

Life as Immigrant Parents;

A Qualitative Study of the Family Life of Ghanaian Immigrant Parents in Denmark.

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Master Thesis: 31 May 2022

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to the Almighty God, who has journeyed with me through thick and thin in the course of my study. To him be all the praise.

Again, I dedicate this work to my grandfather, Mr. John Kwesi Kuti, who accepted and took on the responsibility as a biological father and gave me the gift of education. I am eternally grateful Papa.

Acknowledgment

My profound gratitude goes to diverse individuals, who have been very instrumental and constructive during the writing of this dissertation. First and foremost, my heartfelt gratitude goes to my supervisor, Anja Kublitz for your constructive criticisms and directions throughout my thesis process.

To my lovely wife, Juanita Awuah Mensah, who made sure that I was of a sound mind to study and also always pushed me to reach for excellence, I say a resounding thank you.

To my family members back home who supported me with regular check-ups and prayers, especially my mom, Augustina Abena Kuti, I say the good Lord abundantly bless you all.

To the Ghanaian community of immigrant parents who availed themselves for longer conversations and interviews for my data collection irrespective of the challenges that Covid-19 posed, I say your benevolences will not go unrewarded.

Last but not least, to my colleagues at Global Refugee Studies and the Danish Government for the scholarship to study in this terrain, I am grateful and God bless you all.

Abstract

It is a known fact that as part of its core mandates, the Danish welfare state does not undermine the incorporation of newcomers into its society. The political mantra for the institution for such laid down guidelines is to help immigrants and refugees transition smoothly into the welfare state. On the other hand, scholars like Birgitte Romme Larsen argue that such interventionist programmes make the welfare state inherently present in the lives of immigrants and minority groups, creating a trilateral establishment in the domestic space (Larsen, 2008; 117).

In relying on their shared narrative stories and experiences, I examine the family lives of Ghanaian immigrant parents in Denmark. I interviewed seven (7) Ghanaian parents (4 males and 3 females) to gain insight into how family life is for them as immigrant parents.

Theoretically, Edward Said's concept of *the Double Perspective* is used as the overarching theoretical framework in this thesis because my interlocutors compare every aspect of their lives in Denmark with their Ghanaian traditional backgrounds. Also, I rely on Karl Mannheim's approach to generations, the inter-generational contract, and Pierre Bourdieu's forms of capital to explore the issues that I discuss in this study.

Analytically, this thesis is structured in 2 two parts. The first chapter of my analysis examines the life of my interlocutors as citizens in Denmark. My focus here is to examine the forms of changes that have taken place in the lives of Ghanaian immigrant parents in Denmark. In brevity, there are changes in areas of the organization of family life, which lead to changes in gender roles but at the same time, these changes in gender roles are coupled with certain desirable advantages for some of the women that I spoke with in my study.

The second chapter of my analysis focuses on another important dimension in the life experiences of my interlocutors in Denmark. I examined the parent-child relationship which is different from what has been described as the patron-client relationship in the Ghanaian context by some scholars. In conclusion, this study makes the justification that in living their lives, Ghanaian immigrant parents experience certain critical alterations in their personal lives and that such changes that they experience are necessary for their incorporation into the Danish society.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Danish anthropologist, Mikkel Rytter in his work; *Made in Denmark: Refugees, integration and the self-dependent society*, a project based on migration, integration, and family, observed that the concept of integration gained much traction in popular Danish discourses in the 1980s and 1990s (Rytter, 2018; 12). However, there was not much attention on immigrants or refugees before this period. According to Rytter, “*when the first male guest workers’ (gæstearbejdere) came to Denmark, mainly from Turkey, (former) Yugoslavia, and Pakistan in the 1960s and 1970s, their everyday lives attracted relatively little public and political attention*” (2018; 12).

However, the invisibility of immigrants and refugees in the Danish Welfare State soon became visible when the number of immigrant families who had settled in Denmark increased mainly through the expansion of family size by procreation and family reunification (ibid). New groups sprung from places like Asia, the Middle East, Bosnia, Africa, and so on (see Rytter, 2018 & 2013) and this phenomenon was characterized by the problem of “*unforeseen cultural problems*” (Rytter, 2018; 12). In light of this, legislative policies (integration policies), were adopted by the government of the welfare state to regulate all facets of the life of the immigrant and refugees ranging from “*organization of family life, accommodation, upbringing, authority, gender roles, language spoken in the home, transnational relations with the homeland, clothing, hygiene, nutrition, and marriage*”. (Rytter, 2018. p. 12-13). Thus, the advent of most of the integration policies designed at the time as part of the strategies to incorporate minority groups into the larger Danish society was aimed at transforming family life, religion, and tradition to suit the ideals of Danish society (Rytter, 2013) or as Steffen Jöhncke will opine that “*for immigrants to become accepted as integrated, they must not only “feel Danish,” they must also “do Danish” in close accordance with a whole range of particular social and cultural demands of the welfare state*” (Jöhncke, 2011; 35 as cited in Olwig, 2011). Thus rationale behind various integration policies in Denmark has been to mitigate cultural differences, dispel unparalleled societies and achieve a homogenous cultural system within the Danish welfare state.

Ghanaians constitute a part of the ethnic minority groups in Denmark. According to Statistics Denmark¹ (2022), the current number of Ghanaian residing in Denmark is estimated at 28,980

¹ Statistics Denmark is a governmental organization under the Ministry for Economic and Interior Affairs. It oversees the creation of statistics on the Danish population. See <https://www.dst.dk/en/OmDS>

out of the estimated 12% of the Danish population with immigrant backgrounds (www.statbank.dk/FOLK2). Just like all immigrants, Ghanaians in Denmark are expected to integrate into the larger Danish culture, learn and acquire Danish skills, engage in economic and political activities, contribute by way of taxation to the welfare pool, incorporate Danish norms and values in their private and social life (Larsen, 2018).

Generally, like all newcomers, Ghanaian immigrants in the Danish welfare state also migrate with distinctive habits, experiences, and resources from their home country. This includes valuable and productive inputs that benefit them in the host country (Angelini et al., 2021). For example, skills, human capital, and labour. Aside from this, they also migrate with certain cultural goods into the Danish society. These are in the form of different religions, socio-cultural values, and distinct languages (ibid). Furthermore, immigrants with time establish their own units of families and raise their offsprings in their new settlement and tenets of family practices plays a crucial role in how immigrant families interact or forge relations with their new environment and the state at large (Grødem, 2017. p.76).

Problem Statement

From a general point of view, while it is true that the issues and challenges that are faced by immigrant parents in their new environment (for example gender roles and inter-generational related issues) cannot be found in social policy programmes in most European states, scholars contend that family-related issues that are faced by most immigrant parent are a by-product of the policies and programmes that politicians design for new-comers (see for example Popkewitz, 2003, Crozier & Davies, 2007).

Owing to recent studies in Europe, there has been the proliferation of diverse views by various stakeholders and the majority on the growing number of immigrants and refugees. This is what Birgitte Romme Larsen has referred to as the debate of "cultural anxiety" in most Scandinavian countries (Larsen, 2018; 116). In an attempt to mitigate such diversity, the Danish welfare state developed important guidelines or frameworks for the social incorporation of immigrants or newcomers into the Scandinavian society (Olwig, 2013 as cited in Olwig et al, 2013).

Ghanaian families serve as a critical institution in which the critical task of living is organized, directed, and executed (Oheneba-Sakyi & Takyi, 2006). It socializes the young and acts as a

reserve of political power for regulating behaviors and norms (ibid). However, upon migration, immigrants are required to learn and do “Danishness” (Jöhncke, 2011; 35 as cited in Olwig, 2011) through integration programmes such as learning Danish norms and values through state institutions like the social service centers, health facilities, be self-yielding citizens by gaining employment and paying of taxes and in return for the social and economic benefits that are enjoyed by the citizens of the welfare state (Olwig, 2013. p.2 as cited in Olwig et al, 2013). With regards to the above requirements by the Danish welfare state, scholars observe that the state is omnipresent, even in the private family lives and “*the intergenerational relations that it builds upon*” (Larsen, 2018; 117). While integration policies and programmes by the Welfare state are meant to ensure that Ghanaian immigrant families assimilate into the populist culture, they are also fraught with certain challenges as will be shown in this study. Moreover, as researchers, it is important for us to start asking ourselves questions like what happens to immigrant families when there is the presence of a “*second head*” (Larsen, 2018; 117) that is interwoven into the very core of their everyday lives? Thus, “*a trilateral resettlement establishment between parents, children and the welfare state*” (Larsen, 2018; 117). It is in light of this that this study seeks to answer the research question:

Research Question

How do Ghanaian immigrant parents experience their family life in the Danish Welfare state?

Gap in Knowledge

As with other areas plagued with international migration, integration and family studies, regrettably, there is little or no data currently available on the Danish welfare state's impact on the lives of Ghanaian families in Denmark. For example, most studies on integration in Denmark have focused on ethnic minority groups from Muslim states and African backgrounds like Iraqis, Palestinians, Somalis, and Congolese refugee families in Denmark (cf. Kublitz 2010, 2016; Larsen, 2011a, 2011b, 2018; Rytter, 2019, Holm Pedersen, 2012). Studies on Ghanaian families living in Denmark are scarce, hence the need for this study to contribute to the knowledge gap of how Ghanaian immigrant parents experience their lives in the Welfare system through tenets of integration policies in the Danish welfare state. Therefore, this study sets out to help anthropologists and other researchers curate data on Ghanaian families living in Denmark.

Another important justification for this research can be related to what I may term as the practical aspect of this research. Thus, I hope that the findings in this research may contribute to policy relevance, concerning integration policies, especially for immigrant families, refugees, and asylum seekers. I hope that my findings will shed some light on how certain integration policies are beneficial while others impose challenges on foreigners. Such findings will not only benefit Denmark in terms of future legislation policies on integration for foreigners but will also provide first-hand information for other internationals planning on migrating to Denmark and what to expect. This will be based on the documented experiences that I capture in the case of Ghanaian families living in Denmark.

Organization of Chapters

This section will focus on the organization of chapters in my thesis project. Chapter one (1) will make up my introduction, followed by the problem statement, research question, and the gap in knowledge for the purpose of which I undertake this study. In Chapter two (2), I will present my literature reviews and theoretical frameworks which will explain the social issues that I unearth in my study.

Chapter three (3) will focus on my methodology, which involves the research design and the procedures adopted in undertaking this study. My fourth (4) and fifth (5) chapters will constitute my analysis chapters in this study from the data gathered. Finally, chapter six (6) will be the concluding chapter, which will contain the summary of my research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.

Introduction

To situate my study in the right context and also to give readers a sense of where my interlocutors have come from, I will begin this chapter by talking briefly about Ghana, the modes and organization of family life, and the migration of Ghanaians to other parts of the world. Following this and based on my interaction with my interlocutors, I will proceed to talk about the Ghanaian community in Denmark, where they are largely concentrated in terms of housing projects in Denmark, and what has informed such preferences in terms of their settlement.

Furthermore, I will develop a section to talk about the dispensation in which my interlocutors are introduced when they arrive in Denmark, namely the Danish Welfare state and its integration policies and programmes. This is of critical importance because such integration policies and programmes form the core foundation or the major instrument of settling in Denmark for most newcomers.

In terms of theoretical underpinnings, I will expound on Edward Said's theoretical concept of *The Double Perspective*. Said's *Double Perspective* will be my overarching theoretical concept. This is because, in the preliminary stages of my data analysis, it became clear that my interlocutors compared their life experiences in the Danish welfare state to their cultural backgrounds in Ghana. Hence, I found it suitable to largely situate my analysis in Said's work. I will also rely on Karl Mannheim's Inter-generational Approach and the Inter-generational Contract by Erdmute Alber, Susan Reynolds Whyte and Van Der Geest, Pierre Bourdieu's theory on Forms of Capital to unfold how my interlocutors have experienced family life in Denmark.

Ghana

Ghana, a West African democratic country, is estimated to have a population of about 32 million people, currently according to the latest United Nations data² (www.worldometers.info).

² <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/ghana-population/> (accessed on 9th of May, 2022)

It is diversified in terms of culture and ethnicity. Geographically, it is situated along the lines of the Gulf of Guinea and surrounded by neighbouring African countries with Cote d'Ivoire to the West, Burkina Faso to the North, and Togo to the East (Salm, 2002). Ghana holds a prominent place in African history and culture as the first country to have gained independence in Sub-Saharan Africa from its colonial ruler, however, the independence years from 1957 to 1980, Ghana was fraught with economic and political successes and challenges (Salm, 2002. p.1). Since 1981 till date, the country has experienced changes in successive governments through peaceful elections and a stable political environment, however, Ghana's economy continues to show signs of weakness (ibid). High youth unemployment rate, poor medical care and others constitute some of the major problems that successive governments have been challenged with as part of its socio-economic and political issues (Cooke et al, 2018; Tsekpo, 2007).

