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WHEN REMITTANCES BECOME THEIR TEARS: CANADA'S EXCLUSIONARY
IMMIGRATION POLICY TOWARDS AFRICAN IMMIGRANTS ROBS SUDANESE
IMMIGRANTS OF THE VERY MONEY THEY NEED FOR SETTLEMENT

by

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BA Honours, University of Saskatchewan, 2004

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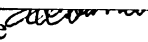
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Abstract:

This study examines the difficulties associated with family sponsorship from Africa to Canada and the misleading picture in the literature that remittances represent generous flows of money from developed to the developing countries. It also examines how Canada's immigration policy, due to its cultural bias, results in African immigrants being coerced to send remittances. Its findings indicate that while remittances are sent for various reasons, Canada's culturally exclusionary immigration policy inflicts negative impact on African immigrants seeking family reunification.

The study examined the experiences of Sudanese immigrants in Canada. Its findings indicate that they handle racism, cultural exclusion and delays in family reunification which deteriorate their socioeconomic status. To reverse these experiences, immigration policy needs to address sponsorship inefficiencies and embrace cultural sensitive.

This qualitative study interviewed 12 key informants at various stages of the sponsorship process. This was supplemented with a literature review and secondary data analysis.

Key words: Immigration, Immigrant, migrant, remittances, Euro-centrism and ethno-dynamic

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SECTION ONE: Introduction

In many African cultures, family ties are central to the folk wisdom that, “I am because we are” (Hord, et al 1997). This cultural code suggests that successful settlement of African immigrants must begin with the reunification of families. It may also explain the flow of immigrants’ remittances to Africa. In this context, social and cultural links remain significant family values among African immigrants, so much so that any intended or unintended phenomenon that disrupts that social and cultural attachment, directly or indirectly, imposes a cost on the family. In the case of immigrants seeking family reunification through sponsoring spouses or relatives, it comes in the form of ‘forced’ remittances. In this study, I sought to understand this cultural attachment and how it relates to the settlement of those involved, by asking the question: To what extent do African immigrants send remittances as a result of the social pressure of maintaining family ties by providing for the livelihood of family members? What costs does this impose on their own livelihoods in Canada and how does it impact their settlement processes?

To answer this multidimensional question, this study investigates the experiences of a group of African immigrants involved in both, sponsorships and remitting money to their countries of origin. Based on the findings, I argue in this study that while remittances are sent for various reasons, the social exclusionary nature of Canada’s immigration policy towards African immigrants, results in them continuously sending more remittances than they would otherwise send for more traditional social-cultural reasons of maintaining transnational ties (Arozco, 2003; Dimzon, 2005; Andres, 2005). This is because the administration of the sponsorship program delays the family reunification process, and imposes extra demands on sponsors to sustain

relatives who anticipate immigration to Canada and who for that reason become financially dependant on their sponsors.

Speaking from their personal experiences, participants in this study strongly agreed that the long separation from their spouses did not only affect their socioeconomic status in Canada, but it also affected or affects their physical and psychological wellbeing, thus rendering them less motivated to engage in successful settlement process in Canada.

Remittances to Africa, sent in response to family or cultural obligation, are part of a widespread practice among migrants or immigrants across the globe (Andrés 2005). To understand remittances within a global context and the forces that warrant their flows, I use the transnational theoretical framework¹. The significance of this approach is its focus on how the “political, economic and socio-cultural connections that exist between migrants and their homelands” impacts their lives and livelihoods (Horst 2006: 207). These connections and their effects need to be set within the racist historical context of Canadian immigration policy. The approach enables me to ask different questions about the Transnational networks of remittances, their flows, the pressure and the choices that inform these processes. Not only are such questions key to the understanding of Sudanese immigrants’ situations in Canada in particular, they also touch on various aspects of the process of migration and the livelihood of African immigrants in Canada (Horst 2006).

Canada’s capacity to process immigrants and refugees from Africa is constrained by the fact that it has so few processing offices in Africa, a continent with a sixth of the world’s population (United Nation Population Information Network). Using anti-racist approach I seek to understand the reasons for the differential treatment of Africa by Canadian immigration

¹ Transnational framework in this study refers to a theoretical approach that seeks to understand the political dynamics that not only create multiple sense of belonging or identity in immigrants, but that as well explains how these political behaviour emerge as the result of host country’s policy of exclusion .

authorities. Ighodaro (2006: 57) suggests that in order for “equitable policy implementation and practice to be achieved, discrimination in refugee policy practice must be subjected to an anti-racist exploration”.

This research study has four goals, which include: (i) to review existing literature on the dynamics and the flows of immigrants/migrants’ remittance, the impacts and the emerging picture drawn based on that literature; such as the misleading picture which assumes immigrants/migrants’ financial remittances as handouts from the global north to the global south (ii) to review the causes of migration and to analyze existing migration patterns (iii) to examine Canada’s immigration policy for differential policy, practice and impacts on African immigrants/refugees, and (iv) to present a case study of the dynamics of remittances among Sudanese immigrants in Canada that provides new knowledge on the difficulties associated with family sponsorship of their spouses from Africa.

This research paper begins with a careful investigation of the reasons why individuals send remittances. It then explores the channels and the forms that immigrants’ remittances take, with specific focus on immigrants’ remittances to Africa. My analyses of the remittances dynamics will, to a great extent focus on the impacts of remittances on the individuals who send them, rather than the effects of remittances at the receiving end. This allows me to focus on how the conditions under which the decision to send remittances is made. I will, for instance, explore how social exclusionary of Canada’s immigration policy that coerces remitters to send more money and the socioeconomic impacts that it inflicts on their own adjustment processes in the host countries. In Canada, there is evidence of such impacts among “Live-in Caregivers” (see Arat-Koc, 2001) whose exploitive labour provides safe heaven to the children and the elderly in

many Canadian families - perhaps the contemporary slavery of our time that paradoxically we like to call immigration policy.

This study looks at the impact of sending remittances through the experiences of twelve family sponsorship cases among the Sudanese immigrants in Canada. On a personal note, before joining this graduate program in Immigration and Settlement, I lived in Calgary with a Sudanese roommate who, I observed to be sending about a thousand Canadian dollars home monthly from his two full time minimum wage jobs. The pain he went through touched my heart and motivated me to seek an understanding to the dynamics of remittances. I inquired and found out from him that the sponsorship case of his wife from Sudan to Canada had become a social prison for him for the previous two years, however, he was determined to do everything to bring his spouse to Canada in order to end his unwanted hard labour. Not only was his experience painful and interesting, it as well gave me the motivation to join the immigration and Settlement Study, to research the impact of remittances on the senders and to analyze the exclusionary content of the Canadian immigration policy towards African immigrants.

Comparing the experiences of Sudanese immigrants to the existing literatures on remittances, it becomes clear that not only do immigrants send remittances to Africa because of family responsibility and individual personal interests (Straubhaar and Vădean 2005: 29), but in Canada policies that are fraught with racism, exclusion and Euro-centrism combine with family obligations force immigrants to send remittances. The study found that, Canadian public policy deficiencies such as the unjustified family sponsorship delays are costing African immigrants more money in terms of the remittances they send to their families in Africa. This would be the very money that they need to successfully resettle in Canada. This drain on their income thus, makes their settlement process difficult in many ways. Because for African immigrants family

reunification is a significant part of their successful settlement, as I heard again and again during the interviews for this research project, the longer the family sponsorship takes the more money has to be sent home. And because the more money they remit, the less money they possess to commit to adjustment and settlement processes in Canada. This phenomenon condemns them to a continuous cycle of low socioeconomic status despite their hard work in Canada. Secondly, the focus on the policies that require immigrants to meet certain specific cultural notion of family to qualify for the sponsorship program has a culturally exclusionary impact. Such policies include the preference for nuclear over extended family in Canada's family sponsorship policy (Settlement.org, 2004). Such culturally defined exclusionary policies also contribute to the pressures on immigrants to send remittances to the point where their social development and settlement process in Canada are negatively affected.

To address the problems that have been identified in this research project, I provide a set of recommendations based on the findings of the study aimed at key immigration policy improvements that the Canadian government can undertake.

SECTION TWO: *Methodology*

Attempting to understand how much pressure or choice goes into sending remittances, and to examine the experiences of African immigrants sponsoring their spouses, or who have had sponsored spouses to Canada in the past, various sources of data collection were utilized. The primary data collection method utilized for primary research was interviews with 12 Sudanese male immigrants who were either sponsoring spouses at the time of the interview or who had done so in the past. Although Sudanese immigrants live in various cities across Canada, the twelve participants whose experiences and insights are reported in this study live and were interviewed in various cities in Ontario that include; the Greater Toronto Area, Kitchener/Waterloo, St Catherine and Windsor. The interview method was of significance because I intended to take an anti exclusionary or anti racist analytical approach to Canada's immigration policy in which, arguments, evidences and policy recommendations are drawn from the recent and living experiences of Canada's African immigrants.

All interview questions were open ended with possibility of prompts aimed at obtaining participants' lived experiences and narratives of the motives that inform their choices to remit money (Neuman, 2006). Interview questions were designed to learn from the experience of African immigrants and the challenges of family sponsorship process from Africa and its financial effects on their settlement adjustment and socio-economic wellbeing here in Canada. Interviews were designed to obtain information on family sponsorship experiences, and to ascertain how much money they send/sent home during the sponsorship process. I also sought to know the impacts of this financial flow on the immigrant during the period of sponsorship, the duration of sponsorship and what the impacts were, when it took longer. The interviews were

also designed to know if family sponsorship imposes any financial impacts on the Sudanese immigrants' lifestyle and adjustment processes (see interview appendix).

I, being a recent immigrant (less than ten years in Canada), participants related to me during the interviews as their fellow immigrant in the struggle to settle in Canada, and thus, most of them were open and comfortable in discussing their experiences and immigration policy with me. I asked for their inputs and suggestions in easing the challenges of family sponsorship and in improving immigration policy in the future. I listened carefully to all their inputs and policy recommendations, and I further gave them the opportunity to discuss any other issue that I may have had not included in the questionnaire and that they may needed to be reflected in the study.

I recruited all participants through purposive sampling in which the research focuses on identifying participants who meet specific criteria (Neuman, 2006). For this study I had to focus on a specific African country and all participants had to be Sudanese immigrants who were either landed immigrants or Canadian citizens at the time of the interviews. They had to be sponsoring spouses at the time of the interview or had done so in the past. To avoid the use of translation and any possibility of misinterpretation, all participants had to speak at least one of the languages I fluently speak; Azande, Arabic and English. Although participants were expected to speak one of the three languages known to the researcher, fortunately all of them speak English and Arabic. Eight interviews were administered in English language and four in Arabic.

