

**INVISIBILITY, ANTI-BLACKNESS, AND PAN-AFRICAN CONNECTIVITY:
NARRATIVES OF AFRO-TRINIDADIAN FACULTY MEMBERS
NAVIGATING THE AMERICAN ACADEMY**

Dave A. Louis*
University of Houston

Nicha Otero
University of Arkansas Forth Smith

Sasha A. Fleary
City University of New York

Iva C. Gloudon
The University of the West Indies

Charles M. Hosten
Howard University

Hayden N. Noel
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Ian V. J. Murray
Alice L. Walton School of Medicine

Elliot D. Francois
Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business

Abstract: *Trinidad and Tobago, the twin island republic in the Caribbean, has produced a significant number of immigrants to the United States, many of whom are of African descent. Like many immigrant groups, they permeated all walks of American society, including the field of American higher education. This narrative exploration captured the perceptions, through scholarly personal narratives (SPN), of seven Afro-Trinidadian faculty members describing their experiences with (a) faculty and student interactions, (b) White populations, and (c) African American populations within the American Academy. The study generated the themes addressing the importance of cultural heritage as a tool for navigating negative workplaces and anti-Blackness, and the Pan-African commonality and camaraderie with African Americans. The study provided an emic look into the experiences and perceptions of an often overlooked, under-researched, and unique Black immigrant population that frequently, yet erroneously, is grouped with African Americans.*

Keywords: *Pan-African, Afro-Trinidadian, Faculty, Academics*

* Corresponding Author (dalouis@central.uh.edu)

INTRODUCTION

Although one-in-ten Black People living in the United States is an immigrant (Tamir & Anderson, 2022), Black immigrant populations in the United States remain an understudied population (Ifatunji, 2016). Unfortunately, because of their physical attributes, most prominently skin colour, many immigrants of African descent are frequently assumed to be African Americans and are overlooked, resulting in their invisibility within the larger social space (Louis et al., 2017; Warner, 2012). Nonetheless, Caribbean immigrants, one subset of African or African descended immigrants, have been a significant factor in the evolution of America's demographic composition. What also complicates matters is that Caribbean people comprise many nations, histories, and cultures; thus, exploring them as one collective group can be misleading and inaccurate if researchers overgeneralize or extrapolate their findings of one Caribbean group to explain the experiences of differing Caribbean groups.

Thus, the exploration of individualised cultures and their distinct experiences, and in this case as immigrants navigating the environment in the United States, is a viable and necessary practice to respect and acknowledge the beauty and uniqueness and plethora of Caribbean cultures. As such, this current study utilises the university environment in the United States, *quae sunt* the American Academy, as a representative system characteristic of the White, westernised, capitalistic, hegemonic and belief structures of the larger society (Anderson, 2015). The study then provides the narratives of seven Afro-Trinidadian faculty members describing their experiences navigating race and racism within the American Academy concerning (a) faculty and student interactions, (b) White populations, and (c) African American populations. Specifically, their narratives elucidate their perceptions on the importance of their Trinidadian culture and Trinidadian background in navigating their academic environment.

U.S. Immigration and the Caribbean

People from the Caribbean began immigrating to the United States en masse approximately one hundred years after the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, which heralded the de jure, although not the de facto, freedom of enslaved African populations (Zong & Batalova, 2016), of which a significant portion were of African descent. By 2014 "approximately 4 million immigrants from the Caribbean resided in the United States, accounting for 9 percent of the nation's 42.4 million immigrants" (Zong & Batalova, 2016, para. 1). Additionally, according to the Migration Policy Institute, the Caribbean is the most common region of birth for the 4.5 million Black immigrants in the United

States (Lorenzi & Batalova, 2022). By 2019 the twin island nation of Trinidad and Tobago accounted for the fifth largest Caribbean population (Lorenzi & Batalova, 2022). Today there are over a quarter million immigrants from Trinidad and Tobago residing in the United States (Zong & Batalova, 2019; U.S. Census Bureau, n.d). In 2009, Trinidad and Tobago immigrants constituted 8% of all Black Americans; and their children (first generation Caribbean-Americans) represented 12% of all Black children in the nation (Waters et al., 2014). Thus, any study that involves Afro-Caribbean populations has the potential to add to the complex discourse on diversity in the United States.

The process of immigrating is a complicated experience for an individual and typically involves re-socialisation and the development of new and foreign intergroup relations (Berry, 2001). Processes such as cultural transference, assimilation, integration, acculturation, and economic impacts also occur with individuals who emigrate (Bove & Elia, 2016; Cameron et al., 2014; Hirschman, 2013). Immigrants from Trinidad and Tobago are no exception, as they consequently adapt to their new American environment yet retain significant elements of their own Trinbagonian culture while contributing to the host country. Trinidadian poet Paul Keens-Douglas exemplifies this duality in his poem entitled *This an' Dat*, featuring a conversation occurring in England between a Trinidadian immigrant and an Englishman that hinges on migration, language, and colonialism. The Trinidadian in the poem aptly states to the Englishman, “*For when you run from dialect, is you runnin’ from you,*” meaning that even if one may exist in a foreign land their culture remains with them. In a nuanced manner the selected quote embodies the dichotomy that immigrants consistently endure; an ongoing fissiparousness of living, navigating, and contributing to a Europeanised culture while being the progeny of an African culture (Fanon, 1967).

Anti-Blackness and The White Academy

Upon arrival to the United States, Afro-Caribbean immigrants are instantaneously positioned and categorised as “racial minorities”, *ergo* “Black” (Hilaire, 2006; Warner, 2012; Louis et al., 2017). As a result of this racialised marginalisation the immigrants realise they are systematically and individually denied privileges in a similar fashion that other ethnic minorities, such as African Americans, are denied. Simply put, they experience anti-Blackness. Succinctly, anti-Blackness is the persistent cultural disregard for Black people in White Europeanised societies whereby Black people become the “embodiment of problem” (Dumas, 2016, p. 15). DuBois (1903) referred to the issue of anti-Black sentiment in a White world in *The Souls of Black Folks* when he stated, “the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line,” and it has spilled over into the twenty-first century as well. This anti-Blackness is perpetuated in and through institutions and organisations of which universities are a subset (Feagin,

2006). Although the university can often be viewed as a liberal space it can also be one which exacerbates this racism, hegemony, and marginalisation (Anderson, 2015; Shaw, 2014). Louis et al. (2017) state that “These spaces are perpetuated by not only the building blocks of European university systems, but also colonial ideals that have been fostered for centuries creating university campuses which have enrolled predominantly White populations” (p. 673).