The Ghanaian Family Systems and Organization

In Ghana, two types of family systems are recognized. The extended and nuclear family systems or types. Kingsley Nyarko (2014), in his chapter on the book *Parenting across Cultures*; writes that the traditional Ghanaian society hinges on the foundations of the extended family which is also known as the collectivistic family system (p.234). The extended family functions as a collective and cohesive family type where the total well-being of members is a group responsibility in all facets of family life. (Nyarko,2014). Here, parenting and childrearing responsibilities are not only restricted to members of the extended family, but members of the larger community also share in this responsibility, irrespective of one's biological parents (Nyarko, 2014; 234). In the same manner, punitive measures are also not restricted to a child's biological parent but older people have the license to administer punishment to a child (Nukunya, 1992; Degbey,1997; Nyarko,2014). For example, if a child goes out to the public and is delinquent, an older person can carry acceptable forms of corporal punishment on the child before reporting him or her to his or her parent.

According to Nyarko (2014), the implications of such collective responsibility when it comes to child nurturing in the extended family is that it emphasizes respect for the elderly and to be responsive to the needs of elders. Also, the objective of parenting of the extended or collective family is to harness the ability of children to become custodians of societal values and norms (Nyarko, 2014,p.234). Albeit, the extended family system still operates in most Ghanaian communities, modernization and encounters with the West introduced the nuclear family

system (Nyarko,2014). The nuclear family is organized along the lines of gender roles and majority of the responsibilities are shouldered by the male head with the wife performing auxiliary functions like keeping the home and raising the children. Here, parents are responsible for investing in the child, as well as training the child with the right attitude and behaviour according to acceptable societal codes (Nyarko, 2014.p.235). In adherence to this mode of family structuring, children are required to be submissive and imbibe good morals under the stewardship of their parents in order to foster the parent-child relationship. Manuh and Brown (2006) have argued that the good thing about this mode of family organization is that it reinforces the emotional bonds between parents and their children. However, they also critique that the nuclear family is characterized by a *patron-client* relationship where in most cases, care, maintenance and other benefits accrue to the child in so far as children adhere to laid down principles of the parent and remain submissive (p.102-103)

Migration

Schapendonk (2009), concludes that migration flow from Global South countries to Global North countries has a long history of colonial ties that establishes migrants in the host countries. For example, Congolese will settle in Belgium, Ghanaians in Britain, and Senegalese in France or Switzerland. However, since the 1980s, the patterns and destinations of most migrants have changed and do not follow the old colonial ties (ibid). In recent times, studies on migration have shown that Ghanaian communities can be found in the Americas (Arthur, 2016), Asia (Atakora et al, 2013), Canada (Manu,2007), and parts of Europe (Arthur, 2016; Van Dijk, 1997).

Margaret Peil (1995) contends that reasons accounting for why Ghanaians migrate vary on individual basis. While some migrate for economic reasons in search of a better life, others migrate on the basis of family reunification, studies, tourism, and so on (ibid). She further explains that even though on the one hand, emigration of Ghanaians comes with certain advantages for the individual and the society at large, inherently, *“there are consequences in terms of national, family and individual cost”* (Peil, 1995.p.345)

The Ghanaian Community in Denmark

Regrettably, there is little or no existing literature on Ghanaian immigrants in Denmark. However, based on my interaction with my interlocutors, I will talk briefly about their mode of organization, that is their spatial distribution in Denmark as well as their social connections.

All my interlocutors live in parts of Copenhagen namely; Albertslund, Brøndbyester, Brøndby Strand and Farum Midtpunkt. As I got to find out, these were multi-ethnic sites of settlement for most immigrants, and for my interlocutors, these were housing projects where they could easily connect with their fellow countrymen. To illustrate this, one of my interlocutors (Albert) remarked:

“[...] *They say Albertslund is a ghetto because we are different people here, but I like the ghetto because this is where I find my fellow Ghanaian brothers (...) because (...) you won't find Ghanaians in the cities or the suburbs, Those places, you will find the Danes living there*”. (Interlocutor, Albert)

Studies of residential patterns and preferences for immigrants in various migration destinations like Europe, Canada, Australia, North America, and others have contended that, in most cases, differences exist between geographical locations where the natives of a country actually prefer to reside or are spatially distributed as against where immigrants prefer to reside in the host country, and in furtherance to that, there are reasons that account for such differences (see for example Musterd 2005, Johnston et. Al. 2002, Finney 2002, Fong and Chan 2010). As part of the phenomenon of migration flows, immigrants tend to be concentrated in certain parts of the receiving culture because newcomers tend to have an already established network relations from home in certain parts of the housing market (Van Kempen, 2003). Moreover, treatments of discrimination and prejudice by the natives of the host country on immigrants and the lack of social and economic resources are also contributing factors to settlement preferences for most immigrants (ibid). In Skifter Andersen's study of *Spatial Assimilation in Denmark*; he concluded that immigrants from the same ethnic affiliations are likely to move to the same housing estates (2010). Again, his study also showed that the residential preferences of immigrants are most likely to be based on living close to family and friends (ibid). The creation of such ethnic enclaves, while it seeks to serve the purpose of mitigating the social deficit that immigrants face and connecting them with co-ethnics, also serves to widen the social gap between Danes and immigrants. This is because the creation of such multi-ethnic enclaves, in and of itself, can arguably dispel members of the native society. This could be the case with the so-called *ghettos* which has gained so much traction in national Danish discourses.

The Danish Welfare State and Integration

Denmark is a welfare state that functions on the principles of the “*Universalist Nordic model where welfare services are provided through national agencies, closely integrated into*

the public sector and funded by general taxation” (Olwig, 2012.p.1-2). This means that the tenets of operationalization of the Welfare State falls on the principles of reciprocity. Citizens are required to take on the mandate of being responsible, self-sufficient and independent (Rytter, 2018.p.12), and in return, the state through its social service agencies will provide needed support in terms of social benefits and national health programmes (Olwig, 2012). This widely accepted arrangement between the welfare state and its citizens is one that newcomers are required to adhere to as part of achieving the so-called “*equal footing*” with the rest of the Danish society (p.6). The Danish integration law of 1999, which was introduced by the then Social Democratic Government (Larsen, 2011; 142), was set to provide a framework that was to serve as a working policy for the incorporation of immigrants and refugees into the Danish society. As parts of the provisions embedded in the integration programme, Karen Fog Olwig writes;

“At a specific level, many newcomers learn about Scandinavian society primarily through health clinics, social service centers, integration programmes and – in the case of refugees - asylum centers; their personal encounters with the local population involve mainly staff on these various welfare programmes. At a general level, immigrants and refugees have been expected to actively take part, as workers and taxpayers, in the reciprocal social and economic relations between the state and the local population fundamental to the Nordic model” (Olwig, 2012; 2)

This means that the Danish Welfare State through the support of its agencies is directly responsible for ensuring that newcomers conform to laid down procedures. Moreover, social service agencies that are directly involved in this process, such as the Kommunes or the Municipalities, possess the power to control and manage the resources distributed to refugees and immigrants, and in some cases are in the capacity to define the needs and problems of immigrants as well as with which means they should be remedied (Olwig & Pærregaard, 2007: 21-22). The analyses of this make it clear that, through such integration policies and programmes, the Welfare state becomes inherently present in all facets of the lives of newcomers be it “*socially, culturally, physically and psychologically - according to Scandinavian norms*” (Olwig, 2012.p.6).

In criticizing integration policies and programmes, Karen Fog Olwig contends that such integration policies are not flexible enough to accommodate the needs of immigrants and

refugees. Instead, they are perceived as rigid and designed to fit Scandinavian welfare norms (ibid). This critique becomes manifested in the lives of my interlocutors as I shall discuss later in my analysis chapter.

Theoretical Frameworks

Edward Said's Theory of The Double Perspective

The concept of the "*Double Perspective*" was first used by Professor of literature, Edward Said in his 1984 book: *Intellectual Exile: Expatriates and Marginals*. In his book, Said captures the conditions of being the individual who is away from the place where he was born and belonged. Said uses his autobiography in his work and extends it to a more widespread, modern condition of exile, of uprootedness, of emigration or immigration, and so on.

Said asserts that a person in exile can be unsettled because neither is the person separated from their place of origin nor are they completely ostracized from their home, but that, fond memories and connections with the old place puts them in a binary state (1993). What he terms "*the median state of the exile*" as neither completely at one with the new setting nor fully disencumbered of the old" (1993:114). Extending his discussion on intellectual exile further, Said also derives his diagnosis of exile from a political and social standpoint of dislocation and migration (1993:116). Said opines that, intellectuals, migrants, and foreigners who may presumably perceive themselves to be members of a society can easily be susceptible to the categories of "insiders and outsiders" by the powers, privileges, and honors that be (ibid). According to Said, the insiders mean those who eventually feel fully belonged to the society and take active participation in the day-to-day life of the new society, on the other hand, those who are perceived as outsiders are those who are not in synergy with the activities of the state or as Said puts it, at odd with the forces of power (1993).

However, Said also counters his argument that the intellectual is not always bound by the deprivations of marginalization and the long distance from their homeland but that there exist certain pleasures, privileges, or merits that are coupled with being in exile. (1993). One of such privileges he identifies is that the intellectual is privileged with being surprised at everything in his new setting, never taking anything for granted, and also engineering their stability—making them resistant to things that will render others destabilized (Said, 1993). In engineering such resistance that will confound others, Said claims that because the exile sees things both in terms of what has been left behind and what is here and now, he or she has a double perspective, never seeing things in isolation. Every scene or situation in the new country draws on its

counterpart in the old country” (1993, p:121-122). Said will seem to suggest here that, every situation that is experienced by the intellectual or the immigrant in their new home is countered or juxtaposed with another experience often in one’s past and perhaps offers one a broader lens with which to think differently and compare for example say the issue of parenting or the type of family practice in one situation from another(ibid).

A second advantage Said identifies for the intellectual in exile is that he or she is not limited to understanding the way things are but that he or she gets to have a better and deeper understanding or appreciation for how things have come to be (Said,1993). This means that individuals are bound to gain better knowledge and history as to why things seem to be the way they are.

Finally, Said (1993) will conclude and argue that continuity of one’s life in a new dispensation from where they left off is a daunting task. This is because the intellectual or in this case the immigrant in exile may be marred by challenges of an easy transition into the new society, he or she finds him or herself in and because of this, Said opines that the intellectual can experience a phase of emotional turmoil, a feeling of dissonance and ultimately “becoming a beginner, allowing you a new style of life, and, above all, a different, often very eccentric career (1993, p: 123-124).

[Pierre Bourdieu’s Theory on Forms of Capital](#)

According to Pierre Bourdieu(1986), capital does not only connote the classical or traditional notion of capital, but the symbolic and interpretative forms of capital –cultural, social, linguistic, scientific, and other forms. Bourdieu concludes that the theory of capital does not only take its classical form of economic exchange, which is objectively and subjectively oriented towards the maximization of economic profits but has inherently defined, other forms of non-economic exchanges (Bourdieu, 1986.p.242). Bourdieu simply seeks to imply an extension of the theory of Capital in a wider scope so that values and worth of different kinds are negotiated within and across fields.

The theory of Capital can be seen as the currency that grants actors pre-eminence or places one within a higher status in society. It is the foundation of social life and it is what decides your role in the social world. Various forms of capital are valued in their corresponding fields (Bourdieu,1986.p.243). According to Bourdieu (1986), there is an interdependence between

the concepts of capital and fields thus; when we talk of the cultural field, we refer to such capital and resources that are valuable in the cultural field. In the same way, one's dominance in the religious field will be dependent on their religious capital. Thus, capital can be understood as the commodity that drives a field. It sets the pace for who can '*fit*' into them, through the principles that govern such fields.

Bourdieu explains that aside from economic capital, the currency of non-economic forms of capital can exist in mainly two forms; social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986, p.243).

According to Bourdieu (1986), cultural capital can be in the objectified form –these are the type of capital that is inherent in things such as arts, museums, books, literary works, scientific instruments, etc. In another form, capital is embodied –thus the forms of capital that make up the totality of an individual as inherent qualities, as well as those present in physical features such as body language, language acquisition and accents, lifestyle choices and so on (p.243). Bourdieu also talks about the institutionalized cultural capital. According to Bourdieu (1986), institutionalized capital are symbols of cultural competence and authority –these forms of capital are acquired through an actor's investment in a field of quality through which they acquire more capital in the field of context. Institutionalized cultural capital can be present in the credential of a person, one's qualification from an education, normally assuming the formal setting of such cultural capital acquisition (ibid). Yet other scholars corroborate that institutionalized cultural capital may be present in informal settings such as in institutions like the family, and cultural groups (Erel, 2010).

In the aspect of social capital, Bourdieu (1986) opines that an individual's capital is mainly increased or strengthened by one's affiliation with social networks or association with other groups (p.248). Indeed, such capital within a specific socio-cultural context is apparent by having a broader connection with others or being connected to a smaller amount of people who possess power. It appears that Bourdieu will make the conclusion, that your social relations give you social capital which are enacted, maintained, and reinforced through exchanges (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 250-251). What he terms as the exchange of gifts (ibid).