In order to identify participants, I maximized the use of social networks in which I made consultation with friends and student colleagues to inform me if they knew any Sudanese immigrants who had sponsored or who were sponsoring spouses at the time. I also utilized the snowball method in which I asked each participants to identify at least four other people who he/she knew and who he/she thought would qualify to participate in the interview (Newman,

2006). Out of the four recommended I often chose one randomly to be the next participant. Recruiting participants was tough in the sense of fitting into participants' busy schedules, even so, the need to express their disappointment with the sponsorship policy and process gave them extra motivation to find time to talk about their experiences, to share their insights and to identify others who shared their aspirations, disappointment, lamentations and experiences.

Although many participants recommended several others, however, only two of those who did so made reference to potential female participant. Since I had keen interest in gender balance, I inquired the eight individuals who participated in the snowball method why their references were gender biased. All of them replied that the absence of female participants signifies how difficult the sponsorship process is for female applicants. Many of the male participants I asked emphasized that the challenges for female applicants are greater than those for males.

According five male participants, single mothers have the biggest challenge of family sponsorship because they have many responsibilities; to care for their children's needs, to learn English as second language, to work full time in order to meet the required income in order to be able to sponsor, and to be able to make extra money to send to their spouses in Africa constantly. As a result only few women or those without children can afford to sponsor a spouse. This thus, explains why despite my many attempts to balance the gender content of study participants, I was unable to interview any female participant. For instance, I made phone contacts with one woman who had sponsored her spouse in the past and personal consultation with two others who are cunningly in the process, however, their schedules and mine could not allow us to meet. Given the time constraint I was facing, I could not be able to travel to other cities to search for more potential female participants.

During each interview, I took notes of all the answers and comments to each question in written so that I could be able at a later time to recall what each participant said. For the purpose of analysis, I utilized cross-sectional indexed groupings of relevant information under specific themes that I identified for the interviews and that emerged during the interviews. I scrutinized the data I collected according to the themes I established for the purpose of this analysis. Through out this paper the interpretation and analysis of the data I gathered are incorporated in the forms of comments, narratives, case study, asking questions, examples and policy recommendations.

In addition to the interviews, I undertook a review of the literature and also analyzed relevant federal and policy documents from various sources.

SECTION THREE: Theory and Literature Review

A. Theory:

In order to analyze public policy for cultural exclusion and its impacts on immigrants, it is essential to seek an understanding to some of the theoretical frameworks regarding the content of Canada's immigration policy and the dynamics of global remittances. As such, a key theoretical assumption behind this research project is that transnational activities and political behaviours are prompted by policies of exclusion and that law and policies are constructed to reflect the dominant culture and have the potential to foster political exclusion and its impacts on new immigrants' cultures in various ways, in this case the result is sending remittances. Taking a transnational approach to studying remittances serves to reveal the parameters and the pitfalls of Canada's family sponsorship policy and thus to challenge the hollow claims of being a multicultural and welcoming society to immigrants from everywhere (Giles and Klimt, 2003; Multicultural Act of Canada, 1988).

Smith and Guarnizo (1998) and Wayland (2006) define Transnationalism as the experiences of individuals whose identities, multiple ties and relations span nation state borders and are measured as flows of capital, people, goods, information, and images. According to Cainkar (2002), as cited in Satzewich and Wong, (2006:226) immigrants' ties to the homeland such as sending remittances and family reunification can only be minimized through processes of political inclusion that fosters positive changes in the host countries' policies. Cross border activities are facilitated through established networks known as transnational organizations.

Transnational organizations consist of three main groups; the political, the religious, and the community development group. The latter acts internationally to achieve local objectives in home countries, such as engaging in global utilization of resources, global transfer of money and

transfer of skills acquired in the host countries (Levitt, 2001). Because the transfer of money from host countries to home countries are common and visible than incoming remittances to host countries, sending remittances to home countries thus, tend to be seen by anti immigrants groups as a threat to social cohesion (Shandy, 2006).

This conceptualization of the dynamics of remittances is rooted in the negative transnational theoretical argument which suggests that maintaining multiples ties with host countries implies lack of commitment to permanent settlement in host countries (Stockden, 2000). This is a clear misconception that ignores the various reasons that oblige immigrants to send remittances. Furthermore, it has the potential of generating negative attitudes in the dominant culture towards those whose lives or transnational ties impact their cultures. For example, in the case of Chinese people in Canada, history suggests that their transnationalism had emerged in response to their experiences of exclusion such as the head tax and the impacts of the exclusion legislation that Canada imposed on them as a punishment for being of Chinese origin (Kelly and Trebilcock 1998). Similarly, Galloway (2000) argues that transnational practices often result from the fact that receiving states have been reluctant to extend equal social, political, and cultural rights and in other cases “strong assimilationist pressures” prevent migrant cultures from achieving the equal rights and privileges that native cultures do. The unwillingness of host countries such as Canada’s to extend social, cultural and political rights to immigrants groups will commonly be referred to, in this study as political exclusion. Political exclusion as such forces many immigrants to further strengthen their ties with home countries in attempt to have a sense of identity and belonging. The negative political aspiration and commitment to excluding minority or immigrants’ culture in host countries like Canada is rooted

in the vertical mosaic thesis that continues to characterize and define acceptance and power relations in the Canadian colour coded landscape² (Mensah, 2002).

Drawing on Porter's (1966) thesis of Canada as a vertical mosaic, Mensah (2002) argues that the "vertical Mosaic thesis" explains what he sees as the historical factors that allocate advantages and disadvantages in the Canadian society (Mensah, 2002:137). According to this thesis, ethnic and racial affiliations are both historical and contemporary. They are critical determinants of prestigious positions in the Canadian society and consequently they solidify hierarchy of social class for the benefit of the dominant group. Canada, for that reason is a colour coded class society with perceptible income and occupational lines between the so called white and non white groups (Galabuzi, 2006). His analysis may be used to explain Canada's skin coloured hierarchy, it as well distinguishes between the "Charter Status" and "Entrance Status" of Canada's paradoxical multicultural society (Mensah, 2002:137).

"Charter status" refers to the privileges and prerogative that are associated with being of the British and French ethnicities, which constitute the so-called "founding groups" of modern Canada (ibid). In line with the colour-coded stratification, these two groups enjoy the social, political and economic privileged position of determining the admission of other racialized groups into Canada. On the other hand, the "Entrance Status" refers to the classified positions at which other immigrant groups continue to join the Canadian society (the two founding groups).

It should also be noted that immigration policy makers being predominantly of the charter status group, their aspirations continue to be reflected in the existing character of Canadian society; as such it makes the policies and administration of family sponsorship for

² Colour coded landscape implies that the view of Canada as a vertical Mosaic in this study does not exactly take the same ethnic connotation as Porter (1965) explains, however, it continues along racial lines. According to Galabuzi (2006) for example, Canada's stratification is no longer along the lines of ethnicity, but it has taken a colour coded direction in which privileges are awarded to one skin colour and disadvantages to others based on the stratified skin colour hierarchy -a more contemporary stratification along racial lines instead of ethnic lines.

African immigrants more difficult. Thus the biases in the program design and implementation lead to difficulties that condemn African immigrants into sending remittances to the point that it affects their socioeconomic status and settlement process in Canada. Some of the participants in this research project even expressed regret as to why they came to Canada.

Secondly, I utilized the anti-racism framework to better understand the experiences of the African immigrants in Canada. According to Murtadha (1995), inclusion advocacy as well as anti-racist framework, offer new paradigms for political and social change. The anti racist framework gears towards the development of a culturally inclusive public policy by placing the new Canadian cultures into the centre of public policy decision making. Similarly, the main motive behind anti-racism framework in this research paper is to advocate policy inclusiveness and to provide more opportunities for alternative ways that do not impose mono-cultural and Eurocentric norms and conceptualizations of kinship terminologies on all immigrants as if they all come from a single European stock (Dei, 2005). Taking an antiracist approach in this research paper is aimed at challenging public policy or the institutional structure that fails to validate the lived experience of African immigrants in Canada. Furthermore, to challenge the inequitable power relations that policy makers maintain while proclaiming the opposite (Carr and Klassen 1997). Of course taking anti-racist directional approach requires a particular focus on the contemporary lived experiences of those who fall the victims of the mono-cultural or Eurocentric immigration policy in Canada.

B. Definition: (Immigrant, Migrant, Refugee, Remittances)

In order to understand the dynamics of migration and its impacts, it is essential to explore and define the concept of migration and some common used concepts and their various

meanings. **Migration** is the free and coerced movements of people from one country to another either for settlement on permanent basis or for labour on temporary bases. *Labour migration* refers to labour mobility in which individuals move from one region or country to another for employment purposes (IOM). These demographic dynamics have been the dominant global characteristics for the past two and half decades. Despite the odds, it is essential to note that although migration keeps immigrants apart from their loved ones, their relationships and networks remain reachable. Evidences in Li (2003) indicate that financial flows and demographic dynamics are the two common episodes that continue to characterize the 21st Century as an age of migration. As a result an estimated 192 million people live outside their countries of birth (Burstyn, 2007: 2; IOM). Of this number, African migrants constitute about half of the world's international migrants (Massey and Taylor, 2004). The people who choose to and those who are coerced to engage in these demographic movements are politically known as immigrant and migrants.

In this paper, **immigrants** are understood as: people who migrate for various reasons with the intention to settlement in host countries permanently, while **migrants** are those who migrate temporary in search of employment opportunities (IOM). Immigrants exist in several categories: Migrant workers, permanent settlers and refugees. A **refugee** is:

"a person who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country..." (UNHCR); also see Crawley cited in Marshall, (2006: 59).

Whatever category they are, many immigrants/migrants share a common transnational behaviour; sending money to their countries of birth. The money immigrants send home is generally known as **remittances**. Although the concept of remittances is general associated with

finance, Tamas and Palme, (2006) argue that there are two kinds of remittances that include the financial and social.

Social remittances include the “ideas, behaviours, identities, and social capital that migrants export to their home communities” (Marshall, (2006: 33). These include democratic ideas and health values. However, social remittances may exhibit both positive and negative impacts. For instance, evidences suggest that in the Dominican Republic, while some saw migrants as a democratization and accountability driving force, others held them responsible for “rising materialism and individualism” (ibid).

Financial remittance is defined as the monetary transfers or cash flow that immigrants or diaspora send from host countries to their countries of birth (Baruah, 2006). Remittances include both cash, and in kind flows from immigrants/migrants in host countries to family members in home countries (Horst 2006; IOM; Arozco 2003). It is essential however, to note that this scholarly definition of remittances remains unreflective of other types of remittances. For example, financial transfers that are not recorded in countries’ official financial records are excluded in this definition. In Kapur and Mchale (2005) for example, this definition as well does not include the remittances sent through private money transfer agencies, through individuals in person or handy delivery through a third party. Due to the costs associated with sending remittances, host country’s money transfer policy, the remoteness of the location of delivery and the lack of technological infrastructure in receiving countries, immigrants’ remittances take various forms in the best interest of both the receivers and the senders (Newland, 2003).

