

Erasing Invisibility, Inequity and Social Injustice of Africans in the Diaspora and the Continent, edited by Ukpokodu, Omiunota N. & Ojiambo, Peter O. Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017, 317pp, \$64.99, hardcover.

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African immigrants in the United States and across the African diaspora (United Kingdom, Canada, etc.) have been described as the new model minority. Much of the literature and research that examines the educational experiences of African immigrants in the United States have been scarce and limited. In the book: *Erasing Invisibility, Inequity and Social Injustice of Africans in the Diaspora and the Continent*, the authors take the reader into the sociocultural spaces of African immigrants as they navigate educational environments. The authors also provide a framework in understanding the educational needs of Africans within various countries post-colonial. By the end of the literature, the authors provide a discourse into the goals that the International Association of African Educators (IAAE) are reflecting in order to provide collective work on “*Erasing the invisibility of African educators, students, families and communities in the Diaspora and “motherland.”*”

In Part 1: Contextualizing Educational Scholarship from the Diaspora, the authors began the literature examining the environment that enables inequities in the educational experiences of African immigrant children in urban school environments. Much of the review of the literature have found that most African immigrants reside in urban cities. These individuals are said to be the fastest growing segment of the United States and come from twelve of the fifty-five African countries (Nigeria, Egypt, Ghana, Ethiopia, South Africa Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Morocco, Cape Verde, Sierra Leon, Eretria, Cameroon, Burundi). The author provided a glimpse into the dark side of African immigrant experiences of being the new model minority by exposing that, “African immigrant educators, students, and families are homogenized, marginalized, and ignored in Western institutions of learning across all levels (xviii).” These educational experiences within this sub-section were first-hand accounts from the parents of African immigrant children that described the ways their children are treated within the educational system. One example the literature pointed out was African immigrant children not being challenged in attaining gifted and advanced programs and classes. The *Struggles of Invisibility* sections lends itself as an avenue where the author provides the ways in which African immigrants are treated, further perpetuating their invisibility. African immigrant children are profiled under a Black racial identity microscope which does injustice in the ability to fully understand their unique achievements and experiences. The literature and research discussed within this sub-section looks exclusively at African immigrant experiences within the educational system and allows readers a glimpse into research examining the treatment this group endures in contrast to their peers. One common theme that was found in examining the sociocultural experiences of African immigrant families was marginalization in the form of linguistic by way of disaffirming their names and language barriers. Linguicism is one form of marginalization that further perpetuates the erasure of African immigrant students’ unique sociocultural selves. Research highlighted found that African students were disproportionately placed in ESL (English as a Second Language) classes and programs and forced to abandon their home language and accent; this marginalization was due to language and accent issues. The authors also parallel the reader into examining micro-insults. Research found that micro-insults are those curriculum that negatively degrade African culture thus negatively affecting African

immigrant students. Interview data found that negative perceptions and stereotypes were often at the hands of their counterparts—African American peers.

In Part 2: Africans Negotiating Transnational Spaces, the authors utilized this subsection of the literature to explore the ways in which African immigrants navigate their spaces by bringing attention to issues of identity, acculturation, and gender. The author of this chapter discussed the ways African-born immigrants acculturate within the United States by enmeshing within the African-American/Black identity. The issues with this enmeshment, as this chapter discussed in detail, was due to African immigrants claiming a Black identity which was challenged by Black, native-born Americans. The question of *Who is considered African American?* pivoted the discussion to provide compelling dialog on racial and ethnic identity. This chapter was compelling, discussing the dominant issues that African immigrants face while examining within group differences of African-born Americans and Black, native Americans identity development. African American identity, also known as Black Americans or American blacks, are individuals that are citizens of African slave or non-slave descendants, whereas, African born immigrants are those that are foreign born in an African country. African American identity traditionally focuses on the experiences of native Black American students contrast to the African immigrant identity. For African-born immigrants, the intent to claim the African American identity has been a long-endured struggle. One could argue that due to African immigrants being its own ethnic group that encompasses subgroups within the African content and diaspora, their wanting to identify with the dominant Black, native group goes against wanting to be distinguished as a heterogeneous group outside of the dominant American groups. The question I would pose in opposition to African-born Americans taking on the identity of African Americans, because little is known about the experiences of African immigrants in the United States, is due in part to the ways in which they acculturate into the dominant African American identity. I would also argue that many African-born immigrants may not all share the same sentiments regarding the claim to the African American identity. The challenge I pose is providing the avenues and the means whereby even in spaces where African-born immigrants identity with an African American identity, that this category provides an open discussion into what being African American means for both Black, native-born Americans and African-born immigrants.

In Part 3: Contextualizing Educational Scholarship from the African Continent, the authors utilized the final chapters within this sub section of the literature to guide the reader into the educational practices that aren't typically discussed in modern literature. For example, the authors discussed the educational practices of post-apartheid South Africa and the challenges in providing adequate educational and learning approaches to students. Within these chapters, the author provides recommendations for the emergence of African educators and the usefulness in their approach to championing educational modalities that can contribute to "African education both in the colonial and post-colonial period (xxiii)." The author points out that educational practices that are Eurocentric in nature lacks at providing the educational needs of Africans. One example is education that takes into consideration the values of its people. The inability of having indigenous educational experiences now, post-colonial is a narrative that further perpetuates the erasure of Africans within the educational shuffle. The need to study the educational experiences of Africans in the diaspora and on the continent of African goes far beyond being a reflection of the goals International Association of African Educators (IAAE). The authors within this literature provided a compelling argument on the importance of

inclusiveness of the educational experiences and needs of Africans on the continent and within the diaspora.

In conclusion, inequity exists in the educational experiences of African Americans in the diaspora. These inequities begin when African immigrants first come to the United States and are manifested in their educational environments. Linguistic marginalization experiences such as African students being prematurely placed in ESL classes and language bias as they navigated their school experiences. African immigrants also are faced with navigating spaces where their identity impacts the way society perceives them. This was highlighted as the authors discussed the dialog between native Black American students contrast to the African immigrant identity in the right to claim the African American identity. Overall, the authors succeeded in conceptualizing the inequities imbedded in the educational and transmigrates spaces for African immigrants and offered recommendations for clinicians, educators, and practitioners in order to improve relations in order to ensure the success of African immigrants.