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## **African Immigrants' Perceptions of Employee Performance and Organizational Cultural Barriers in Fortune 500 Companies.**

Opeyemi Oluwakemi Adebayo  
*Walden University*

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# Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

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Opeyemi Oluwakemi Adebayo

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2024

Abstract

African Immigrants' Perceptions of Employee Performance and Organizational Cultural  
Barriers in Fortune 500 Companies

by

Opeyemi Oluwakemi Adebayo

MSc, Walden University, 2020

BSc, University of Ibadan, 2008

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Management

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December 2024

## Abstract

The frequent underemployment of African immigrants and lower job earnings continues to be a problem in the United States. African immigrants in the United States struggle to effectively navigate the U.S. organizational culture system due to cultural barriers. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore perceptions of African immigrants regarding their employee performance and cultural barriers in terms of communication within Fortune 500 companies in Houston, Texas. Research questions involved how African immigrants navigated and adapted to cultural expectations within Fortune 500 companies and how adaptation influenced their perceptions of job satisfaction and performance. The study was grounded using rational choice theory. Seidman's exploratory case study method was used to analyze and process the semi structured interviews from a purposive sample of 12 African immigrants working in Houston, Texas. Six critical themes emerged from the thematic data analysis: (a) cultural misunderstanding, (b) promotion and advancement, (c) workplace inclusion, (d) communication barriers, (e) organizational support, and (f) networking and professional growth. Findings indicated that the organizational culture was significant for African immigrant employees to influence changes in global organizational policies, procedures, and practices, which may impact their performance and promote organizational culture sustainability in Fortune 500 companies. The implications for positive social change include the potential for Fortune 500 companies' leaders to implement management programs to improve leadership selection, development, and cultural training to enhance African immigrant employees' job satisfaction and performance in the United States.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to the Almighty God, the ultimate source of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. His abundant blessings, grace, and favor have carried me through every step of this doctoral journey, and I owe it all to Him. A special dedication to my late father, Chief Rotarian Banji Olatona; thank you for being a great role model and the invaluable values you instilled in me. May your gentle soul continue to rest in peace. To my loving mother, a mother in a million, whose prayers, words of encouragement, and unwavering belief in me have been a constant source of motivation. Your prayers, wisdom, and words of encouragement have fueled my determination.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

African immigrants relocate to the United States to pursue dreams and employment opportunities (Commodore-Mensah et al., 2019). They contribute significantly to the workforce, and 59% of African immigrants are educated (Commodore-Mensah et al., 2019). While extensive research exists regarding organizational culture, sustainability, and growth challenges, there was a significant gap in the study concerning the sustainability of African immigrants and their performance in Fortune 500 companies. Researchers have emphasized the need to pay attention to the challenges immigrants face, especially Nigerians.

In this qualitative exploratory case study, I addressed organizational culture systems in the United States as a requirement for employee sustainability. This qualitative exploratory case study involved focusing on organizational culture systems of Fortune 500 companies which were crucial for employee sustainability. By conducting this study, employees could comprehend how companies in Houston, Texas, contributed to a thorough understanding of work experiences of African American immigrant employees, as well as successful navigation of organizational culture systems. The study could lead to knowledge that may assist African immigrants in Fortune 500 companies to address negative stereotypes in the workplace, identifying immediate solutions for societal challenges and fostering beneficial social change programs.

In this chapter, I address the research background, the problem, and purpose of this study. Additionally, this chapter includes research questions (RQs) and the conceptual framework that guided the investigation. I also describe the nature of the



study, define key terms, and discuss assumptions, delimitations, and limitations of the study. Finally, the significance of the study in terms of practice and social change is addressed.

### **Background of the Study**

The journey of immigrants to the United States, particularly for those of African origin, involves resilience, determination, and an unwavering spirit (Delgado, 2022). However, there are complex challenges and barriers. In the contemporary global landscape, migration dynamics significantly contribute to multicultural societies, reshaping workforce demographics and organizational cultures. Immigrants must be culturally literate to be able to fit into new environments with minimal challenges. Immigrants come from different and unique cultures, so there was a need to understand culturally-similar immigrants in terms of their ability to achieve their goals and objectives.

Despite the increasing role of immigrants in the United States workforce as well as other developed countries, research on organizational communication concerning experiences of immigrant employees in host cultures remains limited. African immigrants significantly contribute to the workforce, with three out of four being of working age.

It is essential to understand challenges and cultures when acquiring jobs, as well as cultural literacy. Migrants have objectives that can be achieved only through cultural literacy. However, prerequisite levels of literacy that enable them to thrive in complex cultural systems appear to be lacking.

In this qualitative exploratory case study, I focused on the U.S. organizational culture system as a necessity for employment sustainability among African immigrants. This qualitative exploratory case study involved understanding how African immigrants perceive employee performance within these companies, cultural obstacles they encounter, and strategies that aid in mitigating factors that influence limitations faced by African immigrants in Fortune 500 companies. While researchers have explored this issue, there was a lack of information regarding African immigrants.

There have been few studies on African immigrants, organizational culture, cultural barriers, and employee job satisfaction within Fortune 500 companies, particularly in the United States. I sought to address this gap by examining perceptions of African immigrants regarding employee performance and organizational cultural barriers involving communications among Fortune 500 companies. African immigrants often encounter obstacles to their performance due to perceived organizational cultural barriers, leading to underemployment and lower earnings.

Conducting this exploratory case study could enhance the existing body of knowledge by providing deeper insights regarding relationships between organizational culture in the United States and sustainability of African immigrant employees. This has the potential to assist the U.S. Department of Commerce and African American Employment Program (AAEP), a government agency that is tasked with devising methods for recruiting, hiring, promoting, and maintaining diverse and skilled workforces. By identifying and developing effective social change initiatives, the Department of Commerce could positively impact African immigrants.

## **Problem Statement**

African immigrants in the United States frequently experience underemployment and may earn low wages. Despite these challenges, they are a vital part of the workforce, with 75% of African immigrants in their prime working years (Dabic et al., 2020). This demographic is well-positioned to address the employment gap as baby boomers retire. To understand how African immigrant professionals adapt to their new circumstances, this study includes a historical overview of African immigration to the United States. Following this, I provide a secondary analysis of sources regarding potential barriers they face and opportunities that enable African immigrant professionals to succeed.

The specific problem is that African immigrants in the United States struggle to effectively navigate the U.S. organizational culture system due to cultural barriers. Saasa (2019) asserted that African immigrants in the United States frequently face underemployment due to cultural barriers involving communication, despite available job opportunities. While technical challenges persist, limited studies have focused on African immigrants' experiences with organizational culture and cultural barriers impacting job satisfaction, especially within Fortune 500 companies.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore perceptions of African immigrants regarding their employee performance and cultural barriers in terms of communication within Fortune 500 companies in Houston, Texas. This study could help managers understand how African immigrants perceive employee performance within these companies, cultural obstacles they encounter, and strategies that help mitigate

factors influencing constraints faced by African immigrants in Fortune 500 companies. Experiences of African immigrants was the phenomenon of interest. The target population for this study was African immigrants employed by Fortune 500 companies in the Houston metropolitan area. I employed purposive sampling to gather a sample of 10 to 15 employees.

### **Research Questions**

RQ1: What are the perceptions of African immigrants regarding their employee performance within Fortune 500 companies?

RQ2: What are the perceptions of African immigrants regarding their cultural barriers in communication within Fortune 500 companies?

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework of this qualitative exploratory case study was the rational choice theory, initially developed by Salovey et al. (1990). According to Salovey et al., African immigrants act as rational agents who are capable of making informed decisions and standing against discrimination within Fortune 500 companies. Their actions influence changes in terms of global organizational policies, procedures, and practices that may negatively impact African immigration (Abdullah et al., 2021).

The rational choice theory was appropriate for this study to address the assumption that African immigrants exhibited greater commitment and satisfaction when their needs were met without discrimination. This in turn enabled them to perceive more opportunities regardless of their cultural backgrounds in host countries (Kilag, 2023).

Insights that are gained from understanding the functioning of emotions and their management enhances clarity of thought and improve decision-making.

### **Nature of the Study**

An exploratory case study approach was employed, and I used the qualitative methodology to investigate a phenomenon within a specific setting. This approach involves gathering data from multiple sources and employing various perspectives to capture diverse facets regarding a phenomenon (Rashid et al., 2019). I adopted a qualitative case study design to address the RQs and provide a comprehensive understanding of subjects within their natural contexts as well as generate new research insights.

A singular qualitative research design was suitable for this study, because I explored perceptions of participants instead of exclusively relying on existing literature, focusing on personalized narratives of experiences. The single-case qualitative design facilitated addressing perceptions of African immigrants regarding their employee performance and cultural barriers within Fortune 500 companies in Houston Texas.

Data collection involved conducting semi structured interviews that involved open-ended questions with African immigrant employees in the Houston area who worked in the United States for more than 7 years. This length of time was selected because it was in line with the average survival time of most employees. Interviews were conducted with 10 to 15 African immigrant employees until data saturation was reached.

Saasa (2022) stated ethnic minorities and immigrant communities often face exclusion and discrimination. In the United States, Black African immigrants specifically

experience heightened vulnerability, encountering skill devaluation, underemployment, discrimination, and reduced earnings, despite their significant human capital and work participation. Exploring these insights was necessary to address participants' collective experiences and lessons from workplace involvement.

I addressed clarifying strategies and approaches used by participants to understand organizational culture. Initially, three qualitative designs were considered to conduct the study: grounded theory, phenomenology, and case study. Grounded theory is an inductive procedure used by researchers to develop theories (Nayar, 2020). It was not chosen for this study because my goal was not to develop a new theory. Phenomenology involves exploring meanings that participants assign to their lived experiences regarding a phenomenon (Deslandes et al., 2022).

However, phenomenology was not suitable for this research as my aim was not to examine participants' lived experiences. A case study approach was chosen instead. This design was more effective for exploring real-life situations and it enabled the study of organizational cultures via the rational choice theory. The case study design was suitable for this research as it allows for an in-depth examination of complex phenomena or issues within real-world contexts.

The qualitative case study design is a research method that facilitates investigation of a phenomenon within a specific context by using multiple data sources and examining them from different angles to highlight their various aspects (Rashid et al., 2019). I adopted a qualitative approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of the subject in its natural environment and develop new research concepts.

## **Definitions**

*Cultural Barriers*: Misunderstandings involving meaning due to cultural differences between individuals, resulting in conflicts and workplace stress (Haller et al., 2019).

*Cultural literacy*: Interacting with cultures and developing and expressing cultural identities and values (Maine, 2019).

*Rational choice theory*: The theory that individuals naturally make sensible decisions that deliver the most significant benefit and the highest satisfaction or utility (Goode, 1997).

## **Assumptions**

An assumption is an underlying belief that remains unquestioned without conscious awareness (Theofanidis, 2019). Inferences and conclusions frequently derive from assumptions that have not been critically evaluated.

To achieve objectives of the study, several assumptions were considered. I assumed the qualitative research design was the most appropriate approach to explore the phenomenon under investigation.

I also assumed that the rational choice theory was optimal for this study. Finally, I assumed participants were honest during their responses to interview questions.

This study was conducted involving cultural knowledge of African immigrants in the United States, specifically Nigerian participants. I explored their understanding of organizational culture in the United States and how their knowledge of U.S. cultural systems affected their employment performance. The study involved organizations

located in Houston, Texas, a city with a thriving population of businesses that are started and operated by Nigerian immigrants. Target participants were employees who had diverse experiences with cultural barriers in this region.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

Delimitations define the study's scope and establish parameters. They also ensure researchers do not generalize findings to entire populations. Delimitations are voluntary constraints, in contrast to limitations which are inherent constraints that researchers do not choose (Miles & Scott, 2017). The study was delimited to cultural barriers of African immigrants who were employed in the Houston, Texas, area. Participants needed to have been employed in the United States for more than 7 years with a sound knowledge of Fortune 500 companies. The study was focused on individuals who chose to participate voluntarily, and participation was allowed only after signing informed consent forms.

### **Limitations**

Limitations are constraints or weaknesses that could impact outcomes. These limitations, such as issues with internal and external validity, are beyond the researcher's direct control (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). Key challenges in this study involved ensuring participant honesty, relying exclusively on participant-provided data, and considering generalizability of findings. Participant honesty when responding to interview questions was acknowledged. Furthermore, researcher bias may also be a concern, especially given my role as a leader in a company department.



Data were gathered from the target population from which participants were selected. According to Noble and Smith (2015), this approach may lead to researcher bias since there is a notable chance that I could impact study results.

### **Significance of the Study**

Research on immigrants in general has highlighted cultural differences as significant factors contributing to communication issues, conflicts, and lower job satisfaction. However, there was a notable gap in terms of exploring how organizational culture specifically impacts African immigrants. Given their unique experiences, it is important to examine how organizational culture may influence African immigrants differently as compared to other immigrant groups. This gap in research likely stems from the recent emergence of African immigrants as a demographic in the United States, and there have been limited comprehensive studies regarding their workplace experiences. Additionally, existing studies on African immigration tend to focus more on challenges within legal or educational systems rather than employment dynamics, thus overlooking strategies for navigating such challenges.

Organizational culture could have diverse effects on immigrants from African American communities. Specifically, they can influence immigrants' job satisfaction, engagement at work, and perceptions of fairness within organizations. Furthermore, organizational culture can impact immigrants' retention in companies and career aspirations.

**Significance to Practice**

African immigrants who were employed in Fortune 500 companies shared their experiences and strategies in this study, providing valuable insights for other immigrants to enhance job sustainability. Findings of this research would benefit all African immigrants seeking employment opportunities in the United States. I aimed to contribute new knowledge on cultural barriers among African immigrant employees which may lead to developing organizational cultural education programs that are tailored specifically for this demographic. These initiatives could potentially reduce the significant cultural barriers faced by African immigrants within Fortune 500 companies.

**Significance to Theory**

The study involved using the rational choice theory, which is that when given different opportunities, individuals always select alternatives that give them maximum benefits based on available information (Burns & Roszkowska, 2016). Therefore, I addressed how lack of information involving cultural barriers and U.S. organizational cultures limited the ability of African immigrants to maximize benefits of gaining employment in the United States. I also addressed organizational cultural education programs for African immigrants as a way of improving effectiveness of their organizational decisions and boosting employee performance in Fortune 500 companies.

**Significance to Social Change**

African immigrants in Houston, Texas who are interested in job opportunities may benefit from results of this study, which could help them understand the U.S. organizational culture systems and increase their cultural literacy. Results also could be

used to initiate social change by improving cultural literacy of African immigrants in other U.S. communities. Several factors can weaken links between organizational culture, cultural barriers, and outcomes. Individual factors such as the level of acculturation and environmental factors such as the size of organizations are examples of these influences. This study could aid organizations and leaders in terms of implementing effective management programs. Positive social change implications include the potential for improved leadership selection, development, and cultural training, which can enhance employee job satisfaction, customer relations, and organizational performance, as well as contribute to more culturally aware populations.

### **Summary and Transition**

In Chapter 1, the problem statement, purpose statement, research questions, and conceptual framework were addressed. I examined perceptions of African immigrants residing in Houston, Texas concerning employee performance and challenges posed by organizational cultures in Fortune 500 companies. A qualitative approach was used to analyze secondary and primary data such as survey responses and structured interviews in order to identify trends and outcomes related to cultural barriers among African immigrants residing in Houston.

Data sources for this study included structured interviews. Information included experiences of African immigrants residing in Houston and their familiarity with U.S. cultural systems. The rational choice theory was chosen to address how access to cultural information influences decision-making processes of companies. Chapter 2 includes the literature review, which involves an extensive analysis of previous research on this topic.

I examined research methods and findings as well as their relevance to the current study. In Chapter 2, gaps in studies are identified and justification is offered for conducting this research.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

African immigrants depart their home countries in pursuit of opportunities in the United States (Saasa, 2019). Despite their increasing presence in the U.S. workforce, many African immigrants lack comprehension of American cultural systems, leaving them without necessary organizational culture literacy to navigate new environments (Arthur, 2016). Scholars have emphasized the need for greater attention regarding difficulties faced by African immigrants, particularly those from Nigeria, in terms of grasping organizational culture systems. I aimed to address the gap that African immigrants often encounter obstacles to their performance due to perceived organizational cultural barriers, leading to underemployment and lower earnings among Fortune 500 companies in Houston, Texas. Through a qualitative phenomenological approach, I sought to identify strategies to mitigate factors limiting African immigrants' success in these companies.

The wellbeing of employees is essential for maintaining sustainable performance in the workplace. Therefore, to cultivate a workforce that demonstrates improved health and productivity in business settings, it is crucial for leaders to not only guarantee but also actively promote employee vitality. Immigrants arrive in the United States with aspirations for employment and career advancement (Choi et al., 2020). For African immigrants, cultural literacy is one of the basic requirements of successful careers. Cultural literacy refers to understanding and knowledge of cultural practices, customs, symbols, and references within particular societies or communities. It involves the ability to navigate and communicate effectively across different cultural contexts, as well as

interpret and appreciate cultural diversity. Therefore, organizations need to be more culturally inclined and equipped to recognize and respect perspectives, values, and traditions of others, facilitating meaningful interactions and collaboration in diverse environments.

Organizational culture systems and cultural practices of foreign countries are different from those in the United States, which leads to many challenges for immigrants that can be overcome by having sound cultural knowledge and education (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022). Once African immigrant employees acquire a deeper understanding of U.S. cultural systems, the potential for sustainable job opportunities may improve (Gu et al., 2019). In Houston, Texas, employees must have cultural literacy to effectively integrate into their new environments with fewer obstacles. This chapter includes pertinent literature on the conceptual framework, perspectives of researchers regarding employee performance, strategies, and alternatives, and gaps in existing literature.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

To find research on concepts related to cultural literacy and awareness of U.S. cultural systems, I used the Walden University Library's online resources and publications. I used the following databases: ESCBOHost, Taylor and Francis Online, Springer, SAGE Journals, SAGE Knowledge, SAGE Research Methods Online, Google Scholar, Academic Search Premier, Business Source Complete, ABI/Inform Collection, Emerald, and Elsevier. Search terms were *African immigrants*, *organizational culture*, *employee performance*, *pros and cons of cultural literacy*, and *challenges faced by African immigrant employees*.

## **Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework is a theoretical approach that researchers employ to investigate a research problem, which is tailored specifically to the study (Imenda, 2014). It provides a theoretical basis for understanding concepts that are essential to the research topic. In this study, the conceptual framework was used to deepen understanding of theories and concepts, thereby establishing connections between variables. Researchers use conceptual frameworks to facilitate data collection, interpretation, and comprehension. Hughes (2019) stated conceptual frameworks establish the foundation for framing research questions, guiding investigative processes to gather pertinent information. For this study, the conceptual framework was the rational choice theory.

### **Rational Choice Theory**

The rational choice theory is a framework for researchers studying social and economic behaviors of individuals. Individuals have a range of options and make decisions guided by personal preferences and social norms (Burns & Roszkowska, 2016; Goode, 1997). The theory involves emphasizing individual decision-making, characterized in literature as rational calculations that align with personal goals and objectives. Despite choices, individuals typically select options that offer benefits and align with their goals (Coleman & Fararo, 1992; Pepper & Gore, 2012). Decisions that are rooted in rational choices are associated with increased levels of personal satisfaction.

Individuals make decisions to enhance their returns and decrease risks and losses (Hechter & Kanazawa, 1997; Shenhav et al., 2017). Rationality drives individuals to opt for particular actions. The rational choice theory has been fundamental in terms of

shaping rational decision-making processes where individuals strive to maximize benefits while minimizing losses. This theory was used to examine African immigrants' perceptions of employee performance within these companies and cultural challenges that impede their success in the U.S. workforce.

### **Organizational Culture and African Immigrants**

Knowing the concept of rational decision-making is vital to individuals seeking career advancement (Quiroz González et al., 2020). According to Palarino (2021), African American immigrants often encounter challenges involving integrating into dominant organizational cultures due to language barriers or cultural disparities. Possessing adequate cultural understanding can assist in making more suitable employment decisions.