Categories of groups like immigrants, refugees, international students, tourists, etc lack social capital. This is because they sometimes do not possess any social connections prior to migrating into new social spaces. Thus, for these groups, social capital can only be enhanced over time. It may be emphasized that one's social integration into their new environment reinforces their

social capital. However, this can only be achieved if the immigrant is accepted into the wider majority without any reservations. In situations where this is the case, the immigrant is able to use such social capital acquired through their connections to improve upon their lives and resettlement.

In summary, Bourdieu's symbolic forms of capital, thus in the form of social, cultural and institutionalized capital are characterized in a couple of ways. First and foremost, they take the embodied or objectified forms. Secondly, these forms of capital can only be acquired over time which helps the agent to strategically imbibe them and use them to their advantage. Thirdly, social and cultural capital helps the social agent to accumulate resources and values that help their habitus to be well-formed in their inclination to a particular field. Last but not least, for an actor's capital to be valued, it must be mutually recognized by other actors of the same field to gain the needed legitimacy and practiced in the most effective and efficient manner.

Karl Mannheim's Inter-Generational Approach

Generational labels like "Baby Boomers", "Silent or Veterans", "Generation X or Y", and Millennials are names or terms used to collectively describe a group of individuals who were born at a particular time in history and therefore are characterized by similar social experiences (Codrington, 2012).

Karl Mannheim, was one of the early scholars to have attempted to theorize and explain the development of generational values. The German scholar, Karl Mannheim in his popular work; *The Sociological Problems of Generations* purported that, certain differences and similarities characterize various generational cohorts and this is as a result of critical events or social encounters that have influenced their formation process (Mannheim, 1969). According to Mannheim, a generational cohort does not connote a concrete group that cannot exist without its members nor a group of individuals bound by specific organizational values, aims, and objectives (Mannheim, 1969. p.165). By generations, Mannheim contends that we mean "*the union of a number of individuals through naturally developed or consciously willed ties.*" (ibid). Mannheim asserts that while some values may be biological, thus children learn and acquire norms and values from their parents at birth, the sociological problem of generations becomes apparent when the sociological aspects of one's life come to play or gain relevance in their life course (1969, p.168).

Moreover, Mannheim continues to assert that the sociological phenomenon “generations” have a common and shared social and historical location (Mannheim, 1969.p.168). By this, Mannheim is of the view that individuals who belong to the same age group or social class will share similar experiences in their life course irrespective of where they are geographically located. Such similar experiences will predispose them to an identical way of thinking about the world (ibid). For example, we can think about how most millennials of today are much concerned about saving the planet and issues of climate change or championing LGBTQ rights.

Further on, Mannheim (1969) talked about the concept of “fresh contact” (p.171). By this, Mannheim posits that the growth and experiences of young people or generational cohorts form parts of their lived experiences and through such lived experiences, value systems are adopted and enacted, rather than relying on the worldview of an older generation (1969). Mannheim will illustrate the idea of “fresh contact” with adolescents who leave home for the boarding house, a peasant who leaves the suburbs to live in the city, or an emigrant who migrates elsewhere. (ibid) In all of such instances, the transformation that takes place in the individual goes beyond their experience but also includes their “*mental and spiritual adjustment to it*” (Mannheim, 1969.p.171)

Mannheim’s theory of intergenerational approach is of relevance in this study because understanding how one generation views social issues and uncovering what their social values are is critical in helping us to understand the worldview of different generational cohorts and how society has changed over time.

[The Inter-generational Contract on Reciprocity](#)

In their work; *Generations in Africa: Connections and Conflicts*, German ethnologist Erdmute Alber and her colleagues Susan Reynolds Whyte and Sjaak Van der Geest; conceptualize generations in three forms. According to these scholars, generations can be conceptualized as *principles for structuring society – a mode of grouping members of society based on biological positioning or progression through life course*. (Alber et al, 2008.p.4). Secondly, they classify generations as a genealogical relation of kinships –what they mean by this is that generations ties individuals vertically and horizontally along bloodlines and “*fixed upon descents, filiations and successions*” (Alber et al,2008. p.3). A classical example is the linkage between grandparents, parents, children, grandchildren and so on.

Lastly, Alber and her friends conceptualize generations as; *historical generations or generations as cohort*. (Alber et al, 2008.p.5). In this last conceptualization of generations,

Alber and her friends take inspiration from Karl Mannheim who grounded this conceptualization of generations in his popular essay: *The Sociological problems of generations*. Alber and her friends are in agreement with Mannheim that we can look at generations as a social location of age cohorts within history (ibid). By social location of age cohorts Mannheim means that, “age groups or individuals who are born in the same time period share are bound to share in similar experiences and destinies” (Mannheim, 1969 as cited in Alber et al, 2008.p.5). Thus even though cultural inheritances are passed down from generations to generation, when “fresh contact” (Mannheim, 1969) is made, generational units will rather work out elements of their common experiences rather than relying on what has been passed on by parents (Mannheim, 1969 as cited in Alber et al, 2008). This is how changes between historical generations become visible because differences in experiences exist from one generation to another (ibid).

Now to narrow my focus on the reason for this section, Erdmute Alber and her colleagues, Susan Reynolds Whyte and Sjaak Van der Geest also expound on the concept of inter-generational contract as constituting a kind of biological and moral obligation that exist between kinship relations in most African societies (Alber et al, 2008p. 7)

Alber et al (2008) contend that the concept of inter-generational contract rests on the shoulders of intra-family support, group solidarity, and reciprocity (p.6). For these scholars, *reciprocity* is the most important quality in inter-generational relationship (ibid). By this, Erdmute Alber and her colleagues mean a form of relationship that is built on the foundations of mutual reliance. For example, there are material and non-material exchanges between parents and their children over the course of life. Thus, at first, the younger generation will depend on the older generation for transmission of qualities like maintenance, training, and support and in return, the young generation will express the same when they came of age and the older generation cannot fend for themselves. This is basically, expressed as an economy of “*give and take*” over time (Alber et al, 2008.p.6).

Furthermore, these scholars contend that the element of reciprocity engrained in the inter-generational social contract operates in all stages of an individual’s life from childbirth, puberty, marriage, parenthood, grandparenthood and all other life cycles of the individual (Alber et al, 2008.p.7). They argue that all of these stages of life mentioned above have embedded in them what is deemed appropriate between generations: “*like paying of fees,*

paying of bride price, helping children to secure occupations, taking care of the old and frail, providing for the sustenance of the family” (ibid).

However, as I already mentioned, Erdmute Alber and her colleagues do not limit the discussions of the inter-generational contract to material transfers only, but also non-material transfers. According to Alber et al (2008), “morality” and “deference” are inherent in the very fabric of inter-generational contract in most African societies (p.7). They argue this is the case because “*the transmission of resources is intertwined with the flow of life and fertility, expressions of sentiments and moral consideration pervade the way people talk about relations between generations*” [Alber et al, 2008,p.7). Additionally, so important is the currency of deference and morality in the African society, that such provisions are found in legislative instruments of the union of African member states. For example, the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights³ (1981) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child⁴ (1999).

The African Charter on Human and People’s Right which was adopted by heads of African states in November 1981 stipulates in chapter II, article 29 (1) of the charter that: “*the individual shall have the to preserve the harmonious development of the family and to work for the cohesion and respect of the family; to respect his parents at all times, to maintain them in case of need*”. Again, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child adopted on 29th November, 1999 reaffirms the mandates of parents to children and vice versa. Even though, this charter also covers the same rights, it emphasizes on the responsibility of the child in article 31 (a) which stipulates that: “*the child shall have the duty to work for the cohesion of the family, to respect his parents, superiors and elders at all times and to assist them in case of need*”.

On the other hand, even though scholars like Wilson (1977) argue that inter-generational contract or reciprocity is fraught with conflict, he asserts that “*generation conflict is not something that emerged with an industrialized society. It was taken for granted in many pre-*

³ The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, also known as the Banjul Charter, is a regional human rights instrument designed to reflect the history, values, traditions, and development of Africa. The Charter entered into force on 21 October 1986. The Charter recognizes individual and collective peoples' rights as well as duties. <https://www.justice.gov.za/>. (Accessed on 21st May, 2022).

⁴ The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child is a regional human rights treaty adopted in 1990 and which came into force in 1999. It sets out rights and defines principles for the status of children. The African Charter can be a powerful tool to hold governments accountable for ending child marriage. <https://au.int/>. (Accessed on 21st May, 2022).

literate societies which devised a variety of institutions to control it” (p.85). I believe it is still critical in contemporary times in our attempt to understand how relations and responsibilities are structured especially in most African societies and families.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This thesis seeks to examine the experiences of Ghanaian immigrant parents when it comes to their lives in Denmark. In light of this, I rely greatly on the experiences of my interlocutors thereby approaching this study from the point of view of my participants. I study this phenomenon as a way to understand their present lives and how they have navigated certain experiences and changes in their respective families. To study such a phenomenon, Kvale & Brinkmann (2009), contends that a phenomenological approach becomes suitable in this case. According to these scholars, when taking a phenomenological approach, it involves: “*detailed descriptions of how people immediately experience space, time, and the world in which they live.*” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009. p.26; Jackson, 1996: 11, Kvale, 1996). Thus, in accordance with the words of Kvale and Brinkmann, I became aware of their experience through the details of narratives that my interlocutors shared with me in order to carry out this study.

This chapter will also focus on how I gained access to the field. Furthermore, I present my choice of informants, the preparations I made before my data collection, and introduce my interlocutors briefly for readers to gain a better appreciation of who they are, how they arrived in Denmark, and what they do by way of employment. I will also provide an explanation for my qualitative interview method, explain how I processed my data, and lastly, present the limitations I was faced with during the process of writing this thesis.

Research Strategy

Before the start of my thesis, I came to the realization that very little or no literature existed on Ghanaian immigrants in Denmark and consequently, Ghanaian families living in Denmark. This already posed a challenge for me as a novice researcher, but at the same time, it also served as an opportunity for an important field of inquiry within the Danish society. This gave me the idea of the possibility of studying this population group and contributing to the knowledge base of Ghanaian immigrant families living in Denmark. At the start of this study, I decided to stay within the qualitative method of conducting this research. This was going to be beneficial for my study because this was a way to gather in-depth knowledge from a group of immigrant

families to explore their experiences or encounters in Denmark. Again, employing a qualitative method in this study will make it easier for me to revise the direction and framework of my research quickly as soon as fresh information and findings emerged.

Methodological Approach

Methodologically, this thesis will adopt a qualitative approach in its inquiry as I already noted. Within the field of social sciences, researchers employ the use of three (3) distinctive methods, namely: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method approaches. By way of definition, Strauss and Corbin (1998), assert that qualitative research is any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification. According to Creswell (1994), quantitative research focuses on explaining phenomena by collecting statistical data that are analyzed using mathematical formulas and methods to achieve desired outcomes. The mixed-method approach employs the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods together in research. Applying a qualitative method of approach in this study will help me to gain factual experiences through interactions with Ghanaian immigrant parents living in Denmark as a means to understand the phenomenon that I seek to examine in this study. Again, a qualitative approach will be beneficial for me in this study, as it will enable me as a researcher to adjust to different approaches according to my findings (Rowley, 2012).

Data Collection Methods

Data collection forms part of one of the most critical aspects of any research studies. Ritchie et al (2013) asserts that, conducting any research for gaining knowledge in this world, can be done in many different ways, but every research is founded on the data which is analysed to obtain the needed information by the researcher. I used two main methods of data collection in this thesis. These are primary data and secondary data.

Primary Data

In this thesis, my primary data was obtained through semi-structured interviews with Ghanaian immigrant parents living in Denmark. Based on the purpose and objectives of my research, it was important to rely on this group for first-hand information, which is more reliable, accurate, and objective (Pienta et al., 2010).

As regards my primary data, I started collating my interviews in the summer of April 2021 and April 2022 in Copenhagen, Denmark. This was after the approval of my interview guide by my

supervisor⁵. Here, one of the Ghanaian families I had come into contact with in 2019 when I first arrived in Denmark, used his social network to get me in touch with other Ghanaian families living in Denmark. Without his assistance, accessing my interlocutors in this study would have posed as a great challenge. Upon establishing contacts with the other families, they were of great help as they made time for me. Again, when I disclosed to my informants that I was undertaking a study on Ghanaian immigrant parents in Denmark, it struck their interest and they were ready to furnish me with all the needed information required for my data and analysis in this thesis. This undoubtedly worked to my advantage as it help me engage in in-depth interviews with my interlocutors.

