

Narratives of resilience from Indigenous women in North America and Africa

by

Chibuzor Mirian Azubuike

B.A., University of Benin, 2011
M.A., University of Ibadan, 2018

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Leadership Communication
College of Arts and Sciences

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

2024

Abstract

The colonialization of Native people in different parts of the world led to grave consequences for the colonized people. Scholars have examined the various kinds of colonialism and their negative impacts on the Native people who suffered alienation from their lands, cultures, and ancestries. The findings of numerous studies reveal that many treaties signed between Indigenous nations and Europeans were disregarded at the onset of colonialism in full swing in North America and Africa. Colonialism exacerbated this issue by imposing arbitrary boundaries in various African and American societies, resulting in the loss of lands for several tribal nations and the displacement of Indigenous groups from their ancestral lands. Both Native American nations and African societies experienced the adverse effects of colonialism, enduring significant consequences such as land loss and forced displacement and the disruption of the hitherto existing leadership of the Indigenous peoples before their contact with the Europeans and subsequent colonization. The leadership structures that emerged in many colonized societies of Africa and America were in line with the colonizers' leadership styles. These styles of leadership, as explained by many scholars, led to the emergence of social injustice movements as regards land acquisition, forceful eviction, and, in some cases, brutal treatment of the people. Such treatments include the report from the Urban Indian Health Institute, which shows that the Indigenous women of some tribal nations in the USA and Canada were murdered on their Native lands by non-Native people. Gbenenye (2016) cited the arbitrary creation of boundaries, which led to civil wars and the displacement of Indigenous people from their ancestral lands, like the Bakassi people in Africa, as an aftermath of colonialism and such injustices gave rise to movements such as Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in the USA and Canada. However, not much has been done on the narratives of resilience among the Indigenous women of North America and Africa. This is the gap that this research sought to fill. This study utilized qualitative research methods, mainly narrative inquiry, with Indigenous women in North America and Africa to elicit data on their intersectional realities. Leadership as practice, complex adaptive system, nego-feminism/Indigenous feminism, and muted group theory constitute the theoretical framework employed in this study. This work situates resilience in the Leadership as Practice framework. As such, I argue that community resilience is a leadership practice. Resilience for Indigenous people is beyond being a trait, it is a commitment to uphold the

legacies and sacrifices of their ancestors. The findings of my research show that Indigenous women practice resilience in their everyday lives. Findings from this research further show that there are factors responsible for resilience-building among Indigenous women. These factors include mentorship to acquire skills necessary for them to build resilience in their societies. Finally, the findings of my research show that resilience building is essential for Indigenous women in North America and Africa. Findings from this research would be useful in preventing violence in the event of displacement, as well as in socially integrating people who have suffered forced removal.

I recommended some actions that can elevate the voices of Indigenous women in this study, contribute to the discourse on resilience and women's leadership, and uphold the Indigenous knowledge systems while demonstrating the agency of Indigenous women in North America and Africa.

Keywords: Indigenous people, Women, Resilience, Leadership, North America, Africa

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Approved by:

Major Professor
Andrew Wefald, PhD

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Acknowledgements

I am grateful to God for the grace to pull through. I am thankful to Dr. Andrew Wefald, for being my major advisor and for your guidance during this period. I thank you for the many hats that you had to wear to ensure that I finish this dissertation. I want to appreciate my committee members Dr Samuel Mwangi for providing great direction, Dr Alex Red Corn for seeing the value of this research and providing me with the connections I needed to do this work, Dr Trish Gott for cheering me on. I am grateful to you all for your constructive feedback and working with me. I am thankful to Dr. Kerry Priest, Dr. Brandon Kliever, Dr Mary Tolar, and all the members of the Staley School of Leadership for your support during my time at K-State. Thank you, Professor Muturi, for being an anchor to me. Dr Mac Benavides, you played a great role in providing guidance and I am immensely grateful for your ideas and feedback.

Mrs. Veronica Ayara, thank you for making your house a home for my children. Aunty Esther Ayara, you saw through my struggles and vulnerabilities yet continue to hold me in high esteem and cheer me on. I appreciate you. Mama Teresa Oyibo Ameh, I am so grateful to you for all the love you have showered me.

I appreciate my husband, Chukwuneke and my daughters, Nchedo and Ngozi, for the kind effort and faith that made this dream come true. I am grateful to my father Hycainth Azubuike, my mum in heaven, Nchedo Azubuike. You invested in my education and set a solid foundation; I will continue to make you proud. My dear brothers, Obinna, Kenechukwu and Chinedu Azubuike for your prayers during this time.

Dr. Nyasha, you have been a strong support to me. Dr. Kefa Otiso, thank you for always being present from the day I landed in the US until this time. Brent Weinman, you supported me and my family in a special way, thank you for being a blessing.

Thank you, Oluwasegun, and Morakinyo for all the support.

I am thankful to Mrs LaVerne Bitsie-Baldwin and Dr. Debra Bolton for all the support.

I also thank Sakshi for holding my hand and all my colleagues in the Leadership Communication doctoral program for providing a supportive community.

I appreciate all the special angels I met in Manhattan for supporting me and my family.

I also thank my online community, particularly my Facebook people, for cheering me on and sending good vibes.

Chukwu gozie unu!

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my dear husband, Chukwuneke; it was a bumpy ride with good and bad times in a new country far from home. I am grateful to you for your sacrifices during this period of our lives. I dedicate this work to my precious daughters, Nchedo and Ngozi. I hope that you grow to be resilient women leaders, when the journey of this dissertation was tough and I wanted to give up, I thought about how I wanted to be a good example for you and that inspired me to remain focused. I love my family, and I am privileged that we all share a home together.

I dedicate this research to my parents: My father, Hyacinth Azubuike, I am so lucky to have a father like you whom I draw strength from. I have not doubted your unconditional love. You have been so proud of me, and I would not have gotten to this point if it were not for you. To my mother, Nchedo Azubuike, this is your dream, it is so unfortunate that you are not here on earth to see how your Ada and only daughter turned out, I dedicate this to you for building a solid foundation. I miss you more than words can describe.

Ndi oma daalu nu!

Chapter 1 - Introduction

“Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.” Chinua Achebe

Indigenous peoples, over the centuries, have continued to experience crises of identity, cultural oppression and different forms of racism (Hodes, 2018). The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted in 2007, states:

Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories.

No relocation shall take place without the free, prior, and informed consent of the Indigenous peoples concerned and after agreement on just and fair compensation and, where possible, with the option of return.

Yet, this declaration continues to be overturned as Indigenous people have been forcefully removed from their lands. The United Nations is also concerned that Indigenous people experienced historical injustices emanating from colonization and dispossession, which inhibited their rights to development according to their interests.

In 2020, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that there are more than 79.5 million displaced people, including Indigenous people, globally. Colonialism remains the root cause of most of the cases of displacement in North America and Africa. As Prakash (1994) notes, the aftermath of European colonialism led to the relocation and the renegotiation of the boundaries of the Natives which led to displacement. Most, if not every place in the world, has experienced colonialism at some point in their history. Colonialism is a large-scale political and economic structure that allows a single geopolitical entity, such as a nation-state or city-state, to establish its authority over areas outside its customary boundaries in the pursuit of greater power or profit (Ahuja, 2017). Colonialism is inherently connected to

capitalism, as it has had a global impact on human settlement worldwide (Ahuja, 2017). Horne (2018) explains that European colonialism in the Americas and, subsequently, in Africa, brought about capitalism. This was possible through the territorial expansion policy of European leaders, like Oliver Cromwell, and mainly through trading companies, like the Royal African Company, which were capitalist. The establishment of trading companies fostered capitalism in many European colonial territories.

The era of modern colonialism began around 1500, following the European discoveries of a maritime passage around America (in 1492) and the southern coast of Africa (in 1488), which allowed sea powers to navigate the seas because of these events (Prakash, 1994). Consequently, sea power shifted from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic and the emerging nation-states of Portugal, Spain, the Dutch Republic, France and England (Olaoluwa, 2019). Through conquest and the establishment of settler' colonies, these nations expanded, colonized other nations worldwide, and spread European institutions and cultures. Yet, these countries colonized others globally differently. For instance, in some parts of the Americas, Europeans forcefully evicted Native Americans from their lands and assimilated them into their institutions and cultures (Hall, 1987, p. 1). In Africa, the British administration widely used the indirect rule system (Falola, 2001).

Colonialism led to and continues to cause many conflicts in the world. One of the lasting consequences of colonialism is the creation of arbitrary international boundaries, which have become sources of sharp divisions and accentuated what Newman (2003) calls the 'us versus them' dichotomy (Newman, 2003, p. 2). Babatola (2012) describes international boundaries as a wall or a partition between people on both sides. The partitioning of African countries by their colonizers has engendered extensive border disputes in locations around Africa. In the African

context, border disputes emanate from undefined boundaries and defined but intensely disputed colonial boundaries. Based on this, Ugwuja (2014) states that a country with more neighboring states sharing more boundaries with others would likely experience more boundary disputes than those with fewer boundaries.

There are different causes of border conflicts in the African context. Sama and Johnson-Ross (2006) argue that resource control is one of the commonest reasons for disputes among nations sharing common borders. Babatola (2012) posits that border disputes may concern disagreement over the ownership of offshore spaces or waterways, not land boundaries alone. Whatever the sources of these conflicts are, the conflicts certainly threaten the unity of Africa as they engender forced migration, displacement and other dire consequences for human populations (Babatola, 2012). The Organization of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU), quickly passed the 1964 Resolution to prevent deep-seated animosities, grounded in border disputes, among the African nation-states. By this resolution, the union members pledged adherence to the colonial boundaries, as inherited at independence (Babatola, 2012).

However, such an international document, as the 1964 Resolution of the AU, has not totally exterminated border conflicts in Africa. An example of this, recently, is the Bakassi Peninsula territorial dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon. During the pre-colonial times, the controversial Bakassi Peninsula was under the leadership of the Obong, who was the head of the ancient kingdom of Calabar. Calabar officially became part of Nigeria in 1914 when the Northern and Southern Protectorates were amalgamated by the British. Nevertheless, through a series of bilateral treaties and other legal instruments, the British first handed over the territory to Germany and then placed it under the mandate of the League of Nations. Subsequently, it came under the trusteeship of the United Nations (Tarlebba & Baroni, 2010, p. 2002). The Bakassi

Peninsula caught the attention of the Cameroonian authorities when oil was discovered there in the 1970s (Tarlbbea & Baroni, 2010, p. 6). Relying on certain extant colonial treaties, Cameroon laid claim to the area and claimed that Nigeria had trespassed on its territory. On the other hand, Nigeria built its case on the 1913 Anglo-German Treaty and the 1975 Mauro Declaration (Akinyemi, 2014, p. 13). In 2002, the International Court of Justice finally ruled that the disputed location belonged to Cameroon and directed Nigeria to transfer sovereignty over the space to Cameroon.

As a result of this judgment, the indigenes occupying the Bakassi Peninsula were resettled in Cross River State by the Nigerian Government in camps. Displacement pertains to forced migration from the homeland because of conflict, war or even natural disaster. Alienated from their homeland, the Bakassi indigenes had to negotiate their identity and develop strategies to fit into their new socio-cultural, political and economic space. Their primordial home was a geographical area of 1000sq km of mangrove swamp which were half-submerged islands inhabited mainly by people whose dominant occupation was fishing (Tarlebba & Baroni, 2010, p. 199). The displaced Bakassi people currently occupy Ikang in the Akpabuyo Local Government Area of Cross River State. The Nigerian government resettled the Bakassi people in New Bakassi, an area that was carved out of another Local Government Area(LGA) called Akpabuyo LGA. The new place is tagged 'New Bakassi' to give the people a sense of home. The essence of this nomenclatural label can be interrogated vis-à-vis Hammond's (2004) ideas on place-making, which explains the socio-historical process of emplacement and its relationship to social identity construction. Hammond's (2004) position agrees with Turton's (2005) contention that "how people experience a place, and how it becomes inextricably bound up with their social and personal identities is a product of social activity". This intersects with the view I expressed

in my master's thesis (Azubuike, 2018). I argue that home is a place of preference where an individual or group of people is comfortable; hence, people should be consulted about their place of choice in the event of relocation because displacement often devastates the displaced.

Though on another continent and in a different historical frame, the Native Americans share the socio-historical experience of displacement too. Put simply, the Native Americans were colonized, and they lost their lands as the European settlers in America pushed the people off their lands (Giesler, 2014). That had far-reaching consequences for America's Natives, who became displaced and are still agitating for their land rights. Geisler (2014) argues that the account that the Natives in North America sold their lands to the non-Natives was false. Instead, he suggests that discriminatory policies from the US government enabled the erasure of titles. More evidence from the Fort Berthold Reservation of North Dakota shows that there were well-planned efforts geared at erasing any evidence of the Natives' land ownership. This has invariably occasioned relocation into the reservation areas by the Native Americans, loss of identity and loss of cultural artifacts. He states that the Indian nations were forcibly removed, deceived by treaties, subjected to military confinement, and stripped of their Native lands by the colonial settlers (Geisler, 2014, p.57). For example, Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee passed unfavorable laws that forced 50,000 Indians to migrate to the West. In return, the Native American nations were promised an annuity of \$50,000 for 50 years but it was quickly reduced to 10 years without any notification to the Indians. Some legal provisions were deployed to strip the Indians of their properties and there was the privatization of approximately 90 million acres of tribal land between 1887 and 1934. According to Usa.gov, there are 574 recognized tribes in the USA, these are nations with some tribal sovereignty. An example of an ethnic collective impacted by the European settlers in the US is the Navajo people. The 2012 Navajo Human

Rights Commission report states that the Navajo were the first inhabitants of the Hopi areas. Both the Navajos and the Hopis lived together and intermarried. The Navajo claimed that the federal government instigated conflicts between the nations to exploit their natural resources. The ensuing disputes led to devastating results for the nations.

Generally, the European contact with Native Americans and several nations of the continents (North and South America) became catastrophic for the native people. The contact, firstly, led to the contest between European settlers and the Native Americans over space, which subsequently led to the forceful acquisition of the land of the Native Americans and the displacement of people off their lands (Giesler, 2014). The contact further led to the dislodgment of several nations' sovereignty. The displacement of Indigenous people from their ancestral homes as a result of conquest and colonialism put the Native Americans on the margin in their homeland. Many of the Native Americans were evicted from their Indigenous lands through arbitrary land laws and policies that systematically excluded them from their homeland.

Piatt (2021) emphasizes that the white settlers sought to exterminate the Native American Indians on their ancestral lands through several strategies. These strategic actions range from the initial aggression against the Native Americans that led to wars and displacement to the forceful eviction of the Native people. It also included the boarding school system that attempted to systematically erase the identity of Indian children and assimilate them into the dominant American culture. Finally, Piatt (2021) submits that the blood quantum was also another means targeted at eliminating the Indigenous people of America. An important fact, however, remains that the contact between the Europeans and Native Americans led to a series of historical events and the eventual colonization of the Native Americans. Hall (1987) stated that the Europeans' contact had complex effects on the Native Americans. These complex effects, as further

explained by Hall (1987), can be seen in the displacement of Native Americans from their Indigenous land in North America and the subsequent attempts to resettle and incorporate them into other cultures (Hall 1987, p.1).

European colonialism in Africa and North America left some Indigenous groups displaced and vulnerable (Tarlebbee & Baroni, 2010; Hall, 1987). Generally, the Native American women were vulnerable during colonialism. Fischer (2002) explains that Native American women were made to work on the plantations of European settlers. The vulnerability of women (Native Americans and Africans) is pointed out by Fischer (2002); he also pointed out that the Native American women embraced the gendered role placed on them by their European settlers. However, these women were more loving, modest, mild, and hard-working than their situation allowed (Fischer, 2002, p.1). The description of the Native American women by Fischer (2002) shows their resilience during colonialism. Burnette (2015, p.5) further states that the Native American women, especially those who have matrilineal or matrilineal systems like the Choctaws, were resilient despite facing historical oppression on their lands.

Against the backdrop of colonialism, the resilience of vulnerable groups, especially women, has become sacrosanct for survival (Burnette, 2015). In light of this, my research considered the narrative of resilience among Indigenous people in North America and Africa. I specifically explored the narratives of resilience among Indigenous women in America and Africa. Through this process, I examined women's resilience as a practice of leadership. As such, my research has contributed sufficiently to understanding how vulnerable Indigenous women in North America and Africa narrate their experiences, practice leadership, and maintain their survivance. My research sits at the intersectional point of resilience, gender and displacement.

Findings from my research show how women, who are more vulnerable in the events of crisis or displacement, even in the face of prevalent patriarchy, colonialism and marginalization, led their societies in dire situations. This research has focused on gendered perspectives, specifically Indigenous women as a minoritized group who continue to face discrimination. This work has presented Indigenous women's stories and lived experiences to demonstrate leadership as practice. The gendered perspective is important since women are culture transmitters and biological reproducers of the nation (Das, 1996; Davies, 2007). The research is about Indigenous women in places where colonialism took place, and they suffered historical or presently forced removal and how these women enact resilience as a leadership practice.

Statement of the Research Problem

Several studies have examined the European contact with Native Americans and Africans, the spread of European institutions and cultures, and the European colonization of the Americas and Africa. Braudel (1992) explains that the encounter between European explorers and Indigenous peoples profoundly affected both parties. As Kupperman (2007) submits, European powers, especially Spain, Portugal, France, and England, dominated lucrative trade routes and valuable resources during their contact with Native Americans and Africans. Braudel (1992) explains that there were cultural exchanges during this contact, such as technologies, crops, animals and even diseases. Falola (2002) also submits that European contact with Africans eventually led to colonialism on the continent. The European contact with the people of America and Africa marked significant changes on the two continents regarding land and boundaries. Colonial boundaries were created, and many Indigenous people of the Americas and Africa lost their ancestral land. In the Americas, Geisler (2014) asserts that the narratives that Native Americans in North America sold their lands to non-Natives are misleading. According to

Giesler (2014), discriminatory policies from the government enabled the erasure of land titles in the United States. Geisler (2014) cites the evidence from the Fort Berthold Reservation of North Dakota which shows well-planned efforts to erase any evidence of land ownership by the Native Americans. Candelo and Geloso (2021) further explain that the relationship between European settlers and Native Americans in North America was characterized by tension and violence over settlement and land use. Although there was an exception to this pattern in the area around the Bay of Fundy in present Canada, this changed when the British army deported most of the Acadians (Candelo & Geloso, 2021, p. 550). This research shows the connection between colonialism and the displacement of Native Americans from their lands. While Geisler (2014) and other scholars of the American Indigenous people highlight the impacts of colonialism on Native Americans, the effects of colonialism were far-reaching globally as it affected the Indigenous people in Africa through the establishment of arbitrary boundaries, which has proven to be detrimental to many Indigenous groups (Falola, 2002).

Colonial boundaries caused many land conflicts in Africa (Gbenenye, 2016). Gbenenye (2016) explains that colonial boundaries in Africa caused social disruption and the displacement of many pre-existing ethnic groups. One such scenario was the Bakassi People of Nigeria, whose territory became a legal tussle between Nigeria and Cameroon (Gbenenye, 2016, p.1). Although the International Court of Justice ruled in favor of Cameroon, scholars have focussed on analyzing the impact of the International Court of Justice's ruling on the Nigerian/Cameroon disputes (Mbuh, 2004). Scholars in this category criticized the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for its supposedly wrong handling of the Bakassi case. Mbuh (2004) states that France backed Cameroon, which helped them to secure victory in the legal tussle. They also condemned the judgment for not considering the people who had been on the Peninsula for decades.

Another segment of the scholarship on this case situates the matter in the context of the European conquest of the Americas and partitioning of Africa, which led to the disruption of the extant boundaries of the pre-colonial era and disrupted the internal administrative formations of the African kingdoms and communities along tribal/ethnic lines (Babatola 2012). According to Babatola, Africans, before colonization, primarily identified with kingdoms, clans, and ethnic formations. As a result, new identities began to emerge when individuals started to identify with their new nation-states brought about by colonization. Scholars have also focused on the challenges that arose from the conflict brought about by the colonial fostering of borders, which was driven by greed and selfish interests (Agba et al., 2010; Gbenenye, 2016; Inuagbuna, 2017). Evidently, extant studies have critically reflected on the roles of colonialism and neo-colonialism in the marginalization of Indigenous groups and the destabilization of peace among the Native American population and across the African continent, which occasioned internal displacement in some instances (Candelo & Geloso, 2021; Gbenenye, 2016). My study explored new grounds by focusing on how Indigenous women who have been marginalized, navigate their situation and assume leadership roles. This area of scholarship, which concerns the display of resilience by women who have suffered historically forced displacement, has received little attention. My study was undertaken with references to the lived experiences of the marginalized Indigenous people in Africa and North America. Though studies like Agba et al. (2010), Holly (1997), and Inuagbuna (2017) exist on the Indigenous displaced people in North America and Africa, these studies have focused more on their resettlement patterns and are less extensive in orientation. The studies do not capture the resilience of women on the margin in a minority group like a community of displaced people.

Although scholars have studied the effects of displacement on these communities, little research has been done on the resilience of the women facing violence, marginalization, minoritization and displacement in these communities. My study has addressed this gap by studying the narratives of resilience from Indigenous women. My research confirmed its findings by establishing that women demonstrate leadership in their daily activities despite their largely challenging situations. Fleming & Ledogar (2008) have examined the usages of 'resilience' in literature through their literature review on how the term, 'resilience' has been used over the years, especially in studies relevant to Aboriginal research; they identified some gaps, one of them is the need for the greater involvement of Aboriginal researchers who can bring a nonlinear worldview to resilience research. My study has responded to such calls by exploring the narratives of resilience among Indigenous groups in North America and Africa. The results of my study have contributed to preventing violence in the event of displacement and offer strategies for reintegrating those who have experienced forced migration. It is significant for its clear contributions to the literature on the narrative of resilience among Indigenous groups, contested citizenship, especially in border areas, identity politics, spatial politics, and social exclusion. It offers a critical and nuanced explication of displaced women's resilience and leadership capacities in the selected communities. It provides insights into effective leadership practices, especially for women in challenging circumstances. My research further indicates, through its findings, that Indigenous women demonstrate leadership in their daily activities through their resilience.

Research Objectives and Questions

This study aims to provide insights into effective resilience techniques, especially displayed by women, in challenging circumstances, such as in the cases of Indigenous women who suffered colonialism and historically forced removal. This research has one main research question and two sub-questions. The main research question for this work is:

1. How do Indigenous women describe their experiences enacting resilience as a leadership practice?
 - a. How do Indigenous women individually describe their experiences enacting resilience as a leadership practice?
 - b. How do Indigenous women collectively describe their experiences enacting resilience as a leadership practice?

Theoretical Framework

In terms of theoretical perspectives, this research utilized appropriate leadership and communication models. According to (Halladay & Tytel, 2011), complex adaptive systems account for the interaction between the entrepreneurial and the administrative space to create the enabling space. Leadership as practice (Raelin, 2011) was used to unpack resilience in the research population's everyday practices. Leadership as practice perspective suggests that leadership evolves as people carry out day-to-day activities. It involves taking action to solve problems, regardless of occupying a traditional leadership position; therefore, leadership is framed as being socially constructed, emergent and collective in nature. The communication theoretical orientation to be used in the study is the muted group theory by Ardener (2005), which accounts for the intricate communicative strategies found in the narratives. Ardener explains that women often ignore and refuse the right to speak. This refusal is where the theory

gets the paradigm of muteness. Within the paradigm, women are still recognized as catalysts for shaping society, even in a patriarchal setting. nego-feminism by Nnaemeka (2004) and Indigenous feminism, as propounded by scholars like Ramirez (2007), account for the feminist perspectives in the data.

Methodology

The qualitative research method was employed as my research design for this study. The research method is suitable because it is exploratory. Specifically, I used the narrative inquiry qualitative method for my research. As Bhattacharya (2017) states, “researchers who use narrative inquiry are interested in understanding how people articulate their life experiences in the structure of a story. The story's structure becomes the analysis points for a narrative inquiry-driven qualitative researcher”. Kim (2015) suggests that the story's structure becomes the point of a narrative inquiry-driven qualitative analysis. Smith et al. (2019) present the principles of indigenized scholarship which were adopted in this research. They include positionality and relationships, ethical engagement, decolonizing research practices, cultural competency and community collaboration. Decolonization, as a process in Indigenous studies, involves acknowledging historical injustices, addressing power imbalances, and working towards more equitable and inclusive spaces that recognize and respect the Indigenous ways of knowing and being (Smith et al., 2019). For the analysis of my data, I focused on thematic narrative analysis. By recollecting and re-enacting these stories, people make meanings out of their lives. The stories were analyzed through inductive procedures to extract the storyline's themes (Flick, 2009).

Operationalization of concepts

In this section, I will define the key terms often used in this study and their contextual meanings.

Resilience

Connor et al. (2003) state that resilience embodies the personal qualities that enable one to thrive in the face of adversity. Resilience has been defined differently by various scholars. Resilience is the ability to regain balance after exposure to an adverse event. It is not an end state of being but a process of adaptation and growth within a risky landscape (Southwick 2017). As conceptualized by Ledesma (2014), resilience in leadership captures how an individual thrives in the face of adversity. The individual who thrives is often vulnerable but transforms from vulnerability to strength in adversity. Fleming & Ledogar (2008) state that there must be the presence of adversity for the term, ‘resilience’, to be used, as this differentiates it from normal or normative development.

Gender

Many scholars have tried to define gender through the lens of sex in society, but one thing remains: gender and sex are two distinct constructs. The World Health Organization (2019) defines gender as the characteristics of people that are a function of social construction based on roles, norms and behaviors, and relationships with each other. It is seen as the opportunities associated with being male or female or one of a range of other identities that do not correspond to the established ideas of male and female. Wei et al. (2024) explain that Indigenous people have a social construct of gender. According to them, gender relates to the state of being man or woman in line with the sex of male and female. They further state that these distinct features led to the understanding of masculinity and femininity among Indigenous people (Wei et al., 2024,

p. 3). The gender focus of my study is on women. In the context of this study inclusion criterion, a woman is any woman from the target population who is older than 18 years and who has suffered some form of displacement. In this research, women, female are used interchangeably as they are near-synonyms.

Minoritization

Here, ‘minoritize ’is used to reflect a situation where people, persons, or groups are made subordinate to a more dominant group, especially in migration situations (Navas et al., 2021). To be minoritized also means being pushed to boundaries beyond one’s control. Although women make up most refugees, they are mostly minoritized in the decision-making processes. Minoritization often involves power tussles between a dominant group and minoritized groups who do not agree with the terminology because of being seen as subordinate to a dominant group (Navas et al., 2021). In my study, minoritization is conceptualized in terms of the minoritized groups, in this case, women. The term ‘minoritized’ may not be due to a lack of number or numerical strength. However, it is due to the social, cultural, political hierarchies and other policies that negatively impact women).

Marginalization

Marginalization refers to the state of being marginalized. Marginality is conceptualized by its transient usage, as described by Yuddice (1989). For this study, marginalization refers to a group of people who are ‘in-between and in-between’ in a particular society because of their status (Thomassen, 2014). In this state, the group is often viewed to be the ‘other’. Varghese and Kumar (2022) explain that otherness shapes the identity formation of marginalized individuals and communities as they navigate the experience of being perceived as different or "other" within society. Marginalized groups may develop collective identities in response to their

marginalization, drawing on shared experiences, values, and cultural practices to assert their sense of belonging and resilience. From a more critical viewpoint, otherness intersects with other axes of identity, such as race, gender, sexuality, and class, to produce complex and intersecting forms of marginalization (Varghese and Kumar, 2022). In my study, marginalization refers to a group often positioned as inferior or subordinate to the dominant group (Fangen, 2007).

Power

Power is a phenomenon where one person or organization has control over other people (Betts, 2011). This is viewed from the angle of the policies that promote or demote forced migration. Every forced human movement is aided and abetted by power relations and interplay. In this study, power is viewed from the point of view of who gets what and how they get it. In migration, some of the political push factors have been listed as policy changes, civil wars, terrorism, economic policies, and others.

Indigeneity

Paradies (2006) notes that the definition of indigeneity varies but largely depends on how Indigenous people want to define it. Still, it captures a link between the people, the territory they occupy and their culture. Guenther (2006) states that indigeneity pertains to the intrinsic connection that a person might have to a specific land or territory where they have historical land rights, roots and cultural practices. Indigenous people are often considered the original inhabitants of a place, which shows in their distinct relationship with the land, ancestry, and environment. Indigeneity encompasses a sense of belonging and identity and involves political, social, and legal dimensions related to self-determination, rights to land and resources, cultural preservation, and autonomy. In the context of this research Indigenous people Saifullah (2021) states that historically, Indigenous people experienced domination, marginalization, and

discrimination. Such oppression still exists in different parts of the world. It is for this reason that we have movements such as Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and the Bakassi Youth Development Forum.

Tribal Sovereignty

Cobb (2005) explains that tribal sovereignty resonates with the concept of sovereignty of nations; this involves a nation's determination to self-govern and to control all aspects of its society. Tribal nations are culturally distinct groups with recognizable governments and defined territories (Cobb, 2005, p. 118). As Cobb (2005) further explains, the sovereignty of tribal nations is inherent and ancient. I use this conceptualization to underscore the determination of tribal nations, also known as Indigenous people, to self-govern and control all aspects of their culture without interference from an external force. It also includes the determination of Indigenous nations to own and defend their territorial boundaries.

Migrants

The UN Migration/International Organization for Migration affirms there exists no universally agreed-upon definition of a migrant. However, Shaw (1975) defines migration as the relative movement of an individual over a significant distance. The common lay understanding defines a migrant as 'a ' person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons.

Refugee

Whittaker (2006) explains that according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, a specialized body of the United Nations that was given the task of defining who a refugee is, a refugee is defined as,

“A person who is outside his/her country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of persecution because of his/ her race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution.” This implies that refugees crossed territorial boundaries and have the legal status of refugees in their new country. In the context of this research, the Bakassi people sometimes refer to themselves as refugees because they crossed territorial boundaries between Nigeria and Cameroon to return home.

Leadership

Raelin’s (2011) Leadership as Practice (LAP) suggests that leadership evolves as people carry out day-to-day activities. It involves taking action to solve problems regardless of occupying a traditional leadership position. I am framing leadership as how the women assume agency in their daily activities.

Significance of the study

This research is significant because it contributes valuable insights to the existing knowledge on resilience in Indigenous groups, identity, politics of space, and contested or political citizenships. This study is critical because it addresses the marginalization of women's experiences in the resilience of displaced populations. Women bring so much to the home they are parts of and the society where they live and raise their children. Given the reality of their experience, their perspectives are unique, yet it appears that these women are not appreciated or recognized as much as they should.

My project is also important because it helps me understand how to enact leadership in situations of hardship, like the Indigenous peoples. Although several studies have engaged the discourse of leadership, including the insightful work of Ospina and Foldy (2010) on leadership

on the margins, my study will build on these works and critically explore the leadership of marginalized and minoritized women. This study duly explores how Indigenous women navigate the oppressive intricacies of deep-seated patriarchy to lead larger sections of communities and their families.

My research is important because of the context I am adding to leadership as practice among Indigenous people. This research stands on the premise that resilience is a practice of leadership. Moreover, my research will help improve policies that can be created to solve the problems associated with displacement, as initiated by colonialism, violence and conflict, and suggest ways displaced women lead their homes out of such crises. My work stands at the intersection of colonialism, migration, gender-based resilience, leadership, human aggression, terrorism identity, politics of space, violence, and social exclusion. The work will contribute to knowledge by offering a better understanding of the agency of displaced women through understanding their stories and how they intersect ideas of women's experiences. Women's experiences have been sidelined on issues affecting humanity. Women bring in so much to the home. They are a part of the society where they live. Some raise their children; others contribute through social norms/practices. Given the reality of their experiences, their perspectives are unique, yet it appears that women are unreported. My project shed light on how to enact leadership in different times. This work contributes to knowledge by offering a nuanced explication of the agency of spatially displaced women. The study takes an interdisciplinary stance with appropriate insights from related fields. The findings generated offered a mechanism to insightfully reflect on gendered leadership practices and the definition of leadership as a leader-follower relationship (which has already been debunked by Uhl-Bien & Arena 2017) in the context of Indigenous women.

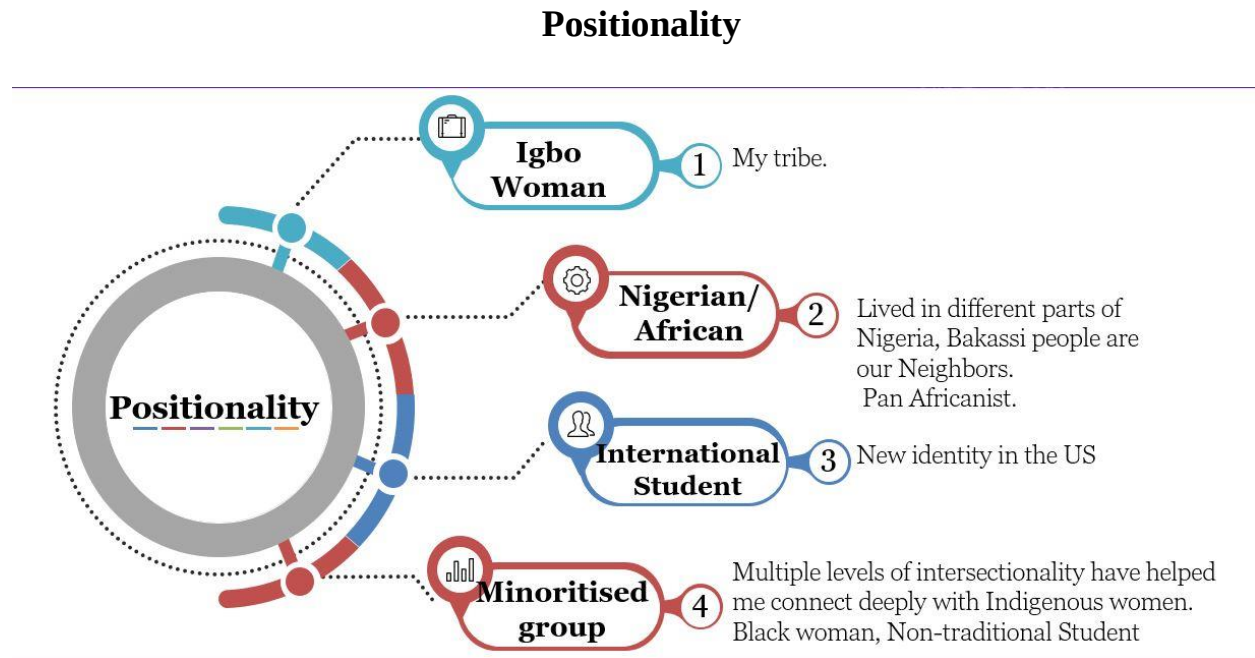
Limitations and Delimitations

In terms of thematic coverage, the study examines the responses of Indigenous women in North American and African. The participants of my study were mainly Native Americans in the United States of America and the Bakassi people in Nigeria, based on the relationships that I have built with them. Indigenous research is relational; extracting information from people you have not built a relationship with is inappropriate. There is the need to conduct research that includes Indigenous people women from different parts of Africa and North America; however, time constraints, as well as funding, were limiting factors for this study. Moreover, colonialism created the international student's category with constructs of movement limitations that could not allow me the time I needed to do this research. I would have preferred more time to do this research, but these constraints are beyond me.

Through relationships in each community, I arranged the interviews for this research, which were conducted virtually via Zoom. While this was not problematic for the interviews conducted in the USA, it was problematic for those conducted in Nigeria. The challenge was due to the often limited and unstable internet connection. I had to ask the participants to turn off their videos so that we could hear each other more clearly. For this reason, I could not see their faces to ascertain their reactions as they told their stories. Moreover, I am neither Native American nor Bakassi, although I am an Indigenous woman. This perspective informs and limits the role I play in this work.

In qualitative research, it is normal to have multiple touch points, there are instances where the quality of interactions, openness of the participants and depth of information shared in one touch point can provide rich data for analysis (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). This approach becomes helpful when dealing with time constraints and limited resources, as evident in this

research. Subedi (2021) asserts that researchers have the autonomy to determine the number of participants, and this is based on the information sought and data saturation.



Massoud (2022) states that stating your positionality as a researcher helps enhance the findings. I have been researching the Bakassi people since 2016, till this time it is about 8 years. I have always had a flair for researching women and humanitarian issues. I am an Igbo woman; the Bakassi people, mostly Efik, are our neighbors. We all belong to the defunct Biafra that lost the Civil War to secede from Nigeria between 1967 and 1970. The offshoot of losing this war is that my people have been politically marginalized in Nigeria and have continued to fight other mild forms of ethnic wars. In fact, history has it that during the Nigerian Biafran civil war, the (then) military head of state, General Yakubu Gowon, promised the Cameroonian president, Paul Biya, that if they allowed Nigeria to enter Biafran via Bakassi, the Cameroonian boundary, he would gift the Cameroonians the oil rich Bakassi Peninsular. As an Igbo girl whose relatives

fought in the war, I have heard several stories about Bakassi; all of these make me well-positioned to do this research.



Figure 1.1: Map showing states in Nigeria.

As a Nigerian woman doing her PhD in the US, I realized that I belong to the Indigenous people member population even though I do not belong to either of the groups I am studying. I am not displaced and have not experienced displacement. However, I have come to realize that as an international student in the US who is also a black woman. These identities embody multiple levels of intersectionality. As an International student, I had to navigate time constraints

as colonialism led to the creation of constructs of movement with limitations. I am minoritized in the US; minoritized not just because of number but because my population has been minoritized by the system so much so that sometimes I feel as if I am invisible. In doing this research, I've had such personal encounters with Native American women, and we connect to those moments of powerlessness. Indigenous people experience marginalization too! With that in mind, I think I am well-positioned to do this research as a minoritized woman. Before I came to the US, I never knew that I was black. I really did not know the baggage that comes with being black, being a minority, and then being a woman. Nevertheless, I have come to see that this is baggage, and it is not just me, my children, who did not choose to be born, who did not choose their biological or racial identities, will now have to carry on the baggage that comes with it, and most of it is about negative stereotypes and treatment. In doing this research, I spoke with minoritized Indigenous women about their resilience. I observed that women tended to connect more with my experiences in a unique way that I felt was being seen. My positionality in doing this research is that women understand women's problems better. It is intuitive, but it may not be empirical. It's hard to explain in empirical words, but I do not deny that such ways of knowing exist.

I like to describe myself as a scholar-practitioner. By this, I mean I am a researcher who likes to get her feet dirty while implementing community initiatives and impacting the development space. I have over 12 years of experience in community development in Nigeria, focusing on providing potable water in rural communities and empowering women/youths. When I flew over 6,500 miles from Nigeria to the US on a 31-hour flight with my family, I recognized the privilege that education provided me with; our people say that when you send a child abroad, they are expected to learn something that will translate to development home. I understand the responsibility that my knowledge is only meaningful if it can lead to

transformation back home, mainly because Sub-Saharan is lagging behind in development when compared to other countries in the world. I approached my research intending to learn something new but had a challenge. I have been following the Bakassi case and remained connected with the Bakassi people so I could deduce the findings if I intend to continue that line of research by expanding my research master's thesis endeavor. Moreover, I am a nursing mother. I had a baby during this time of my PhD. Keeping up with the update on Bakassi, coupled with the stress of motherhood and graduate school as an international student, was depressing, as I heard their despicable situation had not changed yet. I needed some good news to keep me motivated to forge ahead, and this search led me to the Indigenous people in the USA. I received emails from faculty members and read their email signatures that state that Kansas State University was built on stolen land, and then I listened to the K-State land grant acknowledgments. I picked an interest in Indigenous people to learn from their experiences because I was intrigued by their resilience in the colonial system, and I was encouraged to learn about their experiences to utilize the new knowledge back home in Nigeria and Africa. I saw many similarities between the Indigenous people in North America and our people in Africa. I thought it would be great to research that, and I thought it was essential to conduct research bringing together Indigenous people's experiences in Africa and North Africa. Therefore, I challenged myself to study the Indigenous women in North America; with my committee member, Dr. Alex Red Corn, I connected to some Native American women, who vouched to introduce me to other participants. It took a while before they responded, but they eventually did, and in a short time, we bonded well. My informal meetings with Mrs. Laverne and Dr. Bolton greatly encouraged me and further motivated me to forge ahead. I was also excited to hear from them that the research findings would benefit Native American women's student organizations. I went on to do a pilot

study of this research. I also took a class on an independent study on Native Americans to equip myself with the necessary competency and knowledge to conduct this research since I was well knowledgeable about the African side aspect of this research already, so there was a need to balance it.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has carefully introduced my study on the narratives of resilience by the Indigenous women of Native America and Africa and this can unravel the several intricacies of women's practices of leadership on the margins. The chapter has presented a general background for this study and situates European exploration and the subsequent colonization of the Americas and Africa as a significant factor that led to the displacement of Indigenous people from their ancestral homeland. This could have been because of eviction or arbitrary boundary creation in the Americas and Africa. The chapter has further stressed the gap my work seeks to fill in the academic literature on resilience and the nature of leadership among Indigenous women. The chapter has also underscored the significance of my study and operationalized the terms I will use in this study. Understanding the concepts in the context of my research is essential to situate this work.