Chang et al. (2023) conducted research indicating that there is still a significant lack of organizational communication studies focusing on the experiences of immigrant employees in the host culture, despite the increasing presence of immigrants in the workforces of the United States and other developed nations. Zeng (2017) studied the relationship between rational choice theory, Organizational culture, and African Immigrants by considering preference propositions, constraint propositions, and immigrant motivations.

The rational choice theory views African Immigrants as goal-oriented individuals who rely on their decision-making skills to determine preferences that can help them to make choices and consider alternatives. However, most organizations may not benefit from this due to cultural barriers that cause limitations (Farashah et al., 2022). In



addition, employers who have low levels of cultural literacy are ineffective decision-makers who struggle to make decisions.

Xu et al. (2023) noted that African immigrants in Texas and other regions in the United States struggled to determine specific preferences and consequently made poor decisions because of gaps in their knowledge of cultural literacy. Thelamour (2021) identified the lack of research on how organizational culture affects African American immigrants as a critical challenge facing immigrants seeking opportunities in the United States and other developed countries.

According to Uyar (2019), the understanding of entrepreneurial opportunities among immigrants includes incentives in terms of prices, economic factors, and legal, and economic aspects. The correlation of these factors can determine the success and sustainability of African Immigrants in Houston and other lucrative areas in Texas. Uyar indicated that governments that provide incentives by removing constraints and supporting cultural literacy facilitate the informed decision-making of immigrants. Zeyada (2018) analyzed the significance of cultural literacy in the decision-making of immigrants and discussed the effect of immigrants with an inadequate understanding of legal and economic regulations. The ability of immigrants to make a rational decision is influenced by the extent of their understanding of business regulations, requirements, and limitations (Zeyada, 2018).

Rational action and employee motivations. Having cultural literacy is key to the employee's success in organizations in the United States. Corra (2023) studied the performance of African Immigrants in the United States who had little cultural literacy of

the state's organizational operations. Their proficiency was assessed based on their grasp of the interpersonal dynamics that African immigrant professionals navigate within organizations, offering a deeper understanding of how these immigrants assimilate into the new organizational culture they encounter. Corra found that immigrants who had valuable cultural knowledge had higher, passion, and motivation and were more comfortable making strategic decisions that would help them become a better version of themselves. According to Wang (2018), there is a rising interest in studying the well-being of international immigrants in host countries, with job satisfaction being highlighted as a crucial factor in assessing immigrants' overall welfare.

### **Literature Review**

In this section, a critically developed literature review will explore the perceptions of African immigrants on employee performance and organizational cultural barriers in Fortune 500 companies. Throughout this review, a diverse array of topics, covering aspects such as the concept of organizational culture, cultural literacy for immigrants, factors contributing to cultural barriers among African immigrants, as well as the link between organizational culture and workers' performance will be explored. Besides, the literature will also identify and discuss the main challenges faced by African immigrants in host nations.

### **Organizational Culture**

According to Adejumo (2020), organizational culture entails the firm's shared values, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs that characterize it. This was supported by Edward (2022), who holds that organizational culture entails a firm's set communication

styles, work environment, dress code, as well as decision-making process. To this end, Gligor et al. (2021) stated that the above-mentioned elements of organizational culture shape the company's work environment, thus impacting how workers interact, make decisions, and attain their set goals. This aligns with Bloemen's (2023) argument that a robust organizational culture promotes a sense of belonging, identity, and shared purpose among workers in a given company.

Organizational culture consists of the shared values and behaviors that evolve within an organization over time. These elements shape employees' beliefs about the importance of their work and impact their attitudes and actions (Aboramadan, 2020). Understanding the interplay among organizational culture, leadership behavior, and employee job satisfaction is crucial. Additionally, it describes the collective assumptions and behaviors adopted by employees within an organization (Kim et al., 2019). Researchers have shown keen interest in organizational culture, viewing it as a pivotal determinant of organizational innovation, productivity, and employee performance. This innovation falls under the category of organizational growth and more particularly, the cultural literacy of the decision-maker (Aboramadan, 2020).

Delgado (2022) highlighted several factors that lead to discrimination against African American immigrants in U.S. organizations, with organizational culture being the primary contributor. An organizational culture that promotes information exchange is fundamental for knowledge initiatives (Lam et al., 2021). These cultures enhance knowledge sharing and boost organizational performance. Therefore, managers are tasked with creating strategies and practical approaches to improve performance in

competitive environments. Ensuring a balance that includes equitable organizational support is essential (Shea et al., 2023).

A critical look at Fortune 500 companies, it is obvious that they embody diverse and dynamic organizational cultures, characterized by a solid focus on innovation, workers' development, and competitiveness. According to He et al. (2019) literature, fortune 500 companies tend to have well-defined values, mission statements, and corporate philosophies that influence their activities and interactions. However, as the Center for Talent Innovation (2020) acknowledged, the impact of these cultures on African immigrants is complex and multifaceted. For instance, as Green (2019) acknowledged, most Fortune 500 companies tend to embrace the cultural values of equity and fairness, which is manifested by their strong diversity and inclusion programs. As Ahmed et al. (2024) literature shows, the existence of these programs positively impacts the perceptions of African immigrants, as they believe that these companies are working towards establishing and sustaining an all-inclusive environment for these immigrants. On the contrary, Gligor et al., (2021) literature noted that although Fortune 500 companies embrace diversity and inclusion initiatives, a huge number of African immigrants still hold the view that they are subjected to implicit biases and microaggressions. This clearly shows that despite the existence of diversity programs in Fortune 500 companies, the lived experiences of inclusion among African immigrants largely vary from one company to another.

Tesfai (2020) addressed these gaps in the literature by employing quantitative analysis to examine the occupational segregation of Black immigrants. Given that Blacks

constitute a minority in the workforce, discrimination is likely a significant factor in directing them toward predominantly Black occupations. Consistent evidence shows racial discrimination in hiring decisions, resulting in racial minorities being concentrated in jobs with less stability and fewer advancement opportunities. Despite African immigrants being more highly educated than both U.S.-born and Caribbean-born Blacks, this does not result in lower levels of occupational segregation.

As the educational attainment levels of African immigrants in metropolitan areas increase, their occupational segregation also intensifies. This study examined the workplace experiences of African immigrants, particularly those from Anglophone countries. With more than 3.8 million Black immigrants in the United States, they make up 8.7% of the nation's Black population (Anderson & Lopez, 2018). Understanding the interpersonal dynamics African immigrant professionals encounter within organizations offers a comprehensive view of how these individuals adapt to and integrate into new organizational cultures.

Researchers have asserted that cultural literacy has a significant role in influencing employees' behavior by affecting their attitudes toward their general performance. Culture is, thus, a driver of employee loyalty and commitment (Dunger, 2023). When individuals have sound cultural knowledge, they can work confidently and make informed decisions based on their acquired knowledge, but when they lack adequate cultural knowledge, African immigrants may encounter challenges in securing employment opportunities aligned with their skills and qualifications. This highlighted the ongoing struggle they face in assimilating into dominant organizational cultures, often

hindered by language barriers or cultural disparities, which is pertinent to my research (Palarino, 2021).

Acquiring this cultural knowledge helps in understanding that affective commitment encompasses more than “mere passive loyalty to an organization. It describes, in their perspective, “an active relationship with the organization such that individuals are willing to give something of themselves to contribute to the organization’s well-being (Bodjrenou, 2019). Understanding the intricate interplay between these factors is crucial for comprehending how organizational culture evolves and how it impacts employee behavior and performance. By recognizing these influences, organizations can proactively shape their culture to cultivate a more positive and conducive work environment (Fortado & Fadil, 2012).

Organizational culture encompasses a collective set of beliefs, values, and assumptions that are commonly embraced by members of an organization. These core values play a significant role in shaping the behavior of individuals within the organization, serving as guiding principles that influence their decisions and actions (Johnson, 1988). Moreover, work environments play a pivotal role in perpetuating this culture by consistently encouraging employees to embody these values in their daily interactions. The formation of organizational culture is influenced by a multitude of factors, including the external environment, Industry dynamics, the size and composition of the organization’s workforce, technological infrastructure employed by the organization, and the historical background and ownership structure of the organization (Fortado & Fadil, 2012).

Researchers have demonstrated that culturally literate individuals exhibit greater awareness compared to those lacking multicultural education and culturally responsive approaches. Both approaches share a common objective: to educate on the contributions of culturally diverse groups and foster social consciousness, civic responsibility, and political activism, ultimately aiming to reconstruct society for greater pluralistic equality, truth, inclusion, and justice (Kelly & Wakefield, 2021). One effective strategy to promote culturally aware behavior is to incorporate cultural awareness training and supervision at the institutional level within organizations. By implementing such training and supervision systems, organizations can work towards institutionalizing the skill of cultural awareness (Fong & Catagnus, 2021). Individuals equipped with sound cultural knowledge are better positioned to identify and operate optimally in various contexts without encountering risks.

### **Cultural Literacy for Immigrants**

Anasori et al. (2019) stated that cultural literacy is the ability to comprehend and navigate different cultural contexts within a given workplace. The fact remains that cultural literacy is very vital for African immigrants to thrive in Fortune 500 workplace settings. By understanding the communication styles, workplace expectations, legal frameworks, and nonverbal cues, African immigrants can enjoy higher levels of job satisfaction, career growth, and integration in these firm's workforce (Center for Talent Innovation, 2020).

A critical look at the literature is evident that quite a significant number of African immigrants possess a foundational knowledge and understanding of the

organizational culture characterized by Fortune 500 companies. Nevertheless, as Zachery, (2019) acknowledged the depth of these immigrants' cultural literacy significantly varies depending on individual backgrounds and personal experiences. This is supported by Auger-Domínguez (2024), who posited that the migrants who previously worked in MNCs or enjoyed extensive intercultural interactions find it easier to navigate the corporate cultures of Fortune 500 companies, which are mainly characterized by high levels of individualism, innovation, and low power distance. However, as Kaufman and Petts (2020) acknowledged, African immigrants coming from regions characterized by high-level hierarchical structures and collectivist cultures tend to find it difficult to transition into the new cultural environment evident in Fortune 500 companies.

Newcomers to any organization require an introduction to the diverse social, cultural, and economic aspects that define its culture and influence employee performance. In the twenty-first century, cultural literacy has become increasingly crucial. As noted by Elena et al. (2019) individuals often encounter each other already shaped by cultural programming. Culture delineates acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, biases, and prejudices, many of which may go unchecked and unrealized. In light of the unique demands posed by global interconnectedness, individuals must strive to become culturally literate. Elena (2019) observed that globalization has not only transformed economic, social, and technological landscapes but has also impacted people's mindsets and their interactions with the world. Consequently, there is a growing consensus that educators and institutions at all levels must actively cultivate, promote,



and enhance cultural literacy to navigate this increasingly interconnected world effectively.

Paredes (2017) highlighted that Houstonians widely recognize the presence of immigrants as an integral aspect of the city's identity. Scholars in immigration, race, and ethnicity have shown a keen interest in studying attitudes toward immigrants within host societies. In our increasingly interconnected world, cultural literacy emerges as a crucial component for effective communication among professionals, fostering understanding and respect across diverse groups while promoting inclusivity.

As one of the most diverse cities in the nation, Houston mirrors its immigrant population's rich diversity. The city boasts thriving industries such as energy, healthcare, and aerospace, with immigrants playing a pivotal role, constituting nearly 30% of the workforce (Kucharska & Bedford, 2023).

Marcelin et al. (2019) emphasized the importance of identifying cultural identities and planning responses to the varying cultural factors that influence learning. This necessitates cultivating respect for cultural identities and backgrounds within the learning environment. The expanding cultural diversity enriches the learning environment and provides a fertile space for intercultural dialogue and learning. However, it requires educators committed to fostering culturally responsive pedagogy to support meaningful and quality learning for all students. Culturally responsive pedagogy is an educational approach that adopts a learner-centered philosophy, respecting the cultural background and nurturing the intellectual, social, emotional, and political developments of the learner (Kaihlanen et al., 2019; Markey et al., 2020).

Maine (2019) illustrated how the direction of research leads to the move beyond the concept of cultural literacy as being about knowledge of culture, into consideration of cultural literacy as a dialogic practice enabled through constructive encounters about what it means to be different from each other. Gaps in culture have been attributed to the failure of limited studies on African immigrants, organizational culture, and cultural barriers to employee job satisfaction in Fortune 500 companies especially in the United States (Hamilton, 2020).

Zeb et al. (2021) suggested that culture is a key precursor of innovation. A facilitative culture plays a pivotal role in enhancing the capabilities of organizational members. It provides a set of standards and expected behaviors that guide and motivate employees to increase their work efficiency and performance. Surviving in dynamic cities such as Houston requires that immigrants have adequate cultural knowledge that can help them make decisions beyond any cultural barriers and diversification.

Critically looking at the above literature, it is obvious that cultural literacy directly impacts how easily, and effectively African immigrants adapt to the corporate culture of Fortune 500 companies. For instance, immigrants possessing in-depth understanding and knowledge of aspects such as individualism, low power distance, and innovation are better at understanding the Fortune 500 companies' workplace expectations, behavioral norms, and communication styles, thus boosting their overall job performances. To this end, as Kaufman and Petts (2020) emphasized that training programs aimed at promoting cultural literacy can assist immigrants without a proper

understanding of the organizational culture of Fortune 500 companies to navigate the cultural differences they face at their workplace to boost their overall performance.

Importantly, immigrants' backgrounds should be considered when establishing cultural literacy policies for immigrants. Akinsulure-Smith (2017) noted that most African cultures are collectivistic and value social support from their families and communities in dealing with challenges experienced as immigrants in the United States. African immigrants, like other racial minorities in the United States, often face discrimination due to cultural barriers in organizations (Saasa, 2019). Literacy, a core skill for learning and development, was recommended by Akinsulure-Smith to be offered in introductory programs to all interested immigrants. As societies diversify, creating new challenges to communication, we need to approach literacy in a broader context. The concept involves acknowledging differences and fostering the ability to encounter, communicate, learn, and live together through empathic, tolerant, and inclusive interactions with others who may be different.

The inclusion of immigrant diversity in decision-making is an essential element when the Texas government plans to empower immigrant entrepreneurs seeking business opportunities (Doran et al., 2018). Success in the contemporary business environment depends on understanding culture and preferences. Rational choice theory is useful in helping immigrants make decisions on the type of businesses that they wish to pursue and the types of customers whom they wish to attract.

### **Factors That Influence Cultural Barriers Among African Immigrants**

As the previous section holds, not all African immigrants possess sufficient cultural literacy to deliver optimum productivity in their Fortune 500 companies' workplaces (McClerking & Block, 2020). This lack of adequate knowledge is triggered by several factors including diverse communication styles, different meanings, and interpretation of work-life balance, as well as diversity in management styles. For instance, Khan (2021) acknowledged that in terms of management styles, most African immigrants tend to be used to the hierarchical and directive leadership styles that are common in Africa before migrating to the United States and securing jobs with Fortune 500 companies. Therefore, as Legutko (2020) argued, when they secure jobs with these companies, they find it difficult to adjust and adapt to the largely collaborative and participative styles used in these companies. Such management shocks result in frustration and trigger a lack of engagement among immigrant workers.

Secondly, the issue of work-life balance also served as another key factor that influenced cultural barriers among African Immigrants. This aligned with McClerking and Block's (2020) argument that a significant number of African cultures place greater importance on family and social obligations, which in the U.S. can be deemed as a lack of dedication by workers accustomed to a culture of long working hours.

The determinants of organizational culture among African immigrants are intricate and varied. Bodjrenou et al. (2019) discovered that leadership behavior and colleague support play crucial roles. Additionally, Bodjrenou highlighted the significance of an employer's compassionate approach toward employees, which enhances

commitment by fostering a sense of care for their well-being within the company. According to Dunger (2023), most studies exploring the precursors of organizational commitment have traditionally focused on individual factors and their impacts. Furthermore, only a limited number have interpreted these factors as dimensions of organizational culture, often treating them as isolated or unrelated phenomena.

In today's business environment, organizations encounter significant hurdles amid intense competition. Within this framework, the actions of leaders hold the potential to alter an organization's course from success to failure (Tarba et al., 2019). The unethical behavior exhibited by leaders is commonly seen as detrimental to the organization's overall performance. Additionally, culture, whether positive or negative, exerts a profound influence on relationships within the organization (Dunger, 2023).

Houston, the largest city in Texas, stands as a vibrant mosaic of cultures, rendering it one of the most diverse urban centers in the United States. African immigrants who lack familiarity with the cultural nuances of Texas markets and organizations may find themselves making decisions that are unsustainable or disadvantageous. Al-Madadha (2021) suggested that the cultural heritages and identities carried by African immigrants from their countries of origin are intricately linked to their other assets previously delineated: educational achievements, entrepreneurial acumen, and traditions of communal support.

These cultural legacies and identities not only bolster individual self-esteem but also foster group cohesion among African immigrants. Moreover, they serve as coping mechanisms against the systemic racism often encountered by individuals of African

descent in America. However, it's essential to recognize that African cultural traditions can impart both beneficial and maladaptive values and behaviors. Additionally, the accounts provided by respondents underscore the profound impact of migration on the identity, culture, and social ties of African immigrants. Similar to their predecessors, first-generation and second-generation African immigrants must navigate the process of cultural adaptation and identity reconstruction to integrate into American society effectively. Organizations dedicated to serving African immigrants can play a pivotal role in facilitating this adaptation process (Mohammed et al., 2020).

The United States typically attracts highly skilled African immigrants, with approximately 59% of Nigeria's high-skilled immigrants choosing the United States as their destination. These immigrants are often employed in sectors such as medicine, management, business, science, and the arts (Echeverria-Estrada & Batalova, 2019). Discrimination experiences may vary based on factors such as race, ethnicity, and nativity. Recent research, as indicated by Szaflarski et al. (2019), suggested that discrimination is closely linked to acculturation stress among immigrants.

While discrimination among immigrants has gained attention in new studies, the findings mirror patterns observed among ethnocratic groups. Discrimination is recognized as a barrier to the successful integration of immigrants, hindering their participation in society. UNESCO defines literacy as a multifaceted concept that encompasses continuous learning to achieve personal goals, expand knowledge, and engage fully in society (Abood et al., 2021).

Building competencies that facilitate effective interaction with available services can address structural inequities, foster a sense of belonging, and enhance well-being among new migrants and their communities. Additionally, Immigrant Social and Solidarity Literacy (ISSL) contributed to the socio-economic development of new migrants by enhancing their social awareness and fostering critical reflection, laying the groundwork for personal and societal transformation (Masinda, 2014).

Lastly, diversity in communication style is another key factor that influences cultural barriers among African Immigrants working in Fortune 500 companies (Prickett, 2018). For instance, most African cultures stress indirect communication and absolute respect for authority, whereas Western cultures prioritize direct communication and assertiveness. According to Meyer and Schneider (2021), such differences in communication styles trigger misunderstanding and misinterpretation of Fortune 500 companies' cultures by African immigrants.

### **African Immigrants**

Corra (2022) highlighted the increasing presence and visibility of African immigrants within the United States population. Regarding the countries of origin, he noted that approximately 71%, 76%, 71%, 69%, and 70% of the total African immigrant population in the United States come from the top ten “sending” countries. This underscores an emerging trend in the influx of African immigrants to the United States. Kumi-Yeboah (2019) pointed out that black immigrants from African nations are among the fastest-growing immigrant groups in the United States. It is projected that by 2050,

Africa will likely surpass the Caribbean as the primary source region for the United States black immigrant population.

African immigrants assumed diverse roles within various markets, significantly contributing to the cultural, social, and demographic diversity of America. Their increasing presence has sparked rejuvenation in neighborhoods, where they actively engage in civic duties and play integral roles in community life (Ip et al., 2019). Moreover, African immigrants play active roles in delivering essential social services and contribute significantly to the workforce across healthcare, business, and educational sectors. To further augment the pivotal role of African immigrants, it is essential to ensure they possess fundamental cultural knowledge.

Kamya (2023) highlighted numerous push and pull factors driving the migration of African immigrants to the United States. A significant number of Africans relocate to the U.S. to escape wars and internal conflicts in their home nations. Additionally, many seek enhanced educational, healthcare, and economic prospects through migration.