C. Causes of migration:

In order to comprehend the global dynamics of migrants’ remittances it is essential to

understand the political factors that inform the processes of migration. In this analysis, I intend to examine the political factors in countries of origin that result in two forms of migration; labour migration and refugee flows.

Labour migration: Although there appears to be no universally accepted definition of labour migration, (IOM) defines it as a cross-border movement of people for the purposes of employment outside their home countries. The various reasons that compel migrant workers to move out of their countries of origin include lack of labour opportunities caused by poor economic policies, over population, colonial legacy and the global restructuring of world economy (Todaro and Smith, 2006). Furthermore, these conditions force labour migrants even to accept jobs at unfavorable conditions of employment standard in host countries. In addition there is an assumption that the “movement of labour as part of a well-functioning, integrated labour market-would lead to the elimination of disparities and equalization of development” (De Haan cited in Marshall, 2006: 30). These expected effects on the economies of both the sending and host countries encourage labour migration further. Marshall, (2006) argues that according to the World Bank analysts, the level of poverty would greatly reduce if the number of migrants who send remittances was higher; even so, this assumption remains questionable for content accuracy.

Given this perceived positive picture of global remittances as the engine of development in the global south, Hatton and Williamson (1998) argue that this age of globalization and trade liberalization creates more labour opportunities in the industrialized countries and the demand for unskilled labour, to which migrant workers respond by crossing multiple borders in search of better employment or life opportunities. Similarly, in many developing countries the supply of labour exceeds the demand, there are inefficient macroeconomic policies, inequality and poverty (Todaro and Smith, 2006; Asres 2006; Carmelita, 2005; Hanley, 2004 and Hefti, 2004).

Based on these reasons, I argue that labour migration emerges as the result of both state actions and market function that create the push and pull factors in both host and sending countries (IOM). It may also depend on the host countries' immigration and labour policies. In Canada for example the perceived benefits, which come with or after being a "Live-In Caregiver", provide the incentive that makes such an exploitative labour attractive to migrant workers (Arat-Koc, 2001). Because of such perceived benefits, regardless of how exploitive the system may be, it remains attractive to many migrants "Live-in caregivers".

Unlike labour migrants, refugees do not contemplate when to migrate. Directly or indirectly, they are forced by internal, external or life threatening factors to migrate (UN, 1998).

Refugee migration: refugees leave their countries of origin under two conditions; forced migration and family reunification (see CIC, 2003). Forced migration occurs when citizens are coerced to leave because of threats of persecution or harm that may have affected, or that will affect them and their families should they continue to stay in that country. Unlike labour or economic migrants, refugees/forced migrants are unable to go back to their countries of origin because of such threat and the perceived lack of protection from the governments of their countries, (Crawley cited in Marshall, 2006:58). Once these citizens cross the boarder of their countries of origin to another for protection, they are recognized by the international community as refugees and thus, are entitled to refugee protection under this category (UNHCR).

In addition to the UNHCR definition of refugee provided earlier, the Organization of African Union expounds on that definition to include a "well-founded fear of being persecuted" including other grounds for refugee status such as "Flight across borders caused by 'external aggression', occupation, foreign domination, or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of ...his/her country of origin or nationality" Marshall, (2006:58). Like labour

migrants, similarly the outflow of refugee migration is caused by several political factors that include state conflict, colonial legacy, postcolonial development, external factors such as the restructuring of the world economy and Western Hegemony (Asres, 2006; Lyons et al, 2006 and UN, 1998). These factors combined, character the main reasons that have been generating the flow of refugees from Africa and other regions around the world. Even so, while these factors have their roots in the “pre-colonial and colonial history” they also emerge as the results of the policies of the respective post-colonial sending countries and their quasi dependent bilateral relations with their formal colonizers or with the global imperial governments that intend to exploit their natural resources through the so-called economic liberalization (Asres, 2006 and Marshall, 2006).

D. *Forms of Remittances:*

The global flow of remittances commonly takes the forms of migrant workers’ remittances, compensation to employees and migrants’ transfers. Workers’ remittances refer to transfers in cash or kind, while compensation to employees refers to the wages or salaries in cash or in kind paid to persons who labour outside their countries of legal residence. Similarly, migrants’ transfers refer to financial flows made by migrants as they reallocate from one country to another in search of more labour opportunities (O’Neil, 2003).

Financial flows also take the forms of entrepreneurial, collective and family remittances (Kapura and McHale, 2005). Family remittances are used as substitute for subsistence daily living or to cover the recurrent cost of food, clothing, housing and to facilitate improved access to public services. Collective remittances, on the other hand, refer to transfers associated with organizations that have gained considerable social and political leverage in host countries.

Similarly, entrepreneurial remittances are financial flows, which have the clearest investment potential because migrant investors tend to seek returns or profit (Bareria, 2004). While remittances are known in these various forms, however, the analytical work in this research paper will significantly focus on family remittances and their impacts on immigrant/immigrant remitters.

Dictated by the high cost of sending remittances and the estimated time of delivery, remittances are transferred in various forms. These forms include banks transfer, private money transfer agencies, postal services and hand delivery in person or through third party (IOM; Arozco 2003).

E. Channelles of Remittances:

Channels of remittances are the financial institutions or agencies through which transfers are coordinated. They consist of both the formal and informal transfer systems. The formal system includes government regulated financial service agencies such as the banks, money transfer organizations (MTOs) like western union, moneyGram and many other small MTOs. The informal system consists of the hand delivery in person or through a third party, gifts, and other unregulated financial transfer agencies that include; Taar and Xawilaad that facilitate money transfer to Somalia and many other Sub-Saharan African countries (Hosrt 2006; Straubhaar and Vădean 2005). Further evidence in Kapur and Mchale (2005, 132) indicates that in Asia, South America and in other regions, many unregulated transfer agencies also exist. In Asia, such channels include the Fei Ch'ien in China, the Phoe Kuan in Thailand, and the Hui in Vietnam. Similarly, in South America, Casa de Cambio is the most common cited channel. Despite the availability of these unregulated channels, information regarding the financial flows

that pass through these networks is hard to estimate thus, rendering any qualitative data on global remittances unreliable.

Given the fact that most of today's immigrants to Canada come from the less developed countries (LDCs), it is essential to note that there are many more unregulated money transfer agencies that are as well not accounted for by researchers in the field of remittances (IOM). It is important to note that the money that gets transferred through the unregulated agencies is not accounted for in the official scholarly remittances statistical data, which are of significance to this literature review. For instance, the Organization for Economic and Cooperation and Development (OECD) collects its data on remittances from the balance of payment sheet for its 30 members who are pre dominantly western countries. However, its list of member countries excludes major remittance trading regions and countries like the Philippines, India, Turkey, the Middle-East, Asia and Africa (OECD). Perhaps the fact that remittance data collected from the 30 member countries is paradoxically referenced to as world remittances data can be seen as an attempt by OECD to draw the picture that remittances are financial flows heading to developing countries from the west. Furthermore, to emphasize the impacts at the receiving end as the goodwill of the sending regions in compensation for the brain drain associated with immigration. Even so, one fundamental question that deserves scholarly attention is that, what factors inform the processes of remittances.

F. Reasons for sending remittances:

The existence and the increasing scope of remittances are characterized by many factors. Straubhaar and Vădean (2005, 29) suggest that the four dominant remittances motivating factors include "Pure altruism"; this refers to when immigrants remit money because they are simply

concerned about their relatives in home countries. Similarly, “pure self-interest” is when immigrants’ remittances to their parents are driven by the desire to inherit parents’ properties in the long run. It also applies when immigrants remit money because they own assets in their home countries that need to be maintained. Immigrants whose remitting motivations are driven by pure altruism do not settle in host countries on a permanent basis. They do return to their home countries after certain targets such as education achievement, or capital accumulations are achieved³ (Straubhaar and Vădean, 2005).

According to Massey and Taylor (2004), implicit family agreement is when a family invests in one of its members who it views to have the greatest potential for generating migrant earnings and sending remittances home in return. The family then sponsors that individual to migrate and to settle in a host country with the potential of future benefits such as remittances. The individual sponsored is further expected to send remittance or to return with certain amount of saving in return for the sponsorship that she or he received from parents or relatives. Similarly migrants’ saving target is when immigrants intend to return in the longer run to their countries of origins. To prepare for this return migration, immigrants send remittances home as a form of capital accumulation and to build assets while living abroad and waiting for the calculated return time to ripe (Massey and Taylor, 2004). Unlike the existing literature claiming this practice to be the main reason factoring the flow of remittances, the experiences of the 12 study participants differ significantly from this claim.

Remittances motivated by Portfolio management decision, on the other hand, are when the flows of remittances to home country are influenced by both or either microeconomic and macroeconomic underlying factors. The best example of macroeconomic policy driven

³ Capital accumulation refers to when immigrants whose remittances fall under the pure altruism category have accumulated enough financial saving capable of starting and sustaining an investment in their home country.

remittances according to Dimzon (2005) includes the fact that the Republic of the Philippines has designed the labour migration of its citizens as a macro-development project that generates hard currency. For that reason the government trains and sends its citizens around the globe on contracts as migrant works. In return they have to remit most of their income through government regulated banks in addition to the annual contract fees they pay (Dimzon, 2005). The government of the Republic of Philippines utilizes the remittances it receives to pay off its foreign debt. According to the existing literature these five reasons combined, constitute the main motivating factors that define the existence and the growing scale of world remittances. Although the various reasons for sending remittances commonly apply to many immigrants/migrants, it should be noted that African immigrants/migrants' remittances vary in many ways.

G. Remittances to Africa:

Although a significant amount of remittances flow to Africa, however, the reasons and challenges of sending remittances vary depending on the location of the sender, the location of the receiver and the culture of those involved. In her participant observation research among Somalian refugees in Kenya, Horst (2006: 124) mentions that "Being a Somali as well as being a Muslim entails a responsibility to assist those who have less". This cultural and religious slogan of responsibility entails the motto based on which Somali refugees receive and send remittances. The author also points out that among the Somalis like in most warring countries, remittances are as well sent as contribution towards a political cause such as to fund a movement or to fund a development project or peace project. In addition, cultural obligations such as extended family responsibilities, expensive funeral and wedding ceremonies continue to inform the process of

remittances that are sent as pure altruism by African immigrants (Kapur and McHale, 2005). Even so, Straubhaar and Vădean (2005) demonstrate that the degree to which immigrants' remittances flow is determined by their level of income, savings and the duration of immigrants' stay in host countries.

