet. All participant's data were highlighted with different colors to allow me to refer to the original data if necessary for a fresh look or further understanding. Then, I consolidated the theme clusters based on meaningful relationships among the sample population. I worked on trying to identify what theme clusters consolidated at the group level to capture the meanings of their experiences. I also reviewed the theme clusters and reflected on further conceptualization. I then identified meaningful connections within the theme clusters across the sample. Similar theme clusters were highlighted with an identifying color font across the dataset. Reviewing the theme clusters and consolidating the themes allowed me to develop a list of superordinate themes and subthemes. I also matched the color font code for the theme clusters with the connected superordinate themes in column A of the worksheet. At the end of the IPA data analysis, twelve participants had five superordinate themes, seven themes, and 60 theme clusters (See Table 4).

Table 4*Sample of Theme Clusters and Superordinate Themes*

Raw data	Line-by-line Code	Focus Code	Theme Cluster	Superordinate Themes
Q: Tell me about your experiences regarding your cultural transition when you came to the United States.				
My transition in Florida was difficult.	Location played a role in the transition	Geographical location	Environment factors	Contextual Factors
Where I lived only had a sprinkle of Blacks, which was a culture shock for me. The majority of the community population was White.	Predominantly White community	Community ethnicity	Personal environment	Contextual Factors

Evidence of Trustworthiness

The maintenance of trustworthiness followed the proposed steps presented in Chapter 3. Trustworthiness is the degree to which the researcher has confidence in the data analysis process which produced the study's results (Nowell et al., 2017). To increase trustworthiness, the data analysis procedures in this study upheld integrity and complied with research guidelines. I showed that the data analysis procedures used in this study were accurate, thorough, and consistent with the IPA methodology. To increase the study's trustworthiness, I disclosed all stages and steps in the data analysis process to allow readers to accept the study's credibility. I further described evidence of trustworthiness in the credibility, dependability, and confirmability sections.

Credibility

In qualitative research, credibility refers to whether the findings of the study are accurate. Credibility validates that this study captured Black Caribbeans' experience transitioning cultural identity status from dominant to minority accurately based on the study's research question and methodologies. A variety of steps were taken to create credibility in this study. Verbatim transcriptions, member checks, saturation, and triangulation were used to increase credibility in this study.

Since credibility depends on whether the study's findings are accurate, it was essential to ensure that the data collected from the twelve participants were accurate. To increase the study's credibility, I manually transcribed each participant's data verbatim. I repeated the verbatim transcription process several times to ensure that I captured the Black Caribbean immigrant participants' experience transitioning their cultural identity status post-migration to the United States accurately. The verbatim transcription was essential because it ensured that the data analysis was conducted with reliable data. To go a step further in establishing credibility, I verified the validity of the transcribed data. The transcribed data were sent to each Black Caribbean participant to validate the accuracy. All twelve participants validated their data and added any pertinent information they forgot to mention during the interview. The participants were also encouraged to contact me if they had additional information to add to their experience. The participants were updated about the progress of the study.

Saturation was used to assist with increasing the credibility of the study. Saturation occurs when information is repeated in the study. No new information

emerged in the data collection process with the Black Caribbeans about their experience transitioning their identity status post-migration. Reaching saturation in the study allowed me to increase the credibility of the study.

Additionally, triangulation was used to increase the credibility of the study.

Triangulation increased the credibility of this study because it allowed me to use multiple methods and data sources to understand the experiences of Black Caribbeans' experience transitioning their cultural identity status from dominant to a minority. I used multiple methods to recruit participants. Flyers were posted in an Afro-Caribbean Community Facebook group, distributed by friends and family members, and posted on Caribbean immigration center bulletin boards to recruit participants. Triangulation obtained through the data sources and participants' demographic information also played a role in the credibility established in the study's findings (Denzin, 2009; Fusch & Ness, 2015). Ultimately, the steps taken throughout the study increased the credibility of the study.

Transferability

Transferability refers to if the findings of this study can be duplicated and readers can draw parallels for comparable situations in other areas (Patton, 2015). The burden is placed on the individual attempting to apply the findings elsewhere and not on the researcher of this study. However, the construct of this study will provide support for further understanding of the experiences of other populations transitioning their cultural identity status post-migration. To increase transferability, I provided detailed information about how this study's findings could be applied to other populations who have a similar experience transitioning their cultural identity status. Rich details were provided about

Black Caribbeans experience transitioning their cultural identity, the reason for migration, how they adjusted to the migration process, how interactions with other people played a role in their experience, and information about overlapping factors in their experience. Participant excerpts were also included in efforts to increase transferability. Ultimately, the disclosure of sufficient descriptive information about this study can provide insight that allows readers to determine the effectiveness of the findings for their unique circumstances.

Dependability

Dependability refers to the findings in this study are consistent and can be replicated (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015). Human behavior is not static. Therefore, it would not be easy to gain the same results if the study is replicated. In addition, identity transition is fluid and not linear (Benson, 2006). As demonstrated by the findings of this study, many factors of uncertainty played a role in the cultural identity status transitioning process. As such, replication could be difficult. However, to increase the study's dependability, I recorded and shared descriptive details about the procedural approaches and protocols to ensure readers could replicate the study and gain similar results. If duplicated, descriptive information on data gathering, data processing, and interpretation procedures detailed in this study can improve the reliability and consistency of the findings. Such information will increase the study's dependability because the reader will know the deciding factors and methodology used throughout the study.

Confirmability

The degree of objectivity in the study findings is referred to as confirmability in qualitative research (Patton, 2015). An audit trail was used to demonstrate this study's confirmability. The audit trails maintained throughout the study increase visibility and comprehension, which allows readers to connect interpretations and findings to the facts. As a result, I constructed and maintained an audit trail throughout the data analysis process to ensure that I did not tamper with the results. In addition, my dissertation committee reviewed every step taken in the data analysis process in the study to increase confirmability. The review of the dissertation committee allowed me to manage bias which increased the confirmability of the study. I also used reflexive bracketing methods such as memos, bracketing interviews, and journaling throughout every stage of the study to eliminate any potential bias and increase confirmability.

Results

All participants reported that this was their first time participating in a study related to their experience transitioning their cultural identity status from dominant to minority. Participants described their cultural transition experience as good, bad, or complicated. Participants who described having a complicated experience explained having different contributing factors which led to a good and bad experience. Five superordinate themes were identified in answering the research question based on the in-depth review and data analysis of the participants' experiences with the studied phenomenon. These five superordinate themes were: contextual factors, social support, social mobility, stressors, and emotional reactions. The five superordinate themes

comprised seven themes. The contextual factors superordinate theme comprises two themes: personal factors and environmental factors. The social support superordinate theme comprises of support and preparation. The social mobility superordinate does not have any themes. The stressors superordinate theme comprises two themes: race-related stressors and acculturation stressors. The emotional reaction superordinate theme comprises two themes: happiness and sadness. Each of the themes was connected to 60 theme clusters (see Table 5).

Table 5*Superordinate Themes, Themes, and Theme Clusters*

Superordinate Theme	Themes	Theme Cluster	Participant Identifier
Contextual Factors	Personal factors	Culture, relationships, education, employment, ethnic community, interactions, institutions, migrant development stage, and migration reason	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11 & P12
	Environmental factors	Living conditions, homes, transportation, geographical location, pollution, and weather	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11 & P12
Social Support	Social support and preparation	Family support, parental support, dominant culture support, and preparations	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11 & P12
Social Mobility		Upward mobility, downward mobility, socioeconomic background, and finances	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11 & P12
Stressors	Race-related stressors	Discrimination, racism, colorism, opportunity limitations, segregation, inferiority, stereotypes, racial inequality, identity status, loss of identity, mistaken identity, invisible identity, regaining identity, and dual identity	P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P9, P11 & P12
	Acculturation stressors	Acculturation strategies, dominant culture acknowledgment, cultural practice maintenance, cultural bereavement, cultural resettlement, cultural inclusivity, cultural preference, acculturation pressures, coping strategies, and acculturation difficulties	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7 & P12
Emotional Reaction	Happiness	Appreciation, positive outcomes, positive coping strategies, beliefs, support and preparations, personality traits, and cognitive appraisal	P1, P2, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9 & P10
	Sadness	Challenges, depreciation, stress, bereavements, and loss	P3, P6, P11 & P12

Superordinate Theme 1: Contextual Factors

The first theme that appeared to be prevalent among all the Black Caribbean participants in this study was contextual factors. The contextual factors overarching superordinate theme refers to relevant components impacting the participant's cultural identity transition experience. This superordinate theme was the most prevalent across the study's sampled population of Black Caribbeans. The participants in this study had personal and environmental contextual factors which impacted their experience transitioning from dominant to minority.

Personal Factors

Some personal, contextual factors influencing the participants are their developmental stage at the time of migration, personality, migration reason, and coping abilities. A major contextual factor that impacted the participants in this study was their age/developmental stage of migration and their reason for migrating to the host country. Most participants migrated as adolescents, whereas a small portion of the sample migrated as adults. P1, P7, P8, and P10 were adult migrants who had a different migration than P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P9, P11, and P12 adolescent migrants in the study. The adult migrants were the migration decision makers. The adults were more prepared to make the necessary adjustments in the host country than the adolescent migrants. Ultimately, the adult migrants had a more positive outlook on their migration process than adolescent migrants. P1, P7, P8, and P10 rationalized having to adjust post-migration to survive in the host country because they were involved in making the migration decision. P10 stated, "I knew coming here meant I had to lose the life and

status my family held in Barbados. I knew I had to start from scratch because this was different from my country. Migration means starting over for me.” Therefore, the adult migrants’ rationalization allowed them to have a positive experience in the cultural transition process than most adolescent migrants.

In comparison, unlike the adult migrants who rationalized the changes, most adolescent migrants felt unprepared for the identity transition experience. P2, P3, P5, P6, and P12 described difficulties rationalizing the changes because they were unprepared for the migration process or the cultural identity transitioning experience.

P2 stated:

A few of my aunts lived here, and we visited one summer. Then Mom decided that we should stay and live here. I was surprised by the migration, which made me feel like she forced us to come here. I remember telling all my friends that I would see them when I got home from vacation, but I had no idea we were going to stay.

Such surprise of not being a part of the migration decision-making process caused many adolescent migrant participants to have a negative cultural identity transition experience. Consequently, not being involved in the migration process caused adolescent migrant participants to expect the status quo from their native country post-migration and not cognitively reframe their expectations in the host country post-migration. P2, P3, P6, P9, P11, and P12 adolescent migrants described feeling free in their native countries because they had all their desires and necessities met due to their parents’ dominant status. However, the sense of feeling free changed for most adolescent migrant

participants because their new minority status in the host country caused much financial hardship and other struggles. In their native country, their dominant status allowed most adolescent migrant participants, such as P2, P3, P6, P11, and P12, to feel pampered and privileged to be part of the majority. Those adolescent migrants did not feel prepared for the changes associated with transitioning to minority status. P2, P3, P6, and P12 adolescent migrants described being unprepared for the drastic changes that made them gain a negative outlook on the experience. P6 stated, “Too many changes happened simultaneously, and I was unprepared for them. I just wasn't prepared to lose my identity. I looked at everything negatively, which led to a difficult experience.” Therefore, the adolescent migrant participant's lack of psychological altering their expectations made them feel unprepared for the changes associated with transitioning from a dominant to a minority post-migration.

The positive outlook the adult migrants and a few adolescent migrant participants such as P4, P5, and P9 demonstrated were mainly due to positive cognitive abilities and having amiable personalities. P4, P5, P8, P9, and P10 described having a pleasant and friendly personality which helped them gain positive social interactions with others during their experience. P9 described using his amiable personality to make friends easily and identify commonalities with dominant culture members, which led to a positive transition experience. In addition, P4, P5, P8, and P10 also described using amiable personalities as being friendly and pleasant to gain an easy experience transitioning their identities. P4 stated, “my friendly personality, being understanding, and supportive of others helped me have an easy journey.” P8 stated, “people always liked me everywhere I

went because I was very friendly, especially when working in the field. Socially I always had good interactions with others no matter their color or culture, they always gravitate to my personality.” Therefore, the participants amiable personality facilitated an amenable cultural identity transitioning experience for Black Caribbean participants.

Participants used different coping styles to the drastic changes in their cultural identity transitioning experience. Some participants described utilizing coping strategies such as lowering expectations (P7 and P10), obtaining social support (P3, P4, P5, P8, P10, and P11), cognitive reappraisal (P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, P10, and P11), and accepting their changes (P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, P10, and P11). These participants coping strategies, mainly the adult migrants, fueled an easy experience because it increased their abilities to cope with stressors positively. By contrast, some migrants utilized coping strategies such as self-isolation (P2, P6, and P12) and avoidance (P2, P6, and P12) to cope with stressors. Using those coping strategies caused those Black Caribbean immigrants to have a negative outlook and experience. Ultimately, participants who used those coping strategies had difficulties dealing with stressors throughout their experience.

Additionally, the participant's reason for migration was a personal, contextual factor that determined how they experienced and perceived their identity transition. Some participants migrated to reunite with family members (P4, P5, P8, P10 and P11) while others migrated for opportunities (P1, P2, P3, P6, P7, P9, and P12). The participants who migrated to reunite with loved ones described having a more positive experience than those who migrated for other reasons. Those participants described feeling happy to

reunite with their loved ones. They also easily embraced the changes during the cultural transition experience because they appreciated reuniting with loved ones.

In contrast, some participants migrated to increase opportunities unavailable in their native country. P1, P2, P3, P6, P7, P9, and P12 migrated for increased educational and employment opportunities. Most of those participants focused their migration on the perception depicted of the host country through media. P11 stated, “Coming here to New York is so different from what is on TV. I expected more based on what I saw on TV. I never expected so many challenges, which probably caused me to look at everything negatively.” P12 stated, “Life in America is not as glamorous as it appears on TV. It requires a lot as a minority in this country, and I struggled because I was not prepared for the multiple drastic adjustments.” In addition, some participants who migrated for opportunities described needing family members who migrated to this country before them. They felt unprepared for the changes in the process and needed more support. Ultimately, some participants had a negative experience because their lack of preparation caused individuals in this population to struggle with embracing their new identity status and dealing with stressors appropriately.

Moreover, it is essential to note that the decision-making for the migration only involved the adults. No adolescent migrant participants were involved in deciding the reason for migration. Even if the reason for migration was for the betterment of the adolescent, they were still not involved in the decision-making process. P3 stated, “After I completed college at home, my mom decided to move us here for me to get more opportunities.” These participants described having negative feelings towards the reason

for migration even though the migration reason revolved around their future. Ultimately, the participants who were involved in the migration decision-making process felt more prepared for the changes than those who were not involved in the migration decision-making process.

Environmental Factors

This theme refers to changes in the Black Caribbean's immediate surroundings, which affect how they adjusted to the migration process. The participant's destination in the migration process was predetermined, and they had no control over the environment they migrated into. The predetermined environments influenced their experiences transitioning their identity status. In addition, the physical environment played a role in the experiences of Black Caribbeans transitioning their identity status post-migration. All the participants recalled some environmental factors that played a role in their experiences. The physical environment was external surroundings and conditions which played a role in the participant's experience. All the participants described how exposure to new physical environmental factors determined how they felt about their experience in the cultural identity status transitioning process. All participants described environmental factors such as weather change, homes, pollution, and transportation played a role in adjusting to their migration in their transition experience. P11 stated: "The drastic change was the weather; it was freezing here. We did not have that weather in Jamaica. I did not like the weather change, which initially affected my feelings about migrating. I missed home."

Additionally, P8 stated:

I also arrived at night. But when daylight hit, I was like, wow, this is America. It had garbage and roaches. The street was all filthy. I was like, I want to go back home. They had a lot of burnt-down buildings and abandoned places and all that; I was like, wow. It was terrible because we did not have those things in Jamaica. Jamaica is clean, and we do not have dirty streets or abandoned places. You know, in Jamaica, we take pride in our island.

Additionally, geographical location played a role in participants' experiences. P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, and P12 described how migrating to the north (New York) allowed them to have a more pleasant experience because of the large Black population in this area of the U.S. When participants migrated to the south (Florida and Georgia) they had increase stress because of increased presence of dominant cultural members. P1 was the only participant who migrated to the south. P1 described having a lot of stress when she migrated to a predominantly White community in Florida. She mentioned having difficulties accepting her new minority status living amongst Whites in Florida because it intensified her cultural identity transition process. P1 stated:

My transition in Florida was a little difficult. Living there was a culture shock for me. I felt the effects of being the minority when I lived in Florida. That prompted me to relocate to New York. New York felt like home. More people looked like me, and there is a huge West Indian population here in Brooklyn.