African immigrants who possess a deep understanding of cultural dynamics demonstrate higher levels of productivity and creativity compared to those lacking cultural awareness. Mosugu (2020) emphasized that comprehending the interpersonal dynamics among African immigrant professionals within organizations provides valuable insights into their adaptation to new organizational cultures. This awareness is crucial when considering the implications of current immigration laws and policies that may hinder the cross-sector contributions of African immigrants to the USA. Equipped with sufficient knowledge, African immigrants can navigate cultural barriers effectively and



make informed decisions. Notably, African immigrants exhibit relative success in the United States, often boasting higher educational qualifications than native-born Americans (Echeverria-Estrada & Batalova, 2019).

Some researchers have posited an argument elucidating the variation in assimilation experiences among Black (African) immigrants within the racially stratified American society. They challenge the notion of a uniform Black immigrant assimilation process and explore factors contributing to differentiation. Drawing on theoretical frameworks of marginalization and resistance to assimilation, these scholars propose a mechanism to account for such variation: groups may diverge in their probability of being misidentified as members of specific groups within the host community. When their immediate hosts themselves belong to marginalized communities, it fosters incentives for these immigrants to reinforce the ethnic boundary they perceive as shielding them from discrimination (Adida, 2023).

Cultural literacy extends beyond the scope of merely grasping cross-cultural training and education; it encompasses a broader spectrum of understanding. Commonly provided to professionals, students, and volunteers across various industries, it aims to enhance effective interaction across cultural boundaries. Its roots can be traced back to early diversity training initiatives in the United States following civil rights legislation in the 1960s. The expanding influence of cultural awareness efforts has generally been well-intentioned. Cultural literacy training is widely prevalent and frequently mandated across multiple sectors, with its principles integrated into the strategic plans and mission

statements of organizations (Shepherd, 2019). Hence, enhancing intercultural relations within a framework of globalism and increasing diversity appears highly logical.

Cultural literacy serves as a vital link to performance and teamwork within organizations. Mandated across various sectors, cultural literacy training plays a crucial role in fostering understanding and collaboration among diverse teams. Culture is intricately linked to various aspects such as risk tolerance, propensities for regret, social trust, life satisfaction, income levels, family dynamics, and public safety nets (Statman, 2015). By enhancing cultural literacy, leaders can establish strong connections within their teams, leading to heightened performance levels.

A contemporary extension of cross-cultural education, cultural intelligence has emerged as a prominent concept in business management settings. It encompasses a multifaceted skill set, including the ability to discern differences and similarities between cultures, adapt and thrive in unfamiliar cultural environments, cultivate a genuine interest in learning about other cultural groups, and effectively plan and employ these skills in cross-cultural interactions (Meier et al., 2019).

### **Migration and Cultural Barriers**

The migration patterns of African immigrants to the United States have largely changed in the 21st century, as they are more influenced by increased economic opportunities, and educational possibilities in America in addition to political instability in Africa. As Rogers (2021) noted, African Immigrants presently form one of the highest percentages of skilled workforce in Fortune 500 companies, a clear indication that the members of this group are playing a huge role in the success of these companies.

However, to some extent, Sengupta and Louis (2023) contrasted the argument, noting that although African immigrants form a huge portion of the Fortune 500 workforce, their contribution to these firm's success is minimal due to cultural barriers that hamper their full potential, adversely impacting productivity and career advancement.

The aspect of cultural barriers is supported by Roberts et al. (2019), who hold that differing cultural norms concerning hierarchy, authority, and teamwork have posed a huge barrier for African immigrants to integrate with the rest in their workplaces. For example, African immigrants from cultures characterized by high power distance tend to struggle with more egalitarian and participatory management styles that are prevalent in Fortune 500 companies. This, as Prickett (2018) stressed has resulted in discomfort during interactions with superiors and reluctance to air their views and opinions, thus hampering innovation and engagement.

Apart from leadership variations, African immigrants have also increasingly faced stereotypes and implicit biases that additionally increased the cultural barriers they face at their workplace. According to Cassie (2022), African immigrants tend to face discriminatory assumptions regarding their capabilities, which have largely hindered their access to mentorship, key projects, leadership roles, and advancement opportunities, thus hindering their career growth and job satisfaction.

### **Organizational Culture and Employee Performance**

As literature by Ward and El-Amin (2022) established, a positive organizational culture largely improves workers' performance by enhancing motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment to a firm's goals and objectives. This aligns with Williams's (2020)

study, which established that companies with strong, cohesive cultures constantly outpace those characterized by feeble and scrappy cultures. Some of the key factors resulting in high-performance culture in Fortune 500 companies include shared vision, worker engagement, and adaptability.

When it comes to shared vision and inclusivity, it is established that a shared vision establishes a sense of purpose and direction which in the long run is vital for African immigrants navigating through a new cultural and corporate environment (Wawrosz & Jurásek, 2021). Therefore, this means that when Fortune 500 companies effectively communicate their mission and values, they can successfully integrate African immigrant workers goals with their organizational objectives (Wang & Jing, 2019). For the African immigrants, the ability to comprehend and embrace this shared vision can improve their sense of belonging thus enhancing their productivity and commitment to the company.

Lastly, organizations whose organizational culture promotes workers' involvement and empowerment create a serene environment for workers to thrive and maximize their potential (Rocco et al., 2014). This is supported by Scherer (2022), who argued that workers' involvement is vital as it allows the company to leverage diverse perspectives and skills from all workers, thus resulting in increased innovation and productivity. For instance, through workers' involvement, fortune 500 companies can easily leverage the diverse perspectives and skills that African immigrants bring into the workplace (Shang et al., 2023). This involvement enhances these immigrants'

performance and also promotes innovation and creativity, thus benefiting the company as a whole.

To this end, the connection between organizational culture and employee performance is clear, especially when it comes to African immigrants and Fortune 500 companies. It is well-established that the presence of a robust, inclusive, and adaptable culture not only improves the individual performance of each immigrant worker but also contributes to the overall success of the company (Roberts & Mayo, 2019). Therefore, this means that by investing in cultural competence training and creating a highly engaging environment for all workers, Fortune 500 companies can fully leverage the potential of their diverse employees, including African immigrants.

### **Benefits of Organizational Culture**

According to Myers et al., (2012), organizational culture offers diverse benefits such as enhanced workers' morale, and enhanced efficiency. This aligns with McCluney et al. (2021) literature, which stresses that the strong and cohesive culture of Fortune 500 companies has yielded them immense benefits including promoting alignment between their goals and workers' behavior, which in the long run results in increased productivity and innovation. Lynch et al. (2024) acknowledged a positive organizational culture assists a company to attract and retain top talent, thus enabling it to gain a competitive edge in the market.

Besides, Roberts and Mayo (2019) argued that a positive organizational culture improves workers' morale by establishing a supportive and inclusive work environment. This, as Keengwe and Kungu (2020) noted is very vital for African immigrants, who

often face immense challenges in adapting to new corporate settings. When Fortune 500 companies establish a positive organizational culture, they ensure all workers including African immigrants feel valued and included in the workplace (Kahn-Lang, 2018). In the long run, this results in an increase in employees' job satisfaction thus resulting in lower turnover rates along with better retention of talented immigrant workers.

Additionally, Meher (2024) argued that a positive organizational culture is key to enhancing efficiency and productivity in the workplace. This is supported by Lynch et al. (2024), who hold that a cohesive culture aligns workers with the firm's mission and objectives thus leading to more efficient and productive work processes. The fact as Hollis (2018) stressed is that when African immigrants are adequately supported via cultural literacy programs and inclusive environment, they significantly contribute towards the company's success and innovation by maximally exploiting their exceptional skills to the advantage of the employer.

### **Problems Resulting from a Lack of Organizational Culture**

As Gomez and Bernet (2019) argued, organizations without organizational cultures tend to face a lot of challenges including high turnover rates, poor communication, as well as low employee engagement. As acknowledged by Hollis (2018), in Fortune 500 companies, these challenges are worsened by the presence of a large and diverse workforce including African immigrants, who tend to face exceptional challenges such as racial discrimination and negative stereotyping. As Flory et al. (2021) held, Fortune 500 companies that lack strong organizational cultures tend to create an environment where their workers lack a sense of purpose and commitment to the firm's

mission. To a large extent, this disengagement has largely escalated among African immigrants, who may be facing challenges in adapting to their new workplaces.

This literature aligns with Gynn and Schrotenboer's (2020) argument, whereby, it is established that the lack of inclusive practices and support systems in Fortune 500 companies can result in increased feelings of isolation and undervaluation, thus escalating the levels of turnover rates. According to Flory et al. (2021), high turnover rates expose firms to increased recruitment and training costs, as well as disrupt the teams' productivity. Besides, Corra (2023) established that a lack of organizational culture among Fortune 500 companies can result in confusion and conflict among workers, thus derailing the firm's success and growth. This is backed up by Borjas et al. (2019) who hold that successful communication is vital in diverse environments, and that the lack of such cohesive culture hampers this. According to Barreto (2021) when Fortune 500 companies lack proper organizational culture, they expose African immigrants to increased levels of discrimination and negative stereotyping, a move that results in strained working relationships. In the long run, poor communication derails the efforts of collaboration thus resulting in decreased efficiency and innovation.

### **Relationship Between Organizational Culture and Employee Performance**

As established in the earlier sections, there is a strong link between organizational culture and employee performance. For instance, it was noted that a positive organizational culture positively impacts workers' performance and organizational outcomes (Andemariam, 2007). Fortune 500 companies that embrace positive organizational culture are not only able to attract but also retain high-talented workers.

This means reduced cost of recruitment and training, as well as enhanced productivity and increased company growth (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). On the other hand, it is established that companies that lack a positive organizational culture tend to create conflict and confusion in their workforce, thus hampering innovation, cohesion, and productivity.

### **Need for Organizational Culture Literacy for Employees**

As Alan et al. (2020) emphasized, fortune 500 companies can largely benefit by adopting cultural literacy programs for their workers, particularly if they can effectively target African immigrants with these trainings. It is through such cultural literacy programs that these companies can effectively train African immigrants to address the cultural barriers that hinder them attain optimum productivity in the workplace.

This was supported by Andemariam (2007), who asserted that moving beyond generic cultural awareness and comprehensively concentrating on offering in-depth training on specific beliefs and values enables African immigrant to contribute their best towards the company's goal attainment. It is through this in-depth cross-cultural training that Fortune 500 companies can impart the immigrant Africans with adequate knowledge of the organizational culture embraced by United States firms, thus enhancing their engagement and retention. The fact, as Adeoye-Olatunde and Olenik (2021) held is that culturally competent workplaces where African immigrants feel accepted, understood, and valued tend to record higher worker engagement and lower turnover rates.

Besides, Adejumo (2020) argued that culturally competent workplaces boost the levels of innovation and creativity, whereby, training African immigrants on different



communication styles empowers them to air their innovative ideas during brainstorming meetings, thus promoting innovation and creativity. This is supported by Alan et al., (2020), who held that for African immigrants, the cultural literacy programs aid in sealing the cultural gaps, thus aiding better communication and collaboration.

### **Challenges Faced by African Immigrants in Host Countries**

According to Ahmed et al. (2024), African immigrants face numerous challenges in the host nations including cultural misunderstanding, discrimination, and restricted access to training programs and resources. This aligns with Jordan-Zachery's (2019) argument, which stressed that African immigrants tend to largely face extreme levels of racial and ethnic discrimination in their workplaces, thus hindering their prospects of advancing in their careers and being effectively integrated into the workplace.

Additionally, when it comes to resources, Khan et al. (2021) held that African immigrants suffer limited access to financial resources, and professional development opportunities, all of which hamper their prospects to attain their full potential. The existence of these challenges informs Adejumo's (2020) literature, which emphasized the need for all Fortune 500 companies to establish support systems and policies that fully address the issues of discrimination, cultural literacy, and access to resources for all African immigrant workers, as this is the only way that they can establish a more inclusive work environment.

### **Gap in Literature**

Although it is obvious that there is a growing body of research on the experiences and perceptions of immigrants in Fortune 500 companies' workplaces, the fact remains

that a huge literature gap continues to exist. For instance, from the available literature, it is obvious that there is a huge gap when it comes to specific challenges faced by African immigrants in these companies. For instance, the available literature concentrates on quantitative data, such as statistics and surveys, thus leaving a gap in qualitative research, which is more vital in capturing the lived experiences of African immigrants in these companies' workplaces. There is a need to fill this gap, as it is needed for an in-depth understanding of the actual challenges that African immigrants face when working in Fortune 500 companies.

Besides, the existing literature concentrates more on general workplace experiences, thus leaving a gap when it comes to the examination of the exceptional challenges that African immigrants face in specific industries such as finance, agriculture, and technology served by Fortune 500 companies. Filling this gap is vital as it helps specific companies operating in each of these sectors to tailor their solutions to the unique challenges faced by this group of workers in their particular sector. This can boost properly tailored training, response, and support for African immigrants working in Fortune 500 companies.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

Organizational culture plays a significant role in terms of boosting workers' engagement and performance. African immigrants face challenges in terms of adapting to their workplaces due to cultural differences they face in Fortune 500 work environments. Therefore, to overcome these challenges, there is a strong need for cultural literacy programs and training. Strong positive cultures promote workers' motivation and

productivity. Lack of robust organizational culture results in organizational challenges involving low engagement, high turnover, and poor communication.

African immigrants face a wide range of cultural barriers that hamper their full potential when working for Fortune 500 companies. Some key barriers they face include diverse communication styles, different workplace norms and values, and different leadership styles. Moreover, implicit biases and stereotypes worsen these challenges, thus hindering their access to career development and growth.

To overcome this, proper cultural literacy programs and inclusive practices should be adopted. Fortune 500 companies need to invest in cultural literacy programs, as this is the ideal way to assist these African immigrants in terms of easily adapting and thriving in workplaces. Differences in terms of cultural norms, behaviors, and economic and political conditions result in challenges for African immigrants (Gomez et al., 2015; Kim-Soon et al., 2017; Ndofor & Priem, 2011). There is limited literature on lack of cultural literacy among African immigrants.

Addressing cultural barriers and promoting positive organizational cultures are ideal ways that Fortune 500 companies can empower African immigrants, thus aiding them in terms of attaining their full potential. Investing in cultural literacy programs can not only support African immigrants to integrate into their new workplaces but also benefit these companies through enhanced organizational performances. By establishing such conducive environments where African immigrants feel accepted, valued, and supported, these companies are more likely to tap and retain top talents, trigger innovation, and uphold competitive edges in markets. In Chapter 2, I addressed tenets of

the rational choice theory in terms of individuals making sensible decisions based on objectives. Researchers acknowledged cultural literacy allows African immigrants to make appropriate decisions that can help sustain their employment performance in host countries. Chapter 3 includes information about the proposed methodology.

### Chapter 3: Research Method

In Chapter 3, procedures to identify, collect, collate, analyze, and present data that met study objectives and answered RQs are outlined. The main methods that are considered for contemporary studies are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Creswell (2013) indicated target population, types of data, objectives, and allocated resources determine research approaches.

The purpose of this study was to develop a deeper understanding of how organizational culture shapes attitudes and perceptions of African immigrants regarding employee performance and organizational cultural barriers in Fortune 500 companies in Houston, Texas. This involved understanding how African immigrants perceive employee performance within these companies, cultural obstacles they encounter, and strategies that help prevent limitations. Chapter 3 includes details about the research design and rationale, my role as the researcher in collecting data, methodology to recruit participants, data collection instruments, and data analysis. In addition, I address issues of trustworthiness.

#### **Research Design and Rationale**

This qualitative exploratory case study was guided by two RQs:

RQ1: What are the perceptions of African immigrants regarding their employee performance within Fortune 500 companies?

RQ2: What are the perceptions of African immigrants regarding their cultural barriers in communication within Fortune 500 companies?

A qualitative exploratory case study design combines strengths of primary and secondary data to ensure comparisons and triangulation are possible in order to generate quality and reliable findings. It was suitable to obtain a deeper understanding of cultural literacy of African immigrant employees. In qualitative research, generated data are flexible and sensitive (Mason, 2002).

Creswell (2013) defined case studies as analysis of individuals, events, institutions, or groups of people based on collection of in-depth data and information. Case studies can include surveys, observations, interviews, and focus groups (Bajpai, 2011). I used the exploratory case study design because the topic of African immigrants and cultural barriers has not been widely researched.

The qualitative research method was informed by the need for specific data. Other qualitative approaches were considered during initial stages of developing research, such as grounded theory and phenomenology. The grounded theory design was excluded because it involves collecting data that supports or refutes existing hypotheses and theories. I also did not use the phenomenological design, which involves collecting information about lived experiences of participants; this methodology was not appropriate for this study because participants may not have had adequate experience to meet outcomes of this study. In addition, phenomenology is a detached approach that does not consider inclusion of secondary data (Giorgi, 1997). Therefore, a case study approach was selected to explore the topic under study. Quantitative and mixed methods approaches were not used because I did not test relationships, variables, or theories through experimentation and surveys.

### **Role of the Researcher**

The qualitative approach involves recognizing the researcher as the driver of the research process. Furthermore, quality and completeness of data depend on involvement of researchers in terms of engaging with participants and ensuring all interview questions are answered (Mills & Birks, 2014). Interacting with participants is vital to ensure collection of extensive data that satisfies objectives of the project. In this study, I controlled the research process and observed and analyzed data. Although data were provided by participants through interview sessions, I oversaw coordination of all logistics and interview preparation to ensure participants were prepared.

Leadership, people, and planning skills are essential for researchers. As the observer, I noted participants' facial, emotional, and physical expressions during interviews that suggested different attitudes and perceptions. My observations were meant only to reinforce reliability of interview data as well as assist in asking probing questions to collect more relevant data. As the data analyst, I was involved in transcribing, sorting, coding, and organizing interview data., I was the chief data analyst and determined which data to keep or discard.

Any prior professional or personal relationships between myself and participants may have positive and negative implications for data collection processes and outcomes. To eliminate negative implications, the study target population was individuals with no attachment or relationship with myself. Therefore, creating new relationships was another role for me, so I ensured the data collection process was impartial and void of past relationships and attachments.

Researcher bias has the potential to influence study outcomes (Maxwell, 2013). Leading questions, wording, question order, and confirmation bias can have adverse effects on quality of data. Potential bias should be considered when creating interview questions and schedules by starting with general questions and then asking more sensitive and specific ones. Additionally, confirmation bias occurs when researchers manipulate primary data to correspond with personal hypotheses or conclusions regarding the topic, including rejecting data that do not correspond to their hypotheses. Managing researcher bias includes analyzing data impartially by considering all data provided by participants.

Noble and Smith (2015) stated qualitative research is susceptible to ethical issues. Researchers are responsible for ensuring the data collection process does not raise any trust, privacy, confidentiality, or conflict-of-interest issues. When recruiting participants, researchers must ensure participants are aware of risks involved in joining the study and the consent form provides adequate information on ethical guidelines. I used bracketing as the principal investigator and stakeholder. Importantly, participation in the study was voluntary, and no incentives or payments were offered to participants to join the study.

### **Methodology**

This section outlined the major components of the research process, including the identification and selection of participants. Contained in this section are the study target population, sampling process, data collection instruments, and recruitment process. In addition, the data analysis procedures were outlined and how this qualitative case study was used to meet the purpose of the study and answer the research question was addressed.



### **Participant Selection Logic**

The qualitative, exploratory case study design requires the identification of the target population and subsequent sampling to ensure a representative selection of participants. The population refers to all individuals who meet the inclusion criteria. Jackson et al. (2007) indicated that the target population could be as few as 10-15 individuals or as large as the population of a country or a region. In most cases, the size of the target population cannot be quantified; thus, researchers can use regions, periods, and other general features to determine the sample participants. The target population for this study consisted of African immigrants who have been actively employed within Fortune 500 companies in the Houston metropolitan area, Texas, over the past 7 years.

Sampling was used to determine the ideal number of participants who would satisfy the data needs of the study. Sampling refers to the process of determining and selecting participants from the target population who represent the entire population (Emmel, 2013). Researchers of most qualitative case studies lean on random and purposive sampling to recruit their participants, depending on the defined number of participants and the extent of the data required for the investigation.