Invisibility and Racial Positioning

The all-encompassing, unnuanced, coating of Afro-Caribbean people with a negative racial connotation and one without power is a new personal experience for Afro-Caribbean immigrants to the United States. Indeed, racism in the Caribbean exists and is well documented (Law & Tate, 2015); and the vestiges of European colonialism and Afro-East Indian tensions are palpable. Yet, anti-Blackness in such an overt manner, both individually and institutionally, coupled with invisibility, is difficult to reconcile. Case and Hunter (2014) state that Black Caribbean immigrants experience racism-related stress and it is related to changes in their racial identity because of the transference of meaning of “Blackness” from the Caribbean perspective to the United States’ perspective. Therefore, Afro-Caribbean immigrants become invisible in terms of a unique culture and are swooped up in the broadened Americanised societal perception of Blackness (Warner, 2012). Mwangi (2014) and Bryce-Laporte (1972) refer to this as “double invisibility.” Contradictorily, despite the racial marginalisation, Afro-Caribbean immigrants have outperformed their African Americans counterparts in the job market regardless of metric (Ifatunji, 2016; Model, 2008), and furthermore can be perceived as “model minorities” (Ifatunji, 2016). This success does not help the social chasm between Afro-Caribbean people and African Americans. Many Afro-Caribbean individuals are hesitant to interact and align with African Americans and create a social barrier (Waters, 1994). Lewis (2003) refers to the creation of distance as “border skirmishes” and Mwangi (2014) calls it “social positioning.”

Trinidad and Tobago’s Influence in the United States

Caribbean immigrants, including Trinidadians and Tobagonians, like many other Caribbean immigrant groups, have contributed to the landscape of the United States in numerous arenas such as government, social justice, the arts, and education (Louis et al., 2020). Notable examples of Trinidadians who shaped, or continue to shape, the American landscape are social justice activist Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture), 2005’s New York Transit Strike leader Roger Toussaint, the former director of the U.S. Department of Treasury Larry Felix, and president of Howard University Dr. Wayne Frederick. Oftentimes contributions of Trinidadians and Tobagonians to the United

States are not always well-documented; however, the mainstream society has been peppered with artistes of Trinidadian and Tobagonian heritage such as Kareem Abdul-

Jabbar, Tatyana Ali, Heather Headley, Nia Long, and Alphonso Ribeiro, and more recently Romany Malco, Nicki Minaj and Cardi B. Unfortunately, even less is mentioned of their predecessors like Geoffrey Holder, Lorraine Toussaint, and Pearl Primus, individuals who not only contributed to various art forms, but could be said to have made significant changes to them. One of the biggest cultural contributions, not just to the United States, but to the global music landscape, is the steelpan. Originated in Trinidad and Tobago in the 1930's, the steelpan is noted as being the only acoustic musical instrument invented in the 20th century (Smith, 2012) and the history of the instrument can be "traced back to the enslaved Africans who were brought to the islands during the 1700s" (Steel Pan History and Development 2021, para. 1). It is a symbol of Afro-Trinidadian resilience and ingenuity, especially during European colonialism. Martin's 2017 book *Steelpan Ambassadors: The US Navy Steel Band, 1957–1999* is one example of Trinidad's culture melding with American culture. Steelpan music is taught from the elementary up to the collegiate level in the United States. Thus, Trinidadians of African descent have made indelible marks on American culture, way of life, and education despite the hostile racial environment to which they have unwittingly chosen to emigrate and exist.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this autoethnographic case study was to capture the perceptions of Afro-Trinidadian faculty members about the relevance of their Trinidadian culture to their existence as a faculty member in the United States. According to Mills et al. (2010), an autoethnography "is a form or method of research that involves self-observation and reflexive investigation" (p. 43), and Creswell (2002) states that a case study is "an in-depth exploration of a bounded system" (p. 485) such as a specific group of individuals. Yin (2012) states that case study research "aims to produce an invaluable but complex understanding—an insightful appreciation of the 'case'—hopefully resulting in new learning about real-world behavior" (p. 142).

The aim of the study was to deepen and foster an increasingly nuanced conversation about the experiences of African Diasporic immigrant while focusing on Afro-Trinidadian faculty and their experiences in the American Academy and the role of Trinidadian culture in navigating the university environment. Concurrently, the study's findings can expand the discourse on Black Caribbean immigrant invisibility and the crucial role of culture in acculturation and assimilation. The study also delves into and sets an example for Caribbean researchers to explore individualised national and

cultural populations within the Caribbean rather than subsuming all cultures and assuming that their perceptions and experiences are all the same.

The study explores the Afro-Trinidadian participants' insights regarding their Trinidadian culture and background shaping their experiences with (a) faculty and student interactions, (b) White populations, and (c) African American populations in the university environment. Contextually, Black faculty members constitute only 2% of all faculty members in the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2020); thus, a critical impetus for conducting this study was the fact that Afro-Caribbean faculty members, which includes Afro-Trinidadians, are not accounted for in educational reports, reinforcing the invisibility of the immigrant populations. Therefore, it is critical to elucidate the cultural perspectives and lived experiences of this under-researched and invisible population while enriching the discourse on the multifaceted nature of Blackness, specifically as it relates to the American Academy and racism in the United States.

Conceptual Framework

Three major concepts informed the inquiry. The first concept is Tuwe's (2016) notion of the necessity of the use of Indigenous paradigms in research and that "the African oral traditional paradigm of storytelling is an effective and appropriate methodology to use in the investigation of employment-related experiences and challenges" (p. 1). Tuwe asserts that a qualitative approach is recommended for studies in which African lives are being investigated, especially "the social impact of the employment-related experiences and challenges on the lives and well-being of African communities" (p. 10). Although the backdrop of his work involved Africans in New Zealand, the premise holds constant in terms of the ethnic and racial power structures within European westernised societies.

The second framing concept was Mwangi's (2014) assertion of the "black and black divide" between Afro-Caribbean immigrants and African Americans. She discusses the phenomena of the "homogenizing effect of being Black in America" (p. 1) and that African descended immigrants engage in a "form of social distancing which includes avoiding close relationships with African Americans" (p. 11) with the intention of protecting themselves from the racial injustices that have occurred to African Americans.

Thirdly, Waters' (1999) belief that relationships between Afro-Caribbean immigrants and White Americans are "tense" and "unaccepting" as a result of the prevalent anti-Blackness sentiment in the larger society was also used in framing the study. Waters

concludes her book, *Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities*, stating,

W. E. B. Du Bois wrote in 1903 that the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line, and that a veil separates Black from White in America. As we enter the twenty-first century, the tragedy is that America has sold West Indians a bill of goods—a universal ideology of inclusion that in reality is based on defining [B]lacks as “the other,” the people who can never really be Americans. (p. 344) Inevitably, Afro-Caribbean immigrants will most likely be viewed by White individuals and White populations as a socially and historically marginalised American “Black” person even though the Caribbean person may at times benefit from the status of the “model minority” and have gains in employment and housing (Ifatunji, 2016).