In their study involving the first and second-generation Portuguese immigrant women in Toronto, Giles and Klimt (2003) argue that the compassionate desire to remit money and to return to home countries are aspirations commonly shared by first generation immigrants, however, they are less likely to be shared by the second or the later generations of immigrants. Due to their direct relationship with home countries, first generation immigrants are more likely to remit money than the second generation. Unlike the influence of duration, 11 out the 12 Sudanese immigrants who participated in this research project clearly demonstrated that family obligation imposed by the unjustified extended delays in the sponsorship processes of their spouses force them to send more remittances than they would be sending voluntarily.

H. Remittances to Sudan the invisible channels

The existing literature assumes that a significant amount of remittances head to Sub-Saharan Africa, however data on the flow of remittances to that region is limited and thus, inaccurate for the purpose of comparative research due to the differences in the methods used to report remittances and the invisible nature of transfer that most remittances to Africa take (Thomas and Palme, 2006). The extensive use of informal channels and the non-distinction between internal and international sources of remittances combine to factor the invisibility of data on remittances to Africa (ibid).

Thomas and Palme (2006) further argue that where few currency restrictions exist such as in Francophone Africa, it is even harder, to trace the extent of remittances. For example, North African migrants to France are said to be sending more than one-third of their remittances by hand and almost an equal amount by post office transfer (Ibid).

Another invisible remittances trading mechanism includes the fact that in the Maghreb countries for example, northern Sudanese migrants escape the complexity of exchange control restrictions by purchasing goods for customers in the home countries who in turn will “credit the emigrants’ accounts with the money in local currency at a black market rate” (Thomas and Palme, 2006: 74).

Similarly, Sudanese in the Gulf tend to hand carry “gold jewellery back home, both in the interests of a safe investment and of personally compensating women for managing the household in the absence of men” (ibid). Studies of remittances to Sudan by Ramamurthy as cited in Thomas, and Palme, (2006: 74) concludes that the principal uses of remittances in Sudan are for consumption, land acquisition, housing construction and establishment of small business. Similarly, for the twelve study participants, the welfare of their families constitutes the prime reason that obliges them to send money to Africa. Despite claims in the existing literatures that ‘implicit family agreement is the main reason for sending remittances (Straubhaar and Vădean (2005), however, this conclusion has not been proven accurate by the experiences of the Sudanese immigrant remitters whose views and experiences are documented in the paper.

Family welfare implies subsistence livelihood, support for victims of natural calamities, housing maintenance, religious and other culturally relevant necessities. The study or comprehensive review of these kinds of cultural informed processes of trading remittances is

what is known in this paper as remittances' ethno-dynamics⁴. In the absence of comprehensive studies of the cultural dynamics of remittances, and in the presence of the many fallacies of hasty generalization that exist in the studies of remittances, there are as well limited concepts to describe the ethnocultural motives and the policies of exclusion that pressure immigrants/migrants to lean further towards that direction. The concept of ethno-dynamics is implied to describe such cultural or ethnocultural based dynamics that continue to characterize the trading mechanisms of remittances to many places and thus, makes it informal and invisible for the formal systems to detect their scope with prize accuracy.

In the existing ethno-dynamic literature on the remitting patterns among African immigrants; Sudanese immigrants in particular, all evidence points to the complex nature of these resource flows in sustaining live at two ends under very difficult circumstances (Shandy, 2006). Regardless of the pressure that appears to dictate financial flows, remittances sent to Africa alter social life in unexpected and powerful ways by shaping residential patterns, local economies and power structures. Viewed in this way, Shandy, (2006) argues that regardless of the circumstances that warrant their flows, placing remittances within the scholarly paradigm of factors that influence social change will increase our understanding of remittances and their dynamics. Whether immigrants' remittances are sent due to social pressure or voluntarily, such flows have significant impacts at both the remitting and receiving ends. Perhaps this argument challenges our Eurocentric understanding of remittances and asks us to pay attention to the impacts of remittances at both the sending and the receiving ends.

⁴ Remittances' ethno-dynamics implies the cultural informed processes that warrant or dictate the flow of financial remittances to a particular region.

I. Impacts of Remittances:

In attempts to analyze the limited existing ethno-dynamic literature on the impact of remittances, it appears clear that it is dominantly written from Eurocentric perspective and is driven by the desire to conclude that remittances are a kind of generous financial support from the west to the developing regions of the globe, which however is not the case (Srisankandarajah, 2005; Kapur and McHale, 2005). In addition to this biased epistemological view⁵, most of the existing scholarly research on the impacts of remittances also emphasizes the macroeconomic dynamics or the impact of remittances at the receiving end. This emphasis however, ignores the impacts on the senders and the social pressures that may in the first place force them to remit (see Andrés, 2005; Heilmann, 2006; O'Neil, 2003). This over-emphasis in the literature on the receiving population has left a gap in our understanding of the impacts of financial remittances on the sending population. Furthermore, it continues to beg the misleading inclusion that remittances are flows from the global developed to the global developing regions. Financial remittances as well flow from the global poor to the global rich in the form of compensations paid to employees working as invaders, oil explorers, migrant workers, aid workers and the so-called expatriates. Even so, the existing literature because of its Eurocentric context ignores this kind of remittances, perhaps to avoid mentioning the fact that the developed countries receive as much remittances as the developing countries do. Additional misleading picture of remittances argues that although financial remittances are sent individually, when they are of significant amounts their impact is felt in national balance of payments (OECD, 2005). These arguments fail to acknowledge the side effects of remittances on the migrants/immigrants senders.

⁵ Biased epistemological view: refers to the Eurocentric view of remittance being drawn by the existing literature and which tries to paint remittances as the good will of the host countries, and which ignores the impact on the sending sends while focusing on the macroeconomic impact at the receiving end instead of both.

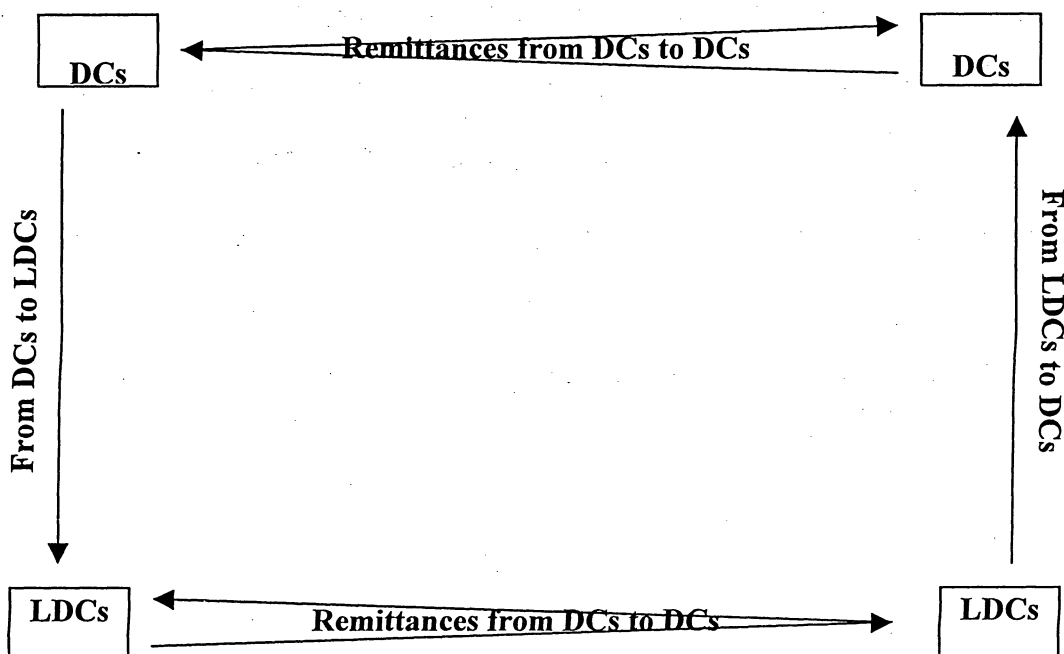
Counter-arguments to the overemphasis of the macroeconomic impacts of remittances include the unpredictability of transfers; that remittances are utilized mainly to buy consumer goods and thus, fuel unproductive consumption, inflationary pressures and artificial increases in wage levels as well as increased imports and balance of payments problems (Bareria, 2004). Remittances also constitute little or no investment in productive capital. They lead to increased personal investments in real estate (see Nyberg-Sorensen et al, 2005). Dependency on the remittances as sources of income erodes good work habits, and that they induce consumption spending by non-migrants households (Heilmann, 2006). Comparing the positive impacts of financial remittances against the negative impacts counter argument, the formal seems to exhibit more misleading assumptions.

Given the demonstrated evidence claiming that financial remittances at every level directly or indirectly are geared towards macroeconomic benefit, I argue that even as such arguments point towards good motives, they on the other hand are attempts to draw a kind of a good-master image of the developed countries sending remittances as a kind of bilateral⁶ aid flying from the pockets of western donors for development in the global south. The irony accompanying the above argument however, is that even as the World Bank argues for more migrants to send more remittances Marshall (2006), the World Bank as well ignores to see the necessity to ask for migrants/immigrants' acceptance or improved working conditions in host countries. Perhaps the host countries are in attempts to claim remittances as credit for hosting immigrants. This wish is far from reality. Should they wish to receive credit, at least they need to demonstrate their good will by making their employment, settlement and immigration policies accommodating to the economic prosperities of immigrants. Furthermore, perhaps they need to

⁶ Bilateral aid: refers to financial or other kinds of aid that is one country gives to another in good faith based on the political or economic relationship that exist between the two.

soften the cost of sending remittances or to credit remittances as tax break during their tax filing regardless of who in the family receives the remittances. With or without this demonstrated good will, claiming credit for remittances sent as the results of the negative experiences of immigrants is equivalent to collecting money from a dead man's pocket. Financial remittances are not donations for developing the global south, but financial flows that Sudanese immigrants in Canada are forced to send in order to have a peace of mind. Furthermore, they are not only flows heading in one or two directions; from the DCs to the LDCs, but they are flows in four directions. Table 1 demonstrated the global flow of financial remittances.

Table 1: Global Flow of Remittances



I. 1 Trading directions of remittances:

Although the existing literature paints remittances as almsgiving flowing in one direction; from the west to the developing countries, and that the developing countries must appreciate, (see Horst 2006; IOM 2006; Arozco 2003), I argue that remittances are financial flows in four directions. The four directions include; flows from DCs to DCs, from LDCs to LDCs, from LDCs to DCs and From DCs to LDCs.

With the Republic of South African in the global economic system categorized as LDC, evidence in Ramamurthy cited in Tamas and Palme (2006) and Dimzon (2005) pointing towards the dynamics of remittances within the LDCs indicate that the Republic of Southern African countries of Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Lesotho are characterized

by massive migration to the Republic of South Africa; the benefit of which is rural development in sending countries. This demonstrates that financial remittances impacting lives in the southern African region do not necessarily come from the west, but within the regions itself.