Purposive sampling was used in the selection of 10-15 employees, ensuring sufficient representation of the target population. A sample size of 10-15 employees was considered adequate for achieving meaningful results for this study. Purposive sampling, being a nonprobability technique reliant on researcher judgment, facilitates the selection of optimal and resourceful participants. This approach mitigates the necessity for generalizing findings and study outcomes. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were utilized

in purposive sampling to ensure the selection of individuals who closely align with the research criteria.

This study focused specifically on African immigrants who were actively employed in Houston, Texas. Consequently, African immigrants who were not currently employed were excluded. Utilizing purposive sampling, the researcher identified and selected individuals who were not only interested in participating but also capable of providing relevant data and understanding the challenges encountered by African immigrants within the U.S. organizational system. Additionally, African immigrants experiencing difficulties in securing employment would be considered for inclusion in the study sample.

The participants, African immigrants employed and working in Houston, Texas, were recruited as participants using purposive sampling. Leveraging this method, the researcher possesses pertinent personal and professional details of potential participants. Invitations to join the research were dispatched via email, which entails comprehensive study information. Confirmations from recipients were requested to ensure the integrity of the intended sample size of 20 participants before commencing data collection.

### **Instrumentation**

The study relied on primary data, as the researcher, I intended to use 100% primary data to meet the objectives, answer the research question, and achieve the expected outcomes. Therefore, conducting interviews was the primary data collection method. The review of secondary sources was used to support sources of data to close

gaps in primary data. The interview protocol involves audio-recording all the interviews and keeping field notes.

### **Interviews**

Primary data was collected through semistructured interviews. Questions include predetermined and open queries. The interview protocol dictated the interactions between the researcher and the participants. Predetermined questions were asked of all participants to ensure consistency in data collection and facilitate useful data analysis through comparisons. However, I was free to ask insightful questions to seek clarification or further explanation. Data provided by participants that were not within the interview protocol were considered additional information that was used as supportive data.

As the researcher, I practiced bracketing throughout the interview process to ensure the understanding of the topic, the perceptions of the participants, and personal feelings do not influence or interfere with the data collection process. Self-reflection and pretest are ideal methods that ensure that the researcher sets aside assumptions and personal perspectives on the topic. Mock interviews were used to identify any vulnerable areas that could create an opening for interference in data collection by leaning toward some aspects of the topic.

The initial interview sessions were allotted sixty minutes in total. The interview questions were structured to gather both general and specific data. The general inquiries, comprising five questions, primarily focused on demographic information, including age, income levels, years of residency in Texas, and gender. Subsequently, the remaining ten questions delved into more specific aspects, targeting African immigrants' perspectives

on their job performance and the cultural obstacles encountered within Fortune 500 companies in Houston, Texas. Additional queries within this section will seek participants' recommendations for enhancing organizational culture and their perceptions of the role the Texas government should play in mitigating factors limiting African immigrants' opportunities within Fortune 500 companies.

As the researcher, I collected all necessary data within the initial sixty-minute timeframe, participants were kindly requested to allocate an extra thirty minutes during the subsequent month. This additional time assisted in facilitating any required clarifications or the provision of further details regarding the data provided. Additionally, it allows for addressing any follow-up queries that may arise after the initial interview sessions.

The final length of the interviews was subject to such factors as language barriers, interpretation of the questions, and the willingness of the participants to provide detailed responses. As the researcher, the initial face-to-face interviews allowed me to develop an essential connection with the participants that was indispensable in any follow-up interactions. During the interviews, I was also able to note observations on the moods, emotions, and reactions of the participants to different questions.

The genuineness of face-to-face interviews helped to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings of the research. Telephone calls and video conferencing were considered for follow-up interviews. The times and locations of the interviews were based on the convenience of the participants. Coffee shops or business premises for the participants were the preferred locations for the interviews. During the interview

sessions, as the researcher, I audio-recorded all responses and kept field notes for analysis.

### **Interview Questions**

As the researcher, I bore the crucial responsibility of formulating appropriate interview questions that aligned with the research objectives. The interview guide, as outlined by Kvale and Brinkmann (2015), served as the framework for assessing individual responses from participants. Questions within the guide will exhibit flexibility, enabling evaluation of participant responses based on specific criteria associated with each query, as noted by Turner (2010). In instances where participants may not readily provide information aligning with the research goals, follow-up questions were encouraged. The questions presented herein serve as exemplars tailored to address the objectives outlined in the problem statement, following the framework provided by Kvale and Brinkmann. For the complete set of interview questions, please refer to Appendix A of this document.

### **Audio Recordings**

Creating audio recordings of the interviews is vital in analyzing the data. The participants were informed that the interview sessions would be recorded when they signed the informed consent form. Specialized equipment was used to record interviews, but simple gadgets such as a phone and a digital recorder can also be appropriate. As the researcher, I use specialized audio recorders with adequate storage capacity, and noise cancellation features to ensure clear capture of all details. All recordings were reviewed and transcribed after all 20 interviews had been completed.

**Field Notes**

Collecting field notes is essential in a case study in facilitating the capture of data expressed through nonverbal cues. I compiled field notes that were significant in supporting the interview data. In most cases, the notes were used to close gaps in the instances in which the participants may not fully complete their responses or cannot recall an appropriate concept to their answers, thus allowing the researcher to provide the appropriate description subject to confirmation. The field notes were used to support the interview responses. They were not considered the detached source of data for the study.

**Secondary Sources**

The review of secondary sources depended on the responses to the interview questions. Journals and websites that detail the plight of African Immigrants in trying to fit into the U.S. organizational culture were resourceful in validating and supporting their responses. Texas public information on immigrants was reviewed through the state's website and other authentic publications available online.

**Field Test**

Patton (2015) noted that interview protocol is used to develop interview questions that will elicit responses from the participants to address the research question. Testing the interview protocol will help to verify that the instrument will generate the required data. The researcher will seek reviews, assessments, and recommendations from experts in research methodology, organizational culture, and Immigrant employee sustainability in the United States to ensure that the interview questions are written in a way that will meet the expectations of this study. Any interview protocol revisions based on the

recommendations of the experts were used to conduct mock interviews with classmates to ensure that words or phrases that elicit bias or provocation were removed.

### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

The study relied on semistructured interviews to answer the research question. The data collected through the interviews was verified through such secondary sources as reports and government information on the cultural challenges facing immigrant entrepreneurs. The interview protocol was used to collect data. As discussed previously, as the researcher I use specialized audio-recording devices to ensure that all responses to the interview questions are captured. However, other devices such as phones and other secondary recording devices were not allowed in interview sessions in case the specialized devices malfunctioned. Audio recording of the interview sessions reduced the burden of taking extensive notes and enabled the researcher to focus on asking questions, seeking clarifications, and noting the nonverbal expressions of the participants.

Participants were recruited and then selected to join the study. Recruitment includes seeking consent from the potential participants through physical meetings or electronic communication. E-mail was the primary method of communication in addition to sharing research briefs on WhatsApp, Face to Face, Facebook, and other potential social media networks. The additional modalities of publication were ideal before the selection of the 10-15 participants. Communication and contacting the 10-15 participants was done primarily through e-mails with all records preserved as evidence of the recruitment process.

Informed consent and information sheets were used to recruit the participants. The selected participants were required to sign the informed consent to indicate their voluntary participation in the study and to give the researcher the right to use their responses to the interview questions. The information sheets contained details about the proposed study, including background, objectives, research question, and nature of the inquiry to help the participants make informed decisions. The participants were informed of the importance and significance of the study, including potential benefits that the entrepreneurs may obtain from the conclusions and recommendations. The sample size will be 10-15 participants or until data saturation occurs.

The scheduling for interviews occurred in one month to enable the participants to pick appropriate dates while enabling the researcher to manage the schedule and avoid conflicts. Google calendars and e-mail notifications were used to confirm availability and schedule the interviews. As the researcher, I tried to complete more than one interview per day to shorten the data collection period.

All interviews were audio-recorded, and field notes were taken to support the recordings. Following the completion of the interview sessions, the participants had time to ask questions or seek clarification from the researcher. The participants also had the opportunity to share additional information related to the study. As the researcher, I confirmed that the results of the study were shared with the participants once the study had been approved by the university.



## **Data Analysis Plan**

Seidman (2013) recommended using an exploratory case study. The data analysis plan obtained from the interviews and supplementary secondary sources was analyzed and processed. This analysis involves examining 10-15 transcribed audio recordings and accompanying field notes to identify patterns between the primary and secondary data. Each transcription includes participant codes along with responses to the 20 interview questions. Field notes were used to address any gaps identified during the review of the recordings. Should any significant missing data be detected, participants were re-engaged to provide clarifications and additional information.

Coding was employed for both the participants and the collected interview data. Numeric coding (e.g., P1, P2, etc.) will be utilized for the participants, while color coding differentiates various types of information. Both inductive and deductive approaches were employed to assess the relevance of transcribed data obtained from the interviews. New data was marked with red labels, while information identified during the literature review was denoted with green labels. Analysis of new data aims to identify themes and subthemes that address the research question.

Organizing data involved identifying, collating, and sorting interview data based on their frequency. Tables will be used to group similar data, assisted by the inductive and deductive coding completed during interview transcription.

I developed themes from the data that directly address the research question and study objectives. Themes will serve as a measure of how well the collected data aligns with the study's expectations.

Throughout analysis, any information that failed to meet quality and credibility standards was scrutinized. Participants will be consulted initially to validate such data, while secondary sources will be used to verify any discrepancies in facts provided during interviews.

from the data analysis were reported using charts, graphs, and tables. The QSR NVivo computer software program will facilitate data analysis, reporting, and presentation, enabling the creation of visualizations to aid in interpreting the findings. Tracy (2012) noted that the effectiveness of data analysis determines the achievement of the study expectations. The researcher may have to collect more data by conducting follow-up interviews if the initial data do not yield the expected results. Discrepancies in data collection will be managed by collecting additional data and cross-referencing with supporting documents.

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

According to Fischer et al. (2014), trustworthiness in qualitative case studies refers to the validity and reliability of the findings. The absence of hypothesis testing and the use of metrics and instruments to measure validity and reliability means that the trustworthiness of qualitative data is measured by examining the findings for transferability, credibility, dependability, and confirmability (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). The description of these aspects of the findings addresses both the internal and external validity of the data and study outcomes.

**Credibility**

This measure of the trustworthiness of the study focused on the internal validity of the findings (Mihalache, 2019). Credibility relies on the confidence of the researcher in the accuracy and truthfulness of the findings. Triangulation, lengthy interviews, and peer reviews are some strategies that will be used to ensure the credibility of the findings. Triangulation includes the use of other sources of data, such as field notes and a review of secondary sources. Contacting participants for information and clarification is also another significant method to attain credibility while experts, supervisors, and colleagues will be allowed to review the study findings to identify any apparent anomalies.

**Transferability**

Transferability refers to the findings being used in similar situations and with similar target populations (Yin, 2013). Detailed descriptions of the findings will be used to show how the results could apply to other populations seeking access to and navigation of the United States organizational culture system. This description included noting social and cultural patterns among the participants and then correlating any similarities with other populations experiencing cultural barriers in the United States. Transferability was used to measure the external validity of the outcomes.

**Dependability**

Korstjens and Moser (2018) defined dependability as the extent to which the findings are consistent when studies are replicated by other researchers. An audit trail was used in this study to ensure that data collection and analysis processes meet the required standard to ensure that the findings are consistent and can be replicated.

**Confirmability**

Megheirkouni and Moir (2023) defined confirmability as the degree of neutrality maintained in qualitative research, ensuring that findings are derived solely from participant responses and other data collection methods. However, achieving confirmability poses the risk of incorporating the researcher's own beliefs, perceptions, and motivations into the results. To mitigate this risk, a step-by-step audit trail was employed throughout the data processing and analysis process. This audit trail ensures that all decisions regarding the inclusion or exclusion of responses in the analysis are justified and not influenced by the researcher's preconceptions about the topic.

**Ethical Procedures**

Ethics considerations are the guidelines ensuring that researchers do not violate the fundamental rights of the participants. Common ethical issues in qualitative research include confidentiality, informed consent, privacy, the publication of the results, and early withdrawal from research without repercussions. I conducted this study with a sample of volunteer participants, so I required permission from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) with approval No. 08-14-24-0825324 to conduct the research. The application included the proposed guidelines and approaches to handle issues such as recruiting, managing confidentiality, refusal to accept the invitation to join the study, and premature withdrawal from the study.

The participant information sheet contained detailed information about the recruitment and management of participants during the research process. Details included the process of selecting participants, the roles of the participants, and the risks and

benefits of being in the study. The responsibilities of the researcher, including maintenance of the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants and the data, also were included. Participants were required to sign informed consent. The participants were contacted at least 2 days before the scheduled interviews to reconfirm their availability and answer or clarify any questions that they might have about the study. Participants will be required to provide informed consent before participating. The interview data and field notes were handled and stored only by me in a secured safe. The interview transcriptions are stored in files on my personal password-protected computer. To enhance the security of the data, participants are identified with numeric codes, as mentioned. Participants wishing to verify the accuracy of their transcriptions were provided with such copies through e-mail.

### **Summary**

Chapter 3 included information about the proposed research approach and design. A qualitative case study design was ideal for collecting data on African immigrants navigating U.S. organizational culture systems and solutions to support growth and sustainability of African employees in Fortune 500 companies. The rationale for using a case study design and purposive sampling was explained. Semistructured interviews were the primary data collection method, with an extensive description of data analysis. My role as the researcher, trustworthiness issues, and ethical considerations were also discussed. Data are analyzed, interpreted, and presented in Chapter 4.

## Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore perceptions of African immigrants regarding their employee performance and cultural barriers involving communication within Fortune 500 companies in Houston, Texas. This chapter includes findings from interviews with 12 African immigrants using a sample of IT employees in Houston. Interviews involved identifying participants' understanding and experiences with cultural issues in their workplaces within Fortune 500 organizations.

Interview questions were administered, and data were gathered through semistructured interviews for 4 weeks. Interviews lasted 30 to 50 minutes for participants, during which I asked them about their experiences and understanding of cultural issues and how they thought those issues affected or did not affect performance of employees in organizations.

The interview process consisted of two sections: during the first section, I collected demographic data involving gender, age, years of living in Houston, and job experience. The second part was addressing participants' attitudes and issues they encountered related to organizational cultural constraints in Fortune 500 organizations. Based on interviews, cultural barriers to employment sustainability were ways of addressing those barriers and experiences with dealing with workplace cultures. Data from interviews were negotiated manually and analyzed in terms of themes and patterns.

The chapter also includes results of thematic analysis, focusing on four major themes: cultural issues in the workplace, ways of addressing cultural issues in the workplace, the role of organizational culture on level of career advancement, and effects

of cultural origination on performance and behavior in global Fortune 500 companies.

Also, I discussed the significance of these findings, focusing on cultural competence and organizational barriers.

Findings are discussed with special emphasis on credibility, dependability, and confirmability of research. I address common pitfalls and difficulties of African immigrants in the United States, as well as an analysis of how cultural issues influence opportunities in Fortune 500 companies.

### **Research Setting**

Research involved exploring African immigrants' perspectives regarding employee performance and the influence of organizational cultural factors within Fortune 500 companies on Houston, Texas. Houston was chosen as the study environment due to its growing population of African immigrants, many of whom work in the IT industry. Participants had experience in various roles across different Fortune 500 organizations in the region. Houston's highly diversified corporate landscape and presence of numerous Fortune 500 companies meant it was an ideal context for analyzing how organizational conditions affect cultural barriers and their impact on African immigrant employees.

Interviews were conducted during evenings and weekends for participants to concentrate fully on discussions, sharing detailed observations regarding workplace experiences. They were selected based on their IT backgrounds and exposure to organizational cultures of large corporations. Participants provided insights about how cultural barriers influenced employee performance and career progression. Interviews

lasted between 30 and 50 minutes, yielding valuable data on how barriers shape professional experiences of African immigrants.

### Demographics

Twelve African immigrants participated in this research. They were different in terms of gender, age, number of years in the United States, and job position at Fortune 500 companies. Participants' gender was evenly split, with half male and half female participants. This ensured I received thorough insights regarding themes as well as experiences and views of African immigrants in IT (see Table 1).

**Table 1**

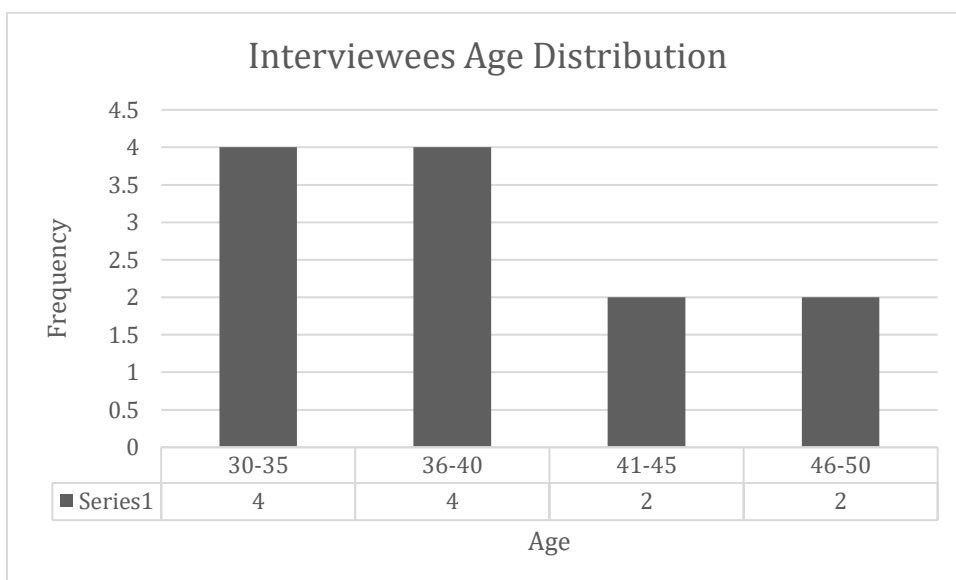
*Participant Distribution Data*

	Gender			
	Male	Female		
Frequency	6	6		
Percentage	50%	50%		
	Age			
	30-35	36-40	41-45	46-50
Frequency	4	4	2	2
Percentage	33%	33%	17%	17%
	Years lived in Houston			
	Less than 5 years	5-10 years	11-15 years	More than 15 years
Frequency	2	5	2	3
Percentage	17%	42%	17%	25%
	Job experience level			
	Entry-level	Mid-level Management	Senior-level Management	
Frequency	3	5	4	
Percentage	25%	42%	33%	
	IT sector role			
	Technical/Engineering	Management	Support/Administrative	
Frequency	6	4	2	
Percentage	50%	33%	17%	



**Figure 1***Gender*

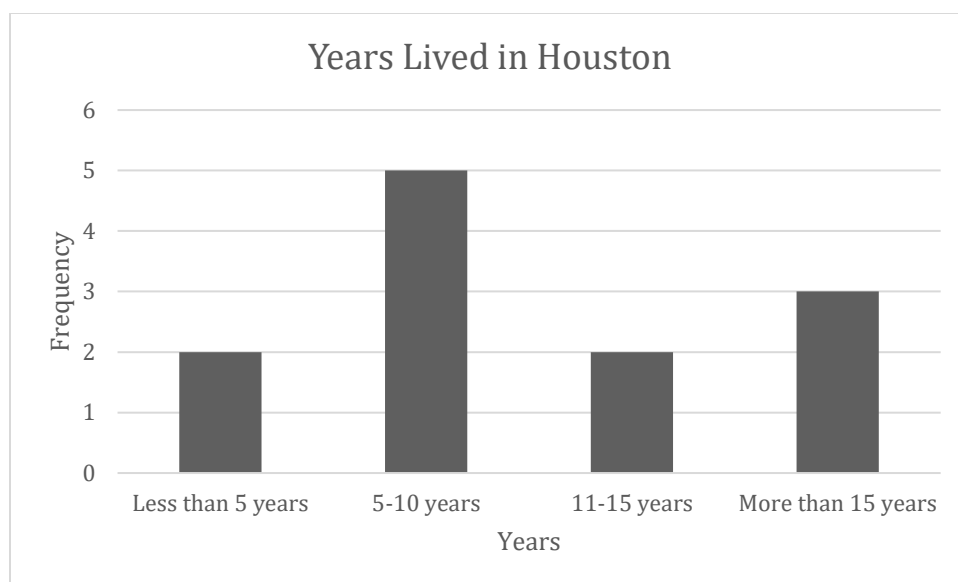
Age of participants was between 30 and 50, and almost all of were between 40 and 50 (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2***Interviewee Age Distribution*

Participants resided in Houston for roughly 10 years on average. Participants reported they had been living in the city for several years, with some spending over 20 years in the city. This is indicative of a deep-rooted level of engagement with culture and employment markets in Houston (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

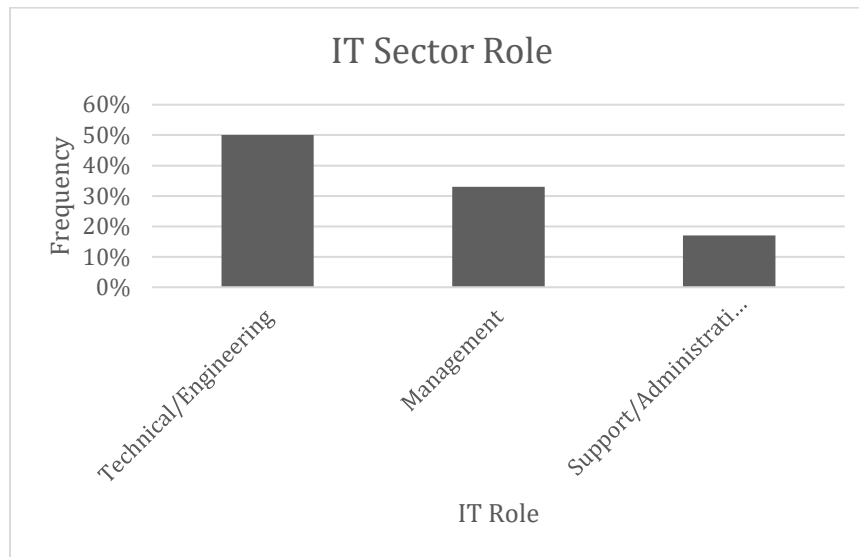
*Years Lived in Houston*



In terms of job experience, all participants were currently working or had previously worked for a Fortune 500 company and held various ranks and positions. Four participants held senior management positions, five participants were middle managers, and three participants were junior managers, as portrayed in Figure 4 below. These differing job experiences offered a broad perspective of how cultural issues are encountered, more so within various organizational levels.