Next, Chapter Two will focus on the literature review. In it, I will discuss relevant studies in the requisite areas and explain the theoretical framework that will guide this work. Chapter Three will account for the methodology I use. Chapter Four will present the findings from the data derived from the research. Finally, Chapter Five will include my discussion, recommendations, and summary.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

This chapter presents reviews of existing studies, concepts, and the theoretical framework of this study. The chapter introduces and extensively discusses the gendered perspective of the research; elaborates on colonialism in the Americas and Africa, and the impacts of European colonialism on the Americas and Africa. In this review, I carefully examine indigeneity in North America, tribal sovereignty in North America and local government administration in Nigeria.

Gendered Perspectives

Scholars such as Das (1996) and Davies (2007) have observed that women experience displacement crises differently because they are cultural transmitters and biological reproducers of a nation whose bodies carry meanings. Hence, this research will focus on the Indigenous women who have a history of forced removal. Mama (2017) argues that it takes integrity and courage to listen across boundaries and to hear and respect the multiple languages of gender and sexuality, which is marked by the striations of other dimensions of power and status. It is further stated that unless we link collective organizing with coherent feminist consciousness, informed by sound theories of gender oppression and change, we can quickly become subject to identity politics that will keep us divided (Mama, 2017). By strengthening feminist consciousness, we strengthen the collective “will to change” expressed through activism. In addition, it is further argued that feminist writing and publishing is a crucial route to conscientization (Freire, 1970). As Freire (1970) submits, conscientization captures developing critical consciousness or awareness of social, political and economic realities, particularly among marginalized or oppressed groups. This critical consciousness is at the core of Indigenous feminism in the Americas and Africa (Green and Bourgeois, 2017; Mama, 2017).

Green (2019) submits that many Indigenous women have been actively contributing to the political and social activism of Indigenous groups, through feminist analysis methods, without identifying as feminists in many instances. These women, as Green and Bourgeois (2017) explain, sought to claim rights for aboriginal women in their communities. Many of these aboriginal women were understood to have suffered from racist and sexist oppressions, which are brought to bear on the united category (Green & Bourgeois, 2017, p.14). As Guerrero (2003) had earlier stated, many Indigenous women developed the will to battle sexist oppressions in their communities. This is reactionary to the practice of the early Western feminists whose activities were limited as it was not concerned with racialized oppression of marginalized groups. Rather, it challenged men's sexist behavior toward women in society (Guerrero, 2003). While the Indigenous women activists consciously sought this balance in their communities, they rarely identified as feminists (Green & Bourgeois, 2017, p.14). Yet the works of these women activists have opened the discussion for the gendered perspective of my research. Indigenous women in Africa have made a conscious effort to push feminist activities in a patriarchal society.

In the post-independence era, hundreds of thousands of Africans have received advanced levels of education and training, feminism remains unsatisfactory despite the astuteness of the feminist intellectuals. As Mama (2017) explains, building solid and independent feminist movements is essential for the liberation of Africa. The general push for African feminism involves the drive for gender equality and explicitly overcoming sex and gender-based oppressions in African societies. However, this push can only be achieved through the conscientization of Africans. According to Mama (2017), this is made possible through feminist scholarship. While Mama (2017) identifies the unsatisfactory status of African feminists, she

opines that publishing and pushing the intellectual works of African feminists can spur the necessary growth for African feminism. This is summarized in Mama's words thus:

Feminist Africa is guided by a profound commitment to transforming gender hierarchies in Africa and seeks to redress injustice and inequality in its content and design, and by its open-access and continentally targeted distribution strategy. Feminist Africa targets gender researchers, students, educators, women's organizations, and feminist activists throughout Africa. It works to develop a feminist intellectual community by promoting and enhancing African women's intellectual work. (p.2).

Mama's (2017) position provides a gendered perspective on understanding women in African scholarship. This perspective is necessary for my study as I will engage feminist writings during my research.

Importantly, gendered perspectives in research involve engagement with feminist writings and critical engagement to unpack the nuances of power at play. Regarding engagement, Berger's (2011) work says we should look at different spheres such as political, social, moral, and even civic engagements. This research was hinged on Berger's (2011) submission. Berger's distinctions among the different kinds of engagements were not present in the pre-colonial settings of the African Indigenous communities. The engagements obtainable in Africa were holistic and inseparable; the political, civic, and social engagements were fused without any clear distinction. This is what is obtainable in many Western societies. Yet, the elements highlighted by Berger's forms of engagements are present in the African space.

In this work, the term, 'engage', will be examined as espoused by Berger (2011). As Berger (2011) puts it, "The sense of 'engage in' implies an activity without attention, the sense of 'engage by' implies attention without activity, and the sense of 'engage with' implies activity as well as attention". Berger reasoned that 'engagement' implies close communication. More particularly, 'engagement' implies activity, focus, an expenditure of energy and a sense of

direction. This statement may mean that, even among the Indigenous women, interactions were necessary to bring about any engagement. Still, it has been observed, over time, in 2018, Azubuike (2018) My research study has analyzed civic engagement, with political, social, and moral strands, and augmented them by civil engagement, to test Berger's submission on how it will help us think. In the light of Berger's critique, civic engagement can be likened to community engagement, but most people have misunderstood political engagement to mean attendance to political functions. He categorically stated that every civic engagement must have political, social, and moral strands to achieve its aim (Berger, 2011). We must also find out which strand of engagement promotes democracy. On the issue of Indigenous women, in order to achieve political engagement, people resort to coercion, such as forced voting or exchange of food for votes and feeding programs among the Indigenous women. This can be seen even among the Indigenous people in the Bakassi camp and their relationship with the political class. This can also be seen in Green and Bourgeois's description (2017). According to them, engagements between the 'aboriginal women' and the society are affected by sexist oppressions, with political engagements still at the lowest.

Resilience by Indigenous women can be built if there is a meeting point between civic, political, social and moral engagements. Each standalone engagement, though it may support democracy, cannot help the cause of the Indigenous women. It is, therefore, recommended that an intermarriage of the four strands of engagement, coupled with the right democratic processes, can help to strengthen the resilience and coping strategies adopted by Indigenous women.

The research will explore the resilience of women as they negotiate their identities as people who have been displaced. Scholars such as Das (1996) and Davies (2007) have observed

that women experience displacement crises differently because they are cultural transmitters and procreators of a nation whose bodies carry meanings. By cultural transmitters, it means that women as primary caregivers, pass on tradition and culture to their children as custodians. It is, therefore, very evident that displacement impacts the status of women differently. In some cases, it led to their emancipation; in other words, it made them more vulnerable and marginalized. This study has offered insights into their displacement by drawing extensively from the interviews conducted from this study.

European Colonialism of North America

The period of European exploration and settlement in America marked a transformative era in world history which was characterized by encounters between diverse cultures, the establishment of enduring colonies, and the loss of Indigenous nations' sovereignty. Beginning in the late 15th century, the European explorers, driven by a quest for new trade routes, wealth and religious conversion, embarked on an eastward route to India across the Atlantic Ocean. As Braudel (1992) explains, the period witnessed a flurry of maritime activities as the European powers sought to expand their influence and access new territories. This quest was led by European explorers like Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, and Ferdinand Magellan through the expeditions which were launched to navigate uncharted waters and establish direct trade routes to Asia. This led to the contact of the European explorers with the people of America. The contact with the people of America, first perceived to be a trade relation, later resulted to the violent colonialism of the land and people of Americas by the Europeans (Bang, 2017).

With the established contact with the people of the Americas, European powers scrambled to stake their claims on the 'New World' to the detriment of the Indigenous peoples of

the Americas. Kupperman (2007) explains that the European powers, especially Spain, Portugal, France, and England, competed fiercely to control lucrative trade routes and valuable resources and, beyond this, for colonies. For instance, the Jamestown project in Virginia symbolized the presence of English in America. The encounter and subsequent presence of European countries in the America significantly affected Native Americans and their sovereign Nations. While Braudel (1992) explains that the contact led to the introduction of innovative technologies, crops, and animals to the Americas, it also led to diseases that affected Indigenous populations in the Americas (van Setima, 1976; Braudel, 1992; Lees and Bang, 2023). Beyond diseases, the European settlers declared war and displaced many existing civilizations of Indigenous peoples in the quest to acquire their territories (Lees and Bang, 2023).

The eventual defeat of the Native Americans, which was largely due to the military might of the Europeans, and their exposure to disease (Braudel, 1992), led to violent colonialism of the Americas and the subsequent attempt to immerse the cultures of the Indigenous peoples into the European culture (Bang, 2017). This conquest has led to a significant change in global history marked by curiosity, ambition, conflict and the establishment of colonies. The establishment of colonies laid the foundation for the emergence of new societies, cultures and identities, on the one hand, and bitter waves of displacement and the attendant resilient struggle for identity maintenance on the other hand. While interactions between European settlers and Indigenous peoples shaped the course of history in profound and lasting ways, the understanding of this period shows the complexities and contradictions inherent in the exploration and colonization of new lands and the enduring legacies of those who ventured into the unknown in search of adventure, fortune and glory. On the other hand, the understanding of this period shows the extent of the reduction and destruction of the booming civilizations of the hitherto existing

Indigenous groups in the Americas. In the next part of this review, I critically explore the Native Americans in America and carefully place their colonial experience in the historical context of the continent.

Indigenous Nations in North America

In this section, I review the literature on Indigenous nations in North America. I selected four nations, based on my interactions with members of some of these nations and the literature previewing relevant previous studies on Native Americans. However, there is a need to explain the concept of land and its significance to the Indigenous people of America. Land is sacred for Indigenous people and core to the way they live (Lees and Bang, 2023). Land, as well as the natural environment of many Indigenous people, is important in the learning process of their communities. Without their lands, their communities are not complete and without the communities, the Indigenous people are practically denied their existence as a group of people (Lees and Bang, 2023). Understanding this importance of land further reveals the anomalies and injustices of colonization when the lands of the Indigenous people were taken from them and allotments to new reserves were made (Lees and Bangs 2023; Marceau et al. 2020). As I review the four nations, their lands are well described as one of the marks of the nations' sovereignty.

I begin with Kauanui (2008) who examines how blood racialization constructs the Hawaiian identity as measurable and encapsulated within a spectrum. Racialization is described as the process by which racial meaning is delineated as ideologies measurable in terms of blood quantum (Kauanui, 2008). The argument put forward is that the blood quantum racial paradigmatic approach can be seen as a proxy for ancestry which portends grave consequences for the Indigenous people socio-economically and socio-politically while downplaying genealogy. Kauanui's work explores the struggles for self-determination and foregrounds the

challenges encountered by the Kanaka Maoli people and the Native Hawaiians since historic times.

Kauanui (2008) explains that the Kanaka Maoli people, commonly referred to as Native Hawaiians, have a rich history and cultural heritage deeply rooted in the islands of Hawaii. The ancestors of the Kanaka Maoli are believed to have migrated from other parts of Polynesia, navigating the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean using traditional navigation techniques. They settled in the Hawaiian Islands for over a millennium, bringing with them their language, culture, and customs. The traditional Hawaiian society was organized around extended family units known as 'Ohana,' led by chiefs or Ali'i who held hereditary leadership roles. The land was divided into Ahupua'a, the self-sustaining land divisions that provided for the community's needs, from mountain to sea (Kauanui, 2008). Spiritually, The Kanaka Maoli practiced a polytheistic religion centered around worshipping gods and goddesses associated with natural elements such as land, sea, and sky. They also revered their ancestors and performed rituals and ceremonies to honor them and seek their guidance. The contact with Europeans had profound impacts on the Hawaiian society and lifestyle. The contact, as Cook et al. (2003) explain, changed the spirituality, well-being, and customs of the Kanaka Maoli people. Lyon (2017) explains that the Kanaka Maoli people continue to navigate the complexities of living in a modern world while preserving and honoring their ancestral heritage.

With a strong background in postcolonial and Indigenous studies, Kauanui's work critically examines the effects of US imperialism, settler colonialism and colonialism itself in the Islands of Hawaii. The diachronic account of Hawaii's colonization is deftly recounted right from its interactions with the Western powers to the annexation of the island by the United States, which resulted in the loss of Native sovereignty and the marginalization of the Kanaka Maoli

people. The first intervention the book provides is in the field of Hawaiian and political activism. The author remarks that blood quantum is a colonial project geared towards alienation and dispossession. Blood quantum does not allow for the building of their political power because it is about exclusion, which eventually reduces Hawaiians to a racial minority. The second intervention is that it situates the issue of blood quantum within the field of Native studies and this often brings up debates about what makes a person Indigenous and whether or not the Indigenous use of blood quantum is a membership criterion for determining the accommodation of the citizenship in the US Federal policy. The third intervention is in critical race theory. Critical race theory, which has been expanded to include Latinos and Asian Americans (in the subspecialty of tribal critical race theory), offers what the author calls the singular logic in the construction of 'whiteness'. The book allows the author to write about her people following the United States Congress 'classification of "Native Hawaiians" as persons "with, at least, one-half blood quantum of individuals inhabiting the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778" in the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) of 1921. Since then, this "blood logic" has calcified into Hawaii's legal system. A thorough study of this federal law, which links a person's Hawaiian cultural identity to a blood type, as found in Kauanui's (2008), was developed as a means of undermining the sovereignty of the Native Hawaiians or Kanaka Maoli, in the opinion of the author. According to the 50 percent guideline, intermarriage "dilutes" the population of Native Hawaiians who are officially recognized by the state. Therefore, blood quantum puts Hawaiians in the category of a racial minority. The author criticizes the race measurement imposed by the US government on the Indigenous people of Hawaii; this is a criticism that has had far-reaching legal and cultural effects.

Another work reviewed is Mawani (2010) who extensively explores the cross-racial encounter between the Metlakatla, a first nation community of British Columbia, and other migrant communities. Mawani states that “less interested in producing a conventional historical narrative and more concerned with navigating and building a conceptual argument about the plurality of racism in the colonial contact zone, one that brings histories of aboriginal-European contact into dialogue with those of Chinese migration” (p.30). Specifically, she asserts “that placing aboriginal European contact and Chinese migration in the same conceptual lens may illuminate the variegated forms, patterns and rhythms that underpinned colonial encounters and the racial epistemologies and modes of regulation that contoured imperial terrains” (p.7) A variety of racial fears that characterized colonialism in British Columbia were formed by interactions between European colonists, Chinese migrants, Aborigines and mixed-race communities. Metlakatla is a first nation community located in British Columbia, Canada. Metlakatla is situated on the northern coast of British Columbia, near Prince Rupert, on the Tsimshian Peninsula (MacDonald, 1990). The community occupies the traditional Tsimshian territory near the mouth of the Skeena River. Metlakatla has a rich history dating back thousands of years, with the Tsimshian people having resided there for generations. The community has strong cultural traditions, including art, dance and storytelling, which are integral to the Tsimshian identity.

In the late 19th century, a group of Tsimshian people led by the missionary, William Duncan, migrated from Alaska Panhandle to British Columbia and established the community of Metlakatla (Usher, 1969). This relocation was prompted by a desire to establish a Christian mission and create a more self-sufficient and economically stable community. Metlakatla, as a Christian mission, led to significant changes in the community, including adopting Christianity,

Western education and European-style housing and agriculture practices. This led to the establishment of the first church in Kincolith, which was a part of the focus of Mawani (2010).

Manawi (2010) explains that essential connections between the histories of migration and dispossession, by concentrating on these sites of contact, are brought to the fore in the book which focuses on the legal and spatial tactics of control that were employed to limit inter-racial interactions by the missionaries, Native American agents and law enforcement agents. Mawani exemplifies how the creation of legal racial truths and governance structures that promoted the racial politics of modern settler countries was influenced by interracial proximity in one colonial contact zone. "Colonial proximities" thoroughly examines the historical background of colonial interactions (Manawi. 2010). The book's background highlights the different forces that shaped these contacts, not limited to geopolitical dynamics and economic reasons. It also examines the negative legacies of colonialism by illuminating the power structures and tactics of resistance used at that period. That introduction section lays the groundwork for comprehending the other significant ideas covered in the study, including the importance of intersectionality and proximity in comprehending colonialism. This work focuses on how colonialism influenced and still influences societies. To understand the nuances of colonial connections and their effects, it investigates the points where power dynamics, proximity and postcolonial theory intersect. Thus, past colonial contacts are explored to examine how they have affected modern nations throughout time. It also delves into the power struggles and the tactics used by oppressed groups to resist power play. Decolonization and potential avenues for dismantling colonial structures are discussed. Manawi (2010) explains the decolonization activities that have characterized the Metlakatla community despite the colonial contacts that they experienced. Manawi (2010) also submits that the present decolonization process can build a future devoid of power struggles

among the various groups of the Metlakatla First Nation. Through a thorough analysis of these collages of themes and discoveries, "Colonial proximities" offers a profound comprehension of the enduring impact of colonialism and the possibility of the transformation of those impacts through revolutionary means.

Washburn (1989) provides insight into the Navajo/ Hopi tribes through the land and reservation cases in the United States. I would like to give a brief background of the two tribes before a review of Washburn's study. The Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe are two distinct Indigenous nations in southwestern United States, each with its own history, culture, and government. As Washburn (1989) highlights, the Navajo Nation, also referred to as Dinétah, stands as the largest federally recognized tribe within the United States. The Navajo people inhabit the Four Corners region of the southwestern United States, encompassing portions of present-day Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado. Their culture is built on the values of family, community, and tradition with the language, Diné bizaad, which is prominent among the tribal members. The Navajo people are agrarian in nature and share a deeply rooted spiritual connection to their land. Governed by its own executive, legislative, and judicial branches, the Navajo Nation operates under the leadership of the Navajo Nation Council and President (Spruhan, 2007).

The Hopi Tribe, situated in northeastern Arizona, stands as a sovereign Native American nation with a history spanning thousands of years (Washburn, 1989). The Hopi people engage in time-honored traditions such as religious ceremonies, artistic expression, and pottery craftsmanship. Their society operates on a clan-based structure, with governance traditionally relying on consensus decision-making and the guidance of revered religious leaders known as

kikmongwi. While many Hopi individuals still converse in their Native language, Hopilavayi, English has become a prominent lingua among members of the tribe. The Hopi tribe is governed by the Tribal Council and Chairman.

However, like many tribal nations, the Hopi and the Navajo face challenges of economic development and natural resource management to the preservation of cultural heritage and reservation allocations. While the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe are separate entities with distinct cultures and governments, they share a deep connection to their ancestral lands. This was the thrust of the study of Washburn (1989).

The research and documentation of Washburn (1989) adopted a historical analysis, ethnographic approach and narrative discourse to bring out the different dangers of anthropological interventions in the lives of the Native Indians. The study is hinged on the concept of advocacy by the American Bar Association which emphasizes that one does not need to perjure to help a client. The study was carried out as a way of showing that advocacy is an anthropological approach to be agreed upon by the collaborating parties. In his commentary on the "dangers of anthropological intervention in the affairs of the People's anthropologists' study," Washburn lists three "ethical issues" raised by the activities of certain anthropologists in the Hopi-Navajo relocation dispute. One, anthropologists tend to intervene in the affairs of sovereign institutions as governments. Two, they intervened almost entirely on the side of the Navajo nation. Three, they serve as advocates, providing a narrow perspective of the dispute through "ignorance or suppression of data" that supports the tribe they are opposing. We are unable to ascertain with evidence that Washburn made a convincing case that any of these three charges involve ethical violations. Since he deals jointly with the last of the two issues, the responses

cannot be neatly segmented according to his three major allegations. This study is relevant as it sheds light on how anthropologists intervene in the affairs of relocated Natives. It buttresses why anyone should avoid drawing conclusions from strongly held personal opinions.

Besides, in a public hearing report on the impact of the Navajo-Hopi Settlement Act of 1974 by the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission, Washburn (1989) argues that the US Government, in the course of settling a land dispute that began with a feud among three white men residing on Hopi and Navajo lands, decided to draw boundaries that separated these Indigenous nations, supposedly to manage better the Christianization and education of a slice of the Hopi population. It was further argued that the same social, economic, and environmental conditions that the Indigenous nations had in the pre-relocation era persisted on a more aggravated scale during the relocations (Washburn, 1989).

A number of lessons can be learnt from this relocation. It shows us that, in spite of the conditions the displaced are subjected to, they remained resilient. Like the weathered warrior returning from war, exhausted and wounded, they returned to their roots where they found the strength and wisdom to forge ahead as their identity was bolstered. The forced relocation of the Diné families was and remains a violation of the human rights of the relocates. The study was carried out as a way of showing that forceful relocation has adverse effects on the relocated human beings as it may predispose them to vices. Significantly, it proves that forceful relocation may be a violation of human rights. The Relocation Act did not protect the human rights of the Diné. It does appear that the Act was structured to allow the corporate mining companies to exploit the valuable subsurface minerals that belonged to the Indigenous nations. The Relocation Act has a long and twisted history that has precipitated many debates and legislations such that

the Congress members no longer support it. Thus, the Navajo nation opposed the sudden withdrawal of the federal government and demanded the Congress to finish the relocation of the Diné families to the satisfaction of the Navajo nation's government and, more importantly, to the people. While much focus was given to Congress and the federal budgeting process to "fix" relocation and other Diné-federal government obligations, a group of Diné leaders began to engage in the global discussion on Indigenous rights in the United Nations. This also makes the study relevant to my research as it exposes the process of legal deliberation on human rights for those who have been relocated. The map below shows the Navajo Hopi reservation land.

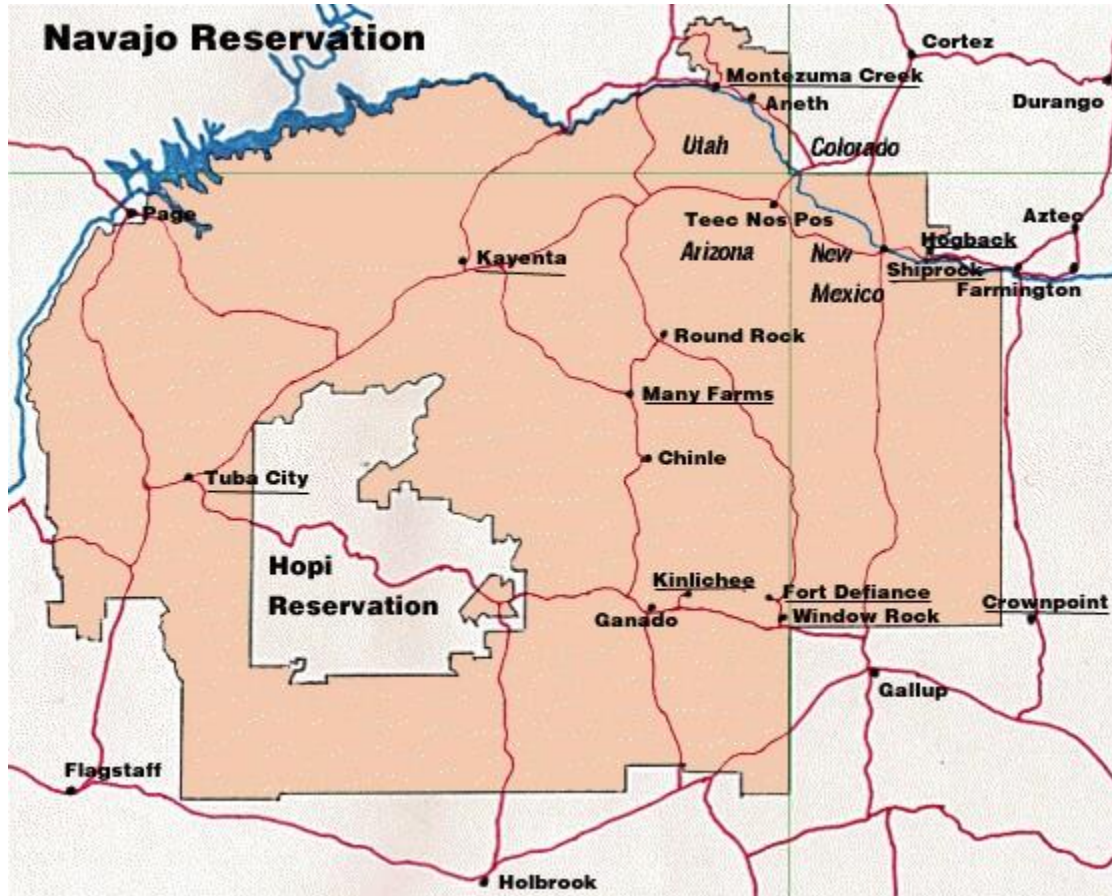


Figure 2.1: Navajo Hopi Reservation Area Map. Source :
<https://crossingworlds.org/support-for-hopis-during-coronavirus-emergency/navajo-hopi-map/>

In Brugge (1994)'s ethnohistory, the author ponders several reasons that mostly boil down to conspiracy theories. The most popular among these is that the energy companies plotted the Navajo relocation to gain access to mineral resources. But Brugge's principal thesis is similarly conspiratorial and somewhat incoherent. His contention is that courts and the government have ill-treated the Navajos because of the negative stereotypes accorded to nomads and raiders, whereas the Hopis have been favored as a model minority due to their positive image as peaceful town dwellers. Furthermore, the study indicates that historical accounts of Navajo raids on Hopi (or other Pueblos) are simply stereotypical. For example, in 1869, old stereotypes were relieved when it was said that the Navajos "plundered" the Hopis. The overall picture was clearly one of the Navajos as inherently violent and belligerent beings that prey on the virtuous and hapless Hopis. Such a stereotype is pervasive and reflective of the propagandistic intentions of the Arizona politicians. Prejudice and bigotry, as exemplified and manipulated by the Hopi people's, attorney John S. Boyden and the Hopi Tribal Council, resulted in unabashed victimization of Navajos in the Healing Decision and Settlement Act. After two chapters of the too familiar historical background, Brugge mainly describes a series of events in the immediate background of *Healing v. Jones* (which divided the 1882 Executive Order Hopi Reservation into a Hopi area and a larger Hopi-Navajo "joint-use area"), and the court decision's effects up to the Settlement Act of 1974 (which split the joint-use area into Hopi and Navajo sections and mandated the relocation of those on the wrong side of the partition line). Most of the text is a personally inflected recitation of meetings, court hearings and the assemblage of testimonies. This is both the strength and weakness of the work. Some of the details, presented chronologically, are very interesting for experts. Nevertheless, even for a specialist, the sheer level of minutiae in what reads like unedited minutes and field journals can

be mind-numbing to the extent of blurring the clarity of the bigger picture. The study tries to show how the Native Indians were relocated from their lands and the challenges they went through to maintain their ancestral lands as seen in figure one.

For much of the important historic period, the Navajo economy was primarily pastoral and done in an environment unfavorable to high livestock densities. The rise of the "rico" system in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries produced ever-expanding herds and stock wealth became a diagnostic Navajo value. These are all well-established facts of the ethno-historic and ethnographic records, as are raids on Pueblo and Hispano villages for livestock, and a gradual pattern of westward Navajo migration from the eighteenth century.

Surely, these demographic and economic factors, together with the pressure by the United States Army in the 1850s and 1860s and the American political economy, thereafter, require some examination in any serious effort to explain the land dispute. Yet Brugge ignores this critical background. He substitutes it instead with a revisionist ethno-history that reduces factual records to stereotypes. Even if there were some enmities between Hopis and Navajos as Brugge (1994) seems to argue, those belonged to the distant past and have no current implications. In a 1994 BIA survey of Hopi crop-pests, several farmers reported that, as for a long time, a major threat to their crops was not caused by nature but man, especially the thefts by the Navajos. Likewise, Hopi accounts of continued cattle rustling by Navajos were not uncommon during the fieldwork. While Brugge's perspective may dismiss these as mere stereotypes, there is no gainsaying that such a possibility cannot simply be ruled out without any sufficient evidence, both historical and anthropological.

Incorporating this study into the body of literature relevant to my current research is crucial because of its direct relevance. However, it's essential to delve into the role of blood quantum in shaping Native American identity. The following section will thoroughly examine blood quantum as a criterion for determining the identity and citizenship of numerous Native American nations which is called Indian Nations in the United States of America.

Blood Quantum in the Identity-making of Native Americans

The question of identity has been a major discourse amongst many tribes of the Indian nations that were incorporated into the United States through conquest and malignant treaties. This discourse is significant for several reasons, but I will highlight two main reasons. In explaining the origin of the quantum blood in identity-making among the Indian tribes, Spruhan (2007) highlighted the very reason for the significance of the blood quantum, which is to determine the membership of a particular tribe among the Indian nations and underscore their rights to reservation allotment. Secondly, this is significant because the discourse of blood quantum in determining the identity of Native Americans has become divisive among many groups. Specifically, Ladson-Billings (2021) explains that there must be rigorous efforts in the discussion of race so as not to fall into the pitfalls of racism that have become a major bane in society. What then is blood quantum? How did it originate?

The concept of blood quantum first gained prominence in American public discourse in 1705 with the introduction of the Indian Blood Law in the Colony of Virginia. As Schmidt (2011) explains in his critical review, the Indian Blood Law was started to limit the civil rights Indigenous people could possess in the colony. As such, the half or greater blood quantum became the determinant for citizenship of the Indian nations. This very move was used to segregate and deny the rights of Indians for an extended period filled with treaties. Hagan (1985)

carefully notes that the half/ full blood debate has become intense among many Indian nations, often leading to lawsuits. This is mainly due to the extent of the rights of the Indian people on owning properties (reservation) and in many instances civil rights in the American public spheres.

In explaining the contest of Indian full blood, Hagan (1985) provides several cases justifying this view including the Lower Brule Sioux tribal rolls. In 1912, the United States circuit delivered a judgment that justified the claim of a family being full Indian. The case was ruled in favor of the family because they had one-eighth Indian blood and that was enough for them to be considered full blood status and admitted into the Brule Sioux Indian tribe (Hagan, 1985:311). While the Indian blood was a determinant of Indigenous people's identity, Hagan (1985) further argues that this relatively changed as many non-Indians assumed full citizenships of Indian nations like the Cherokees, Chicksaws, Choctaws and the Seminoles.

The review by Schmidt (2011) confirmed Hagan's submission that Indian identity in the Americas has been fluid in historical passages. This is so because the Indigenous people were taken off their lands in many instances with little civil rights and their identity as Indian First Nation must be proven in the American society to be able to enjoy recognition by the Federal Government of the United States of America. This impression of the Indigenous people by White Settlers could undermine their civil rights in American society (Schmidt, 2011) if their identity is not proved; they could lose the right to the reservations allotted to them and even their tribal rights.

Unfortunately, the Indian Blood Law of 1705 was forced on the Indigenous people of America and White Settlers determined membership based on the darkness of their skin color.

The very first act to distinguish Indigenous people gradually became the means for their identification. Yet, scholars have opined that membership into an Indian nation is mostly a two-way process which includes the blood quantum of the individual and the acceptance of the nation. Although the Federal Acknowledgment Act of 1978 stipulates that full Indian blood to a one-thirty-two of Indian blood is required to be considered a member of any Indian nation. Spruhan (2007) further argues that the extent of Indian blood an individual must possess before being identified as Indian ranges from one tribal law to the other. In the case of the Navajo nation, it is expected that a person must possess one-eighth Indian blood before being considered a citizen of the nation.

The perspectives and research of the research from scholars I reviewed demonstrates that the quantum blood law varies from one Indian nation to the other. This suggests that Indigenous communities had some degree of autonomy in determining their membership criteria. However, their authority was limited by the fact that the Supreme Court or United States Circuit could intervene and make rulings on the definition of who qualifies as an Indian. This shows that, although the Indigenous people are recognized in the United States, there are limitations to their rights. The sovereignty of the Indian nations then falls under the jurisdiction of the federal government. As I will discuss in the next section, the forceful eviction of Indigenous people and the introduction of the boarding school system was an attempt to forcefully assimilate them into the Anglo-American system and undermine their sovereignty.

Forceful Eviction and Boarding School System in North America

Cohen (1953) expresses concerns about the American treatment of the Indian nations as minority groups in the United States of America. Lohmann (2022) reiterates the submission of Cohen by stating that, “like the miner’s canary, the Indians mark the shift from fresh air to

poison gas in our political atmosphere; and our treatment of Indians even more than our treatment of other minorities, reflect the rise and fall of our democratic faith”. This view, as Lohmann (2022) explains, captures the attitude of the federal Indian law concerning Indian lands and the Natives’ quest for environmental justice. In this section, I review literatures that concern the forceful evictions of Indians off their lands and the boarding school system as a means to assimilate Indians.

As Piatt (2021) explains the expansion of the American people led to the forceful eviction and near extermination of the Indigenous Indian nations. Although there were treaties signed by American founding fathers with Indian nations promising them their freedom, Lohmann (2022) explains that these treaties never materialized. Specifically, Lohmann (2022) cited the example of the Seneca chiefs who wrote to George Washington in 1790 asking the American government why they were taking their lands without compensation after they had initially taken most of their ancestral lands as a sign of peace. Although Washington assured them that the promises would be kept, the treaty of Fort Stanwix as the agreement was known became a hoax.

As Lohmann (2022) further highlights, so many Federal laws and expansion to the West Coast were detrimental to the Indigenous people. Treaties were not kept by the Federal government as Indigenous people were forcefully removed from their ancestral land. The height of this forceful removal was depicted in what has become the trail of tears (Sturgis, 2007). Sturgis (2007) explains that the 1836 Treaty of Echota that was ratified by the US Senate led to the voluntary movement of Indian sovereign nations further from their lands and forceful removal if they refuse to move with the Cherokee one of the main victims. This led to the death

of many Indians. This according to Piatt (2021) is part of the means to exterminate Indians from their ancestral lands.

Finally, the boarding school system was also used to take the sovereignty of the Indian nations in the Americas. Piatt (2021) explains that the boarding school system created by the Federal government and religious organization was a systematic way to assimilate Indian children and force them to renounce their identity. In the explanation of Piatt (2021), many of the Indian children were forcefully taken away from their families and placed in the boarding school. These children became weary of their identity because of the prejudice of being Indigenous children as it led to their marginalization. As Piccard (2013) expresses, the boarding system was genocidal as it attempts to kill the culture of the Indian nations and assimilate the children in a new world entirely different from their origin. Piatt (2021) further reinstates that many of the children forcefully taken to the boarding school lost their families and even their tribes as they were not registered with the Federal government. These processes led to the total loss of the sovereignty of the Indian nations that had earlier existed. It also pushed them into the position of marginality in their ancestral lands.

While the Native Americans suffered great loss, Africans also lost their freedom beginning in the mid nineteenth century. In the next section, I present the review of colonialism in Africa and how this also contributed to the creation of marginalized people who, initially were Indigenous people of their lands.

Colonialism in Africa: A History

The colonial history of Africa spans several centuries and is marked by the exploitation, subjugation, and eventual colonization of the continent by the European powers (Okoth, 2006;

Falola, 2002; Boahen, 1985). This long process has had profound and lasting impacts on African societies, economies, cultures, and political systems. As Ayandare (1965) explains, it was the European exploration of Africa which dates to the 15th century, with Portuguese sailors establishing trade posts along the western coast, that changed the course of the Portuguese interactions with Africans. Although they sought to access African goods such as gold, ivory and slaves, which were highly prized commodities in European markets early on, the discovery of the New World soon diverted the trading activities to Slaves. Falola (2001) further explains that the effects of the discovery were dire both to the Native Americans in the New World and Africans as they became slaves in the New World. The trade was further strengthened with the establishment of structures to support it. As Falola (2002) describes, establishing trading posts laid the groundwork for increased European involvement in Africa. Yet, the abolition of the slave trade gave rise to even increased interaction with Africans as many European powers wanted territories in Africa to pursue their economic interests on the continent.

Starting from the beginning of the 19th century, European interests in African territories increased and, by the end of the century, intense competition among European powers to partition Africa and establish colonial territories had reached another height (Falola, 2002). This period, known as the Scramble for Africa, was driven by economic motives, strategic interests, and notions of the imperial prestige of European nations. Colonialism became an established order after the conquest of many African sovereign kingdoms, like Lagos in 1861 (Falola and Heaton, 2008). However, it was at the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 that the partitioning of Africa among European powers, with little regard for the wishes or boundaries of the Indigenous African societies was formalized (Okoth, 2006; Falola, 2002; Boahen, 1985). This conference effectively legitimized colonial rule over vast swathes of the continent, neglected the ancestral

homes of many Indigenous groups and started a wave of the marginalization of groups (especially women and minority groups like the Bakassi) that has continued to the twenty-first century.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the European powers had successfully taken territories, and colonialism had begun on the continent. European colonial rule in Africa took various forms, including direct rule, indirect rule, settler colonialism and informal imperialism. Some of these colonial forms were also used in the Americas. The colonialism forms were characterized by distinct governance, economic exploitation, and social control methods. As seen in many studies, there were four main types of European colonialism in Africa. I will discuss these four forms of European colonialism in the next sub-theme.

These various forms of colonialism in Africa were shaped by the political, economic and strategic interests of European colonial powers, as well as by the social, cultural and historical dynamics of the African societies. Each form of colonialism left lasting legacies that continue to shape Africa's trajectory in the post-colonial era. The legacy of colonialism in Africa is complex and multifaceted, shaping the continent's political, economic, and social landscape to the twenty-first century. Years after gaining independence, many African countries continue to grapple with the legacies of colonialism, including border disputes, ethnic tensions, and economic dependency. The map below shows the colonial languages spoken by different African countries due to colonialism.

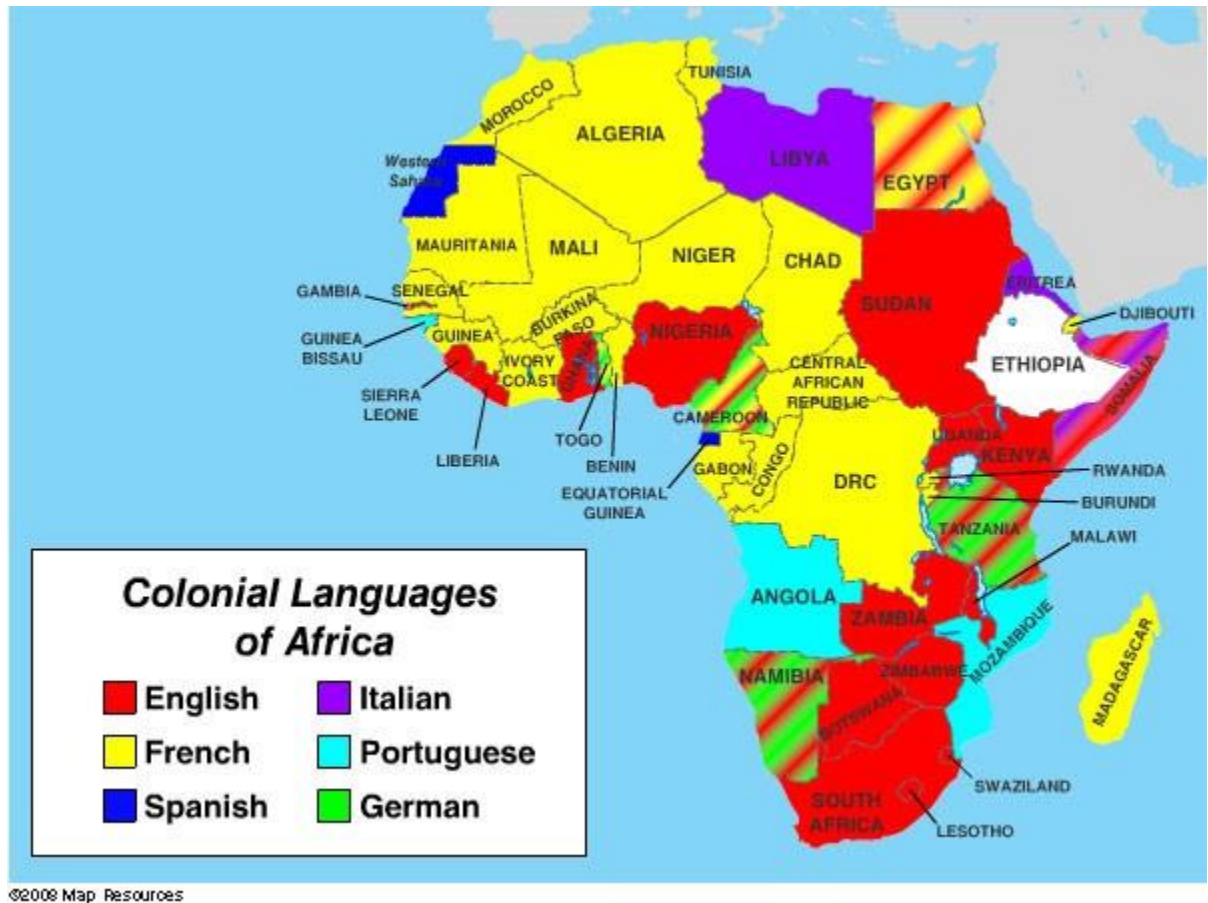


Figure 2.2: Map showing the colonial languages in Africa. (Source : <https://polylingualpassion.home.blog/2019/05/19/what-languages-are-spoken-in-africa/>)

Forms of European Colonialism

European colonialism refers to the historical practice of European powers establishing control over territories outside of Europe, often through conquest, colonization, and the imposition of political, economic, and cultural dominance (Lehning, 2013). There were various forms of European colonialism, each characterized by different strategies, motivations, and impacts.

