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Reconstructing Cultural Identities: The Lived Experiences of Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women of the Pentecostal Faith

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Reconstructing Cultural Identities: The Lived Experiences of Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women of the Pentecostal Faith

by

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Abstract

This study was undertaken to expand my understanding of how Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women (JCIW) reconstruct their post-immigration cultural identities using the Pentecostal faith. Viewed as a contentious faith tradition, the Pentecostal faith is often misrepresented, misunderstood, and misperceived in various psychology literatures. The findings generated from this research, however, address the saliency of the Pentecostal faith in the lived experiences of JCIW as they strive to cope with post-immigration stressors such as culture shock and acculturation difficulties.

This current research was informed by a social constructionist framework to emphasize multiple realities constructed through social interaction and language. Developed by (Moustakas, 1997), Heuristic Inquiry (HI) methodology was employed in this study to collect, analyze, and synthesize the data. The flexible and creative nature of HI allowed for the integration of my lived experiences into the research alongside those of the six participants.

Utilizing a semi-structured interview method, data was collected and reviewed using thematic analysis. Four categories were identified: Lived Experiences of the Pentecostal Faith, Gender Role Expectations, Defining Cultural Identity, as well as Seeking Counselling and Taking Action. Additionally, numerous overarching themes and subthemes also emerged from the data. The relevance of the results is discussed as they relate to the existing literature and new perspectives arising from the study to inform multicultural counselling. Strengths and limitations of the study are presented, as well as implications for theory, research, and practice.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with great honour and humility that I take this time to express my sincere gratitude and sincere thanks for all the significant to people who have sown seeds of prayer, love, and encouragement in my life. You all made the completion of this dissertation possible. Due to limited space, there are close family members, mentors, motivators, and friends whose names are not mentioned but whose kindness along the way will not be soon forgotten. To these people, please accept my deepest thanks!

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To conclude, this dissertation would not have been possible without the braveness, faith-driven passion, and transparency of the six participants. You were not afraid to tell your stories for the advancement of the counselling psychology profession. You are all advocates and activists in your own rights. Thank you all for your courage!
DEDICATION

Reflecting on the Scripture, “to whom much is given, much is required” (Luke 12: 48, NIV), I would like to dedicate this work to my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has given me the spiritual strength, knowledge, wisdom, and understanding to complete this project in order to become an agent of change in the lives of others.

Secondly, I dedicate this work to strong women of faith whose voices have been silenced in our society. Don’t be afraid to share your stories because they need to be heard—loud and clear!
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CHAPTER 1 – THE GENESIS OF FRAGMENTED IDENTITY

“I write for those women who do not speak, for those who do not have a voice because they were so terrified, because we are taught to respect fear more than ourselves. We’ve been taught that silence would save us, but it won’t.” (Audre Lorde, as cited in Tate, 1983, p. 106).

My identity was first challenged when I immigrated to Canada from Jamaica as an adolescent. Amidst the excitement of moving to a new country and its many opportunities, I also had feelings of trepidation towards the unknown. The idea of starting over in a new environment frightened me. I left a familiar culture where key dimensions of my identity were valued, accepted, and unified. I transitioned into a different environment where my Blackness, accent, and Pentecostal faith were scrutinized and my gender role radically redefined. This redefinition fragmented my identity along the lines of religion, spirituality, gender, race, and ethnicity.

Two years prior to immigrating to Canada, I decided to be baptized into the Pentecostal faith. At that time, I did not feel the need to justify my religious identity because Pentecostalism is a vibrant and significant part of Jamaican culture. The tenets of my faith were deeply rooted in the Bible, whose Scriptures were interpreted literally instead of contextually. The pastor’s role appeared to be hierarchical; he saw himself as a Shepherd guiding his flock of sheep (i.e., members). As a new convert, I felt obliged to adhere to his pastoral teachings, which were conservative and rigid, though influenced by certain biblical principles. These principles were the fundamental beliefs of the New Testament Church of God that I was affiliated with, which was of Pentecostal orientation. The first Declaration of Faith is that “The Church of God believes in the verbal inspiration of the Bible” (The Church of God, 2012; please see Appendix A for full Declarations of Faith). At that particular stage in my religious worldview, I believed
this to mean that the Bible should be taken literally, not considered through historical, social, and cultural contexts.