METHODS

Kim (2016) states “narrative thinking is a method of making a story out an experience” (p. 156) and the researchers sought to tell a unique counter story and to express their experiences in the most authentic way possible. To capture the voices and meaning it was decided that an autoethnographic narrative approach using Scholarly Personal Narratives [SPN] (Nash, 2004), incorporating philosophies rooted in counter storytelling (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002), would serve as the foundation for the study’s design.

SPN is a unique approach within the narrative tradition (Nash, 2004). This approach deliberately uses the insights and observations of the scholar as the primary data source. It places the participants’ expressions at the centre of the study and uses their lenses to describe, and construe, the meanings of their experiences. The authors adopted guidelines developed by Nash (2004) and Nash and Bradley (2011) in developing a series of reflective prompts for the participants to structure and compose their narratives.

The participants wrote in a free-flowing manner with no restrictions placed on length, expression, word choice, or language. They wrote on topics and experiences pertinent to their role as faculty members in the United States and the influence that their Trinidadian culture had on their perspectives, observations, reactions, or behaviours within the university environment. Subsequently, the narratives were coded, utilising open coding and pattern coding (Saldaña, 2015). Themes were then derived from the emergent codes.

In terms of Indigenous paradigms (Tuwe, 2016), the team playfully coined their approach as a “*Rapso approach*” since they viewed the exercise as an infusion of their

culture, their experiences, their voices, and their stations as key informants which should yield a culturally authentic view of their collective lived experiences. Rapso is a Trinidadian musical genre evolving since the 1970's "which sought to construct an indigenous identity independent of the cultural hegemony of its former British colonial authority" (Van Leeuwaarde Moonsammy, 2013, p. 214). She continues, Rapso, "de power of de word in de riddim [rhythm] of de word," is a genre of lyrically oriented rhythmic performance and music from Trinidad. It is deeply rooted in the traditions of oral culture and resistance ... rebellion not only against the institution of slavery, with its laws banning public gathering among slaves, but also against the idea that to be black was to be inferior and powerless. (p. 214 and 220)

The research team fully agreed that the study was inherently centred on the Trinidadian culture as their prime basis for navigating the American Academy, and furthermore they were using their voices, their experiences, and their perceptions as key informants to produce a counter story to communicate the lived experiences of people regularly omitted from the larger dominant-group narrative (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Concurrently, the researchers' rationale for exploring solely the Trinidadian culture out of many Caribbean cultures was to engage an exploratory journey that: (a) focuses on one culture instead of conflating it with the various national cultures that exist within the Caribbean, and (b) does not generalise all Caribbean cultures as the same.

"De Trini Culture"

The journey of the Trinidadian cultural identity has evolved through being native Amerindian peoples, through African Slavery (Brereton, 2000), and through Indian indentureship (Roopnarine, 2018). There are very few studies that explore the values and culture of held by Trinidadians (or any individual Caribbean nations nation for that matter). This lack of cultural research can be viewed as a limit to any study, but it is imperative to start at some juncture. However, as an autoethnographic study leaning on the precepts of counter storytelling, a cultural consultant was brought in to give context of the Trinidadian culture and values. Elliot Francois, a coauthor who was brought into the study as a cultural consultant, is a Trinidadian musician, artist, actor, photographer and arts administrator with over twenty-five years of experience in the entertainment industry, asserts there are intrinsic facets to Trinidadian culture that always make them stand out from the crowd. He travelled globally promoting Trinidad's culture including playing calypso/soca music with bands such as "3 Canal" and touring with steelpan ensembles. He has also worked for the Trinidad and Tobago government in the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts. In describing Trinidadian culture, he states, Globally, people are drawn to the culture of Trinidad and Tobago. Is it our simple

way of dealing with life and the joie de vivre that we wear in our smiles and how we walk and talk.

Trinidadians are an easy-going people who try their best not to stress too much about the trappings of the world and prefer simplicity in lifestyle rather than lavishness. Trinidadians display educational prowess, intellect and understanding of world issues. In my view, it is the sum of all these things which manifests itself fully in and around our annual African-birthed celebration simply named "Carnival." This celebration incorporates creative thinking, logistics analysis, marketing strategies, social understandings These attributes are what assist in our navigation of society. Thus, the Afro Trinidadian culture is multilayered, complicated, multiethnic, and yet grounded in social easiness, compassion, malleability, enjoyment, intellectualism, pride, creative thinking, and social awareness. These concepts were kept in mind when engaged in the analysis of the study data.

Sampling, Participants, and Plural Positionality

Purposeful sampling and convenience sampling (Patton, 2014) were employed, and each participant was selected based on two characteristics: (1) individuals who identified as both born Trinidadians and being of African descent and (2) individuals employed as full-time faculty members at universities in the United States. Only Trinidadian faculty members participated in the study and not Tobagonian faculty members. This occurred out of lack of accessibility to Tobagonian faculty members and not through intentional exclusion of Tobagonians. Three of the initial researchers knew each other, and for the purposes of the study each reached out to other Trinidadian faculty members with whom they were acquainted to determine interest in being part of the study. Subsequently, seven Afro-Trinidadians, four of whom self-identified as men and three of whom self-identified as women, who held faculty positions at universities in the United States served as participants for the study. All participants earned their doctoral degrees in the United States and/or North America. Each participant selected a pseudonym for the purposes of anonymity. Although more details about the participants and their institutions would provide additional layers of context to the findings, the team agreed that the institution type and location of their respective universities should remain anonymised to further protect identities. However, every institution was an accredited institution which conferred, at minimum, bachelor's degrees. No community college faculty members were utilised for this study.

The participants who self-identified as women were Evelyn, Esther, and Lydia, and the participants who self-identified as men were Wilfred, Cecil, Tom, and Vincent. One of the participants also served as the lead researcher on the study even though the

research team consisted of all seven participants. This state of plural positionality entails being concurrently both researcher and participant as key informants (Louis et al., 2017) and provided opportunities for individuals to clarify, support, critique, define, redefine, and expand upon the meaning of information shared within their narratives; subsequently providing greater depth and authenticity to the findings. In terms of authorship, two of the authors served as the lead researchers and lead analysts, the other researchers were involved in discussions about both the methods and findings, and one researcher served as a consultant on Trinidadian culture. All individuals submitted components of writing used towards the final manuscript.

Procedure and Analysis

After a team discussion about the nature of the study, the lead researcher developed an instrument comprising five items/prompts for the participants to reflect on and compose their narratives around their experiences as an Afro-Trinidadian faculty member, and to reflect on the role Trinidadian culture played in navigating the academic space (Appendix A). Ideas of “race” or “racism” were not used in the construction of the prompts; however, participants’ interactions with specific ethnic groups were addressed. The prompts were constructed primarily to inquire about participants’ interactions and difficulties with respect to “faculty and/or colleagues”, “student”, “African American individuals” and “White individuals”. The subsequent prompts probed into the manner in which Trinidadian values and/or characteristics assist them to navigate, work with, and resolve issues with the specific groups. Therefore, it directly addressed difficulties in the workplace and the role of Trinidadian culture; therefore, “race” or “racism” did not necessarily have to be elements that emerged.