Similarly evidence in Lyons et al (2006) citing labour migration within the DCs indicate that the declining fertility rate in many developed countries make them dependent on labour migration from other countries as well. Some contemporary evidence suggests that health workers and social workers from within Europe, Africa and Asia comprise a significant proportion of today's professional workforce in the United Kingdom. For instance of the 30% of Britain's social workers which is composed of non British workers, 10% comes from Holland (Ibid). With migrant workers' compensation for work abroad being defined as remittances, this suggests that remittances are traded not only with LDCs, but even within the DCs. Even so, with this diversity of social and health workers in the U.K., comes the diversity of remitting directions.

In terms of remittance flowing from DCs to LDCs, evidence from (IOM) suggests that the top three remittance receiving countries include India, Mexico and the Philippines, and that in 2004 remittances to those countries in U.S.A. Dollars amounted to 23 billion, 17 billion and 8 billion respectively with significant portion coming from the those countries' diasporas living in the U.S.A.

On the other hand, the fact that over 4 million Americans work outside the U.S.A. as labour migrants and over 68, 000 Canadians cross the Canadian border every morning to work in the U.S.A. alone in addition to those who have home addresses in the U.S.A. and those who work else where in the world as migrant workers suggests that both Canada and the U.S.A. receive significant amounts of migrant workers' remittances (Jones and Luscombe, 2006 and

Statistics Canada, 2003). Should there be a system to track the remittances of those labour migrants, the U.S.A. for example, should as well be ranging on the top of the Countries receiving remittances from its migrants workers working in both the developed and developing countries.

In an article entitled 'Labour Migration', (IOM) migrant workers are defined as individuals who cross national border for the purposes of employment. Based on this definition it can be concluded that not only are the earnings of migrant workers from LDCs defined as remittances, but all migrant workers' earnings are remittances. Similarly, not only do migrant workers come from LDCs, but there are many migrant workers from DCs who as well cross their national borders for employment in developing countries or in other developed countries. According to Jones and Luscombe (2006) it is estimated that several millions of American citizens work abroad for the transnational corporations and as aid workers. Regardless of what they do, if their labour migration falls outside the diplomatic missions of their countries, they are migrant workers and the income they generate abroad is remittances.

The irony and double standard in this is that while many developed countries such as the U.S.A. and Canada are busy establishing the statistics of labour migrants sending financial remittances to LDCs, however, they have no interest in knowing how many of their own citizens work abroad as labour migrants whose incomes equally are defined as remittances (Ibid). The fact that National Statistics in both Canada and the U.S.A. are not interested in knowing how many of their own citizens migrate for labour purposes around the globe is not an accident. It is a calculated policy that exists perhaps to create illusions and to hinder any possibility of establishing or citing the many Canadians and Americans who make their living as labour migrants else where. Even so, the absence of information created by this illusion does not mean

that there are no remittances coming to the developed countries. This as well, is another academic gap created by the existing literature on financial remittances.

The question one needs to ask is who is a labour migrant? Who is an expatriate? What about oil driven foreign invaders like the U.S.A. army in Iraq? In my opinion, if they are not parts of the institutionalized diplomatic mission in Iraq, if they went to those countries on working visas, and if U.S.A.'s invasion of Iraq was a strategy to create jobs for the sons and daughters of the poor Americans, indeed, they are all migrant workers and their incomes are financial remittances flowing from LDCs to DCs regardless of the misleading picture of remittances that appeals to the applause of the west.

In this context, the limitation of data on remittances is evidently impacted and dependent on the directions the flows of remittances take, the method of transfer, and the willingness/unwillingness of nation-states to generate statistics on their migrant workers and their incomes. Of all the four directions, data on remittances both to LDCs and DCs is very limited or does not exist at all (Newland, 2004). The absence of this data on remittances to LDCs perhaps symbolized how friendly and affordable official money transfer policies in host countries are. The lack of data on remittances coming from LDCs to DCs is due to the political unwillingness of those states involved to label the income of their migrant workers by its name; remittances. In the case of Sudanese immigrants in Canada, it plays a significant role in their choice of which money transfer agency to utilize while sending remittances. Perhaps, should host countries be friendly to immigrants' remittances and should they soften their transfer policies, migrants may have the motivation to remit through the formal systems, and thus, scholars would be able to trace them with precise conviction. These political factors can be taken as evidence that immigrants' choice of the informal systems over the formal, to a greater extend is informed

by the nature of financial policies in host countries, thus, this however, limits the availability of reliable data available to scholars for research.

SECTION FOUR: Family Sponsorship

A. Historic and contemporary dynamics of Canada's Immigration policy:

Canada is commonly seen as one of the few countries with the will to select refugees abroad through a “government sponsored program”. Canada is also seen as one of a handful of nations where social and cultural change driven immigration is perhaps, the single enduring social policy constant⁷ (Kelly and Trebilcock, 1998: 405). Contrary to this positive impression however, evidences suggest that Canada's contemporary immigration policy instruments such as the family sponsorship, begets its content from a racist and exclusionary history (Kelly and Trebilcock, 1998). For instance according to Kelly and Trebilcock, (1998), since before the confederation Canada's immigration policies were clearly established along the lines of racial hierarchy. The most preferred immigrants were the British and white Americans. However, when the scarcity of British and White Americans emerged, the reverse became essential. To facilitate the immigration of the unwanted, immigration officials were given a hierarchical list of the desirable immigrants. Following the British and Americans were “North Europeans...at the bottom of the list were Jews, Orientals and then blacks” (Kelly and Trebilcock, 1998: 442). Citing an early 1900s immigration document, further evidences in Li (2003:19) argues that for this era Canada's admission policy was summarized by government report as follows:

“it is the policy of the Department to do all in its power to keep out of the country undesirables...those belonging to nationalities unlikely to assimilate and who consequently prevent the building up of a united nation of people of similar customs and ideas”.

Given our similar experiences today, Ighodaro (2006: 43) asks that, has this lamentable history of social policy discrimination and racism changed? My answer to this question is no. This same

⁷ This statement implies that Canada is theoretically one of the few countries that literally embrace diversity, social and cultural changes through its multicultural immigration policy. Even so, its economic prosperity depends on immigrants' labour.

imperial logic of differences continues to be seen in today's Canada immigration policy and particularly in the settlement experiences of African immigrants in Canada. For instance all the twelve study participants for this research paper remarked that Canada's overseas immigration officers are cultural competent in handling family sponsorship cases in non western cultures. The case of Mr. Right-Denied⁸ and the "Singh" and "Kaur" scandal serve the best examples in this regard. Interpreting today's Canadian immigrants' settlement experiences in comparison to the past as previously articulated, Galabuzi (2006:179) similarly argues that

"historically in Canada, structural inequalities in access to social, economic, political, and cultural resources have arisen out of the often intersecting experiences of oppression relating to race, class, gender...and immigration status".

These inequalities continue to shape today's immigration policy in many ways and to define social exclusion; the legacy of which have resulted in Sudanese immigrants' negative experiences such as paying two rents; their own in Canada and their spouses' in Africa as the result of denial and long delays in the sponsorship processes. This is associated with the unavailability of Canadian immigration processing offices in some regions in African (Ighodaro, 2006). Moreover, the case of Mr. Right-Denied services the best example of cultural exclusion in today's Canadian immigration policy.

⁸ Mr. Right-Denied is the only participant who has been identified with a pseudonym in order to protect his identity. Due to confidentiality agreement, I will now on refer to the story his narrative because he of one the twelve study participants whose family sponsorship denied case reveals the cultural incompetent that impedes the ability of many Canadian overseas officers to make cultural appropriate decisions. He is the only participant I have identified with a pseudonym because his case deserves especial attention than others, and he insisted that it needs to be told.

a 1. The case of Mr. Right-Denied:

Background:

According to Mr. Right-Denied, in his culture, if a man is unable to have a child with his wife, In consultation with his wife he privately calls his younger brother or his nephew and introduces him to his wife. If the two agree, the brother or the nephew can have sex with the wife. If she becomes pregnant as result, the children are the husband's children regardless, and not his brothers' or nephew's; who many would refer to as biological father. In other cases, if a young man dies at about age 14 or less, the family of the dead man will marry for him and the dead man's wife will stay and have sex with one of his relatives, should she happen to have a child as a result, the children are the dead man's, and they will never be known as the children of the man who is biological supposed to be their father.

The Case: Having been brought up in this culture, Mr. Right-Denied was away from his family for many years due to some unfortunate situation in his country. As result, his family thought he was dead and thus, his wife had to make her choice and she chose his younger brother in order to have children for him assumed as dead. In the period he was assumed dead, two other children were born for him. After many years however, he resurfaced and migrated to Canada. Given the official recognition of cultural marriage such as this; which is evident in the CIC sponsorship policy manual (see CIC; family class migration), Mr. Right-Denied filed an application to sponsor his wife and his three children including his brother. His wife in the overseas processing office was called for interview, however, she was denied immigration visa to Canada. According to him, the processing office clearly stated to her that she is not his wife any more because she has children with another man, who they referred to as her husband. Even so, the women never intended nor did she under go another marriage ceremony accept that with her husband; Mr. Right-Denied. Not undergoing another marriage implies that the marriage relationship between Mr. Right-Denied and his wife remains valid even under the Canadian legal system, which would have served as the bases of immigration decision making. According to him, the rejection is unfair, and that woman will forever be his wife. Furthermore, he would like CIC to review his case.

Similarly, in the most recent account of racism and ethnocultural bias towards non western cultural groups in one of the Canadian overseas processing offices, a recent news paper article which appeared on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) website on July 24th/2007 in a shorter version, and reappeared on 'The Times of India' website in a full version on July 26/2007, has evidently revealed that over a decade the Canadian government immigration policy had been forcing "Indians bearing the last name of 'Singh' or 'Kaur' to

change their surnames” as the prerequisite for immigration visa to Canada or else they would face rejection. The rationale for this request was that such last names are already very common in Canada. Perhaps this kind of racist, Eurocentric and unprofessional immigration policy and practice has represented the basis of immigration decision making about conventional refugees in more than India. According to the rejection note served to the innocent sponsored husband whose case exposed this latest scandal by Citizenship and Immigration office in New Delhi dated May 17/07, his last name could not qualify him for immigration visa to join his wife in Canada. Furthermore, neither did his marriage status to a Canadian citizen/landed immigrant qualify him. The letter runs: “Please note that your surname must be endorsed on your passport. The names ‘Kaur’ and ‘Singh’ do not qualify for the purpose of immigration to Canada.” Given this case, should non European immigrants believe that they as Canadian citizens or landed immigrants have the same rights that Canada is supposed to offer to all its citizens?

This incident leaves us with questions about the nature of such an immigration policy, and above all, such a racist scandal has happened in the name of a country that prides itself on the notion of multiculturalism and claims to welcome immigrants from all cultures. Rather than answering the questions, one might need to ask Canada’s immigration overseas processing officers more questions: How many people still migrate from Europe or from the U.S.A. to Canada with common last names like McDonald/MacDonald, Smith or Lee/Leigh? Have they been asked to change their last names since such names are common as well? Are there ongoing cases like this elsewhere? Are our immigration officers mandated to re-define, rename or create an artificial so-called Canadian immigration last name or immigration culture?