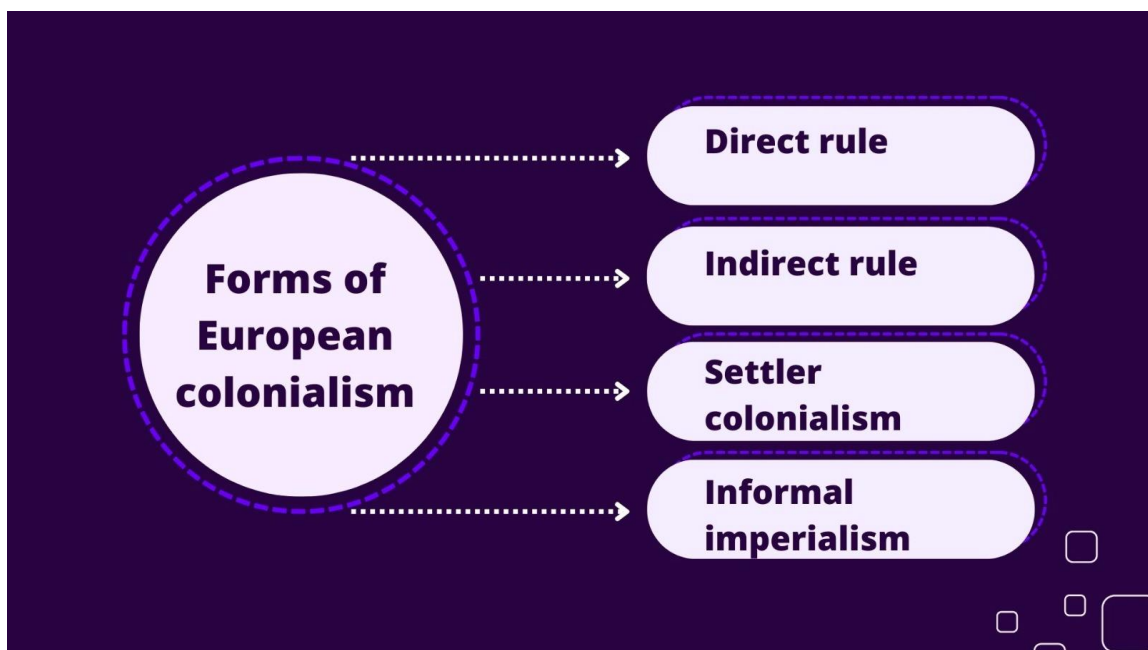


Figure 2.3: Forms of European Colonialism

Firstly, there was the Direct rule which involved the establishment of European administrative structures and institutions to govern African colonies. Falola (2001) explains that the European colonial powers exercised direct control over all aspects of colonial administration, including law enforcement, taxation, education and infrastructure development. This form of colonialism was most practiced by France and Belgium in their African colonies. As Lehning

(2013) described, it was the form of rule that the French used in their American colonies. French governments were directly involved in the colonization of their American colonies. The French colonies, known as "French West Africa" and "French Equatorial Africa", were directly governed by French officials appointed by the colonial government in Paris. Similarly, the Belgian colony of the Congo Free State was ruled directly by King Leopold II and later by the Belgian government.

Secondly, there was the Indirect rule system of governance whereby the European colonial powers governed through Indigenous African authorities, often traditional chiefs or rulers. Rather than imposing any direct European control, the colonial administrators worked collaboratively with Indigenous leaders to administer colonial territories. This form of colonialism was primarily practiced by Britain in its African colonies, such as Nigeria, Uganda, and Kenya. The British colonial officials appointed Indigenous chiefs or rulers as intermediaries, granting them authority to administer local affairs and collect taxes on behalf of the colonial government. While indirect rule allowed for the preservation of some aspects of Indigenous governance and culture, it also reinforced existing power structures and hierarchies, often to the detriment of marginalized groups within African societies. Some of the groups included women and that was the main cause of the Aba Women Riots in colonial Nigeria. The ills of the system were directly evident in the ceding of the ancestral homes of the Indigenous Bakassi people in Nigeria to Cameroon and has led to Bakassi people's loss of their ancestral home in present times (Edet, 2015). This practice was less prevalent in the Americas. However, Falola and Heaton (2008) noted that the British used it in Asia before practicing the system in Africa.

Thirdly, there was settler colonialism. Settler colonialism involved the migration of European settlers to African territories where they established permanent settlements and sought to assert control over land, resources, and labor. The European settlers typically sought to create societies that replicated their own cultural and political systems by displacing Indigenous populations in the process. As Lehning (2013) explains further. Settler colonialism was prominent in regions such as North America, Australia, New Zealand, and Southern Africa, where European settlers displaced or marginalized Indigenous peoples and established new societies based on their own cultural, social, and political norms. Falola (2002) buttresses this when he noted that this form of colonialism was most prevalent in Southern Africa, particularly in countries like South Africa, Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia), and Namibia (formerly German South-West Africa). European settlers, primarily of British and Dutch descents, established settler communities known as "colonial enclaves" or "white dominions" where they enjoyed privileged access to land, economic opportunities and political power. Settler colonialism has often resulted in violent conflicts between European settlers and Indigenous Africans, as well as dispossession, displacement, and forced labor for Indigenous populations.

Finally, informal imperialism refers to forms of economic and political domination exercised by the European powers in Africa without any formal colonial annexation. This included the establishment of "protectorates," "spheres of influence," and "concessions" that granted European powers exclusive rights to trade, invest, or extract resources in African territories. Informal imperialism was common in regions where the European powers did not establish direct or indirect rule but sought to maintain economic control and influence. Examples include British and French "informal empires" in regions like Hawaii, Montreal, Egypt, Ethiopia,

and the Horn of Africa, where colonial powers exerted significant economic and political influence without formal annexation.

The Patriarchy Legacy in Colonial Africa and North America

Matrilineality among Native Americans in the pre-colonial period was widespread. Knight (2008) submits that many tribal nations were matrilineal. Knight's study (2008) was based on the note of Lewis Morgan's study of his Iroquois tribe and cultural practices. According to Knight (2008), Morgan was surprised that the Iroquois were a matrilineal society. Matrilineality refers to social and cultural systems in which descent, inheritance, and kinship are traced through the maternal line, focusing on the mother's lineage rather than the father's. Matrilineal societies are characterized by the central role of women in family and community life, as well as the transmission of property, status, and identity through maternal kinship networks. The Iroquois were not the only tribal nations that had matrilineal practices. Schneider (1974) expresses that the Hopi and many other nations in North, Central, and South America were matrilineal. While matrilineal descent is not universal among Native Americans, it represents an essential aspect of Indigenous cultures and social organization that continues to shape contemporary Indigenous identities and communities (Knight, 2008).

Generally, Native American women were vulnerable during colonialism. Fischer (2002) explains that Native American women were made to work on the plantations of European settlers. The vulnerability of women (Native Americans and Africans) was pointed out by Fischer (2002); he also pointed out that the Native American women embraced the gendered role placed on them by their European settlers. However, these women were more loving, pitiful, modest, mild, provident, and laborious than their situation would have implied them to be (Fischer, 2002, p.1). The description of Native American women by Fischer (2002) shows their

resilience during colonialism. Burnette (2015) further states that Native American women, especially those who have matrilineal or matrilineal systems like the Choctaws, were resilient despite facing historical oppression on their lands (2015, p.5.).

Africa's colonial history represents a pivotal chapter in the continent's evolution, marked by exploitation, resistance, and eventual liberation. Understanding this history is essential for grappling with the complex legacies of colonialism and charting a path toward a more just, equitable, and prosperous future for Africa and its people. However, one of the lasting legacies of colonialism that led to the marginalization of a group is patriarchy.

Patriarchy in European colonialism refers to the system of male dominance and privilege that was reinforced and perpetuated by European colonial powers during their rule over territories. Patriarchy manifested in various aspects of colonial society, including political, economic, social, and cultural spheres, and had profound implications for the lives of both men and women in many Indigenous communities.

In the political scenes, colonial administrations typically marginalized women from formal political structures and decision-making processes by reserving political power and authority for male leaders and representatives. European colonial powers often relied on Indigenous male elites to serve as intermediaries or collaborators, thereby reinforcing patriarchal structures of governance. Traditional systems of governance, which were often patriarchal, were co-opted or manipulated by colonial authorities to maintain control over African populations. Indigenous male chiefs or rulers were granted authority by colonial administrators, while women were excluded from political leadership and representation positions.

Colonial economic policies and practices often disadvantaged African women, primarily engaged in subsistence agriculture, informal labor, and domestic work. European colonial powers prioritized the extraction of natural resources and the development of cash-crop economies, which further marginalized women's economic roles and contributions. Land tenure systems introduced by colonial administrations favored male inheritance and land ownership and disenfranchised women from access to land and productive resources. Women were often relegated to marginal lands or denied the right to own property, perpetuating their economic dependency and vulnerability.

Indigenous women did not enjoy the benefits that men enjoyed in their political and economic lives during colonialism. Nnaemeka (1998) explains that patriarchal norms and values were reinforced through colonial education systems, religious institutions, and legal frameworks, which upheld male authority and control over women's bodies, sexuality and reproductive rights. European colonial powers imposed Western gender ideologies and norms that marginalized the Indigenous concepts of gender equality and women's autonomy. Social hierarchies based on gender, race, and class intersected to marginalize further African women, who faced intersecting forms of oppression and discrimination. European colonial powers upheld patriarchal systems of social stratification that privileged white male settlers and elites at the expense of the Indigenous African communities.

Finally, the cultural positions of women in traditional institutions were altered. Colonialism disrupted Indigenous African cultural practices and belief systems, thereby undermining traditional roles and statuses of women, such as matrilineal descent and kinship within Indigenous societies. European missionaries and colonial administrators often portrayed

Indigenous cultures as primitive and barbaric by promoting patriarchal interpretations of gender roles and family structures. Indigenous systems of kinship, marriage, and inheritance were subverted or eroded by colonial interventions, which imposed the Western notions of monogamy, nuclear families, and patrilineal descent. Women's rights to land, property, and inheritance were often restricted or denied under colonial legal systems, reinforcing patriarchal norms and practices.

In Africa, colonialism led to oppression, exploitation, and, most significantly, the institutionalization of patriarchy (Falola, 2002). Patriarchy in colonial Africa was a pervasive and enduring system of male dominance and privilege that was reinforced and perpetuated by European colonial powers. It shaped all aspects of colonial society, relegating African women to subordinate roles and denying them agency, autonomy, and equality (Agbaje, 2021). While some women like Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti were able to face patriarchy (Falola & Heaton, 2008), the struggle for gender equality has continued till the present time. Understanding the dynamics of patriarchy in colonial Africa is essential for grappling with its enduring legacies and addressing ongoing challenges of gender inequality and women's rights on the continent. Moving forward literature on indigeneity in the discourse of forced migration would be reviewed.

Indigeneity in the Discourse of Forced Migration

In the study of displacement, the question of indigeneity often becomes essential to understanding the groups being forcibly taken out of their land. The cases of Native Americans and Bakassi people in Nigeria take center stage in this discourse. Indigeneity refers to the state or quality of being Indigenous, which generally means being Native to a particular region, territory, or land (Ben-Zvi, 2013; Qian, 1999). Guenther (2006) states that indigeneity pertains to the intrinsic connection that a people may have to a specific land or territory where they have

historical roots and cultural practices. In breaking down the assertion of Guenther (2006), Indigenous peoples are the original or earliest known inhabitants of a given area, often possessing unique cultural, linguistic, and historical ties to that land. As such, indigeneity is often associated with specific ethnic or cultural identities and claims to ancestral territories, traditional knowledge, and collective rights. Indigenous peoples may have distinct legal, political, and social statuses within the countries in which they reside.

The concept of indigeneity is frequently used in discussions of colonialism, land rights, human rights, and cultural preservation, particularly in relation to the Indigenous peoples' struggles for recognition, autonomy, and self-determination. The underlying principle of indigeneity is the quest for the recognition of the rights of a group over their territories after long-standing incursions that have been recognized by law. Saifullah et al. (2021) state that historically, Indigenous people experienced domination, marginalization, and discrimination. Such oppression still exists in different parts of the world. It is for this reason that we have such movements as Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Bakassi Youth Development Forum, and the like. In the case of the Indigenous people of America, Edmunds (1995) asserts that the arrival of European colonizers in the Americas led to the displacement, marginalization, and genocide of many Indigenous peoples. This encounter has been focused well and has led to the fight for recognition in all aspects of the Indigenous people's lives. Falola and Heaton (2008) further state that colonization brought significant changes to Indigenous societies, including the imposition of European languages, religions, and legal systems. After years of resilience, the Indigenous people of America are gradually being recognized with the rights to their ancestral homes.

While the case of Native Americans deals with incursion and forcible takeover of the land during colonialism, Indigenous people in Africa suffered the imposition of arbitrary borderlines that have eventually displaced many from their ancestral land and deprived them of their land rights during colonialism. Africa is home to many Indigenous peoples, each with their own distinct cultures, languages, and histories. These Indigenous groups have inhabited the African continent for thousands of years, developing diverse social, economic, and political systems. Like the Americas, Africa has a history of colonization by European powers, resulting in significant disruptions to Indigenous societies and cultures. Colonialism brought about the imposition of European political systems, economic exploitation, and cultural assimilation efforts. Following independence, many African countries continue to grapple with the legacies of colonialism, including issues of political instability, economic inequality, and ethnic conflict. Indigenous peoples in Africa often face marginalization and discrimination within their own countries, as well as challenges related to land rights, cultural preservation, and political representation.

Despite centuries of colonization and oppression, Indigenous peoples in the Americas and Africa have demonstrated resilience and continue to assert their rights to self-determination, land ownership, and cultural preservation. Movement for Indigenous rights and sovereignty are ongoing, and they advocate recognizing Indigenous land rights, cultural heritage, and political autonomy.

Violence Against Indigenous Women

The violence of colonization and exploitation is reproduced at different scales, from within the home to the international scene, placing Indigenous women in spaces of exclusion at the margins of state and society (Marceauet al., 2020, p.1).

Until recently, violence against Indigenous women has been less examined in mainstream scholarly works (Deer et al, 2008). Yet, violence against Indigenous women is grave and multi-layered, especially in the Americas. For instance, the opening part of the article by Marceauet et al (2020) explains the large-scale violence that Indigenous women face in the Americas. This violence encompasses various forms of abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence, capable of causing inter-generational trauma (Deer et al, 2008; Deer, 2015;). To get a grip on this grave issue requires examining the historical context, systemic factors, forms of violence, with their attendant legal and social challenges.

The colonization and Christianization of the Americas has had profound impacts on its Indigenous peoples and nations as it has led to systemic inequalities and the disruption of traditional social structures of the Indigenous people of the Americas (Marceauet al., 2020). Historically, colonization introduced a cycle of dispossession, marginalization, and trauma that has persisted through generations among Indian Americans. This was further worsened by the introduction of the European legal and social systems which greatly undermined Indigenous governance and social norms that traditionally held women in high regard and protected them from violence. The Christianization of the Indigenous people of America further compounded the forms of social violence on the belief system of the Indigenous people (Deloria, 2001).

The prejudices that colonization and Christianization birthed in the Americas still exist in the forms of systemic racism and discrimination in the Americas. Racism and discrimination

have further worsened the vulnerability of Indigenous women to violence (Agtuca, 2008). These women frequently encounter prejudice, which limits their access to essential services and justice. This discrimination is compounded by intergenerational trauma resulting from historical abuses such as residential schools and forced assimilation, which have left enduring scars on Indigenous communities (TallBear, 2003). This schooling system was violent against the values, norms and identities of Indigenous people of America.

Another form of violence faced by Indigenous women is domestic violence. Indigenous women face disproportionately high rates of domestic violence, often driven by socioeconomic factors, substance abuse, and historical trauma (Ybanez, 2008). These factors create a volatile environment where abuse can thrive unchecked. Sexual violence is also alarmingly prevalent, with many Indigenous women experiencing exploitation and trafficking. In the United States of America, Indigenous women are the most victims of sexual violence where one out of three are victims of rape (Deer, 2015). Sexual violence against Indigenous women in the Americas is a major concern as it could be likened to an epidemic on a group of people (Deer et al., 2008; Deer, 2015).

A particularly distressing aspect of the sexual violence epidemic against Indigenous people is the missing and murdering of women which has been tagged Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) in some parts of the Americas. Marceau et al. (2020) explains that Indigenous women are more likely to go missing or be murdered compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts, often without adequate media coverage or law enforcement response. This lack of attention and sense of urgency from authorities underscores the systemic disregard for Indigenous women's lives.

Sadly, the legal complexities and jurisdictional issues around rape cases in the United States are parts of the systemic violence against Indigenous women (LaPointe, 2008; Jones, 2008). They often hinder the prosecution of crimes against Indigenous women. For instance, in regions with overlapping federal, state and tribal authorities, the confusion about jurisdiction often leads to delays and failures in justice delivery. This issue is compounded by underreporting, fear of retribution, mistrust in law enforcement and cultural barriers often prevent Indigenous women from reporting violence. Furthermore, many Indigenous communities lack sufficient resources for shelter, legal aid, and counseling services (Clark & Johnson, 2008). As Lees & Bang (2023) submit that resource gap leaves many survivors without the necessary support to escape abusive situations and rebuild their lives.

While the Indigenous women of America face these several forms of violence, they have also ventured into building resilience to confront these epidemic (Deer et al. 2008; Vizenor, 2008; Cajete, 1994). Common features of Indigenous women that has continue to help them to survive is their cultural resilience and traditional practices. These features play a vital role in healing and addressing trauma within Indigenous communities (Deer et al., 2008; Marceau et al., 2020). While revitalizing cultural practices and healing ceremonies can help survivors reconnect with their heritage and find strength in their identity, community support is also essential as strong community bonds provide a network of care and empowerment for Indigenous women (Lees and Bangs, 2023). Beyond this, the awareness created by several Indigenous scholars are helpful to support Indigenous women to speak up and strengthen other victims.

Displacement

Displacement can be conflict-induced. Amao and Okeke-Uzodike (2015:4) define conflict as:

...the existence of non-compatibility or disagreements between two actors (and this could either be individuals, groups, organizations or nations) in their interaction over issues of interests, values, beliefs, emotions, goals, space, positions and scarce resources.

Their definition aptly speaks to the meaning of conflict as foregrounded in this study. I align with this definition and, therefore, adopt it for this study. Nigeria, along with four sister countries, namely Cameroon, Niger, Chad, and Benin, experiences relatively few conflicts (Ugwuja, 2014). Here lies the paradox: a country that has more neighboring countries may likely have more conflicts to contend with. Amao & Okeke-Uzodike (2015) note that Nigeria has continued to maintain the centrepiece position in Africa, a position defined by her economic and political dominance. In the area of armed conflicts, Nigerian troops have been deployed to maintain peace and stability within the sub-region. The foregoing has informed Nigeria's focus on foreign policy. Despite playing the 'Big Brother' roles to other countries, Nigeria has been unable to solve her homegrown challenges, including the Boko Haram insurgency. This contention is critical to this study, given that the Bakassi people still remain largely resettled after the ceding of the Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon.

Against this backdrop, some studies have attempted to account for the extent to which colonialism has contributed to conflicts and displacement in many African countries as well as other parts of the world. Focusing on the justification, Olaoluwa (2018) reiterates that the colonialists believed that they introduced civilization to the colonies. In Nigeria, the indirect rule system was the mode through which colonialism was administered. Olaoluwa adds that, in

countries like Kenya, settler colonialism raised questions about land use and the marginalization of Native populations from resources that were rightfully theirs. Scholars argue that the history and evolution of “citizenship” in Africa is inextricably linked to the account of the emergence of the contemporary African state. Hovil and Lomo (2015) observe that the conceptualization of belongingness and identity changed with the coming of colonialism which clearly defined state authority, redefined the power relations and controlled migration.

Their assertion buttresses the fact that, with colonialism, Africans assumed different identities that transcended clan identity that was linked to nationalities and countries. This was not the case before colonialism. Prior to its advent, the identities of Africans were linked to the kingdoms they belonged to, their ethnic groups or tribes. In the Nigerian context, the Igbos, Yorubas and Hausas, for example, fostered unique systems of administration. The systems changed with colonialism; this implies that the mentality and perception of Africans was significantly affected. Hovil and Lomo’s (2015) submissions were influenced by Mamdani’s (2001) view that crises in Africa originated from the conditions of the post-colonial state.

Mamdani also observes that problems of contemporary political instabilities and conflicts in Africa are offshoots of the creation of the colonial states, which contributed largely to a fragmented state based on the political identities of race and ethnicity (Hovil & Lomo 2015: 13). These postulations, in a way, can be corroborated with the history of intrastate and interstate conflicts within many African states linked to colonialism and its attendant problems. The Bakassi Peninsula, for example, is a case in point, requiring the ICJ to pass judgments based on old colonial documents. This has led to untold suffering for people sometimes called internally displaced persons or refugees (Azubuike, 2018). So, in looking at conflicts in Africa, the negative

impact of colonialism, with displacement as a major index, which cannot be under-emphasized.

Displaced people across the continent still suffer the consequences of alienation from their homes.

Whittaker (2006:72) states that:

Africa has suffered refugee crises as a result of conflict in various African Nation states. Africa has been crippled by internal warring but nothing is comparable to the suffering of Rwanda. This, particularly, must have been in the mind of Britain's Prime Minister, Tony Blair, when he declared two years ago that 'The state of Africa is a scar on the conscience of the world, but if the world focused on it, we could heal it.

In the above, Whittaker foregrounds the damage that conflicts, particularly ethnic-based ones, have caused. One of such leading ethnic-oriented conflicts in Africa's recent history is the Rwandan genocide, which rocked Africa and the world. The Rwandan case was a full-blown war, unlike the conflict in Bakassi, which did not escalate into a war. When displacement is occasioned by war or natural disasters, the plight of those affected often attracts much international attention and sympathy. The mainstream media would spotlight the situation, and researchers would analyze it from various perspectives. However, in a situation as Bakassi, the primary focus of this study, where the struggle for natural resources led to displacement, scholars such as Inuagbuna (2017) and Agba et al. (2010) opine that top media organizations and scholars hardly invest much effort and energy in analyzing the case. It is apparent that war-induced displacement receives more attention. This point can be illustrated by the situation in Syria, which has attracted global outcry. The role of journalists and media houses in bringing matters arising to the fore creates an awareness of that situation that has far-reaching effects. This is a sharp contrast with situations such as that of the Bakassi IDPs, which hardly get a mention even in the local media.

More recently, the world has experienced a movement of people from one region to another. The reasons for this include the search for better employment, academic and medical tourism, and displacement (International Organization for Migration, IOM, 2021). According to the IOM World Migration Report (2021), 135 million migrants, representing about half the global migrant population, are female. Conflicts and environmental disasters were the main drivers of the refugee situation, with 30.7 million people displaced by conflicts globally and 82.4 million displaced by natural disasters in 2020 alone (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2021). As a result, there are now more refugees in various parts of the world than ever. Among these, 26.4 million are refugees (half female), and 41 million are asylum seekers (UNHCR, 2021). This statistic indicates that the global refugee problem, particularly among females, is disturbing and may require investigation.

Young and Chan (2015) and Das (2007) argue that displacement must be examined from a gendered perspective. They believe that researchers should use gender as a variable for studying displacement. To this end, this study approaches the subject from a gendered perspective. Thus, the review of scholarly works in the next section focuses on gender and displacement.

The change in gender roles within the family has been a significant factor that conflict-induced migration has impacted. Conflict has a multiplier effect. It may lead to flight or forced migration of members of communities and families. Effectively, displacement occurs. The displacement invariably reorganizes a family's social structure and gender roles (Buckley-Zistel, 2007). In her study on Brazilian immigrants in the United States, DeBiaggi (2002) highlights the importance of gender when people move to a new nation and how it affects the immigrant family

makeup overall. She notes that the fluid gender roles in the families is a critical component of an immigrant family's adjustment. When settling into a new home, the family is often unable to replicate the customary and familiar surroundings of the new place of residence, leaving immigrants in an environment devoid of recognizable social systems and institutions. Similarly, the gender hierarchy is disrupted and replaced by new systems to which immigrants must adapt. Although the findings of this study may be region or culture-specific, given that the study subjects are Brazilian migrants, it offers useful insights into how shifting gender norms can affect how migration restructures preexisting marital arrangements. Some of the families interviewed admitted to experiencing marital issues caused by the shifts in men's and women's opinions brought about by the forced change which may arise when one party joins the workforce, or even by their observing fluidity of gender roles in American relationships.

Acculturation in the accommodation and environment of a new country becomes a painful process for both sexes when values, customs, and identities from the migrants' home countries lined up against those in the host country feel so alien. Hajdukowski-Ahmed (2013) draws attention to how the idea of home is weakened and destroyed when people become displaced. Losing their "safe place" during times of violence and upheaval has a remarkable impact on women. By attempting to recreate traditional foods, accustomed routines, and familiar settings, it is believed that the women are trying to restore the familiarity of the lost home in the resettled environment. Taking on new responsibilities, including employment, is another reality refugee women face. They have to quickly blend in and acquire new cultural behaviors and values similar to those of the host country.

Refugee women who take on new work duties are consequently introduced to the new culture and more readily embrace new cultural patterns and values than their spouses (Hojat et al., 2000). More often than not, the women run the risk of bearing a "triple burden". Many women maintain their reproductive roles and are still in charge of running the home and raising their children in addition to their new employment. Besides, they frequently take the lead and act as "culture broker" between their partners and kids when acculturation-related disputes arise (Young & Chan, 2005).

When conflict escalates into violence, women are expected to serve as the symbolic and practical carriers of culture and national identity, passing along the values of the past to the next generation (Chatterji, 2014). As a result, often after having to take on new tasks during battle or displacement, they are stripped of those roles and "pushed back into the kitchen" to restore the pre-war order and status quo (Rajasingham-Senanayake 2004).

At this juncture, it is essential to emphasize that the factors that lead to displacement in some areas may include climate change, environmental pollution, violent conflicts, globalization, natural disasters, and poverty. Colonialism has been seen as a significant factor in conflict-induced displacement (Tarlebba et al., 2010). To illustrate, in the Bakassi dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon, the history of imperialist colonial control and the contemporaneous neo-colonial governments in Africa were among the numerous elements that fueled that conflict. Future African strife was nurtured by imperialist capitalists and colonial authorities like Portugal, Germany, France, and Britain in the 19th century through cunning and self-serving economic, political, and strategic calculations. As a result of not minding the harm that practices such as the divide-and-rule system of government and the division of African States and their people caused

to the people's language, socio-political lives, cultural affiliations, and ancestral lineage, the foundation for perpetual conflicts in the region was laid. This self-centered governance approach resulted in ethnic groups being divided into areas under the power of the colonial lords. In turn, this stifled the reign of peace in the area as split families rebelled against the system and struggled for the unity of their families and friends. This situation caused splinters among ethnic groups in those regions under the overlords. Gradually, protests against the brutal and self-centered destruction of the culture by the colonial masters began with a ripple effect as the protest spread throughout the continent. This egotistical, cruel, and cunning behavior sparked several conflicts in Africa. The Nigeria-Cameroon Bakassi peninsula conflict is a case to be examined in this study.

Hovil and Lomo (2015) note that the emergence of colonialism altered the ideas of belongingness by explicitly defining the state's territorial authority, redefining the boundaries of power and controlling the movement of people. Their claim highlights how, because of colonialism, Africans developed new identities beyond clan identity; these new ones are tied to certain nationalities and nations. Thus, colonialism has impacted the psyches and self-images of Africans. Mamdani (2001), who was quoted earlier, opines that crises in Africa are an outgrowth of the crisis of the post-colonial state and this is corroborated by Hovil et al., (2015).

The Bakassi people in Cross River state Nigeria, remain under-researched and the areas remain volatile. They include the tension caused by ex-militants and “bad boys” in the area and the influx of hundreds of Cameroonian refugees from the Anglophone parts into Cross River as a result of the ongoing Cameroon dissidents’ conflict which has increased the number of displaced people in the area. Another issue is how to equitably distribute humanitarian aid which is now

instigating further conflict because some members of the host community pose as Bakassi IDPs so as to benefit from the aid donated by international NGOs to the Bakassi IDPs who had even entered into “an informal” agreement to either be discreet or be ready to face the consequences of fighting members of the host community, an action that seemed futile since the IDPs are operating from a position of powerlessness and dispossession. This research looked at the current resilience of the Native Americans and other Indigenous people in West African region as a way of extrapolating from how they adjusted to their new homes and the strategies that they employ to cope with difficult situations.

The resilience of the Bakassi IDPs may be compared to that of the Native Americans who are likewise experiencing prolonged displacement. A pilot study showed that the women on both sides have now taken up leadership positions, a situation that did not exist prior to their displacement since the societies were predominantly patriarchal. These fresh issues indicate a gap in the literature which this work seeks to fill. The Native Americans and the Bakassi people were selected because both communities are indigenous in nature and have experienced forced removal induced by colonialism. The present locations of both Native groups are secluded. In the case of the Bakassi people, it is referred to as camps, while, for the Native Americans, it is called reservations.

Protracted displacement and the politics of identity

Given that this research unpacks the resilience of Bakassi women, it is essential to review the literature on protracted displacement. Their identity as internally displaced persons, sometimes called refugees, speaks to how their identity was impacted by displacement. Indigenous are now referred to as refugees and foreigners. Protracted displacements indicate that there are no simple solutions in sight. Its presence implied that all solutions have failed. Crawford et al.

(2015) is an essential study of protracted displacement. Protracted displacement implies that there could have been settlements, but those settlements complicated existential matters for the displaced people and the people were left to be on their own for a long time. In fact, in situations of protracted displacement, the settlements led to further displacement and closed doors for negotiations. Crawford et al. (2015) submit that situations of displacement tend to be prolonged for many years as the IDPs and refugees experience multiple displacements. Crawford et al. (2015) observe how people experiencing protracted displacement rely on the self as a means of survival. They project that, by the end of 2014, there would be over 59 million displaced persons all over the world. The findings from their research on the Syrian refugees, the Somalian refugees and others show that displaced people who were living in camps or the society were only able to access humanitarian assistance that covered just their minimal needs.

Therefore, as displacements became protracted, funding for their welfare needs tended to decline or, in some extreme cases, disappeared entirely. They further explored the features of protracted displacement, protracted IDPs' access to international aid, and the intervention that could help them achieve self-reliance, and they came up with three main findings. One, the state of displacement, presented globally, is incomplete and unreliable. In other words, there is not enough data to show the number of displaced people, their needs, and the international assistance that they have had access to. This finding of Crawford et al. (2015:49) shows that governments are yet to build a comprehensive system that appropriately tracks displacement. In some cases, displacement is intentionally politicized. Two, they posit that the duration of protracted displacement should be reviewed. The UNHCR benchmark of five years should be revisited as their data showed that protracted displacement should be treated as protracted right from the onset as displacements tend to be prolonged. Third, they argue that, after extensively reviewing

the literature, they found that the effectiveness of international interventions to encourage self-reliance and better livelihoods of people in protracted displacement was weak. Observing that displaced people are beginning to turn more to autonomy than aid-centered, they submit:

Evidence that the economic dynamism of displaced populations can have positive effects for host populations and states has also led to a consensus around advocacy: encouraging access to livelihoods (e.g. work permits or freedom of movement) is not just a human rights issue, but also offers practical economic and social returns – an argument, however, that has so far had few positive results in host states, whose behaviour continues to be shaped more by domestic political calculations.

In furtherance, they state that circumstances during displacement are undulatory and in a constant state of flux. The path to stabilization is rarely predictable due to the heterogeneous nature of the refugee population. This assertion speaks to this research's aim regarding the camp's different identities. A previous study showed that some Bakassi residents and indigenes joined them in New Bakassi. Hence, because of their displacement and scramble for limited resources, the Bakassi indigenes began to assert this difference, which further disadvantaged the Bakassi residents.

This kind of situation is attested to in Long (2011), where the Iraqi displaced in Syria and Lebanon had difficulty in obtaining legal status, and that caused them untold hardships, including economic and social marginalization. From studying the Somali and Iraqi displacement, he observes that there is no single experience of protracted displacement because every case is unique. This research does not dispute this finding. Long asserts that the refugee or IDP problem is the absence of state protection and the inability to access the fundamental rights bestowed on citizens. Therefore, the remedy to this exclusion must include restoration and the creation of meaningful citizenship. He lists the three popular duration solutions as repatriation or

return, resettlement, and local integration, with repatriation/return as the preferable option in the international community. Long posits that repatriation/return allows for compensatory justice and protects the collective political interest. However, this research shows that Long's submission is faulty, drawing from the lived experiences of the Bakassi people, who, upon their return, are confronted with struggling to protect their political voice. This situation has led to conflict between them and members of their host community, Azubuike (2018). Using the example of Germany and France, which focused on resettling the Christian Iraqis, Long argues that resettlement is a political instrument utilized to meet political aims. Concerning this research, we are interested in finding out how this has turned out. A pilot study showed that the Bakassi IDPs were accommodating the Cameroonian refugees in the limited spaces provided for them. However, the findings did not explore what hidden political motives might have informed this interaction.

Previous research has shown that the displacement of the Bakassi people put into question their political agency and their identity (Azubuike, 2018). Gwadabe et al. (2018) affirm that forced displacement has to do with "the involuntary movement of people from their habitual place of residence to a location within their country of nationality; or across an internationally recognized border". These people, who were landowners before, now have become tenants elsewhere. A pilot study showed that, since they had scarce resources, they were unable to take up the political positions meant for them. The political implication of this is that they do not control their resources and are unable to take part when making decisions that will affect them. Regarding the politics of identity, we are talking about the political interest that leads to the construction of identities.

Identities are not inherent but are constructed. A group of people can be constructed as dangerous because they constitute a threat to the current political leadership. Jenkins (2014) argues that identity must be understood, in political and economic contexts and in line with local material interests. He, therefore, calls for looking into why perceived interests come to be so perceived as interests instead of being viewed as being typical. This research would investigate the nexus between displacement and the politics of identity. I am interested in who is framing their identity, the consequences of such frames, if any, and the economic and political gains therein.

Shahid (2009: 167) clearly states that, “although fluid, identity is not infinitely elastic. It is shaped by the initial cultural resources which an individual acquires by birth. New identities can be acquired by learning new languages, cultures, intermarriages, and through the migration process.” Hence, a political economy analysis would be applied to this study. Piech (2015) argues that the relations between economic ideas and political motivations are the subjects of interest of political economy. It is also the study of the interaction between politics and economics. Drazen (2002) observes that the political economy begins with the political nature of decision-making, and it pertains to how politics impacts economic choices in society. Hence, a political economy analysis to the understanding of the situation on ground in New Bakassi is significant. Why do the Bakassi people feel they are refugees even in their home country? They are sometimes called refugees, and it is clear that they are technically in their home country but disconnected from their homeland. This is about how scholarship speaks to the importance of citizenship and less about a homeland for Africans. Therefore, in discussing homeland and return, the concept of citizenship is critical. Nyamnjoh (2019:407) argues that being a citizen is a permanent work in progress. He states:

Citizenship is an attribute of being and becoming human through constant awareness and provision for the normalcy of incompleteness in how one claims rights in full cognizance of one's obligations to oneself, to others and to the imperatives of society and sociality. Citizenship is a capacity, technique or technology of self-cultivation and self-activation through relationships of sociality and civility. Given the ambitions of dominance of those in power who may or may not act on behalf of the communities or societies they purport to lead, citizenship is also a technology, technique or capacity of ownership and control of mechanisms of belonging.

He elucidates that those in charge employ technology to track their citizens; hence, citizenship has the power to mobilize. Using the analogy of birthmark, he submits that citizenship pertains to how one is born, as well as how and where one can assert one's capacity to act and redefine one's circumstance. In other words, when we talk about citizenship, Nyamnjoh (2019:410) posits that it is a discussion of to what extent it can deal with the tensions "between nature and nurture, ascription and achievement, blood and choice, autonomy and sociality, independence and dependence, us and them, here and there, the familiar and the profane."

This research would explore the term 'refugees' because Bakassi returnees are not yet legally refugees; they do refer to themselves or view themselves as refugees. Identity is a question of who a person is and how they are perceived. Consequently, the extent to which they would perpetually be seen as outsiders will be explored in the findings. Returnees are the ones who get to go back home (UNHCR 2017). This definition of returnees still does not fit the Bakassi people. As it relates to the Bakassi people, the question is: return to which home when there are no more homelands?

Canefe's (2010:147) research presents us with great insights to understand the meaning of home and homeland in refugee studies. She reviewed four books to unpack the meaning of 'home' to refugees and states. According to her,

Refugees who have lost their original homes often find themselves traumatically detached in their new environment despite resettlement. Under these circumstances, their natal or lost home assumes a new significance for the sense of belonging and their need for being reconnected and recognized with dignity. In the context of refugeehood, "home" is not only a physical manifestation of identity. In their country of asylum, in essence, refugees try to re-establish a lost grounding by reclaiming and reconstructing their sense of belonging.

The above assertion implies that home is linked to identity. It transcends a physical place of residence. Therefore, in the event of displacement, people struggle to construct new identities to match their current predicament. I agree, to some extent, that home is linked to ancestry and displacement; however, people may not be traumatically detached in their new environment if they are comfortable and have a political voice.

The definition of the term, 'refugee', is rather amoebic. A review is germane. Why are the people of Bakassi referred to as refugees and, sometimes, internally displaced persons? They crossed the border as members of the community to a homeland they did not have. In Africa, there have been expulsions of people who go back to where they say they belong. Upon their return, they realize they do not belong there. Nigeria, at the National level, is happy to have them again to reassert her power and identity to the Cameroonian government. Still, on the ground, it appears that the returnees have not been made to feel that they do belong to the nation (Amao & Okeke-Ufodike, 2015). Ugwuja's (2014) submission that Nigeria's foreign policy is Afro-centered is based on asserting power in the continent. Several reasons are adduced. One is the demographic advantage as the most populous black nation. Another is prestige and the country's past and present roles in ensuring regional and sub-regional for political stability because what happens in neighboring countries would affect Nig.

Amao & Okeke- Ufodike (2015) further argue that it is for these reasons that the foreign policy of Nigeria has been pursued without regards to the country's domestic interests and economic woes. It becomes clear why adequate measures on the Nigerian side have not been taken to ensure that the Bakassi people are properly resettled, ironically, Nigeria has been generous to the refugees from Cameroon. The Bakassi people have continued to show their angst over their current location. A pilot study showed that the people preferred to be relocated to Day Spring for several reasons since it has the semblance of their home which was surrounded by water and they could go back to their occupation of fishing. However, the rationale of the government resettling the Bakassi people in the mainland area of Cross River State, which the Iking people already inhabit, is not clear. This tenuous resettling has caused conflict between the locals and the Bakassi people. On the other hand, there is the migration of Cameroon refugees in droves into Cross River State. On the 31st of January, 2020, *The Guardian* reported that the Governor of Cross River State donated 800 million Naira and 100 hectares of land to the Cameroonian refugees taking refuge in the state. Moreso, the International Centre for Investigative Reporting stated that, as of February 2020, 60,000 Cameroonian refugees had arrived in Nigeria.

The donation is an incentive that led to an increase in the number of Cameroonians seeking refuge in Nigeria, and the number is projected to increase in the future. A pilot study shows that the Cross-River State Government lacks the resources to cater for the Bakassi people. This is also backed by the research of Agba et al. (2010). If this is true, then the generosity to the Cameroon people suggests that the motives may be ulterior. For this research, it would be called the "international politics of aid." This is due to rendering welfare services for others for personal gains. With the case of the Bakassi refugees not getting the needed attention from the

government while the Cameroonian refugees are getting their best attention, it crucial to examine the terminology that is used to refer to Bakassi people.

While both groups are displaced peoples, it appears that the refugees get more sympathy than the internally displaced persons. Technically speaking, the Bakassi people living in camps in Cross River state are called Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). Hence, by accommodating the Cameroonian refugees, the Cross River state government is positioning itself to the international community as a humanitarian state that is considerate and capable of administering aids. On the other hand, giving welfare packages to the Bakassi people may not make the country attractive for international assistance and recognition as the former would. It is essential at this point to attempt to unpack the official definition of the term “refugee.”

Whittaker (2006) explains that, according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, a specialized body of the United Nations that was given the task of defining who a refugee is, a refugee is defined as:

A person who is outside his/her country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of persecution because of his/ her race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution.

He argues that the above definition is no longer relevant. To buttress this point, he speaks about the Convention of 1951 that stipulates how refugees should be treated. The 1951 convention emphasizes that refugee status should be granted to those fleeing from danger from their home country, and they should be given equal rights as given to citizens, such as the right to food, shelter and clothing. Besides, unless the refugee willingly wants to return home, when everything has returned to normalcy, the country of a refugee should not forcefully send the refugee back to their home country. However, Whittaker (2006) criticizes the definition on the

basis that it is an arduous task to distinguish bona fide refugees from migrants, traveling has become cheaper and more accessible and, lastly, there has been the sporadic increase in the number of people that are being trafficked in recent times. While Whittaker gives an in-depth analysis of the definition of a refugee by the UNHCR, he fails to provide or suggest an alternative interpretation that can be adopted by the UNHCR and other international organizations.