Prior to the dissemination of the instrument to the participants, the instrument was vetted by the lead researcher to an independent qualitative researcher not related to the study to assure that the prompts were as clear and accurate as possible to the essence of the study. Concepts from Waters (1999) and Mwangi (2014) served as the framework for the instrument and was used to make meaning of the collected data. However, with respect the central analysis, the researchers used open coding. The lead researcher emailed the instrument to the fellow participants and kept one for his own use. Participants had four weeks to reflect on the prompts, make notes and write, edit and re-edit, and thoroughly construct their individual narrative with no limits on expression or articulation. They returned the completed narratives to the lead researcher, who anonymised and compiled the narratives. The lead researcher subsequently requested clarification on aspects of the narratives, if necessary. The

participants possessed the time, space, and ability to edit and re-write, which provided an additional level of member checking and confirmability.

Two lead researchers, one man and one woman, conducted a basic thematic analysis on the narratives using both open coding and pattern coding. Open coding was administered to each narrative, and all relevant quotes were extracted. Saldana (2015) also calls this 'initial coding', which "is an opportunity [for the] researcher to reflect deeply on the contents and nuances of [the] data and to begin taking ownership of them" (p. 100). Line-by-line initial coding was executed (Charmaz, 2006). After the initial coding, connections and patterns between the initial codes were aligned via pattern coding (Saldaña, 2015; Miles & Huberman, 1994). From this exercise, themes emerged from the narratives and relevant quotes were extracted to exemplify the major themes from the data.

Trustworthiness

The researcher constructed the study protocol to ensure trustworthiness as outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985). The member checking aspect of the protocol provided ample chances for participants to explain and expound upon the meaning within their narratives, bolstering credibility and confirmability. The specific nature of this study, with respect to Afro-Trinidadian participants, makes transferability of the data uniquely contextual. Thus, any individual utilising the data must consider the original and outlined contexts of the data if the findings are to be used for future research.

Assumptions

One key assumption for this study is that Trinidadian culture plays a role in Afro-Trinidadian faculty members navigating their interactions, environments, and situations within the American Academy. Another assumption for this study is the notion that universities within the United States are "White spaces" (Anderson, 2015) which perpetuate White colonialised hegemonic norms, reflected in the institutions' structures, policies, and actions, hence asserting that racial biases are embedded in the ecology of universities in the United States (Feagin, 2006). Although the American Academy is not representative of the entire population of the United States it a revered nationwide operation, conglomeration, enterprise, and educational system that holds significant influence on the larger society.

Positionality of the Lead Researcher

Although the entire research team designed the study, one individual acted as the lead researcher, who not only disseminated study materials and collected the primary data

but also engaged and guided the analysis of the data. It is imperative to understand the positionality of the lead researcher because it “describes an individual’s worldview and the position they adopt about a research task and its social and political context” (Holmes, 2020, p. 1). Therefore, being cognisant of the researcher’s background and lens is vital when contextualising the process, design, data, analysis, themes, and findings.

The lead researcher for this study was an Afro-Trinidadian male who emigrated to the United States in his early twenties. Born in Trinidad, he attended primary and secondary schools in Trinidad. He grew up in, what was deemed at the time, a middle-class neighbourhood on the outskirts of the capital city of Port-of-Spain. He attended and graduated from college and graduate school in the United States. He is currently a faculty member at a large research university and has been involved in higher education for almost twenty-five years, of which over ten years he has served as a faculty member. His research agenda focuses on the experiences of individuals and groups of the African Diaspora within higher education. He has lived in the United States for over thirty years. He is proud of his Trinidadian culture and heritage. Therefore, he possesses contexts and experiences as an immigrant from a Caribbean nation, as a student at institutions of higher education in the United States, a researcher of ethnic minority experiences, and as a faculty member in the American Academy.

FINDINGS

Three major themes emerged from the analysis of the narratives: (1) Resilience the Trini way, (2) Racism, microaggression, and disrespect, and (3) Tempered affinity with African Americans. The following subsections detail the themes that emerged. Although there was a surplus of narrative describing the themes, the quotes chosen for this section most effectively highlighted the experiences of the participants.

Theme 1: Resilience the Trini Way

Throughout the narratives, the participants consistently referred to notions of being relentless, unfettered, and unintimidated. Dogmas of perseverance to success and resilience through adversity with respect to their experiences as faculty members were also strewn throughout the narratives. Each participant discussed having to find ways to traverse the Academy. But what became evident was common loci of strength and encouragement, in particular the families and communities from which participants originated. Ironically, they all tapped into a core Trinidadian quote that embodied this resilience. Cecil also saw his family’s motto merged with the Trinidadian culture and experiences growing up on the island. He wrote, My family’s motto is “cork can’t sink”

... From a small child, I think that I learned perseverance from attempting to swim at Maracas Bay. The waves were so big, and I was so small. I then learned that there was a rhythm, and I had to time the entry, and if the wave was too close, to jump or duck under. From this I learned that almost any obstacle was formidable due to the inherent fear, and that this fear was basically a fear of not knowing, or not acting. I have repeatedly switched research focus, and even changed careers [within higher education], always diving into new endeavours with the same passion and fearlessness that I learned at Maracas Bay.

Evelyn shared her Trinidadian moniker, 'All skin teeth eh laugh.' She stated that "is most applicable with how we have to function in academia. You can't trust everyone who smiles at you; stay vigilant, not everyone is your friend." The saying translated means that not every person who smiles with you is your friend or advocate or ally; thus, it allowed her to be wary of her surroundings and of the politics involved in being a faculty member.

Vincent had two quotes that illustrated both his resilience and the level of poise that he had to exercise to be a faculty member. The first, "Crab doh fraid crab," meant that as an individual one cannot run away from a fight or adversity, and summarily as a person you are just as equipped as the adversary. The saying instils confidence in one's own abilities while having the resolve to stand in the midst of negativity. Accordingly, Vincent shared his father's saying, "Doh dig no blues" [translated: do not stress or worry about a negative situation], which meant do not worry about anything and to be calm in antagonistic situations. Vincent shared that he thought of his father's saying and composure as a model of how he needed to deal with uncomfortable scenarios as a faculty member.