Secondary Data

Even though finding related secondary sources of literature on Ghanaian immigrants in Denmark proved difficult, I relied on a range of journals, articles, books, working papers, Ph.D. thesis, and statistics from Statistics Denmark⁶ as my source of secondary literature. These secondary sources gave me a leap into what had already been done within the field of inquiry and on what specific groups. Based on such findings, I was able to gather needed information and relevant materials to arrive at the desired result.

Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Knowing it was going to be impossible for me to collect data on all Ghanaian immigrant parents in Denmark to form my sample size, I set out to gather data from a sample of the population size in my study. I used the snowball sampling technique as a means to reach out to other Ghanaian immigrant families in my study. According to Carol B. Warren (2002), snowball sampling is a sampling technique that “*begins with acquaintances and moves on to strangers*” (p.88). I used my social network relations at the Vor Frue Kirke in Herlev to gain access to my field of inquiry. When I first arrived in Denmark in August 2019, I became friends with Albert and his family (*who are also interlocutors in this study*) from the Catholic church as I got to know that they were from Ghana. Consequently, when I informed Albert about my thesis project and wanted to interview Ghanaian immigrant parents, he offered to get me in touch with three (3) other Ghanaian immigrant parents for my interviews. After establishing contact

⁵ Anja Kublitz is an associate professor at the department of Global Refugee Studies. Aalborg University, Copenhagen, Denmark.

⁶ Statistics Denmark is a governmental organization under the Ministry for Economic and Interior Affairs. It oversees the creation of statistics on the Danish population. See <https://www.dst.dk/en/OmDS>.

with these parents, two (2) of the parents referred me to other three (3) Ghanaian parents, making up a total of seven (7) Ghanaian immigrant parents. This method was beneficial to me because gaining access to my informants became relatively easier, without which it would have been a rather tedious process for me to locate and have access to the informants.

The sample size will be drawn from the Ghanaian immigrant population living in Denmark since it will be practically impossible to interview all Ghanaian immigrant parents in Denmark. In view of this, the study will use a fraction of the Ghanaian immigrant population as a representation. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), the size of a research sample matter, thus a too large sampling size or a too small sampling size is not suitable to generate a good result. Therefore my sample size will be seven (7) informants which I hope represents a fair number of sample size for my study. All seven (7) informants are currently parents living in various municipalities in Copenhagen.

Validity and Reliability

During the research process, I made sure to constantly engage in periodic validity checks with respect to my interview guide where applicable. This was to enable me stay within the framework of my interview questions and also to guard against any biases. During our interview sessions, indeed there were moments where certain questions that I posed to my informants required that I probed further. However, this was to enable me gather quality material and not to impose my understanding of the questions on them. Again, an important underlying method I employed was observation during my interviews. Sangasubana (2011), opines that observation in research refers to the act and skill of identifying the activities and the interrelationships of the people under study while maintaining professional distance. Maintaining close observation with my informants complemented my interviews and chats that I had with them. I observed the facial expression of my informants in the process of the interviews. Neuman (2011) also argues that observation also helps to provide meaning and depth in understanding the subject. One example depicting this was when I asked my informant how they perceived living in Denmark. They will normally sigh and smile, this I interpreted as “*challenging and a daunting task*” for them as Ghanaian immigrant parents in Denmark.

Application of Field Methods

Interviewing my Informants

As I have already stated in my methodological approach, this study employs a qualitative method of approach and thus the need for me to conduct interviews as a way to gain in-depth knowledge of the experiences of my interlocutors. Interviews are a means of gathering data or information through conversation with the researcher actively engaged in the asking and listening process, while the respondent or the interlocutor does the answering of questions (Kvale, 1996; Warren, 2002,p.83). Also, interviews can be structured or unstructured conversations between a researcher and his or her respondents to examine and understand the experiences of an individual or a group of people (Kvale, 1996).

The format of my interview guide for this study was semi-structured. I found semi-structured interviews as the most suitable method for my data collection. It was developed in order to help me to be more flexible in the questions that I posed and also to lead me in different related directions during the interviewing process with my interlocutors (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009: 130). My interview guide can be found in Appendix 1.

When I began my interviews in April 2021, this was at the time when Covid-19 was prevalent and therefore for the health and safety of my interlocutors, I had to resort to zoom video calls as a medium to interact with them, which they agreed. Consequently, in April 2022 I decided to make follow-ups on some of my interlocutors to gather more data where necessary. This time I visited those that I made follow-ups on in their places of residence. English was used as the means of language to facilitate all conversations with my interlocutors. I always made sure to state categorically at the start of every interview to record our sessions. With their permission, I recorded each interview and transcribed each of the interview at my own time. The interviews lasted approximately between 30-50minutes. Some of the interview sessions went on longer because some of my interlocutors found our conversation interesting and decided to share at length with me the needed information as I posed various questions.

For the purposes of clarity, I made sure I read each question clearly and where necessary I explained. However, one thing that helped me in the process, was that all informants had had some higher levels of education and therefore I was not required to do much explanation as the questions in my interview guide were worded with simple words for easy comprehension. To avoid any disruptions during the interviews, I activated flight mode before the interviews. I did

not take notes but recorded our conversations on my telephone because I needed to pay rapt attention to be able to ask relevant further questions where necessary. O'Reilly, Parker and Hutchby (2011), allude to the fact that recording and taking notes at the same time can be daunting and renders the interview less anonymous and natural in its original setting.

Preparation before Interview

Preparation before my interview sessions was of great importance. When I first began my data collection in April 2021, all my informants were uncomfortable meeting face to face because of Covid-19. Therefore, most of my interlocutors agreed to our interview sessions over zoom video calls. Nevertheless, my interviews over zoom was also convenient for my interlocutors as I did not have to spend so much time trying to locate a place and fixing an appropriate time to meet with them. Additionally, I made sure that I created a more friendly and relaxed atmosphere where the informants could express themselves freely and unreservedly. Fortunately for me, my interviews over the zoom calls were not fraught with internet or technical challenges and so this allowed for a smooth flow of conversation.

As I already mentioned, I made follow-ups on some of my interlocutors for additional data in April 2022. Here, I had to schedule meetings prior to our interview sessions and I also had to travel to their places of residents for my interviews because Covid-19 restrictions had been lifted and people could now meet in enclosed spaces. Regardless of the difficulties in finding a suitable time and sometimes traveling long distances to meet with my interlocutors, it afforded me the opportunity to get to meet with some of my interlocutors.

Presentation of Informants

Informants for my study will be introduced shortly in the ensuing paragraph. Based on gender composition, I interviewed four (4) males and three (3) females, all of whom are currently Ghanaian parents living in Denmark. Unfortunately, it was difficult to maintain a gender balance with my informants because it was easier to access men than women in this study. However, it is of utmost importance for me to reiterate that the disproportionality of gender representation by no means affected the outcomes of this study.

The Informants

Mr. Agyei is 58 years of age and lives in Farum Midtpunkt with his 17 years teenage daughter (Feblyn). He migrated to Denmark in the 90s to pursue his Master's degree. He currently works

at Global Logistics Company (GLS) as one of their warehouse employees. He is married to my next interlocutor (Mrs. Agyei.)

Mrs. Agyei lives in Farum Midtpunkt. She is 45 years of age. She is married to Mr. Agyei and they have a teenage daughter together. She currently works as a cleaner (*rengøringsassistent*).

Isaac is a 47 years old Ghanaian who lives in Brøndbyøster. He has also lived in Denmark for the past 19 years with his wife and has a 1 year old son. Isaac came to Denmark in 2003 to study for his master's degree at the Denmark Technical University in Food Processing Engineering. He currently works as a warehouse supervisor in a homeware logistics company.

Lawrencia is 33 years of age and lives with her family in Brøndby Strand. She first came to Denmark through family reunification and has been in Denmark for 28 years and counting. Lawrencia is a single mother with 2 children. At the time of this study, Lawrencia relies on state support with her two (2) children.

Albert is 37 years of age. He currently resides in Albertslund with his wife and two kids. Albert has been in Denmark for the past 9 years. He currently works with the Ghanaian Embassy in Copenhagen and has a master's degree from Aalborg University.

Nana Patrick is a 59 years Ghanaian immigrant living in Denmark. Nana Patrick came to Denmark in the year 2000 as an economic immigrant. He currently works in a warehouse in Copenhagen. He is married to Ellen (my next interlocutor) and father to two (2) children. He currently stays in Brøndby Strand in Copenhagen.

Ellen is 33 years of age. She works as a nurse in a senior home in the København municipality (social og sundhedsassistent). She is a wife to Nana Patrick and they have two children together. She has been in Denmark for over twelve years now through family reunification.

Data Management and Analysis

Transcription and Data Protection

The data gathered were audio recorded during the interview sessions. After each recording, I transcribed the audio recordings word for word before commencing my analysis. Also, I made sure that all recordings from the interview were kept in a password-protected phone and computer to secure the anonymity of my informants. I painstakingly sent out the transcribed interviews to my informants through emails as a means of reducing errors and also for respondent validation. After this, I was ready to further develop my transcribed data into thematic areas for analysis.

Data Analysis

In my attempt to analyze my transcribed data, I needed to employ coding to identify salient and important topics for further discussion. Also using coding was to aid me in identifying uniformity in the different interviews that I conducted (Brinkmann and Tanggaard, 2010: 450). Driven by my data some of the common themes that I developed around were: *family life and organization, gender roles, Danishness, respect, women empowerment, change in class, responsibility, Ghanaian children born in Denmark, Children born in Ghana, parenting, and so on.*

In analyzing my data, thematic analysis was applied. Similar themes were condensed and grouped together to be further developed. According to Clarke et al (2017), thematic analysis is a method through which systematic organization of the data, allows the researcher to discover meanings across a dataset and to categorize these meanings according to the main findings and the topic of research. Developing thematic codes in this study aided in making my study rather objective and giving me a holistic analysis of my topic rather than subjecting my biases and personal judgments to my findings. The themes that I developed from familiarizing myself with the collected data from my interlocutors, also dictated the direction of my study in a natural way. It is important to stress that it will not be accurate to generalize that the findings in this study are a true reflection of the situation of all Ghanaian immigrant parents living in Denmark. People may experience things differently even though they belong to the same group, thus it is important to take this study as a reflection of their individual experiences and perceptions.

Reflexivity

Creswell (2003), asserts that reflexivity is the phase that is encountered in conducting qualitative research, where the researcher reflects upon his own role in the study, and how one's own background, culture, and anecdotes might alter the interpretations of data and the data collected especially when the researcher feels attached to the subject of study. As a qualitative researcher, I identified with my informants on the basis of nationality. However, I made sure to distance my pre-conceived ideas prior to this study as much as possible and stay objective, and not let my own background and beliefs interfere with my findings. I was however aware that, one's own pre-assumptions are subconsciously present. During interviews, I aimed at avoiding to feed my informants with questions that led to specific answers and stayed within the clear methodological approach for data collection and analysis.

Ethical Consideration

Being ethical in this study was of utmost importance to me. Bryan and Bell (2007) allude to the importance of ethical consideration in undertaking any research. Both scholars assert that it is important to ensure respect for the dignity and rights of research participants irrespective of their age, background, citizenship, and social status. Owing to this, I made sure to read out before the start of all my interviews, a short confidentiality statement. Stated categorically to my informants, that the basis for the interview was strictly for academic purposes and that whatever they shared with me by way of their experiences and perceptions was bound by utmost confidentiality. After introducing the study and outlining my aims and goals, they willingly consented to be interviewed. Also, the fact that I was Ghanaian and studying for my Master's degree all played to my advantage based on which they were ever ready and willing to assist in any way possible. Indeed, I did not forget to make them aware that my supervisor had given me clearance on the questions posed in my interview guide. During this study, I maintained a friendly and respectful posture toward my informants. This always created an amicable atmosphere, which encouraged my informants to open up to me more. Also, since I was going to record the interviews, I sought their consent before undertaking each interview. All my informants agreed to have our conversations audio recorded.

Study Limitations

Inevitably this study was marred by a couple of challenges. To begin with, the current COVID-19 pandemic made it increasingly impossible for me to have physical contact with my informants at the start of my data collection. Based on the protocols by the Danish health authorities, and the Danish Ministry of Health, I had to observe social distancing, first and foremost for the health safety of my informants and secondly, for myself. Thus, I began my data collection virtually until April 2022 this year when I had the opportunity to meet with my interlocutors in person. Secondly, this study was time-bound, the study was scheduled to be completed in 4 months (February – May), and this placed constraints on the researcher because there was a lot to be done in a short time. Thirdly, my small sample size for this study also affects and places a limit on the generalization of the findings in my study, however, this does not affect the relevance of the study in any way, shape, or form. This is so because the findings and analysis are drawn solely from the collected and transcribed empirical data. Despite this being a relatively small study, I am of the hope that the findings from this study provide in-depth insight and understanding which represents my informants and their experiences in a

meaningful way. Consequently, I hope it goes a long way to contribute to the needed knowledge gap concerning Ghanaian immigrant parents' experience of family life in Denmark.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the research strategy I employed in this study. Methodologically, the study will rely on a qualitative method in its inquiry. The collection of data will primarily be through the snowball sampling technique. My findings will be gathered through developed themes to answer the research questions that I pose. Last but not least, I have also observed some limitations I encountered during the process of my research. I will now proceed to chapter four (4), where I discuss my findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

From Extended Families to the Danish Welfare State

Introduction

This chapter of my analysis focuses on the life of my interlocutors in the Danish welfare state. Mainly, I examine the kinds of changes that have taken place specifically when it comes to the organization of family life for them as Ghanaian immigrant parents in the Welfare state. My data goes to show that my interlocutors compare the widespread nuclear family system in the Danish context against the extended family system which is part of their traditional backgrounds and the challenges coupled with practicing the former as Ghanaian immigrant parents in Denmark. Again, the analysis in this chapter will be centered on issues like the organization of family life, changes in gender roles, and the inherent presence of the welfare state in the lives of immigrants through the popular discourse of integration in Denmark. To help me and my readers gain a better understanding of the issues that I talk about in this chapter, I will employ Edward Said's concept of *Double Perspective*, as my overarching theory as well as rely on a number of secondary sources to aid me in my analysis. Finally, I conclude with what has been discovered and learned from this first chapter of my analysis.