P12 experienced the reverse of P1. P12 first migrated to a state in the north of the host country. The participant described having to relocate later during the cultural transition

journey to the south (Georgia). The participant explained how his cultural experience intensified after moving to the south. P12 stated:

In Georgia, I felt the difference in status. In New York the biggest challenges were cultural. However, in Georgia I experienced increased stress because I felt effects of the majority versus minority environment. I never had to consider my identity status until I moved to the south.

Therefore, the geographical location where the participants lived played a role in their experience being positive or negative. However, all the participants adjusted to environmental factors over time in their experiences. Difficulties tied to environmental factors dissipated over time. However, the participants' social environment played a role in the dissipation of the physical environmental challenges.

Social environmental factors also played a role in all the participants' experiences transitioning their identity status. The social environment refers to how other people in the environment played a role in the participant's cultural identity status transition experience. Throughout the semi-structured interviews, all the participants described how interactions, relationships, culture, individual racial background in their communities, social settings, and individuals in institutions such as school and work impacted their experience transitioning their cultural identity status from dominant to a minority post-migration. Adolescent migrant participants experienced more challenges in their social environment than adult migrant participants. Most adolescent migrants described having trouble due to cultural differences in the school system. P3 mentioned having increased stress because she was demoted to a lower-class level in the school system because the

Caribbean and U.S. had different education standards. This participant was forced to return to high school in the host country after completing college in her native country.

The return to high school played a significant role in how she interacted with others in the school system because she thought she was more mature and academically advanced than her peers. P2 experienced being teased for having a different culture than his peers in the school system. Consequently, the teasing from other minority students made him develop a negative perception of his new identity status and the cultural identity transition experience. P2 stated:

When I came to this country and went to school, I was excited to see many different types of children. We had Hispanics, Indians, African Americans, Africans, and more. I was eager to learn about their cultures, but it was challenging. The kids at school teased me and called me derogatory names because of my West Indian culture. That had a negative domino effect because I started looking at minorities differently. I did not want to associate myself with being identified as a minority.

Except for P9 who used positive coping mechanisms, all the other adolescent migrant participants struggled in their social environment because of cultural differences. P9 utilizes his love for a new culture, sports, and friendly personality to adjust to his social environment. However, the other adolescent participants focused on the differences that arise in their social environment. Some participants described other factors that caused increased stress in their social environment, were the school system protocols. Apparently, in New York City, minority schools have protocols that make some of the

participants feel criminalized. P2, P3, P6, P11, and P12 explained how they experienced having to be searched by school security guards every morning before entering the school building. These participants recalled having an undercover police presence in their minority-populated schools. However, when they visited predominantly White schools, they noted that it was evident that minority children were viewed differently than their White peers. P2 stated:

I was surprised to see that every morning to enter my high school, I had to walk through metal detectors and have my bags scanned and searched before entering the building. The school hallways were also plagued with undercover detectives waiting for us to mess up. I felt like a criminal. However, when I visited White schools for Basketball tournaments, I realized that White kids weren't subjected to the same criminalized school protocols as Blacks and Hispanics in minority schools. White children feel free, while we were left to feel like criminals before we did anything wrong. No trust or hope was given to minority students in the New York school system.

P6 also stated:

I experienced feeling fear when I entered school in the mornings because I knew one unfortunate mistake or wrong accusation by the security guards could be detrimental to my future. I didn't feel safe in New York City high schools, and it wasn't because of my peers; it was primarily because of the presence of law enforcement.

Therefore, the adolescent migrant participants had increased stress from various social and environmental factors. In contrast, the adult migrant participants had a different experience in their social environments. All participants described having all pleasant encounters in their workplace and other social settings. P8 stated, “People always liked me everywhere I went because I was very friendly, especially when working in the field. Socially I always interacted well with others no matter their color or culture; they always gravitate to my personality.” As such, the adult participants demonstrated more positive experiences and reduced stress because they encountered no negativity in their social environment. Ultimately, the participants' social environment significantly influenced the cultural transition experience.

Superordinate Theme 2: Social Support

The second superordinate theme prevalent amongst all the participants was social support. This overarching superordinate theme refers to how others provided emotional and practical support to the participant during their cultural identity transition experiences. The importance of social support was evident throughout the sample in this study. P3, P4, P5, P8, P10, and P11 described having a positive experience transitioning from dominant to a minority because of the support and preparation they received from others. Individuals provided social support by preparing the participant for changes during the cultural identity transition experience. The support and preparation gained from others were critical in the participants' everyday lives because they allowed them to reduce the stress associated with their cultural identity transition. P4, P8, P10, and P12 had family members who had already lived in the host country before they migrated who

provided support. The participants noted that some of those family members prepared them for P8 stated, “My husband, my sister, and many of my friends lived here before me. They prepared me for what to expect before entering the country.” The preparation gained from others before migration allowed the participants to accept their new minority status post-migration and embrace changes associated with their new identity which essentially reduce stress during the transitioning process.

P10 noted:

I never had a bad transition. My sister was here in the US way longer than I was, plus my husband was living here before we came up, so I knew a little about what to expect. They told me how to navigate in the US as a minority and what things to avoid. Therefore, even though I saw how Blacks were placed at the bottom through things shown on television, I never experienced those things. My family’s preparation made my transition smooth, and I received the minority identity with no problem.

Therefore, the preparation gained from others before and during the cultural identity transition process facilitated a positive experience and acceptance of the new identity in the host country.

Additionally, some participants did not only gain preparation they also gained support from others. P3, P4, P5, P8, P9, and P10 received support from others during their cultural identity transition process which facilitated a positive experience. However, those participants who received support gained it from different sources in their social environment. P3 and P4 gained parental support, which allowed them to navigate

stressors successfully. P3 stated, "My mother kept me grounded, reminding me to look ahead and not at the past." These participants described having an easy time navigating stressors because they felt like their parents cared about their experience. P4 described being separated from her mother at a young age because her parent migrated to the U.S. As such, gaining support from her mother post-migration during the cultural transition process meant a lot to this participant, allowing her to appreciate the changes in her experience.

In comparison, P8, P9, P10, and P11 gained social support and preparation from family members who migrated to the U.S. before them. These individuals explained that it brought them comfort during their identity transition experience to have support from others who lived in the host country before them.

P11 stated:

I had cousins who migrated to America before me. They were like older mentors for us, the little ones. They cared for us regarding how to navigate school, the neighborhood, and different things during the transition. That eliminated the stress for me when I came to this country.

Essentially, participants with family members who lived in the host country before them felt like they had a blueprint on the cultural transition process. However, not all the participants received social support from their family members.

P5 received social support and preparation from non-relational individuals from the dominant African American culture. This participant noted that when she failed to gain support and preparation from family members who lived in the host country before

her, her African American friends stepped in and provided the necessary support and preparation during the transition process. The participant explained that the acceptance and support gained from African Americans made her accept the minority status quickly with reduced stress. P5 noted, "I felt accepted and welcomed by African Americans. They were there for me. They supported and prepared me for the transition. That made me acculturate and accept the minority status quickly." Overall, participants who gained support and preparation from others, whether relational or non-relational, described being able to navigate stressors healthily, cope appropriately, appraise changes positively, and adapt quickly to the minority status.

Participants who did not have support and preparation from others during the cultural identity transition process described having difficulties and a negative experience. P1, P2, P6, P7, and P12 explained that they did not have any support from others during their cultural identity status experience. Some adolescent migrants explained not having parental support. Those participants felt lost and unprepared for their identity status change without support and preparation from their parents. P2 described not having any support from his parent:

As a teenager growing up in a new country where I had to get used to being a minority who faced a lot of prejudice and injustice in this country, it would have been nice to have my mom or someone to help me through my transition experience. I did not have that.

Participants who lack social support shared those sentiments as they described having more difficulty navigating stressors, coping appropriately, appraised changes negatively,

and could not accept the minority status. Hence, having no social support left some participants to navigate their cultural experiences alone. All participants who had no support described feeling lost and alone during the process, leading them to becoming resistant to the minority identity. Having social support was crucial for all the participants.

P5 stated:

Support is essential, and one could expect support from family during their transition, but it doesn't always come from family. Support can come in different forms. It can come from outsiders. Parents assume that we should know certain things when we come here instead of preparing us for it, talking us through our experience, giving us a road map, and shedding light on the adjustments required through the transition. Some parents bring you here at a young age, and you have no say in that decision-making process, and they don't take the time to prepare you for what is ahead. Black Caribbeans should know that help is necessary during their journey and be open to receiving that support from individuals who sometimes don't look, sound or share the same culture as you.

Throughout the cultural identity status transition, the participants in this study acknowledged that their social encounters and support from others facilitated a positive cultural identity transition experience. Participants without support or preparation for the cultural identity transition process demonstrated experiencing more difficulties. Social support and preparation from others are essential for a positive experience. Ultimately,

the support and preparation facilitated a positive experience for Black Caribbeans and influenced the acceptance or rejection of their new minority status post-migration.

Superordinate Theme 3: Social Mobility

The social mobility overarching superordinate theme refers to how the changes to the participant's social class played a role in their experience transitioning their cultural identity status from dominant to a minority post-migration to the U.S. This superordinate theme was identified in interview questions that explored the participants' social class. All the participants' experience was influenced by a change to their social class post-migration. The participant and family members' social status changed from one to another on the social hierarchy. All the participants in the study experienced their social status changing post-migration. Participants social class moved upward or downward. Upward mobility refers to the participant and their family members' social status moving from a lower position to a higher position on the social hierarchy post-migration to the U.S. However, not all the participants had upward mobility. Other participants in the sample had downward mobility. Downward mobility refers to the participant and family members' social class dropping from a higher position to a lower position on the social hierarchy post-migration.

Participants described how upward mobility allowed a positive experience in their identity status process. P1, P4, and P5 had an upward mobility post-migration which influenced their identity status experience. Participants explained that they had increased wealth, resources, finances, occupation, and opportunities. Participants revealed that they

did not have to adjust because of the upgrade of social class because they gained more in the host country than in their native country.

P1 stated:

If you ask me, it was not a significant adjustment. I felt great coming here and establishing some form of wealth. I was young when I left Grenada, so it felt great not having to struggle, not that we struggled in Grenada, but life was way more comfortable financially here than in the islands.

Also, P4 stated:

It was easy for me because we had a better living situation here than in Monserrat. In Monserrat, we do not have access to as much stuff as we do here in the US. Even though we lived in our own house in Monserrat, we had to transition to living in a building in the US. However, we had more opportunities, such as education, healthcare, food, clothing, entertainment, and more than when I lived in Monserrat.

P5 said:

One thing that stayed on my mind when I came here is to not ever be in that position again where I am in a lower class or do not have options and have to accept whatever is given to me. I have worked hard since I came to this country. I transitioned my identity, and my social class was adjusted to have financial freedom, be more financially responsible, and have no debt because I fear being broke again.

In contrast, most of the participants who had downward mobility noted that they had a negative cultural identity status transition experience. P2, P3, P6, and P12 had negative experiences adjusting to their new social status because of their downward mobility. These participants described having many changes associated with their social class status downgrading. Participants recalled having to alter their life because of the downward mobility.

P12 stated:

It was challenging to adjust to my new lower status. One thing is that America changed us. The social class downgrade caused a lot of financial struggles for us. We started asking for more here because the country is so materialistic. We did not require much as kids when we were in Antigua. When we came to this country, my mom had to work jobs that she would never have worked back in Antigua. Being in a low socioeconomic background because of my social status change made it apparent that my status was switched from a majority to a minority.

Moreover, the participant's perception of the social status downgrade played a significant role on how they perceived their cultural identity transitioning in the host country. When the Black Caribbean participants viewed other minority groups as being less than for possessing a lower social class, the participant were more likely to reject their new minority cultural identity status. However, their negative perception of having a lower social class were based on their ideologies gained in their native countries and how they viewed minority groups in the same social class.

P8 stated:

Welfare is the lower class to me. I tell people I am not poor cause in Jamaica, we do not consider you poor once you can afford somewhere to live and have food to eat; you give God thanks. However, coming here and having my social class adjusted to the same as Black Americans on welfare, even though I had a job, made me extremely sad to be considered a minority.

Therefore, the social class downgrade also fueled the rejection of the minority status which affected the Black Caribbeans cultural identity transitioning experience from dominant to a minority. Ultimately, participants and their family members who experienced downward mobility, had to work in lower positions than they had in their native country, with limited resources, limited opportunities, and financial struggles. Consequentially, the shift in the participants' social class caused them to exert themselves to regain the social class held in their native country. One significant way the Black Caribbean participants exert themselves to retrieve their original social class held in the native country is through continuously striving to increase their socioeconomic achievements. Participants with downward or upward mobility demonstrated the utilization of socioeconomic achievements as a social class adjustment tool in the host country. Participants who experienced downward mobility used socioeconomic achievements to regain their social status advantages.

P12 stated:

Pressures placed on me from living in a materialistic and vain place like America pushed me to keep the cultural practice of striving for economic achievements. I

desperately wanted to regain my original social class, and economic achievements gave me that opportunity.

In addition, the participant's perceptions of their downward mobility were also based on how they socially interact with the dominant cultures in the host culture. Some adolescent migrant participants felt pressured by other dominant African American culture members to require materialistic things they could not afford because of the financial constraint of downward mobility. P2 stated, "Bullying from Black American children placed a lot of pressure on me to fit in, even though our income couldn't support the lifestyle after our social class was lowered here in America." Social interactions influenced the participant's downward mobility during the cultural identity transition process.

Black Caribbeans with upward mobility utilized the achievements to maintain their new class in fear of returning to not having financial stability or resources.

P5 stated:

One thing that stayed on my mind when I came here is never to want to be in that position again where I am in a lower class or do not have options and have to accept whatever is given to me. That is where my mentality of working hard and other Caribbean people also. I want to ensure that I never go back to where I do not have options in life and live in poverty. Once you hit rock bottom, you never want to go back there, so that helped motivate me to go to college, start my own business, and things of that sort. I worked hard in school and everywhere else.

That is where I see education comes into play; it allowed me to climb the economic ladder and maintain my newfound financial stability.

Therefore, the Black Caribbean participant's socioeconomic achievements significantly influenced their cultural identity transition experience.

Participants also described utilizing socioeconomic achievements as an adjustment tool after their social class changed to deal with their cultural identity status transitioning post-migration. Black Caribbean participants explained that they did not fully understand the cultural identity concept when they entered the United States. They exerted themselves by becoming hardworking because they felt socioeconomic achievements could assist with regaining their dominant status.

P10 stated:

We never had that concept, or should I say we never had to think about that concept of our identity status because we were all Black in our countries. Many Caribbean people believe that minorities and the majority are based on treatment. We based it on how we feel. At least I know that I did, and those close to me also based it on that because it was the only way we could wrap our heads around the difference there and here. When you hear the word minority, it makes you feel less than others. Especially since society treats Blacks here as if we are at the bottom. So, Black Caribbean people are constantly looking for ways to remove themselves from the bottom by achieving more economically.

P5 further explained why Black Caribbeans used socioeconomic achievements post-migration:

We Caribbeans believe that having an education means success, but having the good education we were taught to strive for does not imply regaining your majority status. Most Caribbeans work extra hard to regain that majority status. We believe that applying ourselves and climbing the education and economic ladder will make us feel like we have regained that status. No matter how hard we work, we can never be equal to Whites here. When Caribbeans come here, and we think that we will magically erase that history and achieve more and somewhat be looked at as an equal, that is an illusion in my experience. With that being said, how can we ever regain a feeling? Cause let us be honest, by the makeup of this country, we are not the majority, so we Caribbeans are chasing a feeling when we migrated here. It is the feeling of being important, the sense of being seen, the feeling like you have the same opportunities as we did as the majority in the islands, and the feeling of being equal to our White counterparts. However, I feel like I am running a race here, and Whites had a head start because this is their country, and no matter what I do, I can never catch up.

P1 also stated:

No one talks about how hard you have to work to be seen by the majority in this country. When I came here, I realized that we must push ourselves so hard to get a good education, get good careers, and lift ourselves a little more just to fit into the culture and be seen by the majority. We believe that if educated, we can be at a higher level and not be seen as just another Black face in this country. That is why seeing so many Caribbean people go for higher education degrees is normal. It

gives us a different identity than the low minority status we are forced to accept in this country.

Ultimately, participants explained they continuously pursued higher socioeconomic achievements to regain advantages of being the dominant culture in the host country.