Once in Canada, I attended a Catholic high school where I was in the minority in terms of religion. This was a decision my parent made, and was beyond my control. While in high school, my literalist views were challenged because I was taught courses on world religions rather than solely on Christianity. This was a significant awakening because I was exposed to various religious worldviews and required to learn about doctrines that were vastly different from mine. For example, I recall learning about Charles Darwin’s (1859) seminal work, *On the Origin of Species* in my religion class. Through processes he called natural selection and survival of the fittest, Darwin argued that life forms grew increasingly complex, and that humans developed from the same family tree as apes.

The notion that I evolved from an ancestry of apes contradicted my faith; my faith tells me that I am created by God and that I am “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalms 139:14, New International Version [NIV]). My continuous meditation on these and other scriptural verses helped me to reconcile and to confirm my identity. At school, I did not declare my Pentecostal faith for fear of being ridiculed and shunned. I often cried from feelings of dejection and exclusion. I had no one to speak to about my struggle with religious identity.

In my new environment, I felt conflicted about my religious identity. I was expected to participate in certain religious practices that contradicted my Pentecostal beliefs, such as reciting the Rosary, confessing to a priest, and praying to Virgin Mary. To cope with my environment, I often sought solace in the washroom during my lunch hour, praying and reading my small pocket Bible. Those moments of spiritual solitude and Scripture reflection gave me comfort and helped
me make meaning of my faith. I was able to reconfirm my faith in biblical creation, although I continued to be challenged by Darwin’s theory of evolution.

In Jamaica, I was comfortable with my role as a woman within the Pentecostal church. I felt at ease with the gender expectations and norms for women in the church. I was restricted from engaging in certain “worldly activities” which demarked believers (saved) from non-believers (unsaved). Some prohibitions included wearing pants or any form of makeup or other accessories, painting my nails, attending movies, and putting any chemicals in my hair. These gender restrictions were influenced by scriptural verses that instructed “women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness” (1Timothy 2:9-10, NIV). Moreover, I was surrounded by other women who proselytized their Pentecostal faith at school and in the broader community, which helped to increase my spiritual and religious confidence. Under the spiritual guidance of my former Jamaican pastor, a woman who chose to disobey the rules would likely be disciplined by being expected to sit at the back of the church and would be suspended from any church duties.

My relocation to Canada shattered my previous notions of gender identity. I was shocked and conflicted to see many women at my Canadian Pentecostal church defying the rules and regulations I was taught; among other assumed “worldly” activities, many of these Pentecostal women wore pants, jewellery, make-up, and styled their hair instead of keeping it natural. I was teased at school for wearing kilts all the time, and at my part time job for wearing long skirts. Further, wearing my hair natural and going without make-up made me the target of bullying and ___________________

1 Believer is one of the terms used in the literature to describe adherents of the Pentecostal faith (Simms, 2011).
social exclusion. I compensated by going to the library every day after school and by attending church on Sundays. My motivation to make meaning of fragmented gender roles within the context of the church as well as school, led me to read the Bible more frequently. Through daily prayer and meditation, I sought knowledge, wisdom, and understanding from God. By so doing, I discovered other Scriptures that offered flexibility in terms of appearance. For instance, I was encouraged by the verse that said: “Rend your heart and not your garments” (Joel 2:13, NIV). I was able to reconcile my gender identity by deepening my Pentecostal faith through Scripture reading and fervent praying.

Within the Jamaican context, I did not see my racial and ethnic identities as a problem. I was part of the majority group—Black people of African descent constitute the largest group in the nation—and Jamaica celebrates the unity of its diverse cultural minorities. As a country, Jamaica represents the third largest nation in the Caribbean and the largest of the English-speaking islands (Jamaica, n. d.). The country encompasses an area of 4,411 square miles of 11,424 square kilometres with an estimated population growth of 2.9 million as of 2015, based on an annual projection increase rate of 0.9 percent between 1997 and 2015 (Jamaica, n.d.). Therefore, when I immigrated to Canada, my perception of Blackness and ethnicity changed immensely. I was categorized as a visible minority and a member of a non-dominant cultural group instead of the dominant group. There was no explicit message of multiculturalism, or if there was, it was not overtly discussed in my high school or greater community and I was not aware of it. I had no one to tell me that my contribution to the ethnic diversity of Canada was valued. I experienced social marginalization and discrimination on a regular basis. I distinctly remember being laughed at by some students when I spoke up in class because I spoke English with a Jamaican accent. They made stereotypical remarks: “You just got off the boat”; “Teach
me to swear in Jamaican”; and “Do you smoke weed?” These forms of cultural discrimination left me feeling unaccepted, inferior, and uncomfortable. My ethnicity was valued, if at all, only in terms of activities and cultural products that were reductive and stereotypical by my classmates: pot-smoking and reggae music. I found these stereotypes disturbing considering that Jamaica’s cultural achievements are felt beyond its Caribbean borders (Billroy, 2014; James & Davis, 2012; Sheperd, 1998). For instance, on an international platform, Jamaicans have stolen the spotlight and have been given accolades in various capacities, including but not limited to sports (e.g., Usain Bolt), music (e.g., Bob Marley), politics (e.g., Mary Anne Chambers), and academia (e.g., Cecille De Pass).

