
7-29-2023

Giving Voices to Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women: A Heuristic Inquiry Study

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Recommended APA Citation

Dixon, S. P., Amin, D., & Arthur, N. M. (2023). Giving Voices to Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women: A Heuristic Inquiry Study. *The Qualitative Report*, 28(7), 2172-2212. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2023.4775>

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Abstract

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Keywords

heuristic inquiry, cultural identity reconstruction, Jamaican Canadian immigrant women, Pentecostal faith, postmodern social constructionism theoretical framework

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Giving Voices to Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women: A Heuristic Inquiry Study

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The Heuristic Inquiry (HI) qualitative method applied in this study explored the role of Pentecostal faith in the post-migration lived experiences of Jamaican Canadian immigrant women (JCIW). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven JCIW whose Pentecostal faith helped them to reconstruct their cultural identity post-migration. The creative flexibility of HI allowed for the integration of the primary researcher's (i.e., first author's) voice into the study alongside those of the co-researchers. Positioning the study within a postmodern social constructionism theoretical framework created space for multiple realities to emerge that were constructed through social interaction and language. These realities were evident in the unique ways in which the JCIW used faith to reconstruct their cultural identity during the migration process. Results revealed four key categories and 10 salient themes which were used to inform theory, research, and practice for counseling professionals. Recommendations for future research in using HI and the topic of cultural identity are discussed.

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Introduction

Reflecting on my past dissertation journey, I¹ struggled with what topic to investigate. As a Jamaican Canadian immigrant woman, my lived experience of Christian faith, specifically Pentecostalism, represented a salient aspect of my cultural identity. In this context, I characterize “faith” as a subjective concept that encompasses a sense of hope, spiritual renewedness, religious attitude, meaning making, and personal acceptance of a set of beliefs (Hellwig, 1990). Here, “Pentecostal faith” refers to a personal and often charismatic encounter with God through the transcendent experiences of the Holy Spirit by the believer² (Poloma, 2003). The terms faith and Pentecostal faith are used interchangeably in this paper to refer to the spiritual and religious fervency of believers who embrace such practices as the baptism of

¹ The subjective nature of Heuristic Inquiry (HI) methodology explored in this paper allows me, the primary researcher (i.e., first author), to include my narrative in the research and speak in the first person, alongside those of the co-researchers (Dixon, 2015). The collective voices of the co-researchers will be integrated throughout the paper as deemed appropriate for the cementing of our collective faith stories. For consistency, the terms first author and primary researcher are used interchangeably in the paper.

² Believer is one of the terms used in the literature to describe adherents of the Pentecostal faith (Simms, 2011).

the Holy Spirit (Simms, 2011). Further, “cultural identity” is viewed as a fluid and multilayered construct that includes such dimensions as race, ethnicity, gender, spirituality, and religion (Dixon, 2015). As an immigrant woman, reconciling the intersectionality between my faith and cultural identity was challenging while I undertook my doctoral work. This challenge resulted in a state of fragmented cultural identity that required reconstruction as I navigated post-migration stressors (e.g., systemic racism, discrimination, stereotypes, and micro-aggression). “Fragmented cultural identity,” for this discussion, is understood as a broken sense of self, which relates to a by-product of post-migration challenges. In contrast, informed by a postmodern social constructionism theoretical framework, “cultural identity reconstruction” (CIR) refers to one’s ability to reaffirm and readjust within a new historical, spatial, chronological, and socio-cultural context, where language plays a key role in this complex, and multi-faceted dynamic (Gergen, 2003).

Sharing my story of faith and CIR as a Jamaica Canadian immigrant woman took me on a lonesome journey of vulnerability, trepidation, truth, self-doubt, confusion, and passion. Undertaking my doctoral research, I was pleased to have the assistance of a supportive research supervisor (third author) who encouraged me to pursue my interest in faith-based practices and helped me to see how my experience might be illuminated versus suppressed in the exploration of a contentious dissertation topic. Additionally, the second author has contributed significantly to the development of this paper by providing useful research context and insights on the subject matter in question. The support from my research supervisor led me to heuristic inquiry (HI; Moustakas, 1990), an exploratory qualitative methodology that allowed for creativity, flexibility, and passionate engagement in the research process (Dixon, 2014; Sultan, 2019). The well-suitedness of this approach created a safe space for me to tell my story, which gave birth to this body of work. This study explored the lived experiences of Jamaican Canadian immigrant women (JCIW) who used their Pentecostal faith as well as the religious and spiritual practices associated with their faith (e.g., prayer, scripture readings, healing, speaking in tongues, devotions, etc.) to reconstruct their post-migration cultural identity. In this paper, JCIW describes immigrants of Jamaican descent who migrated to Canada and adopted this new land as their home country. As a collective group, these individuals still embraced their original cultural and ethnic identities but were able to navigate these multiple identities in a new mosaic landscape by drawing on their faith (Dixon, 2015). Like myself, these women were eager to share their stories of resiliency and CIR through the empowerment of their Pentecostal faith experiences. Participating in my research provided a culturally safe space for these individuals to speak their truths, a reflection of their faith, without being judged, pathologized, mislabeled, and “othered”. From here onwards, these women participants, whose narratives echoed my own lived experiences, will also be referred to as co-researchers³.

The paper begins with a brief introduction about the role of faith in the pre-and-post-migration lived experiences of JCIW. Pentecostal faith will be the focus in exploring how the co-researchers used it to construct a sense of identity within and outside of the church community. The postmodern social constructionism theoretical framework (SCTF; Gergen, 1985) that guided this study alongside the intersectionality of Pentecostal faith will be discussed. Attention will also be given to the use of HI methodology that informed this research. To familiarize readers to this under-utilized and exploratory approach (McCloud, 2011), the historical context of HI methodology will be examined and critiqued, pertaining to its suitability for this research. Considerations will also be given to the repositioning of HI within a SCTF, which best informed this study. Then, a procedural description of the research process and data analysis will be highlighted. Next, I will address the seven key processes and

³ Participants are referred to as co-researchers in HI because shared meanings of narratives are co-created between the primary researcher and co-researchers, due to their similar subjective realities (Moustakas, 1990; Sela-Smith, 2002). In this paper, both terms will be used interchangeably.

the six phases of the methodology as they relate to HI research. Further, an overview of key findings that emerged from the study will be presented, highlighting a creative synthesis that was generated from the stories of the co-researchers in a poetic format. Given the uniqueness of HI, rigor and validation will be explored in the context of this study. The strengths and limitations of the methodology are also discussed alongside a brief reflection of the research process that sheds light on the role of HI research on faith outcomes in theory, teaching, and practice. The paper concludes with recommendations for future research on faith in relation to religious faith groups.

Faith and the Pre-Migration Lived Experiences of JCIW

According to Kubiak (2018), Christian women of faith in the Jamaican context have helped to bring significant change to Jamaica through their leadership roles in various religious institutions. As such, they have deconstructed traditional standards and reconstructed new spiritual ways of being as leaders to empower other believers in the church and the broader society (Gillpin, 2018; Wedenoja, 2019). For example, many women's diverse roles in the church consist of being worship leaders, Sunday school teachers, youth pastors, prayer leaders, choir directors, spiritual mothers, and community outreach ministers (Henry, 2019). Embracing these responsibilities pre-migration has allowed JCIW of the Pentecostal faith to deconstruct a subservient view of self and reconstruct a more positive sense of identity that centers around spiritual freedom in life-style practices (Dixon, 2015). Contrasting other traditional churches (e.g., Catholic, Presbyterian) where men tend to be more authoritative and patriarchal (Kubiak, 2018), within Pentecostal religious spaces, women and men are typically seen as equal in the way the Lord has designed it to be both within and outside of the church context (Kubiak, 2018). In theological spheres, this form of gender repositioning is known as "Christian egalitarianism," which means equality in authority and responsibilities between genders (Keener, 1992). To emphasize this sense of egalitarianism, a common Scripture that is referenced in the Christian faith written by the Apostle Paul is that: "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for [we] are all one in Christ Jesus" (*The New International Version [NIV]*, 1978, Galatians, 3:28). These words affirm the biblically based belief that equality within the Christian faith transcends race, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status. Grounded by faith, this sense of equality underlined the hopefulness of the JCIW's post-migration lived experiences.

At this juncture, it should be noted that the scope of this research was to shed light on the importance of faith in the lived experiences of JCIW and to capture their narratives of how they reconstructed their cultural identities post-migration. As such, their social contexts in Jamaica pre-migration were not the primary focus, although the importance of their faith pre-migration was explored in our conversations. Additionally, investigating what motivated them to leave their native country for Canada would have appeared intrusive, created mistrust, and possibly deviated from the research objective. As an insider of the Pentecostal faith tradition, I wanted to honor the participants' bravery and trust in sharing their post-migration faith stories with me, given the societal stigma surrounding their Pentecostal religious worldviews (Dixon & Arthur, 2019; Mix-Ross, 2019; Muñoz & Fernández-Mostaza, 2018).

Historical Overview on the Post-Migration Lived Experiences of Jamaican Canadians

Since the 18th century, Canada has been a host country for many Jamaican immigrants. Past reports showed that the first Jamaicans who migrated to Canada were Maroons, and they settled in Halifax on July 22, 1776 (Saunders, 2004). "Jamaican Maroons" are people of African heritage who fought to maintain their freedom in Jamaica and established independent

communities of liberated Black people (Winks, 1971). Many of these early immigrants assisted with the reinforcement of Nova Scotia's defenses by constructing the Halifax Citadel from 1795-1800 (Saunders, 2004). Canada's restrictive immigration policies made it difficult for Caribbean immigrants like Jamaicans to migrate. However, the implementation of the domestic scheme in 1955 allowed for an increase in Jamaican immigration to Canada (Alexander & Glaze, 1996; Labelle et al., 2019). By 1965, about 1,000 Jamaican women had come to Canada under the domestic scheme; additionally, many came on student visas during this period (Mabusela, 2021).

Further, in the 1960s, the significant shortage of nurses in Canada created an opportunity for Jamaican nurses to migrate under the "cases of special merit" provisions of the Immigration Act (Labelle et al., 2019). Also, the modification of the immigration laws in 1967 under the "point" system made it more feasible for Jamaicans to migrate to Canada based on their level of education and skills with less emphasis placed on the color of their skin or their nationality (Flynn, 2011; Saunders, 2004).

More so, the influx of Jamaican immigrants began in the 1970s after the multicultural policy was established in 1971 by then Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau (Jedwab, 2011). Following this policy, many women from Jamaica migrated to Canada to seek employment as domestic workers. This exodus occurred because Jamaica's emancipation and independence from Britain's colonial powers failed to transform the country's economic and social reality. Also, the immigration policy and legislation have a long-established tradition of supporting the re-unification of families (Government of Canada, 2014). This period resulted in a larger inrush of Jamaican immigrants, with many families settling in the Greater Toronto Area (The Canadian Magazine of Immigration, 2020).

Many Jamaican Canadians place significant value on family status and are less likely than other Canadians to live in a common-law relationship; however, they have a lower probability than native Canadians to be married (Statistics Canada, 2007). Also, educational attainment is important for Jamaican Canadians, so there is a strong cultural expectation for them to complete a community college program than the rest of the population (Statistics Canada, 2007). Along this vein, they are most presumably to be employed with multiple jobs than other Canadians (Statistics Canada, 2007). Despite their high educational achievements, they generally have lower incomes (\$26,400) than the national average (\$29,900), with women (\$23,600) having lower incomes than their male counterparts (\$30,100; Statistics Canada, 2007). Based on the Ethnic Diversity Survey, several individuals from this population (69%) reported that they experienced discrimination or unfair treatment based on their ethnicity, race, religion, language, or accent in the workplace or when applying for a job post-migration (Statistics Canada, 2007). Given this reality, it is unsurprising that numerous Jamaican Canadians express a strong sense of belonging to their ethnic or cultural group. As part of their social and cultural life, they benefit from a rich, vibrant faith community that is rooted in strong religious values. Below, I shed greater light on some of the post-migration stressors that a myriad of JCIW encounter and how they can navigate those challenges by leaning on their faith within the Jamaican Canadian diaspora.