Superordinate Theme 4: Stressors

The stressors overarching superordinate theme refers to having situations or events that caused participants to feel stress during their cultural identity status transitioning post-migration to the United States. This superordinate theme was identified in interview questions that explored the participant's experience adjusting from one identity status to another post-migration. All the participants expressed experiencing stressors in their transition process. However, some participants had a more effortless experience than others. Many Black Caribbean participants in the study had a lot of stressors, while others had minimal stressors. The stressors superordinate theme comprises two themes. The themes are race-related stressors and acculturation stressors.

Race-Related Stressors

The race-related stressors refer to the encounter of challenges associated with the participant's racial background during their cultural identity status transition experience. Eight out of the twelve participants in the study described encountering racial bias, which increased stress during their cultural identity status transitioning experience. P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P9, P11, and P12 shared rich details about negative situations and events they encountered because of their race. Some of the race-related stressors the eight

participants shared from their experiences were discrimination, racism, colorism, opportunity limitations, segregation, applied stereotypical views, and racial inequality.

P9 stated:

But everything was not peachy cream; I had my issues because I was in a situation where I was not the majority. I had some situations where I had to deal with some racial issues. Especially in the military, it was more segregated. I became a supervisor in a predominantly White division, and my assistant and I were Black. We were less than 10% of the division. Some of the individuals took offense to that situation. We do not know what they said behind our backs, but in my face, they called me the N word and said, “Why don't I go back to where I came from.”

Race-related stressors affected how some of the participants felt about their minority identity status in the experience. P12 stated:

I experienced colorism. It was mainly from light-skinned, Black, and Hispanic people. It shocked me, but I was most surprised by Blacks and colorism because when we fill out a demographic section, we all have to check the same box. There is no light-skinned or medium Black category. There is only a Black Category. That experience from Blacks in the South made me feel rejected by Black Americans. It made my transition a little bit more difficult.

Moreover, participants with darker complexion believed that race-related stressors were worse base on skin tone. Some participants thought there were advantages to being a light-skinned Black Caribbean individual in the host country. Dark-skinned Black

Caribbeans felt their skin tone placed them at a disadvantage, and they experienced more race-related issues than their light-skinned Black Caribbean peers. P6 stated, “I could see and feel the difference; you know the difference in the treatment when you have darker skin color like mine as opposed to other Black individuals with lighter complexions.” In addition, those participants who experienced colorism described having it severely applied by minority group members more than Whites in the host country. P12 mentioned, “Colorism was mainly from light-skinned Blacks and Hispanics.” Therefore, race-related stressors were detrimental to the cultural identity transition experience when applied by individuals in minority groups. Participants described that it was difficult accepting their cultural identity transition when being judged for their skin tone by individuals in the minority community. Additionally, some participants experience stress from losing their identity due to acculturation and racial consolidation. P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, and P13 had increased acculturation stress because of identity loss. Many of these participants described having increased stress from being mistaken for other cultures, which left them feeling like they had an invisible identity. P1 stated, “I was frustrated that people identify me as everything except Black Caribbean or West Indian. I just wanted others to respect me for my identity as a Black Grenadian woman and not couple me with other ethnicities.” Ultimately, the race-related issues the participants experience affected various areas in their cultural identity status transition process.

Acculturation Stressors

The acculturation stressors refer to stress that emerges from conflicts during the cultural identity status transition process associated with adapting to the dominant culture

in the host country. A large portion of the Black Caribbean participants in the sample for the study described having stressors associated with acculturation. P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, and P12 had acculturation stressors during the cultural identity status experience. The acculturation stressors are associated with the interaction with the dominant culture, the acknowledgment of the dominant culture members, pressures to acculturate, and difficulties that arise in the cultural identity status transition experience because of the participant adapting to the dominant culture.

P7 stated:

The Black Americans do not like us Caribbean people because of our accomplishments, such as employment. That is why I keep away from them as much as possible. I only deal with them if I have to. I only stick with my people because I know them and their family backgrounds. When some Caribbeans come here, they try so hard to be like the Black Americans and then get surprised when Whites treat them like they are one. Not me; I keep my same traditions. I do not experience those things because I stay true to my roots.

This participant refused to adapt to the dominant Black culture in the host culture.

Therefore, rejection from the dominant culture made this participant utilize a separation acculturation strategy. Those acculturative stressors determined what acculturation strategies the participant used. Other participants described other factors that determined their acculturation strategy without the stressors. In addition, the participants provided rich details about experiencing increased levels of acculturative stress because of stressors they encountered. P4 explained that having White family members in her native

country prepared her for acculturation during the cultural identity status transitioning experience.

P4 stated:

I never had a bad encounter with Whites here because we were taught from a young age not to focus on skin color since our family had some Whites. My interaction with Whites here and in Monserrat has always been pleasant. That made me open to the acculturation process with either dominant culture.

However, no matter how accepting the participant was of the White American culture, all participants in this study preferred to either acculturate to the African American culture by utilizing an integration acculturation strategy or only retain their native culture with the separation strategy. Some participants felt pressured to acculturate to African American culture.

P12 stated:

African Americans teased and bullied me for being too educated or not speaking Ebonics. They called me a sellout and whitewashed me. The teasing forced me to adjust to their culture fast. It was to adapt to the culture or get teased for being different. I choose to adapt. That made me feel pressured to assimilate into African American culture.

Ultimately, the social interactions with the dominant culture played a role in the acculturation strategy utilized during the cultural identity transitioning experience. A few participants described negative interactions with the dominant Black American culture members. However, the pressures to acculturate still forced them to utilize an integration

strategy despite the negative social interactions. P1, P2, P3, P6, P9, and P12 described developing a dual identity to separate the two cultural identities distinctively when the integration strategy was used.

P1 stated:

I had a different personality when I interacted with Black Caribbeans from when I interacted with African Americans. I cannot be the same around both groups because of differences. Blacks did not have it that easy here in America, and they still do not. They felt the effects of slavery longer than we did in the Caribbean. It caused psychological damage. Caribbean people speak like they are free, and African Americans talk like they are in bondage.

However, the Black Caribbean participants described that it was pretty easy to maintain the two separate identities. P3 stated, "I found it easier to operate differently when interacting with the two cultures." Many participants who described developing dual identities in the cultural identity transition experience explained that cultural differences were a primary factor in developing and maintaining the two separate identities.

In contrast, some participants opt to utilize the separation acculturation strategy because of stressors. Some Black Caribbean participants felt African Americans did not like Black Caribbeans.

P7 stated:

Black Americans do not like us Caribbean people... That is why I keep away from them as much as possible. I only stick with my people and traditions. When

some Caribbeans come here, they try so hard to be like the Black Americans and then get surprised when Whites treat them like they are one.

Therefore, rejection from dominant culture members caused Black Caribbean participants to use the separation acculturation strategy. In addition, Black Caribbean participants felt assimilation subjected them to increase acculturative stress because of race-related stressors associated with African Americans.

Additionally, some of the participants refused to acculturate because they had issues with the assigned term for the dominant Black American group. Some participants had difficulty accepting their identity status and acculturating to the Black American culture because they did not like the word African American. The participants described hatred of the assigned term for Black Americans because it did not represent their true identities. Participants believed that the term African American displaced Black Americans from their country of origin.

P7 stated:

I do not believe in that term, African American. They know nothing about Africa. There is also no concrete evidence that they are from Africa. This term only confuses them about what country they belong to, which causes them to have no sense of belonging to this land. That is why most of them have identity confusion. They are Americans. You can say Black US-born or Black Americans; now that is a fact because they are Black and were born here in America.

Hence, issues with the term African American further perpetuated the segregation between the two groups in the Black diaspora. It led to those individuals choosing

separation acculturation strategy and difficulty accepting the minority identity status, especially since they believe the displacement of African American terms is the root cause of discriminatory and prejudiced acts toward the minority group.

Furthermore, cultural barriers were also an acculturation stressor. Many participants wanted to interact socially and gain acceptance from dominant group members. However, most participants described that cultural barrier such as accent issues played a negative role in communication with dominant culture members. Consequently, the accent barriers limited interactions with dominant culture members, which led to some participants feeling rejected. P4, P6, and P10 described having difficulty losing their native accent. The difficulty losing the native accent cause P4, P6, and P10 to have limited interactions with the dominant American culture. The cultural differences were detrimental to the cultural identity transition experience because most participants described needing the acceptance of dominant culture members, especially African Americans. P1 stated: "I needed African Americans to accept me so badly because I just needed some normalcy and feelings from back home." Therefore, participants felt that acceptance from the dominant culture members in the minority community increases an amenable cultural identity transition experience.

Ultimately, stressors significantly impacted Black Caribbean's cultural identity transition experience. However, how they dealt with those stressors determined an amenable or inimical experience. Participants described how they use strategies such as self-isolation, avoidance, cognitive reappraisal, openness, and dual identities to deal with this acculturation stressor. Even though acculturative stress is inevitable in the Black

Caribbean participant's cultural identity transition experience, the coping strategies determined the outcome and adaptation of minority status during the cultural identity transitioning experience.

Superordinate Theme 5: Emotional Reaction

The emotional reaction overarching superordinate theme refers to the participant's feelings toward their overall identity status transitioning experience after adapting to the minority identity status. All the participants described factors that made them feel strongly about their experience. Two themes were identified in the emotional reaction superordinate theme. The themes identified in the emotional reaction superordinate theme are cultural happiness and sadness.

Happiness

The happiness theme refers to the participants feeling joy or contentment towards their overall experience in the identity status transition process. The majority of the participants described feeling happy about the outcome of their experience because of several factors. P1, P2, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, and P10 had happy emotional reactions towards their overall experience in the cultural identity status transition process. Even though some of these participants had stressors in their experience, they provided rich details about why they were appreciative and content about their overall experience in their cultural transitioning identity status to a minority post-migration. P1, P2, P4, P5, P7, and P12 expressed happiness to the adaptation of the minority status. Those participants explained being proud of who they became because of their experience. They expressed happiness because they were satisfied with how they embraced changes during their

cultural transition experience. They felt it was an honor to accept the minority status because they loved being Black. They all said they would never change any aspects of their cultural transition because it made them resilient and strong. P5, P8, P9, and P10, who expressed happiness, felt Black Caribbeans needed an open mind to the migration because it allows them to learn new things about themselves, new cultures, about what it means to be a minority and gain a new perspective about life.

Participant #2 stated:

I did turn out well despite my teenage experiences in a strange place. I appreciate my experience. I have a great job, my education, and a lovely family. I did not let circumstances define who I became in this country. I have never been arrested or gone to jail. I have no criminal record, which is pretty good coming from a minority who had the odds stacked against me. Throughout my journey here in America, I learned to appreciate my life for what it is. My transition has made me more open to all races and different cultures. I learned from being judged incorrectly during my journey to treat everyone respectfully and empathize with others and their unique situations.

Participants who expressed happiness described low acculturative stress after adapting to the minority status. Accepting the minority status allowed P1, P2, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, and P10 to see the positivity in their cultural identity transitioning, lowering stress.

Sadness

The sadness theme refers to the participants' emotional unhappiness towards their overall experience in the identity status transition process. Four out of the twelve Black

Caribbean participants described being sad about their overall experience in the identity transition experience. P3, P6, P11, and P12 felt unhappy about their overall experience transitioning their cultural identity status post-migration. Participants provided details about being depreciative about their overall experience because of challenges that arose in the process. P3, P6, and P12 described having many significant stressors in their cultural transition experience which contributed to a sadness emotional response to adapting the minority status. Those participants expressed experiencing cultural bereavement, resettlement stress, and identity bereavement from losing primitive cultural practices post-migration. The participants noted that they had increased stress because of the challenges, which led to them preferring their lives in their native country more than their lives in the host country.

Participant #11 stated:

I get sad every time I think about my experience because my native country will always be home. I love the childhood I had back home more than the childhood I had here in America. Here in America, I always felt like a stranger.

Additionally, some adolescent migrant participants expressed sadness towards their cultural identity status transition experience after adaptation to the minority status as continuous. Many participants described having to continuously deal with drastic changes in different stages of their lives after the adaptation to the minority identity. P11 and P12 described visiting their home country frequently to regain the feeling of being dominant or to visit friends and family members. However, they explained that each visit to the native country only proliferated their cultural identity transition experience. When they

returned to the host country after a visit, there is a need to continuously transition based on significant differences of being in the dominant group in their native country as opposed to the minority in the U.S. P11, and P12 described feeling a sense of belonging when they visited their native country because of their friendly, togetherness and collective culture which is hugely different from the individualistic culture in the host country.

P11 stated:

Returning to Jamaica made me have to consistently adjust and transition repeatedly because it is so different from being the dominant culture. I felt like I had new issues every time I returned from a visit, which caused me much stress. You get sad every time because Jamaica will always be home. Here in America, I always felt like a stranger in my neighborhood. You see the same people daily, but no one communicates with me. The it takes a village to raise a child culture in Jamaica made me feel like others were invested in my future. Whether they know you or not, they are invested in your success. I liked that everyone knew who you were. I liked that I had a sense of community back in Jamaica. Here in America, it is different; no one cares if you succeed or fail. I like feeling that sense of community whenever I went home.

P3, P6, P11, and P12 expressed sadness in adapting to the minority status because the transition does not stop after accepting the minority status. P3, P6, P11, and P12 explained that new stressors are associated with transitioning their identities in every stage of their lives.

P3 stated:

Life in America is not as glamorous as it appears on TV. It requires a lot as a minority in this country, and you will not be prepared for the multiple drastic adjustments you must make to survive here. The changes never stop. You face new stressful things that require adjustments in every stage of your life.

Therefore, even though some participants accepted their new minority identity in the cultural transitioning process, they still felt sadness and resentment for having to give up their original dominant identity. Adapting to the minority status is inevitable in the Black Caribbean participant's cultural identity transition experience. However, based on the differences in expressions towards the adaptation of the minority status, emotional reactions can be good or difficult for Black Caribbeans (see Table 6).

Table 6*Factors Contributing to Adaptation for Black Caribbeans*

Theme	Contributing Factor	Good Adaptation	Difficult Adaptation
Personal Factors			
	Age	Older (+20)	Adolescence
	Having family members in the US	With family members	Without family members
	Decision-making process for coming to the US	Included	Excluded
	Reasons for migrating	Reunion with family	Opportunities: Employment, education
	Rationalization	Psychologically adjusted to changes post-migration	Cognitively unable to change one's perception post-migration
	Previous knowledge of US life	More realistic view based on family members accounts	Having a stereotypical, movie-based rosy picture of life in the US.
	Personality traits	Amiable personality	Cynical personality
	Coping Strategies	Lowering expectations, obtaining social support, cognitive reappraisal, and accepting their changes	Self-isolation and avoidance to cope with stressors
Environmental Factors			
	Geographical location	Control over specific destination to locate in the US.	No control over destination in the US.
	Type of ethnic background areas to locate	Predominantly Black Caribbean or Black communities	Predominantly White communities (or Non-Black Caribbean communities)
	United States residence location	Northeast	Southeast
Support & Preparation			
	Social support	Parental, family members, and friends social support	Lack social support
	Preparation	Preparation for changes pre-migration	Unprepared for changes pre-migration
Social Mobility			
	Social Class changes post-migration	Upward mobility	Downward mobility
	Socioeconomic strata	Higher socioeconomic status post-migration	Low socioeconomic status post-migration
	Socioeconomic achievement	Increase education levels, employment, and income	Little to no socioeconomic achievements
Race-related Stressors			
	Race-related Stressors	No race-related stressors	Discrimination, prejudice, inequality, mistaken identity, racial consolidation, and colorism
Acculturation Stressors			
	Dominant Culture Acknowledgment	Dominant culture acceptance	Dominant culture rejection
	Dominant culture social interactions	Increase or positive social interactions with dominant culture	Limited or negative social interactions with the dominant culture
	Different culture acceptance	Multiculturalism	Monoculturalism
	Acculturative Stress	Low acculturative stress	High acculturative stress
	Culture maintenance	Culture retention	Culture relinquishment
Happiness			
	Change Reaction	Embrace Change	Resistance to change
	Experience expression	Cultural identity transition experience appreciation	Cultural identity transition experience depreciation
Sadness			
	Resettlement Expression	No resettlement stress	Resettlement stress
	Cultural loss	No cultural bereavement	Cultural bereavement

Superordinate Themes and Connecting Factors

All the superordinate themes identified in this study are interconnected. There is a reciprocal relationship between all the superordinate themes in the study. Therefore, the superordinate themes provide a holistic view of the Black Caribbean's cultural identity transition experience. In addition, there are both external and internal factors that connect the superordinate themes. The external factors are outside aspects that influence the participant's cultural transition experience. Most of the participants described having a positive experience.