**Figure 4***Job Experience Level*

In the IT sector, there was a great variation in the role distribution among participants. Technical and engineering positions were the most reported; they constituted 50% of the sample. Second, there were management posts; again, 33 % showed the respondents to be in leadership and planning posts. Clerical and auxiliary positions were also rare but still significant, as 17% of the participants were engaged in such functions. This distribution can be associated with the diverse occupations present in the IT field (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5***IT Sector Role***Data Collection**

The data for this research was collected in August/September 2024 using a semistructured interview technique that provided a detailed understanding of the African immigrants working in the IT sector of the selected Fortune 500 organizations. They noted that the approach provided the opportunity for optionality when considering the participants' accounts of their experience with employee performance and organizational cultural constraints (Weideman & Hofmeyr, 2020). All the participants were interviewed via self-administered face-to-face and/or digital interviews, with an average duration ranging from 30 to 45 minutes.

All interviews were tape-recorded with the participant's permission and recorded using Rev.com, and the two analysts transcribed them in full. Challenges, as highlighted by Chomutare et al. (2021), included data loss; hence, all files, transcription, and consent

forms were saved on two different platforms, which included personal computers and external hard drives. Further, a review of the existing literature specifically focusing on organizational culture and employee performance was also performed to support and enhance the results generated out of the interviews.

### Data Analysis

**Table 1**

*Participant Table*

Participant ID	Interview duration (minutes)	Transcript length (pages)	Interview location
P1	26:54	8	Face-to-face
P2	14:19	5	Face to Face
P3	19:38	6	Face-to-face
P4	18:47	6	Digital
P5	20:20	7	Face-to-face
P6	29:15	9	Face to Face
P7	26:59	9	Face to Face
P8	30:01	9	Face to Face
P9	15:12	7	Face to Face
P10	24:12	8	Face to Face
P11	20:38	7	Face to Face
P12	16:42	5	Face to face

The participant table provided illustrates the various ID assigned and subsequent interview location and interview length and duration. All transcripts obtained underwent the initial step of organizing data as recommended by Seidman (2013). The inductive approach of coding was embraced in ensuring the identified quotes from the various participant's interview transcripts arrive at the different categories and subsequent themes for the reports. These included highlighting some of the common patterns from the transcripts. The themes developed by directly addressing the RQs and quotes identified among participants aligned with study expectations. Subsequently, data validation was

implemented where every quote generated from the transcripts was verified by matching the audio files' content and transcripts. Lastly, presentation of findings was done through tables and charts obtained from the QSR NVivo computer software programs that represented accurate findings. These visualizations revealed an achievement of the study expectations and allowed for management of any potential data collection discrepancies.

The semistructured interviews comprised 16 questions: whereas the first six questions captured the participant's age, gender, and years of experience, the remaining questions dealt with the participant's views on cultural issues and employees' performance in Fortune 500 companies. The data from the asynchronous interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis to uncover significant patterns and themes across the data set. Regarding data analysis, the data was hand-coded and analyzed for major themes, which were further checked with the help of NVivo qualitative data analysis software. The themes of the study were arrived at following an analysis of the various quotes that revealed various patterns.

In various interview questions, quotes were highlighted that revealed a pattern relating to the keywords and codes generated to help align them to various themes relevant for current study. Table 4 highlights some of the frequency of the codes and subsequent application of the quotes to identify various themes used in the results section. Various participants who mentioned the quotes are also identified to help illustrate the codes and the subsequent generated themes associated with it. The thematic analysis highlighted several key themes of the research, focusing on the experiences and attitudes towards African immigrants in the IT industry.

These themes are provided in Table 4 and Figure 1, as well as the frequency and percentage of appearances according to interviews solicited for the research.

### Interviews

Subsequent evaluation of the various quotes from the different participants revealed various codes. These were extracted from the transcripts after being placed inside QSR NVivo software and subsequent generation of codes such as language barrier, cultural differences, discrimination, prejudice, career mobility, diversity management, mentorship, and biased perceptions.

**Table 2**

*Codes, Categories, and Themes*

Participant	Quote from transcript	Codes	Interview question	Research theme
P3	“Once I had a problem with language when I was job hunting”	Language Barrier	Q4	Cultural Misunderstanding
P1	“They will probably have this notion that they are not sure if you can lead a team.”	Cultural Differences	Q10	Cultural Misunderstanding
P8	“It doesn't matter if you work 20 hours or you work 40 hours, as long as you're there to fulfill what you're supposed to do. And I mean that is a cultural change or cultural shock to me”	Cultural Differences	Q8	Cultural Misunderstanding
P10	“The higher you go, the more you're	Career Mobility	Q10	Cultural Misunderstanding

	supposed to be involved in maybe more social engagement and building relationships...”			
P2	“given the stereotype and conflicting values, it becomes difficult for the employees to cling to their jobs and practice mutual respect; they are likely to be trapped.”	Discrimination	Q10	Promotion and Advancement
P11	“Cultural barriers can lead to misunderstandings and miscommunication.”	Biased Perceptions	Q10	Promotion and Advancement
P7	“the Africans are more knowledgeable than the whites, but whites are occupying a higher percentage of the job”	Prejudice	Q11	Promotion and Advancement
P1	“As a minority, and also a Black female, I would say they tend to probably have this notion that they’re not sure if you can lead a team.	Prejudice	Q10	Workplace Inclusion
P7	“in some parts, Africans are really respected for their high level of knowledge of education and also their being hardworking, and on the other side, they	Biased Perceptions	Q8	Workplace Inclusion



	think Africans are fraudsters, loud, they don't have manners, and they are not supposed to be here."			
P2	"Leaving aside the stereotype and conflicting values, it is difficult for employees to keep their jobs and work without feeling like they are being harassed."	Discrimination	Q10	Communication Barriers
P5	"I found it challenging to manage the employee relations and office politics as some things are not said directly, and the cultural differences of being direct or self-promoting, especially in business meetings."	Cultural Differences	Q4	Communication Barriers
P1	"For instance, my company has a department for cultural holidays because it is very diverse, but the diverse persons should come forward and demand more diversity."	Diversity Management	Q13	Organizational Support
P4	"there is lack of support to the various groups of employees."	Diversity Management	Q9	Organizational Support
P7	"...having companies sponsor this culture. Having	Mentorship	Q11	Organizational Support

	sponsored or provided funding to promote cultural awareness.”			
P2	“Values and expectations are set in stone without considering the cultural differences and individual values.”	Career Mobility	Q14	Networking and Professional Growth
P6	“there is social networking amongst Nigerian communities that will provide people with opportunities to address these issues.”	Mentorship	Q13	Networking and Professional Growth
P9	“. I try to manage the situation by not allowing their level of lack of knowledge to rub me of my joy, and while I try to look for my own...”	Language Barrier	Q10	Networking and Professional Growth

### **Cultural Barriers and Employee Performance Based on Interviews**

Six key themes emerged from the interview analysis of the 12 participants and the 16 questions from the interview questionnaire. These themes record participants' experiences of organizational culture and how they feel that culture inhibits or enhances their performance in Fortune 500 organizations.

**Table 3***Theme Frequency in Participant Responses*

Themes	Number of references	Percentage
Cultural Misunderstanding	10	83%
Promotion and Advancement	8	67%
Workplace Inclusion	7	58%
Communication Barriers	6	50%
Organizational Support	5	42%
Networking and Professional Growth	4	33%

**Theme 1: Cultural Misunderstanding**

The two codes that were used to generate the theme of cultural misunderstanding included language and cultural differences. The report went ahead to illustrate quotes from the transcripts of different participants to illustrate the theme. The theme of cultural misunderstanding brings out the experiences of African immigrants who work in Fortune 500 firms. It cuts across organizational culture, leading to misunderstandings that impact their performance and readoption in the firms.

For instance, P1 revealed that cultural differences present a severe challenge to organizational culture in as much as work relations; the differences make questions and suspicions arise regarding the ability of a particular person to lead. The following comment from the participant from the real estate sector supports this; “They will probably have this notion that they are not sure if you can lead a team.” Once again, the point has highlighted the importance of being relevant within the company. It still took

me quite a while to rise to the level where I had the opportunity to do what I am doing now; even if one has the academic background and vocational experience one needs, one has to prove oneself no matter where one is from.” These are not unique features, and this is part of a larger problem where culturally associated dissimilarities will influence perceptions of competency and leadership. As a result of this, a study conducted by Alfoqahaa and Jones (2020) supported this view by arguing that in organizations, culture molds how leadership qualities are perceived and, consequently, evaluated, which puts the efforts of the minority candidates into question in a diverse context to portray their ability to lead.

P3 touched on how language barriers present challenges in finding new opportunities when he said this: “Once I had a problem with language when I was job hunting,” “Some of the organizations were more friendly with those employees that speak two languages as opposed to an employee that only speaks the English language.” Ultimately, it depicts a situation where some employers may turn you down just because you cannot speak the language. This viewpoint supports the assertion that language has a critical function not only in daily interaction but also in terms of job prospects. According to Reigstad (2021), due to cross-cultural differences, which create language barriers, colleagues from different cultures will, in most cases, translate or interpret communication in different ways, making it difficult to conduct a constructive review of performance and development in the workplace. These barriers lead to more negative attitudes towards the competencies of non-native speakers and a lower likelihood of career mobility. It is a trend that is replicated through the fact that the means through

which people communicated resulted in uneven ground and an inability of African immigrants to be fully absorbed and progress in the multinational companies.

P6 spoke about the issues of communication and cultural expectations by saying, “One of the major challenges I encountered is in the aspect of communication; from Nigeria, we do have an accent, and this makes people have a hard time understanding you and likewise you are being able to pass your message across.” This statement indicates that language barriers and accents hinder communication, thus leading to poor working relationships and productivity. Failure to understand the other person due to accents may bring about misconceptions about their intentions and or messages, which may, in the end, create conflicts within the team. Weinzierl (2021) noted that such barriers to communication in cross-cultural teams create negativity and destroy the overall effectiveness of a team by causing conflicts due to different communication styles and accents. This issue is highly relevant in today’s multicultural organizations, where effective communication is the key to success.

P8 stated, “I find it difficult to impose my perception of how matters should work to my juniors who think that working 40 hours a week is sufficient, to my belief of working and delivering any assignment by the time it is required and in case of an added job, it warrants more hours.” This statement reflects a major clash of cultures in a number of ways, including the expectations of employees from their workplace. In this case, one may see how the different perceptions of the work ethic and expectations that the participant has about their subordinates versus what they expect from the participant and the rest of their workers can lead to misunderstanding and conflicts resulting from the

clash of the two cultures. Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions are beneficial for these differences, showing how different attitudes, including time and work completion and overtime, influence interactions and managerial approaches (Le et al., 2020). For example, cultures with a less rigid view regarding time and deadlines may not have the same emphasis on schedules as compared to cultures with a more rigid view. These cultural differences influence team performance and cohesiveness, which justifies the necessity for cultural sensitivity in multicultural workplaces.

P10 observed, "The higher you go, the more you're supposed to be involved in maybe more social engagement and building relationships, and that's where that could be a challenge because sometimes the people you're trying to network with, they don't have the same cultural background as you have." This comment highlights a significant challenge in leadership roles: the practicable risk resulting from cultural differences in the aspects of networking and social contact. In the course of climbing the career ladder, a person has to develop and apply different types of workplace relations for career and power advancement. However, where there can be a lack of cultural reference regarding such people from colleagues or prospective partners, there are impediments to meaningful encounters. Elchawich (2024) stated that such a cultural misfit leads to exclusion, isolation, and low job satisfaction because leaders are out of the networks that do not accept those cultures.

## **Theme 2: Promotion and Advancement**

The researcher focused on prejudice, discrimination, and biased perceptions in formulating the theme. It points to the issue of career mobility of such employees in rigid

bureaucratic organizations due to racism and sexism. P2 was so very concerned with the issue as he had this to say, “given the stereotype and conflicting values, it becomes difficult for the employees to cling to their jobs and practice mutual respect; they are likely to be trapped.” This idea captures the problem that African immigrants face in terms of promotion and career advancement in Fortune 500 companies. Discrimination and prejudice mean concentration camp conditions in which the minority workers can lack the opportunities to get a promotion and all the ingredients are intrinsic to a system and pose barriers to success for the employees. It is further supported by Williams et al. (2020) that preconceptions and prejudice in the business world and organizational culture and practice affect the lifecycle and upward mobility of minorities in organizations. One is likely to experience distrust of competency, prejudice toward performance, and discrimination against promotion opportunities. Hence, these challenges are not only about job security but also relate to advancement and progression and can evidence discrimination and unfairness in employment relations.

P4 also said, “Sometimes cultural issues can suppress job satisfaction, communication, and collaboration, and thus promote misunderstanding and miscommunication.” This statement also shows that culture plays a major role in deciding on promotion and advancement because it changes other areas of work performance. Nearly and globalization, sometimes leading to intercultural conflicts and miscommunications, interfere with satisfaction with work and career advancement, which are components of training. This agrees with the study by Kuoribo et al. (2024), which establishes that culture has a bearing on the capacity of members to effectively convey

ideas, which hinders teamwork and efficiency. This means that if the employees don't get a chance to succeed in attaining the objectives set for them by eliminating confusion in the workplace and acquiring cooperation opportunities, these employees cannot demonstrate their capability in their working places and earn promotions. Therefore, it is seen that the mentioned cultural issues are not situational but structural and affect not only day-to-day procedures but also career advancement programs and opportunities of people from diverse backgrounds and minorities, meaning that some solutions must be found to enhance the representation.

For instance, P7 said, "in the field that you find yourself in right now, you will find a good percentage of African individuals, and on the other hand, you find a very large number of non-Africans, especially the white color, the blacks, particularly the Africans are more knowledgeable than the whites, but whites are occupying a higher percentage of the job." The above statement established limited job representation and career advancement chances despite having adequate education and knowledge highlighting organizational systemic and cultural barriers. In support of this fact, the study that was conducted by Qureshi et al. (2020) showed that employees of color are locked out of promotions because of prejudice and culture. Such a display of gender and ethnicity at work underlines the need for organizational redressal to erase prejudice and to enable better prospects for mobility at the workplace.

During the interview, P9 said, "I have experienced the feeling of being of low status and being receptions and never appreciated. A person told me that I have a smell that pains her head." This shows discrimination and cultural prejudice on African



immigration workers and how these shaped their perceptions and experiences in the labor market. Stories of this nature provide examples of how prejudice not only removes people's perceptions of belonging but also harms career progress. Verbal abuse and perception of no acknowledgment experienced by this participant in their job characterize the systematic level affecting satisfaction and promotions. In the recent studies by Lee et al. (2020), it has been found that such negative experiences negatively affect job satisfaction and also restrict the career advancement of minority employees. These outcomes are signs of another negative phenomenon that has been observed in organizational contexts, in which prejudice and cultural discrimination exclude minorities and restrict their promotions or opportunities, showing the importance of fair employment practices.

P12 also from the IT sector said, "I observed that there is a racial inclination; some races are keen on enhancing opportunities for their fellow races within Americans, the American system... some cultures are loyal to their people, and they do this tactfully." This comment also reveals promotion and career advancement discrimination based on race or cultural preference. This helps in supporting the argument for racial clustering, the belief that those doing well in organizations can use references and social bonds to move up the ladder and leave behind those of a different color. Lee (2023) and Machen et al. (2021) supported this notion, claiming that minority workers are discriminated against because of organizational cultures, and therefore, their chances for promotion are limited. The systematic discrimination of such a policy fosters

employment opportunity disparities and hinders upward mobility for African immigrants and other minorities in the organization.

### **Theme 3: Workplace Inclusion**

The theme of Workplace Inclusion centers on the ways that perceived exclusion affects job satisfaction and performance. Some of the participants explained how they were excluded and how this process impacted their professional development.

P1 (Real Estate Sector – Professional) also agreed with this feeling on how they are sidelined in the contributions made by the team by saying, “As a minority, and also a Black female, I would say they tend to probably have this notion that they’re not sure if you can lead a team. And again, it’s all about proving yourself and proving that you are vital to the company.” This shows that African immigrants are perceived. The other potential negative outcome of this perceived need to always assert one’s worth is that employees feel invisible or passed over in the workplace, leading to decreased workplace satisfaction and impeded career advancement. Shore and Chung (2022) also advanced this idea, stating that workers suffer decreased efficiency and satisfaction at work if they are regarded as part of some structure that offers little value. Hence, experiences such as these may pose a real threat to the idea of inclusion for workers with NP disabilities and the overall organization’s ability to integrate inclusively hired individuals effectively into the work environment.

Diversity is an important factor that defines today’s workplace, and following the cultural perspectives, here are some issues that could be in the opinion of P4 (Finance Sector – Management) stated that knowledge workers in the present context work on

such issues as “the freedom of relationship with individuals of different cultures especially concerning interpersonal communication.” Based on this assertion, the following questions concern the challenges that come with the issue of diversity and how it affects it. It may be necessary to attend to them in order to foster a positive attitude towards cultural diversity in organizations. According to Homan et al. (2020), cultural diversity is a context that can shape interaction processes and, thus, team performance. There is a need to implement policies on cultural differences in an efficient manner to reduce the discrimination against members of a team. The problem of working in heterogeneous teams, including conflict between direct and indirect communication and difficulty in establishing rapport across cultures, is reminiscent of a broader problem of implementing inclusion policies and practices that have to take into account the differences in norms and values in order to foster effective cooperative working.

P7 (Healthcare Sector – Support/Administrative) concluded his views as follows:

“It all depends, in some parts, Africans are really respected for their high level of knowledge of education and also their being hardworking, and on the other side, they think Africans are fraudsters, loud, they don’t have manners, and they are not supposed to be here.” Constraining the given statement, it is possible to describe the crucial. Such mixed and often biased perceptions, as O’Connell and McKinnon (2021) pointed out, can not only hinder an individual’s career advancement but also negatively affect their identity as employees in the organization. It impedes both integration and non-discrimination into working organizations and the capacity to operate effectively when people are subjected to mixed actual and perceived cultural heritage. These prejudices

need to be sacked, and more importantly, the work environment must be shaped in such a way that it is more socially sensitive to everybody so as to be capable of raising the morale of these employees, as well as other employees, and at the same time, be capable of promoting the cause of each employee based on their performances.