Faith and the Post-Migration Lived Experiences of JCIW

Traditionally, Canada has been a destination for many Jamaicans seeking a better life. Subsequently, Jamaica has seen the largest number of immigrants to Canada from the Caribbean; data showed that between 2016 to 2021, just over 15,000 Jamaicans immigrated into the country (Statistics Canada, 2023c). Based on the 2021 Census, approximately 249,070 Jamaicans are living in Canada, comprising about 30% of the entire Black Canadian population of the country's residents of 40 million people (Jiang, 2023; Sekhon, 2023; Statistics Canada,

2023a, 2023b). Of this growing number, more than half were second (104,730) or third (42,380) generation, while 101,965 were first generation. More so, demographic data collected in Spring 2021 by Statistics Canada (2023c) indicated that over four in five Canadians of Jamaican ancestry were living in Ontario (201,945); many of them called Toronto home (140,870), with Oshawa (12,150) and Hamilton (9,530) also having grown Jamaican communities (Statistics Canada, 2023c). Alberta had the second largest Jamaican population among the provinces at 15,620, with most living in Calgary (6,710) and Edmonton (6,495; Statistics Canada, 2023c). Quebec ranked third with 11,395 reporting Jamaican heritage, with a majority living in Montréal (10,095; Statistics Canada, 2023c).

Regarding gender, women (164,410) make up most of the Jamaican community in Canada compared to men (145,080; Statistics Canada, 2021). More specifically, people of Jamaican descent in Alberta comprise about 5,785 women and 5,620 men (Statistics Canada, 2015). Numerous JCIW are strongly influenced by Judeo-Christian values (Hall, 2012; Wedenoja, 2019), which play a key role in how they cope with post-migration challenges. Some of these challenges relate to prejudices and stereotypes that some people from the dominant Anglo-Saxon group have about the Jamaican culture that might be harmful to the diverse bilateral relationship founded on shared democratic heritage, common values, and strong community ties in Canada (Government of Canada, 2023). For instance, people of Jamaican descent in Canada are often negatively portrayed in the media as lawbreakers, individuals who do not speak English, aggressive, lazy, and marijuana-smoking persons (James & Davis, 2012). These forms of categorization and mislabeling tend to be falsified and misrepresentative of Jamaican Canadians, who can be described as hard-working, loyal, humorous, and proud people with strong leadership styles and moral values (DePass, 2012; Dixon, 2015). In fact, they are just as dynamic, astute, complex, multi-faceted, as well as socially, politically, and religiously aware as other ethnic groups in the nation (Government of Canada, 2023). It is, therefore, fair to state that Jamaican Canadians have created lively and energetic sub-cultures in various provinces namely Ontario, Alberta, and Quebec (James & Davis, 2012). Given the significant adversities faced by several JCIW to maintain their identity, values, and culture, many of them use Pentecostal faith as a resource to tackle persistent forms of racism, stereotypes, gender inequality, and other forms of social injustices and systemic barriers (Dixon & Arthur, 2014; Flynn, 2011; Hall, 2012).

Religious scholars acknowledge that spirituality and religiosity have benefits on overall well-being in terms of enhanced quality of life, greater social support, effective coping, lower levels of depression, longer survival, and meaningful purpose in life (Aryee, 2011; Dixon, 2022; Dixon & Wilcox, 2016; Koenig, 2008; Siegel et al., 2001). It is not surprising that many immigrants use their culturally based faith as a protective factor to adjust in their new geographical location (Dixon, 2015). Further, research shows that the religious faith of many people from the Caribbean, including JCIW, is maintained mostly by those who migrated from there directly, as opposed to their Caribbean-Canadian born counterparts (Labelle et al., 2019). This awareness reflects the lived experiences of numerous JCIW who migrate with their Pentecostal faith and traditions. This study acknowledged that research on religion and spirituality is frequently polarized by dominant traditional faith groups (e.g., Catholics and Anglicans) whose stories are being told (Bramadat & Seljak, 2009; Wilkinson, 2011). Conversely, the narratives of sub-religious groups like Pentecostals are often silenced and “othered” in mainstream society (Dixon & Arthur, 2019; Wilkinson, 2006, 2011; Wilkinson & Althouse, 2010). As a multicultural country, Canada continues to work to embrace religious diversity, particularly for non-dominant ethnic groups like JCIW. In this discussion, *non-dominant* describes individuals who are systemically and institutionally marginalized and racialized in mainstream society due to their variations from the dominant Anglo-Saxon, male, able-bodied, heterosexual culture (Arthur, 2019). As such, non-dominant faith groups are often

pushed to the margins, and their voices go unheard within the dominant religious discourse. I argue that this study plays a critical role in fostering a deeper understanding of the Pentecostal faith by focusing on the lived experiences of JCIW whose religious and spiritual practices served as a coping strategy post-migration. In relation to these experiences, the primary objective of this research was not to generalize the findings to a larger immigrant population. Rather, it was to capture participants' subjective realities of cultural identity reconstruction using their Pentecostal faith post-migration.

Postmodern Social Constructionism Theoretical Framework and Pentecostal Faith

This study was informed by a postmodern social constructionism theoretical framework (SCTF) because it emphasizes multiple perspectives and the importance of language in the way people reconstruct their lived experiences and their situations (Gergen, 2009; Lock & Strong, 2010). The concept of reconstruction is relevant to the socio-cultural location of myself as the primary researcher and the co-researchers whose identities became fragmented as a result of acculturation stressors. In this discussion, the term "reconstruction" is influenced by a postmodern SCTF; it reflects an aspect of the ongoing development of identity that is not static but rather multi-layered, complex, and fluid within various socio-cultural and historical contexts (Berry, 2005). During this reconstruction process, the stressors experienced by the co-researchers gave birth to feelings of disenfranchisement, marginalization, stereotyping, and racial prejudices (Dixon, 2015). However, the strong reliance on our Pentecostal faith allowed us as co-researchers to recognize our resilience amidst societal challenges.

According to Campos (1996), "Pentecostalism" encompasses a religious movement and is not merely a "denomination" or a "religious organization" (p. 41). As a growing movement, it transcends denominational sects and presents itself as God acting in transformative ways within Christianity (Campos, 1996). Considered one of the most significant religious experiences of the century (Anderson, 2013; Melton, 2023), Pentecostalism embodies a socio-religious phenomenon and a transformative spiritual force in the life and mission of the Christian church (Dixon & Arthur, 2014; Klaus, 2007; Stewart, 2012). For believers, the theology of Pentecostal faith is a transcendental event that transpired through the power of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost in the first century of Christian history (see Acts 2-4; Joel 2:27-32; Luke 24:49, *NIV*, 1978). In modern day Christianity, many Pentecostals who call themselves charismatics still believe in the empowerment of the Holy Spirit both on individual and corporate levels within and outside of the church community (Pentecostalism, 2009; Simms, 2011). For these believers, Pentecostalism is a builder of identities (i.e., social, class, cultural, spiritual and religious) and a way of being in society (Campos, 1996). Further, charismatics tend to be energetic and dynamic in their Christian life based on their personal experience of the divine (Dixon, 2019, 2021; Stewart, 2012). These individuals believe that faith should be powerfully experiential and strengthened through the manifestation of the "gifts of the [Holy] Spirit such as speaking in tongues, prophecy, and healing" (Pentecostalism, 2009, para. 6). In the religious scholarship, speaking in tongues is also known as glossolalia (Nolen, 2010), or speaking in a heavenly language (Saayman, 1993). These concepts, often used interchangeably in the literature, delineate a uniquely subjective spiritual process of conversion and renewal for Pentecostal believers (Pentecostalism, 2009, para. 6).

In this vein, the subjective realities of the co-researchers in how they reconstructed their Pentecostal faith post-migration aligned well with a postmodern SCTF; this approach rejects the notion of a single reality in favor of multiple worldviews, meaning makings, understandings, and useful truths (Gergen, 1985). According to Lock and Strong (2010), "constructionist dialogues challenge the longstanding [dominant discourse that embraces an] individualist tradition and invite an appreciation of relationship as central to human well-being"

(p. 66). From this perspective, postmodern social constructionism creates space for communal truths in the area of faith that are embedded in an array of culturally and historically specific constructions. As such, I would argue that viewing Pentecostal faith through the lens of postmodern SCTF emphasized the reality that meanings of problems, solutions, and identities are co-constructed through language (Gergen, 1985). In other words, collectively as co-researchers, our language through the Pentecostal faith that was influenced by a patriarchal tradition pre-migration shifted to a more liberal and progressive worldview post-migration (Dixon, 2015). These views will be further discussed later in the findings section of the paper. Positioning the study within a postmodern SCTF was fitting for the HI methodology that guided the lived experiences of the co-researchers.

Reconceptualizing HI within a Postmodern SCTF

Through subjective realities and language, HI research methodology enabled the co-researchers and I (i.e., primary researcher) to explore our own internal pathways while engaging in the process of deep meaning making and adopting a passionate, relational approach (Sultan, 2019). Therefore, for this study, HI methodology is reconceptualized within a postmodern SCTF to enable the exploration of multiple truths and internal frames of references (Gergen, 1985). The adaptation of HI within a postmodern SCTF creates space for uncovering the co-researchers' collective lived experiences and subjective understandings of the phenomenon in its wholeness and uniqueness.

Further, repositioning HI within a postmodern SCTF challenges the notion of a singular truth and allows one to discover the diversity of human experiences and knowledge in multicultural contexts (Sultan, 2019). This methodological relocation of HI permits the meaning making process of personal experiences to emerge from a social constructionist view (Dixon, 2015). Essentially, this perspective honors the diverse and multiple realities of the primary researcher and co-researchers, with consideration given to the broader dimension of knowledge and cultural identity construction from a societal viewpoint (Dixon, 2015). The primary researcher leverages the richness of intrinsic knowledge by exploring the phenomenon with the participants in the context of personal, socio-cultural, and universal dimensions (Kenny, 2012). Below, I address the method, which outlines the participants' demographic information, research procedures, data collection, and data analysis in relation to this study.

Method

Participants

In terms of the participants' demographic information, the sample was comprised of seven women, including the first author (i.e., primary researcher) who self-identified as Jamaican Canadian. The average age of participants was 39.33 years (range = 27-53 years). The length of time they lived in Canada varied from 1-20 years. They had a diverse educational background: three participants went to university, three had college education and one completed high school. In terms of church membership, the years ranged from 1-36 years.

Procedure

This study obtained approval from the University of Calgary's Conjoint Faculties. Ethical concerns included procedures for gathering data, accurately representing the views of participants, and disseminating the results of the research (Smith, 2003). Participants were recruited from community centers and local churches from a city in Southern Alberta.