Positive social interactions and cognitive reframing are two significant factors positively linked to participants' amenable cultural transition experience. Positive social interactions refer to the positive reciprocal exchange in social encounters between the Black Caribbean participants and other individuals during the cultural identity transitioning experience. Positive social encounters are an external factor that connects the superordinate themes and contributes to an amenable experience. Humans are social beings. We are inherently wired to connect with others, and social interactions played a pivotal role in participants' lives. Positive social interaction is a critical component proliferated during the interviews as a factor that impacted the Black Caribbean experience. The impact from others during the experience was consistent among all the participants and superordinate themes in the study.

Additionally, the participant's positive cognitive reframing was also a connecting factor that contributed to the participants' amenable cultural identity transition experience. The positive cognitive reframing factor refers to the participants' mental

capabilities to shift their mindset and perception of situations, drastic changes, individuals, and conditions during the cultural identity transition experience. Positive cognitive reframing is an internal factor that the participants can control from within during their cultural transition experience. The participants' positive cognitive reframing abilities allowed them to appropriately identify and respond to various stimuli throughout the cultural transition experience. The Black Caribbean participants' positive cognitive abilities played a significant role in how they viewed and responded to changes during the transition process. Hence, why cognitive reframing connects the superordinate themes. However, it is essential to note that both the positive cognitive reframing and social interactions also interconnect with the superordinate themes throughout the Black Caribbeans cultural identity transition experience. Positive social interactions and positive cognitive reframing work simultaneously to allow the participants to adjust to various factors in the migration process during their identity transition. The interconnection of the factors is prevalent amongst all the participants who had a positive identity transition experience, as demonstrated through the superordinate themes.

The superordinate themes are contextual factors, social support, social mobility, stressors, and emotional reactions. These five themes had an interconnected relationship. The contextual factors superordinate theme refer to aspects that played a role in the participant's migration process during the cultural transition experience. Positive social interactions and cognitive reframing in the migration process gave the participants a positive cultural identity transition experience. The participants used a positive outlook in the migration process, which allowed them to utilize cognitive reappraisal and amiable

personality to gain positive social interactions. Participant #4 stated, "Having good interactions with others, being friendly, understanding, and adaptive allowed an easy journey transitioning identity." Positive social interactions and cognitive reframing were prominent factors amongst all participants who had an amenable experience. Those participants could adjust appropriately to personal, environmental, and social contextual factors. The contextual factors set the stage for how the Black Caribbean participants experienced other factors in their cultural transition experience.

Moreover, the participant's ability to positively utilize positive social interactions and cognitive reframing during the migration process described by the contextual superordinate theme determined their experience with the social support superordinate theme. Participants explained how having positive social interactions with family members and members in the dominant culture facilitated them having a pleasant experience in the cultural identity transition experience.

P8 stated:

I have a great relationship with my sister. Our relationship grew stronger when I came here, and she started supporting me and my children through the process. I don't know what I would have done if we didn't have such a great relationship.

Having positive social interactions allowed the Black Caribbean participants to develop a social support system that facilitated an easy cultural identity transition experience.

However, the acceptance of social support extends further than the positive social interaction factor. The participant's cognitive reframing abilities also played a significant role if those amenable experience participants gained the necessary support and

preparation. The participants in the study who gained social support from others during their cultural transition experience described their willingness and openness to retain and accept social support. No matter if others offered support if the participant lacks the cognitive ability to perceive the support as positive, they will have difficulties accepting the social support. Unlike the participants who had negative experiences, participants who had amenable experiences demonstrated the ability to appraise social support positively, which allowed them to shift their mindset and embrace the changes.

P9 stated:

Having an open mind and a solid family bond helped a lot in my transition. I made it a point to respect others and embrace change. That was the type of mindset that I entered and maintained throughout my journey. I didn't view the transition as a burden. I saw it as a learning opportunity; you cannot learn with a closed mind.

The positive social interactions and cognitive reframing in the social support superordinate theme facilitated an amenable experience in the other areas of their cultural identity transition experience. The social mobility superordinate theme is another area of positive social interactions, and cognitive reframing is connected to this study.

As aforementioned, the social mobility superordinate theme is connected to participants' contextual factors and social support. The participants' positive social interactions and cognitive reframing abilities were factors that assisted with a further connection of those superordinate themes. All the participants experienced having their social class changing from one status to another post-migration. Regardless of if the

mobility was upward or downward, the participants who had a positive experience noted that their ability to shift how they view the changes and interact with others facilitated having no difficulties adjusting to the new social class. All the participants described how crucial financial stability was to their cultural identity experience. Some participants explained how downward mobility disrupted financial stability. However, how they perceived their loss of financial stability determined their experience. Essentially, if Black Caribbean participants saw their downward mobility positively, they had an amenable experience. P11 explained that adapting to the downgrade in her family's financial situation was easy by changing her perception of her new conditions and increasing her social interactions with others who did not focus on materialistic things. P7 also explained that altering her expectations and positive interactions with other Black Caribbeans made her humble and accepting of her new downgraded social status. P7 stated, "I knew this was a new place, so I lowered my expectations. It was also easier to adjust to the social status when you surround yourself and only interact with others in the same class as you." Those participants demonstrated the importance of positive social interactions and cognitive reframing factors in Black Caribbeans having an amenable cultural identity transition experience.

Furthermore, the interconnection of the external, internal factors and the superordinate themes was also demonstrated in the stressors superordinate theme. The stressors superordinate theme is directly linked to how the participants socially interacted with others and cognitively reframed their changes in the contextual factors, social support, and social mobility superordinate themes. Most of the stressor's participants

experienced were induced by others during the cultural identity transition experience. The stressors were associated with social interactions with dominant White and Black American culture members. The social interaction component played a significant role in the identity transition experience. Participants with a positive cultural identity transition experience explained how positive interactions with dominant culture members contributed to their experience. Most participants with a positive cultural identity transition experience positively interacted with dominant White and Black American culture members. P7 stated, "I have more interactions here with Whites than back in my country. We usually have a good relationship which helped make my identity status transition experience easy. The good interactions also caused me to eliminate stress during my process."

In addition, the cognitive reframing component was equally crucial in reducing stress and positively handling stressors. Participants' perceptions of the stressors determined the type of experience they had. Participants who shifted their outlook on the stressors had an amenable experience. In contrast, when participants viewed the stressors negatively, they had a negative experience. P9 had colorism experiences. However, P9 viewed the experience and dealt with it positively.

P9 stated:

Some people deal with colorism differently. I always deal with things like that as water off my back type of way. From a young age, I learned to use my psyche to shed the negativity. It all made me who I am, stuff that hurt me or didn't feel well; I made mental notes not to do them to someone else and shift how I think of them.

I never wanted anyone to feel how I felt when it happened. That helped me with the way I look at people. I made a cognitive decision to change how I let negative things affect me. That helped me even later to befriend the individuals who apply the colorist act and educate them about my culture regarding skin tone.

Ultimately, positive interactions and cognitive reframing are interconnecting factors that connect the superordinate themes.

The interconnection nature of positive social interactions and cognitive reframing factors also played a role in the participants' emotional reactions in the adaptation process. Those factors connected the other four superordinate themes to the participant's emotional reactions. The emotional reactions superordinate theme is associated with how the participants felt about their overall experience in the adaptation process. Without the other four superordinate themes, the participant would be unable to adapt to their minority status and have an emotional reaction to their overall experience. The emotional reaction is connected to the participant's contextual factors, social support, social mobility, and stressors. In addition, the factors that connect those superordinate themes are positive social interactions and cognitive reframing. Participants who were happy with their cultural identity experience expressed feeling happy because they could embrace their new identity status. The new identity was accepted due to the participants having positive social interactions and altering their mindset about changes that occurred during the cultural identity transition process.

P5 stated:

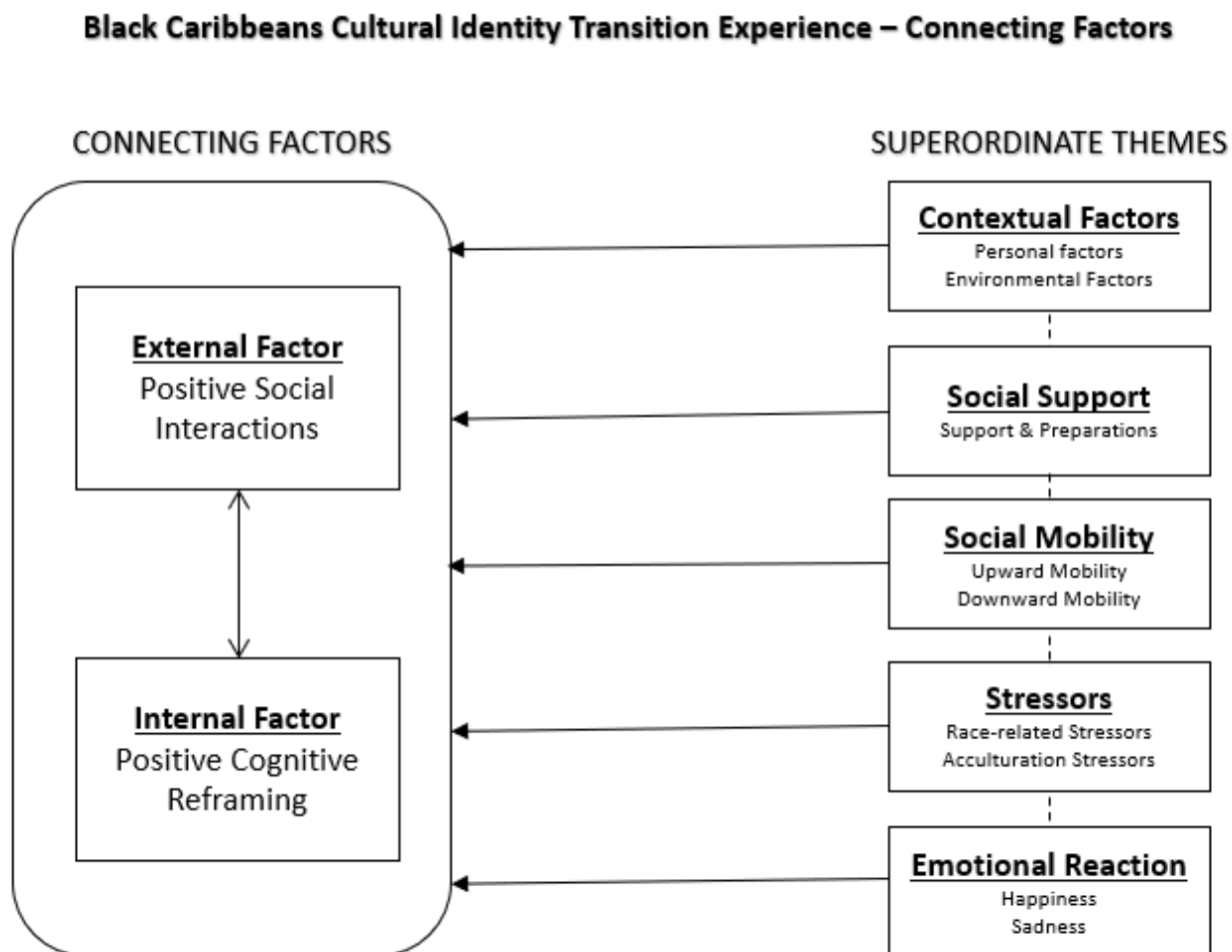
Let's put it this way, when you are thrown into a new environment, you either sink or swim. Some people would fall to the wayside. However, I'm a thriver; I view challenges as an opportunity for growth. So, I constantly adjusted to whatever challenges the transition threw my way. I'm very appreciative of my transitioning experience because it pushed me. I am always living in a place of gratefulness for where I am and how far I've come. The wonderful connections I gained with others through my journey, and my ability to stay positive helped me.

The social interaction with others during the cultural transition process contributed to participants having positive emotional reactions to their process. Therefore, the external and internal factors did not only connect the superordinate themes; they were also essential components in Black Caribbeans' amenable experience transitioning from dominant to a minority.

Similarly, the superordinate themes, the external and the internal connecting factors have a reciprocal relationship where they influence each other in the Black Caribbean participant's experience. Stress is inevitable throughout the cultural identity transition experience. However, how the individuals handled the stress determined their amenable cultural identity transition. The participants in this study described utilizing cognitive reframing by gaining a positive outlook and attitude toward stressors. The positive outlook allowed those participants to deal with stressors appropriately and reduce acculturative stress. This notion is evident in the participants who had an amenable experience. Unlike participants who had a negative experience, individuals who had an amenable experience described not having issues such as resettlement stress

or cultural bereavement. However, the lack of resettlement stress and cultural bereavement was also partially due to positive social interactions. When the participants utilized their positive cognitive abilities, they increased their chances of having positive social interactions with individuals from the dominant Black and White American cultural groups and vice versa. Increasing positive social interactions with dominant group members promoted an easy acculturation process and eliminated some race-related stressors in the Black Caribbeans experience. Subsequently, the positive cognitive reframing and social interactions fueled an easy transition, enhancing participants' experience adjusting to various aspects of the migration process, social mobility, and stressors. Positive experiences in those areas allowed the participants to gain social support, which led to a positive emotional reaction to the overall cultural identity experience. However, for the participant to gain social support and have a positive emotional reaction, they needed also to have positive social interactions and cognitive reframing abilities. Increased positive social interactions was only possible when the participant used their internal cognitive reframing factor. When Participant #7 was asked whether she experienced resettlement stress during her cultural identity transition experience, she stated, "no, I got accustomed to things here fast. I'm not a high-stress person. I don't let things bother me. I usually choose to look at things positively. Getting along well with others and staying positive assisted with my good transition." It was evident that the reciprocal relationship between the external and internal connecting factors in this study enhanced a good cultural identity transition experience and reduced acculturative stress.

With positive social interactions and cognitive reframing abilities, the Black Caribbean participants could appraise their stressors positively, which increased their ability to reduce stress in various areas of their cultural transition process. However, only some participants experienced positive social interactions during their cultural transition process. P2 explained, “I had terrible fistfights with some Black Americans in the neighborhood because they didn't believe we belonged in the country. Those unfavorable interactions made me view assimilation negatively, which caused me to reject the minority status.” Participants who had an inimical experience during their cultural transition process demonstrated that they could not cognitively reframe the situation that occurred in a negative social interaction with dominant culture members. Consequently, the failure to positively shift their mindset and interact with others led to difficulties accepting the minority status in the cultural transition experience. The difference in these experiences reveals how important it is for Black Caribbeans to have positive social interactions and the ability to reframe their situations cognitively. The five superordinate themes in this study are connected to the Black Caribbeans' cultural identity transition experience. In addition, positive social interactions and cognitive reframing are also interconnecting factors that join the five connected superordinate themes identified in this study (see Figure 1).

Figure 1*Superordinate Theme Connecting Factors***Discrepant Cases**

IPA analysis of all the cases considered in this study consistently yielded the key findings of this investigation. However, there were some minor discrepancies between the details of the participant's account. Out of the 12 Black Caribbean participants, P2 mentioned how his immigration status affected his experience. Unlike the other

participants, P2 provided details about how his undocumented immigration status influenced his experience transitioning from dominant to minority. Even though participants 1,3, 6, and 12 described having negative experiences in the cultural identity transition process, P2 did not have the same experience as the other participants. P2 negative experience transitioning his identity status was fueled by his thoughts of being less than a minority in the host country because of his undocumented status. P2 stated, “Being an illegal immigrant minority placed much pressure on me. I felt like I had so much to prove to live above that minority status, especially since I was at the bottom of the minority scale.” He described having fewer opportunities and more stressors because of the limitations of being an undocumented Black Caribbean immigrant. Immigration status was not a factor that caused limitations for the other participants. No other participant revealed the role of immigration status in the interviews.

Moreover, his refusal to accept his new minority status in the United States differed from other Black Caribbean immigrants in the study. P2 described feeling that other minorities had more ties to the host country because of their documented or citizen immigration status. P2 stated, “even though we were all minorities (West Indians, Black Americans, and Puerto Ricans), knowing that I was at the bottom of their minority status because of my illegal status here made me feel cheated during my transition.” He described having no support or preparation during his experience because his mother had live-in jobs usually designated for undocumented immigrants, which took her away from home for at least 5 or 6 days a week. Consequently, P2 stated that he was left alone to navigate stressors associated with his immigration status that arose in his cultural identity

status experience. P2's experience was different from the other participants in the study. P2's stressors in terms of cultural identity status experience were race and acculturation. Even though P2 shared some of those stressors as other participants in the study, he also had an added factor which was his undocumented immigration status which he believes influenced many of his experiences transitioning his cultural identity status.