This is a siege on non western cultures and a continuous attempt by those who migrated earlier to culturally assimilate those who are just coming in. I am afraid that perhaps immigration

offers abroad will soon begin asking some new immigrants to change the shapes of our noses in order to qualify for immigration visa to Canada. Given the case of Mr. 'Singh' as a sponsored spouse who could not qualify to join his wife in Canada because of his non European last name, it is essential to examine the existing family sponsorship policy based on which immigration officers are supposed to base their decision makings.

a 2. *Sponsorship policy/requirements:*

As it stands in its various documents, it is the obligation of CIC to ensure that Canadian citizens or permanent residents, whose cases meet the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) eligibility criteria, are eligible to sponsor family members to Canada (CIC, 2005-2006). According to an article on (IOM website) titled International Law and Family Reunification, the paradox in this criterion is that there may not be any uniform definition of family in the many cultures in Canada. Depending on whose cultural concept is reflected in the legal definition of family in Canada, the acceptance of family sponsorship cases may be problematic when some cultural contexts defer in their relevancy to the accepted definition. As it stands in (CIC), the concept of Family under Canadian immigration law has a very definite meaning. Family stands for "husbands, wives, dependent children, mothers, fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers" or in other words, nuclear family.

Based on this definition it is clear that those other types of family relations that may not fit into this Eurocentric definition may also not be recognized as family members and thus, may not be allowed to join their loved ones in Canada. For instance, in the case of Mr. Right-Denied, he had been denied the sponsorship of his wife and children because of cultural variation in the definition of wife and children, even so, despite the outstanding legality of his marriage status to

his wife even under the Canadian legal system. In order to conceptualize the bases of decision making in CIC immigration practice, it is essential to understand the legal definition of marriage in Canada and the sponsorship requirements that guide family reunification immigration processes from Africa to Canada.

B. Marriage & Immigration to Canada:

As it stands in the sponsorship policy, a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant who is married to a spouse of other nationality is eligible to sponsor his/her spouse for permanent residency as long as the marriage is “legal both under the country's federal law where the couple got married and under the Canadian federal law” as well (CIC). The Canadian legal system also accepts the following types and definitions of marriage and spouse:

“Tribal Marriage” (Customary Marriages): these are marriages carried out according to tribal customs. Such marriages are valid for immigration purposes if they are legally recognized where they occur (Ibid).

“Arranged Marriage”: in this kind of marriage family members or marriage brokers facilitate all the required marriage procedures in the absence of one or both spouses. This kind of marriages is recognized for immigration purposes to Canada as long as they are legally recognized where they occur (Ibid).

“Common-law partner”: is defined as a “life partner in a committed relationship” in which the spouses have been continuously living together for at least one year (CIC).

“Conjugal partner”: is defined as a “life partner in a committed relationship for at least one year...no cohabitation is required but a relationship must be interdependent in physical, financial, emotional, and social aspects” (ibid).

Despite the clarity of these various definitions of marriage, and despite the fact that the wife of Mr. Right-denied did not undergo, neither did she intend to undergo another married and despite the cultural legality of his marriage as it stand today; his case remains a denied case. Furthermore, despite the existence of these definitions and their official recognition by the federal law of Canada, in many cases, the application of such legality is informed by stereotypes and various discourses of exclusion, thus rendering them contrary to their content. According to Li (2003) the attitudes with which immigrants are accepted to Canada and with which immigration officers abroad interpret non western cultures are shaped by the defined category under which individual immigrants fall. Such categories are further established based on the public discourses that define them. He further argues that in the official discourse in Canada,

“a distinction is often made between the economic immigrants...and other unsolicited or self selected immigrants made up of family class or refugee class. This distinction also implies that solicited immigrants have more to offer to Canada while the self-selected immigrants are less productive and can be costly to Canada (Li, 2003:176).

Even so, this human capital based distinction is only a tool used by Canada's Immigration system to validate and solidify its colour coded desire to maximize the migration of immigrants with the desired skin colour and race. Perhaps the so-called credential or qualification serves as the shield of racism and exclusion behind which Canada's colour coded immigration agenda can safely be pursued. Indeed, as the following case study of Sudanese immigrants in Canada reveals, despite the fairly articulated definitions of marriage in the Canadian legal system as it stands in the sponsorship manual, their application to different cultural groups, especially those from Africa defer greatly.

SECTION FIVE: case study of Sudanese immigrants in Canada

A. Findings:

In order to protect their identities, participants are not identified, except one, I have identified with a pseudonym as Mr. Right-Denied in specific narratives because of the nature of his case which he, insisted during the interview that it should be told specifically. For the same reasons their exact backgrounds are not reported in the study. During the interviews I asked participants various qualitative and open ended questions in order to detail their experiences of sponsorship, remittances, and the impact of remittances on their own economic and social adjustments here in Canada. These questions help in understanding the experiences of sponsorship from Africa to Canada and in defining the context from which participants speak throughout the study. The questions were asked either in past tense in cases where participants had completed their sponsorships already or in present tense in cases where participants were still processing their spouses. In reporting their responses, I indicate the numbers of individuals who shared common or different experiences for comparative reasons. Comparing their sponsorship cases will help in understanding the variations and the magnitude of their sponsorship experiences. The interview questions were categorized into three sections: Sponsorship, Remittances and Impacts of remittances. For a full interview questionnaire, see interview appendix. Below are some of the questions I asked and the responses I they provided⁹:

Sponsorship:

1. Q: *Did you attend your marriage or did you arrange it from Canada?*

Ans: Each participant identified with one of these categories. As such, nine of the twelve study participants confirmed that they attended their marriages either before migration to

⁹ Q: refers to each question I asked and Ans: refers to participants' responses to each question.

Canada or they went back to attend. According to two individuals from the group of nine, they went back to Africa from Canada to attend their marriage and came back to Canada to start the process. In This way, they claimed that they lessened the perceived challenges of arranged marriage sponsorship. One of the two who did so said that he was initially married before migrating to Canada, but since he came to Canada as a student, he claimed single to qualify for scholarship. Just before he started his sponsorship process, he went back claiming to marry just in order to avoid complication and delays in his sponsorship. The other three participants arranged their married while living in Canada.

2. **Q:** *Where does your spouse live now?*

Ans: Six individuals had completed their process and had their spouses living with them here in Canada at the time of interview. Three individuals have their spouses living and being processed in Uganda, one in Kenya, one in Egypt and one participant has his spouse living in Sudan but being processed in Cairo; Egypt.

3. **Q:** *How long are you into the sponsorship process? Or how long did your sponsorship process take?*

Ans: To this question, seven participants reported saying that their cases were completed in 3-5 years, and the delays were associated with lack of communication fostered by the remoteness of processing offices. One had his case rejected in two years time, with the remaining four having been into or completed their processes in two years or less.

4. **Q:** *Have you been told or were you told why your process delayed?*

Ans: Although this question did not apply to all, the seven participants it applied or applies to cited the delays associated with the limitation of processing offices in Africa, which all of them said creates communication and logistic difficulties. One of the remaining five declined to

comment on his rejected case. One of the remaining four had their cases processed faster because they took chances of the one year window opportunity¹⁰ and the one processed his case through a charitable agency.

5. **Q:** *In which country is your sponsorship process taking place or did your sponsorship process take place?*

Ans: The eleven participants who have Sudanese spouses either had their spouses living in the past or have their spouses currently living and being processed out of Sudan. One participant has a non Sudanese spouse who for that reason was processed in her own country of birth. Six of the eleven participants with Sudanese spouses have their spouses currently being processed. Three individuals of the group of six has their spouses living in Uganda, one in Kenya, one in Egypt, and one spouse lives in Sudan while being processed in Egypt.

6. **Q:** *How does your spouse survive?*

Ans: The eleven participants who have Sudanese spouses indicated that they send or sent money monthly or periodically to their spouses to make their ends meet during the sponsorship processes and one reported that he only sent an unspecified fairly large amount to his wife which she utilized to run her own business on which she depended for the duration of her process.

7. **Q:** *How much money do/did you usually send?*

Ans: Participants who remit money to their spouses on monthly bases reported the following amounts in Canadian Dollars; 150.00, 300.00, 150.00, 100.00, 200.00 and 250.00. One of the two who reported remitting on annual basis testified to sending 1000.00 and the other 2500.00-3000.00. One participant reported that he sends 200.00 weekly for wife and children. One

¹⁰ Window opportunity refers the federal sponsorship program that allows government sponsored refugees to sponsor their family members to Canada at the expense of the government within their first twelve months of arrival.

participant declined to respond to this question and the remaining one sent one unspecified fair-sized amount for investment on which his spouse depended until her arrival in Canada.

8. **Q:** *Do or did you have a schedule for remitting money or do/did you just send money upon request?*

Ans: To this question, six participants reported that they remit/remitted money on monthly bases to support their spouses. Two others said that they only remitted money on monthly bases when their spouses were on process in Africa, but since their spouses' arrival in Canada they do not remit on schedule any more. One participant said he remits on monthly bases and when he can't he borrows money from his brother who he refunds later. One other participant only remits upon request. While one other reported remitting on weekly bases, one other only sent/sends one fair-sized amount periodically.

9. **Q:** *Do you have other reasons for sending money home apart from helping your spouse?*

Ans: To this question, all the twelve participants unanimously indicated that they as well send money to Africa to help their parents, brothers, sisters and other relatives.

10. **Q:** *Compare the amount of money you now remit to when you were single or compare the money you send after your spouse's arrival to when she was still in Africa?*

Ans: Out of the six participants who had already completed their sponsorship, five reported that they now send less money; only to their relatives compared to when their spouses were in Africa. One participant reported that out of the 3600.00 he used to remit annually when his spouse was still in Africa, he now remits only 1000.00. However, the three who arranged their marriage while living in Canada reported significant increase in their remitting practice since they got married. One said that whatever it costs him, taking care of his family is his responsibility and he

accepts it the way it comes. The remaining three participants reported that they do not see where to draw the boundary of cost since they still have their spouses in Africa.

11. Q: *How much money do or did you send to your spouse compared to that you send or sent for any other reason?*

Ans: Ten participants reported that the amount of money they send/sent as contribution towards their sponsorship processes is three to four times the amount they send or sent for other reasons combined.

12. Q: *How does/did your spouse or do your relatives spend the money you send them?*

Ans: All twelve participants unanimously reported that the remittances they sent or send to their spouses were/are utilized towards the sponsorship process and its associated costs such as transportation, medical examination and for rent and subsistence while on the process. All of them as well reported that the money they send to their parents and other relatives are utilized for paying rent, food, medical costs, school fees and for substance during catastrophic disasters.