“Snowball sampling method,” a non-probability sampling approach where participants enrolled in the study recruited future individuals who might be interested, was effective in the recruitment process (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010). Community leaders and church members assisted in the sharing of recruitment materials to their social networks, posting flyers at community establishments, listserv announcements, newsletters, and through word of mouth. Individuals who were interested in participating in the study contacted the primary researcher via phone or email for more information. Additionally, I followed up with individuals through both mediums if their contact information was provided. Although 15 participants were interested, six participants were randomly selected who met the study’s inclusion criteria listed in the recruitment advertisements: (1) Jamaican Canadian descent; (2) female; (3) over 18 years old; and (3) adherent of the Pentecostal faith. Whilst the number of participants may seem small for this research, the sample size, which was determined by data saturation, is in line with several HI qualitative studies that use samples that vary from six to 13 participants (Brisola, 2000; Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010; Freeman, 2012; Kumar, 2017; Meents, 2006; Moustakas, 1990; Nzojibwami, 2009; Snyder, 2012). Notably, Guest et al. (2006) indicated that data saturation might be attained by as little as six interviews, depending on the sample size of the population.

According to Bentivoglio et al. (2022), “data saturation” is “used in qualitative research as a criterion for discontinuing data collection and/or analysis” (p. 8). This concept describes the point in the research process when there is a redundancy of themes and no new information to be attained in data analysis (Burmeister & Aitken, 2012; Morse, 1995, 2000). Additionally, the redundancy of themes signals to the researcher that data collection may cease since no further coding is feasible (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Given that prior research failed to examine the post-migration lived experiences of JCIW who practice the Pentecostal faith in Western Canada, this timely study filled this gap in the literature. Prior to the interviews, the signed consent forms were collected and reviewed to address any inquiries the participants might have. Co-researchers were informed of their right to voluntarily participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no penalization. To ensure their anonymity and confidentiality throughout the research process, they were invited to use a pseudonym. Collected data from the participants were stored in a secure filing cabinet and on password-protected electronic files. Data were destroyed five years after the study was completed. There were no predicted risks for this proposed project. If the participants had experienced any form of distress following the interview process, they would have been provided with the names and contact information for public counseling agencies in the city where they resided.

Data Collection

Co-researchers provided demographic information that included age, cultural background, religious affiliation, education level, and length of time living in Canada. Data was collected from participants including the first author using an interview script based on a semi-structured interview protocol. The first author’s interview was conducted by an independent interviewer outside of the research to ensure objectivity of the data. The unique nature of HI methodology allows for this form of creative self-inquiry and flexibility in data collection (Moustakas, 1990). All co-researchers, including the first author, engaged in an in-depth, semi-structured interview that was rooted in a postmodern social constructionist framework, which valued one’s subjective realities. This theoretical approach allows for the “social interchange” (Gergen, 1985, p. 271) of “passionate engagement and self-discovery” (Dixon, 2014, p. 5). Influenced by this framework, the interviews took an informal, conversational approach that created space for participants to share their stories in a natural dialogue. This collaborative exchange is consistent with the rhythm and flow of heuristic

exploration, and the search for meaning making situated in the post-migration lived experiences of the participants who practice the Pentecostal faith (Moustakas, 1990). Through the free flow of conversation, I was able to demonstrate authenticity in the framework by asking probing questions to help participants make meaning of their experiences, thus eliciting a richer dialogue from them. The overarching research question that guided the study was: “What is the experience of JCIW who use Pentecostal faith to reconstruct their cultural identities?” Secondary research questions included: (a) how do notions of female gender roles change in the cultural identity reconstruction process? (b) how are these changes mediated through the Pentecostal faith? And (c) how can these insights inform multicultural counseling practices? These questions were answered by utilizing a HI methodology that allowed for flexibility in its conceptualization (Moustakas, 1990), and explored the subjective meanings ascribed to the phenomenon. Each interview lasted for approximately 90 minutes long and was audio recorded based on the participants’ permission. All interviews were transcribed verbatim by a transcriber who was required to sign a confidentiality agreement. The transcribed interviews and notes taken during the interview process provided relevant narratives for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Ricoeur’s (1981) work influenced the data analysis process which encompasses phases of thematic analysis, seeking meaning, and interpretation with reflection. Through meaningful dialogue, the participants and I co-constructed the meaning of our individual experiences of cultural identity reconstruction post-migration using the Pentecostal faith. To stay committed to the postmodern SCTF that guided this study and emphasized multiple realities, it was important for me to immerse myself in the research. This immersion occurred in that someone not affiliated with the research was invited to interview me (the first author) using the same interview protocol as the co-researchers; the flexibility of HI methodology allows for this form of creativity and deviation from the modernized HI process of creating individual composites (Moustakas, 1990). Rather, I infused my own experiences into this study alongside those of the participants. This integrative approach truly reflects the multiplicity of stories and contributes a “richness and depth to the data” (Nzajibwami, 2009, p. 46). Self-analysis was helpful for me to make meaning of my own lived experience, general healing, and reconcile dimensions of my fragmented identity (Kumar, 2017). Undergoing this form of self-examination during the data analysis phase reinforces the principle of HI as a unique method in which the lived experience of the primary researcher becomes the focus of the study and is used as an instrument in the process of understanding the phenomenon (Brisola & Cury, 2016). Therefore, the transcripts of the participants were analyzed alongside that of myself to generate significant categories, themes, and sub-themes, which were coded using a structured coding process (Freeman, 2012; Nzajibwami, 2009). I also familiarized myself with the data by reading the transcripts, reviewing field notes made during the interviews, and listening to the recordings several times (Snyder, 2012).

Upon completing the coding, a master list of similar themes and sub-themes was created and clustered in their respective categories to reflect the multiplicity of participants’ stories (Moustakas, 1990). Four conceptual categories, ten themes, and fourteen sub-themes characterized the experiences of the co-researchers, which demonstrated the multifaceted nature of their post-migration journey; these results will be identified and outlined in further detail below. It should be noted that the order in which the results are reported does not reflect any ordinal value and is not chronological. As part of the analysis process, a selection of quotes was identified that represented unique aspects of the co-researchers’ stories. Additionally, personal insights, reflections, and field notes taken during the interviews were included in the data analysis process. A summary of the preliminary findings was verified by participants to

authenticate the data in the form of member checking (Carlson, 2010). An integral aspect of the analysis in HI, “member checking” ensures that researchers have an accurate understanding of the co-researchers’ stories (Freeman, 2012; Taylor, 2010). All the participants responded within one week and indicated that the results appropriately captured and reflected their lived experiences.

Finally, a creative synthesis from the collected data was developed based on the collective stories of the co-researchers. Captured using poetry, this creative process allowed us to make meaning of our cultural identity reconstruction process and gain a deeper understanding of ourselves as women of the Pentecostal faith through resiliency and religious freedom.

Critical Reflectivity

Given the dearth of research on this population and the first author's in-group membership and insider experiences, a robust process used throughout the data analysis was “critical reflectivity.” Informed by Koch and Harrington’s (1998) work, the concept denotes the ongoing self-critique and self-appraisal of the primary researcher during the research process. This method was demonstrated throughout the investigation by keeping an ongoing record of emerging self-awareness and reactions that were included in the data and analyzed (Morrow, 2005). As the first author, I increased awareness of my assumptions through a process of critical reflectivity to reduce subjectivity (Creswell, 2012; Morrow, 2005). To illustrate, I utilized journaling during data collection and analysis to become more mindful of any personal biases that might influence data analysis (Birks et al., 2008). Journaling also enabled me to be aware of my subjective processes, which proved relevant to the discovery of knowledge that often evolves from the processes and phases that are essential to HI methodology (Rennie, 2004).

Processes and Phases in HI

Moustakas (1990) outlined seven processes and six phases involved in the primary researcher’s journey of uncovering the phenomenon in question. I arrived at a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being explored by using the seven processes: (a) identifying with the focus of inquiry, (b) self-dialogue, (c) tacit knowing, (d) intuition, (e) indwelling, (f) focusing, and (g) the internal frame of reference (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985; Moustakas, 1990). According to Sultan (2019), in HI these processes serve as a pathway for the six phases in that each phase is facilitated through the implementation of one or more of the seven processes. Essentially, these processes and phases work jointly to support the exploratory, introspective, creative, experiential, and relational facets of the HI methodology (Sultan, 2019). Below, a brief description of the seven processes is provided, followed by the six phases of HI to offer a broader understanding about how they unfold in the study.

Identifying with the Focus of Inquiry

This concept involves aligning oneself with what one is seeking to discover (Stevens, 2006). In this process, the primary researcher is required to become immersed in the research question, becoming deeply connected with it, and living with it (Hiles, 2001; Nzojibwami, 2009). This means that my insider’s connection with the phenomenon in question allows for a richer understanding through an open-ended and self-directed inquiry process (Moustakas, 1990; Sela-Smith, 2002). As such, the internal curiosity about the phenomenon was a

motivating factor in the need to clarify and closely examine the post-migration lived experiences of JCIW (Freeman, 2012). The subjective inquiry of this exploration allowed me to use myself and the participants' lived experiences of our Pentecostal faith to explore how we reconstructed our cultural identity in a Canadian context.

Self-Dialogue

This process signifies a critical beginning in HI as the primary researcher engages in self-dialogue with the phenomenon being studied (Moustakas, 1990; Stevens, 2006). Knowledge is produced from this openness to self-inquiry (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010), and multiple meanings are discovered from this self-directed facilitated search (Nzajibwami, 2009). Using self-dialogue, I was able to reflect on my own lived experiences within an internal frame of reference to have a better conceptualization of the phenomenon. In this process, I demonstrated transparency and honesty with myself through journaling to oscillate from the problem to experience and back to gain a holistic awareness of the relevant questions being investigated (Moustakas, 1990; Sultan, 2019). Although self-dialogue is stressed, the relational dimension of HI is utilized in this research to include the perspectives of the participants whose contributions to the research are invaluable and equally privileged. As stated by Douglass and Moustakas (1985): "At the heart of heuristics lies an emphasis on disclosing the self as a way of facilitating disclosure from others – a response to the tacit dimension with oneself sparks a similar call from others" (p. 50). This statement emphasizes the personal and relational dimensions of the HI research process (Sultan, 2019), both of which are necessary in creating new knowledge and authentic meaning making.

Tacit Knowing

Moustakas (1990) drew on Polanyi's (1964, 1966, 1969) understanding of tacit knowledge to explain how some researchers have knowledge about their research topic that they are not able to articulate. "Tacit knowledge" refers to the implicit and hidden dimension of knowledge, where feelings, experiences, and meaning come together to reflect a view of the world (Sela-Smith, 2002). This process guided me to illuminate the untapped dimension of my fragmented cultural identity post-migration (Hiles, 2001). Conducting this research provided me with deeper insights into the implicit knowledge that I held of my lived experiences around culture and faith that were difficult to verbalize or explain, yet they formed the foundation of my perceptions. For example, I often considered myself to be an "undercover believer" who was afraid of being judged because of my faith as a bi-cultural Canadian woman. It is at this level of explicit knowledge where information from my post-migration lived experiences around cultural identity reconstruction through the Pentecostal faith, was collected and utilized to inform my perception, understanding, and meaning making of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1990; Sultan, 2019). This discovery conveys that through reflections and human inquiry, some aspects of implicit knowledge can be made explicit.

Intuition

This process bridges the gap between tacit and explicit knowledge (Bach, 2002). Intuition allows for the facilitation of research by directing the researcher to attend to internal states, insights, patterns, feelings, and perceptions in quest of achieving wholeness and discovering an enhanced understanding of the phenomenon in question (Dixon, 2015). It offered a pathway for me to achieve a richer understanding of my post-migration lived experiences together with the participants (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010). To construct the

meaning of the phenomenon being investigated, my intuition directed me to appropriate patterns, feelings, relationships, and perceptions (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010). By attending to these multiple factors, I was privileged to view the phenomenon holistically rather than in several parts (Moustakas, 1990). For instance, I was better able to facilitate my research questions and methods, and attend to my internal states while interacting with the participants. This attentiveness positioned me well to discover patterns and meanings that enhanced the understanding of the phenomenon being explored.

