

Migration and belonging: How first-generation siblings of migrant Zimbabwean families negotiate belonging.

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Aims and objectives: This research project examines how young siblings from migrant families develop narratives of identity and belonging in contemporary Britain?

Zimbabweans in Britain

- From around 2000, the number of asylum applications made by Zimbabweans began to rise (Humphris, 2010)
- The Zimbabwean population in Britain is estimated to be 116,000 (ONS, 2011).
- Recent statistics indicate that there are 6000 Zimbabweans living in Birmingham.
- Zimbabweans are scattered across the UK and mainly in major cities (Humphris, 2010)

Racial Diversity in Urban spaces: Birmingham



Due to the amount of migration into large cities, they are often regarded as hubs of thriving diversity (Back and Sinha, 2018). In large cities like Birmingham, ethnic difference facilitates tolerance which allows communities to express themselves freely. Urban areas are also important places for ethnic groups to connect with fellow countryman as well as different communities. The proximity to other communities can provide a chance for building strong race relations between groups (Humphris, 2018).

Negotiating Identity and Belonging

- Exploration of how young Zimbabweans negotiate a dual identity.
- Current context of globalisation, Brexit and the 'migrant crisis'.
- Importance of historical events and how that affects identity construction (Schulz, 1998)
- Identity and representation in conjunction with the adolescent experience (Howarth, 2002).

Focusing on Siblings and Families

Siblings will often have shared or similar experiences. The assumption may be that this will result in them having the same views. However, siblings may actually have differing views due to individual perception of experiences (Dunn and Plomin, 1990). The differences between siblings can reveal how they understand themselves as individuals but also in relation to their sibling showing the complexities of identity and how it is shaped.

Families are the smallest unit of a group and have shared or similar experiences which are akin to who they are. This means that families are large enough for differences to be seen but small enough to control variables. The family unit provides boundaries for variables to be controlled therefore making it easier for differences to be easily identified.

Methodology

The research will address the aims and objectives by collecting an original set of in depth qualitative interviews in one multicultural diverse city in UK, Birmingham. To do so, ten pairs of first-generation siblings (16 – 24 years old) will be recruited from families who have arrived in the last 19 years from Zimbabwe. This research design has a number of benefits: By focusing on siblings who are part of the same family I seek to control for socio-economic conditions and human capital of the parents; by focusing on one single community, the Zimbabwean community, particularly one with a colonial connection with Britain; I focus on diasporic narratives of 'home'; and, finally, by focusing on one city, Birmingham, allows me to connect young people's narrative of belonging to theories of urban development. Data analysis will consist of thematic analysis to identify patterns and ideas within data.



Expected Outcomes

The interviews are an appropriate method to unpack issues;

- Identity is a complex phenomenon to negotiate and is shaped by many different variables during someone's life (Waters, 2001 and Hudson, 2000)
- Identity is not fixed but rather an ever-changing process (Van Houtum and Van Naerssen, 2002).
- Siblings may have shared experiences but may interpret situations in different ways (Schachter et al., 1978).
- Urban spaces like Birmingham facilitate identity building due to richness of diversity (Humphris, 2018).
- Zimbabwean identity is particularly complex due to colonial history and recent migration movement.

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