Housing & Family Organization – The Ghanaian & Danish Perspectives

For most Africans, practices of family life and cohabitation are not restricted to the nuclear family system but in certain households in Ghana, one is bound to locate members of the extended family cohabiting in one space (Kpoor, 2015). A myriad of reasons has accounted for this kind of family arrangement in Ghana: the moral, social, emotional, and economic benefits that it affords members belonging to the family cannot be overemphasized (Kpoor, 2015; Noll, 2016). While it is true that the extended family plays a dominant role in the lives of most Ghanaians, the nuclear family also serves as a smaller reserve of investment where parents invest in their offspring for future benefits (Noll, 2016). But it is important to add that, this mode of investment in the nuclear family does not commence until the young male or female adult reaches the stage of marriage and after marriage, the man and the woman move out to become a separate household unit (Jahoda, 1958). Even then, some scholars assert that some family members stay in their parent's compound and fall on the extended family for mutual

support after they are married until such a viable time when they can break away (Bukh, 1979, p.42).

The practice of cohabitation of the extended family members as part of the experiences of my interlocutors runs in contrast with what is commonly practiced in the Western world, where the nuclearization of the family is much more popular (Avner, 2006). Denmark is a case in point here. This connotes that, socially, most Ghanaian families have had to adopt the nuclearization of families as is the case in the welfare state and ultimately engineer modes of stability in their new home, since members of the extended family are not present with them here.

Traditionally, Ghanaian families have been organized along the matrilineal (Noll, 2016) and patrilineal descent (Casely-Hayford 1992; Graham 1968). This means that family inheritances and property distribution are regulated along the lines of the females or women in the family if it is the case of a matrilineal lineage or along the lines of the males or men in the family if it is a patrilineal descent (Kronenfeld 1972 & 1991). Aside this, there is the *abusua* which specifically constitutes only members of the extended family devoid of members that come from long lines of ancestral lineages like distant cousins, nephews, and so on (Noll, 2016). In comparison to the lineages, the *abusua* is relatively smaller; normally headed by an elderly person who is selected from within the extended family and constitutes members from the generations of grandparents in the household, parents, uncles and aunties, through to the least in the family—usually the grandchildren (ibid). That is, the *abusua* springs from the generational tree of grandparents whose children also produce grandchildren. It is the extended family (*abusua*) that is normally situated under a common household usually housing the larger members of the family and creating institutionalized forms of practices like forming an association where meetings may be held regularly, ensuring upward mobility of family members, and resolving conflicts if there are any (Noll, 2016). In this regard, the extended family helps to foster closeness among the larger group, and members' availability is ensured in times of necessity.

The case of Nana Patrick, an interlocutor, is worth sharing at this point. More so because he was one of such interlocutors who grew up in a typical extended family household, as he shared with me, and therefore had an appreciation for this type of family system. I first encountered Nana Patrick through another interlocutor in this study. He tells me he has been in Denmark for over two decades now. He lives in Brøndby Strand, a multi-ethnic and culturally diverse neighbourhood. He lives in one of the 3room housing apartments with his wife and 2 children

(a boy and a girl), and based on my assessment of their apartment as I saw it, this is what one could call an economically stable family. In the course of my interview with Nana Patrick, he recounts that back in Ghana, he lived in a family house. Describing what the house may have looked like, he added that;

“it was a building made of cement blocks. The rooms that made up the entire family house were detached like small bungalows but positioned on a common compound with a surrounding wall that differentiated their family house from other family houses. These smaller bungalows he talked about, were occupied by his uncles and aunties and their children. Again, he went on to say that these bungalows were built such that they all faced each other and created a big compound in the middle which became a common shared space for family gatherings and others” (Nana Patrick; my own translation).

In sharing his experience with me, Nana Patrick implied that the architectural design or the kind of house that he lived in Ghana afforded him the opportunity to live with his extended family and shared close bonds with other family members. In juxtaposition to this type of family organization in Ghana, Nana Patrick had this observation to make as part of his experience in the welfare state. He found out that the nuclearization of families is a common type of family arrangement, one that makes him fall out of place occasionally due to the constraints that it imposes on him as an immigrant. He explained:

“During my over twenty years of stay here in Denmark, I have never seen anything like an extended family living in a big compound house as you see in Ghana. Here, you will see a father, mother, and maybe their children living and staying together. Even the apartments are built in such a way that it is not possible to live with all your family member or even see your neighbors from time to time. Well, this is not what I have been used to growing up but what can I do? This is how the system is here” (Interlocutor, Nana Patrick)

The above extract is indicative of how Nana Patrick has come to perceive family orientation throughout his years of stay in Denmark. He goes on to allude to the idea that unlike in Ghana, where there are compound homes to accommodate the larger family, housing projects in Denmark do not afford one the luxury of doing so and that nuclear families are a common trend of family cohabitation in the welfare state. What is different in the Danish welfare state is that, upon the arrival of migrants, they are said to undergo an integration programme under the Danish Integration Act of 1999, first for 18months and later extended to 36months (Danish

Refugee Council, 1996). As part of the programme, local municipalities are mandated to aid migrants in the acquisition of temporary to permanent housing, provide social support, education on Danish civil norms and responsibilities as well as rights regarding Danish family life (*ibid*).

At this juncture, I will like to turn my attention briefly to the history of the nuclearization of family life in Europe and how it began to gain traction in the Danish welfare state. Avner Grief and Jack Goody trace the history of the nuclearization of the extended family in Europe to the medieval period. According to these scholars, during the medieval period, the conquest of the Western Roman Empire by most Germanic tribes saw the emergence of kinship groups in Europe. The rationale behind this phenomenon was to help most European countries strengthen their military might and for the affordability of manpower to work on large plantations (Avner, 2006). Yet, during this period, the Catholic Church was in opposition to the springing up of kinship groups and propagated the need for the nuclear family, usually consisting of the father, mother, children, and normally close relatives(*ibid*). Furthermore, in his work, *The development of Family and Marriage in. Europe*, Jack Goody explains that, during the medieval period, the Christian church sort to institute dogmas that abolished kinship groups, concubinage, polygamy, the dissolution of marriages, and re-marriage. Essentially, the church undermined the processes that could potentially enlarge the nuclear family (*ibid*).

Following the medieval period, studies in the 80(s) and 90(s) in Denmark investigated the nuclearization of families(Lindstrøm,1997; Koch-Nielsen,1980; Stack, 1990). Lindstrøm (1997) attributed this to the demographic nature of the society at the time—more people were getting old and being sent to elderly homes to live independent lives and to transition on thereafter. Koch-Nielsen also brought another perspective to the discussion. According to Koch-Nielsen’s (1980) study of *One Parent Families in Denmark*; there also began to spring up social incidents that contributed to the nuclearization of families. According to the study, divorce rates began to surge, there was a surge in the number of single families, social isolation became common, and births outside marriage also took a sharp increase, eventually contributing to the creation of smaller homes in Denmark(Koch-Nielsen, 1980.p.20-21). The statistics from the above study also proved that smaller families in Denmark were having less contact (once a week) with their extended family and friends(p.25). This was an indication that smaller or nuclear families in Denmark were getting more independent by day devoid of external help from family relations and relying more on the well-developed social welfare state

support because the state was performing regulatory roles of cushioning single-parent families financially (ibid).

Now that we have gained a sense of how the nuclear family began to increase in the developed welfare state, it may be safe to relate to the popular adage which says “*when you go to Rome, you do what the Romans do*”. Irrespective of Nana Patrick's traditional background from Ghana, he now is challenged with practicing a different form of sociability in the Danish context. Here, my analysis will hinge on his inability to access his neighbors as he shared with me in the above extract. I rely on Larsen’s notion of sociability to unfold this aspect of his lived experience in Denmark. Larsen describes sociability as “the individual’s general facility with the everyday implicit codes of social conduct applied within a given local context” (2011, p.144). In her work; *Drawing Back the Curtains*: anthropologist Birgitte Romme Larsen examines the notion of sociability between immigrant families and Danish society. Her studies reveal that personal practices like long fences, “closed doors”, and non-verbal gestures are not to be misinterpreted as representing one’s rejection from his or her surrounding, but as a condition of sociality (Larsen, 2011). She argues that such symbols of inaccessibility are relevant and constitute some form of social discontinuity– managing one’s sharing of social relations and creating good neighbourliness in Danish settings (Larsen, 2011). Practically, this will mean that for Nana Patrick to achieve this kind of sociability in his current local context, he needs to master his level of accessibility and inaccessibility. He needs to accept that “*not seeing his neighbours from time to time*” as he expresses, constitutes praxis of inaccessibility or when privacy is preferred and vice versa.

Two things I reckon are at play in this context. The first is the socio-cultural background factor. Perhaps, where Nana Patrick comes from in Ghana is not marked largely by symbols of inaccessibility, that is relatives and neighbours may easily connect without any barriers, Second is the human predicament factor which is likely to create the assumption that he is probably disliked by his neighbours and could potentially lead to ethnic tensions (Gullestad, 1992). By indoctrination, these day-to-day practices, will he then be able to engineer adaptability as a way of showing his social inclusivity within the wider Danish society (Larsen, 2011).

Changes in Gender Roles and being One's Own Help

My encounter with Nana Patrick and his family in this study gave me the opportunity to get to know Ellen, Nana Patrick's wife. It was a way to get to know how family life has been for her first as an individual in an industrial welfare state, a mother and wife migrating to Denmark. On the day of my interview with Ellen, I made sure that I engaged with her separately. This was to ensure that the answers she posed to my questions were devoid of any influence from her husband. Unlike Nana Patrick, Ellen had been in Denmark a little over twelve (12) years and through family reunification. She disclosed that in Ghana she trained as a teacher and life for her was somewhat between good and bad. An average income-earning teacher in Accra. Indeed, she admits that she will prefer Denmark to Ghana, because of the differences in how much she is now earning in Denmark as a nurse in a senior's home (*social og sunhedassistent*) as compared to being a teacher in Ghana.

On the day of my interview with Ellen, her husband Nana Patrick was at home. In the course of our conversation, I could perceive what smelled like a savory Ghanaian dish. Banku⁷ and Okro⁸ stew. Being a Ghanaian myself, I could tell because the aromatic smell of the dish was familiar. As an off-topic conversation, I inquired from Ellen if her husband did not mind taking charge of the kitchen and attending to the kids as we interacted. She replied in these words;

“my husband and I do not share roles in our home. I have crazy hours of work and so does he. The only way we can take care of our family is to help each other because nobody will do it for us”.

Also, she added that:

“Back home in Ghana, sometimes you can push your children to your aunties and grandparents to help you. But here, where we live, both of you have to schedule it. If you have something to do to take care of things, your wife would have to keep the children. And also, when your wife has something to do, you have to take care of the children. And our children also have to start school early in the morning and so we have to rush very often in the morning so all of us can still go to work and so on”

(Interviewee, Ellen)

⁷ Banku is a white ball of starch made from a mixture of cassava and corn dough.

⁸ Okro stew is a slimy, spicy sauce made with okro and other ingredients and usually consumed with Banku.

The above extract is an indication of the idea that there exist some internal and external dynamics in the Ghanaian household within the welfare state that does not only affect the form of family organization but also affect the social and economic behavior of its members. The above extract from Ellen arguably suggests that internally, my interlocutors could only access help from within. That is relying on each other for support. Long distance from extended family relations makes help inaccessible to them as immigrant parents, even in times of dire need. Externally, the Danish welfare state through its regulatory and immigration policies requires that immigrant families facilitate their integration processes, must be involved in the Danish labor market and attain self-sufficiency for themselves on an equal footing with ethnic Danes, be contributors to the welfare state in the form of taxes and so on (Danish Aliens Consolidation Act, 2011).