Additionally, another discrepant case arose between the details of the participant's account. Out of the 12 Black Caribbean participants, P5 had family conflict in the home, which affected her identity status transition experience. Dissimilar to the rest of the participants, P5 migrated to a new family and experienced a different identity status transition process. P5 mentioned transitioning into a new family during her identity transition experience. P5 migrated to live with one of her parents and their new family, who did not accept her. P5 was aware of the complexity of having these two transitional factors simultaneously. As P5 stated, "I have mixed emotions about my transition experience. It was difficult for me because not only was I in a new environment culturally, but I was also in a new family. It was challenging. I am trying to separate me migrating here, transitioning my identity status in the States from me migrating and living in a house with crazy people who did not accept me." None of the other participants revealed how home lives played a role in their experience but P5.

Furthermore, P5 provided details about how the conflict and rejection in the household forced her to assimilate into the dominant culture quickly. P5 described gaining support from members of the dominant Black culture, which allowed her to assimilate and freely accept her new minority identity status. P5 stated, "Being around

Black Americans made me acculturate very quickly here in the States because they accepted me, and it was my escape from the craziness happening at home. They helped me accept being a minority.” The support from the dominant Black culture was also unique and different from other participants. Even though some participants gained support from others during their experience, it was always from a family member. No other participant had support from non-relational individuals. P5 stated, “I was looking to feel accepted, and I found that in friendships with individuals who had a different culture from me and not my Black Caribbean family. Here in America, my parent and the new family did not treat me like I was a part of the family. No one in the home told me this is how America is, how you should behave, and how you react; no one gave me a blueprint or manual. I had to pick things up on my own and through friendships. That was weird because everyone in the household was here long before me and had already, from my observation, transitioned. Nevertheless, they never helped me through the transition process.” The support the participant gained from African Americans during the journey also differed from others who positively interacted with individuals from the Black dominant group. Other participants who had positive interactions with African Americans did not gain social support from individuals in the Black dominant group.

Summary

In Chapter 4, I addressed the study's research question. The research question for this study was: How do Black Caribbean immigrants experience cultural identity transition from dominant in their country of origin to a minority in the United States? Based on the in-depth review and IPA data analysis of the participant's lived experiences,

I found that Black Caribbean's experience transitioning their cultural identity status from dominant to a minority was not linear. The participant's experience was fluid and multifaceted. Five superordinate themes were identified in the in-depth IPA data analysis.

The first superordinate theme identified was contextual factors. The contextual factors superordinate theme comprises two themes: personal factors and environmental. The contextual factors revealed that the migration process, the migrant's developmental stage, the reason for migration, and physical and social environmental factors played a pivotal role in all the participant's experiences. The physical environment is the first thing that impacts the participant's experience in the migration process, which influences the participants' experience in transitioning. As such, physical factors such as homes, pollution, and weather played a role in the participant's migration process. Even though the physical environmental factors played a role in the participant's overall experience, the participants adjusted to those conditions over time.

Moreover, the second superordinate is social support. This theme provided context on how social support and preparation were crucial for Black Caribbeans to have a positive cultural identity transition experience. Participants were more equipped for the drastic changes associated with their identity status transition when they gained social support from family members or dominant culture members. In addition, the social mobility superordinate theme revealed that Black Caribbeans' experience with upward or downward mobility impacted their cultural identity status transition experience. Individuals with downward mobility experienced financial struggles, which increased stress for those participants and led to some participants rejecting the minority status. The

next superordinate theme is stressors. The stressors superordinate theme comprises two themes: race-related stressors and acculturation stressors. This superordinate theme revealed how Black Caribbeans have to navigate multiple stressors associated with their racial and cultural backgrounds.

Finally, the fifth superordinate theme is emotional reaction. The emotional reaction superordinate theme comprises two themes: happiness and sadness. Most participants felt happy about their cultural identity status transition experience because they appreciated the outcome. However, the participants who experienced sadness had difficulties navigating stressors in the experience. All the superordinate themes had an interconnected relationship. Those superordinate themes identified in this study were connected by an external and an internal factor. The connecting factors linked to a positive cultural transition experience were positive social interactions (external factor) and positive cognitive reframing (internal factor). The external factor was congruent with the internal factor. Ultimately, the external and internal factors had a reciprocal relationship to connect the superordinate themes.

In Chapter 5, I will discuss my interpretation of the findings. The findings were based on the Black Caribbean's recollection of the experience of transitioning their cultural identity status post-migration in the United States. Additionally, the limitations of the study will be discussed in the next chapter. Further recommendations and implications will be presented in Chapter 5 to serve as a guide for future research.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

Black Caribbeans have a dominant cultural identity status in predominantly Black native islands. However, when they migrate to the U.S., these immigrants experience having to relinquish their dominant cultural identity status. Even though scholars have increasingly explored immigrants' cultural identity transition, little is known about how Black Caribbean immigrants experience this transition. Specifically, there is limited information about how Black Caribbean immigrants transition their cultural identity status from dominant to minority post-migration to the U.S. As such, this IPA qualitative study was used to explore and better understand Black Caribbeans' experiences involving transitioning their cultural identity status. The IPA approach allowed the study's 12 participants to share their subjective experiences via semi-structured interviews where they provided rich and in-depth information about their cultural identity transitioning experiences. Five superordinate themes were identified using IPA data analysis techniques based on in-depth details shared in interviews. The five superordinate themes were: contextual factors, social support, social mobility, stressors, and emotional reaction.

These themes demonstrated that cultural identity transition involves many uncertain factors and drastic alterations that can change immigrants' lives. Participants shared details about their experiences, showcasing how multifaceted their cultural identity transitions could be. No two participants had identical experiences. It was evident that significant shifts to their cultural identity exacerbated the transitioning process.

Ultimately, participants' experiences demonstrated how cultural identity significantly influences various aspects of their lives. The five superordinate themes identified in this IPA data analysis provided a greater understanding of how Black Caribbeans experience the studied phenomenon. Results of this study will lead to increased awareness, resources, social change, and multicultural competence among clinicians when working with individuals in this population. Chapter 5 includes an interpretation of findings, study limitations, recommendations for further research, implications, and a conclusion.

Interpretation of the Findings

Findings from this study confirmed, disconfirmed, and extended empirical knowledge about Black Caribbeans' cultural identity transitioning experiences. Berry's acculturative stress theory was used as the theoretical framework, and existing literature supported superordinate themes generated during IPA data analysis.

This study's findings confirmed, disconfirmed, and extended the empirical knowledge about Black Caribbeans' cultural identity status transition experiences. Participants described their experiences transitioning their cultural identity status from dominant to minority post-migration in the U.S. Superordinate themes in the study supported findings in existing peer-reviewed literature. Superordinate themes are as follows: contextual factors, social support, social mobility, stressors, and emotional reactions. The contextual factors superordinate theme comprises two subthemes: personal and environmental factors. The social support superordinate theme is comprised of support and preparation. The social mobility superordinate theme had no themes. The stressors superordinate theme comprises two subthemes: race-related stressors and

acculturation stressors. The emotional reaction superordinate theme comprises two subthemes: happiness and sadness.

Findings and the Literature

Superordinate Theme 1: Contextual Factors

The first theme that appeared to be prevalent among all participants who experienced transitioning their cultural identity status from dominant to minority was contextual factors. Contextual factors theme refers to relevant components impacting cultural identity transition experiences. Findings showed how participants in this study addressed various factors that affected their transition experience. Various contextual factors could affect how immigrants integrate and acculturate to their new lives in host countries (Jaworsky et al., 2012). Participants in this study had personal and environmental contextual factors which impacted their experiences transitioning from dominant to minority.

A major contextual factor that impacted participants in this study was their age and developmental stage of migration. Participants who migrated as adults had different experiences involving transitioning their identity status compared to adolescent migrants. Children experience migration and changing identity differently than adult migrants (Beck et al., 2012; Shekunov, 2017). The findings in this study supported existing studies which found that adults and children experience migration differently. Existing studies found that individuals who migrate to the U.S. at an older age had more difficulty changing their identity and adapting compared to children (Beck et al., 2012). However, most Black Caribbean adolescent migrant participants in this study had more difficulties

transitioning and accepting their new identity status than adult migrant participants. Adult migrant participants in this study demonstrated an easier time transitioning their identity status compared to adolescent migrants. Therefore, this study disconfirmed previous findings indicating that children migrate more easily than adults. In addition, this study extended the literature by providing a factor that played a role in the differences between adult and child migration. The adolescent migrants in this study were not involved in the migration decision-making process, which hindered their ability to rationalize change post-migration. Consequently, not being involved in the decision to migrate caused a challenging migration experience for some adolescent migrant participants. Black Caribbean participants who were not involved in the migration decision-making process described feeling like they had no control and lacked preparedness for this transition, significantly contributing to difficulties and stressors. The adult migrants were the primary decision-makers, allowing them to rationalize and embrace changes in their experience, resulting in an easy migration. Some adolescent migrants felt forced or surprised by migration to the U.S. because they were not involved in the migration decision-making process. Immigrants who felt forced to migrate may have different experiences in their identity-transitioning process compared to those who were involved in the migration decisions (Klaasen, 2021; Zettl et al., 2022).

Some Black Caribbean immigrants' reason for migration played a significant role in terms of how they perceive changes that are experienced during the transition process (Benson, 2006; Klaasen, 2021; Warner, 2012). Most participants who migrated to reunite with family members felt more prepared, which led to positive experiences in terms of

transitioning their identities. Immigrants who migrate forcibly because they were not involved in the migration decision-making process or migrated for opportunities had more stressors and was less prepared for migration compared to those who are reunited with loved ones and had an input in the migration (Klaasen, 2021; Lin et al., 2022). Ultimately, individuals who are less prepared for changes during identity transition experienced increased acculturative stress because they were not prepared to lose primitive aspects of their native cultural identity (Berry, 2006; Berry et al., 2006; Bhugra & Becker, 2005).

Environmental factors significantly influence participants' migration trajectories because they pressure various factors that arise during the migration process (Ou-Salah et al., 2022). Participants explained that their initial experiences involving transitioning from dominant to minority status post-migration started with environmental factors.

Geographical location was one of the first environmental factor which played a significant role for participants in this study. The participant's destinations in the migration process were predetermined, and they had no control over the environment they migrated (Ou-Salah et al., 2022). Some participants' migration reason was predetermined by someone other than themselves. Except for Participant #1, who migrated because her spouse gained a new employment opportunity, all the other participants migrated to live with family members who migrated before them. Their destinations were predetermined. Also, almost all the participants in the study's first geographical location in the United States was New York, except for Participant #1, who migrated to a predominantly White community in Florida. The participant's migration

geographical location supported researchers' findings of most Black Caribbean immigrants choose to migrate to Greater New York and Florida areas because of their sizeable Black population (Lorenzi & Batalova, 2022; Tamir, 2022; US Census Bureau, 2021; Waters, 1999).

Subsequently, this has caused Black Caribbeans to outnumber African Americans in these geographical locations (Waters, 1999). It is easy for many communities in these areas to be predominantly Black Caribbean (Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Waters, 1999). Many of the participants in this study described migrating to Caribbean-driven or Black minority communities which supports existing literature. This finding coincides with the results of studies which found that first-generation Black Caribbeans tend to live in Caribbean-driven and other Black communities to maintain their identities (Benson, 2006; Tesfai, 2019; Waters, 1994). Participants in this study explained how living in a predominantly Black Caribbean or Black minority community facilitated maintaining the status quo of feeling like they did not lose their dominant cultural identity status post-migration because they lived among only Blacks. This finding extended the existing literature by providing additional context on why Black Caribbeans migrate to predominantly Black communities.

The findings of this study also extended the existing literature by providing context about Black Caribbeans' transitioning their identity status in the northern states versus the southern states in the U.S. Participants had a different cultural transition experience in the South than in the North of the U.S. Participants described feeling the effect of transitioning their identity status when they left their Black communities in New

York City. New York City desensitized Black Caribbean participants' experience because of the prominent Black population, which gave the illusion that Blacks were the dominant culture in the U.S. In the southern states of the U.S., participants explained that they felt the full effects of their cultural identity transitioning because of the significant White dominant presence. In addition, the findings extended the literature when participants explained that New York embracing and integrating the Black Caribbean culture caused them to have a pleasant cultural transitioning experience. Participants felt they lost more cultural practices in the southern states because of the exclusion of the Black Caribbean cultural traditions. Participants experienced more acculturative stress in the South than in the North because of cultural exclusion and the small Black population.

Additionally, existing literature was supported by the findings of the participant's encounter with environmental factors such as diverse populated schools and workplaces outside their communities accentuated their identity status transition experience. Black Caribbeans are more conscious about their identities when they enter institutions where multiple racial and ethnic identities coexist (Malcolm & Mendoza, 2014; Warner, 2012; Waters, 1999). Cultural differences in the Black Caribbean's schools and workplaces affected their experience. Adolescent migrant participants in diverse schools increased acculturative stress for most participants. Participants described struggling to fit into their diverse schools because of education system differences. P3 described experiencing stress because of demotion in the school. P3's demotion was due to cultural education system differences. As such, contextual factors influence the Black Caribbean participant's experience. Overall, the findings in this study were in conjunction with the

results presented in the existing literature, which indicates that contextual factors play a significant role in if immigrants have a positive or negative experience in the cultural identity transitioning process (Foner et al., 2018; Lin et al., 2022).

Superordinate Theme 2: Social Support

The second superordinate theme that was prevalent amongst all the participants was social support. This overarching superordinate theme refers to how others provided emotional and practical support to the participant during their cultural identity transition experiences. The social support influences immigrants' experiences when transitioning to a new life in the host country (Berry, 2017; Foner et al., 2018; Waters, 1999). Some participants explained how having social support and preparation from others allowed them to have a positive experience transitioning their cultural identity. Scholars found support and preparation to be a critical factor for individuals in the acculturation and identity transition process because it buffers stressors and reduces acculturative stress (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2017, 2006). The Black Caribbean participants' experience demonstrated how support and preparation during their cultural identity transition process reduce acculturative stress and promote a more favorable transition experience (Berry, 2017; Kristiana et al., 2022).

In contrast, participants who did not gain support and preparation from others described having more negative experiences transitioning their identity status than those who received the support. Many changes drastically increased stress for the participants in identity transitioning process (Berry, 2017). If the participant did not have support or preparations for those changes, they risked having difficulties navigating those changes,

which eventually led to heightened acculturative stress and negative experiences (Benson, 2006; Berry, 2017; Kristiana et al., 2022). The Black Caribbeans in this study who experience increase acculturative stress and difficulties due to the lack of support and preparation experience supports the findings from previous literature.

Moreover, one crucial thing that previous studies needed more information on is why some immigrants have limited or no support from others. The participants in this study who had no support from others highlighted that they either did not have family members in the host country or migrated with family members dealing with their unique stressors. Participant #1 migrated to the host country with her spouse, who had a more effortless transition experience because he was White and living in a predominantly White community post-migration. However, she had no support because she did not have family in the host country. She struggled to gain acceptance from the White or Black dominant cultures in the United States because they objected to her interracial marriage and applied stereotypical views. In addition, Participants #2 and 12, experienced limited social support during their transition because the individuals they migrated with had to focus on navigating their own stressors and did not have the time or resources to provide sufficient support or preparations. Therefore, this study's findings confirmed other studies and extended the literature on immigrants' cultural identity transition because it provided additional factors which play a role in immigrants' cultural identity transition experience.

Superordinate Theme 3: Social Mobility

The third superordinate theme identified in the Black Caribbeans data was social mobility. This overarching superordinate theme refers to how social class changes played

a role in the participants' experience transitioning their identity status from dominant to a minority post-migration to the United States. All the participants in the study experienced changes in their social class post-migration. However, not all the Black Caribbeans experienced the same type of changes. Participants fell into downward or upward social trajectories (Castro et al., 2010; Waters, 1999). Three out of the twelve participants had upward social mobility. These participants had a more favorable experience because they gained more wealth in the host country than in their native country. Studies have shown that immigrants on the upward trajectory have more advantageous experiences and are more willing to accept cultural changes associated with their acculturation and transition process (Le, 2020; Model, 2002). The findings in this study concur with those findings as the individuals who had upward mobility described accepting their new identity status easily because they experienced having a better lifestyle (Castro et al., 2010; Le, 2020). Participants explained that upward mobility increased their wealth, resources, finances, occupation, and opportunities, supporting existing literature.