13. Q: *How do you send money to your spouse or relative?*

Ans: To this Question eight participants reported that despite the higher costs, they remit money through Western Union because the delivery method is fast enough to meet the necessities and urgency for which they send money. Two participants said they wire money into their friends' bank accounts who in turn delivers the money to their spouses or relatives. One other reported that he absolutely remit through the Somali local money transfer system and one sends either with Western Union or the Somali agency depending on the necessity, urgency and location of delivery.

14. Q: *Under what condition would you stop sending money abroad?*

15. **Ans:** To this question eight participants said that there will be no condition under which they will stop remitting money because they come from extended families and they have the obligation to help their relatives. Three on the other hand said that since the arrivals of their spouses they have already reduced the amount they used to send almost to zero because their spouses are not yet working, but learning English as second language, thus they don't have enough money any more to remit as they used to. Similarly one participant said unless his parents and spouse all live here, he will always send money to Africa.

16. **Q:** *Given the amount of money you send or sent abroad did or do you still have enough money to meet your daily needs here in Canada?*

Ans: To this question, five of the six who have their spouses already in Canada reported that during the process they did not have enough money to meet their daily needs here in Canada and they had to make up by cutting back on their life styles, biking to work or working more than 12 hours or more a day in order to make ends meet. One reported that he had enough money because he did not send a lot of money to his spouse. Five of the six who are still processing their spouses have reported that they do not have enough money and to compensate, they work 12 hours or more a day or they isolate from community activities that require fundraising, walk or bike to work. Three of the six have ended their cable contract in order to make their ends meet.

17. **Q:** *Do you/did you feel any pressure to send money abroad? If so what factors pressure/pressured you to do so?*

Ans: To this question, eight participants reported that unnecessary delays in family sponsorship was or is a frustrating pressure on them to keep sending money and work many hours a day.

Three of these eight reported that if they knew that this is how life is in Canada, they would never have come here in the first place. Mr. Right-Denied said that there has always been and there will always be a real pressure to which he cannot predict an end. One participant said that there were always ups and downs in his sponsorship, but he did not see them as pressure but challenges that he accepted as his responsibility so that could have a peace of mind to keep himself healthy. Unlike the others, one participant said that he did not feel any pressure but frustration over the delay.

18. Q: *Would you say that the amount of money you send/sent aboard has any impacts on your live?*

Ans: To this question, seven participants reported that sending money home has kept them bankrupted and vulnerable with no possibility of saving for long time. Three others mentioned that their cases are more than bankruptcy in that they often time have no money to live on after paying all their bills including those to Africa, and that they often have to sacrifice lifestyle in order to survive. One of the three said who said their cases were more than bankruptcy argued that the minimum wage he earns from work on hourly basis is meant to keep him alive in Canada. He also said that forcing his to send some of it continuously leaves him vulnerable. He further added that he came here five years ago but he feels as if he just came yesterday because he has no saving at all. Two participants declined to comment on this question, with one arguing that the Sudanese culture he comes from does not allow him to complain about his kindness to others, even so, he accepted that it kept his resources depleted. Mr. Right-Denied being one of the two who declined, his answer was that even if he becomes a millionaire, without his family that money means nothing to him.

19. Q: *If you didn't send/don't have to send money abroad what else would you have done with your money?*

Ans: Ten participants responded to this question that if they did have to send money home they would have bought homes by now or they would have furthered their education even without taking loans. Five of the ten added that they would have started business. One of the five stressed that he saw himself capable of succeeding in Canada but the system has failed him. Another said he was far better in Africa than he is in Canada because he didn't have any psychological issue in Africa, but here worries are considered normal part of life. One of the two remaining participants argued that he would have been less poor than he is today if the system didn't force him into sending money monthly. For Mr. Right-Denied, being a millionaire without your family means nothing.

20. Q: *Given your family sponsorship experiences, what would you recommend CIC to do in order to ease any challenges that African immigrants face during sponsorship processes from Africa?*

Ans: see participants' policy recommendation.

A. 1 General Summary Findings:

Both the existing literature and the recommendation from study participants suggest that keeping immigrants' families together outweighs other settlement factors. Similar to the existing literature, comparing the recommendations of study participants leads to the conclusion that united families settle faster. Regarding Canada's overseas processing officers, participants suggested that they are culturally incompetent and they require further training in this area.

Similarly, regarding the impact of cultural incompetent, both the literature and the experiences of study participants suggest that Canada's immigration policy towards African immigrants is racist, Eurocentric and biased. For example, this study has firmly confirmed that there are unnecessary delays in processing immigration applications from Africa, and the pressures associated with such delays coerce African immigrants into over remitting. Furthermore, inefficiency in family sponsorship from Africa dictates low socioeconomic status on those who sponsor. It has also been established that exclusionary immigration policy in Canada inflicts negative socioeconomic impacts on African immigrants and that high level of frustration caused by the delays in family sponsorship from Africa is evident among Sudanese immigrants in Canada.

B. Analysis

Comparing the dynamics of remittances and the family sponsorship experiences among the Sudanese immigrants residing in the Greater Toronto Area, Kitchener/Waterloo, St. Catherine and Windsor to the existing literature on remittances reveals both similarities and differences. In particular, what this study reveals contrary to the literature is that financial remittances are not almsgiving flowing from the western countries to the developing countries as the Eurocentric literature appeals it to western applause and would like us to believe. The flows of financial remittances according to this study are informed by both family obligation and negative pressure in the host country. Furthermore, contrary to the existing literature the experiences of Sudanese immigrants in Canada do not provide any evidence to suggest that any of the twelve participants send or sent remittances as pay back to parents for sponsoring them to come to Canada as the literature commonly claims (Straubhaar and Vădean, 2005). Perhaps this

pattern does not apply to Sudanese immigrants who commonly come to Canada either as refugees, students and independent migrants.

In the family sponsorship cases of the twelve Sudanese study participants, one essential factor to note is that the few who had their cases completed in less than two years are those who took advantage of the one year federal government window of opportunity and those entering Canada as independent immigrants (CIC, 2003). Some participants suggested that they were never informed by their settlement agencies about this opportunity; otherwise they would have utilized it to sponsor their spouses.

Regarding the costs encored by African immigrants while sponsoring, Ighodaro (2006:53) argues that the limitation of availability and access to immigration offices in Africa represents Canada's "informal policy of containment". For instance he further argues that the number of processing officers in the entire continent of Africa is less when compared to processing officers in a country like Thailand for example. Similarly, there is a very restricted number of refugee and immigration processing officers in Africa, with processing periods ranging from "two to seven years, depending on individual situations and determinations" (ibid). In addition, he further argues that in other parts of the world such as in Europe,

"immigrant and refugee applications usual take between three months and two years. Looking at the inequitable distribution of immigration around the world, it is reasonable to say that immigration policy is simply not fair to Africans. Theoretically every one has equitable access to Canada's immigration and refugee services, but things are very different in practice" Ighodaro (2006:53).

Unlike European immigrants whose are desired for their ancestry, perhaps is a clear money driven desire to facilitate the immigration of today's desired immigrants; Asian entrepreneurs whose wealth and not skin colour makes them desirable for immigration to Canada (CIC). Perhaps in the absence of the desired skin colour or European ancestry, money, and not last name

becomes the paradoxically requirement for refugee migration to Canada, otherwise there is no evidence to justify how one country; Thailand, has more officers than the entire continent of Africa (Ighodaro, 2006). Not only does this money driven and colour coded immigration policy foster the lack of processing offices in Africa, it as well forces African immigrants to pay more remittances in the forms of the processing costs of family sponsorship.

Faced with the limited availability of processing offices in Africa and its associated costs, Sudanese immigrants wishing to sponsor spouse have to transport their loved ones to the nearest countries in which a processing office can be found. In the cases of Sudanese, they host their spouses in Cairo; Egypt and Nairobi; Kenya, where processing office are or Uganda because of its closeness to Nairobi and due to its affordable living cost. The limitation and the understaffing of Canada processing offices in Africa alone, is costing African immigrants who wish to sponsor their spouses the very money they need to settle in Canada. For instances, in the case of Mr. Right-Denied, even after his wife's case was denied by CIC, he continues to pay her rent and other expenses on monthly bases as dictated by livelihood in the country of asylum where she resides. Given the culturally biased nature of Canada's immigration policy towards Africans, Ighodaro (2006) concludes that for the chances of equitable policy implementation and practice to prevail, and to end the discrimination in Canada's refugee policy, policy practice must be subjected to an anti-racist exploration that recognizes the diversity of non European cultures.

In addition to the costs imposed by the remoteness of processing offices and the unnecessary delays in sponsorship of African immigrants, this study found evidence that there are additional reasons that make African immigrants send remittances. Like other African immigrants, the various reasons among the Sudanese in Canada include; provision of housing and medical coverage to aging parents and other relatives, sponsoring the education of younger

brothers/sisters and other close relations, helping loved ones cope with natural calamities and helping those who live in refugee camps and outside Sudan such in the neighboring countries (Hosrt, 2006).

Regarding the delays in family sponsorship caused by Canada's colour coded immigration policy, most participants admitted that not only does the limitation of processing offices or officers in many African regions force them to remit more money, but it is also the prime factor in the delay of sponsorship cases. For instance, many pointed to the fact that the processing offices in Cairo or Nairobi at times ask applicants to show up for medical examination within a specific time frame such as four weeks to eight weeks. If those individuals are in Sudan for example, given the complication involved in getting the clearance to travel, the individual may arrive few days later. In this regard, the processing officers usually interpret it as lack of interest in migrating to Canada, a good reason for rejection or suspension. One participant commented that perhaps being a Canadian refugee case processing officer in Africa makes the individual immigration officers to act like robots; to do as they are told without any possibility of humanitarian or even rational analysis of decision making. Acting like robots is not only inhuman, but it has several impacts on those involved in family sponsorship cases from Africa to Canada.

Like other studies, the analysis of the impacts of sending remittances on Sudanese immigrants suggest that keeping immigrants' families together outweighs other settlement factors such as language acquisition and that, united families settle faster than other individuals and groups (CIC 2003). Further evidence based on a study of Sudanese immigrants in Ontario indicates that "pressure due to family obligation affects their settlement in practical and psychological ways" (University of Toronto: Department of Psychiatry, 2004: 30). In the

experiences of most of the participants whose family sponsorship processes are completed, family reunification has minimized the pressure for sending remittances. Putting it in dollar amount, as indicated previously in the interview subsection, one participant indicated that for the duration his spouse was in Africa he annually remitted about \$ 5,000 Canadian dollars annually to his spouse alone, but since her arrival in Canada he now sends only about \$1,000 to his parents whenever necessity warrants it. Furthermore, most participants equally argued that having their families in Africa inflicts many challenges on their lives here in Canada.