P8 (Retail Sector-Management) concurred with the observation by opining thus: As this scholar pointed out, “When I came here to study in the United States, I soon discovered that a subordinate can very easily challenge the manager or leadership by giving his/her opinion or his/her opinion on what they do on a daily basis.” This statement reflects the organizational subordinate as well as the communication modes of the African and American workplace. The African people have a social organization through which one cannot argue with the figures of authority as denied severely. On the other hand, most workplaces in America respond to the culture of free speech and debate, even by the lowly staff. Tear et al. (2020) affirmed this by pointing out that cultural theories determine the assessment of employee behavior toward managers. International competence, therefore, requires understanding these differences to improve communication efficiency within an organization in a multicultural environment. Such an understanding may help African professionals manage such differences with a view to enhancing their social relationships and organizational adjustment within the United States of America.

P10 (Manufacturing Sector - Technical/Engineering) noted, “When people walk in on Monday morning talking about baseball, and you’ve never played baseball or don’t understand the game, you always feel like, ‘Okay, what am I going to say here?’ It shows

one of the challenges of participating in an organization where employees share popular cultural references that may make the newcomer uncomfortable. Such cultural gaps may hinder social inclusion and have an impact on workplace unity, which is supported by Nesterova and Dobronravova (2022). These are work-related areas of difference that may create difficulties in everyday interactions and social interactions of people with different cultural backgrounds, affecting their belongingness and perceived social inclusion. Ideally, solutions to the challenges depicted above should be part of strategies for workplace inclusion, which should aim to enhance workplace understanding and affirmative interaction across employees from diverse backgrounds.

#### **Theme 4: Communication Barriers**

Communication Barriers explores how tones and possible prejudices may influence interactions between African immigrants in the workplace and their counterparts in Fortune 500 firms. This theme focuses on individuals' inability to communicate effectively within their workplace and how this has various implications for working relations.

P2 (Technology Sector – Technical/Engineering) noted, ‘Leaving aside the stereotype and conflicting values, it is difficult for employees to keep their jobs and work without feeling like they are being harassed.’ The statement by this participant reveals that conflicting values and stereotypes are major obstacles in organizational communication. Such barriers result in miscommunication and misinterpretation, hence developing bad impressions that affect job retention and general performance. Jelenko (2020) pointed out that such stereotypes and value differences not only affect one’s

ability to communicate on the job but also erode an employee's job satisfaction. Focusing on the stereotype and not performance may create a toxic environment and lower morale among employees. It is indeed important to unmask these barriers of communication because the workplace should be a safe and positive environment for any individual to work without being discriminated against by their superiors or coworkers based on cultural background.

P5 (Healthcare Sector - Support/Administrative) stated, "I found it challenging to manage the employee relations and office politics as some things are not said directly, and the cultural differences of being direct or self-promoting, especially in business meetings." This feedback shows the struggle with adapting to different communication patterns and other unspoken policies at the workplace. These differences can bring about complications that make it difficult for an individual to assimilate into a new place of work easily. In line with this view, Aririguzoh (2022) demonstrated that cultural differences in norms of communication behavior pose great barriers to intercultural communication. In many cases, failure to perceive these micro-messages and unspoken rules can prove to be disadvantageous to the employees as they are unable to relate well with their colleagues and superiors. Overcoming these communication barriers is important to improving the working climate for all individuals and ensuring employees can participate to the best of their ability within their organizations.

P6 (Oil and Gas Sector - Managerial Level) recalled the following bias: "One of the major challenges I encountered is in the aspect of communication; from Nigeria, we do have an accent, and this makes it difficult for people to understand you and for you to

get your message across.” This comment is another illustration of anchors such as accents and communication styles influenced by cultural backgrounds that may present rational barriers in organizations. It shows that such biases can result in divergent interpretations of the same information or outright omission of other valuable inputs as a result of the manner of their presentation. Levon et al. (2021) supported this observation, arguing that accent and the manner of speech greatly affect the perception and value of communication. This matter demonstrates the necessity and importance of understanding and respecting more customers in organizations to amplify different communications that are crucial in the workplace.

P9 (Retail Sector – Management) argued his response as, “If it is an organization that accepts other cultures, the diversity of such a culture makes me comfortable and offers my most productive effort. If it is an organization that does not accept other cultures, and I do not like toxic environments in any way, the best way to handle this is to ensure that their level of ignorance does not deprive me of my joy.” The response to this on the other hand, in organizations that have not adopted diversity, employees may have feelings of discomfort and lack of enthusiasm, and this would affect their level of job satisfaction. Monteiro and Joseph (2023) believed that a positive environment enhances organizational commitment, the positive behavioral tendencies of workers, and some other organizational virtues, while a negative environment yields undesirable behavioral patterns such as low morale and performance from the organizational worker. This underscores the fact that organizational culture acts as an important mediator in the overall organized employee experience and its impacts.

Manufacturing Sector and Technical/Engineering P11 noted, “Since cultural differences can hinder effective communication, they should be avoided.” Such a statement gives a clear indication of how cultural differences affect communication effectiveness in organizations. As stated by Guo and Stapa (2023), different cultural students are able to make different perceptions based on their respective cultural communication and practice, which are vital when relaying information in the technical discipline. Such barriers can lead to misunderstanding of instructions, project details, or feedback and hence lead to mistakes and poor performance. These imperfect communication barriers can be disadvantageous to the individual and the team in specific applicational technical areas where precision and accuracy of information are important. The observation points to a much larger issue: cultural diversity and how it affects professional interactions and productivity, particularly when there is a need to factor in approaches for improving order and teaming in heterogeneous organizational settings.

#### **Theme 5: Organizational Support**

The codes generated to support the theme of organization support is diversity management and mentorship. Organizational support refers to the extent to which Fortune 500 companies support eradicating the cultural barriers of African immigrants. In this theme, support in the organizational environment is identified as a factor that determines organizational members’ experience and performance.

In the case of the Real Estate Sector – Professional, P1 mentioned the following: For instance, my company has a department for cultural holidays because it is very diverse, but the diverse persons should come forward and demand more diversity. Thus,



the statement suggests that while some entities contribute to diversity, such as having cultural holidays, there could still be a general lack of diversity visible on the ground. Another fact mentioned in Babundo's study (2023), was that diversity management must work when there is no symbolism, and every effort is attempted to integrate diversity programs into the organizational fabric continuously and cooperatively.

The absence of such commitment may, therefore, imply that efforts towards diversity often do not bring into the workplace the kind of diversity the programs intend to convey, and they lack consideration of diversity issues. It underlines the necessity for focused and sustained advocacy for organizations to adopt and ramp up the deployment of diversity and inclusion strategies and procedures.

As highlighted by P4 (Management, Finance Sector), there is a problem that we never imagined in the course of the study, which is that "there is a lack of support to the various groups of employees." The realities of today's organizations and people practices provide evidence that many organizations fail to address the issues of diverse employees adequately. According to Simon (2024), organizational diversity-related activities can only be effective when they are non-superficial, sustained, and integrated, along with the implementation of organizational policies. It suggested that diversity is not merely something that needs to be instituted as a concept, policy, vision, or mission statement, but it also has to be present in the working of the organization at all levels of leadership and management and in support structures. When diversity is not integrated so well at various levels, it may end up being applied as a surface activity that does not meet the

true needs/ concerns of the diverse employees, making diversity groups feel neglected/ excluded.

P7 (Technology Sector - Technical/Engineering) elaborated, “Having companies sponsor this culture. Having sponsored or provided funding to promote cultural awareness. The funding could be for awareness for group gatherings for making reservations or making people want to be more part of it.” It implies that we should not only have broad diversity initiatives but targeted funding and resources for finance and support of culture and cultural practice. For instance, Meyers et al. (2020) pointed out that best practice support should comprise cultural resources that fit the cultural demands faced by workers. It also includes financial support, planning, and holding events that promote culture and diversity. Measures like these can lead to increased interaction between different groups, better organization and management in the workplace, and an overall improved organizational culture that will ensure that all employees will feel valued and motivated to work.

P10, Retail Sector Management, mentioned, “Being misunderstood, especially when one is a calm person, a person of few words, you find people judging you as being timid or lacking maybe leadership qualities.” This statement clearly shows how different people from different cultures face working environments and the various discriminations that are likely to be faced by people with, for instance, low verbal communication abilities. A lack of appreciation of varied communication methods can cause one to underestimate one’s abilities and hinder one’s career advancement. Based on the studies conducted by Syakur et al. (2020), the training and awareness programs of organizations

must support and respect people's diversity and their communication preferences and cultural backgrounds. This approach can eliminate some misunderstandings and create a positive atmosphere around the company's employees, where all of them will feel valued and appreciated. Consequently, organizations are encouraged to be aware of diverse communication styles and empower everyone with equal chances of performing and being perceived as capable leaders in the organizations.

Regarding the manufacturing sector, Support/Administrative P12 claimed, "So, certain races work to support their people within Americans, the American system, and even despite how much it is overemphasized that discrimination is not acceptable, some cultures look after their people." It identifies an ineffable trend of supportive responses from the organizations concerning the identified cultural realities that prevail in the working environment. They can lead to inequity and the continuation of social justice issues in an organization, even as it touts diversity. Garrick et al. (2024) also noted that if the organizations provide clear signals of preference for certain groups, diversity initiatives fail to change structural discrimination. In order for diversity programs to work, there has to be a sheer commitment to make sure that diversity programs are being practiced in the company without exclusion. It can also temper the effects of cultural segregation and help foster a healthier and more tolerant environment within the workplace.

### **Theme 6: Networking and Professional Growth**

Mentorship, language barrier and career mobility were the codes assigned in generating the theme of Networking and Professional Development. It is one of the

themes of the proposed study, which explores the way the accessibility of professional contacts and openings affects the career progression of African immigrants working for Fortune 500 companies. Some of them stated their managerial objectives for getting all of them and mentioned that they need access to these contacts to be able to develop as individuals.

Another interesting factor that was a concern for P2 (Technology Sector – Technical/Engineering) was organizational culture, and he noted, “Values and expectations are set in stone without considering the cultural differences and individual values.” This comment suggests that organizational culture has a big influence on networking and career mobility because it disregards the cultures of the employees. If an organization does not uphold cultural values, then the employees are restricted and cannot progress in networking and career advancement. Rabl et al. (2020) argued that for diversity management to gain a foothold, diverse values and views have to be integrated into practice. This integration assists in developing social spaces for workforce discrimination from plural origins to interact, exchange knowledge, and progress in their career. First, cultural differences in terms of values and expectations should be taken into consideration to create equal opportunities for networking and enhancing professional performance in any organization. While doing so, it not only increases the career opportunities of each employee but also improves the corporate culture of the organization.

P6 (Healthcare Sector – Support/Administrative) affirmed what the participants in the study had said by responding, “The third thing I will say is that there is social

networking amongst Nigerian communities that will provide people with opportunities to address these issues.” In this regard, therefore, there is a need for mentorship that will ensure people get support and are offered direction once they encounter the tough features that come with working in organizations. In their perspective, Davis et al. (2022) noted that having a mentor is important in one’s career trajectory, particularly for people of color who bear different career challenges. Mentoring networks facilitate the best career mobility since well-connected support systems offer information and links to certain subsections. This is because it opines that the posting of advertising the existence of mentorship programs and networking among organizations will likely minimize gaps and enhance professional development and diversification of organizations.

P9 (Finance Sector – Management) revealed, “In organizations that do not embrace other cultures... I try to manage the situation by not allowing their level of lack of knowledge to rub off my joy.” Hence, such a statement suggests that there is a need to seek organizational support in dealing with cultural matters and in nurturing professionalism. Non- acceptance of cultural differences in organizations affects networking and has a higher likelihood of non-White employees being promoted. According to Kiradoo (2022), for the employees to be more effective, the organization should support and encourage diversity in the working environment. Equal treatment of the workers and increased opportunities based on aspects of the cultural background; organizations can focus on networking and professional development. From a cultural perspective, this approach helps to overcome such barriers and, at the same time, enhance

employee job satisfaction and career advancement opportunities of the culturally diverse staff.

P11 from the manufacturing sector and Technical/Engineering identified that “one of the major challenges is a movement within the corporate ladder in the organization.” The problem narrated above may or may not be ethnically related but tends towards the area of mobility in careers within corporate America. Kittel et al. (2021) also noted the need to emphasize structural bonding as well as the organizational culture regarding career progression. In networks and cultures where there isn’t support for diverse workers, it becomes difficult for them to advance in their careers. Communication is crucial in order to gain opportunities and maintain careers, although the concept is relatively new and especially relevant for individuals from diverse groups who may not have as many of these contact points. Consequently, to promote initiatives associated with the professional education and training of all employees, these barriers must be addressed by organizations.

P12 (Retail sector; Management) affirmed, “I think if we can try to get into spaces where they can and advocate and stand up... if our organizations knew that “You know what if you are discriminatory, are going to be on the news,” then a lot more action would be put in tackling issues like that.” The above statement confirms the lack of networking to support people. According to the results presented in the research study by Triana et al. (2021), it has been established that there is a positive effect of networking and career progression for people of color through the promotion of situations where workers can raise their concerns and the assurance that organizations are capable of

addressing discrimination. By promoting inclusiveness in discussions and addressing such issues to work on them, organizations improve their support structures to embrace diversity and equality. It also works to eradicate discrimination and other matters concerning promotion, networking, and contacts and connections of all employees in organizations.

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

Establishing the validity of the research findings is important in determining the reliability as well as the acceptance of the study. The credibility and transferability of the findings obtained through interviews of participants in different sectors are evaluated in this section in addition to dependability and confirmability. The study used this rigorous data collection and analysis technique whereby interviews were conducted to gather qualitative data, which was supplemented by the literature to ensure the validity of the findings (Lemon & Hayes, 2020).

### **Credibility**

The credibility of the results is ensured through the use of multiple sources and methods. First, the study used face-to-face interviews conducted with participants from various fields that ensured the capture of a wide range of experiences regarding cultural barriers to career mobility. As a way of providing credence to these observations, the study cross-validated the interview results with data from the literature on the culture of the organization/organizational culture and culture as a barrier to change (Coplan & Evans, 2021). Also, the study's research team employed strict hand coding and qualitative data analysis software to provide an accurate and reliable analysis of the

interviews conducted. The nature of data coding and analysis for this study, whereby the iterative process incorporates member checking, provides credibility in so far as the participants were able to verify the responses.

### **Transferability**

Regarding transferability, participants' diverse working fields and cultural backgrounds are included in the sample. For illustration, the study included sectors like IT, retail, and healthcare, with the participants having faced culture as a limit to promotion. This diverse representation increases the chances of generalizing the findings in other similar environments where people of such origins may experience similar challenges (Maddux et al., 2021). Overall, the vivid narrations of participants' involvement and setting also provide evidence for the applicability of the findings to other contexts concerning minorities and immigrants working in the professions.

### **Dependability**

The reliability of the research findings was attained by the research's good design and conduct. Interview questions for this study were developed, and the questions posed were pilot tested to gauge their effectiveness in generating response information on cultural barriers and organizational culture. However, it is also important to note that this study employed a sound data collection and analysis strategy, which involved coding reliability using qualitative analysis software (O'Kane et al., 2021) to analyze data. The other approach that was applied in the study was the method of triangulation whereby the findings of the interviews were augmented by the written materials to get an overall impression of the problems, thus ensuring that the findings of the study were reliable.



## **Confirmability**

From the point of view of validity, data were validated by several forms of validation. The research team used hand coding and QDA software to verify the categories; this helped ensure reliability in carrying out the thematic analysis. These steps served to manage and eliminate bias and ensure that the identified themes were relevant to the participants' perceptions and experiences, which enhanced confirmability, as noted by Johnson et al. (2020). The interaction of the interview data with the literature review also ensured that the conclusions drawn were not purely from formulated hypotheses but indeed contained credible findings from the interviews as well.

## **Study Results**

The objective of this research is to conduct a qualitative exploratory case study to establish how African immigrants in the IT industry of Fortune 500 companies perceive and experience organizational cultural challenges and employee performance. It was asked to twelve immigrants from Africa, and the content analysis was made to reveal the patterns and themes. From this thematic analysis, six broad categories emerged among the people interviewed.

### **Thematic Analysis of the Study**

#### **Organizational Support**

Organizational support emerged as a significant theme in 42% of the interviews and pointed to the need for adequate practice in how organizations handle diversity and inclusion. People explicitly mentioned that diversity initiatives and support in general were inadequate. The last part of the conversation highlighted a significant weakness in

diversity practices where P1 noted, "There are some companies... that have a department that does cultural holidays because they know we are very diverse. But it is important to fight for even more inclusion." Such views affirm Torain's (2021) standpoint on the efficacy of diversity programs to address organizational imbalances that are concealing. Further, P4 pointed to a lack of available support for diverse employees, stating, "Lack of support for the diversity of employees is a crucial issue." This resonated with Dover et al.'s (2020) research on the need for effective and tangible diversity plans. Such findings have indicated that, whereas there is some attempt towards the promotion of equal opportunity, genuine organizational support is concerned with a better and more systemic way to support minorities in organizations.

### **Networking and Professional Growth**

Networking and Professional Growth were emphasized as the most important finding in 33% of interviews due to their importance as a factor in career mobility. As noted by participants, there was a strong call for a strong professional association and good mentorship for career progression. P6 also noted that the lack of formal mentorship opportunities also exists and said: "There is social networking amongst Nigerian communities that'll provide people with opportunities to mitigate these issues." According to Iheduru-Anderson (2020), relationships play a significant role in the struggles and successes that individuals face in their professions.

Furthermore, P11 discussed the difficulties encountered in climbing the career ladder and said, "One of the big issues is the promotion up the corporate ladder in the organization." This observation enhances the understanding that career trajectories can be

highly shaped by informal structures and flexibility within an organization, as discussed by Horak et al. (2020), which examines the effects of informal networks on career mobility. Consequently, based on the findings, it could be argued that while networking and mentorship are necessary components that define career mobility, their role is a function of their enablement and usefulness in today's organizations.

### **Promotion and Advancement**

Promotion and Advancement were classified as a core concept within the identified primary themes in all the interviews, as the participants reported that they usually have difficulties moving up the career ladder in issues to do with race and discrimination. P7 made this observation when they said, "African immigrants are more informed than their counterparts Caucasians are occupying a higher percentage of the job." This sums up the inequity in the minority representation in career chances, as confirmed by Kavanaugh (2023). Furthermore, P12 explained the ways racialization in an organization impacts promotions. They argued that while it is apparent that no organization allows discrimination, some races tend to cluster, a move that favors their race and disadvantages other races. This is discriminative, meaning that it does not cover real diversity and inclusion; this fact also corresponds with Hellerstedt et al. 's (2024) studies on how prejudice can complicate the effort to provide equivalent employment opportunities. Taken together, these research findings provide a snapshot of the challenges that African immigrants face when attempting to advance in their careers in a context that is riddled with subliminal bias and systemic barriers.

### **Workplace Inclusion**

Analysis of the interviews revealed that Workplace Inclusion was considered important, with 58% of the interviewees discussing it. The participants described typical stories of discrimination and social exclusion, which impacted their work meaningfulness and performance. This is further supported by P1, who said, “I think as a minority, but also a Black female, they probably have this thought in their head like you are unsure if you can lead a team.” It aligns with Caillier (2021) who asserted that exclusion causes reduced job satisfaction and could also negatively impact performance. Furthermore, as seen with P4, issues with internal partnerships and communication bear indications that it may be difficult to engage effectively with co-workers due to cultural differences when it comes to communicating while noting that they encountered limitations in communication as building relationships with co-workers from different cultural backgrounds and managing Cultural Differences in Communication Challenges. This recognition suggests that it may not be easy to negotiate various forms of diversity at workplace and corroborates findings by Ashikali et al. (2021).