In contrast, participants with downward mobility had a different experience than those with upward mobility. Downward mobility has many drastic changes that are unfavorable for immigrants (Castro et al., 2010). The participants who experienced downward mobility described that the significant shifts in their social class exacerbated their entire cultural transitioning experience (Foner et al., 2018; Waters, 1994). The participants described priding themselves on having a higher social class than Black Americans before entering the United States (Waters, 1999). The participant's social class downgrade did not only affect how they adjusted to those changes but also their

acceptance of their new identity and acculturation process. These findings supported scholars' results of social class shift placing significant pressure on immigrants' experiences post-migration (Akresh, 2006; Model, 2002).

Additionally, many participants who experienced downward social mobility described having financial difficulties because of a shift in their socioeconomics. Studies have found that approximately 51% of Black Caribbean immigrants are forced to devalue their socioeconomic status after migrating to the United States post-migration because of acculturation and cultural identity transition (Akresh, 2006; Model, 2002). The participants' downgrade in socioeconomic status and social class coincides with scholars' results of it being caused by the United States not recognizing education and occupational experience attained in their native country (Akresh, 2006; Model, 2002). P2, P3, P6, P7, P8, P11, and P12 described experiencing downgrades due to difficulties transferring socioeconomic strata from their native islands to American standards (Akresh, 2006; Model, 2002). Consequently, the downgrade forced P7, P8, and P10 to accept employment positions lower than those they possessed in their native country. Those findings concur with Akresh's (2006) results that 75% of Black Caribbean immigrants who had high-paying professional jobs in their native country shifted to being employed in low-level positions than they possessed before migrating to the United States.

Consequentially, the shift in the participant's social class caused them to exert themselves to regain their social class status held in their native country. However, most study participants utilized exertion to regain or maintain their social class regardless of an upgrade or downgrade. Participants with downward and upward mobility prided

themselves as hard workers who used socioeconomic achievements to adjust to their new social class. The participants who experienced upward mobility describe exerting themselves to continuously climb the socioeconomic ladder to maintain their new upgraded social class because they fear being poor again. These findings supported results from previous studies, which indicated that Black Caribbean immigrants' socioeconomic status prior to migration plays a pivotal role in their pursuit of increased socioeconomic achievements post-migration (Ifatunji, 2016; Model, 2002). In comparison, the participants who experienced downward mobility exerted themselves to gain socioeconomic achievements to regain their previous social class held in their native country. These findings align with the results of existing studies which found socioeconomic achievements tied to economic prosperity paramount in the Black Caribbean culture (Rong & Fitchett, 2008). Therefore, these findings further highlight the reasons behind Black Caribbeans acquiring the renowned label of being a model minority. However, additional factors influence Black Caribbean immigrants other than economic prosperity, hardworking culture, and social class adjustment post-migration, as Model (2002) and Sowell (1979) described in previous studies. A further reason for Black Caribbean's high socioeconomic achievement is also tied to their identity status transitioning in the United States.

Further explanation for Black Caribbean's socioeconomic achievements was revealed in the data of this study. Some of the participants in this study explained that Black Caribbean identity status transitioning from dominant to minority also played a role in individuals in this immigrant group excelling in their pursuit to climb the

socioeconomic ladder. Some participants explained that it is difficult for Black Caribbeans to accept their new identity status post-migration because they do not understand the concept. Therefore, this study extended the empirical knowledge of scholars by extending the existing information about the Black Caribbean's pursuit of higher socioeconomic status post-migration in their identity transition process.

Superordinate Theme 4: Stressors

Stressors are the fourth superordinate theme identified in the Black Caribbean participant's data. This overarching theme refers to situations or events that increased stress for the participant during their identity status transitioning experiences. All the participants in this study experienced some stressors because stress is inevitable in the identity transition experience (Erving, 2022; Foner et al., 2018). Since Black Caribbean's cultural identity transition process is multifaceted, it is common for individuals in this population to have various stressors (Dixon, 2019). Two of the most prevalent stressors derived from the data are race-related and acculturation.

Many participants described that their stressors are racially induced. Participants mentioned being mistakenly identified as African Americans because of their racial features. Consequently, participants mentioned that racial consolidation with African Americans increased their stress levels because they felt like they had an invisible identity. Guy (2001) found Black Caribbean immigrants have more stressors than other immigrant groups because their racial features cause them to become invisible and forgotten due to racial consolidation. Consequentially, participants described that their identity being disregarded and consolidated with the African American community is a

significant stressor in their experience transitioning their identity status. In addition, participants described having increased race-related stressors due to mistaken identity. Sylvers et al. (2022) found African Americans and Black Caribbean immigrants face equivalent levels of unfair race-related treatment every day due to physical features and societal racial consolidation. Participants also described that the racial consolidation subjected them to experience race-related issues such as discrimination, racism, limited opportunities, stereotypes, and racial inequality in their cultural identity transition.

Moreover, some participants described constantly explaining and debating their identity to others. However, no matter how much they correct others about their identity to differentiate themselves from African Americans, individuals still insist on referring to them as the dominant Black culture in the host country (Gordon & Anderson, 1999; Pierre, 2004; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017; Thorton et al., 2017). Therefore, the consolidated racial stressor caused many participants to have a negative experience in their cultural transition experience, which also affect their acculturation process.

Another significant race-related stressor that influenced some of the participant's experiences was colorism. P1, P2, P3, P6, P9, and P12 described experiencing colorism in their identity transition process. These dark-complexioned participants experienced more negative stressors related to their skin color than their light-complexioned counterparts in the study. This finding aligns with Monroe & Hall's (2018) results on dark-skinned immigrants' physical appearance, making them a target for severest discrimination and prejudice than light-skinned immigrants.

The application of colorism from minority group members played a significant role in these participants' acceptance of their new minority identity status (Foner, 2016; Monroe & Hall, 2018). Some of those participants struggled to accept their identity status and acculturate to the dominant culture. Some participants who experienced colorism from minorities described limiting their social interactions with the dominant Black culture and increased interactions with the dominant white culture in the host country. These findings support Monroe and Hall's (2018) results that dark-skinned immigrants are frequently forced to align with Whites regardless of their skin color and cultural self-ascriptions. The colorism experience influenced how participants acculturate to dominant cultures in the host country during their identity transition experience (Foner, 2016; Monroe & Hall, 2018; Reese, 2019).

Furthermore, not only do the participants in this immigrant population have to transition and accept a new identity status in the United States, but they also have to acculturate to the cultural norms. That subsequently made acculturation and intersectionality to Black Caribbeans identity status transition experience. Acculturation is a significant stressor for many Black Caribbeans during their identity transition experience (Ferguson & Bornstein, 2014; Joseph et al., 2013; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017). Black Caribbeans are subjected to a tridimensional acculturation process, unlike many other immigrant groups whose acculturation is one-dimensional. Black Caribbeans may orient towards acculturating to their native, White American, or African American cultures in the United States (Ferguson & Bornstein, 2014). Therefore, one area explored in this study was how the Black Caribbean participants interacted with individuals from

both dominant groups compared to others in those ethnic groups from their country. Two participants had White family members who served as a preparation for interactions with White Americans. These participants were more open and accepting of White and Black American culture. These findings support results in existing studies that report that immigrants' experiences in their native country determine their acculturation and identity transition abilities (Bhugra & Becker, 2005; Pope-Davis et al., 2000; Szabo & Ward, 2016).

Contrarily, participants who did not have White Caribbean family members described having limited interactions with White Americans in the host and native country because of factors such as no White Caribbean population in the native country, segregation, and race-related stressors. Subsequently, most of the participants felt rejected by the dominant White American culture because of stereotypical views about African Americans (Ferguson & Bornstein, 2014; Joseph et al., 2013). Therefore, although most participants experienced increased interactions with White Americans in the host country, other factors caused them not to acclimate to that dominant culture. It is important to note that none of the participants in this study chose to acculturate to the White American culture.

Moreover, it is common for Black Caribbeans to acculturate to African American culture (Ferguson & Bornstein, 2014). Most participants (8 out of 12) adapted to the African American culture despite some of them having negative interactions. Some participants' positive interactions with African Americans made them open to acculturating to the African American culture. Acceptance from the dominant Black

culture played a significant role in those participants' willingness to adapt to the African American culture (Berry, 2006). However, participants explained that losing primitive aspects of their cultural practices and identities was the deciding factor of utilizing an integration acculturation strategy than opting to relinquish their native culture and assimilate completely (Foner et al., 2018; Klaasen, 2021; Lin et al., 2022; Malcolm & Mendoza, 2014; Simon, 2013). Most of the participants who utilized the integration strategy developed dual identities. Those participants' development of dual identities supported scholars' findings of immigrants using two separate identities as a coping strategy to avoid stress in the cultural transition process (Lin et al., 2022; Malcolm & Mendoza, 2014; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Simon et al., 2013). Scholars' findings of the development of dual identities aligned with the participants in this study's experiences. Scholars found that it is typical for Black Caribbeans and other immigrants to develop dual identities during their cultural transition process instead of only adapting to the dominant host culture because of fear of altering important origin values (Foner et al., 2018; Klaasen, 2021; Lin et al., 2022; Malcolm & Mendoza, 2014; Simon et al., 2013). The participants in this study described having an easy time maintaining those separate identities because it allowed them to keep traditions in the cultural identity transition experience. This finding disconfirms Malcolm & Mendoza's (2014) results which imply that it is common for Black Caribbeans to experience increased acculturative stress and struggles associated with maintaining dual identities. The participants in this study demonstrated that the maintenance of dual identities developed during cultural identity could be easily maintained with minimal stress.

In addition, the integration strategy was also utilized by a few participants who experienced rejection from the dominant Black culture. Those participants with negative interactions with African Americans described feeling pressured to acculturate to the dominant Black American culture (Berry, 2006). However, even if some participants felt pressured to adopt African American cultural norms, they still utilized an integration acculturation strategy to hold on to native cultural practices. This finding aligns with Joseph et al. (2014) and Rong & Fitchett's (2008) results, which found that Black Caribbeans prefer to utilize an acculturation strategy to retain native cultural traditional norms. Some of the participants in this study also added that their social interactions with African Americans allowed them to identify distinctive psychological differences between African Americans and Black Caribbeans, which led to the development of their dual identities. The development of the dual identities and the distinction of identities can be deduced to Black Caribbeans feeling superior to African Americans because of historical context, as Waters (1999) found. The superiority that the Black Caribbean participants described extends existing research as it provides context on why Park & Iceland's (2011) and Tesfai's (2019) findings of Black immigrants and African Americans were the most segregated groups in the United States. However, simultaneously, participants also differentiated the slavery experience between Black Caribbeans and African Americans, which aligns with scholars' questions about a unidimensional acculturation process for Black Caribbeans. Scholars believe that salient factors in the Black Caribbean's experiences and historical background make them incompatible with the dominant Black American culture, which further complicates a unidimensional

acculturation process (Berry, 2006; Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Joseph et al., 2013; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017; Waters, 1999). The participants demonstrated that Black Caribbeans and African Americans historical differences played a role in the identity transitioning experiences.

Not all participants in the study had positive interactions with African Americans. Three of the twelve participants had negative interactions, which led to rejection from the dominant Black culture. The rejection from the dominant culture is considered pressure against acculturation (Berry et al., 1987). Pressures against acculturation influenced those Black Caribbean participants to select separation acculturation strategies (Berry et al., 1987; Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Joseph et al., 2013; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017). Some participants who utilized the separation acculturation strategy complained about the African American culture being more materialistic than their native culture. Participants described having economic struggles trying to fit into the dominant Black American culture. The economic pressures associated with acculturating to African American culture forced those participants to select a separation acculturation strategy. These findings support Berry's (2006) findings that economics plays a crucial role in the transition and adaptation process of immigrants' perception of their deprivation and loss of original identity status (Berry, 2006). In addition, the participants described the subjection to race-related stressors because their association with African Americans caused them to circumvent those stressors by utilizing a separation acculturation strategy (Joseph et al., 2013). The findings in this study support existing studies on acculturation during cultural identity transition. However, the data expanded existing studies when

participants further described their reasons for utilizing the separation strategy. Some participants noted having difficulty assimilating to the Black American dominant culture because of the term "African American." Those participants explained that they did not believe the term assigned to the dominant Black American culture was fitting. They believed that the name African American only displaced individuals in this population from their birthplace. Hence, the term African American and their experience of the term contributed to some participants in this study disassociating themselves from the dominant Black culture by choosing a separation acculturation strategy.

Ultimately, various acculturation stressors cause the participants to utilize integration or separation strategies. However, no matter which strategy the participants chose, they still only preferred to interact with other Black Caribbeans because of cultural barriers with other dominant culture members. All the participants noted that their accent and native dialect was significant barrier in their interactions with members of the Black and White American cultures. Scholars have found that Black Caribbeans commonly utilize their native accents and accentuating cultural norms to distinguish themselves from others to navigate stressors (Benson, 2006; Foner, 2016; Jackson & Cothran, 2003; Joseph et al., 2013; Rong & Fitchett, 2008; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017; Thornton et al., 2014; Waters, 1999). However, participants in this study noted that they did not utilize their accents to disassociate themselves from the dominant culture. The participants wanted acceptance from the dominant culture, especially African Americans. The accent barrier experienced by the participants in this study was not intentional. The accent and cultural norms became significant barriers in their interactions with dominant cultures

because of limited knowledge about Black Caribbean culture. These findings confirmed that this study aligns with existing studies and expanded the empirical research.

Superordinate Theme 5: Emotional Reaction

The fifth and final superordinate theme identified in the data analysis was an emotional reaction. This superordinate overarching theme refers to how the participant reacts to their identity status transitioning experience after the adaptation process. Adaptation is inevitable in the identity transition (Berry et al., 2006). All the participants in this study successfully adapted to their new cultural identity. However, the emotional reaction to their overall cultural identity transition experience was not positive. Some participants had a positive emotional reaction to their experiences, while others had negative reactions to their experiences (Foner et al., 2018; Warner, 2012). Participants who had a positive emotional reaction to their overall cultural identity transition and adaptation were appreciative of the outcome of their experience (Foner et al., 2018; Lin et al., 2022). Most participants expressed happy emotions towards their identity transition process because they appreciated how their experiences played a significant role in whom they became in life. The participants who had happiness as an emotional reaction expressed their resilience, ambition, and satisfaction because of their experiences. In addition, the participants who expressed happiness as an emotional reaction to their experience felt good about how well they handled various stressors during their process (Berry et al., 2006). The participants described feeling happiness towards their abilities to alter expectations, cognitive reappraisal, positive social support, and positive personality traits facilitated them to navigate stressors successfully and adjust to their new minority

cultural identity. Those positive methods have allowed the participants to navigate stressors and embrace their new cultural identity (Berry et al., 2006; Benson, 2006; Foner et al., 2018; Freeman, 2002).

In contrast, some participants had an adverse emotional reaction towards their overall experience transitioning to their identity status. Participants who expressed sadness towards their overall experience described having difficulties with various stressors. This finding supported Foner et al. (2018) and Kaalsen's (2021) beliefs that various experiences sometimes complicate immigrants' identity transition. Some factors which led to these participants' sadness were lack of support, the pressure to denounce primitive cultural practices, race-related stressors, rejection from the dominant culture, resettlement stress, and acculturative stress. Those stressors made the participants react with sadness towards their experience in the cultural identity transition, which led to cultural and identity bereavement (Bhurgra & Becker, 2005). The participants noted sadness because of a significant loss of identity, which aligns with Lin et al. (2022) findings. However, how these participants dealt with those stressors and appraised their transition process contributed to their negative emotional reaction to their experiences (Berry et al., 2006; Bhurgra & Becker, 2005; Phinney et al., 2001). Participants who expressed sadness as their emotional reaction towards their experience described having difficulties cognitively reframing their minds and accepting the changes in the process. They also expressed those limited opportunities as a minority in the host country hindered them from excelling and achieving certain things in life, leading them to reminisce about their life there. Some of these individuals also frequently visited their

host country to regain the feeling of being dominant again. However, the visits only proliferated their negative feelings towards the cultural transition experience.

Also, these participants who felt sadness towards their overall experience described feeling like the cultural identity transition process was continuous. These findings concur with Berry's (2006) and Foner et al. (2018) discoveries of identity transition having many dimensions that could exacerbate some immigrants' processes. Overall, all the findings in this study confirmed and expanded the knowledge about Black Caribbean's experience transitioning from dominant to minority in empirical research.