Similarly, Cole (2018) also contends that being labeled a refugee has become flexible because it is of importance in a personal and political way because various meanings have diverse productive and prescriptive capacities. Cole's submission underscores the reason the Bakassi people want to be identified as refugees even though they are in their home country. Tags or labels used to describe any group of people would determine how they would be treated, and their rights or privileges to access basic amenities. This study will discuss the evolution of the terms that they use to refer to themselves, how the government views them, how they view themselves, how organizations and their host community views them. Unlike the other internally displaced people around the world, the Bakassi people have crossed a border as a result of their displacement. The concept of long-term displacement, whether it is internal or external, is not new. For example, we have the Burundian refugees in Tanzania and Palestinian Refugees, but the mechanisms through which identity will shift is context specific.

Ingiabuna (2017:215) emphasizes that forced migration arises from diverse factors such as wars, persecution, natural disasters, industrial or infrastructural developments, environmental degradation, ethnic discrimination, and boundary adjustments. He categorizes forced migrants into refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and noted that refugees have received

more scholarly attention, compared to the IDPs, despite the fact that both face the same conditions of deprivation. This distinction underscores the Bakassi people's desire to be recognized as refugees. That the Cross River State Government donated 100 hectares of land and 800 million Naira to the Cameroonian refugees, without extending the same assistance to the Nigerian citizens from Bakassi, raises questions about equity. This gesture led to an influx of over 60,000 Cameroonian refugees to Nigeria by February 2020 and highlighted the challenges faced by victims, including loss of dignity, survival struggles, limited access to education and healthcare and long-term repercussions.

Refugee issues are not peculiar to Africa. In the Middle East, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is described by Rempel (2012:1) as one of the largest and longest-standing unresolved forced displacement situations globally. Grabska (2013) introduces the concept of emplacement, as seen in the Bakassi people's relocation to Ikang, renamed "New Bakassi," in their bid to provide a sense of belongingness in their new home. Hammond's research on the Ethiopian returnees illustrates how emplacement involves the interworking of place, identity, and practice to establish a connection between place and individuals. Grabska (2013) builds on Appadurai's view of the 'production of locality' and argues that displacement not only results in loss but also creates opportunities to construct new social norms through interactions and integration stages between returnees and those who stayed at home. However, Grabska's notion of emplacement has been critiqued for downplaying the importance of ancestral homelands, as it challenges the idea of a fixed home and emphasizes the hybridity of place, home and self.

Grabska's (2013: 1142) perspective, while being unique in discussing the aforementioned areas, has been criticized for potentially undermining the significance of an ancestral homeland,

as noted by Smith (2015). Despite the acknowledgment of the fluidity and flexibility of place, the emotional attachment and nostalgia associated with forcibly removed individuals suggest a complexity that challenges the notion that home can be 'anywhere.' Thus, while Grabska's concept of emplacement offers a valuable perspective, it is not without its drawbacks. This prompts a broader consideration of the intricate relationship between displacement, identity and the concept of home.

Tribal Sovereignty

Cobb (2005) explains that tribal sovereignty resonates with the concept of sovereignty of nations; this involves a nation's determination to self-govern and to control all aspects of its society. Tribal nations are culturally distinct groups with recognizable governments and defined territories (Cobb, 2005 p. 118). Cobb (2005) explains that the concept historically and legally recognizes Indigenous peoples' pre-existing sovereignty prior to the establishment of colonial or national governments. This allows tribal governments to have the authority to establish their governance systems, including legislative, executive, and judicial branches, and enact laws and regulations that apply within their territories. This may include the creation of tribal constitutions, codes, and ordinances (Cobb, 2005). Tribal sovereignty extends to the lands traditionally occupied or reserved for Indigenous tribes, often called Indian reservations or tribal lands in the United States. Tribes can assert jurisdiction over these territories, including land use, natural resource management, and environmental protection.

Cobb (2005) further explains that tribal sovereignty encompasses preserving and promoting Indigenous cultures, languages, traditions, and spiritual practices. Tribal governments have the authority to safeguard cultural heritage and regulate activities impacting tribal identity and cultural resources. Tribal nations are recognized as sovereign entities with a government-to-

government relationship with federal, state, and local governments. This relationship entails consultation, negotiation, and collaboration on matters of mutual interest, including resource management, law enforcement, and economic development.

Spruhan (2007) submits that tribal governments have the authority to determine citizenship criteria and membership eligibility for individuals belonging to the tribe, often based on lineage, descent, or tribal enrollment criteria established by tribal law. Tribal governments enjoy sovereign immunity from certain forms of legal liability and lawsuits, similar to the immunity afforded to state and federal governments. This protection shields tribes from lawsuits seeking monetary damages or injunctive relief in many circumstances.

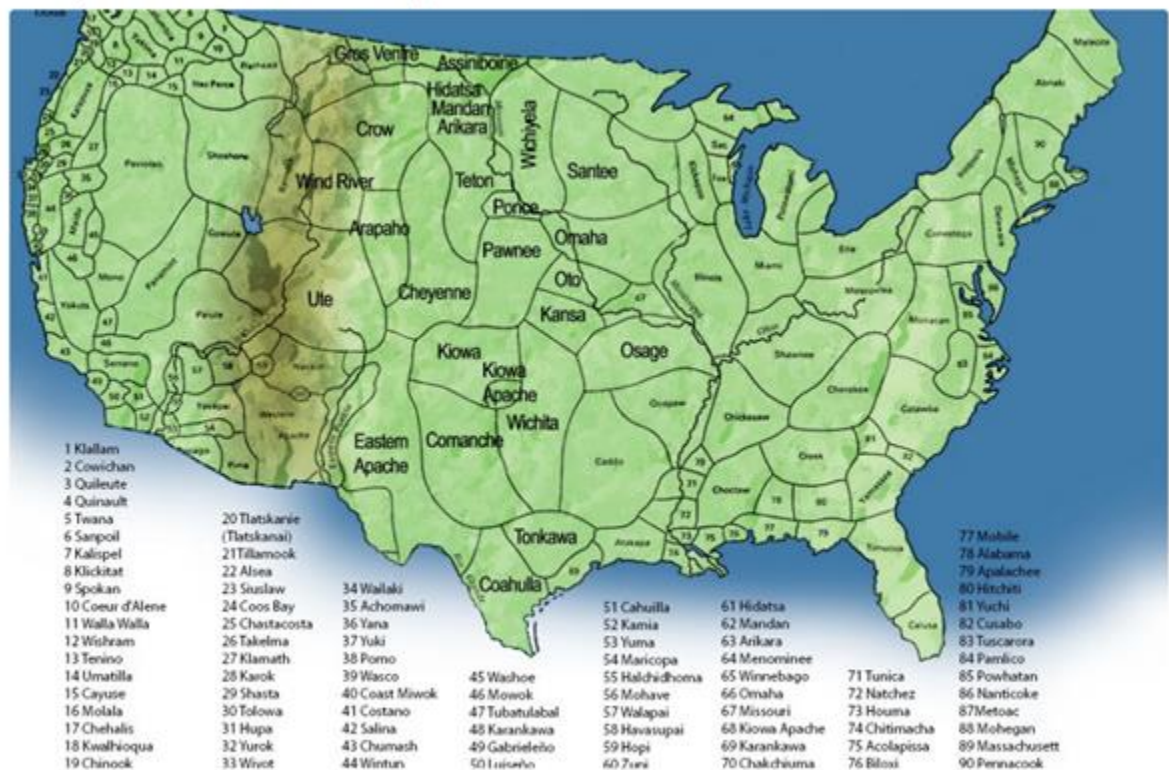
However, Kauanui (2008) explains that the diachronic account of Hawaii's colonization is deftly recounted right from its interactions with the Western powers to the annexation of the island by the United States which resulted in the loss of Native sovereignty and the marginalization of the Kanaka Maoli people. While tribal sovereignty is important for the existence of tribal nations, many scholars have argued against tribal sovereignty (Riley, 2007). Riley (2007) argues that tribal sovereignty must be protected so as to accommodate the 'differentness' of tribal communities which is a part of liberalism that the United States stands for (p. 799). Riley's argument was against scholars who clamored for the Federal Civil rights law into tribal communities which will limit tribal sovereignty.

Furthermore, Washburn (1989) further states the fact the Supreme Court of the United States had repeatedly upheld the sovereign character of tribal governments in many aspects of their activities where the sovereign power held sway. Like the states, the powers of the Indian tribes have been limited, and their sovereignty has been restricted in some ways. Again, like the states, the Supreme Court acknowledges, recognizes, and upholds their sovereign power in

numerous cases (Washburn, 1989). Indian tribes have a government-to-government relationship with the surrounding states and the federal government.

One striking feature of these studies is that they show how Indigenous people have gradually become marginalized in their ancestral homeland. For instance, the two maps below show the land of tribal nations in the United States before and after colonial rule. It reveals how tribal sovereignty over their territories has been hampered over the period.

Gallery: 1700 North American Indian Tribal Map



What does this map show? (Maps courtesy of David J. Wishart)

12

Figure 2.4: Map showing North America and some ethnic groups prior to colonialism.
Source: https://www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Standing_Bear.pdf

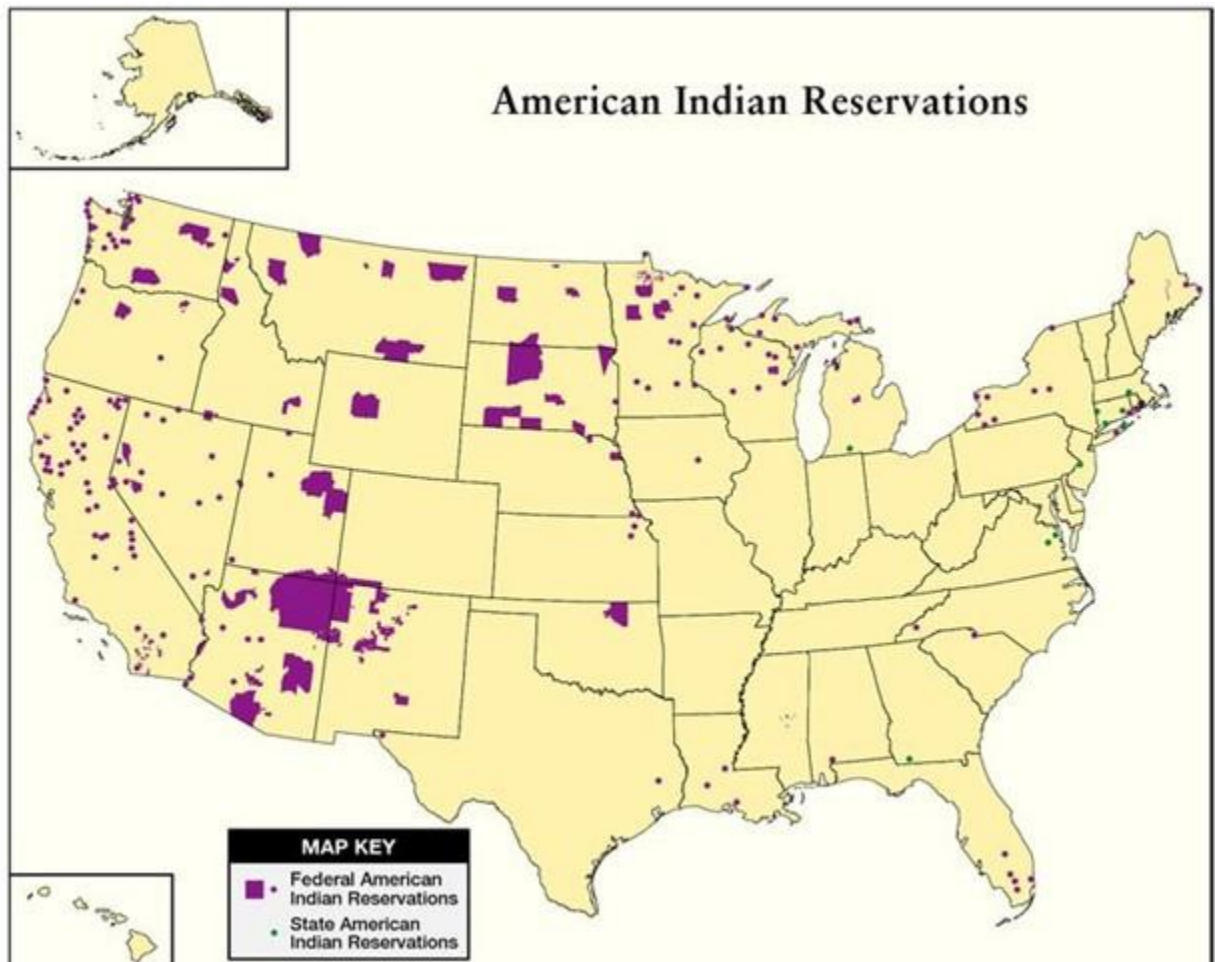


Figure 2.5: Map showing the American Indian reservations in the USA. Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/293648838193492440/>

Local government area administration in Nigeria

While for the Native Americans, tribal sovereignty is sacrosanct, for the Bakassi people, maintaining their Bakassi local government has far reaching consequences for their identity as Nigerians, hence literature on Local Government Administration in Nigeria will be reviewed. The three tiers of government in Nigeria are federal, state and local governments. Oke et al. (2011) note that the local government is subordinate to the state and federal governments since it derives power and authority from them. The local government is headed by a chairman. They

posit that development in Nigeria is hinged on how effective and efficient local government administration is. They suggest that the local government autonomy should include improved revenue allocation as determined by constitutional provisions, the dynamics of political stability, accountability, and transparency. By local government autonomy, they were not referring to this tier being elevated to the sovereign state status since local government autonomy cannot be absolute. Nevertheless, they were talking about grassroots democracy that gives the people adequate opportunities to determine the direction of their life's course. Most local governments are unable to raise funds internally; they exist to pay salaries but are dependent on federal allocation.

Adeyemi (2019) states that states and local governments were designed to bring the government closer to the people to establish proactive participation in governance that is mutual and consensual between the governed and the leaders. Unfortunately, infrastructural development is consolidated in their headquarters instead of the all-encompassing approach, which would prevent stiff competition and struggle for local government creation amongst the various groups that feel cheated. He posits that local government has become a valid ground for increased allocations from the federal government and most importantly, political representations at the National Assembly. His study historicizes local government creation in Nigeria as follows:

the traditional pre-colonial Nigeria (before the arrival of British colonial government); the colonial phase in which Local Government was referred to as Indirect Rule or Native Authority, 1900-1950; the second phase under colonialism was between 1950 and 1966. Also, with the military intervention in politics in 1966, another phase of local government emerged from 1966 to 1976. The era of 1976 to 1983 witnessed the great Local Government Reform which was meant to address the structure and the operation of Local Government in Nigeria, under this reform the nomenclature of local governance changes from Local Administration to Local Government. The military era of 1983 to 1999 also witnessed some reforms in local government administration. Under this phase,

election was conducted into Local Government Council on non-party basis before the birth of the Fourth Republic which run from 1999 till date. (Adeyemi (2019,p.176)

Adeyemi's (2019) research on local government in Nigeria revealed that the current state of local government in Nigeria is characterized by the encroachment of state government in its affairs. In this vein, he recommends a constitution review to empower the local government in terms of the extent of its powers and functions and responsibilities.

A pilot study showed that the Bakassi people had a local government to themselves in the past. However, the locale of the New Bakassi Local Government Area (LGA) is now shared with members of their host community; this puts the Bakassi people at a disadvantage. It is essential to understand that indigeneity is viewed as sacrosanct in line with what is enshrined in the Nigerian constitution, which proscribes discrimination. Therein, it is provided that there should not be the "application of any law... any executive or administrative action that discriminates against a Nigerian citizen solely based on "community, ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion, or political opinion". (Section 42 (1) of the *1999 Nigerian Constitution*). Olakunke et al. (2016) observe that an indigene in the Nigerian vernacular context means a "son of the soil" or a "landowner".

Similarly, Kyernum and Agba (2013) opine that an indigene "is used to refer to an individual who can trace his or her ancestry to a particular place". Section 147 (b) of the *1999 Nigerian Constitution* stipulates that "the President shall appoint at least one Minister from each State, who shall be an indigene of such State". However, it has been observed that there is a lacuna in the Constitution as there is no disambiguation therein of who an indigene really is. Consequently, the political class exploits the control of the economic resources and dictates who

gets what, when and how, at any given time, and justify such with the Indigene Clause and the Federal Character Principle. This is apparently the contention in the New Bakassi LGA.

Abdullahi and Mahuta (2012) state that the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria empowers state governments to create local governments, but this must be done within the boundaries of the principle of separation of powers. Any of such created local governments must be duly approved or recognized by the National Assembly.

Because of political considerations and related reasons, some state governments have gone ahead to create some local governments without seeking the recognition/approval of the National Assembly. The local governments were created to preserve the existing traditional systems and bring government closer to the grassroots but Abdulhamid and Chima (2015) note that the *1979 Nigerian Constitution*, which provides the legal framework for the 1996 reforms, at the same time, put the local government system into a crisis of identity. Hence, the local government in Nigeria has remained an imagined ideal, at best. However, it remains instrumental to democratization because it remains the most viable way to mobilize people for local participation in politics and the dispersal of democratic values. My previous research found that the people were to be relocated to Day Spring Island, the uncaded part of the Bakassi peninsula, for abiotic, economic, and psycho-socio considerations. Day Spring Island had the semblance of its homeland and had the ecosystem to sustain its primary occupation, which is fishing.

In addition, they would maintain the sole occupancy of the Bakassi Local Government, as they solely owned the Bakassi Peninsula. For undisclosed reasons, though, the Nigerian government relocated them to camps. Resettling them in Ikang and moving their local government secretariat to Ikang were complicated issues that possibly led to jettisoning the

already planned relocation to Dayspring Island. This has placed the Bakassi people in a perpetually precarious position with their host community. The locals can enjoy the dual benefits of being from Akpabuyo and posing as indigenes of the New Bakassi Local Government. By default, the Bakassi people must compete for whatever allocations that may come, including the humanitarian aids that are specifically meant for them. This is because the locals pose as IDPs to also obtain the aids. The consequence is a prevailing conflict situation, which is the crux of this present academic enquiry.



Figure 2.6: Map showing the Local Government Areas in Cross River State. Source: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308184570_Careseeking_for_childhood_diarrhoea_at_the_primary_level_of_care_in_communities_in_Cross_River_State_Nigeria/figures?lo=1

From the literature reviewed in the earlier sections of this chapter, the gap that this study fills is related to the prevailing conflict situation in the Bakassi region vis-à-vis the conundrum of

them being IDPs or refugees. Previous studies on the Bakassi case have not independently looked at the resilience of their women and how this can be an index for a conflict situation. Therefore, this work critically examines how displaced Bakassi and Native American women display resilience and leadership capacities in the face of displacement and its attendant challenges.

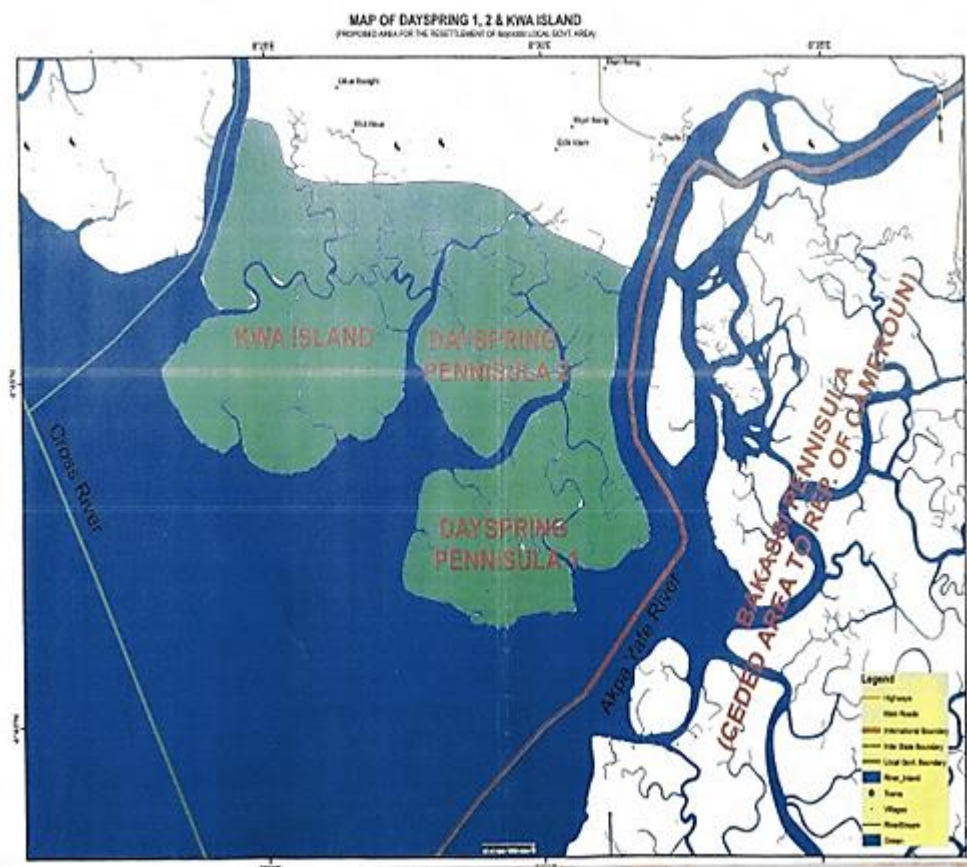


Figure 2.7: Map showing the Bakassi Peninsula and Dayspring Island. Source: Bakassi Youth Foundation

Chapter 3 - Methodology

This chapter discusses the research design I have employed in conducting this study. I presented the qualitative research design I utilized and explained the rationale behind my design choice. The chapter further explains the methodology in line with the theoretical framework. Finally, this chapter explicates how I employed qualitative research methods to analyze the data and presents specific ethical considerations guiding the research.

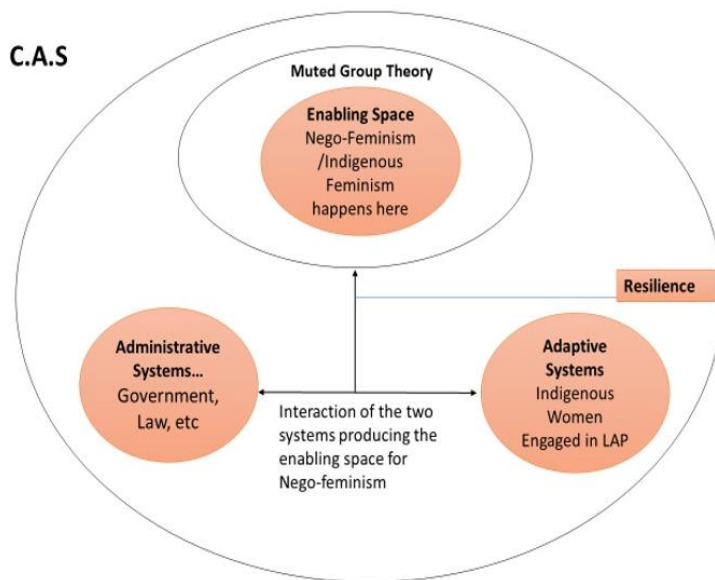
Research Purpose and Questions

This research aims to provide insights into how Indigenous women in challenging circumstances, such as those who suffered colonialism and historically forced removal, enact resilience as a leadership practice. The main research question for this work is: how do Indigenous women describe their experiences enacting resilience as a leadership practice? The main research question is further divided into these two sub-questions below.

- a. How do Indigenous women individually describe their experiences enacting resilience as a leadership practice?
- b. How do Indigenous women collectively describe their experience enacting resilience as a leadership practice?

Theoretical Framework

In this section, I extensively discuss this study's theoretical framework. This study utilized these theoretical lenses: Complex Adaptive System, Leadership as Practice, Negotiated Feminism/Indigenous Feminism, and Muted Group Theory. In addition, given that resilience and indigeneity are central to this research, I also discuss how I framed these concepts in this study.



- Complex Adaptive Systems
- Leadership as Practice
- Muted Group Theory
- Feminism

Figure 3.1: Synergy of the Theoretical Framework

Leadership Theory

Scholars continue to analyze and critique leadership theories. In this session I will give an overview of perspectives from scholars in mainstream leadership theory and unpack the perspectives to leadership that shape this discourse. Dugan's (2017) concept of foundation, or footing, holds that leadership is paradigmatically derived, socially constructed, inherently value-based, and interdisciplinary. These paradigms are linked to positivism, constructivism, critical theory and postmodernism. Positivism believes that there is an objective truth. Constructivism views reality as subjective and experientially constructed. Critical theory holds that the interplay of power relations with the goal of identification and transformation characterizes constructed realities. A postmodern perspective states that the world is complex, chaotic, and fragmented. These paradigms also speak to different theoretical perspectives. In relation to leadership perspectives, we have the entity and constructionist perspectives. The entity viewpoint is objective, while the constructionist angle is subjective(Dugan, 2017).

Western (2019) talks about four leadership discourses that have appeared over time: controller, therapist, messiah, and eco-leader. Ospina & Uhl-Nien (2012) highlight the dichotomy between the entity and constructionist Perspectives. They produce a different orientation to scientific inquiry called positivism or post-positivism. These two approaches represent competing paradigms. They observe that, while the debate is ongoing, scholars contrast each other. The entity perspective is concerned with identifying the attributes of individuals. Here, scholars are divided on how to tackle a construct such as relationality in ways that would not impact the restrictions imposed by post-positivism's tendency to simplify reality. This same contrast is observed among those who hold the constructionist views. Ospina & Uhl-Bien's (2012) work attempts to understand leadership from the post-positivism and the constructionist interpretivism perspectives. Post-positivism has different modernist assumptions, and constructionist interpretivism has different postmodernist assumptions.

Drath et al. (2008) proposed an alternative tripod, namely, Direction, Alignment, and Commitment (DAC), as outcomes of leadership. DAC are integral elements of leadership, which, in my opinion, are largely pragmatic. Their approach is functionalist and uncommon. The outcome of leadership in the tripod is the attainment of shared goals. I will briefly discuss some leadership theories that would be used to frame this work. Complex Adaptive Systems and Leadership as Practice are the two leadership theories that help to frame this discourse.

Complex Adaptive Systems

Complex Adaptive System (CAS) is one of the leadership frameworks that underlines this study. Uhl-Bien and Arena (2017) state that a complex adaptive system is a dynamic system that can adapt to and evolve with a changing environment. This study draws on the scholarship of different scholars who wrote about CAS. CAS concerns self-organizing as a strategy that aids

adaptability. Halladay and Tytel (2011) described self-organizing as active, selective, adaptive, and potentially reactive to positive advancement. This is evident in CAS. In this research, CAS helps to understand how Indigenous people function in the system that marginalizes them and how they assume the agency to advocate their positions. Halladay et al. (2011) opine that when everyone is experiencing a phenomenon, then, that is an example of adaptation in a complex system. This framework emphasizes the importance of human agency in a system that is constantly changing. It posits that, at every moment, humans have the power to influence the system (Halladay et al., 2011). Humans may be unable to control what happens in the system but they can intervene to disrupt current patterns since people choose to act based on what is important to them and what they believe. The lenses in applicable in this research as it accounts for the interconnectedness within a system such that what happens in one part impacts the other. CAS becomes applicable in this study because the Indigenous people continue to push back on unfavorable systems while trying to adapt to situations that they cannot change.

The conditions necessary for creating change in a complex adaptive system, according to Halladay and Tytel (2011), are:

- Container: This refers to the boundaries that bind and hold the system together. They can be social or psychological. This speaks to whatever groups the Indigenous women form to help them function as a community internally.
- Difference: This refers to the potential for interaction and change within the system. In human systems, this includes power, gender and affiliation. This is related to how women form alliances with other groups to advocate what they want.

- Exchanges: This refers to the flow and movement of information or resources between and among system members. This refers to how they share information among themselves.

These are examples of self-organizing in the complex adaptive system. Self-organization is a strategy that emerges in the complex adaptive system to prevent disintegration. I also think self-organizing is a survival strategy to adapt to a complex system. With specific reference to this study, I examine how these women are mobilizing themselves to adapt, survive and thrive in challenging situations, regardless of their intersectionality.

Muted Group Theory

The muted group theory, propounded by Ardener (2005), features in his seminal paper: “Belief and the Problem of Women”. In the essay, the challenges women encounter are buttressed. The challenges are analytical and technical dilemmas (Tiger et al., 2007; Mahrukh et al., 2017). Ardener (2005) explains that women are often ignored and refused the right to speak. This refusal is where the theory gets the paradigm muted. Within the paradigm, women are still recognized as catalysts for shaping society, even in a patriarchal setting. In such societies, the language structures within society are shaped by men's experiences and their perceptions. Citing Ardener, Lewin (2009) notes that “in these terms if the male insight yields a dominant structure, the female one is a muted structure”. In other words, the muted theory posits that women are muted in a male-dominated society because their perceptions differ from those of the men and the differences are well-underscored by role ascription based on gender dichotomy, which effectively assigns the nature of work each is entitled to (Kramarae, 1981). This accounts for why women perceive the world differently from men and why men do likewise. In some

societies, female refugees are not authorized to work outside the house like the men. This, in effect, limits their verbal communication and experiences, which do not extend beyond their understanding in private spaces. The muting process is a socially shared occurrence that presupposes a communal understanding of who is in control and who is not (Gendrin, 2000). If the issue of power in society is considered, the power that lies with the men is almost absolute. Hence, power is not equitably distributed. Overall, the effect is that some may have privileges over others because of the lopsidedness in authority and agency. This situation mirrors the Darwinian survivalist perspective; only this time, the less powerful remain quiet or muted. Indigenous women have muted experiences, predicated on their intersectionality of being Indigenous and women. Following this this research is designed to get their perspectives.

Feminism

In discussing Feminist Leadership Theory (FLT), it is pertinent to discuss feminism as the underpinning ideological movement for FLT. Feminism is an attempt to respond to male predominance dialectically. Raina (2020) states that Feminism is “a wide range of political movements, ideologies, and social movements that share a common goal to define, establish, and achieve political, economic, personal, and social equality of sexes” (p. 3372). This implies that the core of feminism is the emancipation of women. The goal is to establish equality or even equity for women in every sphere of life and create opportunities for them to thrive by making available resources that men can access.

Feminism is a movement that started during the period of Enlightenment in the 18th century. Its core at that time included rights for women to own land, get a divorce from marriage, and freedom of suffrage. From the time of the early Greek philosophers, Plato has observed that

women have natural capacities like men. This view was rejected; however, in the period of the Enlightenment philosophers like John Start Mill. John Mill's, *Legal Subjection of Women* (1869) and Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) awakened the movement for the advocacy of women's rights. It is important to state, at this point, that feminism came in waves. Pagila (2008) states that the first wave of feminism resulted in their courageously demanding fairness and justice for white women. This they did by speaking up against laws that prevented women from owning property. In time, they went ahead and demanded reform of those laws. Hence, the first wave was seen as liberal feminism and gave rise to the second wave.

Socialist feminists, such as Rosa Luxemburg and, in particular, Alexandra Kollontai and Emma Goldman, were the major proponents of the second wave. They fought both politically and in their own private lives for women's right to abortion, divorce , and non-legislative partnership —and against sexism, both in bourgeois societies and within the socialist circles. Kroløkkeet et al. (2006) stated that the second wave was highly theoretical and had affiliations with the academy. As argued by Pagila (2008), the third wave took different stance on issues. They are also defined as radical feminists. Pagila (2008) says they could be referred to as girl feminism, and they are not one by many. “Thus, third-wave feminisms are defined not by common theoretical and political standpoint(s), but rather by the use of performance, mimicry, and subversion as rhetorical strategies” (Pagila, 2008, p.18). Pagila argued that Hilary is an imperfect feminist since all her achievements had been traced to her husband. She asserts that feminism was gradually losing its ground, but Hillary Clinton's candidacy for the presidency of the USA re-energized this movement. Since feminism ensures that women have the same resources as men, feminist theories account for how women lead. They address how women

should not be exempted from holding leadership offices, just as men have had such opportunities. Having discussed various waves of feminisms, I must state that this study draws from Indigenous feminism and nego-feminism.

Indigenous Feminism

Whitlow (2022), an Indigenous woman in North America, talks about how Indigenous feminism accounts for the experiences of the Native American people. Western feminism speaks to white women's concerns. Western feminism is about rights, while Indigenous feminism is about responsibilities. They are unique approaches to addressing situations of people from different demographics. She says that Indigenous feminism is based on the need to serve and empower tribal communities, tribal sovereignty and women empowerment and address sexism. In the same vein, African feminism has a nexus with Indigenous feminism which we have considered in this part.

In explaining Indigenous feminism in the American context, she states the intersectionality of her positionality. By this, she is referring to being a Native who has had historical exposure to forced removal and colonization and as a woman with unique experiences. Historically, for the Cheyenne people who were tribe members, women's roles were to rule the camps, propel men to necessary duties and check their judgments. However, colonialism changed this. Some Native American tribes, like the Navajo, were matrilineal. These roles diminished with colonization and patriarchy. Ramirez (2007) asserts that Indigenous feminism accounts for the similar experiences of Indigenous women all over America; it is intersectional and asserts that the relationships between race, ethnicity, gender roles, and class in North America, from colonialism and after the era, are to be examined as a means of unpacking the feminist praxis.

Anderson (2020) posits that Indigenous feminism is against the exploitation of Indigenous people's lands, white supremacy, and patriarchy. Movements, such as Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in North America (MMIW), encompass the tenets of Indigenous feminism. Such groups are responding to matters, such as violence, and advocating for the well-being of Indigenous women. (Leigh, 2009). According to the 2016 Urban Indian Health Institute Report, as of 2016, the National Crime Information Center has reported 5,712 cases of missing American Indian and Alaska Native women and girls. Strikingly, the U.S. Department of Justice's Missing Persons Database has only reported 116 cases. The majority of these murders are committed by non-Native people on Native-owned land. The reports also state that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention had reported that murder was the third-leading cause of death among American Indian and Alaska Native women and that rates of violence on reservations could be up to ten times higher than the national average. Therefore, Indigenous women were targeted by non-Indigenous people. Hence, Indigenous feminism addresses these concerns. A significant characteristic of Indigenous feminism is its dedication to social justice and community collaboration, which aligns with the Indigenous values of collective well-being and tribal sovereignty. In a broader context, the main goal is liberation from systemic inequalities.

Nego feminism

Native American communities are high context cultures (Pratt, 2017); similarly, African cultures are high-context (Afrouzi, 2021). High context cultures have such features as communalism, collectivism, respect for elders and indirect communication. The opposite of high context culture is low context culture. Low context culture is obtainable in the US; it is characterized by individualism and the speaker bears the responsibility to make the listener

understand the information. In high context cultures, relationships within the family and community are cherished. Since this research is about Indigenous people, literature from Indigenous scholars was utilized. The literature used in this work is from Indigenous scholars. Nego-feminism, as propounded by Nnaemeka (2004), and decolonization (Smith, 2015) are essential frames from Indigenous scholars adopted in this study. It is pertinent to note that to understand and appreciate research of this nature that uses African theories, one that puts on an Afrocentric lens, Asante Molefe states, "Afrocentricity is a paradigmatic intellectual perspective that privileges African agency within the context of African history and culture trans-continentially and trans-generationally. This means that location quality is essential to any analysis involving African culture and behavior, whether literary or economic, political or cultural" (Asante, 2013, p.2). This lens acknowledges methodologies such as oral traditions, cites African Scholars and does not subject African research to Eurocentric and hegemonic standards. African culture, in my response, will specifically speak to sub-Saharan Africa. Prominent African philosophers like Mbiti (1990) posits that African culture is homogeneous and heterogeneous. This means that African culture is unified and diverse at the same time. The core or the essence is the same across African cultures, but the expressions may differ. For example, as a result of language differences, people who speak Swahili in Kenya or Igbo in Nigeria will give the same meaning to their worship of ancestors; the existence of polytheism in all African cultures is a reference point. Another essential aspect of African culture is that it is rooted in the African value of communalism. No wonder Mbiti (1990) says "I am because we are, because we are, therefore I am". In Africa, the individual does not exist in isolation; what affects the individual affects the entire community. People can come together to solve their problems. In African culture, the family is revered as a part of the larger community, and women care for the

home. This responsibility of women to their families and community makes African feminism, or even Indigenous feminism, unique.

To date, feminism is not a word those African women, even the most educated ones, use freely. For them, it connotes negativity or an abandonment of their primary responsibilities, which include taking care of their husbands, childbearing etc. They see feminism as anti-African. It was these kinds of negative connotations that gave rise to African feminism. Within this paradigm, we focus on nego-feminism, womanism, motherism, and African womanism are those strands of African feminism. African feminists advocate the rights of their men, too! African feminists like Oyewumi (2016) opine that gender is a Western term and argue that, in precolonial Africa, women did not suffer like their Western counterparts. They were revered and treated as queens and princesses. They fought wars and still took care of their families.

Nnaemeka (2004), the proponent of Nego-feminism, developed this strand to suit the African context. Its tenets are drawn from the principles of the African culture of shared value, negotiation and compromise. She states: “It knows when, where and how to detonate patriarchal land mines; it also knows when, where, and how to go around patriarchal land mines. In other words, it knows when, where, and how to negotiate with or around patriarchy in different contexts” (Nnaemaka 2004, p. 388). In the line of my work, when I lead a team to communities to drill boreholes, I take a step back when kola nut is presented to us as a way to welcome us. Instead, a male member of my team breaks the kola. This is because, in the Igbo culture, women do not break the kola nut. This approach has helped to reduce needless issues that would have disrupted the project. This is what Nego-feminism is all about. It is a valuable framework for distilling how women operate in Africa and Indigenous communities. This theory relates to community/organization development and their partnerships in that the goal is to drive change

and alter the existing status quo. My understanding as a researcher is that I am looking out for the unique ways in which women navigate patriarchy. I am interested in how women, a minority group, exercise leadership.

Considering the above, the theory frames my approach to data analysis by providing in-depth and unique insights into the strategies women are applying to enact leadership in a patriarchal system and under-challenging positions they may find themselves. This framing captures the women's daily life activities as well as their engagement with impeding forces. This work is interested in the nuances that are present within Indigenous communities. The nuances need not necessarily be radical or disruptive since significance is not tied only to prominence. It is that which is profound, subtle and sublime. I will be using a tripodal model to look at how the women are engaged regularly as part of daily living (leadership as practice); how they engage with impeding forces to bring about the interaction, that is the adaptive and administrative spheres, which eventually results in producing an environment for nego-feminism. Nego-feminism, according to Nnaemaka, reflects two aspects of African culture. The first is negotiation, while the second is non-ego. Non-ego means that the women do not affirm their ego; instead, they are altruistic.

Leadership as Practice (LAP)

Raelin's (2011) Leadership as Practice (LAP) suggests that leadership evolves as people carry out day-to-day activities. It involves taking action to solve problems regardless of occupying a traditional leadership position. From this perspective, we can focus on mundane leadership practices, beginning from what happens within an organization, rather than providing abstract explanations of performative ideals. In other words, leadership occurs as practice. By practice, Raelin refers to the collective and cooperative efforts among the participants who

choose to achieve their desired outcomes through their rules. Nevertheless, the goal is the outcomes and the activities or actions leading up to them.

Carroll et al. (2008) submit that LAP opposes the competency logic. They further state that this approach will help us understand how leadership activities emerge and how institutionalized notions of leadership are integrated into organizational systems. This research aligns with their submission that competencies do not alone determine effective practice. In addition, Crevani (2010) argues that leadership should focus on daily interactions and not on individuals as leaders. The present study will focus on the day-to-day activities of women and how they reflect leadership qualities as they go about them. One does not have to hold a position of authority to exhibit true leadership qualities. In a sense, women are naturally charismatic. They perform their roles as mothers and as wives. In so doing, they demonstrate the qualities that good leaders strive to attain. Hence, LAP sees the individual traits and can be practiced in different contexts. Coghlan & Holian (2021) submit that insider action research is a methodology for doing research on Leadership as Practice. Insider action research refers to a situation where members of an organization conduct an inquiry into their problems. They further explain that in the LAP lens, researchers must examine what happens as leadership practice in the formal leadership contexts to unpack leadership. Using that context as a proxy, we shall investigate how women, who have experienced the dislocation caused by colonialism, demonstrate leadership traits in everyday situations.

The resilience they exude as they do so is an essential aspect of this research, which is accommodated resilience theory. Southwick et al. (2017) link resilience to leadership, describing it as “the ability to regain balance following exposure to an adverse event or events”. They

further state that a resilient person can thrive in adversity. This is the crux of this research. We are looking at resilient women who, despite their circumstances, retain their agencies without being antagonists of the societal frame even though they may give in sometimes. As long as they pick themselves up and face the world squarely, they remain beacons worthy of emulation by leaders who contend with different situations and setbacks within the macro-leadership spheres.

Carroll et al. (2008) emphasize that the conceptualizations of leadership often submerge the functionality in many societies. While several theories and works often focus on the rightness and wrongness of the meaning of leadership, the concept is often overlooked as a practice that could become performative in everyday life, even on the margins (Carroll et al., 2007).