Indwelling

This process requires one to turn inward and dwell within the experience of the phenomenon with unwavering attentiveness to one's thoughts and feelings and to search for a deeper understanding of the human experience (Bach, 2002; Moustakas, 1990, 2001). As the primary researcher, I was invited to focus entirely on myself by gazing inwardly with the aim of comprehending the phenomenon holistically (Sultan, 2019). From this stance, I focused on both my experience of cultural identity and the participants' cultural worldviews. In the context of the relational dynamic between myself and the co-researchers, I also deepened my awareness of the phenomenon, which provided me with a more accurate description of the process (Stevens, 2006).

Focusing

According to Moustakas (1990), the concept of "focusing" within HI denotes a sustained process by which the researcher experiences "personal growth, insight, and change" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 25). This process requires sustained focus and attention to enhance a researcher's insight and discover new elements and themes central to the phenomenon (Dixon, 2015). Here, I engaged in the research process by limiting myself of distractions so that full attention could be given to the explicit knowledge gained through focusing (Nzajibwami, 2009). This form of de-cluttering encouraged me to make meaningful shifts or changes necessary to discover new elements of my post-migration subjective realities (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010; Douglass & Moustakas, 1985; Hiles, 2001). Therefore, I reflected on my lived experience using the participants' stories as alternate perspectives. This relational process allowed me to find any missing elements that could provide a more comprehensive and rich understanding of the phenomenon in question (Freeman, 2012).

The Internal Frame of Reference

The final process of HI emphasizes the concept of an internal frame of reference as the foundation for all knowledge (Moustakas, 1990). Central to HI, this process requires the primary researcher to acknowledge and honor the experiencer's own internal frame of reference. It also seeks to understand the meaning of one's lived experience of the phenomenon through an individual's thoughts, feelings, and perceptions (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010). With this process the participants' stories remained visible alongside those of the primary researcher, because knowledge and understanding were co-constructed and enriched through the eyes and voices of others (Moustakas, 1990). For this HI study, visibility was present as space was created for the collaborative engagement between the participants and me; we all shared similar post-migration experiences of cultural identity reconstruction through faith. The narratives generated from this process embodied our worldviews, values, and beliefs, all contributing to the source of true subjective knowledge.

The Six Phases of HI Research

As highlighted by Moustakas (1990), there are six phases of HI that guide the direction of the research process and represent the steps in designing the study. These are (a) initial engagement, (b) immersion, (c) incubation, (d) illumination, (e) explication, and (f) creative synthesis. In what follows, I provide concise overviews of these phases in relation to the phenomenon.

Initial Engagement

This first phase begins with an exploration of a deep and personal phenomenon of autobiographical nature, which may have social and universal implications (Sultan, 2019). For this phase, the goal is for the researcher to engage in a passionate inner search to discover a topic and a research question that holds internal meaning (Sela-Smith, 2002). In other words, the researcher formulates the research question. Hence, I was required to become fully immersed in self-dialogue and self-exploration to clarify the chosen topic and the research question being explored (Moustakas, 1990). Admittedly, the primary question that led to this research topic had been percolating within me for a long time and intensified in recent years (Dixon, 2015). However, given the stigma associated with the Pentecostal faith tradition (Dixon & Arthur, 2014; Muñoz & Fernández-Mostaza, 2018; Wilkinson, 2011), I approached the topic with a sense of trepidation of outing my faith, which signifies a core dimension of my bi-cultural identity (i.e., Jamaican Canadian). Through relentless praying, scripture readings, and meditating, along with the encouragement of my then research supervisor (third author) to share my story using HI, I was empowered to curtail this fear and uncertainty around my research. Additionally, I reflected and journaled any intense emotional reactions that surfaced and fueled my passion as I immersed myself in the investigation. Such transparency was useful in preventing my apprehension from interfering with the interpretation of our collective post-migration stories (i.e., myself and co-researchers). The exploration of this phenomenon also provided me with the personal space needed to confront key dimensions of my intersected cultural identities, including gender, race, religion, and spirituality.

Immersion

In this phase, the research topic “consumed every aspect of the primary researcher’s life” (Dixon, 2015, p. 74). Once the research question has been identified, this phase requires the primary researcher to embrace an attitude of a learner, who immerses oneself in the question and lives it holistically whilst being self-embedded in the experience of the phenomenon (Sultan, 2019). To illustrate, I lived with the question in various states: awake, asleep, in dreams, reflections, and in dialogue with others (Stevens, 2006). Essentially, the topic consumed every area of my life, which became “crystallized around the question” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 28). Initially, I experienced this phase of my inquiry with ambivalence, which changed to intense passion as I had ruminating thoughts about the topic. With excitement, I continued to immerse myself in the literature. The natural manifestation of this immersion phase was noticeable to outsiders (Nzajibwami, 2009). For instance, I engaged in stimulating conversations with family and friends, had thought-provoking discussions with colleagues, and wrote creatively in my journal as I reflected on the topic. Despite my immersion in the topic, I was still careful with whom I shared the topic to avoid being judged, particularly by outsiders of faith. I overcame this concern of judgment by acknowledging this exploration as an integral aspect of my self-development journey. For example, I was given the opportunity to talk about research and share my Pentecostal faith story with a group of master’s level students while

working as a teaching assistant at a particular institution in the province of Alberta, Canada. Although daunting, this experience helped me empathize with my participants' feelings of anxiety and vulnerability during the interview process and gain their trust to talk about their lived experiences.

Incubation

This phase requires the researcher to step away from the intense attention on the question. It allows space for the cultivation and integration of knowledge by distancing from the question (Sultan, 2019). By detaching from the intensity of the experience and the phenomenon, the primary researcher can create space for the ideas to germinate (Alderson, 1998). In line with HI, I entered this stage of the study following the completion of the data needed, such as conducting, transcribing and analyzing the interviews, as well as reading the literature related to my topic (Dixon, 2015). By deliberately withdrawing from all aspects of the investigation, and re-engaging with it during the written contents, I experienced new seeds of knowledge that sprouted about the phenomenon.

Illumination

During this phase, the researcher is encouraged to become receptive to breakthroughs and bring them into conscious awareness (Sela-Smith, 2002). Illumination also involves engagement, collaboration, dialogue with others, and using tacit knowing, and intuition to configure a transformed internal frame of reference and create new understandings of the phenomenon (Dixon, 2015). At this juncture, Moustakas (1990) emphasized the importance of tacit knowledge and intuition in heuristic research. Although, one might argue that as a unique method of scientific inquiry, heuristic research often requires more than the researchers' intuition to account for quality and rigor. To achieve rigor in this study, I systematically analyzed the collected data by organizing them into multiple core categories, themes, and sub-themes until I felt they had reached the most complete and representative reflection of all the participants' experiences, including my own (Alderson, 1998; Djuraskovic, 2014; Snyder, 2012).

Further, member checking was an integral aspect of the analysis, which ensured that I had an accurate understanding of the participants' stories (Freeman, 2012; Taylor, 2010). In this phase, there was also a sudden breakthrough in understanding the collected data after much reflection on the co-researcher's interviews and transcripts. As I sat and reflected on these research tools, new themes emerged about the phenomenon. Following the illumination of these new themes, I was able to see the topic in a different light that opened the door to a greater awareness about the influence of Pentecostal faith on the JCIW's cultural identity reconstruction.

Explication

In this phase, the primary researcher continues with the process of self-search inquiry. Here, great emphasis is given to unique understandings, meanings, insights, and shifts in worldview within the primary researcher (Sela-Smith, 2002). In preparation for the creative synthesis, the primary researcher invests time in the exploration of emergent themes and modifying them. As such, I gained clarity on the core categories, themes, and sub-themes of the phenomenon. These new thematic discoveries were affirmed by the co-researchers and the third author (former dissertation research supervisor) prior to finalizing the data analysis. In

essence, I created a composite depiction of the phenomenon that reflected and honored our collective wisdom as JCIW of the Pentecostal faith.

Creative Synthesis

This culmination phase in HI results in the expression of creativity by the primary researcher that embodies the core of the investigated phenomenon (Dixon, 2015). The creative synthesis in heuristic research may emerge in various forms, including but not limited to painting, a book, piece of writing, artwork, drawing, collage, poetry, or music to be shared with the outer world (Sela-Smith, 2002; Sultan, 2019). With consideration given to the raw data and the results (Sultan, 2019), the creative synthesis in this study was expressed in poetic form, constructed from the collective voices, and unified stories of myself and the co-researchers (Dixon, 2015; see below). Poetry reflects a hidden talent of mine (i.e., primary researcher) that has been ignored for a while. This artistic form helped me to capture our shared narratives in a culturally relevant manner based on our unique lived experiences.

In summary, these processes and phases depict my journey as a heuristic researcher alongside the co-researchers' lived realities to discover meaningful insights of the phenomenon being investigated. Although, the experiences in these processes and phases might appear in a linear and stage-like fashion, they could also evolve in a non-sequential manner (Moustakas, 1990). Therefore, exercising patience and being open to how these processes and phases unfolded, without rushing the outcome, was beneficial to the success of the research findings as well as my growth and development as a HI researcher.

Rigor and Validation in HI Research

A critique of HI is the issue of rigor (i.e., trustworthiness), which is given limited attention in the literature (Creswell, 2012; Koch & Harrington, 1998). In support of this viewpoint about rigor, Rose and Loewenthal (2006) argued that positioning researchers at the center of HI research might raise critical concerns around challenges and considerations that pertain to self-reflection, representation of researchers' personal experiences, and accountability for rigor. This means that solely relying on the researcher's good judgment does not adequately ensure the rigor and trustworthiness of the study (Koch & Harrington, 1998). Therefore, the suggestion is made for researchers to display trustworthiness in research via transparency regarding all aspects of the research process, including their intentions, values, attitudes, and personal experiences (Alderson, 1998). This form of transparency may be reflected in researchers' participatory sharing with others and reflexivity, which are key elements in enhancing accountability for rigor (Willis, 2007). "Reflexivity" is described as the ongoing self-critique and self-appraisal of the researcher during the research process (Koch & Harrington, 1998). I exhibited reflexivity throughout this investigation by keeping an ongoing record of emerging self-awareness and reactions that were included in the data and analysis (Dixon, 2015). This reflexive method helped me to ensure rigor in the research by being aware of my own subjective processes, which proved to be relevant for the research findings.

As discussed earlier, member checking is an integral part of creating trustworthiness in qualitative research (Candela, 2019; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1986). A useful technique to ensure trustworthiness in HI, participants were invited to review all relevant research materials and assess their accuracy and credibility (Creswell, 2012; Moustakas, 1990; Sandelowski, 1986, 1993). By so doing, participants were able to verify any potential misrepresentations of their experiences, as well as include additional information in their stories (Dixon, 2015; Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2009).

Findings

The study's final thematic analysis generated a cluster of four overarching categories, 10 central themes, and 14 sub-themes (See Appendix A). Due to space restrictions, I will highlight the categories and themes that emerged from the data analysis in relation to the lived experiences of the co-researchers alongside my integrative voice. In the findings below, I will infuse relevant literature, biblical Scriptures, quotes, and commentaries from my lived experiences jointly with the co-researchers to fully capture the essence, passion, and richness of our collective stories. These collaborative narratives will provide a richer understanding of the phenomenon. Following the creative synthesis in the artistic form of a poem, I will conclude the section with a brief summative reflection of the research process.