Findings and the Theoretical Framework

Findings from this study were supported by of Berry's acculturative stress theory. The acculturative stress theory is an alternative to culture shock (Berry, 2006). Unlike the culture shock concept, which implies that an immigrant's acculturation is only based on their experiences or having negativity, the premise of the acculturative stress theory lies in the notion that immigrants can have different experiences during acculturation. The acculturative stress theory suggests that an immigrant's acculturation and drastic changes do not always have to be associated with negativity. Even though acculturative stress is inevitable for immigrants, the stress level is determined by different factors, their appraisal of stressors, coping abilities, outcome and adaptation. Some Black Caribbean participants in this study described their cultural identity transition as positive. P4, P7, P8, P9, P10, and P11 described their positive cultural identity transition experiences. In contrast, P2, P3, P6, and P12 perceived their experiences as unfavorable. In addition, P1

and P5 had multiple factors in their cultural transition, making them describe the experiences as complicated.

Factors Affecting Acculturative Stress

Various factors can affect acculturative stress and the participant's positive, negative, or complex cultural identity transitioning experience (Berry, 2017, 2006). The study participants experienced several factors that caused acculturative stress during their cultural identity status transition experience. Contextual factors on the personal and environmental levels, social support, social mobility, race-related, and acculturation stressors affected the participants' acculturative stress during the cultural transition process. Acculturative stress is commonly associated with immigrants' personal and environmental factors (Berry, 2017). These are themes that emerged in the data. At a personal and environmental level, immigrants could have increased acculturative stress post-migration (Berry, 2017; Berry et al., 1987).

Acquiring a job post-migration is a common environmental factor that determines the level of stress the participant experiences (Berry, 2017). The adult migrant participants in this study described having low acculturative stress associated with employment acquisition because they retained a job relatively quickly after migrating to the United States. Acquiring employment quickly during the migration process reduced those participants' stress levels, allowing them to deal with other stressors positively throughout their experiences. The findings supported Berry's acculturative stress theory because instead of always having a psychological breakdown from encounters with

stressors, the participants' outcome was solely based on how they perceived and managed various factors in their transitioning process (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2006).

In contrast, the adolescent migrant participants had other environmental factors which played a role in their experiences. Dependent on the immigrant's abilities, complexities associated with crossing cultures can significantly increase acculturative stress (Berry, 2017, 2006). Cross-cultural changes played a significant role in the adolescent migrants transitioning experience. Having various cultural differences and barriers in their new diverse school system and surroundings in the host country, many adolescent migrant participants had difficulties navigating those environmental factors. Subsequently, the cross-cultural experience increased acculturative stress for these participants. The acculturative stress theory suggests that such cross-cultural stressors are continuous, which could increase acculturative stress levels for immigrants (Berry, 2017, 2006). This notion was evident in the participant's experiences. Most adolescent participants perceived their stressors negatively because of their problematic cross-cultural encounters. However, the findings in this study disconfirm researchers' argument that immigrants' positivity dissipates over time due to inevitable perceived discrimination, socioeconomic issues, and cultural conflicts (Berry, 2006). Participants in this study encountered those stressors, but additional factors such as social support and preparation, positive interactions with the dominant culture, personality traits, and cognitive abilities allowed them to maintain a positive perception of their stressors throughout their transition experience. Ultimately, those additional factors allowed some

of the participants to positively appraise and cope with their stressors in their cultural identity status transition experiences.

Appraisal

The immigrant's appraisal of their stressors also plays a critical role in their acculturative stress and how they manage the stressors during their experience (Berry, 2017). Although acculturative stress is inevitable in the acculturation process, an individual's assessment of acculturative stressors significantly impacts whether the outcome is positive or negative (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2006). Even though all the Black Caribbean participants experienced social mobility, race-related, and acculturation stressors, they described having different appraisals of the stressors. However, the appraisal of those changes determined if the participants in this study had a heightened or lessened acculturative stress (Berry, 2017). Immigrants' downward mobility post-migration was associated with high acculturative stress for this population (Rong & Fitchett, 2008). Most participants had downward mobility but did not have the same level of acculturative stress. Participants who chose to view the changes positively carried that attitude throughout their experience and had a positive cultural identity transitioning experience. This finding aligns with the acculturative theory suggestion that immigrants with a positive appraisal have lower levels of acculturative stress and a greater ability to navigate stressors during the transition process (Berry, 2006).

Some participants appraise changes negatively. The Black Caribbean immigrants who appraised the changes negatively tend to have more difficulties navigating stressors throughout their journey. When the participants evaluated and appraised the acculturative

stressor as challenging or problematic, they demonstrated heightened levels of acculturative stress (Berry, 2006). Consequently, the negative appraisal created difficulty for the participants to acculturate to the dominant host culture and accept their new identity status, which led to high levels of acculturative stress (Berry, 2017, 2006). Overall, the findings of this study concur with Berry's acculturative stress theory as it aligns with the beliefs that immigrant appraisal has a vital role in the stress level they experience during the acculturation and the transition process.

Coping Strategies

The acculturative stress theory suggests that the coping strategy is just as crucial to the outcome of the adjustment as the appraisal. How immigrants manage their stressors during the cultural transition could determine the outcome of their experiences (Berry, 2017). Immigrants usually use active or passive coping strategies to deal with acculturative stress (Berry, 2017; 2006). Some participants in this study used active coping strategies. Many adult participants explained how they embraced changes or altered expectations to cope with their stressors during the cultural identity transition process. Those active coping strategies allowed the participants to reduce acculturative stress and accept their new minority identity status, which supported Berry's acculturative stress theory (Berry, 2006).

In addition, some participants' willingness, and openness to discovering new cultural norms in the host country allowed them to cope with various stressors healthily and reduce acculturative stress. Utilizing such active coping strategies has allowed those participants to navigate stressors easily and increased their chances of adapting to the

minority identity status appropriately. Active coping strategies allowed participants to utilize integration acculturation strategies which fueled the acceptance of their new cultural identity status post-migration. The integration acculturation strategy is associated with the lowest acculturative stress levels because it allows the participant to retain their native culture and acquire new cultural norms from the dominant culture in the host country (Lechuga & Fernandez, 2011). Those findings coincide with the acculturative stress theory's premise of an active coping strategy promoting successful acculturation with minor psychological adjustment (Berry et al., 1987).

Contrarily, some participants utilized passive coping strategies to navigate stressors in their cultural identity transition experience. Participants who utilized passive coping strategies isolated themselves from the dominant culture, hoping to escape the reality that their identity status transitioned from dominant to a minority. This is present when some participants utilize the separation acculturation strategy, which is associated with higher levels of acculturative stress because it forces the participant to select one cultural norm over the other (Berry, 2017). This notion was present in the acculturation stressor theme, where some participants had increased acculturative stress from losing primitive cultural norms. Those participants chose to avoid and deny their new cultural identity, which heightened their stress even more. However, regardless of the participants' coping strategies to navigate stressors, additional factors played a role in their overall experience transitioning to their identity status. These findings supported the theoretical framework because it enforces that the acculturative stress outcome and adaptation are not one-dimensional (Berry, 2017; 2006).

Acculturative Stress Outcome

The outcome is one of the last stages of the acculturative stress theory (Berry, 2017). The outcome is associated with high acculturative stress, which exceeds the immigrant's coping abilities leading to mental health challenges (Berry, 2006; Ying & Han, 2006). Factors such as the immigrant's age, financial achievements, social mobility, cognitive abilities, and interactions with the dominant culture contribute to high acculturative stress, which leads to psychological issues for some immigrants (Berry et al., 1987). However, although a few participants mentioned psychological distress from their cultural transition experience, no participant in this study developed mental illness. Some participants detailed having mild psychological effects from cultural and identity bereavement from losing primitive aspects of their identities. However, the distress never resulted in the development of a mental disorder. The mild psychological distress experienced by some of the participants in the study was identified among individuals who had a high level of acculturative stress from downgrading social class, experiencing everyday race-related stressors, acculturation stressors, losing cultural practices, negative experiences due to contextual factors, and having an adverse emotional reaction to their overall experience transitioning their cultural identity status. The participants who experienced high acculturative stress, which resulted in adverse effects, were induced by various factors, negative appraisal of stressors, and unhealthy coping strategies. However, participants with less acculturative stress described having no psychological issues from their experience. Their ability to appraise stressors positively and utilize healthy coping strategies allowed them to navigate stressors appropriately and eliminate negative

psychological outcomes, leading to a happy emotional reaction to their experiences. These findings supported Berry's implication of positivity in the acculturation and identity transitioning process eliminating adverse outcomes (Berry et al., 1987).

Adaptation

The last stage in the acculturative stress theory is adaptation. Berry believes adaptation is inevitable (Berry, 2006). This stage entails the immigrant making stable changes and settling down to a more advantageous or less favorable existence when the two cultures (host and original culture and identities) acquire sustained contact (Berry, 2006). However, the adaptation could be positive or negative (Berry, 2006). This notion was evident in the emotional reaction superordinate theme. All the participants in the study disclosed adapting to the minority status over time.

Nevertheless, not all the participants found an improved fit during the process, which decreased their acculturative stress. Some participants described feeling sadness towards their experience even though they adapted to the new identity. Some participants stated that sadness was associated with multiple stressors, continuously transitioning to new factors after acculturation, adaptation, and acceptance of their new identity. Those findings support the theoretical framework as it suggests that adaptation is individual-based, and psychological and sociocultural factors play a role in the individual's prolonged acculturative stress after adaptation (Berry, 2006). The participants who had a sad emotional reaction to their experience after adaptation demonstrated difficulties managing their life after transitioning to a minority identity status. They were still mentally holding onto their experiences of having a dominant culture in their native

country. However, they disclosed having less acculturative stress from their identity transition experience over time, which aligns with acculturative stress theory (Berry et al., 1987; Berry et al., 2006). Some participants mentioned having better social interactions with the dominant White and Black American culture member the longer they lived in the host country because of increased knowledge and exposure. This finding also concurs with the acculturative stress theory, where Berry believes increased exposure to the dominant culture will cause acculturative stress to dissipate (Berry et al., 1987; Berry et al., 2006). Therefore, interpreting the study's findings supported Berry's acculturative stress theory.

Limitations of the Study

Extra precautions were taken to ensure the accuracy and trustworthiness of this IPA qualitative study. One concern was the difficulty in recruiting participants for this study. However, with the utilization of the proposed recruitment strategies, all twelve participants were recruited with ease. All the individual-level information the Black Caribbean participants shared represented their experiences and perspectives of transitioning their cultural identity status from dominant to a minority post-migration to the United States. Therefore, the study was limited by the characteristics of the sample of Black Caribbeans who participated in this study. A larger sample may have yielded additional information about Black Caribbean's cultural identity transition experience that was not found by this sample. The findings in this study directly represent the experiences of this specific group of Black Caribbeans.

Zoom video conference interviews were also a limitation of the study. All participants opt to have a Zoom video interview instead of an in-person interview. Video interviews, as opposed to in-person interviews, limit the researcher from observing all non-verbal communications during the semi-structured interviews. The video interviews limited the researcher's reliance on tone of voice and facial expressions. All the participant's non-verbal cues were observed through video.

Due to the study's sensitive nature, it is also essential to be cognizant that participants may mistrust the researcher and withhold information about their experience with the studied phenomenon to appear more favorable. Some participants verified if the researcher was a Black Caribbean immigrant because it made them feel more comfortable disclosing information and sharing their experiences with someone from the population. However, it was unclear if this was the case for all participants in the study. Some participants could have verified the researcher's identity to conceal or misrepresent information mainly because of the commonality of them being in the same immigrant population. It was assumed that all the participants were open and honest based on the rich-detailed information they provided, and the rapport built in the interviews. However, the study's findings are limited to the extent to which the Black Caribbean participants were truthful in their interviews.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Through this IPA study, I aimed to address the identified gap in the literature regarding the experiences of Black Caribbeans transitioning their identity status from dominant to minority. Participants in this study migrated to common geographical

locations in the U.S. that host large populations of Black Caribbeans. Except for one participant who migrated to Florida, all other participants migrated to New York City. These individuals noted that New York City desensitized the cultural identity transition experience because of the prominent Black population. However, New York City and Florida are not the only locations Black Caribbeans migrate. Therefore, further studies need to target Black Caribbeans whose migrant destination was in other locations throughout the United States besides New York and Florida to explore their cultural identity transition experience.

Furthermore, all the participants in this study were first-generation migrants. However, there have been controversies surrounding children born to foreign-born immigrants in recent years. These children are considered second-generation migrants or sometimes referred to as "anchor babies" (Ignatow & Williams, 2011). There are two types of second-generation migrants. One type of second-generation migrant is raised in the United States, while the other is raised in their parent's native country. However, those raised in their parent's native country tend to later return to the United States for opportunities. Black Caribbean second-generation migrants whose parents choose to raise them in their native country are subjected to experiencing the studied phenomenon of their cultural identity transitioning from dominant to a minority when they return to the United States. Further studies should investigate the differences between Black Caribbean first and second-generation migrants' experience of transitioning their cultural identity status to increase understanding in empirical research.

Furthermore, scholars have found that immigration status and government policies play a role in immigrants' acculturation and cultural identity transition experience (Berry, 2017; Berry et al., 1987; Foner et al., 2018; Thelamour & Johnson, 2017). Black Caribbean's immigration status was not explored in this study. However, one participant in this study provided insight into how an undocumented status significantly influenced the cultural identity status transitioning experience. Therefore, further studies need to investigate if there are differences in undocumented and documented Black Caribbean experiences transitioning their identity status from dominant to a minority post-migration to the United States.

Moreover, the study participants described many stressors that impacted their identity status transition experience. Stressors can positively or negatively affect one's cultural identity transition experiences (Foner et al., 2018). However, the immigrants' stress coping strategies is a determinant factor of the experiences Black Caribbeans have transitioning their identity status post-migration. Therefore, since stressors are inevitable in the Black Caribbean cultural identity status transition process, further studies should explore what this population commonly uses as coping strategies.

Additionally, some researchers indicated that dominant and minority status is not only affected by race and immigration but by other factors. Being part of a sexual minority may be a part of the individual's identity, which overlaps with their experience. The Caribbean islands have a prevalent homophobic culture which places many negative stigmas on individuals in the LGBTQ+ community (Couzen et al., 2017). As such, further studies may need to target Black Caribbeans in the LGBTQ+ community to

explore their experience of transitioning their cultural identity status post-migration since eleven out of twelve participants in this study were heterosexuals. Further studies which included individuals from this population can provide insight into how the intersectionality of sexual orientation and cultural identity transition is experienced.

Also, as seen in the findings of this study, Black Caribbean's cultural identity status is multifaceted. The homogeneity of the study increases the possibility of many uncovered overlapping factors which impact the Black Caribbean's cultural identity status transition experience. One participant in the study described how changes in the family dynamics influenced their cultural identity status experience. As such, other factors may overlap with black Caribbean experiences. Further studies should explore overlapping factors that impact Black Caribbean's cultural identity status transitioning from dominant to a minority post-migration.

Lastly, it would also be beneficial if further studies extend the spectrum to other immigrant populations who have experienced the phenomenon. Even though immigrants' cultural identity transition has been increasingly explored in recent years, there still needs to be more information about their experiences. Little is known about how different immigrant populations experience the studied phenomenon. Therefore, I recommend that future studies include other immigrant populations in their sample to understand immigrants' cultural identity transition better. Including other immigrant groups could increase awareness of immigrants' experiences and provide social change.

Implications

Positive Social Change

The Black Caribbean population is rapidly increasing in the U.S. Black Caribbeans account for most of the Black immigrant population in the country (Tamir, 2021; Waters, 1994). However, when individuals in this population migrate to the United States, they encounter many drastic life changes. One of those significant changes is their cultural identity transition. Most of the Caribbean islands are predominantly Black. Black Caribbeans possess a dominant cultural identity in their country of origin. However, when individuals from this population migrate to the United States, a more diverse populated country, they are subjected to transitioning their identity from dominant to minority. This IPA qualitative study aimed to explore Black Caribbeans' experience transitioning their identity status from dominant to minority.

Black Caribbean's cultural transition experience is not linear (Foner et al., 2018). The Black Caribbeans in the study reported several stressors and factors that contributed to their experiences in the cultural identity transition process. Some participants provided valuable insight, from an emic perspective, into why Black Caribbeans experience increased everyday stressors during the cultural transition process. Many participants described racial consolidation and cultural differences being the cause of many stressors in their experiences.

Social support and preparation were among the most significant determinant factors of how these Black Caribbeans navigated stressors in their cultural identity status transitioning experience. Social support and preparation from others played a significant

role in allowing individuals from this population to deal with stressors appropriately and reduce acculturative stress. Not all participants in this study had social support and preparation during their experiences. Consequentially, the lack of social support caused some participants to have a more difficult cultural transition experience than those with support. Therefore, this study's findings should help identify ways to prepare and support Black Caribbeans in their cultural transition process, which could contribute to positive social change.