Traditionally in Ghana, women were assigned to traditional occupations of production and reproduction aspects of family life, child-rearing and nurturing, taking care of the home, and matters that pertained to the private sphere, while the male heads were responsible for the economic and financial well-being of the family, maintain discipline among the younger generations and so on (Burk, 1979). Justified to say then that household division of labor was designed along these binary models.

However, recent times have seen some changes in this kind of family organization in the Ghanaian household. Brown (1996) concludes that with increased social change brought about by migration, globalization, industrialization, and so on, there has emerged a new type of household organization where women are equally taking up roles as family heads to circumvent and augment family life, either as a result of choice or out of necessity. What is experienced by Nana Patrick and Ellen in this study is a clear case in point. As immigrant parents, they have had to juggle roles to live up to the expectation of taking care of the home and also being productive, as expected of them by the welfare state. However, of notable importance about this family is the fact that they do not admit to financial challenges as affecting family life, rather it is more of a social issue or the reconfiguration of family life that is a challenge in this instance.

For us to understand how my interlocutors have come to experience such changes in gender roles as part of their everyday family life within the wider Danish society, I must situate my argument within the geographical context in which my interlocutors find themselves. Unlike

Ghana, the developed welfare state tends to possess a subtle presence in the lives of its citizens as expounded by various Scandinavian scholars. The intervention of the welfare state in the lives of its citizens, refugees, and immigrants (e.g Stenius, 1997; Larsen, 2011a; Olwig, 2012) is what creates this kind of symbiotic relationship between the family unit and the state, often resulting in changes that can occur in the life of the former.

Denmark as a Scandinavian country runs on the ideology of social welfare. Denmark is a welfare state developed, to large extent, by a Social Democratic government and is “based on the universalist ‘Nordic model’, where welfare services are provided through national agencies, closely integrated into the public sector and funded by general taxation.” (Olwig, 2012: 1-2). This means the welfare state bears the responsibility and mandate of catering to its citizens and shouldering responsibilities that in other countries are often undertaken by family, corporations, or perhaps private organizations (ibid.) Such provisions as described above are non-existent in the case of Ghana. The above will be suggestive of the fact that the Danish welfare state is inherently present and responsible for the integration of newcomers or in this case, immigrants. Hence, it is through the incorporation of immigrants and refugees into a set of integration programmes that can help the welfare state dissolve minority groups into the larger society.

Unlike refugees who due to sudden flight from their home countries are given the necessary social support by the welfare state upon arrival, immigrants do not necessarily enjoy such provisions by the welfare state. As I may have mentioned somewhere in this chapter, immigrants are required by the state to be self-yielding citizens. Olwig captures this beautifully when she explains that immigrants must take an active part “*as workers and taxpayers in the reciprocal social and economic relations between the state and the local population fundamental to the Nordic model.*” (Olwig, 2012: 2).

This inherently means that, for my interlocutors, irrespective of their age, gender or sex, they are required to be self-yielding citizens. It is obligatory in this case and their adherence to this obligation goes a long way to place them on equal footing with the rest of the Danish society and possibly allow them an extension of their residency in the welfare state.

Analytically, this means that this kind of relationship as expounded above is what affects or reverses gender roles in the life of my interlocutors. Here even though it may be argued that Ellen being the wife is bound by the social responsibility of keeping the home and children nurturing, while Nana Patrick (her husband) takes care of their economic wellbeing, in the Scandinavian setting, such strict gender roles are invalidated in so far as they need to fulfill the

mandatory statutory provisions by the welfare state as immigrant parents. They will have to maintain a balance and share responsibilities in order to meet expectations for themselves as immigrant parents and the state at large.

I am empowered as a woman in the Welfare State

The professor of literature, Edward Said made an interesting juxtaposition about the intellectual in exile. According to the professor of literature, while it is true that the intellectual may struggle with a feeling of being unsettled, deprived and out of place in his or her new home, there exists a paradox (Said, 1993). That is, on the other hand, the intellectual in exile enjoy certain pleasures, merits, or advantages (ibid). This assertion by Said can be extended to the case of Ellen. Ellen had been able to enter the Danish labour market over the span of 12 years that she has lived in Denmark. This was in contrast to what other women had shared with me in this study. In the case of an interlocutor like Mrs. Agyei and Lawrencia, irrespective of their prior educational qualifications and job experiences in Ghana, Lawrencia was unemployed at the time of my interview with her, and Mrs. Agyei on the other hand worked as a cleaner with one of the outsourcing cleaning companies in Denmark. Thus, whereas other women had little or few options to choose from as sources of their employment opportunities, Ellen over time had been able to gain access to the Danish labour market as a *Social og Sundhedsassistent*. Through such an endeavor, she felt empowered as a wife and a mother and to be financially supportive at home. She explained this to me:

‘In Denmark, I feel like I can give the same level of support to my husband financially just like he will also support me. You know..... because I also work and make my money. We share it 50-50, you pay half, I pay half. My husband and I pay for everything together. And not only because of finances. It is just that here, we all are on the same level. We have the same value. It is on a whole new level compared to if I was in Ghana [...] maybe I cannot help even if I wanted to. But I see the difference a lot in Denmark’

(Interlocutor, Ellen).

In her study of Iraqi women in Denmark, Marianne Holm-Pedersen concludes on the downward “class journey” that educated Iraqi women who belonged to the middle-class strata experienced upon migration to Denmark and becoming part of the lower social class (2012.p.1102). She observed that as a general principle, entry into the Danish labour market for most immigrants, in their case as Shi’a Muslim women was a daunting task, if not almost impossible and as a result, they experienced downward mobility on their “class journeys”

(ibid). In the case of Ellen, one may argue that she was particularly fortunate to have maintained a class status, from being a trained teacher in Ghana to becoming a *Social og Sundhedsassistent* in Denmark presently. Evidently, she admits that there has been some positive changes in her life as her economic capabilities have been more consolidated in recent times than before. This might seem to suggest that Ellen has been lucky to have escaped the phenomenon of a downward mobility like most Iraqi women in Denmark (cf. Holm Pedersen, 2012) or like the other Ghanaian women in this study, but on the contrary, has been able to maintain some level of socio-economic balance in her life.

As I have already discussed in the previous section, the reconfiguration of gender roles in the Ghanaian household affords women like Ellen, financial independence in Denmark. According to Ellen, the financial independence that she enjoys through her human capital as a *Social og Sundhedsassistent* empowers her as a woman. She feels more useful and supportive in her household than she felt in Ghana.

It will be justifiable to conclude at this point that the welfare state reverses roles for women like Ellen and she capitalizes on such reversal of roles to accrue certain benefits and human capital, which helps in the achievements of certain desirable human functions as compared to her life in Ghana, where the distribution of labour force in the Ghanaian formal sector shows that women generally fall within the lower to middle strata of the working class, coupled with lower wages in salary and job promotion (Sackey, 2005).

The theme explored in this section also forms part of the discourse that is of great interest when it comes to gender equality and one's sustainability in Denmark as Steffen Jöhncke teaches us. According to Jöhncke (2007), the desire by one to be a productive and self-supporting citizen is in and of itself an implicit code of the principles of the Danish welfare system. Thus, this subject poses as one of the critical debates in Danish immigration discourses. A widely debated topic as mirroring the values and characteristics of the Danish society (ibid). The case of Ellen sets a tone for such ideals in the Danish welfare state. Thus, it may be argued that Ellen can be perceived as achieving the ideals of the welfare state, as being a self-yielding immigrant parent by participating in active work life and not being relegated to everyday home duties as generally perceived of immigrant and refugee women (Holm-Pedersen, 2012. p.1106)

Concluding Remarks

The analysis in this chapter mainly focused on life for my interlocutors in the Danish welfare state. Of specific interest was to examine the comparison that they make with their traditional and cultural backgrounds and the changes they navigate as part of their experiences as immigrant parents in Denmark. To commence with, I have shown how my interlocutor's experiences suggest that the nature of housing projects in Denmark directly has a bearing on the type of family organization that they can practice (i.e. nuclear family system). Adding to this, it was ascertained from my interlocutors that practicing the widespread nuclear family system and being far from their homeland was fraught with many challenges as immediate family members were distant and they could not access external help even if they wanted to. Also, issues of sociability with neighbours became a concern because my interlocutors asserted that they sparingly get to see their fellow neighbours.

Secondly, my interlocutors have shown that in order to augment their day-to-day lives and at the same time become self-yielding members of the Danish society, they needed to make certain required changes in their family lives. Thus, they redefine the binary models of domestic production and reproduction between men and women in the household to suit their family goals.

Last but not least, the analysis in this part also goes to show that despite the changes that have occurred in the lives of some families, such changes have been desirable. Especially in the case of Ellen. This means that she gets the benefit of being a full-time worker and a mother simultaneously. This could also be perceived as her using the state to achieve certain desirable human functions (i.e. to achieve higher economic and financial capabilities through her accessibility to the Danish labour market). Ellen's case might constitute a success story, but for the other women in this study, this might not be the case.

In the next part of my analysis, I will delve into another aspect of the experiences of my interlocutors in Danish society. I will look into inter-generational issues, specifically examining the relationship between my interlocutors and their children.

CHAPTER FIVE

Inter-Generational Issues Between Ghanaian Immigrant Parents & Their Children in Denmark.

Introduction

This chapter of my analysis will be centered on investigating the relationship between my interlocutors and their children as part of the shared experiences of Ghanaian immigrant parents in the welfare state. During, my data collection process I was fortunate to have gained insight into an ongoing controversy between one of my Ghanaian family interlocutors and their teenage daughter. Based on the interception of this kind of information and other related stories, an examination of the parent-child relationship became of critical importance to me in my research. This is because, my data will show that, there exist some challenges or barriers in relations and expectations among generations due to the exposure that Ghanaian children have gained in the Danish welfare state and how this translates into the family's relationship with the state. Also, it will be realized that the welfare state legalizes such relations by conferring particular rights on the children. Through statutory institutions like schools and Danish welfare agencies (like for example the Kommune or municipal authorities), mechanisms of surveillance are enforced at home and this limits the level at which parents can exercise control over their children.

Again, most of the interlocutors will assert that children born in the Danish welfare system enjoyed the protection of the state, aside from parental protection. This kind of protection that the children enjoy from the Welfare state is what sets them apart from the so-called Ghanaian model of the parent-child relationship, which often follows the typical patron-client relationship (Manuh & Brown, 2006. p.102-103).

Moreover, there are issues of discipline and respect, the use of the Danish language, children being more Dane than their parents, and the generational gap that exists between my interlocutors and their children in Denmark.

My analysis in this chapter will draw on the inter-generational contract theory, Karl Mannheim's work on *the Sociological Problems of Generations* to explore issues of generational gaps further on in my analysis, Pierre Bourdieu's theory on forms of Capital, and

other scholarly works will be employed to explore the issues that I talk about in this analytical chapter.

The Story of the Agyei family & the myth of the Ghanaian Child born Abroad

As I got to know from our conversation, Mr. and Mrs. Agyei have been in Denmark for a little over twenty-one (21) years now. Mr. Agyei first came to Denmark in the early 90s to pursue a Master's degree and subsequently met Mrs. Agyei a couple of years after and they got married. Mr. Agyei is 58 years old and his wife Mrs. Agyei is 45 years of age. From what I could tell, Mr. Agyei and his wife came off as caring and generally hospitable people as well as family-oriented. Mr. Agyei tells me he works as an employee with General Logistics Systems (GLS). His wife, Mrs. Agyei is a cleaning assistant (rengøringsassistent) with a cleaning company in København. They have a 17 years old lovely daughter called Feblyn. Feblyn had just started her studies in the Gymnasium in Værløse. Mr & Mrs. Agyei reside in Farum Midtpunkt.

As I already stated in my introductory paragraph, I chose to explore some of the intergenerational issues that arise between my interlocutors and their children because the case of Mr. & Mrs. Agyei was an ongoing issue that involved relations with their teenage daughter. Again, this was the only family with a teenage daughter as compared to the other families who had children ranging between the ages of 1 year to 10 years. In all the interviews, my interlocutors narrated their upbringing in Ghana and how different it was compared to the Welfare state. Generally, they described their childhood memories as coming from African homes where respect and reverence for elders were at the core of their formation process. Parents were stricter and disciplinarians such that corporal punishment and reprimand of the child were perceived as the surest way to correct a child when they do wrong. For an interlocutor like Isaac, he shared with me that part of his morning routines in Ghana was to do his house chores and accompany his father to the farm to fetch farm produce and firewood. In an event where he failed to perform this task, he was either deprived of pocket money for school that day or no dinner for him. Therefore, what I seem to have gathered from my interlocutors was that they had undergone rigorous training during their childhood stages as part of their formation for adult life.