Some of the commonly cited challenges include the fact that most of those involved in sponsorship processes work longer hours in order to make ends meet. While some of them commonly pointed out that in order to save some money they bike or wald to work even during the winter because they cannot afford to pay for public transport. Some said they cannot afford to pay their own bills and they rarely have any saving, thus they survive without basic services like home phone and television. Their life style is characterized by isolation and frustration; one participant reported, “people think you are out of your mind when you can’t live like others, they mock you, but when she comes they ask you, what was wrong with you all this time”. Perhaps, the double advantage of family reunification is that there will be more than one income earners while fewer remittances may continue to flow.

Given all these lamentations I asked each participant if bringing their spouses to Canada means that they will not send any remittances back home. Most of them responded that they will always send money to their parents. This suggests that perhaps sending remittances is a cultural obligation which exists within an accommodating range, however, when this cultural factor is warranted by an external factor such as the duration of family sponsorship, it becomes a painful burden and sending remittances becomes their tears.

Even so, in many cases I asked participants to identify some of the external factors that turn their generosity into tears. Nine participants clearly demonstrated that the duration of family sponsorship not forces them to send money, but condemns them into low socioeconomic status. Furthermore, three of the nine mentioned that such delays are frustrating and it made/makes them to regret why they came to Canada in the first place.

Having explored the impact of remittances on the senders, I would argue that the existing literature that paints the picture of remittances as a development source of fund for the developing countries leaves a gap in our understanding of the dynamics of remittances and that it ignores the negative experiences that sustain or exaggerate the flows of financial remittances to Africa particularly. Even so, the view of remittance dynamics among the Sudanese immigrants in Canada highlights the importance of financial flows to Africa in sustaining life in odd circumstances at the receiving end while making life miserable at the sending end. Shandy, (2006) indicates that when considering the negative impacts of remittances on the senders and its effect on integration, two points emerge; first, since many Sudanese immigrants have access only to the lowest level of the labour market in Canada, they may endure low socioeconomic status below that of the average native Canadian. Two, it becomes clear that some of the anti-immigration rhetoric which portrays transnational practice such as sending remittances as a threat to social cohesion in the host country fails to conceptualize the opportunity costs and the choices that Sudanese immigrants are forced to make. Should they invest in their settlement processes in Canada while their spouses and families are lamenting or starving elsewhere? It is obvious that Canadian policy makers are asking Sudanese immigrants in Canada to assimilate by creating conditions that require them to turn their back on their spouses suffering in the few so-called processing offices in Africa? Conscious of the pitfalls in the Canadian family sponsorship

policy and immigration processing practices I found it necessary to seek participants' recommendations for relevant policy changes.

SECTION SIX: Policy Recommendations and Conclusion

A. Participants' policy recommendations:

At the end of each interview I asked each study participant for policy recommendations. All twelve participants made suggestions that they view helpful in reducing the challenges of family sponsorship for African immigrants. Some of the policy suggestions they made include the followings:

- CIC needs to increase the number of its processing offices and officers in Africa.
- Processing officers serving in Africa require cultural sensitivity training.
- CIC needs to allocate more resources to family sponsorship programs since immigration loan is an investment that immigrants pay back with interests.
- Since the definition of marriage has expounded to include same sex union in recent years, the definition of family needs to be expanded from the nuclear family to include extended family.
- CIC needs to honour the duration of sponsorship specified in its own policy manual or to accept financial responsibility for delayed cases in sponsorship cases.

B. Policy Recommendations:

Through the examination of both the existing literature and the contemporary experiences of Sudanese immigrants involved in family sponsorship processes, and the flow of remittances that it generates, I have identified gaps in Canada's immigration policy, problems and solutions. The following are some of the problems and their proposed solutions that I have identifies based on the literature and the experiences of study participants.

Policy recommendations	
Identified Problems	Solutions
<p>>Eurocentric and discriminative immigration policy and practice towards African refugees and immigrants.</p>	<p>>Immigration processing offices in Africa or abroad need to recruit and retain regional or country cultural consultants. This will minimize the chances of biased decision making by immigration officers such as that of Mr. Right-Denied.</p> <p>>CIC needs to pay special attention to the ethnic, cultural and regional diversity of Africa.</p> <p>>There is a need for pro-active and comprehensive anti-discrimination policy and practice in processing African or non-Euro-cultural immigrants to Canada.</p> <p>>Processing offices in each non European or cultural need identified region or country need to develop and utilize a cultural profile of the region. This may provide the necessary sensitive required for making cultural sensitive decisions. It will also help in easing the problem of cultural misinterpretation.</p>
<p>>CIC family sponsorship policy content does not reflect the multicultural society of Canada.</p>	<p>>Canada's Multicultural policy needs to move from the diversity of food manual to an inclusive immigration policy that Africans and other non Euro-cultural immigrants can identify with.</p>
<p>>The limitation of refugee processing offices in Africa causes prolonged delays in family sponsorship cases.</p>	<p>>CIC needs to train and provide more cultural sensitivity to overseas processing officers, especially those working in Africa.</p>
<p>>There are too many unjustified delays in family sponsorship from Africa to Canada.</p>	<p>>CIC needs to study the negative impacts that sponsorship delays impose on the individuals involved and on their settlement processes in Canada.</p>
<p>>Lack of cultural understanding of African or Sudanese immigrants leads to poor service provision.</p>	<p>>CIC needs to fund a cultural study that seeks to understand the family dynamics among Africans immigrants, and incorporate the findings into its policy manual. This will</p>

<p>> Due to lack of cultural sensitivity, Canadian policy makers think that social integration is measured by the acquisition of language and participation in the labour market.</p> <p>>Future research direction</p>	<p>help in easing the challenges of settlement in Canada.</p> <p>>There is a need for policy makers to study the needs, and diversity of cultures in Canada and to provide settlement and other services based on the needs identified.</p> <p>>There is a need for policy makers to engage in practices that will enable them to understand the diverse settlement needs of different immigrants' ethnic and language groups in Canada, and to seek and operate on the definition of settlement as it applies in each cultural group.</p> <p>>Further research needs to distinguish negative from positive remittances¹¹.</p> <p>>Since Sudanese or African immigrants are not the only groups suffering the impacts of remittances, there is a significant need for further research to focus on the direct impacts of policies of exclusion on other ethnocultural group members.</p> <p>>Future research needs to identify and distinguish scope of incoming financial remittances from LDCs to DCs in the forms of migrant workers' earning abroad.</p>
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¹¹ Negative remittances are those sent as the result of exclusionary policy in host country, while positive remittances are those sent voluntarily by the remitters.

C. Conclusion:

In attempts to understand the factors that warrant the flow of financial remittances, I have reviewed the existing literature on the ethno-dynamics that influences the flows of immigrants/migrants' remittance, and the impacts. I have as well reviewed and analyzed Canada's immigration policy and how it negatively affects the flows of financial remittances among African immigrants. In this context, I have presented a detailed case study of the dynamics of remittances among Sudanese immigrants in Canada and how such dynamics emerge as a result of the difficulties associated with policy bias and inefficiency in the family sponsorship of their spouses from Africa. I have also discredited the misleading picture of financial remittances being drawn in the existing literature that they are generous hand out from western countries towards development in the receiving countries.

Comparing the experiences of Sudanese immigrants to the existing literature on remittances has revealed that migrants/immigrants' shared experiences of sending financial remittances are not transnational responds to stimuli, but in Canada, the policies of racism, cultural exclusion, Euro-centrism and family obligations, all combine to force immigrants to send remittances (Straubhaar and Vădean 2005)¹². Furthermore, public policy deficiency such as the many unjustified family sponsorship delays I came across during the study are costing African immigrants more money in terms of the remittances they send to their families in Africa, thus, making their settlement process difficult in many ways.

Similarly, while isolation and deprivation certainly do form part of the experiences of many non European immigrants, this does not imply that all immigrants have homogenous needs. Based on the family sponsorship experiences of Sudanese immigrants in Canada, I have

¹² Transnational responds to stimuli refers the assumption that once an individual immigrants he/she automatically engages in the practice of sending money to his/her home country just because of being an immigrant/migrant.

argued that the prevalence of an immigration policy which gears towards cultural exclusion and racism affects African immigrants in many ways. In the case of Sudanese immigrants, it forces them to work longer hours in order to earn their living while their loved ones wait patiently for the long process like “grace from God” (comment from one participant). Most study participants referred to the frustration it causes as a psychological torture that they endure because of their families, because of being who they are, and because of being members of cultures that they did not choose to be born into. This study has also established that the focus on the policies that require immigrants to meet certain specific cultural requirements such as the nuclear family as qualification for the sponsorship program has a culturally exclusionary impact on African immigrants. For these reasons, they further referred to the money they are coerced to send as their tears. Sudanese immigrants’ tears only dry when their families are reunited, when their cultures are respected by Canada and when they gain control over their financial expending.

To reverse these negative experiences, the need for CIC overseas processing offices to develop cultural profiles of each country and to retain regional or national cultural consultants has been identified. Furthermore, there is need for future research study and distinguish negative or coerced remittances from voluntary remittances. Similarly, there remains the need to establish the scale of incoming remittances from LDCs to DCs, the needs for host countries like Canada to track its own migrant workers and their remittances for scholarly data proposes.

Appendix

Interview Questionnaire

The following are the basic structures of the interviews, and the basic questions I asked each participant. Depending on the flow of each interview, I utilized several prompts to further develop participants' narratives of their sponsorship experiences from Africa to Canada.

Section one: Sponsorship:

1. Where does your spouse live now?
2. How long are you into the sponsorship process? Or how long did your sponsorship process take
3. Have you been told or were you told why your process delayed?
4. In which country is your sponsorship process taking place or did your sponsorship process take place?
6. How does your spouse survive?
7. Do you send her/him any money or how does she/he survive?

Section Two: Remittances:

8. How much money do/did you usually send?
9. Do or did you have a schedule for sending money or do did you just send money upon request?
10. Do you have other reasons for sending money home apart from helping your spouse?
11. Compare the amount of money you now send to when you were single or compare the money you send after your spouse's arrival to when she was still in Africa?
12. How much money do or did you send to your spouse compared to that you send or sent for any other reason?
13. How does/did your spouse or do your relatives spend the money you send them?
14. How do you send money to your spouse or relative?
15. Under what condition would you stop sending money abroad?

Section Three: Impacts

16. *Given the amount of money you send or sent abroad did or do you still have enough money to meet your daily needs here in Canada?*
17. *Do you/did you feel any pressure to send money abroad? If so what factors pressure/pressured you to do so?*
18. *Would you say that the amount of money you send/sent aboard has any impacts on your live?*
19. *If you didn't send/don't have to send money abroad what else would you have done with your money?*
20. *Given your family sponsorship experiences, what would you recommend CIC to do in order to easy any challenges that African immigrants face during sponsorship processes from Africa?*

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