Leadership as a Practice (LAP) was espoused by Carroll et al. (2007) when they argued that leadership exceeds the plain understanding of competency. They rather focus on leadership as practice in all forms. This understanding makes leadership a performative scene of everyday life. However, there is a tendency to often accept the margin as a space for socially invisible groups who could become antagonistic in society and often without leadership. This view, often taken literally, is a flawed understanding of leadership, and as expressed by Tchoumi (2020), leaders who emerge on the marginality of spaces are exemplary as they seek to go beyond the prejudices of the status of the group. This view is supported by the submission of Fathi (1968) on the role of leadership in directing changes among marginalized groups and provides a basis for the argument that leadership in the margins is often neglected because its positionality can lead to substantial changes among the groups. While the argument laid out by Fathi (1968) could be justified, there is a need to conceptualize marginality in order to understand leadership among marginalized groups critically. Marginality is a difficult concept to define or explicitly explain in any term as its usage is dependent on its use (Yudice, 1989). However, two main identifiable

features of marginality, liminality and otherness, are integral to the discourse of its positionality to the 'marginalized' in any situation. On the one hand, liminality has become the center of discussion of marginalized groups since Turner (1967) espoused the work of van Gennep (1909) on liminality. This was at the heart of Thomassen's discussion (2014), which critically suggests that marginalized groups are often in between in many instances. What is liminality? How does it concern marginalized groups? What importance does liminality have in marginalized groups? How can the understanding of liminality foster the discourse of leadership among marginalized groups?

The concept of liminality refers to a transitional stage or condition characterized by ambiguity, fluidity and uncertainty. Liminality is often described as the "betwixt and between" state where individuals or groups are neither fully part of one social category nor fully part of another. When applied to marginalized groups, such as ethnic minorities, liminality takes on particular significance. As such, women from marginalized groups find themselves caught in between society and other forces. Such groups, like Native Americans and smaller Indigenous groups like the Bakassi, fall under this category. Beech (2011) explains that liminality could easily manifest in marginalized groups often through social exclusion where the people are situated on the margins of society and face barriers to full social participation and inclusion. This social exclusion can result in a liminal status where individuals or groups feel neither fully integrated into mainstream society nor entirely accepted within their own communities (Whittle et al., 2009). While liminality appears to be ambiguous, Beech (2011) explains that it has characterized marginality and redefined what the identity of the margins means through the roles it plays among marginalized groups.

Firstly, liminality can be crucial in forming identity among marginalized groups. Beech (2011) explains that liminality aids identity reconstruction among hitherto existing but ambivalent groups. Individuals or groups navigating marginalized or stigmatized identities may experience a sense of ambiguity or fluidity as they negotiate between multiple social identities (Thomassen, 2014). This liminal identity may involve a process of self-discovery and self-definition that challenges dominant narratives and social norms.

Secondly, Azubuike (2018) states that marginalized groups often inhabit transitional spaces or environments that are neither fully public nor fully private. In her research on the Bakassi, she espouses the transitional spaces of the Indigenous people whose ancestral home had been taken from them. These spaces may serve as sites of resistance, empowerment and community-building which allow marginalized individuals to assert their agency and challenge dominant power structures (Beech, 2011).

Thirdly, Beech (2011) submits that liminality often manifests in marginalized groups' cultural expressions and practices. Cultural hybridity, or the blending of diverse cultural elements, is often a characteristic of liminal spaces and identities, as found in her research on the Bakassi people in Nigeria. Marginalized communities may draw upon multiple cultural traditions, languages and symbols to create new forms of cultural expressions that reflect their unique experiences and perspectives (Beech, 2011).

Finally, Liminality can catalyze political mobilization and social change among marginalized groups (Azubuike, 2018). Individuals or communities occupying liminal spaces may be more inclined to challenging existing power structures and advocate their rights and

interests. Political movements and activism often emerge from the liminal spaces of marginalized communities that are seeking to address social inequalities and injustices.

Overall, the liminality of marginalized groups reflects the complex and dynamic nature of social identity, exclusion, and resistance. By recognizing and understanding the liminal experiences of marginalized communities, it becomes easy to work on the diversity and resilience of human societies and work towards creating more inclusive and equitable environments for all. While this liminality has become a solid perspective for viewing marginality and marginalized groups, a challenge comes with it. Liminality is critical to understanding marginalized groups but also provides the need for resilience, which is less discussed as the feature that allows marginalized groups to survive in their state of betwixt and between. Instead, many scholars of liminality focus on the positionality of the concept. On the other hand, marginality entails the position of 'otherness' of some groups which could pertain to their political, social, religious and other classes. The endangered class becomes marginalized in society. In many instances, this position leads to the querying of other societal groups. As such, the marginalized view 'otherness' as the basis for their stance of marginality in society.

In the varying dispositions of marginalized groups, Fathi (1968) submits that leaders emerge to provide the required direction and lead real change. "Otherness" refers to the social and cultural construction of difference, whereby certain individuals or groups are perceived as fundamentally different or alien from the dominant norms or mainstream society (Jensen. 2009). This concept is often employed in social theory to analyze power dynamics, identity formation, and processes of inclusion and exclusion. When applied to marginalized groups, "otherness" plays a significant role in shaping their experiences and social interactions (Jensen, 2009, p.6).

Marginalized groups are often "othered" through the construction of differences based on factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, disability, or socioeconomic status. These groups are viewed as deviating from the perceived norm or standard of the dominant group, leading to their marginalization and stigmatization.

Otherness is closely linked to power dynamics as "othering" reinforces existing societal hierarchies and inequalities (Anderson, 2003). Fangen (2007) avers that marginalized groups are often positioned as inferior or subordinate to the dominant group, resulting in exclusion from decision-making processes, access to resources, and opportunities for social mobility. Otherness contributes to the social exclusion of marginalized groups whereby they are systematically excluded from full participation in social, economic, and political life. This exclusion may take various forms, including segregation, discrimination, and violence, which serve to reinforce the marginalization of these groups (Jensen, 2009). Varghese & Kumar (2022) explain that otherness shapes the identity formation of marginalized individuals and communities as they navigate the experience of being perceived as different or "other" within society. Marginalized groups may develop collective identities in response to their marginalization by drawing on shared experiences, values, and cultural practices to assert their sense of belonging and resilience. In a more critical look, otherness intersects with other axes of identity, such as race, gender, sexuality, and class, to produce complex and intersecting forms of marginalization (Varghese & Kumar, 2022). Intersectionality highlights how individuals and groups experience multiple dimensions of otherness simultaneously, with their identities and experiences shaped by intersecting systems of oppression and privilege. Despite the challenges posed by otherness, marginalized groups often engage in acts of resistance and solidarity to challenge dominant narratives and assert their rights and dignity (Jensen, 2009). This may involve collective

organization, activism, and cultural production to challenge stereotypes, promote social change, and build inclusive communities. As such, otherness plays a central role in the discourse of the marginality of specific individuals and groups within society by shaping their identities, experiences, and opportunities. Understanding and challenging the processes of othering is crucial for advancing social justice, inclusion, and equity for marginalized communities, especially its leadership.

Resilience

The resilience frame in this research aligns with Leadership as Practice (LAP) as explained above. I am interested in how Indigenous women demonstrate agency. Fleming & Ledogar (2008) state that resilience has been used in research in the last 40 years for different purposes with the initial focus on the invincible child. But psychologists realized that what builds resilience seems to originate from the individual; this led to a search for different factors that can promote resilience. Connor et al. (2003) state that resilience embodies the personal qualities that enable one to thrive in adversity. Resilience has been defined differently by various scholars. Resilience can be defined as the ability to regain balance following exposure to an adverse event. It is not a terminal state of being but a process of adaptation and growth within a risky landscape. (Southwick et al., 2017) Resilience is individuals' capacities to navigate their way into psychological, social, and physical resources that sustain their well-being and the individual and collective capacity to negotiate these resources to be provided and experienced in meaningful ways (Ungar, 2008). Fleming & Ledogar (2008) state that there has to be the presence of adversity for the term, 'resilience', to be used, as this differentiates it from normal or normative development. Resilience is an essential factor in the survival of vulnerable people like the Indigenous people, migrants, and refugees. By vulnerability, I am speaking of people who have

been marginalized and made invincible by the system. In this respect, Lemus-Way & Johansson (2020) studied the resilience of Mexican migrant women heading to the US through Mexico. Their study explored how migrant women from Mexico, who were vulnerable, demonstrated strong will and resilience. Authors like Hawkes et al. (2020) study the characteristics of women from displaced backgrounds, and they submit that sense of security and ties to their own cultures are factors that encouraged resilience. It is proposed that Native customs served as the "glue" that keep them together and give them a sense of individuality and self-worth as they adapt to their new environments (Sesay, 2015). Maintaining ties with cultures of origin provide informal support networks (Chung et al., 2013) by allowing for the exchange of cultural artifacts, languages, and culinary items. By participating in these custom-based activities, they can express their culture and preserve their sense of belonging to their home country (Moio, 2008). These positions speak to community resilience. Given that the Indigenous communities that this research focus on are high context cultures, community resilience is central to the framing of resilience. Resilience is therefore beyond being a trait, it is their commitment. According to Usher et al., (2021), community resilience pertains to increased community agency and connectedness between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups. Examples of how community resilience shows up include efforts to revitalize language, culture, history and healing (Estes et al., 2023). Infact the strength of the community and culture is a foundation of resilience for Indigenous perspectives.

The lack of these customary, unofficial and social supports were found to be significant factors in loneliness and poor mental health (Chung et al., 2013). It was also acknowledged that maintaining ties with the culture of origin played a crucial continuous role in instilling respect for cultural customs in their children and the larger neighborhood. This gave them a strong

feeling of purpose in their new lives and a foundation of hope, which improved their mental health (Darychuk & Jackson, 2015). Children and young ones are instilled with the cultural values of their home country to maintain cultural orientations and preserve the migrants' sense of belonging.

Having done a robust discussion of the theoretical framework of this research. I will explain how these theories interact to help answer the research questions. Complex adaptive system will help unpack how they interact between the administrative and entrepreneurial spaces to create the enabling space with evident feminist features. Resilience, as leadership practice, is also evident in the entrepreneurial aspect of the complex adaptive system. indigenous feminism/nego-feminism accounts for their demonstration of leadership in the third space. Muted group theory will accord them the opportunity to share their authentic story given that this research is focusing on women's experiences.

Methodological Framework

My research questions informed the methodology. I did not just choose them based on my preference for the qualitative or quantitative paradigm. Given the nature of this research, the qualitative paradigm will be adopted. The justification for adopting this method is that it speaks to the research questions. It is also selected because it allows for in-depth and nuanced data collection and analysis.

Qualitative Paradigm

Qualitative inquiry was utilized for this study as it allowed me to unpack resilience as demonstrated by women. The rationale for adopting the qualitative method is to critically investigate the context of human experiences and how meaning is made from such experiences (Bhattacharya, 2017); the features of qualitative techniques reflected in this study include direct

observation, in-depth interviews with informants, and informal conversations. The qualitative method of inquiry is exploratory in nature. It gives room for one to explore issues deeply and holistically. Adopting qualitative inquiry for this research helped me explore all the possible angles to resilience among women in the selected areas. It also enabled the respondents to respond freely, based on their experiences, and convey their intended meanings with respect to the problem of resilience. Qualitative research is helpful in Indigenous studies as it sets the pace for storytelling and sharing of experiences and perspectives (Kovach, 2020). The type of qualitative analysis used here is narrative inquiry. This exploits the respondents' stories as the major building block for research. In the words of Bhattacharya (2017), "researchers who use narrative inquiry are interested in understanding how people articulate their life experiences in the structure of a story. The story's structure then becomes the points of analysis for a narrative inquiry-driven qualitative researcher".

This study employed semi-structured interviews to elicit narratives from the participants and thematic analysis to analyze the data. The thematic narrative is centered on the life of individuals; it can be referred to as a story. By recollecting and re-enacting these stories, people make meanings out of their lives. The stories are analyzed through inductive procedures to extract the storylines' themes (Flick, 2009). In qualitative inquiries, how data is collected and analyzed follows the same pattern. Bhattacharya (2017) describes qualitative data analysis as inductive or working up from the data. The data collected during the study is chunked or organized into code-fitting themes or subject matters found by researchers during their analysis.

In line with qualitative data analysis, I utilized journaling as the codes used for the data changed or developed over time, based on assumptions and interpretations. However, making connections between the data can be achieved in multiple ways. Some examples provided by

Bhattacharya (2017) are writing reflexively about the patterns or methods of chunking the researcher has used and revisiting the data multiple times to become familiar with the information. This was what I did. Qualitative research analyzes concrete cases in their temporal and local particularities, starting from people's expressions and activities in their local contexts. Therefore, qualitative research can design ways to make meanings of social trends and transform them into research procedures while maintaining the necessary flexibility in its objectives and tasks in the social sciences and other areas of the humanities (Toulmin, 1990). The rationale presented by Toulmin (1990) aligns with my research objectives and makes it more significant to the study. It gives a more precise justification for adopting the qualitative research design for my study.

Methodological Content Framework

The content framework which is the methodology of this study is based on critical theory. Critical theory looks at power relations. Critical theory is a prescriptive, explanatory, practical, and normative theory. These features function at the same time. Critical theory identifies 'false' or 'fragmented' consciousness that has brought an individual or a social group into relative powerlessness or power and questions the legitimacy of acquired power (Cohen et al., 2007). It investigates repression, lack of freedom of expression, ideology, participation (or not), representation (or not), inclusion or exclusion, and protection of interests. It underscores the increasing multiple identities of individuals, which can be grounds for discrimination, such as race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, skin color, disability, and minority identity. These kinds of oppression intersect in terms of effects on persons and societies. In other words, it explains what is wrong with the current social reality, identifies the actors that can change it, and provides clear norms for criticism and practical goals for social transformation. Its intention is

not merely to give an account of society and behavior but to realize a society based on equality and democracy for all the people. Since conflict and inequality are crucial in understanding the dynamics of human relations, critical theory seeks to uncover the interests at work in particular situations and interrogate the legitimacy of those interests by identifying the extent to which the values of equality and democracy undergird them. Its intention is transformative, that is, to transform society and individuals to social democracy by improving quality of life, be it in the workplace or social setting. This will contribute to eliminating or reducing inequality, preferential treatment and discrimination. Indigenous Scholars tend towards community resilience. This approach favors moving beyond the individual and the adaptation of the community to adversity (Usher et al., 2021 and Antonio et al., 2020). This switches the discourse from loss to a strength-based resilience standpoint as an agency. They assert that community resilience encapsulates cultural practices, historical experiences and social structures. This stems from transgenerational grief and loss, shared resources developed through cultural practices, spirituality, family strength, support network, elders' wisdom, and identity in fostering resilience. The nuances constitute critical aspect of framing this research.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry focuses on the story as the basic unit of analysis. In other words, researchers who use narrative inquiry are interested in understanding how people articulate and structure their life experiences in a story. The primary purpose of narrative inquiry is for participants to provide the researcher with their life experiences through rich stories. As Kim (2015) puts it, the story's structure becomes the point of analysis for narrative inquiry-driven qualitative research. In Kim's (2015) view, narrative inquiry is an interdisciplinary form of qualitative research used to explore the narratives or stories of participants. Kim documents her

own story of becoming a narrative inquirer, sharing the challenges and struggles that she experienced during her academic journey. In her own words, “by sharing my own vulnerabilities, I wanted to let readers know that narrative inquiry begins with oneself, one’s untold story, and one’s way of being” (Kim, 2015). Narrative inquiry-based research should read like a well-written story in which readers are immersed, consequently losing track of time while reading. The story should appear so good that people keep thinking about it even long after they are done reading it. Narrative inquiry is one of the methodologies that make it possible to hold readers spellbound. Narratives entail recounting and organizing events in a detailed manner in the form of a story. Also, the etymology of narrative is crucial as it has two meanings in Latin: ‘to tell’ (*narrare*) and ‘to know’ (*gnarus*). So, a narrative is a way of telling as well as a way of knowing. Although narratives and stories are everywhere, knowing how to theorize them to make a difference is more important. The process of underscoring ‘how’ in narrative inquiry is very important but should not precede understudying ‘why’. The thought of ‘why’ gives the inquirer a purpose. Having the purpose of conducting a narrative inquiry gives the inquirer the significance of what they do. Finding meaning in what they do will be an intrinsic motivating factor that will not only enhance the inquiry but also make conducting narrative research really interesting. Genres of narrative research include autobiographical narrative inquiry (made up of autobiographies and autoethnography), biographical narrative inquiry (made up of life story/life history, oral history), literary-based narrative inquiry (short story, creative nonfiction, fiction and novel) and visual-based narrative inquiry (photographic narrative, photovoice, archival photographs and digital storytelling). The genre used in this study is biographical narrative inquiry.

Regarding data collection methods, Kim (2015) describes narrative inquiry as the process of excavating stories. To collect data, the researcher must get into a narrative thinking mode. Interview logistics like informed consent, confidentiality, sampling/saturation, trust, and rapport must be considered in interviewing participants. The interview process should have various phases, such as developing rapport, building trust, while the art of observation and attention is also important. One question that should moderate the process is whether some interviewers are naturally better, or everyone is equally adept at using these techniques. Kim (2015) posits that data analysis and interpretation in narrative inquiry is a way of ‘flirting’ with data. Kim (2015) opines that when you ‘flirt’ with someone, you are not committed to that person, not just yet. You may flirt with different individuals until you find out who matches you best. When you flirt, you are in charge as you are curious and skeptical at the same time; you explore possibilities, anticipate surprises and imagine the best. We can apply the sense of flirtation when working on narrative inquiry with different ideas and varied data. We can be excited, perplexed, surprised or disappointed by what we see in those ideas. As a psychoanalyst, Phillips says, ‘Flirtation keeps things in play’. We can keep playing with new ideas until we settle on one. Models of narrative data analysis include Polkinghorne’s analysis of narratives, Mishler’s model of narrative analysis, and Labov’s three-dimensional model. According to Bhattacharya (2017:93), “Narrative inquiry offers a lens, a framework to the study of storied lives. One way to think of narrative inquiry is to think of how participants use stories to interpret their experiences with the world, of a certain event, or the world in general”.

The major obstacle facing narrative inquiry is that interviewers get excited about narrative inquiry by thinking that it is just storytelling which anybody can do. Then, they do not have confidence in it as a rigorous research method. The assumption that narrative inquiry is

easy is pervasive. Another aspect of this methodology that tends to be overlooked is inquiry. Just forming stories to make other researchers raise their eyebrows may not be ethical. However, narrative inquiry has been described as deep, profound and complicated. The process of narrative involves conducting interviews to get first person accounts of lived experiences of people (Breton, 2020)

My biggest takeaway from the discussion on narrative inquiry in the sources cited above is that narrative inquiry revolves around stories and stories are very powerful. From stories, powerful lessons are learned, and rich data is elicited for fieldwork. Stories are about how people make meanings of their lives. It is important to emphasize that stories are not about what others say about something that does not relate to them; they are more about what people have to say about themselves. Since this study focused on getting the daily life experiences of women and how they practice leadership through resilience, the narrative inquiry enabled me to get data in form of stories from the key participants. Stories are very powerful and rich data for analysis which can be derived from listening to lived experiences. In other words, stories are an important aspect of life.

Wang & Geale (2015) state that narrative inquiry was first used as a methodology to describe personal stories of teachers. They further state that, by using narrative inquiry, researchers focus on understanding and presenting real-life experiences through stories and accounts of participants. Wang and Geale assert that the narrative approach allows for a profound description of these experiences, an analysis of the meanings that emanate from participants' experiences and amplifies the voices of people that have been silenced. This methodology allows researchers to present findings that provide deep knowledge of participants' points of view, which, in turn, offers a better understanding of their experiences. Here, the

researcher focuses on participants' personal stories. Narrative inquiry, as adopted and used in this study, identified the predominant themes in the data. Kim (2015) explains that arranging excerpts from the transcript under thematic codes results in the inductive analysis process.

Indigenized Scholarship

Smith et al. (2019) emphasize the importance of understanding and respecting indigenous worldviews, cultural practices and relationships to land and community. The principles in Smith et al. (2019) helped to frame this research. They include positionality and relationships, ethical engagement, decolonizing research practices, cultural competency and community collaboration. Positionality and relationships speak to understanding the researcher's position and responsibilities within the process. I reflected on my position, built relationships with the participants before interviewing them. The basics of ethical engagement negate the historical practice of exploiting Indigenous people and knowledge. Ethical engagement pertains to the stipulated culturally appropriate ways. Decolonizing research practice seeks to empower Indigenous voices and perspectives. Finally, community collaboration involves engaging communities in the research process and encourages reciprocity. I worked with Indigenous scholars to draft the interview questions and recruit participant.

Simpson (2007) argues that the techniques of the representation of Indigenous people and available analysis have been given some justification and make for a form of representation that may move away from 'difference' and attendant containment as a unit of analysis. The author is interested in the way that cultural analysis may look when difference is not the unit of analysis and when culture is seen as a disaggregation of narratives rather than whole units, when proximity to the territory that one is engaging with is as immediate as the self, and what this then does to the question of 'voice'. The argument is that, in such a context of anthropological

accounting, the 'voice' is imbued with sovereignty, which is evident at the level of interlocution, method and textualization. Within Indigenous contexts that are never properly 'post-colonial', the sovereignty of the people we speak of, when speaking for themselves, interrupts the anthropological portraits of timelessness, procedure and function that dominate the representations of their past and, sometimes, their present. Simpson (2007) suggests that knowledge can become the 'feeling side' of recognition that is Native to one's local history and knowledge. Rejections account for the kind of history that tells us something about the way we conceptualize our representations and notions of sovereignty and nationhood, gives us a critique, and moves us away from the statist recognition forms.

How is this Work Situated in Community-engaged Scholarship?

Berger's (2011) concept of engagement provides a framework for analyzing engagement. Berger (2011) opines that we should look at different spheres of engagement within political, social, moral, and even civic engagements. Berger's (2011) analysis of civic engagement differs from political attention. Literally, civics refers to "a city, borough, or municipality" or "of, relating to, or fitting to citizens". However, it has also come to be associated with many other concepts, almost all of which are good. Examples of associated concepts include sociability, altruism and cooperative norms. Many appear to agree that civics opposes narrow individualism, isolationism or an exclusive focus on oneself or one's close friends, even though there is no consensus about the precise definition of the word. Additionally, according to Berger, engagement implies intense interaction which almost everyone wants to foster in some way. It has a plethora of recent coinages like "community engagement", "psychological engagement," "academic engagement," "consumer engagement," "corporate engagement," and even "digital engagement" as near-synonyms. More particularly, involvement denotes activity, focus,

expenditure of energy and a sense of purpose. Giving to advocacy organizations is typically a form of attention-delegation, paying a third party to take care of one's issues.

Political engagement, from this argument, is defined as attentive behavior that directly affects the polity, whether at the local, state or national level or as any "activity that is intended to or has the consequences of affecting the polity, directly or indirectly". It is any "activity that is intended to or has the potential to alter, either directly or indirectly, government action" (Berger, 2011: p. 40), whether at the municipal, state or federal levels. Thus, political engagement includes the majority of the actions that are typically associated with political participation or citizenship, from voting, contacting elected officials, making financial contributions to those officials or interest groups, keeping up with political issues through any media, joining organizations that aim to influence political outcomes, participating in protests or rallies with that same goal, and running for (or holding) political offices. While political involvement, as a specific episode, may involve only political attention, just political activity or both at once; political engagement, as a generalized state, must re-present attention to political issues and processes, as well as any behavior aimed at the actualization of policies, whether at the local, state or national levels.

Watson-Thompson (2015) submits that community-engaged scholarship goes beyond being a methodology; it should be a guiding principle that should be at the center of every research. da Cruz (2018) also asserts that Community-engaged Scholarship (CES) is often recommended for producing knowledge that can solve real-life problems. This is applicable to this study given that we are looking to unpack the resilience of Indigenous women in two distant communities. da Cruz (2018) describes community-engaged scholarship as mutually beneficial

relationships between universities and the communities that produce knowledge to address public issues in our democracy. She further identifies six components of CES; they include:

- i. focus on real-life problems that are defined/by the community;
- ii. scholarly investigation of these real-life social problems;
- iii. community-university partnerships that are collaborative and reciprocal and with which community members have shared authority in defining success;
- iv. generation of knowledge to address and improve public challenges that are collaboratively developed by universities and communities;
- v. utilization of institutional resources and knowledge to address real-life social issues; and
- vi. production of scholarship with relevance to faculty members' research agenda and teaching practice (da Cruz 2018:154).

Moreover, da Cruz (2018) proposes that critical theory should be employed when conducting engaged scholarship. They argue that this is sacrosanct since theories are created for the purpose of liberating oppressed people. The ability to uphold this tenet makes the scholar an activist or, perhaps, a scholar with an agenda. The critical theory perspectives, which this study adopts, are an approach to social philosophy preoccupied with reflective assessment and critique of society and culture to unravel and challenge power structures. This unique theory postulates a more comprehensive means to grasp social reality and diagnose social pathologies. ThompsonIt is characterized not by innate ethical or political values it seeks to assert in the world, but by the comprehension of individual and social life and the social processes that constitute them (Watson-Thompson, 2015). This approach is relevant to this community-engaged research because it will provide a lens to understanding the hidden and unhidden factors that engender resilience and assumption of leadership positions among the female demographics selected for

this study. This theoretical approach is the best fit for this research in order to provide a critique of the nuanced factors seen or unseen as well as to give an understanding of the power relations at play.

Furthermore, Kajner (2013) writes about “dynamic knowledge” as an important element in engaging scholarship, while Boyer (1996) encourages higher educational institutions to get better at the “scholarship of sharing knowledge.” Both Kajner and Boyer talk highly about engaged scholarship but explain it using different words and focus on different areas. For instance, Boyer is critical of engaged scholarship. He uses the example of Isaac Newton, who was preoccupied with the sea and studied astronomy because navigating the sea was the occupation of his time; therefore, knowledge had to be produced for that purpose. He asserts that the academy must be directed toward human ends; for example, the role of the university should be coordinating scholarship for improving human conditions and sustaining the salutary values of communities. Universities should produce knowledge that is useful to human needs. The findings from this research will be helpful in addressing the needs of Indigenous women in positions of internal displacement. Boyer states that the academy must become a more vigorous partner in search of answers to the most pressing social, civic and economic needs. It must affirm its historic appointment with the scholarship of engagement. Boyer’s approach is epistemological; he proposes four paradigms for scholarship. The first is scholarship of discovery which insists that universities, through research, simply must continue to push back the frontiers of human knowledge. The second is the scholarship of integration; this implies an urgent need to place discoveries in broader contexts, create more interdisciplinary conversations and converge several disciplines. The third is scholarship of knowledge-sharing; here, scholars should publish their research and communicate outside the academia. The third is the application

of knowledge to avoid irrelevance, which involves moving from theory to practice and vice versa.

This study adopted Boyer's submission. Both of them refer to useful knowledge that is deeply rooted in the significance of academia. Unlike Kayner's, Boyer's approach is both epistemological and ontological. His dynamic knowledge speaks about how scholars conceptualize and practice a form of engaged scholarship that is emancipatory and transformative for the engagement of higher education and the wider world. Boyer states that humans, whom I suppose he is referring to in his research as "subjects", hold multiple identities and interact with social spaces in different ways. However, these perspectives are always changing. Therefore, it can be said that knowledge is both fluid and ever-changing; it is plural, multiple, complex and shifting; knowledge is socially constructed. This observation is useful in understanding oppression, since scholars know that the subject is constructed through multiple relations and positionalities. The essence of the above is that there are blind spots that lead to practicing transformative and engaged scholarship, which is capable of producing emancipatory knowledge. Transformative engaged scholarship leads to social transformation. It includes the following tenets:

- i. commitment to equality;
- ii. relational dialectic consciousness (inclusion of diverse perspectives);
- iii. dynamic knowledge (as discussed above) that is fluid, temporal and emerges through relations; and
- iv. ontological fluidity (this implies that scholars are shaped by each other, in my words, I call it a complex adaptive system).

Overall, their research on the scholarship of engagement highlights the themes of relevance, collaboration, relational consciousness, inclusion, and sharing (to avoid talking to

yourself alone). Moreover, Post et al. (2016) state that the primary function of engaged scholarship is categorized under participatory epistemology to guide knowledge co-creation to solve problems. This shifts the position of students from knowledge consumers to knowledge producers. It also shifts community groups from being subjects of research or spectators to collaborators in knowledge-generation and problem-solving. I worked with the member population to create the interview questions in line with community engaged research. This research approach requires bringing together academic knowledge with community-based knowledge, eliminating hierarchy and one-way flow of knowledge and facilitating a more networked process for creating knowledge. It is important to state why this method came about. In the 20th century, academic scholars worked solo and interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary knowledge was not evident. People were protective of their disciplines. This became a problem and brought about several issues. Some of the demerits of the model were that people outside the academia could not relate to it and those who needed the information could not access it. However, the engaged scholarship model brings about an epistemic shift; scholars work with members of the community to produce research. Members of the community become parts of the process of creating knowledge, and scholars are now collaborating with each other. The goal of engaged scholarship is to empower communities and intervene in inequalities. Scholar works with the community and not work for the community. In fact, in this model, research is an empowering process and gives room for the community, which is likely most impacted by the phenomena being studied, to contribute meaningfully to solving the problem. This model debunks the idea that the researcher is an expert. Here, the researcher takes the role of the facilitator which involves transforming knowledge into public action to create social impacts. This includes building new social, human, and financial relationships, contributing to policy and

educating students to be engaged and productive citizens. This is the democratic mission of higher education. It has its unique challenges, which include building trust between scholars and communities. Moreover, it does not acknowledge the unique contribution of scholars and there is so much focus on getting published for promotion purposes. In addition, it requires tact and knowledge of human management for the researcher to pull through this process and more funding as it implies longer hours of fieldwork. It is important to note that, according to Van de Ven (2007) there are different forms of engaged scholarship. They include informed basic research, which is like traditional research where the researcher is an outsider; collaborative basic research, which involves sharing power and activities among other researchers and stakeholders; design and evaluation research, which is undertaken to examine normative questions dealing with design/evaluation of policies and, finally, action intervention research which takes the clinical intervention approach to diagnose and treat a problem.

I chose action/intervention research in this study because my role is solution-based. It will be challenging to make progress if I do not work with the community to understand their problems, create solutions and work with them to implement it. These three steps involved in community-engaged research will be helpful in creating sustainable solutions. Scalet et al. (2020) states that community-based participatory research is the approach that is designed to ensure and support structures for participation by communities affected by the issue being studied. It also entails co-learning and reciprocal transfer of expertise, shared decision-making power and mutual ownership of the processes and products of the research enterprise. My methodological approach to research aligns with the continuum of community-engaged scholarship outlined by the Kansas State University's Office of Engagement; it aims to inform, consult, involve, collaborate and create. Currently, my work is at the levels of informing, consulting, involving and collaborating.

I intend to work with community partners, especially Indigenous women in America and Africa. I will involve them in the research. I will ask them the right questions as it would provide the right information for my research.

For research like this that focuses on Indigenous people, building a relationship with them is important. So, I have adopted the principles of community-engaged scholarship. I had informal meetings with Indigenous women in North America and Africa where we brainstormed on the research agenda. I explained what community-engaged research is and encouraged them to take the lead. I spent time building relationships with them. When working with Indigenous people, it is important to be relational as opposed to being extractive. I adopted all the recommendations they made about the interview questions. I worked with the Indigenous women to create the interview questions and recruit participants for this research. They chose the women of influence in their communities that I should interview and I did just that. Their responses enabled me to get rich data for analysis. The interviews were conducted in English and Nigerian Pidgin. I spoke English to the Native American women and the Bakassi people. However, during the interviews, I noticed that some Bakassi women code-switched to Nigerian Pidgin so I joined them to speak Nigerian Pidgin. Using the language of the people is an important element of community-engaged research. Therefore, I retained some of the responses in Nigerian Pidgin; I did not translate them to sustain their meaning. Nigerian Pidgin is a mix of English and some Nigerian languages. It is an everyday language that borrows words from English and local languages. It also conveys the ideologies and experiences of the local people; however, translating them into English may not have the same meaning.

Research Design

As stated earlier, the qualitative method of data collection was utilized in this study. I had an in-depth interview with twelve participants. The one touch point provided rich data for the research. While in qualitative research, it is normal to have multiple touch points, there are instances where the quality of interactions, openness of the participants and depth of information shared in one touch point can provide the rich data for analysis. (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) This approach becomes helpful when dealing with time constraints and limited resources as evident in this research. Subedi (2021) asserts that researchers have the autonomy to determine the number of participants, and this is based on the information sought and data saturation. During conducting the interviews, the participants were open to share, and there were several stimulative responses, in fact cried as they narrated their stories. All these goes to show more than enough data was gotten for analysis. After the interviews were conducted, I did member-checking with the participant to share the findings with them to ensure data trustworthiness. According to research Birt et al. (2016), member-checking is crucial strategy in qualitative to enhance the credibility of the findings.

In order to answer the research questions above about unpacking how Indigenous women enact resilience, narrative inquiry was adopted. Inductive analysis was also used to analyze the data.

Table 3.1: Data Collection Timeline

Date	Data Collection Activity
August 2022- January 2023	• Submitted and received IRB approval for pilot study • Conducted the field work and wrote my analysis of the findings • Building relationships and connecting with Bakassi people in Nigeria and Native American women in USA
February 2023 –July 2023	• Strengthening connections with Indigenous women in Bakassi
August 2023- December 2023	• Took an independent study class on Native American women to understand them better • Strengthening connections with Indigenous women in North America and their allies. • Went to Indigenous activities on campus and in Kansas to gain access and build relationships.
January 2024- March 2024	• Submitted and received IRB approval for this research. • Connected with in-country Bakassi women to recruit participants. • Informal meetings like pre-interviews, lunch, and coffee dates with Native American women in the USA
May 2024	• Member-checking with participants to ensure the credibility of the findings

Preliminary Work/Pilot Findings

Before executing this dissertation, I did a pilot study to help provide direction and a foundation for this research. Hassan et al. (2006) assert that a pilot study is an essential aspect of

a research project that, as a small study, helps provide the groundwork for the research. My findings revealed various levels of marginalization that Indigenous people were struggling with. Resilience was not out of choice but for survival. You either keep going, or you keep going. Giving up is a luxury that they did not have. I became further interested in fully exploring how Indigenous women are resilient, given their intersectionality as women and Indigenous people.

Participants

A total of twelve informants were purposely selected to participate in this research. Selecting the appropriate number of participants is essential for getting rich data in qualitative research. Deardorff (2020) asserts that 12 interviews are sufficient to prevent data saturation yet capture the major themes in a qualitative study. For the purpose of this study, I focused on women who influenced their communities. These categories of women included mothers, community leaders, wives and first daughters who had women looking up to them. The target population was the Indigenous women in North America and Africa, particularly in places that have experienced historical displacement. In this case, the participants were women from Bakassi in Cross River State, Nigeria, and Native American women in the diaspora, particularly in the United States of America. Indigenous women in the US who participated in this study are enrolled in federally recognized tribes.

Participants Selection

This study utilized the purposive sampling technique, which involves deliberately selecting information-rich sources (Demarrais & Lapan, 2003). The snowball sampling method was also adopted following the purposive method as the participants helped to recruit other participants. It is important to capture the participants who would answer the research questions within the sample population. Fan et al., (2018) states that snowballing is used in Indigenous

studies as it helps the target reach the target population. Establishing trust and relationships with stakeholders, using appropriate gatekeepers, is essential to help the participants feel at ease (Olaluwoye et al., 2022). Relationality is sacrosanct in working with Indigenous people. Kurtz (2024) states that relationality allows for guidance by the knowledge, wisdom, and direction of a community of members to whom the research would be beneficial. Therefore, one of my PhD dissertation committee members was a Native American who introduced me to other native women with whom I spent time building relationships. They, in turn, introduced me to other native women who were the participants. The inclusion criteria were that they must be Native American, so the participants in this study were enrolled in a federally recognized tribe. Being in the network of native women means they know each other well so this was a valid selection process in line with Indigenous research.

The women selected from Bakassi were nominated or recommended by the Bakasi women as influential people. In the process of data collection, first, I reached out to a Bakassi woman who worked with her community to select eight women adjudged to have much influence. My in-country recruiter was a younger woman advocating for her people. When I told her the need to include women of influence, she assembled information-rich sources from Bakassi. The women recruited were influential women from Bakassi.

Table 3.2: Data Collection (Source, the researcher)

Name	Region	Age
Ana	US (Navajo)	60
Nana	US(Navajo)	46
Lara	US(Choctow)	53
Der	Africa (Bakasi)	58
Mit	Africa (Bakassi)	60
Tap	Africa (Bakassi)	45
Tac	Africa(Bakassi)	50
Sab	Africa (Bakassi)	54
Ram	Africa(Bakassi)	58
Lar	USA (Shawnee and Delaware)	58
Nita	Africa(Bakassi)	48
Par	Africa (Bakassi)	33

Research Site

Considering the nature of the research and the people involved, the data for this research was slated to be collected at different levels. Interviews for the Native American women were to

be done face-to-face on campus while interviews with women in Nigeria were to be carried out through Zoom. However, all interviews were conducted via Zoom. The interviews are conducted in secure spaces that allow the participants to express their feelings and narrate their experiences through stories at their convenience. My previous engagements with some Indigenous women in Africa was vital to this research.

Method of Data Collection

Data for this study was collected through interviews via Zoom. The semi-structured interview was in-depth to get responses to several questions about family background, education, career trajectory and future goals. Data was collected through semi-structured and unstructured questions drawn within the framework of the research objectives. Data was gathered from Indigenous women in America and Africa. A list of basic questions was prepared and used, and I asked follow-up questions based on the conversation. The interviews were recorded and transcribed into texts constituting the data for this study. It is also important to note, at this point, that the data collected was subjected to close observations, which will be premised on what is being said, how it was said, and why it is said. Saunders et al. (2009) opined that observation plays a vital role in qualitative research because it enhances the understanding of unspoken words. Observation enables the researcher even to capture what is not said in words.

Data Management

The data derived from the Zoom interviews was saved on a password-protected laptop and would be destroyed after two years. For this work, the use of technology was minimal. For the data collection portion, I interviewed the participants using pre-developed questions. The

participants' responses were recorded, and I transcribed the data manually. Otter AI was the only digital coding tool that was utilized.

Data Analysis

All participants were interviewed via Zoom. During the interview, I kept a research journal to take notes. Saldana (2021) encourages researchers to start coding as we collect and format data instead of waiting after conducting the fieldwork. This was the approach I followed for this study. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Saldana (2021) states that theming the data applies to interviews. This research yielded 494 minutes of interviews. I used Otter.ai to transcribe them. I checked again to confirm that the transcript represented the voices by adjusting them manually based on language. Data was analyzed utilizing qualitative coding to develop themes across the narratives. The interpretive method was also used to analyze the data elicited from the field. It helped to understand how individuals construct meaning about themselves, interpret people's lived experiences, create meanings out of their social realities, and how their understanding of the world shapes how they see others. To understand this from my participants' viewpoint, I read the transcripts and reread them. I let the stories they told sit with me. I spent time thinking about and processing their stories. In Vivo coding was used to map out the words from the participants; they were arranged in subthemes in line with Saldana (2021). An inductive thematic approach was used to make meanings from the data. The data collected was conceptually mapped into categories and coded using a thematic coding (Saldana, 2021; Bhattacharya, 2017).

First and Second Cycle Coding

Saldana (2021) labels coding the information as heuristic, which has a Greek root word that means “to discover”. Saldana (2021) subsequently explains that coding data is a cyclical act. However, finding meaning requires revisiting the information, allowing oneself to be familiar with the information, and allowing for further discovery. Following this, I revisited the transcripts and, again, let the stories sit with me as I processed their meanings. Reflecting on their stories, rereading the transcripts, and rereading my notes, I made sure I was aligned with my participants stories, their meanings and contexts. I held their stories close as I analyzed the data and let the themes emerge.

During the first cycle of coding, I listened to each interview severally to get familiar with the data, this time, making notes using NVivo codes, connecting quotes within the transcript, and looking for phrases and patterns that spoke to the research questions (See Appendix 1: List of the initial codes). Since the research is based on the data generated from interviews and transcripts of those interviews, In Vivo is the recommended form of first-cycle coding (Saldana, 2021). Vivo coding is known as verbatim coding which lends itself as a preferred approach for generating interview transcripts (Saldana, 2021).

In the second cycle, I employed thematic coding, looking for connections across patterns, to form categories and develop themes in response to research questions. Cycle two coding consists of theoretical coding. Theoretical coding was employed as the second round of coding because of its ability to bring the previous coding schemes under the umbrella of parameters that can relate the codes to specific themes that will be used in the coding. Using specific standards, coding from cycle one and the information collected in memos were placed under appropriate headings by describing why the leader chose to make such decisions. The memo-writing

approach was utilized again after the second cycle to ensure that the correct responses were in the appropriate headings.

Data presentation

The information extracted from this study was presented using thematic narratives. This format followed an inductive data analysis, with the main themes being used as headings of the findings. The findings were elaborated with various examples from the data. The narratives were like explanations of the themes but give more elaborate details (Bhattacharya, 2010).