Esther's and Lydia's quotes exemplified preparedness for difficult situations in life. Esther's quote was, "Yuh cyah play mas if yuh fraid powder," referring to the throwing of powder into the air and on people during the national festival of Carnival. One has to be aware of the situations in which they find themselves and prepare accordingly. If one is to go into the streets during Carnival festivities then they need to be prepared to have powder thrown around or on them; they cannot be skittish, squeamish, or perturbed by the "powder assault." The same line of thinking applied to her as a faculty member in that she had to understand the sometimes violent or volatile environment in higher education. Lydia's quote also alluded to understanding one's situation and role in the Academy but additionally suggested an understanding of their extraordinary ability to deal with difficult situations: "Cattle horn never too heavy for him to carry" indicates that a cow's/bull's horns can be heavy and burdensome but carrying the burden is also the nature of being a cow/bull. Concurrently, even though the horns may be

burdensome, the ability and strength of the cow/bull is inherent in its being. Thus, being a faculty member naturally carries with it aspects that can be burdensome but as a Trinidadian these aspects should be understood and prepared for.

Resilience and resoluteness were illustrated by all of the Trinidadian quotes employed by the participants. Embedded in these quotes was a great sense of identity, self-worth, and confidence rooted in Trinidadian culture, which enabled the participants to steer through difficulty in their roles as faculty members in the American Academy.

Theme 2: Racism, microaggression, and disrespect

Although the study instrument was designed to address faculty life, tenure and promotion, and interaction with White individuals separately, it became exceedingly evident during the analysis that participants' experiences with racism from White individuals impacted all three areas. Additionally, the experiences were primarily negative with respect to student and faculty members. Incidents of racism, microaggression, and disrespect were plentiful. It must be noted that some participants experienced positive interactions. However, these were drastically overshadowed by negative incidents. Racism was found in classrooms with students' behaviours, faculty with dismissive overtones, and White individuals in positions of power and influence asserting their power and influence unnecessarily. Participants also expressed the idea that the racism was both overt and latent. Evelyn wrote, I have also encountered more than my fair share of racist faculty and students. The experiences were even more difficult because the racist behaviours were not overt; instead, their behaviours left me trying to figure out what was wrong with the encounters, was it racism or naïveté, or was it just me. Having to constantly navigate and interpret these encounters was exhausting and demoralising.

Faculty peer interactions were tenuous for the majority of participants. Evelyn shared, "I have had White faculty attempt to bully me". Vincent shared, There are some White faculty that always interrupt me. I observe them let White junior faculty ramble on. But once I begin to speak, within a couple of sentences they interrupt. And yes, I've called them on it many times.

Vincent continued in his narrative to describe power struggles and power imbalances that White faculty members perpetuate. Wilfred stated, "In my department there was a clique of White professors who influenced promotions and tenure ... but coming from Trinidad I believe I was prepared to deal with these issues." Tenure and promotion and respect for scholarship were issues that arose in almost all the narratives. Additionally,

the idea of a hidden agenda and the lack of procedural transparency by White faculty colleagues was evident. Esther wrote, There are so many factors other than your scholarship that come into play. Especially when you may be the only Black faculty member in a department. There is often the systemic racism: you do not really have colleagues, and you are on the outside of what is going on within the department ... you remain an outsider no matter how long you have been there. And people who have hidden agendas are often in charge of your future. It is important to note again that systemic racism is a big factor. You are just never going to be an insider. Cecil attributed his race and culture as elements that adversely affected his promotion, noting: Race played an issue in my not getting tenure.

The department chair indicated that I “could not swim with the sharks.” My outgoing and carefree attitude, and my Caribbean Black stereotype got in the way of my performance ... because of my laidback, jovial attitude.... Sometimes I get the feeling that others think that I am not that well educated because of my laid back or jovial attitude. Additionally, interactions with White students also precipitated racism. Tom reflected, the lack of respect for my position from students was a challenge as well ... Once a student (White male) was trying to get my attention during breakout sessions (students were in groups discussing a Harvard Business School case). I did not hear him initially, so he snapped his fingers and said out loud, “Yo!” I was stunned at this disrespect. I reprimanded him, of course. Also, invariably White male students will call me by my first name during class. This always amazes me. Vincent reflected on his classroom interaction and shared, I have experienced a number of times where White, male students especially, attempt to fight against what I outlined in my classes or aggressively rebut a topic. It’s like they dare themselves to buck up against me. You can tell the difference in disposition between a genuine inquiry and their hostile and intentional attempt to challenge you.

I am all for questioning, and inquiry, and disagreement, but when they flat out say that they will not do a particular assignment as outlined in the course or end an in-class discussion with “I don’t care what you say, I think this” then that is just being blatantly disrespectful. I’ve not received that from any other group of students. Interestingly, the realisation of a non-African American (Trinidadian) culture caused White students and faculty to hesitate. Additionally, through their Trinidadian culture many of the participants found ways to challenge their White interactors. Esther shared an encounter. When you face a class of only White students you initially get all of the issues and assumptions that they may have about you as a Black person. Once you open your mouth and they hear your different accent; there is a tendency for them to take a second look at you in an effort to evaluate you in a way that they were not initially expecting One day, in a heated session/discussion around race, a student asked me “why did all of

the Black students sit together at the university's basketball games?" He thought that was a display of prejudice and they all agreed. I paused for a second and I laughed. They wanted to know what was so funny. I replied, "That perspective is a funny thing." They wanted to know what I meant. [Again], I replied, "It was funny because I always wondered why all of the White people sat together at the games." It was quiet in the classroom and there was no further response. The participants all encountered racism from White individuals across the spectrum of the college environment. Concurrently, they addressed individuals or situations directly, utilising their Trinidadian cultural ethic of being unfettered and undaunted as expressed in Theme 1.

Theme 3: Tempered Affinity with African Americans

With respect to African Americans, there was a bifurcated sentiment. The participants expressed profound respect for and affinity with both student and faculty members who were African Americans. There was an overwhelming level of reverence expressed about the history and social (historical and current) experiences of their African diasporic counterparts. The participants expressed a connectivity and a "Black oneness" with African Americans. However, there were corresponding acknowledgements of the differences that existed between Afro-Trinidadians and African Americans with hints of ethnic bifurcation and tension. In terms of positive sentiments towards African Americans Wilfred shared, "I feel deeply connected to African Americans. My experience working with them has been very good. I have worked collaboratively with faculty." Cecil also expressed positive interfaces with African Americans, "The interactions that I have had have been good, students and faculty alike, as we share common disadvantages." Commonality in the African diasporic experience was expressed in the narratives. Vincent wrote, They [African Americans] are my brothers and sisters. I think there is an authentic connection. Simply put, we are the product of forcibly displaced African populations. I've had relatively no negative issues with African Americans, at least not any more than with my Black Caribbean counterparts. I relate very much to my students and my faculty peers. Are there some African Americans who question my "Blackness"? Sure. But I tally that mistrust to colonial vestiges of the insertion of divisions amongst African people. Esther wrote, "Once you continue to interact [with African Americans] and are open to learning, very valuable relationships are forged." The bond, camaraderie, and affinity with African Americans was evident. Additionally, respect for the African American experience was echoed throughout the narratives. Lydia shared, I hear about and listen to the struggles that African Americans have experienced and continue to experience. I have also seen and read about it in the media. The [African American] faculty with whom I work are nothing short of phenomenal.