Lived Experiences of the Pentecostal Faith

This category depicted the lived experiences of the co-researchers and me (i.e., primary researcher) in relation to our Pentecostal faith affiliation as JCIW. The unique voices of our faith were reflected in two core themes: (1) "Lifestyle Change" and (2) "Outsiders' Perceptions of the Pentecostal Faith." In terms of lifestyle change, we all attested that our Pentecostal faith played a unique role in our pre-migration cultural identity transformations within and outside of the church community. We also expressed our concerns about often being misjudged by outsiders of the faith community whose perception of us tended to be misguided by society's misrepresentations. These themes are further expanded on below.

Lifestyle Changes

Given the above discussion of the ways that faith underlies the centrality of the co-researchers' lived experiences, it is understandable that lifestyle change would be identified as an important theme for the co-researchers. Within the context of this study, lifestyle change represented a process of spiritual transformation that occurred when one became a Christian within the Pentecostal faith and made the personal decision to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. To emphasize this theme, I drew from the Scripture: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17, *NIV*, 1978). Like me, the participants all echoed a sense of rebirth and reconstruction in their religious worldviews as they navigated from their past lives into new and hopeful ones in Christ. To illustrate, they talked about how their biblical knowledge guided their lifestyle changes around respect for their families, showing love, kindness, and forgiveness to others, and an increased desire to attend church services. I also had similar lifestyle changes in that I was more obedient to my parents and took pride in church attendance and other church-related engagements (e.g., joining the church choir and attending prayer meetings, Bible studies, fasting services, church revivals, crusades, rallies, conventions, etc.).

Relevant quotes by the co-researchers that highlighted this theme included Faye (29 years old), who stated: "I had to go to church, there was no exception, and there was no way around it. Every Sunday and Wednesday night we went to prayer meetings. Sunday nights we go back for Bible study at the church." Supporting Faye's viewpoint, Rosemarie (48 years old) also offered her perspective: "I'm a Christian, I should be more Christ-like. So, in terms of being a Christian there are certain things you don't do, or you don't practice. You do the right thing . . . this is what the Bible says." These quotes reinforced some of the positive changes in our lives as co-researchers and provided evidence of our continued growth and spiritual development as converted Christians.

Outsiders' Perceptions of the Pentecostal Faith

This second theme was meaningful to me because prior to my conversion into the Pentecostal faith, I had limited knowledge about certain practices of the faith. I became a born again Christian and got converted into the Pentecostal faith as an adolescent after being witness to, on many occasions, by a member of the faith community. Within the Pentecostal faith, “witnessing” signifies sharing one’s personal experience about Jesus with non-believers with the hope that they will get saved in accepting Jesus Christ in their hearts as their personal Lord and Savior (Grabbe, 2004; Jesus Film Project, 2020).

The expectation of witnessing is a core aspect of the Christian life and is informed by Jesus’s teachings around the Great Commission outlined in the scriptures: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20, *NIV*, 1978). As a fundamental requirement of Pentecostalism (Manglos, 2010), baptism allows one to be “born again,” which symbolizes a spiritual conversion, rebirth, and regeneration when one receives Jesus Christ in their hearts by God’s grace through faith (Bachmann, 2019, p. 59). Reflecting on this unique spiritual and transformative encounter, I felt committed to my faith as a new convert being adopted into the family of God. That said, my understanding of what faith practices demarcated Pentecostal believers from other Christian denominations was quite limited in scope. For example, speaking in tongues was a foreign concept to me. I was able to reconcile my own confusion about the practice when I delved deeper into the Word of God. I found spiritual enlightenment in the following Bible verse: “For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit” (1 Corinthians 14:2, *NIV*, 1978). My understanding of this Scripture helped me to view this practice in an intimate way that was subjective to believers. In contrast, glossolalia appeared to be a mystery to many outsiders of the faith due to a lack of understanding of this concept. I would argue that numerous outsiders’ misperceptions of the faith and its practices (e.g., charismatic worship, prophesy, healing, glossolalia, etc.) might be influenced by the mainstream media and various scholarships by individuals who tend to see the faith through a biased lens (Denys, 1980; Lewis, 2011; Melton, 2023).

The stories of the co-researchers about outsiders’ perceptions of the Pentecostal faith strengthened my resolve to accept and value my faith in a more liberal and transformative way. This outsider perception was experienced in Canada, which adds to my argument about the need for cultural identity reconstruction post-migration. Through self-discovery and my own attunement to understand how I reconstructed my cultural identity through the Pentecostal faith, I found encouragement in the Scripture: “For I am *not ashamed* [emphasis added] of the gospel, because it is the *power* [emphasis added] of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes . . .” (Romans 1:16, *NIV*, 1978). The emphasized words above gave me the reassurance I needed to remain steadfast in my own core faith beliefs and become more grounded in my CIR as I educated myself and others outside my faith community. Many of the co-researchers expressed how they felt about outsiders’ negative perceptions of the Pentecostal faith, which they found to be “othering.” Kay (27 years old) made her feelings explicit in her reactions below about being filled with the Holy Spirit:

Pentecostal is not just being saved. Yes, I accept Christ, but I have a deep intimate relationship with God, so I seek the Holy Spirit. I become filled with the Holy Spirit . . . the Holy Spirit becomes manifested in my life. It’s just a closer walk I believe that Pentecostalism gives. People [outsiders] would see you come to church and you’re running around, and you’re speaking in tongues

and ask, “What is that about?” It’s just the way that it’s done for Pentecostals. It was like on the day of Pentecost in Acts that was described so the Holy Spirit came down. They [believers] spoke in different tongues and the Holy Spirit just came and manifested and it kind of gives you discernment in preparing you for what may come.

The preceding illustration by the participant helped to foster a meaningful and open dialogue for outsiders to challenge and eliminate their misperceptions about the practices of Pentecostal faith. The hope for us as believers is that through increased education that is built on acceptance, trust and respect of cultural and religious diversity, people will come to recognize the importance of the Pentecostal faith in the lives of JCIW.

Gender Role Expectations

This category captured the co-researchers’ expectations of gender roles within the Pentecostal faith. From this category, two key themes were indicated and will be expanded on: (1) “Gender Role Pre-Immigration” and (2) “Gender Role Post-Immigration.” Over the years, the role of women in the church has become a topic of growing interest for both believers and nonbelievers. There are many depictions of gender roles in the Bible, and quite often, the biblical verses surrounding these depictions are misinterpreted by several believers. These believers tend to take the Scriptures pertaining to women’s appearance (see 1 Timothy 2:9-15, *NIV*, 1978) and submission to men (see Ephesians 5:22-24, *NIV*, 1978) literally without consideration given to the socio-cultural, political, and historical contexts in which they were written. As a believer with literal views, I found it fitting to view this category through a social constructionist lens given that gender roles are socially constructed and influenced by cultural expectations (Keener, 1992).

This view of our constructed identities also asserts that the self is formed through our interactions with others and in relation to socio-cultural, and political contexts (Jackson & Hogg, 2010). Therefore, my interpretation of gender roles and expectations within a biblical context has been reconstructed based on my own lived experiences within situational and cultural environments. I was also pleased to see that the co-researchers reconstructed a more moderate cultural view of gender roles and expectations post-migration, despite their conservative perspectives of gender roles pre-migration. These liberal views are outlined in the two forthcoming themes:

Gender Role Pre-Migration

My prescribed gender role pre-migration was significantly influenced by the traditional and conservative doctrines embraced by the former Pentecostal church I attended. As a new convert, I relied quite heavily on the teachings provided by my former pastor to make meaning of my own understanding of biblical principles and ecumenical views of Pentecostalism. Given that the pastor’s biblical frame of reference might have been informed by his traditional and conservative worldviews, his teachings likely reflected the cultural and religious zeitgeist of the time. For example, I was prohibited from wearing pants and certain accessories like makeup and jewelry to church. I was also forbidden from painting my nails and listening to secular music. These behaviors were viewed in a negative light and seen as me deviating from living a spirit-filled life as a believer. Reflecting on my pre-migration religious experiences, it was evident that my former pastor’s conventional worldviews and conservative thinking patterns as a Pentecostal leader were constructed based on a literal interpretation of the Bible. Therefore, if I wore pants, which was considered men’s clothing, I was made to feel guilty (see

Deuteronomy 22:5, *NIV*, 1978). My gender role expectations were significantly impacted by a traditional biblical interpretation of the Scriptures that were preached and taught through a patriarchal and hierarchical lens. This lens was propagated by male leaders who were deemed to be the expert and authority figures within the church community and larger Jamaican culture. The co-researchers' pre-migration experiences mirrored my own in terms of how they viewed their gender roles in the church and the larger community. The expectation from male church leaders was for us as women to be in the secular world but not be part of it in how we dressed, spoke, and presented ourselves as believers. One of the participants, Warrior Princess (29 years old), spoke eloquently to how some believers often misinterpret the Scriptures and take it out of context in the following quote:

It's one thing to read the [Bible], and it's another thing to understand it. For example, when the Bible says cover your head, it could mean a lot of things. It could be to put a hat over your head; it could mean that your head could be your husband's, and you're supposed to cover it spiritually in prayer. Your head could also be your pastor's in the sense of him being your spiritual leader. Now, some people take it out of context, and say you have to wear a big hat over your head and cover it. So, there is one thing in reading, and there is another thing in understanding and applying.

It was clear from the above perspective that there is a need for greater value to be placed on an increased understanding of the Bible and its application of knowledge across diverse cultural contexts. This cultural shift in biblical knowledge occurred gradually for us as co-researchers. As we navigated across history, time, and space, our views around gender roles were deconstructed and reconstructed based on new cultural experiences as JCIW.

Gender Role Post-Migration

This theme was evident in the stories shared by the participants as well as my own self-reflection. Although the debate around gender roles within the Pentecostal faith continues to be polarized in some traditional circles of believers, there has been a gradual cultural shift in the overall traditional biblical interpretation of the Scriptures. Arguably, this change has created space for two main schools of thought in the church: (1) complementarian – “insists on the equality of person while maintaining gender-assigned differences in roles,” and (2) egalitarian – “rejects hierarchy yet accept the reality of non-hierarchical gender differences”; the latter sees man and woman as complementing each other in gender roles (Keener, 1992, p. xi). I embrace an egalitarian stance in my beliefs around gender roles since a complementarian position “completely prohibits women from teaching the Bible to men” (Keener, 1992, p. xi). I argue that if there is no partiality in how God treats us as His children, there should be no partiality within gender roles in the Pentecostal faith. According to the Apostle Peter in the Bible: “. . . God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears Him and does what is right” (Acts 10: 34-35, *NIV*, 1978). This Scripture positively influenced my reconstructed cultural identity in the way I chose to present myself as a believer. For instance, my egalitarian stance was evident when I started to wear pants and jewelry, style my hair, and use make-up without feelings of guilt and shame. I experienced this egalitarian stance post-migration, which helped to cement my CIR. In my reconstructed progressive worldviews of the Bible, I no longer equated the above behaviors as sinful. As a mature believer, my faith-based knowledge in spiritual truths and biblical hermeneutics around gender-specific expressions expanded. Therefore, I took into consideration historical settings and transcultural principles in how I interpreted the Scriptures. My reconstructed views and cultural shifts

around gender roles post-migration were supported by the co-researchers. They also expressed their beliefs that culture, and religion can be seen as situated practices and knowledge that people have (Dixon, 2015). Collectively, we saw faith practices as shared understandings in the church for immigrants like us to challenge traditional biblical worldviews and dominant historic voices that reject women's positionality in Pentecostalism based on their perceived ontological inferiority in understanding the Word. Rosemarie (48 years old) boldly stated this shift in thinking around the transcultural change regarding gender equality:

In the Pentecostal faith we are equal, we can do the same thing as the male. There is no rule to say you are not supposed to do certain things because you're a woman or a female, whatever goes for the male goes for the women. . . there are no barriers, no restrictions.