Ethics

IRB approval and informed consent were obtained prior to conducting the research. This research adhered to the Code of Ethics outlined by the American Educational Research Association (AERA), which are as follows: professional competence; integrity; professional, scientific and scholarly responsibility; respect for people's rights, dignity and diversity and, finally, social responsibility. Following these principles, I equipped myself with a pilot study to be competent to do this research. I consulted Indigenous experts in this study population to ensure my approach was ethical. This study is in line with Tracy's (2010) eight "Big-Tent" criteria for excellent qualitative research. The first criterion is that it is a worthy topic. Fleming & Ledogar (2008) did a literature review on how the term resilience has been used over the years in studies relevant to Aboriginal research; they identified some gaps, one of them is the need for the greater involvement of Aboriginal researchers who can bring a nonlinear worldview to resilience research; another gap was the need for Indigenous research to take the cross-cultural perspectives. This study is responding to such calls. Tracy's (2010) other criteria adopted in this research include rich rigor, sincerity, credibility, resonance, significant contribution and ethical

and meaningful coherence. In line with Tracy's (2010) ethical criteria, this research respected the culturally specific ethics of Indigenous research; in this context, it includes building relationships with the participants and respecting Indigenous ways of knowing. Ethics also speaks to how to exit the scene. Hence, I will be sharing these research findings with the participants. I considered many ethical issues before and during my research. This is mainly because my study intersects with indigeneity, gender dynamics, and the narrative of resilience. I outlined my ethical considerations in this section based on these three aspects.

Considering Indigenous Procedural Ethics

I got due approval for my study to meet the ethical standards of federal and varying institutional bodies. This is because the study of Indigenous people could relay generational memories that are offensive. Guenther (2006) explains that the study of Indigenous people pertains to the connection of a group of people to their historical lands, customs, and laws, which, in many cases, have been denied. This makes it essential to follow procedural processes in my study. More so, the study of Indigenous people strongly builds on the existing relationship between the researcher and the participants. Smith et al. (2019) principles of Indigenous research were respected in this study. They include positionality and relationships, ethical engagement, decolonizing research practices, cultural competency, and community collaboration. As the researcher, I ensured that I protected the identity of my participants who gave me their consent in high confidentiality.

Gender Ethics

I also considered the gender perspective in my study, especially in researching Indigenous women in two different parts of the world with traumatic histories. Women researchers are better equipped to understand the complexities and nuances of women's lives,

which will result in comprehensive research findings (Hamberg, 2008). Women researchers bring unique standpoints to the entire research, from conceiving the idea through the process of writing the findings; since they resonate with their experiences, they feel comfortable talking to each other (Klebanoff et al., 1993). I relied on my relationship with Native American women as a woman of color and on my African network to reach out to my participants. Working with Indigenous women in my previous study made it easier to connect with Indigenous women in Africa. However, it was different with my Native American participants. This is because I was new to them, yet being a woman meant I could connect with them on a personal level. Women researchers conducting women's research is ideal as being a woman helps you connect with other women. Women understand each other better and this is in line with the notion of nego-feminism as explained above. I also ensured the women were interviewed in safe spaces where they felt comfortable talking.

Ethics of Narrative Resilience

Finally, I also considered the ethical procedure involved in the narrative of resilience among the Indigenous people who participated in this study. This is quite important as I sought the vulnerability of the Indigenous women I studied and how these women navigate leadership from their position of marginality in the society in which they found themselves. As such, I gave them the chance to narrate their experiences and received feedback from them. The environment I provided helped me to get details that they might not have given in an official setting.

In considering my research ethics generally, I put some things in perspective. First and foremost, I secured the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the conduct of this research. The general ethical considerations taken in this study included:

- Consent – Participants will be required to give their informed consent after they have been provided with adequate information about the research. The consent will be voluntarily obtained as stipulated in Allmark (2002:13).
- Confidentiality in writing report – Participants’ identities were protected by excluding their names from the data to be presented. In addition, the research data will be held until the end of the study. Pseudonyms will be assigned to the participants to ensure that their identities are protected.
- During the data collection, power dynamics, such as participants' vulnerability and other related matters, were taken into account. The results of the research were made available to the studied communities and those in relevant authorities to effect policy changes.
- Given that this research sought to elicit gendered perspectives, I ensured that men not present during these interviews to enable the women to feel comfortable enough to share their experiences. Also, the strategy of “women helped to recruit women” was used to make them feel comfortable and safe to share their experiences.

Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, I have carefully outlined the theoretical framework and research methods for my study. My study’s design is qualitative as this is suitable for my research. I discussed my research through the prism of narrative inquiry. As such, the chapter presents the data collection and analysis methods I employed. This further strengthens the positionality of my research and gives nuances to its perspective. Finally, this chapter has provided the research ethics necessary for conducting my study.

Chapter 4 - Findings

'Mbelede ka eji ama Dike' which loosely translates as 'Disasters help to sift out the resilient, and the brave' (. Igbo proverb)

This research aimed to examine the narratives of resilience of Indigenous women in North America and Africa. This research has one main research question and two sub-questions. The main research question for this work is: how do Indigenous women describe their experiences enacting resilience as a leadership practice?

The sub-questions are:

- How do Indigenous women individually describe their experiences enacting resilience as a leadership practice?
- How do Indigenous women collaboratively describe their experiences enacting resilience as a leadership practice?

The findings shared in this chapter are elicited from the stories narrated by Indigenous women virtually interviewed in North America and Africa. This research employed narrative inquiry. The participants were asked questions, and they responded with stories. Follow-up questions were asked to get richer data for this study. Moreover, before the interviews, I had informal meetings with the community members to get their views on drafting the questions, in line with the community-engaged research objectives where the community is a part of the process. The findings presented in this chapter are stories told by the participants. I interviewed thirteen women and we spoke for about an hour. I did not do two cycles of interviews because of time constraints in this qualitative study. The gaps I got in the first set of participants were filled when I interviewed the second set of participants. To prevent data saturation, I posed follow-up questions to the second group of participants.

In doing the data analysis, I employed two cycles of coding. The interviews were transcribed with Otter.ai and it helped me to develop the subthemes. Then, I went further to do a thematic analysis at the second stage where I grouped the themes into subthemes. The second coding helped to categorize the emerging subthemes and patterns. Inductive thematic analysis was suitable because it made the themes emerge from the data collected from the participants. Member checks were also conducted to ensure participants' words and voices were captured exactly as expressed. The stimulative responses were highlighted. I was also looking out for stories of collective resilience and support systems. The interviews were conducted in English and Nigerian Pidgin. I observed that the Bakassi women, even though they speak English, were more natural when they expressed themselves in Nigerian Pidgin and that made the process align so seamlessly with the tenets of community-engaged research; so, I joined them to code-switch from English to Nigerian Pidgin. I translated most of the Nigerian Pidgin expressions that made sense to English but I left some others in the original form. Since I will be sharing this research with the participants, It is important that I capture their stated experiences as closely and faithfully as possible. In this chapter, I closely analyzed the stories they told me. In sharing the stories, I began with the points that the readers could understand as opposed to simply sharing quotes from the interview. I adopted this approach so as not to undermine or lose the context of the story, or even cut out valuable information. Moreso, the intention was to document their narratives, given the fact that the participants were interested in the final draft of this dissertation. Prior to interviewing the Bakassi women, I told them that I was undertaking community-engaged research, and they were free to take the lead and suggest the questions that I could ask them. Before the interview, I sent them the questions through a contact at Bakassi, and they discussed the research orientation. They were encouraged to freely share their views. They told me that

they had some concerns; I told them to feel free to share those concerns. Then, they said several students had come to Bakassi to conduct similar interviews and nothing happened; they promised that they would help them speak to the government about their plans, but nothing seemed to have changed. They also said that the students did not give them a copy of their research so that a copy of it could be in the state library. I thanked them for sharing their concerns and told them that the research would be printed after its completion and copies would be made available to their libraries. I was surprised that they were interested in reading the work because of the stereotypical stance that most black persons, especially Africans, do not read. So, this made me resolve that I would capture faithfully their stories in a way that they would be glad of the sacrifices they made to be participants in the research which they hope will improve their situation. On the North American side, the women were interested in reading the research findings. They were so excited to share their stories and told me that the findings from this research would be valuable to their communities; therefore, I ensured that their stories were captured.

Research Question 1

- How do Indigenous women individually describe their experiences enacting resilience as a leadership practice?

The themes below emerged from the first research question:

Table 4.1: Emerging Themes from Research Question 1

Themes	Subthemes
Intersectional position of women	Role of women, suffering, working harder than men to be recognized
Sexual harassment	Rape, assault, boundaries, missing women
Memories from the homeland	Trauma, stigma, stories of survival
Personal development	Mentor
Courage and Confidence: Resistance	Resistance
Minoritization	Identity, stigma, security issues, abiding by the rules, language agency, health challenges
Enterprise	leveraging on tribal resources, leading initiatives, fulfillment working with tribal nations, critical hope, motivation, self-taught culture

Intersectional Position of Women

Findings from this research showed the intersectional position of women that impacts them in several ways and makes them susceptible to discrimination. One of the ways is how they went the extra mile to be paid their worth. When asked how much they earned, the Native American women stated that what they earned was befitting and commensurate to their statuses, but they had to go the extra mile to get to the point where they were at the moment of the

interviews. These were some responses from the Native American women which showcased this.

Some of such are presented below:

Ana: *And I say it this way that I'm swimming as fast as the other fish in the pond., and in the last, probably, three years, I think I'm being paid what I should be in comparison to my coworkers. And this has come with a lot of recognized work. I mean, I've worked hard my whole career. But the last three years or so, I've gotten more notice of the type of work because it's working with tribes. And because the current US government administration has made a big difference in the work that I do. But I've been doing this type of work for almost 22 years...Yes, I mean, 20 years wasn't really noticed, but I was consistently doing the work. And then, all of a sudden, it's very important to the lab because it's a national initiative being put forward by the US government, which is great. You know, I mean everybody is interested in what I have to say. But I've always had an opinion of what we're, what I'm doing and why we do it. I mean, it's not like it's overnight. I've, I've had that experience.*

Nush: *I would say, and maybe at my former job as a head volleyball coach, you know, I used to be at the division one level, and you would see a lot more discrepancy , which is interesting, because, you know, it's a woman's sport, women's volleyball, but it was predominantly, all head coaches is proud, only male and white male. You know, and you would think, but I guess, at the time, you know, when you look at history, when was it, you know, Title Nine came in, and we had more women's sports enacted, there was a floodgate of, of job positions. So, there was so many job positions opening but the main people that they hired were all*

male people, and they were guys who were just males who are coaching basketball, or other sports, because it wasn't many women, you know, not too many women were playing or coaching at that, you know, even high school. So, it's crazy how some of these amazing coaches right now, at the Women's Division One level, were never, they never played volleyball at all, they were a high school basketball coach, and then but there was just this floodgate of positions. And majority of them were all male who were picked. But then, it makes sense because we women weren't able to really participate at a high level or continue to coach and so I don't know, that was something and then you see the pay scale that was different, you know, between an entry level of a woman going into Division One coaching to a male going into Division One coaching, you know, most women, you know, would be like, I played Division One volleyball. And so, I played Division One volleyball, I had coaches at a high level that played at the olympic level. So, you know, I have had a lot of great training, but it's volleyball is just, you know, opening up in America right now. So, you know, I guess I would see more in the coaching realm, that was definitely there, there wasn't some disparity.

Their intersectionality also impacted them as they navigated their way through systemic discrimination from the police, both in the USA and Africa. They explained that they were targeted and treated unfairly. Intersectionality of women's positioning was evident as this research sought to get women's responses on the grounds that women have unique experiences based on their positioning. Findings from this research showed that the Indigenous women had to bear adverse experiences in a unique way that was different from that of the other women. Der, a Bakassi Indigenous woman, shared her perspectives thus:

Der: *You can imagine women suffer the greatest setback in every situation; whether you call it war, civil war, or outbreak of disease or sickness, women suffer a lot. In fact, women bear the brunt of this because, if you talk of men, is a woman that takes responsibility of caring for men in terms of their husbands in terms of their children, as the case may be. So, you can imagine, there is a saying, we say if you build a woman, you will build a nation. You develop just one woman; you build a nation. But being a woman battered by dire situations, how to manage their families became very difficult. People are scattered all over. You lost your relatives; where you can say you're going to a local government or Bakassi, you only move as a visitor you put in your leg in and out and situations like that.*

The intersectionality of the women's positioning impacted their disposition to take up leadership positions. The fear of being in the spotlight made them shy away from leadership roles. While some of the women shared that courage and the confidence helped them to build resilience; others said they would rather not take leadership positions. The quote below from a Native American woman further explains this point:

Ana: *I'll tell you two specific instances. Where I work, I've deliberately avoided being in management and stayed on the technical side.*

Sexual Harassment

Findings from this research showed that women have been exposed to sexual harassment. This is reflected in the following extracts:

Ana: *I think the other was about personal survival, one of my early jobs, I was sexually harassed. I try not to talk about this too much. But it really made me*

very tough. And that's what I say, I don't want to waste people's time. I'm a professional, don't goof around with me. If the music doesn't sound right, as you said to me, I will walk away, or I will tell my supervisor. I know the rules of what can and can't be done. As a young girl, I didn't really realize people like that should be talking to me in that way. And I learned a hard lesson to say stop, I'm going to get my management involved. Know the rules. But if it doesn't sound right, it probably isn't right. And it maybe you have to walk away. And if it's egregious enough, you need to tell your management. So many women have gone through this in the workplace, I hope maybe less people will have to go through this. But I had to leave that job and go into something different.

Sab: For the women, they rape them. Sexual harassment is very much there, especially when the kidnapping was in high gear. And they come; that's why some people move out of the camp. Because you know, you're in the camp, and they will just know that, okay, these ones are not our people let's go and harass them, sexually. And sometimes their husbands or the men are not even able to withstand them because the people are coming with, you know, ammunition and all of that. So, a man can just stand there, they carry your wife away. Do you understand? So, it's been that bad, but so far, so good. The new governor has done so much to try to bring it down. So, we are just praying.

She continues when asked if the perpetrators had been caught;

Yes, I think they have caught some of them. Some are still in custody. I think some, they say, cases where someone lost their life in the process, because it is not as if. Sometimes, the government security comes to kind of attack. But some

of them have died, some of them have been arrested, some are still in custody, and all of that. So, sometimes, they go after them, it is not as if they don't do anything. But it's just that they keep regrouping. That's the problem there, they keep regrouping.

Nita: *Okay, thank you. They are the greatest problem they say, ehn, as our women, you know those army e made them, gendarme and bee dem random and be them, like mama wey get girls pikin dem for house, dem go come. Dem fit jus command your girl-pikin say 'oya, you come here, come for here'. You no get right to say no go ooo. Mama sef dey shake and say 'Ha, go, dem dey call you'. If no be so, if na say make dem call you, e see a girl wey enter im eye, e go send im boys dem, those army or gerdame. Make dem come bring you for am. Mama no get right to say no go, na my pikin orbegin them for house then go calm then fit just command younger they can say hey you come here come for you you know get right to say no go Mama said they shake say go then therefore you you will go if nobody So even our colonial sensei made him call you you see him get away in time it goes any invoice them because I made them agenda Marian calm bring you for my manager right to say no no go now might be killed oh you know that security kind of rotation for beginners, e no dey ooo. Na you know, do not a challenge wey we get there, dem go. If dem like, dey sleep with those girls, impreganate dem without proper care, without proper marriage. So, you see.*

[Translation: Okay, thank you. Th greatest problem is this: the soldiers, gendarmes and other security men pick on our girls for sexual purposes. A woman who has a few cannot protect the girls from them. They can just command

your girl-child to come and, as the mother, you will only be shaking and asking the girl to go to them. You do not have a right, as a mother, to say 'no'. This is the challenge we have; they sleep with our girls at will, impregnate them without any proper care and do not marry them customarily. So, you see].

Findings show that, based on witnessing or experiencing sexual harassment, they have learnt to set boundaries to prevent future occurrences.

Memories from homeland

In the recounting stories of resilience, the Indigenous women shared their perspectives and memories of losing their homeland. It is important to state that, in telling this story, during the interview, two of the respondents shed tears. This moved me to compassion as I heard them speak from a place of pain. Here are excerpts from the three stories:

Ram: *Yeah, we, we just got the information that Bakassi has been ceded while we were in office. And it was a shock to us. We even cried. Because we have offered a series of prayers concerning it but when it happened, there was nothing we could have done. We just have to leave. They carried us to, it was not the headquarters because of the water, rain area, so the plane could not land there. So, we were at another section of Bakassi called Archibong Town. That's where they ceded it. The Cameroonians came with their flags, with their flights; the white people, who are the British and the Americans, they came; and we were all dressed in black, all the councillors were dressed in black. And we were really shedding tears because it was not funny at all. It was a terrible sight. And they handed over; the Nigerian flag was dropped. By then, we were having a battalion of soldiers at that area. And the Army handed over, everything was handed over. The Cameroon*

army came in and took over the territory, the flag was dropped down, Nigerian flag was dropped down. And Cameroon flag was lifted up. That's how they handed over and they did all that they did that day. And we left with tears in our eyes crying and after that, we were removed from our territory. And you know, as legislators, we didn't have a place again to do our sitting; they have to carry us from one place to the other.

They shared stories of survival from their ancestors and about their forced removal from their homeland has become part of their memories. Findings from this research showed that they fell back to the history of their ancestors to draw strength and the ability to forge ahead from it. This is evident in the responses below:

Ana: *I think most tribes have survival stories. For Navajos; in particular, in the 1800s, the Navajo people were rounded up and taken from the land that they lived and put at an army camp in the east part of New Mexico. It's called Bosque Redondo. And that's a part of when they were let loose by the army, many had died walking to that camp. They were not given blankets, they weren't given enough food. I think the intent was to try to kill them off pretty much. And there's some that survived. And when they went back, they talked; we talked about the story of the long walk, walking from the east part of New Mexico back into the other parts of New Mexico, Arizona, Utah. And I have to remember those are the people that survived and that's my lineage, if they could live through that almost an experiment, nation of a people. My problems are not that big. I'm surviving. And what I'm trying to do is not only think about survival but how do you go to the next stage of thriving? How do I thrive in my life and my work in my with my*

family because my ancestors took everything to stay alive to get back home to where they want it to live. I think the other point; I took a group of Navajo tribal council delegates to Bosque Redondo, and I showed them I said, this was our past, this is where many of our citizens died. I said, what you need to do is look from here out to the horizon.

Tac: *The day they asked us to go, some of us were crying; I wanted to disappear. Now, if you want to plant, you have to pay for it, it was not like this before. We heard in the village that Obasanjo has given the land to Cameroon and the town crier told us that if we want to go, we can go, but if we want to stay, we must stay. I cried while leaving. Everywhere was quiet.*

Sab: *Well, I know that, in the original Bakassi Peninsula, there was a treaty of the Obong, it has been an area that has been governed by the Obong of Calabar, right from inception. And but that's an area that the Nigerian nation has neglected. Because, you know, it is a peninsula; it is a little bit on its own. And so, because they've neglected that area so much, the Cameroonians tend to infiltrate them more. In fact, my dad told me that the Cameroonians were coming there more often than the Nigerians. And not until in the early 80s, or mid 80s, or thereabout, or the early 90s, that the Nigerian government was able to put up a police force there. It is just sheer neglect. But there was that neglect probably because that place was just on its own. And so, nobody was going there. Everybody just allowed the people to stay there. And even up till now, I still go there, even though it is under Cameroon. But the difference is clear now because, if you go there now, what's the difference are the gendarmes because if you*

bother now, the Cameroonian government are doing well. And it beats me back; we were under Nigeria. And we're here, Nigeria. So, Nigeria neglects that area. I see a part that is not ceded to Cameroon. If you go there, it is not developed; some parts that were not ceded to Cameroon, the little part is not developed. And this is a Nigerian that has gone to court and knows that there's a part that is even under them, but it is still not developed. So, the place has been under that contention. Though the Cameroonians now go there, they know they are not the owner of the place. So, they go there and torment the people. The people are like agrarian people that are like always wanting to defend themselves because the Cameroonians and gendarmes will come and they will start to, you know, maltreat them. So, that turbulence has been there, right from when I was a child, I used to be, I used to know. Sometimes, we were in the village and they will say 'they have, they have come' and everybody will run. And the men will rise and all of that. And everybody is agitated up and down trying to resist them. So, Nigeria, they don't take their responsibilities.

Lara: *We were originally from Mississippi. And then when Andrew Jackson became president, he's the one who was like, "kill the Indian save the man" or something, whatever his big quote was. And so, basically the settlers wanted the land. So, the Indians were in the way because they were living there. So, they said, you got to leave and they made him leave. And they had to leave their house. They had to leave everything. All the farming stuff, everything. And they made them walk, like hundreds of miles. And like, I think I don't know what the estimates are. I think the estimates are one in every four people died on the trail*

on the walk. Because they started out too late. And that came to be winter. People froze to death. That was hard times.

They recounted stories of surviving trauma too as evident below:

Lar: *And they sat me down and they said, “Now listen”, because I started school the next day. And they said, If I the first thing they said was, “if I get a call from that school, and you have misbehaved, I will help you all the way home”. I was like, “okay, okay”. And then they said, “and whatever you do, do not tell them that you're Indian”. And I don't know what the look on my face was, but I remember in my mind thinking, “what, what did you just say? I don't understand”. And then, their conversation turned to each other. And my grandmother said, “Well, you know”, and she called my grandpa by name. She said, “you know, Carl, he got beat up, and mugged in Tulsa”. And so, I think he was on a bus in my understanding. He was on a bus and was talking about his Native heritage and being very prideful about it. And when he got off the bus, he got mugged and beat up by several men. And so, I think, like I said, it just caused them to be very fearful, fearful for their safety. And I think at that point, they were in a new community, we had only been living there, maybe three months. And I think that they didn't know people there; all they knew was that everybody there was white, and that I was supposed to, for my own safety, not say anything about it. So, by growing, when I went out on the front porch, I looked at my grandpa and I must have had tears in my eyes. And he handed me a slideshow because we always had sling shots, you know, and I think he just tipped his hat to me. Like, as*

if to say, don't listen to them. Another thing, you know, that makes me feel better, comforts me a little, but bit as a child, I guess so.

She continued:

I think there are several different dynamics, as you we talked about earlier that people are still really stuck on what happened in the past and don't understand what informs that now. Like, I'm not responsible for what my ancestors did, which is true. But what are you doing now to change that? How are you educating yourself now to keep those things from happening and have a history not repeat itself? How are you educating yourself and the way that that changed your perception of who I am as a Native woman, because, through the years, I mean my high school experience, and K2 through 12, my experience was not great because every time somebody brought something up, Thanksgiving, Columbus Day, Native History, all eyes were on me, right? I was supposed to explain to everybody, as a child, what the Native experience was, and I was very shy. And so that, along with living in a hugely chaotic home, brought on a lot of anxiety. And it took me a long time to figure it out; you continually have to explain yourself. So, I think that that's probably the biggest challenge throughout my life. It is just feeling like I'm repeating a broken record, explaining things to people, so they'll accept me for who I am. And not try and explain, expecting me to be like them. Because that's how history repeats itself. That's where your involvement comes in. It's where you think I, as a Native person, should be like you. That's what started the whole thing in the first place.

Personal Development

It is interesting to see how these women discussed how they stretched themselves for their personal growth and development. They received education and went out of their way to learn other skills to thrive. I interviewed women who were considered to have influences in their communities; here is a response from a Native American woman from the Navajo tribe:

Ana: I think part of it is, you have to go beyond your normal, normal self. So, I'm a natural introvert, many, many Natives can be very introverted, quiet, and don't talk a lot. Some people say don't look people in the eye because that's disrespectful. But those are not the traits that a corporation or a research and development company want to see. So, I learned that, because of the circumstance; I had to, I had to learn how to do public speaking, write technical reports, give reports in public, give reports to my colleagues, and have them understand the work that I do. So, there's much communication that has to be learned.

As Ana spoke about her commitment to learn from her superiors, she shared insights on learning a valuable lesson on communicating her impact instead of thinking that people already know what she was doing. She also said she had to learn public speaking and writing to get to where she was. She explained further:

Ana: I have to learn to be more open to dialogue rather than sit and listen; that's my nature. And then, when I have a thought, I'll tell you, but you've got to let me think about it. And that is not a natural habit when you are in the midst of a big project. People want to use all the airtime; I get I put it that way. People think they need to talk, talk, talk, talk, talk, whereas I'm different. I'll, again, listen. But

then, when I have something to say, I will say it because I've thought about it. So, for many Natives, I think we have to learn those traits just for work, don't change your personality.

Mentoring was an important aspect of their personal development. Having a mentor who believed in them was an important aspect that helped the women to conquer their fears. They shared stories about how they were mentored and how they had gone ahead to mentor other younger members in their tribes and communities.

Below are examples of their experiences while being mentored and how they had mentored others. Most of the Bakassi women interviewed in this research talked about how they received mentoring from Senator Ita Giwa. She availed them of the opportunities to be mentored and they wanted to be like her.

Der: *Okay, actually, over the years, even before the ceding of Bakassi, I had been mentored, fully mentored by Distinguished Senator Florence Ita-Giwa. So, I saw her resilience, I saw her hardworking attitude. And I saw a lot in her that challenged me as a younger woman, that if she could, at her age, to do all that she was able to do for her community, not just limited to women, the states and Nigeria as a nation. Then, there should be people that could be mentored or can take after her. That's exactly the passion I had. And of course, she mentored and supported and ensured that I scaled through the election and went into the office. And of course, my people, my community, were in my support. So, they gave me huge support to go into the office.*

Having a mentor who believed in them was an important aspect that helped the women to conquer their fears. They shared stories about how they were mentored and how they had

now gone ahead to mentor younger members of their tribes and communities. Below are examples of their experiences of being mentored and are now mentoring others:

Ana: *I'm trying to teach others of my students how to be nuanced; how to think about the same things. And I guess I'll note here, I've had an internship for 22 years, I've had 50 American Indian STEM students who have been my interns, and I've been able to feed some of these dialogues that I've had with you today to them to help them understand. Time is different in Indian country, it's going to take a lot longer to get something done. Again, you said we are very patient, I teach them to be patient. I have to teach them about their expectations, because you're coming from academia, thinking you're going to change the world. But, yet, you think everybody you'll meet at the tribe will be a tribal member on staff and I say no, they may not have the right capacity to do the work as tribal members.*

Nush: *But um, my coach helped me.... I think some teachers, you know, really believed in my abilities. So, I end up getting a college scholarship, through engineering, the American program, College of Engineering paid for like, my first year, full ride, I end up walking on to the University of New Mexico Volleyball Team, and I got to do both; I got to play and go to school. And, you know, once that happened, it gave me another bump of confidence of like, I can, I can do this.*

Most of the Bakassi women interviewed in this research talked about how they received mentoring from Senator Ita Giwa. She made herself a mentor and they hoped to be like her.

Der: *Okay, actually, over the years, even before the ceding of Bakassi, I had been mentored, fully mentored by Distinguished Senator Florence Ita-Giwa. So, I saw her resilience, I saw her hardworking attitude. And I saw a lot in her that challenged me as a younger woman, that if she could, at her age, to do all that she was able to do for her community, not just limited to women, the states and Nigeria as a nation. Then, there should be people that could be mentored or can take after her. That's exactly the passion I had. And of course, she mentored and supported and ensured that I scaled through the election and went into the office. And of course, my people, my community, were in my support. So, they gave me huge support to go into the office.*

Courage and Confidence

To explain their resilience, they shared the challenges they courageously surmounted and how confident they were about being the best of themselves regardless of their intersectional positionality. These extracts below buttress their confidence and courage:

Sab: *My father did not have any form of education, that's formal education, he was not educated. But he was determined to send us to school. And I happened to be one of those children that he sent to school. And I went through school when I had my basic education. And then, I had teenage pregnancy. My first child is married. I had him when I was 17. Shortly after I left secondary school, that long vacation, I had teenage pregnancy. It, and it was such a big blow to my father. In fact, he threatened to disown me, you know, having come*

from a family that a man didn't have education and so treasured education and sent you to school, and then you kind of want to thwart all his efforts. And so, he wasn't interested in sending me anymore to school; he was so angry and all of that. So, and I never knew my mom, because my mom died while I was a baby. I was raised by relatives, stepmothers and all of that. So, when this happened, some of my aunties took me up and took care of me and all of that. But I was just determined because the school I went to was a girls school, and we were exposed to a lot of education to strengthen you, as a girl-child, I was determined, I didn't allow that to deter me. And after I had the baby, my aunty took the baby. And I told myself, look, you have to go and get what you want to get'. And that was how I went back, took extra-mural classes, wrote my JAMB, getting admission was entirely my business. My dad was not part of it, he only became part of me when I succeeded. You understand that was my first challenge in life, a very big one. And I use it today to educate young girls. Because, I mean, if you don't have resilience, you will not be able to go through what I went through. And by this time, some of my classmates, you know, had gone far off because they entered school immediately. But I didn't still allow that to discourage me. I still forged ahead, went through medical school. And I finished. By the time I finished medical school in 2007, a lot of them were already high up in the medical rank, but I didn't still allow that to deter me. I was looking up to residency. I got married, went into residency. And I've reached where they are today without a lot of stress. Because, even when I was in medical school, I was having children, I got married in my Year Two, I was having children, having to cope with children go into school and

then I had classes. So, I thought about resilience and my personal life. I went from my community too because I'm a community girl. I mean, I grew up there in the water. And then we saw the community faced a lot of challenges, right from when we were kids, the issue of the Cameroonian soldiers coming to challenge our women, torment our people who have been there. It's been there right from when I was a kid. I see them come and see our women fight, and all of that, our men fight. So, I grew up in that community. And I think that's what helped me to face life because you just know that you have to struggle. You were just born to see everybody struggling, fighting to survive and all of that. And I went through it. And then the worst part, the worst thing that happened to us was the ceding of our community and it broke our hearts. It really, really broke us because, I mean, came from this kind of community. We've come through a lot of challenges. This is the time that we will see development to our communities. And we will give back to our communities. Just at that point, all the hopes were dashed and the place was ceded. But I still see resilience because of the women. They still trade, they fish, they trade and all of that. And they still managed to survive. We were relocated to somewhere in Akpabuyo where there are camps and all of that. But the people, the women, most importantly, living in the camp, you know the challenges: health challenges, security challenges and all of that the women even manage to survive it. We give lending hands to them, we encourage them. And they have been there, still hoping, still believing God that all will be well. So, it hasn't been easy for me as a person. Challenges everywhere.

Another woman said:

Lar: *I had heard things from my friends that were planning to go to college, right. But I had no idea what that meant. And she said, “well, we can't afford that you're gonna have to get married”. And so, I did. And so, it wasn't until my own kids started to go to college that I started. I mean, I didn't even know what to do then. I remember my son saying that when he was a freshman in high school, they were talking about college, and I looked at him and I said, “I have no idea what they're talking about”. He's like, “that's okay.” So, he took care of everybody else going to college. When my youngest one got ready, she wanted to come to KU. And we went to high school, the tribal college, and I said, Let's just look at it. Well, the person that was doing our tour, his mother was with him there, studying. And she lived in the dorms. And I had just gotten laid off from the company I thought that I was going to retire from and so my daughter just begged me. She was like, please go to college, we'll both go to college at the same time. It'll be great. And so, I was like, “okay”, I went. And I was once a semester at a time. I was thinking I'm just going to do one semester, at a time, and I ended up going all the way.*

Nita comments on how she courageously faced the gendarmes:

Nita: *At times, if dem like ooo, dem fit, when dem bring cow wey dem dey give dem cow milk and all those things. But me wey my children are boys and other relatives, me I no dey hear ooo, I no dey listen to dem. I no dey fear dem. Dem dey call me Nita, di Nigerian woman, I say ‘yes, I be Nigerian woman. Una kom*

tif awa land cari giv Cameroon". I dey open eye well-well for dem, [Translation: At times, they bring cow and give cow milk and all those things. But I, my boys and relatives do not get anything from them. Everyone is afraid of them, but I am not. They call me Nita, the Nigerian woman. I tell them "Yes, I am the Nigerian woman. You came here and stole our land and gave it to Cameroon". I am often deeply vexed with them]

Nita continues:

During that Bakassi problem, because during that Bakassi challenge, we like dis wey we dey do fishing for boat, e no dey dey easy oooo. We go dey boat like dis, dem go cover all of us with trampoline and nah falling canoe we dey, you see am, so that make we no make noise. Na for night ooo, na for 12 we dey comot go fishing port mek dem no detect say na people because dem no dey gree mek dem pass laik dat anyhow, anyhow. Wen dem catch you, na to shoot but we dey take risks. If you no take risks like that how you go chop wey, throughout, fishing and farming nah him be our work. [Translation: During that Bakassi problem, those of us who fished with boats did not find it easy at all. We went about in our boats being covered by trampolines and we fished with falling canoe. You can imagine that. We left for our fishing expedition in the night; we usually set out at 12 midnight for the fishing port so that they would not detect our movement on the water ways because they did not permit us to walk around anyhow. If they suspected any movement, they shot in that direction. You see, we were taking huge risks. But if we did not take the risks, how were we going to eat because our only occupations are fishing and farming]

Resistance is an important aspect of courage. Resistance showed up as an attribute of resilience in this research. The resistance of women is captured below:

Tap: *The stubborn ones who stayed and refused to pay taxes are beaten.*

Tac: *The day we left there, some other women said they couldn't go because they didn't know how to survive. Everywhere, there are stubborn people, and there are peaceful people. The old people stayed and said they couldn't go back.*

Nita said she talked back to the gendarmes and resisted their offer of food to prevent overfamiliarity.

Nita: *When they shout, you shout for dem. Dem go know say you know your left, you know your right. Dem go mellow for you. The only thing be say dem go wan make friend with that family. Dem go dey bring chop for you and all those things. But if you say you no want, you dey do your fishing, you dey do your small farm. You bone, you no give dem face. Dem know say when you report dem officially, dem go put them for guard room, dem go punish dem well-well. So, na so e dey, na choice. You know some mama like chop pass dem pikin, their pikin future, na dem dey fall that victim. [Translation: When they shout on you, you shout on them too. That way, they know you know your rights and they will respect you some more. The only consequence is they will want to make friends with you and your family. They will start bringing food and related things for you. But if you refuse those gifts, you keep at your fishing and subsistent farming. You can refuse to be familiar with them. They know you can report them officially and they can be*

locked up and severely punished in the guard room. It is really a matter of choice.

You know some mothers are extremely greedy; they are the ones who fall victims]

Minoritized Identities

As explained in the first chapter, to minoritize someone is to make them invincible. Minoritization showed up in this research among the Bakassi people, it reflected on how they represented their treatment in Cameroon. The findings from this research revealed that not all the Bakassi people left, some stayed in their homeland and faced the dire consequences that followed their action.

Ram, a Bakassi woman shared her views:

Ram: *After they have finished everything that they did, after conducting the service and they handed over everything, they dismissed now and Bakassi people left. Even our houses that we built in Bakassi, you know they, like us, like they have a legislative chamber, we have the executive chambers, we have so many houses there we cannot go back there again because the gendarmes took over while our army vacated and left that place. Our army removed from there and they were sent to another section that was no more Bakassi.*

Minoritization, for the Native Americans, is unique. A Native American woman shared their ongoing challenge of having Native people go missing, and the police not taking the matter seriously as they would if it was another white entity. She further stated that when they had sovereignty, they did not have the jurisdiction to judge non-natives who committed crimes in their native land, yet, they were said to have sovereignty. She narrated thus:

Lar: *I think in the Trump administration, they created a task force that was dedicated to the missing murdered Indigenous women efforts. The issue there is also jurisdiction and sovereignty where tribes now are able to self-determine, and they have their own police force. They have their own courts and laws that the tribe controls and not someone outside of the tribe and, how they govern, in the way they govern themselves. However, there's still interference there and jurisdiction. We are trying non-Native people who commit these crimes for in that dynamic and the missing and murdered Indigenous women's issues. Their hands are tied, they still rely on local agencies or federal agencies to help with that. I think we've come a long way with that though. I just saw, you know, like they have these crime shows here in this country where they investigate crimes, and you rarely see people of color highlighted.*

She continued:

So, yesterday, there was a student that was missing. And so, we had search teams out. And this was just a clear indication the student has been missing for five days. So, he was charged with or has a warrant for a crime. And so, the police were like, "Oh, well, he's just running from the law". But he hadn't contacted his family at all. And so like, could he have harmed himself? Could he have been in a wreck? Like, so now? I mean, we're on day six now. And this boy is still missing. And the family is here, they organized a search team. So, these are the same dynamics that go on where the law enforcement have this? Oh, well, we're not going to if it was a basketball player in the same issue. It would have been handled completely differently, completely differently.

In addition, these responses from Bakassi women showed their experiences of minoritization to the extent that they can no longer go home.

Der: *Der: We are almost extinct because our identity is difficult. Where we are, you can only visit. Like where you call your local government, you visit, and you don't have a hut personally. But my status as a former Chairman of the Council, a state administrator, former, by my status, one would have wished to come to my home, my country home, but I don't have such a place. So, you can imagine, you can imagine. It is frustrating, it is disappointing, you know, with mixed feelings. And unfortunately, you cannot take your children to where you call your home. You can imagine this scenario. Children are very inquisitive and will ask you, "mommy, where are we coming? You said this about Bakassi, where is Bakassi? It is difficult to explain. You seem to be a stranger or an ally in the place you call yourself. So, I don't know.*

Ram: *When we go here, they will send us away, we go to this other center. Where they have to relocate us now to is another area in Cross River State known as Ikang. That is where we had to look for a place to start having our sitting as legislature. And after that, the community, when we entered, received us very well. But after some time, they started fighting to claim to be the real Bakassi people; they started, you know, fighting us. I mean they started killing some of us. They now changed our natural names to ward names like ward 1 to 10 because we have 10 Native names in the local government for the different wards. We have 10 wards with our Native names when we went there. They changed it to suit their terrain. And we were called ward one to 10. And now, they started fighting*

the political offices with us and that is how it is that most of us were being, you know, pushed aside. You can't have a voice to talk again. We cried to the government, they did not really, you know, they overshadowed us. Let me just say it like that because they talk a lot. They fought us and that is how we're just pushed out. And every time like that, we will be crying and be asking the government. Then we went and located a place, mapped out the place, it is called Dayspring and Por Island. It is still close to Cross River State, quite close, it is a 'waterrine' area. You know, because Bakassi is a peninsula; its natural habitat is water. So, we were looking for a way that the government will fill that place for us so that we can really go back and stay near where there is water because it's like removing a fish from the water and bringing it on top of the land. If you suffocate the fish and they do that, that's what Bakassi people are facing now, because we are no more in our natural terrain, and being on land, and the people are fighting us, everything they want to claim it. So, we can't even have a voice now. All we are pleading is, the government shall help us; that is all we can say. And our people are suffering. We are suffering. This is Our Story.

Minoritized identity is also evident in Indigenous population in America and this comes from blood quantum.

Lara: *So like, I'll never be able to be chief of the Choctaw nation. I can't, because I don't have a high enough blood quantum. I'm not a quarter, you have to be, at least, a quarter, to be chief. So, I can never do that. But, in other tribes, they have a blood quantum in order to get a card. You know, I showed you my Choctaw card. Other tribes cut it off at, like a quarter. Like if you're less than an eighth,*

they're less than 16th. They're less than a quarter then they cut you, cut it off and say now you're not enough. You can't be a member anymore. So, that's different tribes though. Yeah,

Identity issues arose in this research. Being an Indigenous person is an identity that you must proof in the US via blood quantum. This is reflected in the narration below:

Lara: *In the United States, to be an Indian, you have to have a certified degree of Indian blood. You literally have to have a card, a piece of paper that says your pedigree, like that you are a Choctaw and I'm one eight of Choctaw. That's my blood. Back in the day, on the Trail of Tears type of stuff. When the government was making everybody leave, they had what they call the Dawes rolls. And they made people come by and say: "what's your name"? They would say like John Brown, and they'd say: what tribe are you? And he would say Choctaw, they would write it down. And they would say: Are you a full blooded or half breed? And he would say, and then they would make his mark, make his X or whatever, you know, if he couldn't write, and from that list, is where it comes from. So, there was a lot of people that ran away when the government was doing this and making these lists of Tarkowski, of all tribes, all tribes, and so they didn't get their names put on the list. So, they actually might be more Indian than even me. But they can't trace it back and prove it. And so that's what the federal government goes by. Like, when you apply for grants or anything like that, they ask you, can you prove it? And that's how you prove it. Because I, somewhere in my house, I have paperwork that shows my grandma, who's half her father who's full. And then like, his parents are both full bloods. And then somebody right back*

there, sign that role, they sign the paper. And so, if they hadn't done that, back in the day, then, I couldn't prove it.

She continued:

Back in the days on the Dawes rolls, only one had to sign; it was a list of people accepted. And they had to go sign up in between 1898 and 1914. And if they didn't sign up during that window, then they don't count. Yep. And it was the Cherokee, the Creek, the Choctaw, the Chickasaw, and the Seminole. And that's the name of how you spell it.

They shared how they navigated security issues. The women shared their challenges navigating militancy in the areas and how they navigated it to be safe.