Throughout the narratives the sentiment about Afro-Trinidadian/African American interactions was generally positive, and the overt acknowledgment of an interconnected historical origin was palpable. However, the participants also expressed elements of dissonance, difference, and distance with African American counterparts. Esther believed, "There was mostly always tension between the two groups." Lydia wrote, "African American students did not necessarily place me in the same bracket with them." Tom shared, My most negative experience involved an African American student who claimed that I "did not like Black people." She openly stated this to some classmates.

This was very disappointing given that I identified closely with African American culture by the time this had occurred. I had been living in the United States for almost twenty years at that point. Wilfred attributed the differences between Afro-Trinidadian (and Caribbean) people and African Americans to the level of marginalisation in their respective countries. He stated, The difference is real. In the United States there are striking differences between my African American students and Caribbean [students] in academic preparation and life experiences. Caribbean students were never made to believe that they are outsiders in the land of their birth. African Americans were excluded in the USA. As a Trinidadian I am welcomed by the African American faculty at my institution, and they see me as a member of the African American community.

Despite these differences the participants recognised the value of the Black/African connectivity between the groups. Evelyn expressed her passion for working with African American students when she conveyed, "To mentor Black and Brown students who are not remotely aware of their brilliance and the meaningful contributions they can make to their community brings me great joy and pride." Lydia discussed her desire to recruit and support African American students. She stated, "I am still working on figuring out how to reach out to the few African American students on the campus, and how to get more African American students in the college classroom." Vincent stated, My work revolves around the Black experience and my African American brothers and sisters are central to that work. Yes, all African people, but there is a unique desire to work and partner with African American populations. Their story is unique, and I view it as a story that needs to be shared with the world. Their contributions are tremendous!

Indeed, there were differences and tensions expressed by the participants; however, more emphatically articulated was the notion of a collective diasporic African community and connectivity between themselves as Afro-Trinidadians and with their African American brothers and sisters, and that the association outweighs the differences.

DISCUSSION

Emanating from the findings of this narrative exploration were the concepts pertaining to (a) immigrants' culture as a mechanism for survival regardless of societal obstacles, (b) Afro-Caribbean individuals' affinity with African Americans despite disparate perspectives and histories, and (c) immigrants of African descent as receivers of anti-Black racism as members of a sub-dominant ethnic population within the context of the United States. The findings of this study further illuminate the resilience and resoluteness within the immigrant experience. Similar to the construction of the steelpan instrument, the faculty members endure hardship yet continue to positively engage in the sphere in which they find themselves. The initial theme of "Resilience the Trini Way!" mirrors Owens and Lynch (2012), who contended that the resilience of Black immigrant populations in educational environments in their study was commonplace. Although this current study focused on faculty rather than students, as the Owen and Lynch (2012) study did, it became apparent that the resoluteness in Black immigrants in their new homelands was echoed. The focus of Owen and Lynch's (2012) proclamation stemmed from Black immigrant groups possessing strong cultural identity and disregarding stereotypes and racism to accomplish their goals and this was reflected in the first theme in this study. Indeed, the participants acknowledged their resilience was the consequence of tapping into their Trinidadian culture, allowing them to circumnavigate negative and hostile environments in the American Academy.

From the study the emergent difficulty with White colleagues and students was that of anti-Black racism. This underscored DuBois' (1903) assertion from almost 120 years ago that the colour line was indeed the problem of the twentieth century and beyond. Anti-Black racism was articulated throughout the narratives, confirming Waters' (1999) ideas used in the framework of the study, and Johnson's (2016) assertions of Afro-Caribbean immigrants experiencing anti-Blackness and racism in the larger society. The Afro-Trinidadian participants spoke of White individuals, both faculty and students, acting disrespectfully to them based on their ethnicity. This aligns directly with Johnson's (2016) claims that even though African American and Afro-Caribbean populations may differ culturally, racism, rooted in anti-Blackness, supersedes differences in background. (Mwangi, 2014). Louis et al. (2017) discussed Afro-Caribbean faculty experiencing racism and the way they were summarily discounted and discredited in the American higher education system, which Anderson (2015) alludes to as a White hegemonic action. Foner (2016) states that racism "is a central component of the black immigrant experience in the United States, regardless of where they were born" (p. 63). Foner continues, given the realities of race and racism in urban America, wherever black immigrants settle in any number, they are likely to encounter

prejudice and discrimination from some sections of the majority population, yet how these (and other) dynamics of the black immigrant experience unfold varies from one location to another. (p. 67) Thus, being sufficiently educated and gainfully employed within the American higher education system does not shield Black immigrants, such as the Afro-Trinidadians in this study, from racism. Hence, one area of continued and future research necessary is the impact of toxic stress that immigrants of African descent or birth accumulate from having to deal with anti-Blackness in the Academy and the health consequences of racism.

One must recognise that Afro-Caribbean immigrants originate from nations where colonialism does not usually take the overt White racial format as in the United States, and oftentimes people of African descent are the individuals in positions of power and influence in these nations. Thus, a paradigm shift occurs when Afro-Caribbean immigrants operate within the United States because anti-Blackness is pervasive and is embedded in the structures within society. Hence, Afro-Caribbean immigrants, including Afro-Trinidadians, have unique perspectives with respect to race and racism; therefore, navigating both elements in the United States results in distinctive Black experiences that necessitate examination. Future research must entail, at minimum, (a) an understanding of cultural and historical nuances of varied Caribbean immigrant populations, peculiar to each nation, (b) the culture of Blackness including a history of colonialism within each nation, and (c) exploring Caribbean immigration/migration as a sociological phenomenon unlike any other.

Although the participants in this study shared their resilience, racism has negative effects both physiologically and psychologically on people of colour (Clark et al., 1999; Lewsley, 2020). Mwangi (2014) stated that racial positioning and distancing occurs between Afro-Caribbean individuals and their African American counterparts, opining that “social distancing includes avoiding close relationships with African Americans” (p. 11). Additionally, Pierre (2004) shares that media and institutional outlets exacerbate the differences between the two groups, which “serves to perpetuate stereotypical understandings of United States-born Black experiences and identity formations ... constructed through notions of Black inferiority in general, it perpetuates anti-Black racist ideologies and practices that ironically affect all who are racialized as Black” (p. 144).