Moreover, the participants mentioned that social support does not have to only derive from family members because some Black Caribbean immigrants do not have family in the host country. When individuals in the community have difficulties in their cultural identity transition, it does not only affect them and their families. As demonstrated in the study's findings, Black Caribbeans having difficulties in their cultural transition can negatively affect how they socially interact with others in the community. Other ethnic groups in the communities must provide social support and preparation to facilitate a more positive cultural identity status transition. Hence, the findings from this study have contributed to positive social change on an individual, family, and community level because it explains how others can positively impact Black Caribbean's cultural identity transition experiences.

This study also contributes to positive social change through understanding and raising awareness regarding the multifaceted nature of Black Caribbean's cultural identity transition experiences. Not only do Black Caribbeans have to transition their identity status post-migration to the United States they have to also adjust to the migration

process, new environments, new cultures, new social class, new socioeconomic status, acculturation to other cultural groups, unfamiliar stressors, and social environments in the cultural transition process. As observed in the research participants' experiences, such stressors can lead to negative psychological and emotional effects. Clinicians could alleviate the negative effects some Black Caribbeans experience during their cultural identity status transition. However, clinicians' abilities are directly tied to their knowledge of Black Caribbean experiences. The participants in this study shared that Black Caribbeans are often racially consolidated with African Americans because of racial features. Venner and Welfare (2014) found that clinicians have difficulty treating Black Caribbeans because they lack knowledge and consistently perpetuate racial consolidation by mistakenly identifying and treating Black Caribbean immigrants as African Americans.

Consequently, this causes many psychological symptoms to be left untreated because Black Caribbean participants feel like they possess an invisible identity. As such, clinicians must increase their competency with Black Caribbeans. Clinicians' increase multicultural competency when working with Black Caribbeans can lead to positive social change. Clinicians can become a source of support, implement support groups, and treat Black Caribbeans appropriately. As such, the increased awareness provided by this study can positively serve Black Caribbeans in their cultural transition experiences, especially since the participants in the study noted that the process is continuous.

Additionally, clinicians are not the only ones perpetuating mistaken identities towards Black Caribbeans. Individuals in society also mistakenly identify Black

Caribbeans as African Americans in social interactions. Research participants noted that applying mistaken identification to Black Caribbeans makes them feel like they possess an invisible identity. Consequently, this causes Black Caribbeans to isolate themselves from the dominant Black and White American culture members and only socialize with individuals in their immigrant population. However, since social interactions with dominant cultures are essential in the Black Caribbean's acculturation process and acceptance of their new identity status during the cultural identity transition experience, individuals in society need to acknowledge self-identified Black Caribbean's ethnic identity. This change needs to begin with policymakers.

The United States census also played a role in merging the two ethnic groups. The United States Census has no distinction between African Americans and Black Caribbeans. All Black population (e.g., Africans, African Americans, Afro-Latino, and Black Caribbean immigrants) are only allowed to self-identify as Black (represented by one category in the census) (United States Census Bureau, 2022). The consolidation of the two groups on the census causes Black Caribbeans to feel like their cultural identity is ignored in the host country. Policymakers must make the necessary changes to the census. The changes in the census can allow society to identify distinct differences between the two groups and allow individuals to acknowledge Black Caribbean's ethnic and cultural identity. The distinction between the two groups could provide social change for Black Caribbeans as it will allow them to feel accepted and acknowledged by society.

Furthermore, recognizing ethnic identity can be solicited through Black Caribbean advocates. Black Caribbeans should have advocates in the community designated to bring

awareness to their experiences, increase resources, represent their interests, solicit change on their behalf, and obtain services. Ultimately, through the Black Caribbean advocates, knowledge and awareness will be increased among others about Black Caribbean's experiences during the cultural identity transition. Subsequently, increased awareness will provide positive social change as it will allow Black Caribbeans to embrace changes that occur during their cultural identity status transition experience that can lead to a positive acceptance of their new minority identity status. Overall, this study has the potential to increase much, providing social change for Black Caribbeans.

Theoretical Implications

Berry's acculturative stress theory was used as the theoretical framework which guided the formulation of the research question in this study, which seeks to find answers to the identified problem of Black Caribbean's cultural identity status transition post-migration. The interview guide was developed from this theoretical concept and was used to interpret the study's findings. Acculturative stress theory assumes that stress is inevitable for immigrants because they encounter many stressors in the acculturation and transition process (Berry, 2006). Immigrants' experience in the identity and acculturation process is affected by various factors which occur in the social and physical environment or at a personal level (Berry, 2017). However, how immigrants appraise and cope with those stressors determines their experience, outcome, and adaptation (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2006). Berry believes that adaptation is inevitable (Berry, 2006, 2017). If the immigrant has negative appraisal and coping abilities, they will experience negative outcomes and adapt to their new identities (Berry, 2017). If the immigrant has a positive

appraisal and coping abilities, they will have a positive outcome and adaptation, which leads to them embracing their new identities in the host country (Berry, 2017).

This study supported the acculturative stress theory concept as the participants discussed having their experience beginning in the migration process when they first entered the United States. Based on how the participants perceive their new environment, interact with the Black and White American dominant culture members, and gain social support in their migration adjustment process determined the trajectory of their cultural identity transition experience. Ultimately, participants with positive perceptions of environmental factors, interactions, and social support demonstrated reduced acculturative stress throughout other areas of their cultural transition experience. These findings aligned with the theory's belief that the three major components of the transition experience are social support, acceptance from dominant culture members, and positive appraisal (Berry et al., 1987; Rogler et al., 1991). Berry believes that since immigrants have a multi-dimensional acculturation and transition process, those three factors could facilitate positive coping strategies which enhance the immigrant's experience and reduce acculturative stress (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2006). Some significant stressors for the Black Caribbean participants were social class adjustment, cultural maintenance, acculturation factors, and race-related stressors. When the participants gain support from others and have positive social interactions with the dominant culture, they tend to appraise those stressors positively. However, when the participant lacks social support or experience rejection from cultural members, they tend to appraise the stressors negatively, which leads to a negative experience, outcome, and adaptation. Difficulties

navigating stressors successfully during the cultural transition process significantly increase levels of psychological discomfort, which causes high acculturative stress (Berry et al., 1987). The heightened acculturative stress is specifically noticed among individuals who experience rejection from the dominant culture (Organista et al., 2006; Sam & Berry, 2006). As such, the acknowledgment and acceptance from the dominant play a significant role in how Black Caribbeans experience cultural identity transition. Therefore, the findings of this study can educate individuals in the dominant cultures in the host country about the vital role their social interactions play in Black Caribbean's cultural identity transition experiences.

Increasing knowledge and awareness could facilitate more support and understanding from dominant culture members, allowing Black Caribbeans to successfully adapt to their new minority identity status with reduced acculturative stress. Alterations to dominant culture members' behaviors, attitudes, and interactions with Black Caribbeans can positively influence a healthy psychological and sociocultural adaptation for immigrants in this population. According to the acculturative stress theory, when the dominant culture supports and interacts with immigrants positively, problems in the immigrants' psychological and sociocultural adaptation dissipate, which promotes increased cross-cultural contact (Berry, 2006). Ultimately, the acculturative stress theory in this study illustrated its ability to provide positive social change. It can increase cultural knowledge and support and alter behaviors of dominant cultural members towards Black Caribbeans.

Conclusion

This IPA qualitative study explored the experiences of Black Caribbeans transitioning their identity status from dominant to minority. The findings of the study were a direct reflection of the 12 Black Caribbean participants who were recruited through purposeful snowballing techniques. The participants shared intimate details about their cultural identity transition experience in semi-structured interviews, which aligned with the literature review in Chapter 2. The study's findings were derived from manual coding using IPA data analysis techniques.

The findings revealed that Black Caribbean's cultural transition experience is preeminent to other immigrant groups in the United States. When immigrants migrate to the United States, they are expected to acculturate to the dominant groups in the country (Dodoo, 1999; Freeman, 2002; Ghorbani, 2011; Logan, 2019). However, the Black Caribbean's cultural transition experience is not as linear as one would assume. Unlike many other immigrant groups, Black Caribbeans have additional factors that must be considered in their cultural transition experience (Foner et al., 2018). Individuals in this population must simultaneously acculturate to a new cultural norm and transition their dominant cultural identity status when they migrate to the United States. There is an intersectionality in Black Caribbeans' cultural transition experience. The intersectionality poses many stressors and factors which require adjustment.

The results revealed that individuals in this immigrant group must adjust to factors such as the migration process, social class status, socioeconomic backgrounds, various stressors, cultural practice maintenance, acculturation, racial consolidation, and

other overlapping factors. Most Black Caribbeans prefer interacting and living amongst other Blacks to navigate those factors successfully. Some participants had an easy experience in the cultural transition process due to migrating to Caribbean-driven or Black minority communities. The two participants who discussed migrating to a predominantly White community post-migration explained having difficulty in the transitioning experience. Consequently, this led to the participants relocating to more Caribbean-driven and Black minority communities in New York City to alleviate acculturative stress. Therefore, the community Black Caribbeans live in plays a significant role in their experience.

Most of the participants in this study migrated to New York City. New York City has a large Black Caribbean and African American population. Participants explained that New York City desensitized the cultural transition experience because it illuminates them as the dominant group in the host country. However, it is not until these individuals step outside their protective cushion in New York City that they fully experience transitioning from a dominant to a minority identity status. Essential factors such as social support and acceptance from the dominant cultures affected how these individuals perceived those experiences. Black Caribbean participants who had social support from family members or individuals in dominant cultures described feeling more prepared to navigate stressors and embrace changes during their identity transition than those who did not. Social support allowed these participants to appraise changes and deal with stressors appropriately. Subsequently, social support allowed Black Caribbean participants to gain a positive identity status transition experience, leading to them embracing their new

identity status. The study revealed that Black Caribbeans require social support from others during their cultural transition experience to adapt to their new minority identity status in the United States.

Moreover, it is paramount to note that Black Caribbean's cultural identity status transition is continuous. The study's findings revealed that Black Caribbeans endure new factors and stressors in different stages of their lives. This finding was evident amongst participants who migrated to the United States at a young age. The adolescent migrant participants in the study shared rich, detailed information about maneuvering different factors and stressors in every stage of their lives. However, with appropriate social support and acknowledgment from dominant culture members, these individuals had a better chance to cope with stressors positively.

In addition, one hindrance in the Black Caribbean's acceptance of their new identity status is the loss of cultural identity. Most participants felt invisible in society because they were constantly mistaken and consolidated with African Americans. Some participants felt disrespected by society, consolidating them to African Americans because they did not feel they had the same privileges and sense of belonging to the host country as US-born Blacks. Also, the mistaken identity subjects Black Caribbeans to have added acculturative stress because they experience the same discrimination, prejudice, inequality, and unfair treatment as African Americans. Consequently, the mistaken identity perpetuates resistance for Black Caribbeans to accept their new identity status. Increasing education and awareness about immigrants' experiences and societal culture decreases acculturative stress and promotes easy adaptation (Berry et al., 1987;

Berry, 2017, 2006). Therefore, the study revealed the importance of increased awareness and support for Black Caribbean immigrants, especially since this population has additional stressors and factors contributing to their experiences.

The IPA study accomplished its purpose by allowing the Black Caribbean participants to explore their experiences transitioning their identity status from dominant to minority. The Black Caribbean's experiences shared in this study demonstrated that Black Caribbeans' cultural identity transition is fluid. They do not all have the same experiences in the process. Experiences in their native countries also contribute to their experiences. Some participants experienced cultural bereavement and resettlement stress from losing primitive cultural aspects of their native country, while others experienced joy from discovering new cultures.

This study found that Black Caribbeans must be true to themselves and embrace change to alleviate acculturative stress. However, regardless of their emotional reaction toward their overall experience, each participant appeared to have accomplished a lot as a minority in this country and have found a happy place in life. Some participants described feeling appreciation for their experiences during the process because the lessons learned contributed to whom they became in life. Participants felt excited to have a voice and share their experience in this study because they firmly believe it will increase awareness. They thought it was important for others to know that their experiences in the cultural transition experience increased their knowledge and respect for other cultures.

All the Black Caribbean participants demonstrated resilience, strength, ambition, and tenacity during their cultural identity transition experience. This study represents the Black Caribbean participant's experiences. Therefore, I think it is appropriate to end the study by quoting how one of the Black Caribbean participants summed up the experiences of all the participants in this study. The participant stated, "I lost myself and found myself during my transition. I love my Black and am proud to be a Black Caribbean in America."

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Appendix A

Demographic questions:

1. How old are you? _____
2. Please select your ethnicity?
 - (a) Afro-Caribbean/ Black West Indian
 - (b) African American
 - (c) Caucasian
 - (d) Latino or Hispanic
 - (e) Other _____
3. What is your current gender identity?
 - (a) Female
 - (b) Male
 - (c) Transgender man
 - (d) Transgender woman
 - (e) Genderqueer/ Gender-nonconforming
 - (f) I prefer not to say
4. How do you identify your sexual orientation?
 - (a) Heterosexual or Straight
 - (b) Gay or lesbian
 - (c) Bisexual
 - (d) Transgender
 - (e) Not listed above (please state): _____

(f) I prefer not to say

5. What is your marital status?

(a) Single

(b) Married or domestic partnership

(c) Divorced

(d) Widow

(e) Separated

(f) I prefer not to answer

7. Do you identify as an individual with a disability or chronic condition?

(a) Yes

(b) No

(c) I prefer not to say

6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

(a) No schooling completed

(b) Nursery school to 8th grade

(c) Some high school

(d) High school

(e) Bachelor's degree

(f) Master's degree

(g) Ph.D. or higher

(h) Trade school/technical/vocational training

(I) I prefer not to say

7. What is your employment status?

- (a) Employed Full-Time
- (b) Employed Part-Time
- (c) Seeking Employment/ Unemployed
- (d) Retired
- (e) I prefer not to answer

8. What is your annual household income?

- (a) Less than \$25,000
- (b) \$25,000 - \$50,000
- (c) 50,000 – 100,000
- (d) 100,000 - \$200,000
- (e) More than \$200,000
- (f) I prefer not to say

9. What is your living status?

- (a) Homeowner
- (b) Renter
- (c) Other _____
- (d) I prefer not to say

10. Are you a native of the Caribbean Islands?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

11. Where were you born? _____

12. Where were you raised? _____
13. What country did you migrate from? _____
14. What age did you migrate to the United States? _____
15. What migrant generation are you?
- (a) First-generation (*you were born outside of the US*)
 - (b) Second-generation (*you were born and raised in the US with foreign-born parents/caregivers*)
 - (c) Third or later generation (*you and your parents were born in the US with foreign-born family heritage (grandparents, great-grandparents, etc.)*)
16. Where in the United States do you reside? _____
17. What is your language preference? _____

Interview Guide:

The following questions were used as an interview guide in the semi-structured interviews:

1. Based on the responses to the demographic questions, I understand that you are (e.g., first-generation, second-generation immigrant, etc.). What was the context of the migration?
 1. How did your family adjust to the migration process?
 2. How did you adjust to the migration process?
2. Tell me a little about how you would describe your cultural identity regarding your social class (upper, middle, or lower class).
 1. Is this social class different from the one you held in your native country?

2. How did you adjust to the changes (if it is different)?
3. Regarding your racial background, how do you see yourself in your native country?
(e.g., minority vs. majority status)
4. Tell me about your experiences regarding your cultural transition when you came to the United States.
5. What changes or differences have you noticed regarding your cultural practices when you compare your experience in your home country and the United States?
6. How would you describe your racial status regarding majority vs. minority in the United States?
7. How are different or similar the interactions with African American persons in the United States when you compare your interactions with other Black persons from your home country?
8. How are your interactions similar or different when interacting with White persons in the US compared to your home country?
9. In this study, I am exploring whether Black Caribbeans experience transitioning from dominant to minority identity status. Still, some researchers indicated that dominant and minority status is not only affected by race and immigration but by other factors such as ability (having a disability), being part of a sexual minority, or coming from a lower SES background. I wondered if any of these factors (ability, sexual minority, or lower SES background) are part of your identity.

Prove: if participants identify one of these or respond with an affirmation. How do you think that this part of your identity overlaps with your experience of transitioning from

majority to minority status? (in case the participant experienced the phenomenon of transitioning from majority to minority status)?

10. What are the three most important things people should know about your cultural transition experience?