### **Cultural Misunderstanding**

Cultural misunderstanding emerged as the most identified challenge regarding the participant’s working environment, with 83% of them offering a positive response. This theme also demonstrates that the presence and level of cultural impact are relevant to several facets of the working culture. For instance, P1 mentioned that cultural differences create issues with confidence in leadership by saying: “They tend to probably have this notion that they’re not sure if you can lead a team” (P1). This can be attributed to the fact

that cultural biases play a determinant role in determining how leadership and competence are viewed, as Hofstede (2001) remarked on organizational culture (Artina et al., 2020). Additionally, P6 explicated difficulties in correlation with accents and language as they hinder understanding and create developmental misconceptions. This supports Grossman et al.'s (2022) observation on how such communication barriers may affect the nature of working relations in teams. Considering these examples, it is easy to identify the impact of culture on organizational communication and efficiency.

### **Communication Barriers**

As highlighted from the interviews, Communication Barriers were reported as a problem area with a 50% prevalence, which brings an understanding of how such barriers interfere with organizational and interpersonal communication. Some subtopics highlighted by participants included difficulties developed from other aspects of communication, including accents and body language. In this case, P6 talked about this challenge in terms of accent, as in Nigeria, "we do have an accent, and it becomes tough to be understood or to make others understand you." This finding is in line with the study by Fiset et al. (2024), which agreed that prejudice towards certain speech patterns further results in instances of poor communication. Similarly, P5 described some difficulties connected to unspoken rules and internal politics, saying, "I also faced some issues regarding unspoken rules and politics at work."

### **Summary**

The purpose of this study was to identify and explain cultural challenges that African immigrants in the United States experience in IT departments of Fortune 500

organizations and ways in which these challenges impact employees' performance and advancement. Themes suggested these professionals largely perceived their jobs to require high levels of demand and were highly complex. I identified six major themes: cultural misunderstanding, workplace inclusion, promotion and advancement, communication barriers, organizational support, networking, and professional growth.

Cultural clash was mentioned by participants, and 83% stated culture impacted their interactions and perception in the workplace. Promotion and advancement were another important theme, and 67% of participants shared they faced challenges involving career mobility. Participants addressed cultural and structural prejudices which made them think about limited promotions of minorities. 58% of participants reported feelings of being sidelined and excluded. Communication barriers were mentioned by half of participants, who noted various problems involving language and attitudes.

Organizational support was mentioned by 42% of participants, who noted there was a general perception that diversity programs and support could have been more effective. This further supports that diversity programs are required and effective. Networking and professional growth were listed by 33% of participants as factors that influenced career advancement. Lack of role models and contact networks were mentioned as impediments to promotion, and the value of contacts was also mentioned by participants. Networking and professional growth were listed by 33% of participants as factors that influenced career advancement.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

African immigrants in the United States have consistently faced several challenges involving assimilation into the corporate world, especially in Fortune 500 companies. Cultural barriers are challenges to organizational career advancement, work performance, and organizational experiences (Hofstede, 2001). Participants described systemic barriers that hindered their professional advancement. These challenges involve fair career advancement and addressing organizational culture constraints.

This chapter includes a comprehensive discussion of the study as well as conclusions and recommendations. I integrate findings in Chapter 4 with literature to address how cultural factors influence careers of African immigrants in Fortune 500 organizations.

Chapter 5 includes interpretations of findings in terms of past research. I also address limitations concerning methodological perspectives and practical considerations that were encountered during the study. This is followed by practical recommendations for organizations and legislatures based on study findings. I then explain implications and how research findings can inform individual behaviors as well as organizational practices and policies. Lastly, I conclude the chapter and briefly revisit essential findings from discussions as well as possible directions for further studies.

### **Interpretation of Findings**

This study was a qualitative exploratory case study that involved assessing the influence of culture on career progression and productivity of African immigrants in sampled Fortune 500 organizations, primarily in IT positions. I captured important

information on challenges faced by such professionals. Data explained how culture hinders or enhances how they interacted with U.S. corporate culture, which embraces individualism, assertiveness, and direct communication.

Some areas of concern include cultural and language issues, language barriers, challenges in career advancement opportunities, and issues with inability and limited access to networking opportunities. Further, a pattern emerged in the study involving how organizational diversity policies fail to capture experiences resulting in African immigrants feeling erased within working environments. Participants also addressed how to solve these problems in terms of cultural adaptation, mentoring, and active networking.

### **Cultural Barriers in Organizational Environments**

Among key findings was the effect of cultural disparities that shape African immigrants in Fortune 500 firms. Participants discussed impediments to absorption, promotion, and socialization owing to differences between their cultures of origin and hegemonic American business cultures. Clashes in terms of values, communication, and work-related attitudes hinder African immigrant professionals' success.

The majority of African immigrants are raised in societies that are regarded as collectivist. Thus, they appreciate group cooperation and interdependency and collective accountability, (Hofstede, 2001). American corporate culture involves individualism and competition (Ferdman, 2017). These factors are unfavorable to African immigrants as their orientation may be passive and not aggressive. Participants indicated these perceptions have left them out of leadership roles. They said for this reason, since their



leadership was less assertive and they greatly esteemed authority, they are often regarded as foolish.

Participants reported they had been stereotyped or prejudiced by their colleagues or employers since the latter had no positive things to say about immigrant cultures. These biases render African immigrants as substandard or less malleable in terms of skills even though they are forceful workers. Ely and Thomas (2001) argued cultural differences imply fewer chances for immigrants to demonstrate themselves and be trusted. African immigrant professionals are overlooked for promotions or managerial positions.

Due to stereotypes involving cultures and traditions of their home countries as well as culture and demands of American business environments, participants were frustrated and isolated. Their cultural practices had yet to prepare them for corporate American cultures where assertiveness, self-initiative, and leadership are highly valued.

Therefore, these factors must be assessed, and this entails efforts by African immigrant professionals and structural adjustments in Fortune 500 companies. Managers must address cultural sensitivity and diversity within organizations and promote assessments of abilities that immigrants bring to their workplaces (Nardon & Hari, 2022). This includes providing staff cultural competency training and developing more fluidity leadership training as well as development initiatives that recognize cultural variations in leadership. This study highlighted cultural barriers that affect success of African immigrants when working within organizations, which should be solved to enhance their ability to perform roles at their places of work.

## **Communication Challenges and Language Barriers**

This study involved identifying how African immigrants experience communication barriers in Fortune 500 companies. While most participants are English-speaking, differences in language, dialects, and ways of communication affect common working goals. Participants stated their accents resulted in miscommunication and led to uncertainty among coworkers about participants' abilities, regardless of their training and experience. Horak et al. (2020) observed language can manipulate perceptions of immigrant employee competency and professional standards.

Moreover, it was corroborated that various languages relate not only to the verbal aspect of communication but also to nonverbal and conversation etiquette. It is also possible to notice indirect communication. African immigrants understand this well and never dare to engage in confrontation, which is quite unlike operational US corporate cultures, according to Mosuga (2020). Besides, this cultural difference may have to be explained because they can sound passive or unfocused in explaining their concepts. For instance, the participants narrated how they avoid expressing their viewpoints when prompted in meetings because they do not wish to offend any subject matter expert due to strongly disagreeing with them in the American business context. The kinds of disconnection experienced group, the African immigrants, believe they are excluded from team debates and can negatively affect their chances for recognition for their work, which incapacitates their career progress.

The challenge rises to a level higher than mere exclusion from the meeting; it is so because communication barriers contribute to the social exclusion of African

immigrant professionals (Saasa et al., 2022). They also reported voluntary social exclusion by colleagues and managers because it was challenging to listen to their provincial accent or spend time communicating with them as they usually do, for example. This may also repeatedly trigger feelings of exclusion, particularly from those who otherwise relied on informal opportunities for promotion from the network. As understood in their traditional meaning, Ferdman (2017) pointed out that informal relationships provide the required mentorship, endorsement, and exposure in organizations, thereby putting immigrants out of luck.

Consequently, the stress emanating from interaction with the components of these barriers leads to low job satisfaction as well as low self-esteem for African immigrants. Communication, which has to be done in a second language frequently, and the feeling of being understood is stressful and makes most people worried as highlighted in a study by Malik et al. (2021). Participants reported anger whenever they felt that their ideas were not well understood or valued, which reduced the desire of the participants to put effort into the discussion or in availing themselves of leadership positions.

Additionally, offering extra support in the form of language classes designed to focus on improving means of interaction and expression for immigrants can help African immigrants run efficient operations within the confines of their workplaces (Obot, 2020). Such initiatives support the competency of African immigrant professional voices but also make a helpful statement about diversity in practice, not silencing it.

## **Networking and Career Advancement**

Perhaps the most dominant finding in this study was the importance of networking as a means of career mobility among African immigrants within Fortune 500 firms. Almost all participants comprehended that networking is an integral part of career advancement, in addition to offering prospects for promotion, mentorship, and connection-building. Kaiser and Menkhoff (2017) also elaborated on this view, stating that immigrant entrepreneurs and professionals need social capital and networking to improve their careers.

Many of these groups in the U.S. corporate world work as a door to different job opportunities. They create a platform that may give a chance to get a job promotion and meet essential individuals who can become role models. Despite this, the participants of this study expressed considerable challenges in joining these networks as a result of cultural and racist restrictions. Most described the realities of being excluded from informal occasions where intense business networking occurs. Such events are vital in relationship development; those who cannot attend these events may lose opportunities to get acquainted with fellow employees and employers (Maslach & Leiter, 2022). In this case, the African immigrants have a rare opportunity of attaining a better job.

It would be impossible not to agree with this analysis, bearing that cultural differences remain central to this process. When asked what they did not like, some participants said that they felt awkward or out of place because the social norms expected at these informal meetings differed from those of their cultural background. For example, in collectivist organizational cultures, the ways of communication could imply modesty

for the sake of group harmony when the American 'go get 'em' attitude is expected. It hinders African immigrants from being fully active in networking occasions. It makes them feel lonely in their struggles, intensifying their career mobility ordeal.

The participants also reported minimal access to culturally suitable role models as an impediment. Some pointed out that getting mentors who understand their position as immigrant scientists was difficult. Ferdman (2017) noted that mentors should grasp the many challenges immigrant professionals encounter to help clients overcome them. Lacking role models with whom they can identify, African immigrants might not be able to determine what cultural norms apply to the promotion process in corporations and thus experience anxiety and immobility at their workplace.

### **Organizational Policies and Inclusion Efforts**

Importantly, this study identified the propositions of organizational policies for the careers of African immigrants as one of the central issues. As will be discussed, most Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) programs are currently practiced by Fortune 500 companies, yet participants discussed the need for more credibility of such programs to enable career advancement. One recurring theme of participants was that these measures only seemed cosmetic while obscuring the traditional prejudices and tropes that prevented immigrants from Africa from getting promoted in organizational contexts. This resonates with Ely and Thomas' (2001) argument that actual diversity initiatives can fail, given that most efforts appear to move talent up and out of subordinate groups rather than create an environment where diverse people can excel.

Participants noted that, despite many of their organizations promoting diversity, most participants reported that further practical actions to promote workplace diversity were scarce as also highlighted in a study by Devine and Ash, (2022). For example, many of them opined that engaging in D&I training sessions was as much an empty formality as an exercise in positive change. Such sessions never descended into information specific to the plight of black Africans or dealt with the issues that come with assimilation into the corporate world as a person of color. As such, these training sessions made the African immigrants feel that they lack voices that acknowledge the experience they bring with them in the workplace.

Furthermore, the study established that there were written organizational policies and informal organizational cultures of performance evaluation and that African immigrants were disadvantaged because they lacked such knowledge of organizational culture. Participants in the study indicated that defensible criteria for assessing performance included perceived leadership visibility and communication mannerisms, which could be described as culturally sensitive. For example, some personality characteristics eagerly embraced within a corporate American enterprise, such as assertiveness and straightforwardness, may prove that they need to tally with the African communication style that embraces harmonies of indirectness and subordination to elders. Consequently, the evaluations made of the African immigrants were much poorer than those made of the native-born citizens, even though the African immigrants were quite often deemed to be even more technically qualified than the latter.

The differences, therefore, in evaluation processes bring to reality the apprehension that organizations ought to reconsider their performance assessment criteria, hence balance and cultural sensitivity. For example, the design of recommendations that will reduce cultural bias and sensitivity of evaluators could go a long way in addressing these problems. Furthermore, developing objectives and standards concerning the multiplicity of communicative ways and approaches to leadership might also enhance opportunities for African immigrants in their career lives (Primecz et al., 2023).

Altogether, prompt dynamic inclusive efforts can be good starts but are contingent upon a culture of inclusion, not simply a box-checking race for diversity. Organizations need to go out and find out the challenges African immigrants face. Therefore, if organizations modify their cultures to be less prejudiced and critically analyze the organizations' policies, it is possible to develop that ladder for African immigrant professionals to climb up and gain their proper positions within the corporate world. It also renews the profession of such people and the organizational culture, which will be an advantage to all the employees in the long run.

### **Strategies for Overcoming Cultural Barriers**

Nevertheless, this study revealed various robust and workable techniques that African immigrant professionals in Fortune 500 companies have adopted to overcome the culture of diversity and excel in their careers. The participants mentioned a practical approach as the highest priority: culture compatibility and adaptability. Most respondents explained how important it was to learn to exist in both the native culture and the

dominance of US corporate culture. This finding aligns with cultural intelligence, also known as CQ, a person's ability to thrive culturally (Earley & Ang, 2003).

According to participants, to be successful in the United States corporations, achieving a very high level of CQ or cultural intelligence is crucial. Of course, the process can not only be defined as embracing the culture of a particular business organization and ensuring compliance with it but also preserving one's cultural values. Some of the respondents said that, as far as communication and leadership patterns were concerned, they were able to maintain the values of their cultural background along with the American values: collaboration, interaction with the community, and compliance with leadership even if they did sacrifice their values to adapt to the new environment. The combination of the mentioned cultures is helpful for African immigrants to preserve their cultural identity and, at the same time, to make successful initial and subsequent interactions with co-workers and managers.

Mentorship came out as another important strategy in eradicating barriers. The participants, followed by mentors, were better informed about the difficulties immigrants face in getting a successful career experience and more positive experiences. This observation contributes to understanding the need to specifically design the further learning needs of employee immigrants, considering their immigration. As Ferdman (2017) pointed out, it offers a necessary source of instruction that allows migrants to adapt to specific new organizational structures and practices, and it also offers valuable pathways to career mobility. For many people, finding someone who listened to what they were going through and could fight for them in the company was the key.



Another predominant strategy mentioned was the proactive networking strategy. Regarding participants' working experiences in the United States, they were fully aware of some difficulties with constructing professional ties at workplaces in formal U.S. corporations (Robertson et al., 2020), which should be viewed as a primary goal rather than focusing on the barriers. This tended to involve them taking personal risks, which meant they needed to move out of their comfort zone, involving themselves in social functions, memberships in professional organizations, and team exercises. In this way, several participants could establish social interaction with others to gain acceptance and widen visibility in their organizations.

In addition, participants agreed that receiving feedback from others is helpful as a constructive process for improving performance and changing the approach. Looking for constructively timed opinions in a professional setting is another sign of positive interest in professional growth. Still, at the same time, it implies that another professional is understood as ready to work with those specialists within the office with whom the person is currently not in contact.

### **Emotional and Psychological Impact of Cultural Barriers**

The present research work on the self-employment, work status and experience of African immigrants in Fortune 500 organizations also highlighted that because of respondent cultural differences, the emotional and psychological impact as a result of discrimination is powerful. Terms like frustration, isolation, discrimination, and others described stress and other consequences that influenced the employees' satisfaction and

psychological well-being in the workplace. Under this, Derks et al. (2011) noted that minority workers are stressed and burnt out because they are in this position.

Another recurrent genuine attitude voiced by participants was that they had to strive harder than others to be as they offered their opinions. Some are left feeling that one has to keep proving that they are worthy of the task assigned, even though such attitudes end up causing the employees to burn out and develop negative attitudes toward their duties. This is referred to as the minority tax, suggesting the processes that require the minority employees to produce more than the non-minute employees to achieve similar recognition levels and promotions (Padilla, 1994). Pressure behind this constant self-promotion can lead to professionalism burnout, demoralization, and often perceived inadequacy, a known barrier to promotion.

Additionally, some participants described keying in micro-aggression; respondents affirmed being either overlooked to be promoted, assigned unfavorable shifts, encouraged to take a less demanding job, and wholly excluded from meetings. They often blamed those negative experiences on their cultural attitudes or the manner they used while speaking, thus creating within themselves feelings of inferiority in their workplaces. As Ferdman (2017) rightly argued, such exclusion experiences produce a lifelong impact on the career mobility and mental health of immigrants.

These cultural barriers also manifested themselves psychologically in concerns relating to self-esteem and feelings of belonging discussed by participants. They said that they feel isolated from many people, bringing about the above effect of increased isolation. They explained how this exclusion affected their level of participation in team

processes and offered ideas in teams and other professional settings to deepen their feelings of being marginalized. This isolation can lead to anxiety and depression as people never feel good enough, and nobody wants to interact with them at their workplace (Uslu, 2021).

In addition to self-consequence, the research also found that the role stress of managing cultural processes erodes over into other areas of the participant's life and impacts personal, informal relationships. Pressure and negativity at workplaces make them more irritable and cause them to withdraw from families or negatively affect the family members. It also means that an attempt to meet cultural expectations, along with pressure at the workplace, brings stress, which is challenging to avoid.

Another participant theme was regarding company cultures that can act as buffers to the emotional effects of cultural enmities and hurdles. Employees who received messages of value and support from their organizations enjoyed better job contentment and organizational affiliation. Measures taken in an organization to enhance cultural sensitivity in the teams lead to the establishment of secure environments for the employees to embrace their artistic talents and diversity.

### **Limitations of the Study**

#### **Scope**

This study also has some limitations to it. For instance, the study was conducted among African immigrants in the selected Fortune 500 companies in Houston, Texas, and the USA, mainly focusing on the information technology departments. It only focused on one category of African immigrants, meaning that it did not explore other phenomena of

the challenges that other African immigrants have to face; region of origin also had to be taken into consideration; there was still a huge potential for how these immigrant professionals are struggling. However, the exclusive nature of the study to African immigrants who are in civil society or those who are working in small to medium firms or businesspeople limits the coverage needed to appreciate the difficulties faced by the immigrants in the country. The more diverse range of industries and sizes of organizations to which African immigrants belong may produce different outcomes in terms of cultural policies and emotional demands.

### **Methodology**

The research study employed a qualitative research mode, and as pointed out by the type of research, the approach has certain limitations. Even though research techniques help understand human concepts, especially in sociology, this method has the following drawbacks: it is subjective, and the researchers have their own biases. Wilson et al. (2015) noted that qualitative research generally tends to be more subjective because of the ways samples are chosen and methods of analyzing data. This study used purposive sampling to procure people who could explain those experiences. However, this participant selection restricts the generalization of the findings to the broader population of the larger community. They create biases since the conclusions cannot be used to infer the other African immigrants in the Fortune 500 companies. The opinions and views of the individuals who were not selected may partially solve the concerns under analysis.

### **Sample Size and Composition**

The sample size of the study is another limitation of this research work. Despite selecting a research method that targets the participants based on their experiences rather than the sheer size of the samples and even though this research was conducted among a limited number of participants, the research results could be limited in terms of their generalizability (Hays & McKibben, 2021). Including a more significant population of participants selected from a broader population would yield more viewpoints or reliable outcomes. Furthermore, the investigation of the current study primarily focused on participants from specific cultural contexts. Therefore, the findings may only reflect some of the difficulties most African immigrant's encounter.

### **Contextual Factors**

Consequently, the generalization of the results obtained in this study may reflect something other than the variation within the African immigrant population. The other weakness is external contextual variability that could impact participants' experience. The research was conducted in a given period, and the social, economic and political setting could have influenced the participants' responses. For example, new policies on immigration and economic and social attitudes towards immigrants may affect the immigration of employees and their cultural assimilation in the workplace (Alesina & Tabellini, 2024). The study's research findings cannot be generalized to a different historical or socio-political context, which reduces its usefulness in the long run.