However, some of the findings from this narrative study indicated opposite to sentiments of both Mwangi and Pierre. Wilfred’s statement “I feel deeply connected to African Americans. My experiences working with them have been very good” embodied the sentiments of all of the participants. The participants did not regard the “cultural” and “historical” differences between the groups as a negative element but further

recognition of the various paths that groups of Africans had to endure being unwillingly transported to the Western world via the African Slave Trade. The participants viewed the differences between African Americans and themselves as a positive aspect, and it undergirded their Black/African connectivity. Their Trinidadian culture reflected their experience and did not fuel disparaging or distancing from their African American counterparts. Campbell (1988) asserts that the religion of Rastafarianism, a form of Pan Africanism that originated in the Caribbean, and the ideological legacy of Garveyism further purports that all Black people across the globe are members of one family. This Pan Africanism seemed to be exuded in the comments of the participants, and the researchers recognized, the positive connectivity Afro-Trinidadians expressed towards African Americans in this study. This Pan African ethic is undoubtedly a subject for further research.

CONCLUSION

Qualitative studies cannot in any way be utilised to generalise; however, they do provide critical snapshots of the emic experiences of individuals within our society who oftentimes go unnoticed, unrecognised, unresearched, or untold. Using African oral traditions or storytelling, which have been used by Caribbean people for centuries (Smart, 2019), the participants of this study shared their social insights from an anti-deficit perspective about their navigation through the American Academy as Afro-Trinidadian faculty. From sociology, psychology, or anthropology discipline standpoints this study has the possibility to provide additional insight on the complicated nature of the immigrant experience and the role of cultural heritage on the assimilation, acculturation, and workplace experiences for African diasporic immigrants. Additionally, research on African and African descendant immigrant populations in Westernised countries is scarce and some of the more recent work focuses on anti-deficit modelling and pinpoints immigrants' strength and contribution (Okeke-Ihejirika, et al., 2020), and this study falls into that category. As such, this study was an opportunity for Afro-Trinidadian immigrants to reflect on the role of culture on their experiences in their workplace using Tuwe's (2016) concept and creating counter narratives through SPNs. It provided an avenue for them to contextualise their experiences using their cultural heritage, which may not be consciously acknowledged, as a pivot point. This self-authored narrative study provided a culturally understood channel to use their words, expound on their meanings of their lived experiences, and utilise their culture to contextualise their worlds in a *Rapso* approach.

Using one's own culture and lens in self-studies may be a tactic that social scientists choose to embark on more frequently to uncover more silent yet salient experiences

using their stations as key informants and recognising their cultural authenticity through self-expression. The researchers hope that cultures can utilize their own cultural understandings, folkways, mores, and frames to develop studies that explore their lived experiences with greater cultural authenticity and ownership. As such Hawaiian narrative studies can take a *Mele* approach; Senegalese narratives from a *Mbalax* approach; Jamaican narratives a *Reggae* approach; or Madagascan narratives a *Salegy* approach. Cultural authenticity stood at the core of this study, and it yielded frank stories that not only exhibited the importance of culture in immigrants' lives but revealed the continued relevance of "race" and "racism" within Westernised colonial societies and their structures such as higher education. The study provided an emic look into the world of seven Black immigrants whose experiences aligned with DuBois' (1903) postulation of the colour line as the battleground in colonial societies. It also highlighted the fissiparous nature of Black lives in White spaces as Fanon (1967) hypothesizes. This study peeked into a complex space of an African diasporic culture and a Europeanised colonial structure, not from the vantage point of the coloniser but the colonised. It is more than a counternarrative but a counterspace: a place where authentic cultural expression conveys a needed dimension to the cultural conversation. The American Academy is space that perpetuates White normativity (Anderson, 2015; Feagin, 2006), but hidden within it is a multiverse of cultural realities of which this exploration of Afro-Trinidadian faculty was one of countless other cultural explorations to be conducted.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, E. (2015). The White space. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, 1(1), 10–21.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2332649214561306>
- Berry, J. W. (2001). A psychology of immigration. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57(3), 615–631. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00231>
- Bove, V., & Elia, L. (2016). Migration brings cultural diversity, but is it beneficial or detrimental to the host country? *World Economic Forum*.
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/11/immigration-beneficial-or-detrimental-to-the-host-country>.
- Brereton, B. (2000). *An introduction to the history of Trinidad and Tobago*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Bryce-Laporte, R. S. (1972). Black immigrants: The experience of invisibility and inequality. *Journal of Black Studies*, 4(1), 29–56.

- Campbell, H. (1988). Rastafari as Pan Africanism in the Caribbean and Africa. *African Journal of Political Economy / Revue Africaine d'Economie Politique*, 2(1), 75–88. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23500303>
- Cameron, L., Erkal, N., Gangadharan, L., & Zhang, M. (2014). Cultural integration: Experimental evidence of convergence in immigrants' preferences. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 11, 38–58. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2014.11.012>
- Case, A. D., & Hunter, C. D. (2014). Cultural racism–related stress in Black Caribbean immigrants: Examining the predictive roles of length of residence and racial identity. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 40(5), 410–423. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095798413493926>
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Clark, R., Anderson, N. B., Clark, V. R., & Williams, D. R. (1999). Racism as a stressor for African Americans: A biopsychosocial model. *American Psychologist*, 54(10), 805–816. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.54.10.805>
- Creswell, J. (2002). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (1903). *Souls of Black folks*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Dumas, M. J. (2016). Against the dark: Antiblackness in education policy and discourse. *Theory Into Practice*, 55, 11–19. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2016.1116852>
- Fanon, F. (1967). *Black skin, White masks*. London: Grove Press.
- Feagin, J. R. (2006). *Systemic racism: A theory of oppression*. Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.
- Foner, N. (2016). Black immigrants and the realities of racism: Comments and questions. *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 36(1), 63–70. <https://doi.org/10.5406/jamerethnhist.36.1.0063>

- Hilaire, D. H. St. (2006). Immigrant West Indian families and their struggles with racism in America. *Journal of Emotional Abuse*, 6(2), 47–60.
https://doi.org/10.1300/J135v06n02_04
- Hirschman, C. (2013). The contributions of immigrants to American culture. *Daedalus*, 142(3). doi:10.1162/DAED_a_00217
- Holmes, A. G. D. (2020). Researcher positionality - A consideration of its influence and place in qualitative research - A new researcher guide. *International Journal of Education*, 8(4), 1–10.
- Ifatunji, M. A. (2016). A test of the Afro-Caribbean model minority hypothesis. *Du Bois Review*, 13(1), 109–138. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1742058X16000035>
- Johnson, V. S. (2016). When blackness stings: African and Afro-Caribbean immigrants, race, and racism in late twentieth-century America. *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 36 (1), 31–62. <https://doi.org/10.5406/jamerethnhist.36.1.0031>
- Kim, J. (2016). *Understanding Narrative Inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Law, I., & Tate, S. (2015) *Caribbean racisms connections and complexities in the racialization of the Caribbean region*. Springer.
- Lewis, A. E. (2003). Everyday race-making. *The American Behavioral Scientist*, 47(3), 283–305. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764203256188>
- Lewsley, J. (2020). What are the effects of racism on health and mental health? *Medical News Today*. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/effects-of-racism>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Lorenzi, J., & Batalova, J. (2022, July 7). Caribbean immigrants in the United States. *Migration Policy Institute*. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/caribbean-immigrants-united-states>.
- Louis, D. A., Thompson, K. V., Smith, P., Williams, H. M. A., & Watson, J. (2017). Afro-Caribbean immigrant faculty experiences in the American academy: Voices of an invisible black population. *The Urban Review*, 49(4), 668–691. doi:10.1007/s11256-017-0414-0