The above perspective reaffirmed that as JCIW, we were both modernized and progressive in our reconstructed worldviews around gender roles and expectations. Undoubtedly, our increased awareness as educated women of the Pentecostal faith aligned with an egalitarian stance around gender roles in our reconstructed cultural identity within the Canadian context.

Defining Cultural Identity

The third category that emerged from the data was "Defining Cultural Identity," which examined how co-researchers reconstructed themselves post-migration. Three themes were generated from this category: (1) "Pride in Jamaican Heritage," (2) "Factors Affecting Cultural Identity Reconstruction," and (3) "Spiritual Grounding." Each of these forthcoming themes will be examined sequentially. The rich accounts of the co-researchers' stories provided evidence that they had a strong sense of cultural identity strongly rooted in their faith. Based on their exchanges, it was evident that amid post-migration stressors (e.g., language barriers, financial stress, acculturative stress, discrimination, unemployment, etc.) the co-researchers were still able to navigate such adversities by finding strength and resilience from their faith (Dixon, 2015). From the shared stories, it was apparent that migration for the co-researchers was a multifaceted process where they were faced with many challenges to navigate. Their stories resonated with me since my migration journey helped to build pride in my cultural identity as a bi-cultural woman.

Pride in Jamaican Heritage

The first theme in this category, "Pride in Jamaican Heritage," was a common thread in the co-researchers' stories, including my own lived experience. Although I am Jamaican-born, I consider myself to be a proud Jamaican Canadian woman; I grew up in Canada and am more connected with the Canadian ethos than the Jamaican culture. That said, my Jamaican heritage represents salient dimensions of my bi-cultural identity in relation to gender, race, and faith. The co-researchers were also comfortable defining salient aspects of their cultural identity. They were loyal and patriotic as JCIW, irrespective of Canada being their host country. As indicated below, they expressed pride in their Jamaican heritage which played a critical role in how they acculturated in the Canadian context. This poignant stance was reflected by Andrea (53 years old) in the following excerpt: "I am a defender of Jamaica! I'll get up and say I'm Black. I'm from Jamaica, and this is why I look this way." In addition to Andrea, Kay (27 years old) made it clear that her culture had global recognition because of trailblazers who made an impact on an international scale, such as the reggae icon Bob Marley,

and Usain Bolt, who to date is regarded as the fastest sprinter in the world. In shedding light on how they defined their cultural identity, Kay stated:

For me, I would say I'm a Jamaican, so if they are like, "Okay what does that mean?" I normally say, "Have you heard about Bob Marley?" "Have you heard about Usain Bolt?" "Have you heard about reggae music?" I would use identifiers like those to help people to understand where I am from.

The above excerpt demonstrated the co-researcher's connectedness to their Jamaican cultural heritage. This form of connection helped to ferment their cultural identity in Canada where they felt "othered" within the mainstream society. As a person who embraces a bi-cultural identity, I feel that having a strong sense of who I am, and where I come from will determine where I am going. Through our collective stories as JCIW, we were able to demonstrate that despite the setbacks we encountered in Canada as immigrants, we had the resilience through our faith to overcome and reconstruct a new sense of self. Some of these collective stories included our struggles to find and create a sense of belonging, feeling dislocated and disconnected in our new host country as well as experiencing and embodying racism in dominant places and spaces due to our ethno-cultural identity (Dixon, 2015). Consequently, these post-migration challenges combined and contributed to our fragmented cultural identities.

Factors Affecting Cultural Identity Reconstruction

Reflecting on my lived experiences and the narratives of the co-researchers, another key theme that was elicited from the data centered around factors that we collectively encountered post-migration that impacted our abilities to acclimate in our new host country. These stress-related factors included but were not limited to unemployment issues, language barriers, financial stress, discrimination, acculturative difficulties, and culture shock. In this context, "acculturative difficulties" describes associated "cultural and psychological changes that groups and individuals undergo when they come into contact with another culture" (Crow, 2012, p. 153). Coined by Oberg (1960), "culture shock" describes a psychological reaction that is triggered by severe adjustments and stress to cultural norms and mores that are different from immigrants' cultures of origin. Like all the co-researchers, I also struggled to adjust to a new life in Canada that had challenges, as well as opportunities and possibilities. For instance, I experienced culture shock attending a Catholic School where I was first exposed to Darwinism and the Theory of Evolution in my World Religion course. This theoretical perspective of human existence contradicted the biblical foundation of my identity that I was created in the image of God (see Genesis 1:27, *NIV*, 1978), and before I was formed in my mother's womb, God had chosen me (see Jeremiah 1:5, *NIV*, 1978). These Scriptures provided me with the assurance I needed to be open to the ongoing creation-evolution controversy, while I remained grounded in my faith. Being that the origins debate was not addressed in the Jamaican teaching curriculum, this state of culture shock was also experienced by other co-researchers. For example, Warrior Princess (29 years old) also echoed her experience of culture shock in her dialogue:

I had experienced a huge *culture shock* [emphasis added] about how the school system works. The Theory of Evolution and the Big Bang Theory wasn't taught in our [Jamaican] schools. I've never really experienced that until I got here [Canada] and I would say that was a culture shock. . .

Additionally, the co-researchers and I were the racial majority pre-migration. As such, we were not prepared to deal with the unforeseen acculturation difficulty of racial challenges we encountered post-migration as members of a racial minority. The struggles I experienced about my Black racial identity post-migration negatively impacted my self-esteem. Also, being labeled as a visible minority within Canada's multicultural society was distressing for me as an immigrant woman of faith given its negative implication that made me feel "less than" (Brown, 2008, p. 26). Similarly, other co-researchers shared their stories of acculturation difficulties that helped to push them to the margins of society as their race became blatantly visible as members of a non-dominant cultural group. According to Andrea (53 years old), "The first thing I became aware of is that I was Black, in your own environment [Jamaica] it's never been a question." Andrea's racial positionality and othering was also emphasized by Kay (27 years old):

Regarding the racial aspect . . . you can sense that you're not really fully integrated into a group, but it is not really being said but the behaviors, the non-verbal cues, you know people want to make you uncomfortable. . . their cold shoulders, so you would talk to them and they are very abrupt . . . They are not interested in being your friend . . . For me the major thing that stands out is *racism* [emphasis added].

From the above narratives, the co-researchers' post-migration struggles reflected my own journey. Despite these systemic racial challenges, we found hope in our faith; it gave us the perseverance to hold on with the spiritual conviction that "God [would] make a way out of no way" (Harvey et al., 2012, p. 34). This spiritual stance was pivotal to the meaning making process around us reconstructing our cultural identities.

Spiritual Grounding

The final theme in this category was "Spiritual Grounding." Considering that JCIW are often impacted by racial and gender biases (Brown, 2013), the intersectionality of these salient dimensions of identities exerts a unique effect on our CIR. Therefore, religious and spiritual practices played a pivotal role in our post-migration lived experiences as we faced dire adversities. The migration process for me and the co-researchers involved a period of deconstructed cultural identity, which consequently impacted our emotional and psychological well-being (Dixon, 2015). Studies have indicated that faith practices serve as coping responses among immigrants when dealing with difficult life events (Dixon & Arthur, 2019). That said, I relied on my faith practices (e.g., praying, devotions, and Scripture readings, etc.) for spiritual support, meaning making, and life satisfaction when confronted with post-migration stressors. The co-researchers also saw their spirituality as a great source of strength for them post-migration. They reported that their faith practices, such as praying, fasting, devotions, reflecting on Scriptures, praise and worship, and church attendance, played an important role during the post-migration process. The co-researchers further acknowledged that their socio-cultural positioning as a marginalized and non-dominant group presented institutional and systemic barriers for them within a dominant Canadian culture.

Subsequently, this marginality affected their cultural identities in that they felt significantly inferior to the privileged White majority groups in Canada. Further, they were categorized, racialized, traumatized and minoritized in a predominantly White Eurocentric society that merely tolerates them instead of celebrating their differences (Bissoondath, 2002; Dixon, 2015; Tastsoglou, 2002). That said, the co-researchers and I found solace in our faith and sought reassurance in the Word that reminded us that we were: "[A] chosen people, a royal

priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that [we] may declare the praises of [H]im who called [us] out of darkness into [H]is wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9, *NIV*, 1978). To illustrate, Carol (50+ years old) emphasized this form of spiritual grounding in the workplace within the Canadian context:

I am just an ordinary woman who is working . . . and things happen in the workplace . . . but my Christian faith has changed my vocabulary, attitude, and outlook as to how I should behave when things have been said to me that would hurt me. My Christian character takes on a different interpretation of them . . . [which means that these issues] *won't affect me to the point that I behave a way that looks unlike what the Christian behavior should be* [emphasis added].

Evidently, as JCIW we also navigated our cultural identities by being rooted in our faith practices. Despite the unforeseen hurdles that we surmounted along the way, we believed that God would give us the endurance to overcome our trials as we reconstructed our cultural identities in Canada. This form of spiritual growth motivated us to consider support outside the church community and become more action oriented in various aspects of our lives.

Seeking Counseling and Taking Action

"Seeking Counseling and Taking Action" was the last category that emerged from the data analysis. From this category, three themes were generated: (1) "Resistance to Counseling," (2) "Cultural Shift towards Counseling," and (3) "Taking Action." In this category, I share the stories of the co-researchers' views of counseling and taking action during their CIR process. My story and the personal accounts of the participants denoted ways in which we were willing to augment our faith with culturally sensitive counseling practices. Within the Jamaican context, counseling is usually considered taboo (Campbell-Livingston, 2021), and often leads to "avoidance, rejection, and even victimization (Whitley, 2021, para. 1). Data completed by the World Health Organization ([WHO], 2022) indicated that there is approximately one psychiatrist in Jamaica per 100,000 people compared to 13 per 100,000 individuals in the United States. Additionally, there is limited funding geared towards the nation's mental health care system and the services provided by mental health professionals like psychiatrists and psychologists are under-resourced (Whitley, 2021; WHO, 2022). Given this insight, it is not surprising that there is much stigma towards mental illness in the country and the most common response to the "mentally ill" person is "a fear of dangerousness" (Arthur et al., 2010, p. 261). Albeit the misunderstanding about the causes of mental illness has contributed to this form of fear response; a matter that requires attention.

Another area of concern for the populace is that there are grave skepticisms around psychological therapies that are rooted in Eurocentric epistemologies and ontologies. These westernized approaches fail to acknowledge alternative ways of knowing and being like supernatural factors such as demon possession, witchcraft, or magic (known locally as Obeah/Science; James & Peltzer, 2011; Whitley, 2021).