**Generalizability**

Last, this qualitative study's conclusion cannot be generalized compared to that of quantitative research, regardless of its quality, as stated by McCusker and Gunaydin (2015). The findings from this research are mainly relevant, especially to the African immigrants in the presented sample of the employees working in the Fortune 500 companies in the IT industry and cannot be generalized for other immigrant groups or industries. Therefore, readers must be cautious while interpreting the results and bear in mind that the outcomes of this research can be generalized only to the extent to which the presented population is representative of larger populations.

**Recommendations**

The following section provides recommendations grounded on this study, which seeks to explore the cultural challenges of African immigrants in Fortune 500 firms, more so in IT organizations.

**Enhancing Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity Training**

At present, Fortune 500 companies require enhancing corporate cultural awareness and sensitivity training programs applicable to employees of all levels. As a result, this study focuses on how African immigrants encounter many social hurdles due to misconceptions about their communication practices, working principles, and cultural values. When implemented as part of diversity and inclusion practices, cultural competency education will help create an environment where everybody in an organization is cherished and appreciated (Mayfield, 2020). The kind of training provided must focus on distinguishing the collectivist and the individualist-orientated cultures,

increase the understanding of the implicit bias, and guarantee the free discussion of the diversity in cultures. However, it should not be a single occasion that has reached its end once an employee has been trained on a specific skill; this training should form part of a continuous process.

### **Promoting Effective Mentorship Programs**

Companies should embrace having mentorship programs for minority and African immigrants to help them in their workplaces (Mosuga, 2020). The study said that most African immigrants failed to find meaningful mentorship, a significant way of promoting their career path. Getting a proper mentor may be a key to success because they can explain and advise on how things work in a given company. It suggests that organizations must ensure that African immigrants are matched with knowledgeable people who have overcome similar difficulties, as such people will provide helpful information and motivation. Besides, the engagement of the top management in these mentorship programs will help to reaffirm the organization's commitment to equality and other related aspects of talent management within the organization (Bohonos & Sisco, 2021). In so doing, companies can build nurturing relations that offer minorities socio-psychological support, improve their career ladders and progress, and yield overall organizational equity. Developing a people mentorship scheme is suitable for an individual worker and beneficial to the company.

### **Encouraging Proactive Networking Opportunities**

Still, it also helps enhance the organization's organizational structure and contributes to the diversity and inclusion initiative. Fortune 500 companies should

develop a well-defined networking process to target African immigrants and other minority employees (Gorman & Kay, 2020). This paper sought to investigate the networks of African immigrants in their career progression and how they feel about being locked out of other subtle networking events. To this effect, companies can organize structured inter-group events like lunch-and-learn, group exercises, and other events that bring together different groups. Further, companies must form ERG for African immigrant employees to ensure they are supported and can network for their resources. Such ERGs can help the employees, influence organizational dialogues and activities, and enhance the degree of inclusion in the workplace (Byrd, 2022). Those opportunities must help reduce the existing cultural divides or gaps in the workplace, create social networks, and accrue social identity for those from different cultures.

### **Implementing Inclusive Performance Evaluation Processes**

Employee performance assessment methodologies are to be redesigned to embrace all employees without discriminating against anyone. The work showed that traditional performance appraisals tend to reward such attributes as communication practices and cultural attitudes that are characteristic of U.S.-origin workers to the detriment of workers of color, such as African immigrants (Nutakor, 2019). Companies can make it easier and less prejudiced by putting criteria for evaluating candidates in an objective rather than a subjective framework, apropos skills and achievements rather than karma-based norms of culture. This may involve using 360-degree feedback mechanisms and guaranteeing that performance appraisals are done by cross-sectional boards. In addition, more training for evaluators on cultural sensitivity is needed because culture



plays a role in how the results of an evaluation are viewed (Majda et al., 2021). In these ways, organizations will ensure that no subordinates will be mistreated, and all employees will be treated and reviewed relatively and equally. This will also enhance employee morale and their ability to stay with the company.

### **Fostering Open Communication Channels**

Employees and employers should always have open doors so that they can communicate or provide feedback regardless of their race (Malhotra, 2024). Some study participants noted they were lonely and frustrated due to their lack of communication. In this regard, organizations must schedule frequent meetings and group discussions. They should also have suggestions and complaints boxes where people can describe the challenges they go through and the recommendations they would like to give without being punished. Opinions must be opened and shared, believing that such actions enhance trust, thus ensuring that every staff member is valuable despite diversity (Leroy et al., 2022). However, it is also necessary that leadership respond to feedback to help express the appreciation of employee grievances. It also helps establish corporate culture, besides enhancing employees' productivity, and it enhances companies' results by creating a favorable working environment.

### **Investing in Language and Communication Skills Development**

Popular companies on the Fortune 500 list should deem it compulsory to provide resources for language improvement and speaking for African immigrants (Mosuga, 2020). As a result, despite many African immigrants successfully overcoming the language barrier, there can be some misunderstandings in inter-African business

communication because mastering business English differences, which can be crucial in collaboration with counterparts from other African countries, could be better. When it offers an extension to the business communication courses, passion when introducing and workout sessions on interpersonal communication interactions, organizations will help the African immigrants to express their capability in the business marketplace. Also, language learning will go hand in hand with the cultural information about the background of the learners, which will enhance their ability to integrate into the organizational environment.

### **Encouraging Collaboration With External Organizations**

Corporations must also develop partnerships with other external agencies, community-based agencies, and institutes involved in helping African immigrants in the workplace (Martinez-Damia et al., 2024). It is necessary and would significantly enhance diversity as it is essential to engage and work with non-profit, community, and educational organizations; it also provides a good insight into the challenges African immigrants face in the country. When implemented, such collaborations may lead to the development of unique training, workshops, and other outreach activities that aim at creating a pipeline from underrepresented groups. Moreover, in their existing social interactions with these organizations, the corporations can also get clues on the social issues affecting African immigrants (Giazitzoglu & Korede, 2023). This would give corporations a positive corporate social responsibility.

### **Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion Policies**

The organizations must take its diversity and inclusion policies to include new measures based on the challenges faced in their day-to-day life by immigrants from Africa. That is why, besides 87% of organizations implementing diversity and inclusion as a Strategic Management plan, this investigation proves that they should be further and more operational. To add to this, the management of these organizations should consider various policies whereby the minority employees can be asked to explain the weaknesses of these policy standards (Noon & Ogbonna, 2021). It is advisable to undertake an effective appraisal that should state the objectives, aims, index for change, and measures of corporate responsibility for diversity enhancement. In addition, organizations must insist on having talented, diverse populations and be included in the C-suites and on boards.

### **Establishing Clear Career Pathways**

Large organizations in the Fortune 500 lists should design promotional ladders that prescribe expectations for skill acquisition and performance on the job (Scherer, 2021). African immigrant respondents said that they need to gain knowledge on how to negotiate themselves into these large companies and be promoted. Since there is a guide on the most presumed steps on how to advance in one's career, the individuals will understand the potential course necessary to achieve their career goals. This involves providing comprehensive information to meet some specific requirements on the kind of knowledge, experience, and training required for a specific occupation, the training offered at present, and other trainers they can deal with to discuss their needs. Also, to

support career growth, companies should give steady career development talks to help the employee with their advancement and understand what opportunities are out there (Dachner et al., 2021). They might boost the level of satisfaction at the workplace organizational commitment of African immigrants and ultimately increase workforce retention.

### **Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation**

Yadav and Lenka (2020) argued there must be approaches through which companies can evaluate the status of diversity and inclusion in their business. Supervision is also crucial in confirming the effectiveness of these strategies. Thus, it becomes possible to collect information about the Age/Gender distribution of the employees, the promotion rate of employees, and the level of satisfaction among the employees. An organization can develop trends and determine which fields need focus. However, at the same time, there is a demand to introduce the quantitative consequences of the outcome achieved by the workers to determine the efficiency of the measures introduced in their working environment. Information can be gathered from the staff, which provides detailed insight into those particular interactions between the staff and the perceptions of the staff.

### **Implications**

The implication of the finding of this current study will be of significance to the following cross sections of the stakeholders: Fortune 500 companies' leaders and African immigrants in organizations, human resource professionals and practitioners, policymakers, and researchers.

### **Fortune 500 Companies**

As presented in the case of the Fortune 500 corporations, the study showcases the need for Diversity and Inclusion programs to be available at Empresa. However, African immigrants' experiences indicate that critical challenges require specific Diversity and Inclusion programs to be developed. These professionals are commonly faced with cultural issues, communication inconveniences, and unavailability of networks, which are essential for the promotion of their careers (Burke, 2022). This is because recognition of these challenges makes it easier for organizations to adjust diversity policies and practices in ways that might help create a more favorable workplace.

Based on the study results, there is a need for organizations to increase and expand cultural competence training programs throughout all organizational levels. Training in multiculturalism should go further to address cultural factors present among African immigrants, such as analysis that compares collectivist and individualist cultures (Kunst & Mesoudi, 2024). This knowledge is important in establishing rapport in all organizations and ensuring that all employees are treated with dignity and respect, hence improving the flow of business, employees' morale, and the high productivity of employees in such organizations.

However, one thing that revealed itself to be an effective approach to enhancing the career progression of African immigrants is the development of sound mentorship programs. It should also be noted that corporations should actively look for influencers in those environments with whom it is possible to discuss specific corporate attitudes and study their own experiences openly (Baker et al., 2021). Besides, it provides African

immigrants with the abilities and power to contribute to organizations and diversify the corporate culture through leadership.

### **African Immigrants**

As for the work situation of the African immigrants in these Fortune 500 companies, the outcome of this study provides an in-depth reference for these immigrants. These insights will help these professionals identify some of the possible hurdles they are likely to face before they can implement the strategies they will be using. Among the suggestions is for the African immigrant to go out in search of a protege in their organizations (Roberson, 2024). They will thus be in a position to establish relationships with other people with experiences and insights into corporate culture to help them in their career paths.

Also, the study makes a further argument for efforts to obtain resources aimed at language and communication development. There is no doubt that if African immigrants enhance their communication skills, they will easily post higher self-esteem and productivity whenever they deal with like-minded personnel. Besides reducing misunderstandings caused by the shades of meaning, improved language proficiency enables people to claim their worth at work more forcefully (Augustin et al., 2024). This attitude would be capable of creating increased incorporation of individuals with handicaps in social entities such that they can gain recognition for their offerings.

### **HR Professionals**

Since HR is considered the management of people, HR professionals are employed directly in the creation of cultures and policies within an organization (Joyce et

al., 2024). From the results of this study, it can be recommended that HR departments should review the policies and procedures with regard to the performance evaluation tool to increase its fairness and equality. This may involve the reformulation of the assessment criteria, where the objective work experience replaces trait-based assessment, which may negatively portray African immigrants due to cultural inclination. A 360-degree feedback system could also be useful in enhancing how often potential biases are taken into account; since people from various levels in an organization offer feedback on a subordinate's performance, an organization is likely to obtain a balanced perspective of a subordinate's strengths and weaknesses.

Also, the role of human resource management is to ensure that there are well-defined career progression opportunities for all employee populations, including African immigrants (Mosuga, 2020). Thus, by developing clear road maps for professional growth, organizations can help employees navigate the qualities and experiences they may need for the next level. It should be noted that when clear and easily understandable guidelines have been developed relating to promotions, then African immigrants should not feel that something that they cannot understand is occurring. They should be free to go out and seek promotions.

### **Policymakers**

The study's implications of the study narrowed down to the policymakers, especially those in charge of diversity and inclusion policies. Before everything, it is obvious that policymakers must establish sustainable frameworks for promoting talent acquisition and talent retention, as outlined by Popo-Olaniyan et al. (2022). I will admit

to not only developing policies that encourage employers to recruit from diverse segments of the population, like African immigrants, but also coming up with ways of sourcing funds to support the training of these persons for the management level as they undertake disproportionate struggles in the business world. Through financing programs that enable integration into the labor market, policymakers will help ease the journey for African immigrants while at the same time encouraging the economy.

In addition, government policies are needed to understand the necessity of cooperation between corporate and non-profit organizations. Non-profit organizations, education institutions, and other groups that support immigrant communities in Africa should be engaged by the policymakers to complement corporate diversity strategies (García & Jackson, 2021). Such collaborations result in the development of training packages, workshops, and outreach activities that are aimed at producing qualified talent from diverse groups. These programs can empower African immigrants by offering them skills, cultural knowledge, and connections in order to succeed in the business world.

### **Researchers**

For scholars and researchers, the research findings opened up several nexuses for further research, notably about African immigrants' experiences in corporate America and within Fortune 500 corporations in particular. This research identifies significant theoretical and empirical research deficiencies in cultural issues, communication, and career mobility experienced by African immigrants. This offers a justification for carrying out more research in these areas as it will enable academicians to understand



how these challenges are realized in different kinds of corporate settings and how they affect career paths.

Researchers can also explore details of particular cultures in the experiences of African immigrants, such as communication, culture, and leadership perception (Mosuga, 2020). It could include such studies as launching a specific intervention that would facilitate the inclusion of such employees in the organizations and ensure better career opportunities for them.

Furthermore, a comparison of the data collected from immigrants of different origins may be useful to view special conditions and regularities that are reflected in different cultures. Consequently, studying ways in which different immigrant groups manage themselves in corporate environments enables researchers to analyze the efficacy of the diversity and inclusion measures that exist in organizations at present (Nadiv & Kuna, 2020). This cross-cultural approach could also reveal some organizational practices that can be adopted to supplement the work of these organizations in creating a more enabling workplace for the excluded.

### **Conclusions**

This research employed an exploratory, qualitative approach to better understand the cultural aspects that affect the career mobility of African immigrants working in Fortune 500 firms. Therefore, the present study can deepen the understanding of how this particular group of employees might experience corporate reality and what can be done to promote it by those who are keen on diversifying and including people with such backgrounds.

Social identity theory was used to underpin the study with an understanding that people derive their identity from a group they belong to. In this context, African immigrants often find themselves navigating dual identities: their culture and the corporate culture in the United States of America, which they are required to dissolve. This situation can make for quite a nerve-wracking conflict because people attempt to integrate ethnic education with the chiefly egoistic, selfish organizational culture that defines large corporations like those that make up the Fortune 500 list. The study explained the following important elements of the experiences of African immigrants: Intended predictors included communication difficulties, perceived prejudice, and sponsorship.

The study revealed that cultural differences occasion most communication barriers and lead to social isolation and frustration among African immigrant employees. Some of the participants described how they or someone they knew experienced secondary oppression that contributed to their destruction of worth in multicultural organizations. With regard to this, it agrees with other studies that have shown that minority staff are subjected to other forms of stress that may be a reason for their dissatisfaction in the course of performing their duty as well as their overall well-being. Secondly, the minority tax was evident; the minorities tried hard to prove themselves deserving of a chance, only to turn up burnt out, and this created turnover and low morale.

The study pointed to these as sectors that would call for the intervention of Fortune 500 firms. To this end, the study also highlighted the need for Fortune 500

companies to develop and operationalize diversity and inclusion frameworks that would include the frame for African immigrants. In this respect, the proposal that all workers ought to undertake training on cultural competence is a good model through which various organizations can endorse diversity as well as cultural diversity. This training should also entail cultural issues and ways of dealing with the fact that there is a strong probability that one is going to bring prejudices into the decision-making process.

Mentorship issues emerged as another factor that was vital in the promotion of the careers of African immigrants. A program was established to connect an employee with a mentor in an organization depending on the problems they are experiencing as an African immigrant when employees are being hired. As a result, it should be understood that these programs help build professionalism in management and enhance corporate culture through the diversity of leaders.

The study also drew attention to the need for more waived networking chances in organizations. Many African respondents recognized themselves as socially excluded from informal events that are important for adapting to a new workplace and career progression. Hence, organizations' formal systematic methods of networking, such as the employee resource group for the people of associated immigrant origins from Africa, create authentic business relations that help workers map their careers better.

From the applied aspect of the study implications for policy recommendations, the argument emerging from the bearing case is that more effort in public policy should be directed to the search for the right mechanisms that would enhance employment and, particularly, the non-absenteeism of gifted workers with an immigrant background from

Africa. This may be done by engaging such organizations to build trust and embrace the oddities of the multiple types of clients. Also, links to educational establishments may create talent pools from underrepresented minorities and boost the economy.

For human resource professionals, some of the study implications include the need to rethink ways in which performance management evaluation within organizations is fair. This means that an array of career ladders needs to be developed to map the skills and experiences needed to progress, which assists African immigrants in comprehending their career patterns. This shows that more frequent conversations about career planning can also help to improve satisfaction and retention rates.

The consequences of the literature review of the study reveal that there needs to be a greater understanding of the experiences of African immigrants in an organizational context. Some of the directions for further studies may include comparative analyses of immigrant populations from different ethnic, national, and cultural origins to reveal similarities in the observed phenomena and differences and peculiarities of immigrant experience. This could also involve following the African immigrants to understand their career trajectories as they progress in their careers.

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## Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Participant Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Finish Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Introductory Script:**

Hello, thank you for agreeing to be part of my study. This interview will take about 45 minutes. I will be asking you a question related to organizational culture. The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study is to explore the perceptions of African immigrants regarding their employee performance and cultural barriers within Fortune 500 companies in Houston, Texas. Do I have your permission to tape-record the interview to get an inclusive record of your responses? The interview will involve taking as you respond to the questions. Are there any questions or clarifications you would like me to make before we begin? You may stop the interview at any time based on your signed consent agreement. Are you ready to begin?

**Research Questions:**

RQ 1: What are the perceptions of African immigrants regarding their employee performance within Fortune 500 companies?

RQ 2: What are the perceptions of African immigrants regarding their cultural barriers in communication within Fortune 500 companies?

**Interview Questions:****Section A: General Data**

1. Please state your gender.
2. Please indicate your age.
3. How many years have you lived in Houston, Texas?
4. Please indicate your job experience level.
5. State the reason for coming to the United States.

**Section B: Specific Data**

1. How did you get your present job?
2. What key actions are you taking to overcome cultural barriers?
3. How would you describe your understanding of the organizational culture system in the United States?
4. What particular challenges did you encounter within organizations in Texas?
5. How do cultural barriers impact your sustainability in employment?
6. How does your level of organizational culture literacy impact your employability?
7. What practical strategies or actions can address cultural barriers among African immigrants in Houston?

8. Do you believe cultural background influences interactions and performance within Fortune 500 companies?
9. How do you perceive the organizational cultural barriers within Fortune 500 companies?
10. What specific challenges do you face in navigating the organizational culture of Fortune 500 companies?
11. What information do you find pertinent and would like to share regarding what we have not discussed in this interview?

**Ending Script:**

Thanks again for your participation in this study. After the transcription of this interview is complete, I will email you a copy of the transcriptions for your review. If there are edits to the transcriptions, within 3 days of receiving them, please reply to my email with comments on the document. If I do not receive any edits back within 3 days, I will consider our interview complete. Thank you again for your time and comments during this interview. If you are interested, I will share the results of my study with you once it is completed and has been accepted by my university. I will now end the recording.

### Appendix B: Email to Participants

Hello, I am a doctoral student at Walden University, and I am inviting you to participate in my research about the United States Organizational Culture system. The purpose of this qualitative exploratory case study is to explore the perceptions of African immigrants regarding their employee performance and cultural barriers within Fortune 500 companies in Houston, Texas. I believe that your participation could facilitate the acquisition of the required information relating to the research topic. Thus, I am seeking individuals to interview to learn more about the United States Organizational Culture system.

This study is essential as the research findings might offer insight into the challenges facing African immigrants and strategies that will help prevent the factors that influence the limitations on African immigrants in Fortune 500 companies. The results may help Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs obtain a more in-depth understanding of the United States Organizational Culture system, encourage African immigrant employees to share cultural strategies, and advance research on the relationship between the United States Organizational Culture system and employee sustainability. Moreover, the research outcome may add to the existing body of literature and gain a robust understanding of the common understandings of the United States Organizational Culture system.

The participation will include completing an informed consent statement (I will e-mail this to you) and allowing me to interview you face-to-face or interview by phone. The whole process should take no more than 45 minutes of your time. Please let me know

if you would like to participate or need more information. The course has deadlines, so we will need to begin the process by September 15, 2024, and finish the interview by October 4, 2024. Contact me by phone XXXXX or e-mail at XXXXX@waldenu.edu if you have any questions. Thank you in advance, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

XXXXX