In juxtaposition to this kind of childhood experience, I then inquired from Mr. Agyei and his wife, how they had perceived parenting in Denmark by far. In his attempt to share his experience with me and to compare the difference between children born in Denmark and

Ghana, he shared an incident that entailed his daughter refusing to perform a task for him after he had asked her to take his plate to the kitchen after dinner one evening. According to Mr. Agyei, Feblyn (his daughter) was quoted as replying in these words to her father; ‘.....*Daddy here is not a restaurant. When you finish eating, you have to take the plate to the kitchen yourself*’. Pausing him for a moment, I decided to dwell a bit on the above extract to find out from him what his reaction was upon hearing such a response from Feblyn. He reiterated; ‘*What else can you do Oliver? You just have to take your plate to the kitchen yourself. Well, I saw it as a form of exercise anyway...hahaha*’ (Interlocutor, Mr. Agyei).

As a researcher, I interpreted this differently, because the above experience of Mr. Agyei in his household arguably suggests the dynamics of power relations and autonomy that can exist between Ghanaian children born abroad and their parents. As Takyiwah Manuh posits, the Ghanaian child born abroad is regarded as being special and possessing superiority as well as maintaining a higher standard of social recognition over the child born in Ghana (2006, p. 36). Also, children born abroad are seen as enjoying the protection of the host country in which they were born, irrespective of the status of their parents (ibid). Gonzalez (1986), points out in her study of Latin-American immigrant women that, having a child in America consolidates and increases one’s mobility in her social status among peers and family relatives back at home. This will then mean that children born in jurisdictions like for example the Danish welfare state are perceived as special compared to their cohorts born in Ghana in this particular case.

Traditionally in the Ghanaian society, the rights and duties of the Ghanaian child have been enshrined in customary laws, albeit the state has also made certain reforms in recent times to alleviate issues that pertain to child abuse and to ensure the proper development of the Ghanaian child (Bonsu & Hammond, 1996 as cited in Brown, 1996). This means that the duties, rights, and obligations of the child have been a long-standing tradition within the conjugal Ghanaian family. Indeed, such duties and obligations that are ascribed to the child, are to equip the child with the needed skills and techniques for adult life (Bonsu & Hammond, 1996 as cited in Brown, 1996). In a Ghanaian household, a child is under the duty to perform domestic assistance and to render services to their parents (Sarbah, 1898, p.45). Such services rendered by the child are not considered as a form of domestic abuse of the child, but as I have already stated, to equip the child with the needed skills for his or her adult life. In reciprocity, parents are then responsible for the proper care and maintenance of the child (Bonsu & Hammond, 1996 as cited in Brown, 1996).

The case of what ensued between Mr. Agyei and her daughter as he shared with me, sets us apart from what will normally be considered the act of service that is required from a Ghanaian child. In this instance, it could be argued that Feblyn thinks she is not required under any obligation to take care of her father's plate after dinner. One could also argue that perhaps, her exposure to Danish society has taught her to be opinionated about things she deems responsible for and vice versa. To this end, it could be observed that she deems it inappropriate to carry her father's plate to the kitchen after dinner and that such acts of taking one's plate after eating should probably take place in a restaurant as a form of transactional service.

The Clash of Separate Worlds

Demant, & Østergaard (2007) concluded in their study of Danish teenagers between the ages of 14-16 that certain behaviours like partying, alcohol consumption, early dating and love life were some of the common traits that characterized these generational cohorts as part of their sociality and their commitment to their group of friends. On the other hand, such behaviour was what created family tension and gap between my interlocutors and their children. This phenomenon was attributable to the differences that exist in the traditional context of where my interlocutors grew up and the kind of upbringing they had as children in Ghana as against raising their children here in the welfare state and what was identified as a common norm among Danish teenagers.

As I have already introduced, the case of Mr. & Mrs. Agyei and their teenage daughter was of particular interest because I happen to have found myself in a middle of a family controversy during my data collection. This was the case of a romantic affair that Feblyn was having with a "secret" boyfriend of hers and one that Mr. Agyei strongly disapproved of. To give readers a better appreciation of the issue discussed in this section of my analysis, I will begin by giving a summary (*my translation*) of the story as told by Mr. Agyei and then move on to discuss and explore further on this issue.

The Story

Feblyn is the 17year old daughter of Mr. Agyei. She was just about to start Gymnasium at the time of my interview with the family. However, in recent times Mr. Agyei narrated that he had begun to see some changes in her daughter. Time spent on the phone and social media had doubled, she was constantly out and partying with friends at the least chance and had begun to keep to herself a lot, like staying indoors for longer periods without coming out to aid in

anything that concerns the home. At first, Mr. Agyei taught her daughter was gradually becoming a teenager and so such lifestyle was typical of young teenagers, until one day when he decided to secretly access Feblyn's phone without her knowledge because according to him he was getting rather concerned with her new attitude at home. Mr. Agyei went on to tell me that he had found out from Feblyn's phone through text messages that she was involved romantically with a boy. Upon his discovery, he wanted to gain clarity on the matter and so decided to question her daughter for the truth. According to Mr. Agyei Feblyn owned up to her actions and disclosed that the boy was from the neighborhood and their relationship had been going on for 2 months long. Mr. Agyei disclosed that this made him quite furious. She also added that the boy was Muslim and whom she cared about very much. In our conversation, my interlocutor (Mr. Agyei) did not explicitly discuss social class or religious issues with me regarding Feblyn's "secret boyfriend". However, of greater concern was the fact that he felt that her daughter was underage and had not attained the level of maturity where she can safely enter into sexual relationships. The whole idea for Mr. Agyei was to help her daughter make the right decisions. But there is more to the story. Upon Feblyn sensing his father's disapproval on the matter, she saw it as an opportunity to contact and inform the Kommune about the situation and to request that the Kommune finds her a student housing, where her freedom will not be infringed upon. Subsequently, authorities from the Kommune visited their home to discuss the issue. Feblyn had been given the option to move out if she pleases to settle with other teenagers in a shared housing in the Furesø Kommune, where according to Mr. Agyei, she will be under the supervision of the Kommune and can pay regular visits home as and when she pleases.

The story of Mr. & Mrs. Agyei and their daughter sheds light on the generational gap that can exist between my interlocutors and their children in the Danish welfare society. Different generations develop different values and norms that are valued and cherished and this helps them to interact and make meaning out of their lives in the world they live in (Codrington, 2011). It could be argued that the tension or disagreement that exists between my interlocutor and their daughter is a result of the generational differences that exist between them. Analytically, Mr. Agyei's attempt to disapprove of Feblyn's romantic relationship arguably meant that he had tried to impose his own generational values and norms on another. Perhaps, his generational cohorts in the past had a peculiar way of dating, guided by certain principles and rules, and this may have included the right age to date and parental consent. However, in this

case, Feblyn did not identify with such a value system and perhaps that was why she contacted the Kommune to mediate the matter in order that she may get to share in her generational values. To support the basis of my argument, I rely on one of the early German sociologists who attempted to explore the phenomenon and development of generational values, Karl Mannheim. Employing Mannheim's conception of how to think about generations will help us to understand the distinctiveness and particularities which are associated with generational cohorts. In his early works like; *The Sociological Problems of Generations* and other related essays in the 1920s and 30s, Mannheim asserts that generations or individuals of a distinct social age bracket are limited in their socialization processes because there exists a gap between the norms, values, and ideals that are passed on from parents or the older generation to them as against what they actually encounter or experience in real life (1969. p.168). By this, Mannheim brings to fore the idea that generations learn and are often influenced by the ideals and core values of their parents and sometimes by the communities in which they live. However, as they grow and gain consciousness of their environment, they begin to suppress such values that have been acquired from the older generations and begin to experience society differently. This is what Mannheim has described as “*a change, not merely in the content of experience, but in the individual's mental and spiritual adjustment to it*”. (Mannheim, 1969, p.171).

Mannheim referred to “fresh contact”, adding that the growth and experiences of young people or generational cohorts form parts of their lived experiences and through such lived experiences, value systems are adopted and enacted, rather than relying on the world view of an older generation (1969.p.171). Furthermore, he admonishes us to perceive of generation as a “social location”, not because certain individual life cycles tend to coincide with that of others but because; “*they are in a position to experience the same events and data*” (1969, p.176). Thus, individuals characterized by certain commonalities in terms of age or born around the same time to such an extent will develop “*collective mentalities that mirror a dominant view of the world, reflecting similar attitudes and values and providing a basis for shared action*” (1969, p. 177). Through Mannheim, the differences that exist between Feblyn and her father become clear. Feblyn's association as a teenager in Danish society endows her with a set of attitudes and values that are common among Danish teenagers. However, because Mr. Agyei does not belong to this group of generational cohorts and therefore, does not share in their similar attitudes and values, this creates a misunderstanding or tension between him and his

daughter. It could also be argued that the differences that exist between him and his daughter is as a result of the tradition of upbringing in a different socio-cultural context.

Last but not least in this section, the above story highlights the presence of the welfare state at play when it comes to parenting for my interlocutors. In line with Karen Olwig, Birgitte Romme Larsen makes a similar conclusion that *“the Scandinavian welfare states have been described as interventionist states because they exercise far greater power over the private lives of their citizens than do other European states.”* (Larsen,2011a: 336). What constitutes part of this interventionist strategy in the lives of my interlocutors is what Professor Noomi Matthiesen explores in her work; *The Becoming and Changing of Parenthood: Immigrant and Refugee Parents’ Narratives of Learning Different Parenting Practices*. In her work, Matthiesen (2019) asserts that structural intervention policies that aim to ensure good parenting practices in the welfare state is as a result of a perceived “parental deficit” associated with immigrant parents. In the case of Mr. Agyei and Feblyn, even though it could be said that Feblyn uses the state (municipal authorities) to her advantage, that is by gaining her independence and moving out of the home, it could also be said that the recommendations offered by the municipal authorities in the resolution of the matter between my interlocutor and his daughter was a way of teaching him the proper Danish way of parenting.

Our Children are more Danish than us

Another thematic subject that was commonly identified in my findings, was that my interlocutors alluded to the fact that, they considered their children more Danish than them, even though they had lived and gained much experience in the Danish society. My interlocutors assert that through exposure to the larger Danish society, their children have been more drawn toward certain Danish lifestyle patterns like the taste for Danish cuisines, acquisition of Danish norms and values, the use of language, and so on. Lawrence disclosed to me that her 12year old son is fond of Rye bread, burgers, and potato fries and that her attempt to introduce some local Ghanaian foods into his son’s diet has been unsuccessful. She expressed this as:

“...when we cook food like Banku or fufu or anything Ghanaian, Kobby will tell me it is smelly and does not want to try to eat. And so now when I cook Banku, I also have to fry potatoes. We call it kartofler. Once I make that for him or rice or sandwich, he’s happy. And because of that, we eat a lot of potatoes in our home now. You can say we are also turning into Danes now”

Drawing from the works of poststructuralists like Pierre Bourdieu, there are forms of capital that can be acquired in a field. Bourdieu (1986), contends that these forms of capital can be in the form of economic, social, and cultural and that one's acquisition of such capital makes them viable players in the field and be considered as good players in the social world (p.242). The children of my interlocutors can acquire these forms of capital through schools and the network of friends that they have. Lawrencia's son (Kobby) acquisition of taste and preference for Danish delicacies can be attributed to the fact that he has closer social ties with Danish society as compared to Lawrencia. This is made possible through his school or his cohort of friends. Just like the case of Danish food, language usage also dominated our discussions. Here my interlocutors will attest to the fact that they relied extensively on their children for assistance when it came to for example making meaning out of letters and emails that came from the welfare state in their electronic box (eboks) or letterbox. Again, in situations where they had to practice and undertake their Danish language homework from the language school, their children became their "interpreters" and "consultants" as Mr. Agyei calls Feblyn. He shared this with me:

"You know Feblyn was born here and the children because of school and her friends, she can speak the Danish more than me and my wife. So now, anything in like a letter, or danish homework or something, she interprets for me and I learn from that"

(Interlocutor, Mr. Agyei)

From the above narrative, Feblyn can be perceived as a "good player" as Bourdieu will argue (Bourdieu,1986; .242). This is because she is well vested and has proficiency in the Danish language and constitutes a great deal of help to her father in acquiring and understanding the Danish language and thereby enabling his father to build his own form of cultural capital. On the other hand, what this also means is that there is a reversal of what will qualify as the normal process in the parent-child relationship. What I mean by this is that, when children rather than parents acquire first this kind of cultural capital in a given socio-cultural context, then it is children who become agents of social integration for adult parents. Albeit the general idea or social order is that parents are responsible for teaching and passing cultural values to their children (such as the acquisition of language and teaching of cultural norms), it might stand to reason that in certain circumstances such as this, parents learn such integration strategies through their Ghanaian children. Sociology scholar Mehan Hugh in his study; *Understanding Inequality in Schools* observe that children who read books and are taught the antecedents of

the dominant culture, ultimately learn the dominant culture and are thus rewarded, whilst schools systematically devalue the norms and forms of being of other classes and groups (1992). Thus, the use and acquisition of the Danish language in the case of Mr. Agyei in his household potentially alter aspects of family life in a way that creates a kind of mutuality between him and his daughter as being a provider and caregiver to his daughter and his daughter being his interpreter as and when the need arises.