Considering the cultural misconceptions about Jamaican Canadians and the biased westernized approach to working with diverse immigrant groups (Moodley et al., 2012), I was hesitant to seek counseling as a coping method to assist with my post-migration stressors within a new cultural context. Instead of counseling, I used my faith to cope with various stressors. Also, the stigma associated with mental health in the Jamaican culture played a negative role in my resistance to counseling, as well as the absence of culturally appropriate services in Canada (Dixon, 2015). The understanding among certain immigrant groups like Jamaican Canadians, is that people who engage in counseling are "crazy" and "mentally disturbed"

(Sutherland, 2017, pp. 68, 70). This misguided understanding deterred the co-researchers from also seeking professional help to address their stressors. This meant that instead of seeking counseling, they depended on their religious practices to help them reconstruct their post-migration cultural identity.

Resistance to Counseling

The first theme generated from this category was the co-researchers' resistance to counseling. Their lived experiences resonated with mine because I too felt a level of mistrust engaging in counseling with a stranger outside my faith and culture. This mistrust also stemmed from a traditional Eurocentric approach to counseling in the dominant Canadian culture that valued westernized and individualistic views at the expense of culturally appropriate and responsive frameworks (Dixon & Arthur, 2019). Additionally, I would argue that I suffered from "healthy cultural paranoia", which meant that based on my traumatic experiences with microaggression and discrimination, I had a normal reaction of being suspicious and distrustful self-disclosing to a White therapist (Sue, 2006). Further, Canadian research has provided evidence that some immigrants' conceptualization of mental health, coupled with being grounded in their faith increased their resistance to seek counseling (Schreiber et al., 2000). The outcome of this research was consistent with the participants' stories, who leaned on their spiritual beliefs instead of trusting counselors with their problems.

Also, privacy is emphasized in the Jamaican culture with the proverbial phrase that "what happens in the family stays in the family" (Dixon, 2015, p. 136). There is also the belief for many believers that one's struggles with mental illness might signify a sign of spiritual weakness (Dixon, 2015). A person with this perspective might hold the conviction that they have wronged God and are not worthy of His mercy, grace, and forgiveness. Based on my interactions with the co-researchers, I learned that they viewed their hardships not as a spiritual weakness but rather a source of strength to help them cope with their post-migration issues (Dixon, 2015). That said, they found more comfort speaking to someone within the church community than seeing a counseling professional. In the words of Faye (29 years old): "I don't think I would go to counseling for adjustment issues. I would literally just talk to somebody in my church community." Faye's hesitation to engage in counseling was echoed by Warrior Princess (29 years old): "Sometimes it can be harder adjusting to a different culture, especially Canadian culture. However, in terms of adjusting I think prayer and getting the right support around you, and with the right circle of friends you should be okay."

Based on the co-researchers' subjective realities, their church community served as a "way station" or "bridge" (T. Strong, personal communication, May 2, 2013) to help them make meaning of the post-migration process. Nevertheless, with increased knowledge about the benefits of counseling, some of the participants, including myself, demonstrated a cultural shift towards professional help seeking behaviors outside of the church context.

Cultural Shift Towards Counseling

The second theme in the above category encompassed the co-researchers' cultural shift towards counseling post-migration. Undoubtedly, the post-migration journey for myself and the participants was a complex and multi-layered endeavor that required much CIR through faith. Aside from leaning on my spiritual grounding and religious principles to cope with post-migration stressors, I also saw value in seeking counseling support to work through mental health issues related to post-migration stressors like social dislocation. Working through my issues professionally provided me with new perspectives to view my presenting concerns. I was also able to address my own biases about counseling, given that a safe space was created

for me to integrate my faith without judgment from the counselor who was self-identified as a White male. In fact, I recalled the counselor gently praising me for being strong in my faith despite the struggles I was experiencing. Through my self-disclosures with the counselor, I felt heard, validated, and empowered in my truth as a woman of faith. My feelings were affirmed in the counselor's words: "[The primary researcher] does not hide the fact that central to her powerful, yet modest, drive for life and learning is a *steadfast spirituality* [emphasis added] that serves to guide and strengthen her. It is refreshing to me to see such honesty and openness in a young person about personal conviction and beliefs" (R. Baldwin, personal communication, April 23, 2002). With the aid of counseling alongside my faith, I was able to reconstruct my cultural identity from a trauma-informed and strength-based perspective.

Reflecting on the co-researchers' perspectives on counseling increased my cultural awareness about its usefulness in the lives of people of faith. For the most part, the participants expressed their views of counseling as a subjective and personal decision outside the scope of their faith (Dixon, 2015). Their openness to counseling to aid in their CIR demonstrated a unique cultural shift in their coping strategies as new immigrants. I was pleased to see that the co-researchers' spiritual grounding did not deter them from contemplating additional mental wellness support to help them navigate the adjustment process. Our initial reluctance to engage in counseling was influenced by cultural worldviews around the stigmatization of mental health.

Additionally, the limited attention given to counseling and mental health in the church community has contributed to the misperception about the profession (McCloud, 2011). The tension between faith and mental illness in church circles calls for a better understanding for believers to see the importance of counseling in the healing process of CIR for many immigrants (Williams, 2011). More so, counselors are encouraged to adopt a stance of "culturally humility" in their work with believers (Dixon, 2015). Coined by Tervalon and Murray-García (1998), the above concept signifies an ongoing interpersonal process that is other-oriented in relation to dimensions of cultural identity that are salient to the individual. In this research, culturally humility is not a singular point of learning but rather a co-created one that encompasses safety, respect, curiosity, and collaboration to help facilitate change and growth for diverse individuals. Embracing a cultural humility stance was reverberated by the co-researchers who boldly expressed their concerns to me about counseling within a westernized Canadian framework that tends to devalue the Pentecostal faith traditions. For instance, Andrea (53 years old) was very firm in her views on counseling:

It would be very useful for counselors to know that our faith is very important to us [Pentecostal Christians] and our faith is a life and death situation. A lot of us Christians would die for our faith. It supersedes everything. If you take away Christianity from us, we're almost left with nothing. It's our hope. It's our recreation. It's our outlet. It's our sorrow. It's our pain. It's our joy! It's everything to us. A lot of people go to counseling, and they come back to us [at church] and say, "They couldn't help me," and I do understand why they say that because the counselor across the chair does not understand them. *They [counselors] do not understand us because they have preconceived ideas of who we are and how we think* [emphasis added]. So, they tend not to deal with the situation at hand, but what they conceive.

The preceding view emphasized that counselors need to be humble, curious, open, spiritually sensitive, and non-judgmental in their work with Pentecostal clients. This means that counseling should be practiced in a manner that is demonstratively sensitive to the client's culture and religion to meet their needs. Likewise, it is incumbent on counselors to avoid

silencing the lived experiences and faith practices of immigrant clients; instead, they should consider the various factors that influence their CIR post-migration. By applying evidence-based and practice-based approaches to client-care (Dixon, 2022), counselors can offer culturally responsive and trauma-informed treatment interventions to support JCIW who seek mental health support. “Evidence-based practice” denotes the competency that mental health professionals like counselors acquire through clinical experience and practice, while “practice-based evidence” signifies a wide range of treatment methods and supports that are rooted in cultural worldviews and traditions (Dixon, 2022). Both approaches complement each other and can provide a unique lens through which to deliver psychological client-care to JCIW. In this vein, as believers of Pentecostal traditions we do see the increasing need to become actively involved in initiatives within and outside of the church community. This form of community involvement allows us to bridge the knowledge gap that exists between believers and non-believers around the Pentecostal faith, including but not limited to, counselling professionals.

Taking Action

The final theme that emerged from the above category centered around acting within and outside of the church setting to bring greater awareness to the Pentecostal faith. The co-researchers reasoned that through respectful and open dialogues with outsiders of the faith, they would be able to foster change on a communal level. Like the other JCIW, I strongly believe that the misperceptions that are associated with the Pentecostal faith can be mitigated through mutual respect and understanding from both believers and non-believers. Prior to this research, I would describe myself as “an undercover woman of faith” who was afraid to act and speak my truth. Undertaking this investigation with the other JCIW emboldened me in my faith to act through advocacy and education initiatives. To illustrate, I often engaged in meaningful religious discourses with colleagues at local, national, and international conferences about the Pentecostal faith. Also, disseminating knowledge through peer-reviewed publications about this contentious topic has invited insightful perspectives from both insiders and outsiders of the faith community. Through these diverse exchanges, I have become better informed about my faith and other people’s religious and cultural worldviews.

The co-researchers also shared my passion for advocacy and education. They talked about taking on the following duties: motivational speaking, mentoring, outreaching, and evangelizing (Dixon, 2015). Undertaking the above duties gave the women a sense of purpose, agency, and empowerment to “be doers of the Word [Bible] and not hearers only” (see James 1:22, *NIV*, 1978). This advocacy stance was addressed by Carol (50+ years old) who denoted:

I could be an advocate; we all have our biases, but you cannot allow it to rule you if you’re not willing to listen or hear the other side of the story. So, my role is to be a very good *motivational speaker* [emphasis added] in allowing others to understand my faith. I’m not saying you have to believe it.

Joining Carol in her quest for progressive change through advocacy, Faye (29 years old) spoke to the educational dimension of taking respectful action as a believer: “[I] look for unique opportunities to educate people at work about [my] faith and what [I] believe, while respecting that their belief systems might be different from [mine].” Faye’s insightful words speak to her increased cultural awareness to promote respect and appreciation for the multicultural mosaic of Canada and its diverse cultures. The insights provided by me, and the participants reinforced the value of using HI to shed light on our lived experiences post-migration that deserve a scholarly platform to be told, honored, respected, and validated.

Creative Synthesis

This creative synthesis emerged from the final stage of the data analysis. It consists of the sub-themes and subcategories established from the data. Expressed in poetic form, the creative synthesis represents the multiplicity of stories from all our perspectives as the co-researchers.

The Lived Experiences of Strong Women of Faith

*Strong women of faith, that's who we are
Overcoming the brutality of slavery to find freedom in the revolution of our spiritual bravery
Traveling across the seas in search of new possibilities, new dreams, new beginnings
Leaving behind a culture where life seems familiar, comfortable, and safe
Moving towards a life filled with false assumptions, culture shock, and acculturation difficulties
Trudging through snow, we confront the cold weather that pierces through our fragile bones and
hardens our hearts
In search of a new home where we belong
Where our spiritual uniqueness is accepted, and our religious beliefs and faith practices are celebrated*

*Strong women of faith, that's who we are
"Living storied lives"
"But one day soon the stories will no longer be, they will become life"
In search of unfulfilled dreams, we hope for a better existence
Broken, fragmented, and dislocated
Striving to reconstruct new cultural identities in the Canadian Dream
A place of misperceived abundance
Clinging to our faith to keep us anchored, grounded, and empowered
Praying for a more glorious day*

*Strong women of faith, that's who we are
Encouraging each other through our story sharing
Creating fluid cultural identities across history, time, and space
Acquiring strength through our faith to overcome post-migration stressors
Finding victories in our moments of defeats
We can't give up now
We may have lost some battles on racism, sexism, and discrimination
But we will win the war on our spiritual destination*

*Strong women of faith, that's who we are
Respectful of the multicultural policy that drives this nation
Trying to adjust within a culture that chooses to ignore our similarities and promote our differences
Pushed to the margins of a dominant society
Labeled as a minority and excluded from the majority
Judged by the color of our Black skin
Misunderstood for our ecstatic spiritual expressions
Speaking in tongues, dancing, singing, and clapping our hands
Shouting through our pain without holding back any emotion
Laying our burdens down at the altar as a sign of deep repentance*

*Strong women of faith, that's who we are
Boldly proclaiming our faith to those who are willing to listen
Living for today knowing that tomorrow is never guaranteed
Surrounded by a church community that provides spiritual shelter from the storms of life
Often feeling lost in the shadows of our mental health struggles*

*Employing the Bible as our guide to shape our cultural identities as immigrants in a new land
Finding encouragement in Scriptures to help us make meanings of our cultural identity reconstruction*

*Strong women of faith, that's who we are
Carrying the torch for our ancestors who bled and died for our freedom
Creating space for the legacy of our untold stories
Holding steadfast to the spiritual hope that lays before us
Guided by our faith to reconstruct new identities and rewrite the discourses of our cultural histories
Fighting for our voices to be heard above the echoes of marginalization and racial oppression
Upholding our spiritual truths in a diverse nation*

*Strong women of faith, that's who we are
Forever change through the redemptive power of the Scriptures
That bind us together with spiritual chords that cannot be broken
Awaken from our silences through the boldness of our faith
Proclaiming the truth of who we are and where we are going
Knowing that as Prayer Warriors our destiny awaits
Learning through our lived experiences that we are fashioned for a greater purpose
Believing that "God will make a way out of no way"
Our "faith is the cradle to the grave"*

Discussion

In this section of the paper, the strengths and limitations of the study will be addressed. Further, the reflection of the research process will shed light on key implications for theory, research, and practice relative to work with immigrant populations, including but not limited to, JCIW.