- Louis, D. A., Thompson, K. V., Stanley, C. A., & Louis, Jr., B. M. (2020). Reflections, relationships, and immigrant contributions: Narratives of Afro-Caribbean faculty members in American higher education. *Caribbean Educational Research Journal*, 5(1), 110-130. doi:10.13140/RG.2.2.36098.50889
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mills, A. J., Durepos, G., & White, E. (2010). *Encyclopedia of case study research*. Sage.
- Model, S. (2008). *West Indian immigrants: A Black success story?* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Mwangi, C. G. A. (2014). Complicating blackness: Black immigrants and racial positioning in US higher education. *Journal of Critical Thought and Praxis*, 3(2), 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.31274/jctp-180810-41>
- Nash, R. (2004). *Liberating scholarly writing: The power of personal narrative*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Nash, R., & Bradley, D. L. S. (2011). *Me-search and re-search: A guide for writing scholarly personal narrative manuscripts*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Okeke-Ihejirika, P., Creese, G., Frishkopf, M., & Wane, N. (2020). Re-envisioning resilience from African immigrants' perspectives. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 52(3), 129–149.
- Owens, J., & Lynch, S. M. (2012). Black and Hispanic immigrants' resilience against negative-ability racial stereotypes at selective colleges and universities in the United States. *Sociology of Education*, 85(4), 303–325. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040711435856>
- Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pierre, J. (2004). Black immigrants in the United States and the “cultural narratives” of ethnicity. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, 11(2), 141–170. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10702890490451929>

Invisibility, Anti-Blackness, and Pan-African Connectivity

- Roopnarine, L. (2018). *The Indian Caribbean: Migration and identity in the diaspora*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Saldaña, J. (2015). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Shaw, P. W. H. (2014). New treasures with the old: Addressing culture and gender imperialism in higher level theological education. *Evangelical Review of Theology*, 38(3), 265–279.
- Smart, C. (2019). African oral tradition, cultural retentions and the transmission of knowledge in the West Indies. *International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions*, 45(1), 16–25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0340035218823219>
- Smith, A. (2012). *Steel drums and steelbands: A history*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.
- Solórzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2002). Critical race and LatCrit theory and method: Counter-storytelling. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 14(4), 471–495. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518390110063365>
- Steel Pan History and Development* (2021). <https://www.steelpan-steeldrums-information.com/steel-pan-history.html>
- Tamir, C., & Anderson, M. (2022, January 20). One-in-ten Black people living in the U.S. are Immigrants. *Pew Research Center*. <https://www.pewresearch.org/race-ethnicity/2022/01/20/one-in-ten-black-people-living-in-the-u-s-are-immigrants/>
- Tuwe, K. (2016). The African oral tradition paradigm of storytelling as a methodological framework: Employment experiences for African communities in New Zealand. *African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific Conference*, Deakin University, 28th-30th October 2015. https://afsaap.org.au/assets/Kudakwashe_Tuwe_AFSAAP2015.pdf
- U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) 2017 *American Community Survey (ACS)*. data.census.gov.
- U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). *The condition of education 2020 (NCES 2020-144), Characteristics of postsecondary faculty*. <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=61>

- Van Leeuwaarde Moonsammy, P. (2013). Warriors of the word: Rapso in Trinidad's festival culture. In Mamadou Diouf and Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo (eds.), *Rhythms of the Afro-Atlantic World: Rituals and Remembrances*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. p. 214-233
- Warner, O. (2012). Black in America too: Afro-Caribbean immigrants. *Social and Economic Studies*, 61(4), 69–103. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24384427>
- Waters, M. C. (1994). Ethnic and racial identities of second-generation Black immigrants in New York City. *International Migration Review*, 28(4), 795–820. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2547158>
- Waters, M. C. (1999). *Black identities: West Indian immigrant dreams and American realities*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Waters, M. C., Kasinitz, P., & Asad, A. (2014). Immigrants and African Americans. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 40, 369–390. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-071811-145449>
- Yin, R. K. (2012). Case study methods. In H. Cooper, P. M. Camic, D. L. Long, A. T. Panter, D. Rindskopf, & K. J. Sher (Eds.), *APA handbook of research methods in psychology, Vol. 2. Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological* (pp. 141–155). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/13620-009>
- Zong, J., & Batalova, J. (2019, February 13). *Caribbean immigrants in the United States*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/caribbean-immigrants-united-states>
2017#:~:text=In%202017%2C%20approximately%204.4%20million,the%20nation's%2044.5%20million%20immigrants
- Zong, J., & Batalova, J. (2016, September 14). *Caribbean Immigrants in the United States in 2014*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/caribbean-immigrants-united-states-2014>

Appendix A: Study Prompts

AFRO-TRINIDADIAN FACULTY EXPERIENCES PROMPTS

Prompt 1:

As a faculty member at a university/college in the United States, what are/were some of the most difficult challenges that you experienced with respect to **faculty and/or colleagues**? How did your Trinidadian values and/or characteristics assist you navigate/work with/resolve issues with your faculty and/or colleagues?

Prompt 2:

As a faculty member at a university/college in the United States, what are/were some of the most difficult challenges that you experienced with **respect to students**? How did your Trinidadian values and/or characteristics assist you navigate/work with/resolve issues with students?

Prompt 3:

As a faculty member at a university/college in the United States, what are/were some of the most difficult challenges that you experienced with respect to **African American individuals** (faculty/students/others) within the university setting? How did your Trinidadian values/characteristics assist you navigate/work with/resolve issues with African American individuals?

Prompt 4:

As a faculty member at a university/college in the United States what are/were some of the most difficult challenges that you experienced with respect to **White individuals** (faculty/students/others) within the university setting? How did your Trinidadian values/characteristics assist you navigate/work with/resolve issues with White individuals?

Prompt 5:

Please share any stories, sentiments, thoughts that you believe are important as a Trinidadian (or Afro-Trinidadian specifically) person that apply to this narrative. They can be something to expound upon, or something that was not addressed. This is an opportunity to write/express anything that you would like to with respect to your experiences.