Negotiating Respect and Discipline in Ghanaian homes

This section of the analysis will explore on the theme of negotiating respect and discipline between Ghanaian parents and their children within the domestic space. Through the integration processes of Ghanaian children in the Danish welfare state (for example; schools, social networks, and so on) and the various state agencies that are present in the life of immigrant families,(for example the local municipalities, etc) rights and forms of cultural capital are learned and acquired to empower, develop and make the child independent and assertive in their life course.

My interlocutors on the other hand share their experiences of being disadvantaged because such rights and privileges wielded by their children make them “*untouchable*” as an interlocutor like Albert puts it. Furthermore, as part of its integration programmes, the welfare state requires that immigrants and ethnic minority families learn and cultivate the Danish ideals of parenting upon settling in the larger society (Matthiesen, 2019). Thus, even though such provisions are intended for the benefit of the child and immigrant parents, the other side to this is that it limits and marginalizes the unique parenting ethics of minority groups (*ibid*). As my data will highlight, the implications of this within the domestic setting for my interlocutors is that such interventionist programmes tend to blur the lines between what is deemed punishable by parents and what is not, what constitutes a form of good punishment or harsh punishment and so on.

Generally, all my interlocutors shared that, maintaining a sense of respect and discipline in their children was important to them but at the same time a tricky situation to navigate. According to an interlocutor like Lawrencia, she could not distinguish when to be “*hard*” or “*soft*” on her children for fear of being reported to the Kommune and losing her kids. She explained in this scenario:

“ As a single mother, I sometimes have disagreements with my son. What can I do? Because here you cannot beat them and I cannot throw him away. He is my son.

Sometimes I have to stamp my feet on the ground and try to be hard on him so he does not go wayward or something (...) you know (...) but at the same time, I am a bit scared because they can report you at school or the Kommune if they feel they are abused and before you know, you have lost your child to the state. So even sometimes I have to measure the level of discipline” (Interlocutor, Lawrencia)

For fear of losing her child to the welfare state, Lawrencia is confronted with an internal conflict regarding how to enforce the right kind of discipline on her son. She possesses such internal conflict because according to her anything that the child considers an extreme form of punishment can be detrimental to her relationship with her child and the welfare state can take possession of her son. This is evident when she shared the knowledge of being reported to the school or the kommune in the above extract. On the other hand, expressions such as “stamping her feet”, seems to suggest how important it is for her to enforce and instill discipline and respect in her son as a parent. Perhaps also because she sees herself as a single mother raising a son. However, it could also be said that traditions may be at play in this case. Anthropologists of African studies will contend that in most African societies, respect for parents and the elderly is the duty of the child as parents are equally responsible for the proper nurturing and support of their offspring (Alber et al, 2008). Thus, a kind of mutual and moral exchange between generations. What has come to be known by anthropologists as the Inter-Generational Contract. In their book; *Generations in Africa: Connections and Conflicts*, German ethnologist Erdmute Alber and her friends simply define inter-generational contract as “*the transaction of material and non-material exchanges between parents and their children over the course of life.*” (Alber et al, 2008; 7).

Based on the definition of Alber and her friends above, one will agree that intertemporal relations as far as the intergenerational contract is concerned is not only restricted to the “reciprocity of raising dependent children and providing education, care and support in return for nurturing at old age” (Alber et al, 2008, p.7), but also encompasses the transfer of non-material qualities between kinship relations in most African societies. Alber et al. (2008) contend that the concept of reciprocity extends to the exchange and transfer of not only material but cultural resources and the manifestations of morality, care, and respect, especially on the part of the child towards his or parent or the elderly in most African societies (Alber et al., 2008.p.7). Moreover, the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights of 1981, categorically states in chapter II, article 29 (1) of its provisions that “*the individual shall have the duty to*

preserve the harmonious development of the family and to work for the cohesion and respect of the family; to respect his parents at all times, to maintain them in case of need". Additionally, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which was entered into force by the assembly of African leaders in November, 1999 stipulates in article 31(a) that *"the child shall have the duty to work for the cohesion of the family, to respect his parents, superiors and elders at all times and to assist them in case of need"*. Therefore, in situations like that of what happens in the life of my interlocutors, where children enjoy state protection and there is state surveillance through the schools or Kommune on how parents should nurture or even punish their children, then there is bound to be problems or challenges with the inter-generational contract as observed in most African societies.

Albeit these profound challenges, one of such interlocutors expressed that he has tried to devise a rather unconventional or a transactional approach to enforce discipline, respect, and make sure that his children share in the household activities. Albert had this experience to share with me;

"For example, if I call Giovanni [.....] Giovanni come, he will not come. You have to maybe call four or five times before he comes down from his room it's normal with the kids here because sometimes it will be, he has earphones in his ears..... you know. But the whole day he will be upstairs, the only time he comes down to do is to eat and goes up. And so like maybe the whole day, you will see him for maybe, I don't know 20-30 minutes out of the 24hours, but he's here at home. But in the Ghanaian context, he cannot be upstairs all day, and maybe I will be calling my son to come and do this. You know...we train him... you know. Let's say to do some chores at home. Maybe let's say 10 kroner for cleaning your room and then 50 kroner for well, let's say helping to tidy the hall and organizing or sorting out the dirty clothes so we do some laundry. So you have to use some sort of incentive, motivational incentive to help them".

(Interlocutor, Albert).

Parenting styles differ from parent to parent which are all intended to build the child to become a self-yielding and responsible adult (Ojakuratu et al, 2020 as cited in Wariboko et al. 2002). Though there are many parenting styles that parents deploy in nurturing their young ones to become responsible adults, common forms like showing affection, love, care, motivation, enforcing certain punitive measures at home, and so on can help the child to imbibe cultural

values in their life course (*ibid*). In the above extract, Albert gives an account of how he negotiates the fatherly task of imparting ethics and a sense of responsibility to Giovanni.

Furthermore, Albert is also aware of the fact that his current cultural context also influences his style of parenting, hence inculcating habits like incentivizing his child in order to transfer forms of non-material resources to him. He acknowledges this when he makes a comparison in the above extract by saying; “*in the Ghanaian context, he (Giovanni) cannot be upstairs all day*”. This goes to show that socio-cultural and political factors greatly influence the mode and style of parenting for most parents in general. The case of the welfare system is a distinct one as the “invisible” hand of the state is present in the domestic lives of my interlocutors, as compared to that of their homeland.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has explored another dimension of the life experiences of Ghanaian Immigrants in Denmark. Specifically, I have examined some of the inter-generational issues between Ghanaian immigrant parents and their children in Danish society. Analytically, it was discovered that differences in socio-cultural context and upbringing contributed to the tension that exists between my informants and their children.

Again, it became known that Ghanaian children are able to acquire certain Danish cultural qualities easily and faster than their parents. For example; children go to school and learn the culture of the dominant group and also through their social networks as compared to their parents who might be faced with challenges of being incorporated into the larger society. Last but not least, it was discovered that enforcing respect and discipline was fraught with challenges. In order for respect and discipline to be maintained at home, parents found it necessary to enforce certain punitive measures, however, parents also tended to feel a sense of control on how and what constituted as the ideal form of punishment. To this end, for them not to lose their children to the state, they needed to know and practice the right or ideal form of Danish parenting.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

My aim in this study has been to investigate the family life of Ghanaian immigrant parents in the welfare state. As Birgitte Romme Larsen opines, when immigrants and refugees settle in the Danish welfare state, there becomes “*a trilateral resettlement establishment between parents, children and the welfare state*” (Larsen,2008. p.117). Thus, it is important for me to assess how such a change affects the life of my interlocutors in the Danish welfare state.

As my point of departure, I sought to answer the question; *How do Ghanaian immigrant parents experience their family life in the Danish Welfare state?* Through the stories and shared experiences of my interlocutors, I was able to gain insight into critical aspects of their day-to-day experiences in Denmark.

The stories and experiences that my interlocutors shared with me during the interviewing process were characterized by comparing life in Denmark to their traditional backgrounds. They make such comparisons because they have migrated from one socio-cultural context to another. This also means that they have experienced discontinuation from a certain kind of life into a different kind. Such an experience in their life is what drives them to compare these two phenomena. Suffice to say that their lives move from a linear progression (Mattingly, 1998) to a double perspective (Said, 1984).

To begin with, findings in the first chapter of analysis in this study revealed that in terms of organization of family life, my interlocutors have had to situate themselves into the widespread Danish nuclear family system in the welfare state. However, as immigrants having to situate themselves in this type of family system has been fraught with challenges because they have migrated from a traditional system where the extended family is critical in the lives of the individual. They share with me that back in Ghana, one can ably rely on other members of the extended family when help is needed. However, as immigrant parents in the welfare state, one will have to depend on themselves or members of his or her nuclear family for assistance. Even though it can be said on the one hand that such a system of family practice in the welfare system helps to foster closeness in the nuclear family, on the other hand, it imposes some level of constraints on them.

Consequently, the study revealed that one of the ways that my interlocutors navigated the challenges coupled with living the nuclear family life in Denmark, was by complementing each other. That is to say that, there were no strict adherence to the traditional practice of men being the breadwinners or sole providers, while the women were relegated to the department of home care and child nurturing.

According to my findings, it was important for my interlocutors to adopt such strategies if they needed to be successful at being parents and self-yielding citizens of the Danish society.

Furthermore, some of the women in this study will assert that they felt empowered by the welfare state. Through the lens of Marianne Holm-Pedersen's concept of *class journeys*, I was able to analyze how some of my interlocutors shared with me that they were empowered as immigrant women. As I already described, some of the women in this study will assert that in Ghana even though they belonged to the middle working class, such social position was marked by low wages in salary as compared to their life currently in the welfare state. According to one of such interlocutors, she currently finds herself in the middle working class of the Danish society and is also earning higher wages in salary as compared to when she was in Ghana.

The second chapter of my analysis in my thesis was devoted to examining another aspect of the family life of my interlocutors. I examined the relationship between Ghanaian immigrant parents and their children. To begin with, my interlocutors will assert that comparing Ghanaian children born in the welfare state to those born in Ghana, children in the welfare state were perceived differently. Analytically, it was discovered that differences in socio-cultural context and upbringing contributed greatly to the tension that exists between my informants and their children.

Again, it became known that Ghanaian children are able to acquire certain Danish cultural qualities easily and faster than their parents. For example; children go to school and learn the culture of the dominant group and also through their social networks as compared to their parents who might be faced with challenges of being incorporated into the larger society. Last but not least, it was discovered that enforcing respect and discipline was fraught with challenges. In order for respect and discipline to be maintained at home, parents found it necessary to enforce certain punitive measures, however, parents also tended to feel that they do not have a sense of control over how they can enforce correction or punitive measures at

home. To this end, for them not to lose their children to the state, they needed to know and practice the right or ideal form of Danish parenting.

In sum, this thesis has shown that in living their family lives, Ghanaian immigrant parents experience an alteration in their personal lives. This means that the type of family system they need to practice, how they relate with the state in terms of being responsible and self-yielding citizens right down to fostering good relations with their children undergo certain changes which is ultimately aimed at helping them fit into the ideals of the Danish society.

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APPENDIX 1

Interview Guide for Interlocutors

Confidentiality Statement: These interview questions are for the purposes of a research project. It is established that the questions posed in this interview guide are strictly for academic purposes and as such all answers provided will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Personal Questions (Introducing Informant)

1. Name, Age, Educational level?
2. How long have you been in Denmark?

Questions on Parenting for Ghanaian families in Denmark.

3. Do you have kids in Denmark?
 - What do you think about the education system in Denmark? Anything you wish was different?
4. How do you perceive parenting in Denmark?
5. How is communication like in your household?
6. What challenges do you face as a father/mother in Denmark?
 - What are some of the experiences that you have by far as a father/mother living in Denmark?
7. What are some of the things that the Danish welfare state requires of you to do as a Ghanaian father/mother in Denmark?
 - How does this make you feel based on your authority as a Ghanaian father/mother?

Questions on Denmark, Integration for Ghanaian Parents in Denmark.

8. What is it like living in Denmark?
9. How do find your neighbours? How is your relationship with them?
10. What has been some of the pleasant and unpleasant reactions you have received from people in Denmark? Any striking experiences you care to share with me?
11. How has Danish language helped in your integration in Denmark?
12. What are some Danish cultures that you have adopted as a father/mother in your household as part of living in Denmark?

- Maybe in term of food, music, decoration of your home, etc.

Questions on Employment In the Danish Welfare State.

16. What do you do for work? If not, how do you support yourself and your family?
17. How did you find employment? How long did it take? Was/is your employment full-time? Is/was your employment stable?
18. How important is your work to supporting your family life in Denmark?

Appreciation

Thank you very much for your time, insights, and experiences shared with me in this study as a Ghanaian family living in Denmark. This has been helpful. I hope I have your permission to come back for more information should the need arise?