Sab: *And then, we also have the challenge of hostility from the host community. Yes, because, even when you are trying as a women, let me try and follow and do this, immediately you're doing it, the other person feels you're coming to steal her opportunity, her market and all of that. So, it's not easy. And then there's the challenge of insecurity there. New Bakassi is an area with a high level of insecurity. So, that even out fear. And for a woman who is more vulnerable, I won't put fear in their minds, you know, being able to cover their businesses and being able to do those things is all everything is time you must go at this time, come back at this time, you know, try to protect yourself as a woman, you know, as a woman, there's an extent you can go. The original riverine Bakassi woman was very much financially independent*

She continued:

From the host community, you know, originally, they are these people that are active and balanced. And we were taken to that environment. And what they are doing is mostly the guys and they are all trying to find their ways of livelihood. In the whole of Cross River State, Bakassi was the seat of kidnapping. A lot of kidnapping goes on there. And we know what that means. It means that, for you to as a woman to stay there and be able to break even, it takes a lot. You have to go there, you have to placate them, you live with them and do a lot of things so that you will be able to survive there. So that has been a major challenge. But since the new government came in place, we've seen some improvements. And we're praying and hoping it continues so that commercial activities can really, really go on very well in that environment.

Ram: *This is why I'm telling you that because of this, our ancestors are fighting because they want us to go back to our place. Let us be inside water where our people will be benefitting? I don't know. I'm just saying it because that is what happened. Whenever they built camp, they have built two sections, two places in two different villages. But none of it that Bakassi people can live in it. Nobody lives in it even. I mean, it is just hooligans and they will be fighting anybody that comes in. Now, let them come and build this Dayspring for us so that we can have a place, at least, they can call it the settlement camp or the settlement island. Or they can call it even the Green Tree Island because, in the ceding of Bakassi, they call it the Green Tree Agreement. I think that's how they call it. So, they can give it a name, not Bakassi, they should not call it the village, they should call it Green Tree Island, so that we can relocate there and stay there as well. At least, we have*

that territory that is nearer to it, that is the natural resources. Our natural resources and everything will be breathing that natural air that will make our people to be happy. At least, they can go out for their fishing. Nigeria can even benefit from the little fish that they will be fishing and bring it out into the market. Periwinkles, you know, all those shrimps and things like that is found from the water. We are not used to land.

As a minoritized group, they talked about obeying the rules of the government or facing the consequences:

Tap: *As you go there, you have to work with the people there. You must do anything that they tell you to do. So that you can survive, we just manage anything so that we can survive. When you settle them, the boys in the water will allow you to pass. If you don't pay, your produce will be ceased, and you will be arrested. We grew up there, but now, in order to go there, you must do your waka book and pay your tax. We were told before the night before by a town crier prior to the handing ceremony, that if you want to stay you will stay, but if you want to stay you must pay taxes.*

Tac: *When they tell you to sit up, you sit up.; when they tell you to stand up, you stand up. We are no longer indigenes, we have become strangers. They have their own law. We do what they ask us to do.*

She continued,

Tac: *So, wen dey see you, dem dey look how you are, dem dey look your face. Dem dey look the way you are to tax you. Like those old old women and men, dem*

no dey tax dem because dem know say dem no fit do anything again. So, dem no dey pay too much, dem no dey pay taxes sef. Sometimes, wen dem do dem kali-kali, dem no go catch those old people; dem go catch those wey dey strong. Wen dem do cali-cali, dem go bring all people make you kom show your tab, to come show your resident permit. Dem go put something, dem say nah kali-kali be dat tin. So, dem go catch everybody come for the center. [Translation: They use your look to determine your tax. They do no tax old men and women because they know they do not engage in any productive ventures anymore. Those elderly ones do not pay much, they don't even pay at all sometimes. Sometimes, when they use "kali-kali", they do not arrest the elderly, they catch the strong ones. They bring everyone out to tender their resident permit. That is want they call 'kali-kali'. So, they put everybody at the center]

In describing their resilience, they shared how they navigated health challenges.

Sab: *A lot of them went down with diarrhea diseases, in the camp, skin infections. And there is no health facility. The only health facility that was there was a health center, and during the ENDSARS scourge, that place was vandalized. I'm not sure there's anything, there's nothing there. There is no good facility; I have seen a lot of women that are pregnant, that are sick and in an emergency situation, but before they will come out of Bakassi to Calabar, we've lost some of them. Whereas, if there was probably a general hospital or even the comprehensive health center, within reach, maybe some of those things would not have happened. And then sexually transmitted diseases too were common among them,*

very common, because, of course, they are in a camp settlement. So, what we do when I was president, I was president of the Medical Women Association, from 2018 to 2021. And I was always going there taking doctors, nurses, everybody. I go there to do health outreaches for my people because that's what I could do. As at that time, they had a center there. But since the ENDSARS, the whole place was vandalized. And the people are really going through a lot, not just the camp people, even the Ikang people, too, because the health center was serving the whole community, but was vandalized. So, you see, we really need help in terms of health.

Minoritized groups witness their language being extinct and learning a new language. They make efforts to learn French and preserve their local languages in the situation in which they found themselves. This is reflected in the following excerpts:

Tac: *I did not know how to speak French, but now I am learning so that I can communicate. The Cameroon gendarmes don't care if you can speak French; they just speak it to you, whether you can understand or not.*

She continued:

Tac: *We try to learn their language to see if we can cope with them. I can say "Good Morning, come and buy my market". Our children can speak but you know it takes longer for us because we are older. We learn it in the market, 'ce com bien', means 'how much?'*

Lara, a Native American woman, also shared how she is making efforts to learn Choctaw.

Enterprising

Resilience is evidenced in the source of income of the Bakassi women. Due to displacement, the Bakassi women lost their source of livelihood, fishing. They do not have access to the high sea as they did prior to losing their homelands. These people, who are mostly fishermen, became farmers and businesspeople. This is evident in the following extract:

Mit: *Okay, as I started my career when we were relocated down this way, I started my business with a little earning, the little income I had with me. So, I started the farm business there.*

Der: *And where women cannot be stabilized to have their daily income, like mostly people from my own community, we are dealing on selling of crayfish, and drying of crayfish. And some women had their canoes. They had their boat in jail with their needs. They had people who were working for them as they go and come back for fishing. They take the responsibility to supervise while they dry the crayfish and do all that and they gather them and take them out to sell, they'll make their huge money. Visibly, women from our area before now were able to build their homes, not depending on their husbands, not depending on their family members or their parents. But after a period of time, it becomes very difficult because, even for them to move from Calabar where they are, and some are in Akpabuyo. It's been very, very difficult and coupled with the fact that there are sea pirates. Sea pirates get some of the products and render them useless some are abandoned at the bank of the rivers in some cases when we are still trying to*

brave forward, to go into buying and make some sales. So, it's been very, very difficult and challenging for women in the local government.

Tap: *At that time, Bakassi was ceded, so all of us who were doing business gathered there. I sell crayfish, so we do business there now. We go there to buy crayfish, and we sell them in Ikang. The Fishing port is in old Bakassi. We buy the fish when the people just come back from fishing. I will dry it and sell it at the Monday Market. We leave on Sunday evening and sleep on the road, we do the same on Thursday. We sell twice a week at the Ikang Market, it is a big market. When we finish selling, we leave in the evening, but we watch out for the movement of water tides; if the water tide is high, we will sleep there and leave the next morning.*

Tac: *For me, after the land was ceded and I came here, I was not comfortable, so I went back to my ancestral land to buy fish. When I sell the produce here and stay here in the camp for two or three days.*

An important element of their enterprising nature is their fulfillment working for tribal nations.

In sharing their stories of resilience, the women talked about the drive to make impact in their own communities and kept them moving. These narratives demonstrate their joy in working for their tribes and how they draw strength from it:

Nush: *And my parents always, you know, of course, my dad, you know, he has his own business. He wanted to always employ, make job opportunities for other Native American people. So, just seeing him do a lot of things in many arenas, you know, I just like, you have, you believe you can, but you are kind of afraid because you're trying to find your own strengths.*

Lar: *I mean, I think there were two factors that happened there. My grandparents were victims of boarding schools. So, neither one of them really spent that much time at a residential boarding school, because they also had to leave to support their families. But my grandfather, I think, went to the third grade, he couldn't read. But I would read for him once I'd learned how to read. And my grandmother could sign her name. And I think she might have made it to the sixth grade. But as you can see, it was that dynamic. And the expectation for the son was to do work, like field work. I mean, he didn't even speak about it. So, I don't know for sure exactly what he did. But he was a rancher and all of his life. So, he worked cattle and horses and farmland, so you can do that and help out with that at a very young age, I think that part was pervasive in being Native as like having a lack of education or having not the tools to help your children generationally. Get out of that if you don't have an understanding of what it means to go to college or finish high school to do those things. They were also very fearful of everything. We never heard what informed that I don't even think my mother knew what informed that, but they were afraid, so afraid that when I went to kindergarten, they sat me down and said, "Don't do not tell these people that you're a Native". And, of course, being a kindergartener, that's the first thing I said.*

She continued:

Lar: *But they were just afraid. See, I mean, that's really to me says that they were afraid to tell people because something happened to them that made them fearful*

of those types of things. So, I think that had a lot to do with me starting my academic journey late.

Motivation

Motivation is an important aspect of resilience as seen in women's experiences. They shared different things that motivate them as seen below:

Der: *I am motivated by my political mentor, Senator, distinguished Senator Florence, Ita- Giwa, who has not given up on the issue of Bakassi. She's still crying for the government, the federal government and other NGO non-governmental agencies to see how they can look again into the matter of Bakassi. I am motivated by her by forwardness, by her doggedness, by a passion for the people of Bakassi, even women inclusive.*

Mit: *What really keeps me motivated is our political leader, Senator Florence Ita-Giwa, then Senator Florence. Anytime, we look onto her, at least, we believe if she can make it, we believe can too as women. So, she motivates us to be strong. So, she brings us together. She calls meeting, talk to us. At least, encourage us that we should not give up as women that we can make it.*

Lar, a Native American woman, shared that she was motivated by the drive to keep a legacy for generations to come after her:

Lar: *Well, it's the youth. I mean, most Native tribes, and I know my tribe is, you know, you're always concerned with the seventh generation. And so, I'm looking at not just my own grandchildren, and children, and what will be left for them, but seven generations ahead. And so, what I'm doing, because I'm alive today,*

because somebody ahead of me, during this tumultuous time, did something to preserve, that I would be alive here today. And I need to carry that on to my other children. But it's not just about my personal generations, it is about my neighbor's tribe, by all the students at high school and all the students that come to KU who are here thinking, they're thinking the same thing as young as they are. They're thinking, I need to get this degree. So, I can take the skills and what I know, and how I can navigate and strategize that dynamic between the government and my tribe, to preserve what we have for future generations. That's what motivates these students. And, and I know that's what motivates me, this is embedded in my purpose as a human being on this earth, that I need to make sure that what their experiences here at KU and high school informs that they're going to get what they need, they're going to get skills, they're going to feel supported. I need them to get these degrees. So, when they leave here, whatever it is that they do when they get back to their nations, it is going to build the capacity for the nation to continue their culture and continue to support their people and the noise that they need.

Another Native American woman, Lara shared how she got motivation from her job of teaching kids.

Self-taught culture

I found this to be very interesting; a Native American woman shared that her father, who was a Native American, was prejudiced against himself by his white grandparents; so she grew up, connected with her people, and was learning her culture and language so much so that she invited her date to join her to attend tribal meetings. This is reflected in the responses below:

Lara: *So, but and then, so I had to learn everything on my own. So, like, I just set some stuff up yesterday. This my desk is terrible. But like right now what I was fixing to start with this and to make this medallion. I gotta put all these beads on it, you know? So, all this is self-taught. Like, I found some people kind of around here; they're not my tribe. They're not Choctaw. So, I'm a Kiowa Comanche, Otto, PANCA, all sorts, Cherokee. And I kind of got them started hanging out with them, go into some different organizations and stuff. And then hey, YouTube is my friend. Like, YouTube. It teaches you how to bead a Christmas ornament.*

Leveraging on Tribal Resources

Over the years, the tribes in North America have continued to advocate for their rights, and they are making progress even though there is a room for development. They have got some benefits which they have leveraged to go to school. They do not call these benefits welfare. Instead, they are proceeds from their stolen land.

Lara: *And so, my kids, my kids, they all got scholarships from the Choctaw Nation. I love all three of my kids. My son graduated with his associates, he who doesn't know a dime. My daughter graduated with her Bachelor's, she doesn't know owe a dime. Of course, I got academic scholarships, too. And then my middle one, she graduated with her bachelor's, not on a dime. But like I said, they had academics and she played softball stuff, too. We're gonna get out of doctorate school not on a dime, I don't think so but we're gonna try. I mean, well, she applied for and she got some national scholarships through the Native American College, but, so, I'm talking to some good scholarships for her doctorate degree.*

Critical Hope

Critical hope is backed by action. When the respondents shared their stories, they talked about the efforts they were making for a better future. This was attested in the excerpts immediately below:

Ana: *I said, but this may be an answer in the future for Navajo. It is to put renewable energy projects to build that infrastructure to help bring in funds to our tribe and give power to our citizens. I said, “you got to remember the past, but you have to look out at the horizon to the future”. And it may be a project like this with those wind turbines that you see. And I was very deliberate in doing that too to emphasize the point of survival.*

Leading Initiatives

From this research, resilience is evident in the way these women rose up to initiate impactful actions. Lara, a Native American woman, had this to say:

Lara: *Okay. So, like, there was nothing here, where I teach. There is nothing. We are so non-diverse at the school that I teach that We are just not and we don't have any Asian children here. We have, at this point in time in this whole school, in the whole high school, we have one person of color, and that's it. Why everybody has white. Okay. So, I knew from being in Oklahoma that there was grants out there for Native Americans. And so, a few years ago, I talked to the superintendent. And we got the Title Nine program started, because I scrounged up 10 kids that had a CD IV you know what a CDI B is? Okay. In the United States, to be an Indian, you have to have a certified degree of Indian blood. You literally have to have a card, a piece of paper that says, your pedigree, like that*

you are a Choctaw, and I'm one eighth of Choctaw. That's my blood. Back in the day, on the Trail of Tears type of stuff. When the government was making everybody leave. They had what they call the Dawes rolls. And they made people come by and say, What's your name?

Sap: *Well, it was a great experience. It exposed me to many more things in leadership and capacity building. Through it, I was able to travel and interact with other health professionals, particularly my colleagues. And everywhere I went, I did not stop to talk about my people and the challenges we're having. And some people showed a lot of concern. Some even donated some medications, which we're using to do the outreach and a lot of that because it is an area of help, you help them be able to help you. Yes, but it was a great experience. I was able to, I mean, do a lot, not just in my community, the whole states. We are able to interact with people, even with government, we're able to have a way to talk to government to be part of providing healthcare to the citizenry of the states.*

Lar: *So, I mean, Native American people are not a people of the past. It's a living culture. And I think a lot of people that think about Native Americans. I mean, Alex Redcorn, does a presentation where he has Googled Native American, and everything that comes up in the image, part of it is old pictures from like the 1800s. And so, a lot of the work that I've done since I've been in college and I came to college pretty late. But like, we did a news article. So, I worked on the student newspaper at the tribal college that I went to. And we worked with Kansas Magazine to produce a contemporary Native culture or Native people article. And so, I tried to highlight five different Natives in Kansas in some of the things that*

they were doing in a contemporary sense. One girl was getting ready to sign with a school to play division one basketball, the other one was a civic, a person who counseled high school youth on their civic responsibility and government. And then the other one started a sorority. So, like all of those contexts, the other one was a business owner, was a butcher that did use the traditional Lakota teachings in the way that they processed the animal. And so, like, all of those things, I don't think anybody thinks about Natives in that context, and how they leave parts of their Indigenous philosophy or what they knew from their ancestors or grandparents, to who they are in a contemporary sense.

Role of Women: The women also defined their roles in the face of their displacement.

This is reflected in the excerpt below:

Sap: *One is that they should be hopeful. They shouldn't give up on the youth, particularly, the young girls because you know, the women are the builder of the community and the nation. My advice is they shouldn't give up. You should not give up.*

Individualism

Tap: *We used to have a union for contributing in our women meeting. Every Sunday, we will contribute 1000 and give one person. But now, we can't trust the strange people here, everybody is their own.*

Tac: *I don't have anyone other than God to share my problem.*

Research Question 2

- How do Indigenous women collaboratively describe their experience enacting resilience as leadership practice?

Table 4.2: Themes from Research Question 2

Themes	Sub themes/ Concepts
Family bond	Spouse, sisters, brothers, relatives
Joint motherhood	Children, living with me
Community	Attending community meetings, preserving cultural practices, community support
Aid as an instigation of violence	Fight, aid, violence
Sovereign movement	Organizations

Family bond

Family played an important role, especially in how the spouses supported each other. The women shared the support from their spouses which contributed to their resilience.

Nush: *Once I finished there, you know, I got married and my husband and I, my husband went to graduate school, the University of Arizona, and I was really proud of him, you know, getting there and then he's like, he encouraged me. He was like, you should go back to school. I'm like, God, I want to go back to school. I got my degree in statistics and maths But I just was like, 'I'm done with, I don't want to go anymore'. But he thought, you know, as I was, I've always coached I've been a coach, teacher and a coach*

Ana: *I think you'll find one of the keys for Indigenous women is the strength we gain from our families. We tend to have strong ties to our parents and our siblings and our grandparents that helped us to be strong in times of trouble. When I left school for Michigan and survived one semester, I went right back home and my family said, "let's just start over" and they were ready to do that. I will say that someone may not have a good support system to do that at home. Or maybe they can gain that from other relatives and friends. But you'd have to have that support system in order to be resilient. You have to have somebody to talk to you about how to take the next step.*

Joint Motherhood

A recurring theme from the research is how the women became mothers to children that are not theirs. Parenting involves taking responsibility and it is a sign of leadership as evident in the responses below.

Tap: *I have four children, and my sister's children live with me. My sister and her husband got sick and died after we left there. I have four children; my sisters and two children live with me. My late sister has four children. I took two, while my sister took two, so we had to help.*

Tac: *My children have finished school, but I am responsible for my grandchildren and relatives.*

Sab: *I have many dependents, from my children, extended family members, community people, people that, you know, they just look up to you. Because you're a leader. Because anyhow, you look at it, you're a leader. They have these*

challenges that they face. We encourage you to learn skills, certain people to learn skills, and all of that.

Community

Community was an important theme in this part. Attending community meetings was a way to connect and build resilience as reflected in the succeeding excerpts:

Lara: *But I don't know. So, I like doing meetings and stuff like that. To me, Probably, the hardest is there's not many people from my tribe here, where I live now. If I was to have been still in the Choctaw Nation, I could have made more connections with my people because the Choctaw Nation is really good. Like, the elders, they meet every Wednesday, and they have dinner, and they feed the elderly every Wednesday, just so that they can get together. And you know, just fellowship, you know, telling stories.*

Tac: *Before, we had a village meeting, but now, if they see us, they will think we want to have a coup. They told us to join the Cameroon women. We have to do the 11th of February, which is Children's Day in Cameroon, and their dance. So, we just tell them that we are doing a contribution meeting, that is how we do meetings sometimes.*

Another Native woman shared a memory of her ancestry and connected it to attending meetings:

Lar: *And that memory, and when I say blood memory, of the blood that was shed that of my people and what they went through like starvation. I don't know what it is like to starve, and to see my family starve to death, and be starved, like those things I think about. And they come, it comes to me, in my moments of prayer, in*

my moments of connecting with my medicines, and my ceremony. And when I go to ceremony twice a year, with my tribe, and we camp out together, it's a loving space, we carry on these traditions that have been carried on from time immemorial. And those folks that all of these things happen to come to us at that time. And we get our strength from that. And just being with other Natives, anytime. That's why I love being here close to Haskell. When I go over there, all these Native people are coming together, they're bringing together ideas on how we can move legislation, create better opportunities for our people, and educational systems like Connie and stuff like that. And so, I think that's what keeps us all going.

Lara: *So, and then, the styles have changed, because like the powers that you go to nowadays, they got mirrors and all sorts of bling, bling, bling, you know? But I don't know. So, I like doing meetings and stuff like that. To me, probably, the hardest thing is, there's not many people from my tribe here where I live now. If I was to have been still in the Choctaw Nation, I could have made more connections with my people because the Choctaw Nation is really good. Like the elders, they meet every Wednesday, and they have dinner, and they feed those elderly every Wednesday, just so that they can get together. And you know, just fellowship, you know, telling stories.*

As a community, they were intentional about preserving cultural practices:

Nita: *You see as all Bakassi now, we still dey do our tradition, our culture just here too. We still dey maintain our tradition, Ekpe rights and all those things. But di only tin die be say nah Cameroon government dey rule, dey collect all the*

revenue and everything wey dem get. As for say di tradition of our ancestors, e stil dey go on: dis Ekpe rite, initiation and when girl pikin reach the age of circumcision, dem put am for fattening room. All those traditional rites of typical Calabar people, dem stil dey do am, dem stil dey do am. [Translation: As Bakassi people, we still follow our traditions, our culture, just as we used to. We still maintain our traditions like Ekpe rite and other traditional events. The only difference is that the Cameroonian government now collect taxes and other revenues from us. As per the tradition of our ancestors, it is still going on. We still hold traditional events like the Ekpe rite, initiation, girl-child circumcision and fattening room. All those traditional rites of the typical Calabar people are what we still perform. We still perform them]

Community support was evident in this research as seen in the response of participants.

An example is presented below:

Nush: *Watching and seeing a bunch of Natives, Native Americans, young Native youths come to my volleyball games at New Mexico, that was another big eye-opener for me, like they all came to see me. Buses of Native young Native youth came in there and I got to speak to them. It reassured me of my role, and that I am a leader and someone that they look up to, him a role model. That really changed my perspective as well of like, okay, that I need to be there a lot more, I need to be proud of who I am to these young kids, you know., or they look up to me as being named a Navajo and I need American. And now they see that it's possible I need to, you know, I can do it. But my coaches at New Mexico also really believed in me. You know, she nominated me to my junior year of college to*

go to the International Olympic Academy in Greece, Athens, and to be one of three representatives for the state of New for the United States. And that was that was so powerful, like, e she you know, her belief and seeing things and what I just different characteristics, attributes, like, you know., it's like people always I'm grateful people always could see that I could do something more than I thought. But once I finally gotten to the next arena, it really helped me continue to like, I guess continue to, I guess build that flame make that fire even like burn even brighter, and you know, so I was grateful to them and those coaches. mI also played basketball at New Mexico too.

Sab: *For us as a community, people will look up to mostly our government people. But we've worked with a few human rights lawyers, that is, on our own, that's when we have challenges because everything you do must be in line with the law. And sometimes, we have challenging things. We need things to be explained to us. And there's a group of human rights lawyers that have been working with us who we interact with them. How do we handle this issue does what we feel, and they guide us in line. That's to the best of my knowledge but I know that there are other groups that other people may know because it's not like we are just in one space. We are different women groups different demands, everybody's in different groups. But eventually, what we're working towards is one.*

Sab: *Well, coming to Ikang, we are not going to isolate Ikang from us, we just have to kind of flow with them. It is just like you going to somebody's house. You are not going to say, "the owner of the house, stay one corner". You*

understand, We have to integrate, somehow integrate with them. Because they have the land. Even though as at now, we are looking for a way where they can just give us our own space, we coexist with them. But that is still shaky. But for me, like, when I contested election, I integrate with them, we just make them part of us, or we become part of them. We try to carry them along with us. Because you don't have any other place to go and stay and have your own personal space like that for now, even though we are trying to mobilize and speaking to the new government in place that, yes, we've been there with them, but let us have a space because they have land; they have space, let us have our space so that we coexist with them. Because you don't have your own space. Take, for instance, you are in the resettlement camp. They are all around us in new settlements. So, if you want to have a women's meeting and a woman is coming, we are not going to tell the woman to go away. We are all one, you understand. So, we've been carrying ourselves with them along for this? Well, our main problem is identity because it looks as if we continue like this, then they would have forgotten who we are. We don't really have our identity on ground. And that's just one of the major challenges we're having. If we could have a space of our own and co-exist with them, then we'll be fine. But all along, we have been working with them.

Ram: *I still have to call myself an indigene, even though we are refugees. Refugee is not that you don't belong to a place; it is just because they carried us out. That's why now we are called refugees but you are still an indigene of a particular place.*

She continued;

We are called refugees because we have been taken to a settlement camp, that area, they gave us a camp and we were living there. And then, they, because of the political differences, they have to now, you know, put us as a ward. Even though it is ward, it is still like a camp. You understand, it's like carrying you to somebody's house. You are a refugee in that house with all your problems. The people collected all your property and everything about you, you are a slave to that person, isn't it? We are still like refugees. Because we are not properly taken care of. It is those people that carried us there that they are now occupying our offices and then taking much of our rights, what belongs to us. By the time you open your mouth, it becomes a problem. So, we are like we are even worse than refugees because refugees properly care of.

Lar: *Why think it has to be somebody that is in constant community in some ways that has changed, or has to change and is evolving because like, for instance, I went to high school with a Narragansett student, her tribe is on the east coast. And so, when you're away from your tribe, you find community with other Natives and then it becomes an inner tribal experience. But I could not operate and be resilient without that dynamic. I know that 100% because, when I came here from half school, that dynamic was so pervasive, we were all together, we were all talking about our coursework, and what our plans were to help our communities and other tribal communities. When I left there, and came here, I didn't know anybody here. And there was nobody here that I knew was Native. It's when I first came here, but then, I started meeting people, and then that all like I thought, I didn't think I was going to make it; I really thought I was going to have to leave. But I think everybody feels that when you have a change, or you go through a*

change. And so, all college students probably go through that to a certain extent. But once I started finding my Native community here and staying connected to those folks at high school, then I was able to build that strength and resilience and motivation to continue what I needed to do to get here. So, I would say that you're really defined as a resilient Indigenous woman, by your community, and your engagement with your community. And that could mean an inner-tribal experience or what you have when you go home to your people and what you do in your, in your community.

Doing things together, such as Arts, helps them as seen in the responses from the participants:

Sab: Well, well, coming to Ikang, we are not going to isolate Ikang from us, we just have to kind of flow with them. It is just like you going to somebody's house. You are not going to say, are you going into somebody's house, you're not going to say: "the owner of the house, stay one corner". You understand, you're gonna have the house, they won't con and then you understand, we have to integrate, somehow integrate with them. Because they have the land. Even though as at now, we are looking for a way where they can just give us our own space, we coexist with them. But that is still shaky. But for me, like, when I contested election, I integrate with them, we just make them part of us, or we become part of them. We try to carry them along with us them. Because you don't have any other place to go and stay and have your own once they, you know, have your own personal space like that for now, even though we are trying to mobilize and speaking to the new government in place that, yes, we've been there with them, but let us have a

space because they have Land; they have space, let us have our space so that we coexist with them. Because you don't have your own space. Like, take for instance, you are in the resettlement camp. The Resettlement. They are all around us in new settlements. So, if you want to have a women's meeting and a woman is coming, we are not going to tell the woman to go away. We are all one they are not going to tell them and go away. We are all women, you understand. So, we've been carrying ourselves with them along for this? Well, our main problem is identity because it looks as if we continue like this, then they would have forgotten who we are. We don't really have our identity on ground. And that's just one of the major challenges we're having. If we could have a space of our own and co-exist with them, then we'll be fine. But all along, we have been working with them.

Intertribal societies came together to be in a community as seen in this research:

Lara: *I don't have anything on me right now. I've done really, like, I don't know, I made a Rottweiler for my son. I patched it on him because he has a Rottweiler puppy. So, I put it on his jacket. He tore his jacket, I don't know. And this bracelet, it's just, um, you know, it's connecting with the people from the past, because they did the same types of things, you know. Of course, I got much nicer stuff to work with the needed. But some of the patterns and things are carried forward. The tribal symbols and things like this one. It was a Choctaw symbol for happiness; it is what I'm going to be. And then, I kind of put my own little spin on it.*

They offered community services, and this helped them to build resilience as they explained community service:

Lara: *I joined Wichita warriors, ladies auxiliary up there, to try and help them because I think they do good things. They try to help with the kids and the elderly people that need help. So, they do a good job up there, too.*

She continued:

Then, it's called the Wichita warriors. Intertribal society, intertribal means it's more than one tribe, all different tribes. So, because there's like 253, I don't know how many federally recognized tribes in the United States alone, and so, there's a whole bunch of us. And so, when we go up there, and I visit with my friends and do stuff, I think one of me and my one of my girlfriends up there are going to go to Hawaii for about 10 months and do a beating class in Hawaii and try to those Indigenous people on the Hawaiian island. A lot of them don't know how to beat so we're going to teach them how to do it.

Der: *He advised that I would have to give in to the younger women when I was there, as the vice chairman. I recall that we had women that were dropped out of school. And what I did was I had to move from house to house to create awareness in the minds of the family members, because our people, as soon as a female child got pregnant and dropped out of school, the family abandoned her. That's what happens to my community. The family abandoned and they did not look after them again. They never had the idea that they could give that woman or that girl an opportunity to return back to school. So, what I did was, I went from house to house to create awareness in the minds of the people in the community.*

They need to take the child, nurse the baby and encourage the girl-child to return back to school. That's how I did what I do, and you don't have financial backup. But that's what I did. So, I would advise younger women, not to give up, whatever challenge they have, whether in terms of identity crisis, whether in terms of job opportunity, because before now, they were assuming that Bakassi people are not educated. We have so many qualified daughters, let me not even go to the sons because we are here concerned about women. We have many of them that are graduates in different fields that are jobless. So, I would advise that they should not give up.

Nita: *And like, for example now, person fit die for village. I go hear say person don die. If I dey for this side of the Bakassi. I must go to the other side of the Bakassi. I go follow fetch water; na the thing wey women for village dey do be that, follow fetch water. We do follow go farm, go harvest cassava, all the women from the other village. All the village go come unite. Dem go come sit down now. Peel the cassava, boil the cassava and slice am like abasha. Dem put am for drum. Anything wey dem wan do, anything wey women dey do like to cook or to sleep for the die house. All women go sleep, go follow dey dey. Dem go know you.*

[Translation: For example, when someone dies in the village, I will get to know of the demise. If I am at this side of the Bakassi, I must go to the other side of Bakassi. I will fetch water with others; that's what women at the village do. We go to the farm to harvest cassava in company of all the women from the other village too. The entire village unites to peel, boil and slice cassava for the local delicacy, "abasha". They will put the slices in a drum. All the women will cook

and sleep at the house of the deceased. That way, the other women get to know you]

Government Engagement

Participants from this research stated they become involved in politics and formed groups to engage government as seen in the excerpts below.

***Sab:** Well, first and foremost, it's a lot of us that have become politicians, just because of our communities. Because when you are part of the government, the government can listen to you, when you are in the same party, we have the government, they will listen to you. So, we have our political platforms. And most of us are in the party in government. Not because we so love it, but because of our community. So, once every week, anything you can do to make sure that and that has worked for us. We also have community groups, pressure groups in the community, the youth groups, the women group, we have Bakassi women group, different groups like that. You try to have an audience with the government, write for courtesy visits, involve the first lady and all of that in a bid to have an audience and being able to air out your challenges to the government. That was when they were campaigning, when they came, we had a lot of groups, and the first lady had an audience with us. And we spoke to her. And so, right before she came into the office, they already understood our problem. And I believe that has worked because, somehow, it seems some improvement, and we are praying and hoping that it remains so.*

Sovereign Movements

Participants stated how their sovereignty was paramount and why there was a lot to do in advocating it. These responses demonstrate these findings.

Nush: And if you look at American Indian education, there's a whole timeline that has seen all the reforms of Indian education. And one period is specifically called the self-determination period. And that's where, you know, we have taken a lot of, we've taken control of our education for our schools on our land. Because we, you know, it's crazy to think I don't know, I'm not the historian at all, this is not my area. But I don't know if it was in the 50s or 60s where we were barely able to vote as American people. And that's not long ago. But, you know, we've seen all these different reforms but, now, we have the federal government because of the exchange, because of the treaties. And they agreed for exchange of land, we signed these treaties, the federal government ensure that they would always give the American people education and healthcare. So, that's why we have the Bureau of Indian Education. And that's a part of the Department of Interior. And then we also have our Indian Health Services, which we have all over health clinics all over the United States. But, and for a while, we didn't have control over those, we didn't have, really, that big voice. But now we run them. We, as Native people, control 100% of that.

Women Political Mobilization

It is interesting to see a good number of women participate in politics. The Bakassi women explains as follows:

Mit: *There's a great difference because men, men in politics, they only squander the money. I don't think they're always focusing on development, but women in politics, they build the society, they build the home, they build the children. Any earning from the women they are taking it home. What you will be thinking of is your society, your children, your husband, how to build your home. The men the difference is, they are for enjoyment. That is how I see them.*

Sab: *And I ventured into politics too, as a woman after I left school again, I contested for House Assembly 2019. Why? Because all was to see I can equip my people. Because as a medical doctor, there's anything. But I just felt, you know, having seen where we're coming from, looks like nobody's there to speak. As a doctor, you can only speak in your area. But if you get political power, you'll be able to talk you'll be able to, you see what you can do for your people. And that was what moved me to the contest. And incidentally, I was contesting in the opposing party. Cross River State then was PDP. I saw challenges Oh, my sister, I saw challenges, enormous challenges everywhere. You know, because you're a woman, they talk you down, they compete against you, and all of that. And then being in an opposition party. I'm not even talking of the security challenges, having to go out there to compete as a woman. I have to enter boats and paddle myself with other people. It was huge. The challenges were huge. But I'm happy today, even though I'm not in the House of Assembly, but I've been able to, at least, be a part of the power-making process now. And we are believing God that, with that person, there is hope for our people.*

Surviving Communal Clash

The women explained how they built resilience to survive communal clashes with their host communities:

Ram: *That's why even the food, the palliatives they give us, they will litter it on the floor or on the road, nobody benefits from it. Our people are dying of hunger. You know, they are the people who are the government of the day now, they have taken the place from us, they have taken our political offices. So, when they assigned it for us, is it not on the land they will drive the vehicle through? They will come along with their materials and everything claiming they are the owners, even the hooligans in that era, they come out and they fight it, we cannot say it because Bakassi was a very peaceful place. We don't know, we don't know how to fight.*

We even tried and said: "let this amount go to them, let this amount come to us". But by the time you carry your own and want to go out, they will still fight and collect it from you. So, it's a very funny situation. We are not happy at all. We are not happy. I'm telling you because you know it's like you bring in all your goodies to a friend's house and say "please, can I squat with you". And when he discovered the goodies and everything, some people will kill you even to carry the goodies and it is natural. That is happening in the world. That's just what we are passing through now. Why? Because every rights and everything has been collected from us. Now, we're only pleading that the government should help us. Build this Dayspring and Por Island for us and give it a name.

She further talked about how the issues caused militancy to breed in the area. She put it thus:

Ram: *Today, the Cameroon soldiers cannot come to that territory even though they are trying to penetrate because of the militants that are in the water. Now, they used to exchange, you know, fire; this one will fire, this fire is making it so difficult for people to get there. So, what we are learning now is that if the government accepts them, then the military will work with them. We will live with them because they are there to protect us, they are not even there because they are fighting, or they are not fighting us. It is because of the shutdown that made them to be there.*

They also recount that they have to deal with militancy, bad boys, among others. They represent it this way:

Ram: *They are not even Bakassi people, that's the fun about it. They are not even Bakassi people, they are people that just feel like, you know you know. They come in there, the people might think that they are sea pirates. They might not be sea pirates. They have carried us to stay with them; this other town that we are staying with. This villager that we are staying with. Some of them are coming from there to the water so that they are returning to protect the area but they are fighting us indirectly, the real Bakassi people. You understand what I mean now. She said further:*

Yes, they are protecting their people because of gendarmes, but they are fighting the indigenes.

Having presented the findings, I will proceed to chapter five to discuss the findings.

Chapter 5 - Summary, Discussion & Recommendations

"If we cannot use our research to transform Africa, we are wasting our time".

Prof Micheal Tagoe

Discussion

In this research, a resilient Bakasi woman is conceptualized as an Indigenous woman who has withstood the harsh conditions that the ceding Bakassi brought; she has adapted to the changes or is still able to survive despite the challenging conditions. The Native American Woman describes a resilient Indigenous woman as a woman who is in a community with other Indigenous women.

To begin with the first research question, the following themes emerged:

- How do Indigenous women individually describe their experiences enacting resilience as a leadership practice?

Intersectional position of women

The research has shown that women have had to go the extra mile to be paid their worth. The women, particularly the Native American women, discussed how they worked for several years and put in extra work to get recognized. They also explained that men did not have to do as much as they had done to be paid their worth. These women from STEM backgrounds shared that how they felt like an anomaly in their field. This experience is captured in the tenets of Indigenous feminism that aims to empower Native women. This finding agrees with the existing research that women have to put in more efforts than men to be recognized. In the study conducted by Smith et al. (2014), it is revealed that Native Americans are underrepresented in STEM and there are many reasons for this under-representation. According to them, Native American students in STEM often have greater goal incongruity that tend to keep them away

from the disciplines. This assertion, although it does not explore Native American women in STEM, it, however, shows that Native Americans are generally lagging in STEM.

While Smith et al. (2014) described the underrepresentation of Native Americans in STEM, Towns' (2010) research further describes the marginalization of Native American women in STEM. Towns (2010) highlights the dire nature of Native American women, stating that they are the least represented of the minority women in STEM. According to the research, as at 2000, the underrepresented ethnic groups in STEM included African-American 6%, Hispanic 6%, Asian 2% and Native Americans 1%. This apparently did not change in 2007 as Towns (2010) revealed. There was only one Native American out of the women faculty in the top hundred Chemistry Department in the United States, and there were no full professor of Native American origin. This affirms that that was the least of the underrepresented groups in the United States. Although Stevens et al. (2016) provides a pathway that could help young Native Americans to bridge the gap in STEM through culturally relevant samples, the underrepresentation of Native Americans in STEM is still wide; and it is only by going the extra miles that they could get the breakthrough and recognition.

This work has shown the Intersectionality of women's positioning in the event of conflict. This research agrees with Das (1996) that women suffer when calamity befalls a people. The women in the data recounted stories from their ancestors who suffered as a result of colonial discriminatory policies. They averred that being Indigenous, the women carry with a multiple baggage of discrimination that puts them at a disadvantage.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment was presented as a major finding in this research; the Native Americans shared that they were taken out of the reservations, raped and killed, yet they could

not confront, accuse or convict the culprits because they (the courts around them) did not have the jurisdiction to judge non-Natives on tribal lands; and when they take the same case to the federal government, they have to wait a long time to get justice. The Bakassi women also narrated a similar experience. They are raped; the locals visit them at night and rape their wives, while the gendarmes rape the women in Bakassi too. Such injustice is a show of power that leaves the women helpless. It was interesting to find a woman who shared that they could not try such with her because she would report them, and they would be arrested. Complex Adaptive System framing is applicable here, given that it accounts for that the class between the Indigenous women and the authorities. However, other women are scared of reporting the Cameroonian gendarmes to the authorities because they are scared that the gendarmes might retaliate. On the aspect of reporting offenders of sexual harassment, there is a need for advocacy, especially in vulnerable communities where women are likely to be targets of sexual assaults. Findings also buttress that, when it comes to community interventions, the people know what to do, they need a catalyst to show that progress can be made. This finding corroborates the submission of Azubuike (2018) that Indigenous displaced people of Bakassi face sexual assault. The issue of sexual harassment is a major discourse in camps of displaced Indigenous people and many women, often, are victims of this ugly incidences. The study of Clark and Grant (2015) shows that even researchers that often go to the field in refugee camps could be subjected to sexual harassment ranging from romantic discussions to groping.

This is not only limited to the displaced Indigenous living in camps; it is prominent among the Native American women. Wieskamp and Smith (2020) submit that Native women face sexual harassment more than any other groups in the United States of America. The research of Wieskamp and Smith (2020) highlights the ills of sexual harassment against the Native

Americans as part of the discussion of bodies and the abuse of bodies in Native studies.

However, the study further explains survivance — a rhetoric of resistance that emphasizes empowerment by asserting Native presence and rejecting dehumanizing narratives — as a part of the resilience skills for the Native women battling with sexual violence (p.2).

Memories from homeland:

The participants shared how memories from their homeland helped them carry on. These memories are stories told them or the experiences that they have had that toughened them. They shared feelings of hopelessness when their land was taken from them. For instance, Ram's first narrative showed the conflict between the administrative space, in this case, the International Court of Justice, and the entrepreneurial space in a complex adaptive space.

Edet (2015) expresses the bizarre nature at which many people looked down on the Indigenous people of Bakassi when they were forced to leave their ancestral land. As a victim of the forceful eviction from the Bakassi Peninsula, Edet (2015) explains that the memory of homeland has been shared and reenacted many times since their ancestral land was forcefully taken through the court's injunction. However, the memories of their homeland have become a source for leadership resilience among the Indigenous people that were forced off their ancestral land. Their stories of survival, from their ancestors and their forced removal, show how they cope with trauma. This research has shown how they rose above the stigma. A Native woman shared how she was afraid to say that she was Indian because her father told her not to reveal her identity as so, and she looked white. This impacted her so much that she could not continue schooling. In class, she was stereotyped, and if anything about Natives was mentioned, they looked at her and expected her to know about it; it was a huge baggage to carry. She eventually went back to college while her daughter was in college. A Native American woman shared how her dad was

called derogatory names just for being Native, and he hated himself and did not want to be associated with his tribe until his daughter told him to change his mind. This finding is in line with the studies that show that Indigenous people suffer stigma for being seen as primitive and unimpressive. “We are a living people,” one of the Native American women echoed.