Strengths of HI

The HI methodology used in the present study had strengths and limitations that must be identified. These will be addressed successively. A major strength of this study is the utilization of heuristic methodology because it allowed me to explore a personal topic and created space for me to engage passionately with the phenomenon (Dixon, 2014). The qualitative nature of this HI study encouraged me to engage subjectively with the research and with the stories of the participants. Essentially, the richness of the co-researchers' generated stories from employing HI can be viewed as a source of strength, as it adds to our understanding of the importance of socio-cultural contexts within which JCIW of the Pentecostal faith gained the resilience to reconstruct meaning in their lives.

Another major strength is the postmodern social constructionism framework that guides this investigation. This theoretical framework privileges multiple realities and emphasizes the negotiation of meaning making through social interactions that bring forth diverse understanding (Andrews, 2012; Lock & Strong, 2010; Shotter, 1993). It further posits that the "way we understand the world is a product of a historical process of interaction and negotiation between groups of people" (McLeod, 1997, p. 83). Through story sharing, the co-researchers were able to bring unique perspectives to their lived experiences and reconstruct new meanings in the process. Adopting a social constructionist stance, I ensured that equal value was given to the subjective experience of each participant without privileging one person's story over another. Although all the women valued their Pentecostal faith experiences, I was mindful that space needed to be created to facilitate a safe space for each woman to reconstruct their own meaning making and subjective reality (Miller, 2003).

Limitations of HI

Despite the strengths of heuristic methodology, it also has limitations. A key consideration is that the HI study involves a subjective and interpretive process that is undertaken by the primary researcher (Sultan, 2019). While all efforts were made to ensure the accuracy of the findings generated from the data through member checking (Carlson, 2010), there was potential for the interpretive results to be considered somewhat biased. Hence, given this subjectivity, the outcomes might not be fully representative of the experiences of the participants in the study. Although, to address this potential shortcoming in the results I engaged in ongoing critical reflective self-awareness (Kondrat, 1999); this concept was earlier addressed in the paper.

Another area of concern might be the small sample size of seven participants, including the primary researcher. The participants were recruited from one geographical area that limits the findings from being generalizable to the larger population (Creswell, 2014; Smith, 2003). An adequate sample size is fundamental to ensuring credibility in qualitative research (Marshall et al., 2013). The justification of the sample size for this study was directly related to the concept of data saturation, previously discussed. That said, it is important to acknowledge that a larger number of participants would help to enhance the transferability of the outcomes. However, irrespective of the limited generalizability of this study, the generated findings from the collective lived experiences of the JCIW are perhaps applicable to other ethno-racial groups who also struggle with post-immigration stressors. For these individuals, this study may serve as a motivating force in propelling them to take autonomy and agency over their own narratives. By so doing, they will feel validated and empowered around expressing their truths in the knowledge-sharing process.

Reflection on the Research Process

Utilizing heuristic inquiry (HI) enabled me as the primary researcher to passionately engage with the phenomenon, which required a disciplined commitment to the exploration of individuals' lived experiences (Dixon, 2014). More so, using HI methodology to inform this research allowed me to join with the co-researchers on a transformative and reflexive journey of cultural identity reconstruction (CIR) through faith. In sum, examining the implications of this study in relation to theory, research, and practice would be helpful to better understand the dynamics of the CIR process for many immigrants, like JCIW.

Implications for Theory, Research, and Practice

The innovative research undertaken explored the lived experiences of JCIW who utilized their Pentecostal faith to cope with post-migration stressors. This study was paramount because it sheds light on the realities of a sub-population within Canada whose charismatic religious practices are often stigmatized and misunderstood by other traditional dominant religious groups (Wilkinson, 2011). Given a safe space to share their stories, these JCIW were able to reaffirm their cultural identity and provide data that is transferable to other non-dominant immigrant groups within Canada and beyond. What follows from the research are meaningful discussions that provide implications for theory, research, and practice.

To start, limited theorizing has been completed on the Pentecostal faith tradition in relation to JCIW. Past research that examined this faith has often portrayed it to be controversial based on factors such as untraditional style of worship, polarized perspectives about gender roles and expectations and hermeneutic underpinnings around Scriptures (Wilkinson, 2011). Developing theories that consider all dimensions of this faith's epistemological and ontological

practices will create a paradigm shift in the right direction for increased awareness amongst secular researchers, insider scholars of the faith tradition, and the larger religious community. Another area that could benefit from new theoretical models is cultural identity development. In this paper, attention was given to CIR (Gergen, 1985). With the understanding that identity is fluid and not rigid (Hall, 1997), creating theories that expand on the foundational work provided by Hall's construct of identity would strengthen the cultural identity scholarship.

Second, it is evident that more work is needed to fully understand the lived experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants, not only JCIW. The absence of equitable, diverse, inclusive, and sensitive voices in the multicultural counseling discourse about Black Caribbean women's religious worldviews requires further examination to address the gap that exists in the literature. Exploratory research into effective coping strategies for Black Caribbean immigrants in Canada is needed with focus given to the infusing of faith practices for these diverse groups. Further, an expansion of this study could look at the post-migration coping mechanisms for Black men from the Caribbean who are said to be less religious compared to their female counterparts (Chatters et al., 2008). The outcome of such a study would help to generate gender differences in religious faith and what might account for such variations in coping styles. Additionally, assessing the resiliency of Black Caribbean men in Canada would also be warranted since they are often portrayed in a criminalized and less humane manner in comparison to White males (Este et al., 2018). Research depicting the humanity and spiritual civility of this group would help to destigmatize such negative depictions and benefit their overall representations in Canada. However, despite the limited scope of this investigation that focused on the religious tradition of a particular sub-culture (i.e., JCIW), the outcomes still contribute invaluable insights to the multicultural counseling literature, psychology scholarship, religious debate, and qualitative methodology discussion. More so, the findings generated from this research highlighted the significance for further exploration about intersectionality between faith and social injustice issues amongst people of African descent across the diasporas (Dixon, 2015).

Finally, mental health help-seeking behavior among Black Caribbean immigrants is impacted by the availability of linguistically diverse and culturally appropriate services; how mental health issues are characterized across such multi-ethnic groups is also problematic (McKenzie et al., 2016). Therefore, counselors should consider approaches that avoid the judgment of ethno-cultural communities whose faith plays a critical role in how they make meaning of mental health issues. Such approaches should encompass the appraisal of mental health cross-culturally, traditional healing practices, and faith-based coping resources to better understand the underutilization of mental health services for certain immigrant populations like Black Caribbeans across the diasporas. Ignoring faith-based practices or not inquiring about the role of people's religion is not a neutral stance, as it sends a message that it is not important. Counseling professionals are encouraged to facilitate interactions with diverse religious clients whilst acknowledging that faith, churches, prayers, religious beliefs, and consultation with spiritual advisors play a significant role in mental health healing for these individuals (Issack, 2015). Therefore, instead of silencing dialogue about religion and spiritual beliefs, counseling professionals should recognize that there is a wide range of ways that people perceive and respond to the world through faith. These differences should not be minimized or ignored, but rather embraced to promote best practices in compassionate and culture-centered care.

Moreover, counselors require spiritual skill-building training to better serve their religious clients. Such training should reassess the incompatibility of westernized counseling approaches that tend to be individualistic when working with non-dominant immigrant groups who value connection through faith-based communities. These individualistic models can become a barrier for individuals seeking help from mental health professionals who might need to overcome the stigma associated with incorporating faith-based practices into counselling.

The taboo of incorporating faith-based practices into counseling must be called out as a form of oppressive practice that contributes to the barriers to seeking culturally responsive counseling services (Dixon & Arthur, 2019). Researchers should, therefore, strive to add to the existing literature on counseling psychology to inform mental health policies and interventions.

Conclusion

Using HI methodology to explore my research phenomenon was a challenging yet rewarding experience for me. This creative and unconventional first-person qualitative approach helped me to foster a deeper awareness of my co-researchers' subjective realities and enriched my understanding of the human experience (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985). Arguably, the outcome of this investigation would have been limited using a third-person perspective where researchers take the viewpoint of an outside observer to gather data about their study participants (Lumma & Weger, 2021). Although, a third-person perspective is often regarded as the gold-standard approach in mainstream psychological science, it lacks the ability to explore the meaning and tacit dimensions of a personal experience, which is otherwise not easy to measure (Lumma & Weger, 2021, Sultan, 2019). Regarded as exploratory and person-centered, HI aims to uncover tacit and novel facets of subjective experiences (Lumma & Weger, 2021). As such, the application of HI was suitable for the first author's research that aimed to center the unique lived experiences of JCIW who use the Pentecostal faith to reconstruct their post-migration cultural identities. Conducting this exploratory study was both transformative and therapeutic for me as a researcher because I was able to give voice to the stories of a sub-population in Canada whose faith signifies a salient aspect of their cultural identity reconstruction. Therefore, it is hoped that the outcome of this research will help to better promote the psychological well-being of non-dominant faith groups and improve counseling practice and research in Canada and beyond.

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Appendix A

Summary of Results

<p style="text-align: center;">I. Lived Experiences of the Pentecostal faith</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lifestyle changes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conversion b. A built-in community c. Story sharing 2. Outsiders' Perceptions of the Pentecostal Faith <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Lack of education 	<p style="text-align: center;">II. Gender Role Expectations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gender Role Pre-migration <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Traditional biblical interpretations 2. Gender Role Post-migration <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reconstructing biblical interpretations
<p style="text-align: center;">III. Defining Cultural Identity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pride in Jamaican Heritage 2. Factors Affecting Cultural Identity Reconstruction <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Culture shock b. Acculturation difficulties 3. Spiritual Grounding 	<p style="text-align: center;">IV. Seeking Counselling and Taking Action</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resistance to Counseling <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Cultural stigma and taboo b. Valuing privacy 2. Cultural Shift Towards Counselling <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Spiritually-wise counselling b. Spiritual sensitivity 3. Taking Action <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Advocacy b. Education

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Funding Acknowledgements: The authors disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This work was supported by the Open Access Publication Fund, University of Lethbridge Research Services and the Strategic Opportunities Fund, Research and Innovation Services, University of Lethbridge.

Article Citation

Dixon, S., Amin, D., & Arthur, N. (2023). Giving voices to Jamaican Canadian immigrant women: A heuristic inquiry study. *The Qualitative Report*, 28(7), 2172-2212. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2023.4775>