The stories of my participants show clearly the connection with their homeland and the role of memories to promote the connection. This resonates with the finding of Bordeaux (2022). The work of Bordeaux (2022) expresses the impact of nostalgic feelings in the protest of the American Indian Movement against the Dakota Access Pipeline at Standing Rock in 2016 which would have impacts on the reservation of Lakota Indian nation. This protest is a form of decolonization for the Indian nation and the preservation of their Indigenous homeland. Bordeaux (2022) highlights that the American Indian Movement (AIM), which was founded in 1968 used the memories of past events as symbols of their protest against the United States government. In her study, Bordeaux (2022) explains that the AIM’s 1973 protest against federal agents for 71 days on wounded knee was, indeed, a reenactment of the event of 1890 when the US troops killed 300 unarmed Lakota people who were mainly women and children; the group also used these previous symbols for protest at Standing Rock in 2016. While the study of Bordeaux (2022) highlights the importance of memories of the activities of AIM, Bordeaux perhaps enacts the importance of memories to homeland as she is from the Lakota Nation whose notion of homeland was shaped by the memory of her father’s story.

Personal development:

As revealed in my findings, personal development is one of the means for Indigenous women to enact resilience as a leadership practice. The intersectional position of Indigenous women, as earlier discussed, is proof of the constant work Indigenous women must put in in

order to be able to enact resilience as a leadership practice. Personal development is one of the means to strengthen the position of Indigenous women in the society. The participants of my study shared how they humbled themselves to learn skills that will help them survive in both low-context cultures and ‘high-context’ cultures. According to them some of the skills include public speaking, communicating, and writing. These skills are essential for Indigenous women of my study because communication is central to their existence; As such it is important for them also to learn how to communicate. This finding is in line with leadership as a practice, and it is evident in the way the women take up learning skills to improve their situation. As Tchoumi (2020) submits, people who find themselves on the margin like Indigenous people often go beyond the prejudices of their status when they have opportunity to lead or work in a general group; they learn new ways of doing things if need be and learn how to communicate appropriately so as to enact leadership as practice. The submission of Tchoumi (2020) is applicable to the Indigenous women of Native America and Africa examined in my study. While personal development and, specifically, learning skills were important to the personal development, my findings further shows that mentorship was the drive for many of the Indigenous women of my study.

This research shows that having a mentor who can support personal development is a significant factor in helping women build resilience. In the research of Chaco (2020), it is clearly stated that mentorship is necessary to spur the interests of Indigenous women to take skills that could help them to develop themselves personally. Most often, mentors come from within the group of the marginalized groups. However, the findings of my research show that mentors could be members of the Indigenous groups or non-members. Mentors of women in this study came

from their tribes, other nations and even among women but this research also shows that mentors can come from different angles, including men.

Mentorship that promotes the people's personal development is important for Indigenous women for three main reasons. First, there must be personal development that would gear Indigenous women to manage the trauma of colonial violence. The violence of colonialism against Indigenous people is intergenerational as all the fabrics of their societies were disrupted (Bang, 2017). The horror of colonialism and its violence extended to the permanent displacement of Indigenous people from their lands. To manage this trauma, influential and more exposed members of the Indigenous groups must mentor other women of the groups for personal development (Lees & Bang, 2023).

Secondly, mentorship that promotes personal development can assist Indigenous people to negotiate their daily living in their societies. One of the marks of Indigenous leadership is the capacity to negotiate redress on their lands and, most especially, their sovereignty (Lees and Bang, 2023; Deloria, 2001). For Indigenous women in dominantly patriarchal societies, they need mentorship in their communities to assist them in negotiating patriarchy (Nnaemaka, 2004).

The third reason for mentorship in personal development is the necessity of continuous leadership in Indigenous communities. Indigenous communities that have suffered intergenerational violence and continue to face marginalization because of colonialism and, subsequently, displacement must have strong Indigenous leadership to show resilience as practice. This can be achieved through mentorship that promotes personal development (Cajete, 1994).

Beyond personal development through mentorship, indigenization and decolonization of the educational domain can spur the personal development of Indigenous groups like the Native

American and, especially, Indigenous women who are mainly on the fringes of their societies (McCarthy & Lee, 2014; Jacob, 2012; Kenny 2012). The structure of Indigenous education in this aspect would assist Indigenous communities to develop and be self-aware. This would be a good way to continue the process of decolonizing the pedagogies that were created through the boarding school system (Wildcat, 2001). Through this process, mentors could be built and, as Fathi (1968) explains, changes could easily be seen among the marginalized groups.

Courage and Confidence

Courage and Confidence in the context of this research demonstrates Leadership as practice. Courage and Confidence are similar, but they are not the same. Participants in this research demonstrated that Indigenous women must have courage and confidence in their abilities to sustain resilience. A Bakassi woman shared that she summoned the courage to talk back to the gendarmes and that made them not feel confident enough to harass her. This shows that community people know the solutions to their problems; they just need a catalyst or someone to encourage them to champion the fight for justice without fear. She showed courage in explaining how they received university education. One Bakassi woman told the story of surviving teenage pregnancy and going on to study medicine; another Native American talked about going back to college at the same time that her daughters was in college. When asked the advice they had for younger Indigenous women, they stressed the importance of being confident. This is in line with the group theory that women's experiences are muted, so women must learn to speak up confidently.

Syawal et al (2024) explain that the muted group theory directly relates to women as they constitute a high demography that experience limitations to freely express themselves. According to them this is largely due to the domineering nature of men in the society. As such, it has

become a barrier to women attaining some roles in the society. However, Syawal et al (2024) further state that not all women express the notion of muted group; some women have broken the barriers through confidence. They have built a habit of speaking in groups that they have been hitherto marginalized.

Minoritization and the Minoritized

This research has shown that Indigenous people have been minoritized to the point that their issues are not prioritized by the system, yet they continue to forge ahead. The idea of being minoritized even at home is one of the impacts of colonialism. As discussed earlier in this study, the violence of colonialism was devastating both in North America and Africa. It left horror of loss and gap to be filled among Indigenous groups (Lees and Bang, 2023). This is so because they lost the sovereignty of their nations, and in more devastating cases, some Indigenous communities were displaced from their lands. For instance, in Africa, most Indigenous groups were ripped of their sovereignty during the period of colonialism (Falola, 2002) and some Indigenous communities like the Bakassi were displaced eventually because of colonialism. Although the displaced Bakassi indigenes were resettled, some of them remained in their homeland and suffered at the hands of the Cameroonian gendarmes. However, both the resettled Bakassi people and the ones left in their Indigenous land are minoritized groups in two different countries without any form of sovereignty.

This is also the case with Native Americans who have lost their sovereignty because of colonialism. Many nations were relocated off their lands in North America with little or no support for the relocation. As Navas et al. (2021) explained, these nations have been pushed to boundaries beyond their control. They have become subordinates in their homelands and are often marginalized. To compound issues, there is structural inequity that minoritized Indigenous

children and women encounter in their homeland, which has continued to affect the core of their lives (de Finney et al, 2011). These structural inequities are evident in healthcare, housing, education and, importantly, the identities of Indigenous people, which were largely determined by the colonialists. Noticeably, identity formation has become a contentious issue for Indigenous women and only true decolonization can revive their identity.

Identity issues show in their narratives of resilience. Indigenous people in the US are minoritized to the point that a missing Indigenous woman is not given the same attention that a white woman is given. One of the participants shared how she had a missing student whom she reported to the police, but she was not satisfied with the way the case was handled. She went further to narrate that she was told if she removed her shirt that had Indigenous woman written on it and came back as a white woman, she will be well attended to. This goes to show that Indigenous women can pass as white people and get more privileges, but they chose to show their Indigenous identity. This demonstrates power in majority identity. Indigenous people in North America, particularly in the US, use quantum and proof of being a registered member of their tribe to demonstrate their identity as Indigenous people. It is important to state here that not all Indigenous people in the US are white, some are people of colour.

Findings from this research show the intersectionality of women's positioning. The Indigenous people feel they are becoming extinct and thus, have to assert their identity. For instance, the Native Americans asserted their identity with their enrollment and blood quantum. Some are white and explain that it was caused by the ideology of killing the Indian to save the man. Bakassi people felt they were becoming extinct in their exodus. They have been called all sorts of names such as refugees, IDPs, but I observed that they refer to themselves as Baksssi Indigenes. What you are called determines what you get. They now have to use the *Waka* book

to access their lands. If they had been called Indigenous people, they might have had the political value that Indigenous people have. Indigenous people who looked white believed that they could get results if they did not talk about being Native American. This implies that being Indigenous comes with some baggage. Native Americans stated that they are identified as blood quantum, and this identity can be proven by their grandparents or someone in their ancestry that enrolled in the tribes, what this means is those who are quarter-Indigenous in some tribes, cannot be chiefs, yet they call themselves members of the tribes. Another interesting twist about identity is the question about what a people are called; this determines what they get. Bakassi people agree that they are refugees, IDPs and Native/Indigenous people at the same time. Yet the notion that they are indigenes is not much talked about, but they used the term indigenes to describe themselves when they spoke. This speaks to how the concept of labelling constitute limited descriptions of the people. However, calling themselves Indigenous people is a demonstration of their resilience to align themselves with their ancestry, despite losing their homeland.

The issue of identity has become a tossed coin in many instances for the Indigenous people that often leads to denial of rights to their homeland, and in some cases, their existence (Navas et al, 2021; Edet, 2015). Edet (2015) carefully explains the struggle for identity among the Indigenous people of Bakassi. On one hand, the Cameroonian neighbors who now officially possess their ancestral home, have forced them to become the ‘other’ in their own ancestral home. On the other hand, their new hosts in Nigeria think of them as refugees, IDPs, without full rights. This is also seen in the cases of the Indigenous people of America. Piatt (2021) explains that the question of identity is a critical issue among many Native Americans whose ancestors were enslaved, and their tribes were not recognized, due to the systemic policy of extermination of the tribes. Many Indigenous people, as Piatt (2021) reflects, cannot join a tribe and if

eventually they join a tribe, cannot become chiefs mainly because of the fraction of their Indian blood. Unfortunately, the identity ambivalence was caused by colonialism, forceful eviction and the boarding school system for Indian children. These studies corroborate my findings that the identities of Indigenous people are left in the balance and often spur resilience from Indigenous women to scale through the prejudices their identities create in the society.

Stigma also came as an issue in this research. Participants from Native America spoke about how their white grandparents made them hold prejudice against themselves. Native Americans and Bakassi people were called derogatory names that they did not want to be associated with; their heritage was looked upon at school if the discussion was about Native Americans. Again, this underscores how labelling can impact people. But it is interesting to see that a participant shared that despite her father who is Native American speaking negatively about his tribe, she went on to find out about the culture of her tribe.

As they shared how their identity is being impacted by the legacies of colonialism and security issues, how they navigate it seemed to be a big issue. Bakassi people have to deal with a surge in the activities of Cameroonian gendarmes. Bakassi is in the Niger Delta region, where the people have been advocating for the right to manage their mineral resources just as other rejoiners who are managing their agriculture. Nigeria is an oil rich region, in fact, Nigeria is the 4th largest oil producing country in the world, so young men from the Niger Delta region, at some point, took up arms to fight for their rights and this led to high rate of kidnapping in the area. The federal government granted them amnesty if they dropped their weapons, they did drop their weapons but were not properly settled. So, they have taken up arms and headed back to the creeks. Findings from this research demonstrated that some militants have taken up the unceded part of the Peninsula and made it a danger zone for the women to ply. Therefore, they have to

paddle themselves and cover their heads with a big nylon bag so that they will not be seen on the canoe on their way to buy fish for selling. Men cannot paddle them because if they are caught, they will be killed instantly by the Cameroonian gendarmes. Another Bakasi woman shared that her brother was kidnapped, and she was asked to pay a ransom. She had to give up her business capital; and now she has no capital for her business.

Abiding by the rules is important for them otherwise they could be killed. They do whatever they are told to do, especially paying high taxes and going about with their identity card. This goes to show the dynamics of the complex adaptive system.

Minoritized people have to deal with their languages being replaced by the dominant group. It is interesting to see older Bakassi adults learning French to survive in the Cameroonian part of Bakassi and Native Americans who were not exposed to their language make efforts to learn their language as adults. This demonstrates the crucial nature of language agency in identity formation among Indigenous groups. Lees and Bang (2023) suggest that there is the need for Indigenous people to preserve their languages and epistemes. For Indigenous communities, language often promote relations between people in the same group and the environment at large.

Health challenges were evident, as found in this research. Given the situation, they can no longer eat fresh food; so, they fall sick. They also suffer health issues and the spread of diseases from the coordinates in the camp. The Native American women also shared how their ancestors contracted several of the white men's; diseases and sicknesses like diabetics, caused by a change in their diet.

These challenges narrated by the Indigenous women in my study are part of the considered as minoritization of Indigenous people as described by Tanous (2023). According to

Tanous (2023), in many cases of settler colonialism, Indigenous people are exposed to health challenges that often lead to the lower life expectancy. This is evident in many instances in America and Africa and often because of the minoritization of Indigenous people, there seems to be low attention on them. In explaining the ills of Indigenous people, Laurie & Khan (2017) critically express that minoritizing Indigenous people and culture could productively lead to political and social relevance through their resilience.

Enterprising

Being enterprising is an attribute of resilience that dominates in their narratives. First, the Bakassi women, many of them were fisherpersons, now that they do not have access to the high sea like before, they had to learn farming and other business to survive. They had different sources of motivation; some said it came from their mentors, while others said it came from their children.

Native Americans discussed how they are leveraging tribal resources. Native Americans have received some inducements from the government for the historical tortures they went through; it is inappropriate to call these welfare or benefits because they are proceeds from the wealth of their land, which was forcefully taken away from them. So, it is interesting to see a Choctaw Native woman share how she got scholarships for her and her children from the Choctaw fund which enabled them to get an education. Native people must continue to enjoy such benefits so that the disparity between those who have education and those who do not will decrease. It was interesting to see how they reiterated this in affirmative terms in their narratives.

To demonstrate their enterprise, they inbibed initiatives that has helped to preserve their culture. This goes to show the agency of Indigenous women, despite being marginalized. They

applied for grants and mobilized their people to embark on projects that will orient the young minds.

Their enterprising nature drives their fulfillment working for tribal nations. Participants in this research shared that working for their tribe is not only fulfilling but rewarding. A Native American woman shared how she learned writing and communication. She had to give up shyness. She also had to stop thinking that her colleagues knew what she was working on; she had to tell them. Moreover, they gained expertise in community engagement and amassed wealth on how to work with tribal communities. The implication of this finding is that the government should learn how to engage tribal people in implementing projects as opposed to employing experts. The Indigenous people know how best to get their people involved in a project. They know how to speak their language, how to reach consensus, and how to navigate challenges. The skills they mentioned that helped them include listening, and teamwork to navigate the hurdles of community engagement. They have also gathered experience of working with other tribes the government can leverage, as opposed to reinventing the wheel. Indigenous feminism, negro feminism, and leadership as practice framework can be applied in this theme to show how they practice leadership in their daily activities.

They went on to teach themselves their culture. This is a form of self-taught culture, especially for the Native Americans that were not exposed to their culture. All these demonstrate critical hope as they are not only hopeful but are determined to put much effort into their work. They emphasize the African ideology that affirm the thought: ‘train a woman, you train a nation.

It is interesting to see individualism, especially on the Bakassi side the displacement disrupted their community meetings as they did not have anyone to run to.

One of the major resilient attributes of Indigenous women has been the display of leadership through enterprises. Maguirre et al (2016) highlight that despite the patriarchal nature slowing down women empowerment of many Indigenous women in the Americas, they have found ways to become innovative and to excel. According to them, mechanisms like low-interest microcredits, job stability and gender-equality policies are shaping the Indigenous enterprises led by women. This also invariably aids the building of resilience among Indigenous women as their enterprising spirit helps them to build prosperity. Dzisi (2008) submits that Indigenous women through their entrepreneurial activities contribute to the economy of their nations. In most cases, the enterprising nature of Indigenous women are challenged by marginalization of the groups and patriarchy of their nations.

Research question 2

- How do Indigenous women collaboratively describe their experience enacting resilience as leadership practice?

Family bond

The theme of family bond was present in the narratives of my participants as part of resilience practices. This was evident in how they spoke of the strength they get from their family and spouses. As deeply expressed in Indigenous feminism, Indigenous women find strength in family bonds and even their spouses. Oyewunmi (2016) addresses this when she opines that African feminism embraces womanism and the nuances of being feminine. This notwithstanding did not mean that their spouse did not revere them.

Among many Indigenous people, family and kin relations are the foundations of their society; they learn and live in the euphoria of the kin system. The consciousness of family bonds and kinship system among Indigenous people is better captured by the description of Lees & Bang (2023:6) that kinning for Indigenous people is not necessarily biological but rather a conscious effort by intentional humans. This understanding of family and the sacredness attached to family structure among Native Americans provides Indigenous women with access to enact resilience as a leadership practice. Innes (2007) provides a more solid base for this finding as the study carefully examines the importance of family ties to Native Americans. In the context of the generational trauma that Indigenous women have faced, the family bond becomes one of the most visible ways to enact resilience and show their leadership practices.

Closely related to the family bond, the joint motherhood and community platforms aid women to enact their resilience as leadership practices.

Joint Motherhood

An African proverb says: “it takes a village to raise a child.” This is evident in the practices of family and how the Indigenous women joined other mothers to raise their children. Mothers who had died had their sisters become care givers to their children even when these caregivers are mothers too and have scarce resources. Some have up to 6 children living with them. Wood (2021) carefully expresses several issues of motherhood and careers of Native American women. According to Wood (2021) Indigenous women find joy in motherhood they feel they do not find in their careers but also admit that it affects their careers often leading to stunted career growth. However, tribal communities help mothers back to their careers and support them in raising their children. This very submission highlights my finding that Indigenous women are resilient, and they enact this in joint motherhood. Oyewunmi (2016)

further examines that African feminism involves the capacity of women to become caregivers in time of need. This aligns strongly with the philosophy of *ubuntu* which expresses the communal strengths of Africans rather than the individualistic efforts. By helping raise kids that they did not birth, they are preserving their population and doing their responsibility to their community.

Community

Attending community meetings was an important place where both the Native American and Bakassi women helped themselves to become resilient. For the Native Americans, this includes intertribal societies. For the Bakassi people, they have a cooperative society where they contribute money weekly among themselves to raise money in bulk. In this case, when they see the locals having meetings, they accuse them of plotting against them, until they saw that they were having cooperative – contribution, that way they allow them to have their meetings. Community is very important in high context cultures Bakassi people and Native American communities are high context cultures hence the value of doing things together.

Preserving cultural practices is a communal effort. The Native Americans go to *pow* wows where they learn from older Native Americans and hear stories of their heritage, while the Bakassi people continue with their *ekpe* rights and all. This goes to show the agency of vulnerable population. Regardless of operating from the point of powerlessness and dispossession in a system that minoritizes them, they assumed agency to preserve their culture. It is particularly interesting to note that the Native American who suffered generational historical displacement spanning several years and policy of assimilation that sought to put their culture into extinction continue to practice their culture.

They show community support in professional and personal capacity support for their members, for example, going for lunch with fellow tribal members, supporting them at sports,

belonging to associations or whatever group t in community. They are intentional about mentoring younger people in their profession to as to raise a generation of younger equipped professionals.

They are engaged in doing things together like beads (Arts); for them, it was an activity of the past, so, it has become a tribute to them. These community activities like beading, farming, provided opportunities for them to bond and relax.

They understand the importance of Government engagement, so the women embark on political mobilization to contest for election and support each other. This was seen among Baksssi people. They believed that women are better leaders as they take whatever they get home, and they are more compassionate. This research shows that Indigenous people have become a political category with it own currency and capital. The women understood the role that they played in politics. In Nigeria, the political space is patriarchal, so to see a good number of female respondents talk about their interest in contesting for political elections and discuss their government engaging activities like meeting with the first lady of their state, showed that politics can be done by women when the space is inclusive to them.

They are also engaged in various community services. Both Bakassi people and Native American people engaged in community services to show the commitment of Indigenous people to their environment. They also take care of their environment. To the Native Americans, the environment entails their relatives, so they care for their environment. This research agrees with the findings that Indigenous people know how to care for their environment.

As Mbiti (1990) expresses, the African philosophy is highly communal as the community serves as foundation of its people. Nnaemeka (2004) strongly aligns with this notion but relates it to Nego feminism, a branch of African feminism that advocates for shared values, communal

existence, negotiations and compromises, if necessary. The community, in my findings, shows that Indigenous women find strength in communal efforts. It is interesting to see these values apply in Native American contexts.

Sovereign Movements

This was evident, in this research, as seen on how the Natives' continuous agitation for their sovereignty. Indigenous feminism is about women empowerment, sovereignty and an end to sexism. They want to be able to convict sexual offenders in their Native land. The work of Bordeaux (2022) carefully advocates for active participation of women in the clamor for sovereignty, led by the American Indian Movement (AIM). The demand includes, among other things, total sovereignty, including judging the offenders of sexual harassment in Native courts, which would reduce the cases of rape and abuse of women. In recounting the matrilineal trauma that Indigenous women face in the Americas, Birdsong (2015) expresses that what matters at the end is freedom of the Indigenous women who have been marginalized in their ancestral lands. This freedom must include women empowerment, end to sexism and appropriate gender laws to protect the rights of women. This finding also applies in the Bakassi context given that they had a Local Government Area portioned to them, but now they had to share with the Ikang people. They are also clamoring for the autonomy of their LGA they do not want to be absorbed into Ikang.

Aid as an Instigation of Violence

The Bakassi people talked about experiencing communal clashes between them and the host community in New Bakassi. When humanitarian bodies visit, they come to give them food. But the host community destroys it and says it must be shared equally, yet they still destroy it so

that no one will have them. The Indigenous group have become the muted group in the cases of their removal in many African countries. Aid is supposed to protect human rights; however, this research is showing how aid is causing human rights violations. In some cases, the relief materials are destroyed in the process of sharing them, conflict occurs due to lack of consensus on the sharing formula. As it is in the muted group theory, power determines who speaks and since the host community is in control, the Indigenous group who owns the aid becomes muted in the social construction as Ardener submits.

Factors that help with building resilience in Indigenous context

Figure 5.1: Showing resilience factors.



Based on the findings of this research, I am arguing that resilience is not just a trait; it is a duty and moral responsibility that Indigenous women owe to their community and ancestors. Resilience is rooted in recognizing the sacrifices of the ancestors who paid the ultimate price for their survival. You are either resilient or resilient; you do not have a choice. The difference is that some are more resilient than others. Theirs tends towards community resilience as the women draw strength from each other.

Based on my finding, this section will discuss considerations for building resilience among Indigenous women. Resilience can be built, and adversity or unfavorable circumstances can provide opportunities to demonstrate how to lead in difficult situations. These factors which cut across the spirituality, psychological and social aspects of the lives of Indigenous women are discussed below.

Faith: Faith was one of the factors that aid resilience building among Indigenous women in Native America and Africa. According to the participants of my study, their beliefs were central to resilient building in their communities. It is important to know where one stands. Nothing should be imposed, but they need to understand their spirituality. To many of them, only a supernatural being could assist them to build resilience and faith in the being is necessary to access the being. Burnette and Hefflinger (2016) submit that faith was one of the protective factors for Indigenous women experiencing intimate partner violence in their communities. This study shows that faith is one of the ways for Indigenous women to build resilience in their relationships and communities. Elm et al (2016) also stressed that mediation, prayer and spirituality were forms of resilience building for Indigenous women who had been tagged in the society especially because of their sexuality. Furthermore, the study of Jefferis and Theron (2018) carefully shows that South African women and girls relied on faith and spirituality to build resilience during the apartheid period of the country. The findings of these studies show that faith is an essential factor for resilience and ultimately the belief in a spiritual being was an important aspect of this resilience building.

Resistance- Secondly, resistance was one of the factors that allowed Indigenous women to build resilience in their communities. From my findings, Indigenous women emphasize the act of resisting domination, discrimination and violence in their communities. According to my finding the processes involved in resistance are important for Indigenous women to build resilience. The ability to know how and when to push back is essential in building resilience. Who to report to is something occurs and how not to succumb to pressure. The study of Gordon (2017) shows that Indigenous women actively resist violence towards them in the face of patriarchy. The resistance of these women as revealed by Gordon (2017) is one of the means to resilience building in their

societies. As my findings revealed, Indigenous women face several sexual violence and often result to resistance to them.

Adapt: Again, my findings show that adapting is one of the factors for building resilience among Indigenous women. The Indigenous women of my study explained that adapting to communities is key to building resilience. The adaptability of this women often requires them to learn skills like the official language of their countries rather than relying only on their Native language, listening, public speaking, writing, communication, among others. These could be soft skills that people from Indigenous communities do not have, but they need them to survive.

In the study of Baird and Boyle (2012), relating and learning values associated with the new host community was identified as a factor that impinged positively on resilience, particularly commitment to new opportunities, such as working outside the home and schooling. Although they warn that a kind of liminality can occur between the two cultures as engagements in opportunities often clash with cultural practices in the culture of origin (Baird & Boyle, 2012), their submission strongly attests to the findings of my study that Indigenous women often build resilience through adaptability.

Support System: The participants of my study further highlight support systems as a significant factor that could build their resilience. They explain that supporting others aids them in building resilience. This, to many of them, foregrounds how they can give and be helpful in the community. This corroborates the submission of Lemus-Way et al. (2019). The study focuses on what resilience and will are used for. The result of their study indicates that Mexican migrant women in transit toward the USA through Mexico possess both internal and external strengths. These strengths are drawn from religion (faith-based), courage, target-setting, endurance, as well as from their relationship with other people (e.g. families who provided shelter, accommodation,

transportation, health materials and food to them) and institutions. The women in the study succeeded and reached the US-Mexican border because they had these strengths (Lemus-Way et al. 2019). This is further supported by the studies of Mrayan (2016) and Maung (2019) which show the support, which came particularly from social groups connected to their own cultures, as an integral component of resilience as it helped the refugees regain the much-needed emotional and realistic adjustment. This was because communal support provided a channel for social therapy through shared suffering, views and challenges. This further presented an opportunity for refugees to learn from one another in new surroundings and created a consciousness that they were not alone (Mrayan, 2016; Maung, 2019). This is also the women who have been minoritized. Supporting and the willingness to support others when called upon is important in Indigenous communities for them.

Humor: While the Indigenous women of my study do not like their marginalized position, they feel life must be lived and they could help with some relaxation. To these women, suffering can lead to humor, or better still, people can create humor from their suffering. The humor from their situation often eases the pressure of their states and offers hope that they could build a strong future. This is one of the coping mechanisms for the marginalized women and a factor that could help them to build resilience. In the view of Mojo (2008), the coping mechanisms of these groups of people often improve their capacity, their social bonds got stronger, and they shared more positive views and felt a heightened sense of belongingness and comfort (Moio, 2008).

Courage and Confidence; Building resilience to Indigenous women is about courage and confidence. Indigenous women place much emphasis on courage and confidence as factors that could help them build resilience in their states as marginalized groups. These women posit the necessity of being bold to face their challenges in all works of life. For these women, the courage

and confidence to build their resilience were symbols of strength which is a fundamental nature for marginalized groups. Strength was a fundamental characteristic which was cited in keeping the family united and safe, and also helping them to overcome difficulties (Byrskog et al., 2014). The strength (courage and confidence) of the refugees and migrants helped them move to the host community and adapt to their new environment (Chung et al., 2013; El-Radi, 2015). Women refugees also indicated that their strength was derived from their religious inclinations and faith as they received training on perseverance (Byrskog et al., 2014), and past experiences of living through traumatic events (El-Radi, 2015).

Thrive: Finally, there is the focal point for Indigenous women, where they are not just existing, but excelling. This very reason has helped many of them to build resilience in the waves of challenges. The women want to thrive in their works and due to this, they build resilience to face whatever may come their way. Danis (2006) in explaining the positions of marginalized migrants and refugee groups, submit that women and men develop the resilience which helped them to prevail over the harsh conditions they faced, before reaching their destination. Danis (2006) further suggests that their determination for association and self-identification because it gave them the strength to bond with the outside world, meet their needs and achieve their goals are important reasons for the marginalized group of his study to build resilience through several means like religion. It is important to state clearly that the admiration and zeal to thrive from the part of many Indigenous women is a major factor that could help them to build resilience.

Implication for leadership

Indigenous people are a great example for learning resilience. If you want to learn about resilience, learn from people practicing it. They exemplify how important it is to see resilience as a moral obligation, beyond being a trait that everyone should have. Learning resilience from

helps to highlight the practices of resilience among people that are oppressed. Highlighting their resilience demonstrates that they are exemplifiers. There is a Western Bias in leadership education. Perruci (2022) affirms this by stating that the Western world was treated as a standard for examining leadership. Indigenous people are exemplars of resilience. They have lived experiences of adversity; they are thriving and surviving. They are doing so amidst these other challenges they face. They bring in principles that are becoming extinct. For example, collective leadership which includes principles of respect (for elders). This is at the center of holistic Indigenous leadership study and practice.

Moving on, it is important to move beyond culturally relevant leadership learning to domesticating leadership learning and development. Domesticating leadership learning encompasses utilizing what they (the localized group) already have, such as utilizing the Pidgin language as a tool. I observed that even though the Bakassi women could speak English, they switched to Pidgin and were more comfortable speaking it, so I had to join them with the flow.

More importantly, Indigenous people in North America have formed good alliances with themselves so that they are able to advocate for themselves and influence government policies. This implies that African people can rise above tribal sentiments, which have led to wars and opened doors for Western control of her resources.

Recommendations

The findings from this research can be utilized to build a theory of resilience that accounts for practices of resiliency in leadership that speak to Indigenous context. I also recommend that a leadership guide should be developed along the lines of these research findings. I divide my

recommendations into three main parts: considerations for leadership, practices of resilience, and recommendations for future research use.

Considerations for leadership development of Indigenous women



Figure 5.2: Showing resilience considerations.

Based on the findings from this research, I have identified some touch points for leadership development for Indigenous women. This is a guide that I hope to develop further, which could spur the leadership development of Indigenous women in their spaces. The outcome would be to build a guide for the practices of Indigenous peoples who are interested in developing leadership identity, efficacy, and capacity through a practice lens. The considerations for the guide are highlighted below:

Future goal setting: Firstly, I recommend that Indigenous women should set goals especially in the aspects of leadership and resilience building. These goals should align with their values.

Through this goal setting, they could set up to thrive in their communities.

Identifying skillsets: Secondly, I recommend that Indigenous women identify the skillsets that they would need to survive in their position as marginalized groups and in their communities.

This could point to skills they have acquired and know already. The acquisition of these skills

entails knowing what opportunities contribute to growth, and building soft skills like negotiation, public speaking, listening, confidence, and teamwork. Through identifying and acquiring these skills, Indigenous women can survive and thrive in their communities. This is well demonstrated in the study of Baird and Boyle (2012), which focuses on learning new skills in order to embrace the values of their communities. Learning and embracing the values of the new host community emerged as a significant factor that positively influenced resilience, notably in fostering commitment to new opportunities like employment outside the home and education.

Understanding their roles in their community: Thirdly, I recommend that Indigenous women should understand their communities' values and history and understand the roles they play in the community. Indigenous women must understand how they can carry on community values, to build community resilience. Examples of how community resilience shows up include efforts to revitalize language, culture, history and healing. (Estes et al., 2023). Simply put, the strength of the community and culture is a foundation of resilience for Indigenous perspectives.

They must know how they can enact leadership in their communities. Resilience is their duty to pay forward the sacrifices of their ancestors, so leveraging on the community as a foundation for resilience is sacrosanct. As Sesay (2015) explains that custom of origin was hypothesized as a 'glue' that held refugees together and presented them with their personal uniqueness and self-esteem as they navigated their new surroundings (Sesay, 2015). Continued connections with the way of life of origin also offered unofficial support systems (Chung et al., 2013), allowing for the sharing of cultural assets, language, and foodstuff. Engaging in these tradition-based activities could allow Indigenous women to reinvent their culture (Moio, 2008).

How to work with Allies: Also, I recommend that Indigenous women work closely with allies of their course so that their voices would be heard. As Nnaemeka (2004) expresses, working with

allies including non-member of a group could easily help Indigenous women to gain resilience and leadership in their communities. This is an important aspect of community resilience.

According to (Usher et al., 2021), community resilience pertains to increased community agency and connectedness between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups.

Mentoring and being mentored: Finally, I recommend that Indigenous women should be willing to ask for help and give help in return. My research findings show that mentors could be members of Indigenous groups or non-members. Mentors of women in this study came from their tribes, other nations, and even among women, but this research also shows that mentors can come from different angles, including men. Nnaemaka (2004) expresses the need for mentors and guides in Indigenous communities, in most cases, to know when, where, and how to negotiate around patriarchy.

Practices of Resilience

Based on the findings from this research, this section will explore practices of resilience elicited in this study. The practice of resilience for many Indigenous Women is therapeutic and part of their healing process. These resilience practices are often rooted in traditional beliefs, community structures and Indigenous pedagogy and simply provide the framework for healing from trauma and building leadership (Lees & Bangs, 2023; Jacob, 2008). The practice of resilience is also rooted in family bonds as this is critical in the study of Indigenous people (Lees & Bangs, 2023). The practice of resilience is essential, as I will show in this section, because it would revitalize cultural traditions, reignite Indigenous communities, reconnect people with their heritage, promote the well-being of Indigenous people, and empower Indigenous women to reclaim their strength and identity.

The figure below is a pictorial representation of the practices of resilience.



Figure 5.3: Showing practice of resilience.

Moral Obligation: This research demonstrates that resilience is a moral obligation that Indigenous people have to their ancestors who made difficult sacrifices to ensure that their existence was not outlived. This ensures that Indigenous people are not a people of the past but a living category. This understanding makes Indigenous people committed to cultural preservation and upholding their identity. The notion of moral obligation implies that Indigenous people understand the importance of being committed to their cause. In essence, leadership is not necessarily learned; it is moral, innate, and intuitive in a manner that aligns with the Indigenous ways of knowing. This driving factor is evident in Indigenous feminism, nego-feminism, Indigenous feminism, Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) and leadership, as a practice explained above.

Family practices: This research affirms that family is central to Indigenous people. This goes beyond the Western idea of the nuclear family to include the larger extended family. This is why, for example, the Bakassi women automatically take up the responsibility of becoming mothers to motherless children in their communities.

Practices of power: Although the group operates from a position of powerlessness as a marginalized group by operating in a system that makes them feel invisible, it is interesting to see that they reclaim or practice power. Power shows up for the participants through resilience, leadership, and resistance. Resilience speaks to how they commit to thriving, regardless of their traumatic pasts, and leadership speaks to how they support each other. Resistance shows up in how they refuse to be intimidated by the system and advocate for their land/resource control. For example, they refuse aid and assert their sovereignty, to mention a few. Simpson (2007) affirms that refusal is a significant strategy Indigenous people utilize to demonstrate power. This is in line with Bolton (2021) that African women, in the context of this research Indigenous women are not just helpless victims, but active change agents with the ability to assume agency.

Practices of community engagement: Community life is at the core of Indigenous life. This practice is holistic and encompasses the human and non-human elements in the environment by acknowledging Indigenous ways of knowing. Indigenous people define resilience as being in community with other Indigenous people. Through community engagement, they mobilize to advocate for their rights, learn from elders, coexist, and thrive.

Practices of livelihood: This practice is evident in how they rise to take up vocations and pursue other career/business paths that ensure that their sources of livelihood, which were disrupted by colonialism, are sustained even though they have to utilize other means or switch to different paths.

Recommendation for Future Study

The following are my recommendations for future study:

Future research could employ comparative analysis, and I intend to do more beyond this research. Indigenous research is needed just as we have global-south collaborations, as advocated by the UN. While we have South-South collaboration, we should have Indigenous collaborations. Tribal Nations in the US and North America generally are Nations within a Nation. Therefore, while they continue to mobilize themselves to advocate for their causes, they have to connect with other high-context cultures in different parts of the Global South.

I also recommend research based on fieldwork, that is, data collection in person. It was challenging doing the interviews in person in this research. The internet network was bad, while doing this research, I observed that it can be very challenging. Unstable network is a challenge in some cities in Nigeria, how much more amongst vulnerable people living in places where they lack basic amenities. I recommend that this research should be conducted in person.

Moving forward, I recommend that research of the manner does not necessarily have to anonymize the patients if they want their identity to be disclosed. That in itself is a demonstration of power for Indigenous people. The participants in this study were influential women who did not mind if their identity was known.

Furthermore, research should be followed by action, if you don't have food to give anyone, do not ask if they are hungry. There should be a game plan to work with NGOs. It is hard to communicate to the Bakassi women that I am a researcher and I do not have solutions to their problem, however I understand the contest that for people to see you schooling abroad, and

conducting research about them, you most likely have a solution. Community engaged research should go beyond co creation of know, it should include taking actions to solve pressing needs.

Conclusion

This work looked at narratives of the resilience of Indigenous people in North America and Africa, and a qualitative method of narrative inquiry was used. This study concluded that Indigenous women are resilient and practice leadership in unique ways. They know the solutions to their problems; they need a catalyst and a supportive environment to move beyond surviving to thrive. Indigenous women have a moral obligation to their ancestors to be resilient so as to ensure their sustainability. This research concludes that community resilience is the foundation of Indigenous resilience, and women actively play their role to ensure that their heritage is not forgotten.

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Appendix

A. 1: Interview Protocol

Interviewee (Title and Name): _____

Interviewer: _____

Introductory Protocol

To facilitate our note-taking, we would like to audio /video tape our conversations today. Please sign the release form. Virtual interviews will be video recorded via Zoom, while in-person interviews will be audio recorded. For your information, only researchers on the project will be privy to the tapes, which will eventually be destroyed after they are transcribed. In addition, you must sign a form devised to meet our human subject requirements. Essentially, this document states that (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary, and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) we do not intend to inflict any harm. Thank you for agreeing to participate.

We have planned this interview to last no longer than one hour. During this time, we have several questions that we would like to cover. If time begins to run short, it may be necessary to interrupt you in order to push ahead and complete this line of questioning.

Introduction

You have been selected to speak today because you are an Indigenous woman. This research is titled Narratives of Resilience from Indigenous Women in North America and Africa.

Questions

What is your name and what do you do?

How much do you earn? Tell me your dependents if any? Do you think you earn enough for your status and needs? If yes , or no how do they make it work?

What is your greatest challenge as an Indigenous woman and how do you navigate that challenge?

What was your greatest challenge in your colonial community, and how did you navigate that challenge?

Do you have people that you can call for help when you need and how do reach out for help?

What is your disposition to adversity?

Do you have a community of support? What does it mean to you?

How long have you lived here and how is the experience different from where you lived previously?

Through these questions, I want to demonstrate the strength of Indigenous women; what questions should I be asking?

What is the story of how you got here and how you survived here?

What stories of your survival have been handed down to from previous generations?

Could you tell the story of how you got to this point in life?

What are your daily activities like?

Do you see yourself as a leader?

Have you encountered adversities? If you overcame them, how did you do it?

Do you identify as displaced? If yes or no, kindly tell the story behind it.

Have you faced unique challenges because you are an Indigenous woman, and how did you deal with them?

What kind of expectation does your community have of you that is not expected of men and how do you navigate that?

How do you stay motivated?

What advice would you give the younger women in your position?

I thank you for your time, and I am grateful to you for sharing this information with me despite your busy schedule.

A. 2: Debriefing Statement

Thank you for your participation in this research on Narratives of Resilience from Indigenous Women in North America and Africa. Your participation was important in helping researchers learn how to lead in difficult situations. This study is important because it is a useful contribution to the literature on contested/political citizenship, identity, politics of space, and international politics. By participating in this research, you are helping to understand Indigenous women's agency better. This research will provide insights on how to practice leadership in difficult situations. Your participation will remain confidential if you have any additional questions regarding this research: Chibuzor Azubuike (azubuike@ksu.edu), Lisa Rubin, Chair, (785) 532-3224, (rubin@ksu.edu).

A. 3: IRB approval



TO: Andrew Wefald
Leadership Studies
Manhattan, KS 66506

FROM: Lisa Rubin, Chair
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 03/25/2024

RE: Approval of Proposal Entitled, "Narratives of Resilience from Indigenous Women in North America and Africa."

Proposal Number IRB-12142

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects has reviewed your proposal and has granted full approval. This proposal is **approved for three years from the date of this correspondence.**

APPROVAL DATE: 03/25/2024

EXPIRATION DATE: 03/24/2027

In giving its approval, the Committee has determined that:

No more than minimal risk to subjects

This approval applies only to the proposal currently on file as written. Any change or modification affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation. All approved proposals are subject to continuing review, which may include the examination of records connected with the project. Announced post-approval monitoring may be performed during the course of this approval period by URCO staff. Injuries, unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the IRB and / or the URCO.

Electronically signed by Lisa Rubin on 03/25/2024 3:36 PM ET