Despite my struggles in an educational context, I was able to reconstruct my racial and ethnic identity by attending youth groups at my church, which provided space for me to converse with other youths about their post-immigration experiences that were inundated with stereotypes and discrimination. Through the sharing of stories, I was able to normalize my experiences and make meaning of them within the context of my religious community. As an adolescent, transitioning to a new culture was an emotional struggle. It left me feeling attacked and traumatized. As an individual, I faced dire internal and external conflicts plagued with post-immigration issues, such as discrimination and social marginalization. These conflicts gave rise to stress, depression, and suicidal thoughts. I did not seek therapy because of the stigma associated with mental illness in my culture, as well as the absence of culturally appropriate and sensitive services in my community. In retrospect, I believe that coupled with my faith, it would have been beneficial for me to speak about these issues with a counsellor who could offer me useful coping tools. It was not until my adult years while attending university that I sought therapy to help me cope with personal adversities, which impacted my cultural identity. By
coping, I refer to the actions that I took to avoid being harmed by life strains (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978).

These post-immigration experiences ignited my career decision to become a psychologist. At university, I pursued an undergraduate degree in psychology, then a master’s degree in counselling psychology. Upon completion of my master’s degree, I worked in the social services sector, which allowed me to interact with immigrants like myself who had been struggling to reconstruct their fragmented identities amidst post-immigration trauma. Aside from professional work, I volunteered to facilitate life skills and employment workshops with new Canadian immigrants to create space for dialogue around issues of cultural identity deconstruction, and the key role of immigrants’ faith in their reconstruction process. I realized through dialogue that many of the immigrants’ stories were similar to mine despite vast differences in age: Our commonalities and uniqueness as diverse immigrant women were highlighted, rather than the focus being on our differences.

My dream to become a counselling psychologist materialized in September 2011. I began my doctoral degree in counselling psychology at the University of Calgary within the Educational Studies of Counselling Psychology program. I was accepted under the supervision of Dr. Nancy Arthur, whom at the time was Professor and Canada Research Chair in Professional Education at the University of Calgary. I was elated to work with Dr. Arthur, who is an expert in multicultural counselling and social justice. Following my first supervisory meeting with Dr. Arthur, when she candidly stated that our “relationship was like a marriage, we enter this journey together and we learn together” (personal communication, September 8, 2011), I was confident that her expertise would enhance my theoretical and practical groundings in multicultural counselling and social justice issues. I was also motivated by Dr. Arthur’s
encouragement to explore the intersections of such dimensions of cultural identity as gender, religion, and spirituality, which are often under-researched within the field of multicultural counselling.

Despite missteps in carving out a dissertation topic that fit with my identity, Dr. Arthur’s encouragement for me to tell my story and remain true to myself resulted in the genesis of this study. My search for a suitably subjective methodology led me to Heuristic Inquiry (HI), which allows me, as the primary researcher, to include my narrative voice in the research and speak in the first person.

For many Black Caribbean immigrants including Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women (JCIW), adapting to a new life in Canada creates a fragmented sense of self, thus often resulting in severe post-immigration mental health concerns such as stress, depression, and employment struggles (Este & Bernard, 2003, 2006). Many of these women make meaning of their lived experiences and cope with these post-immigration issues through their faith practices (Este & Bernard, 2006). Lived experience refers to “the breathing of meaning” (Van Manen, 1997, p. 36). In other words, it describes the way a phenomenon is experienced in everyday life (Husserl, 1983). Yet, there is a dearth of research on the post-immigration reconstruction process of immigrant groups. From my review of the literature, there appears to be no research that directly addresses the post-immigration experiences of JCIW and the role of the Pentecostal faith in this process. My research, therefore, aims to explore the lived experiences of JCIW who use the Pentecostal faith to reconstruct their post-immigration cultural identities. I am also interested in understanding how significant a role multicultural counselling professionals play in facilitating this process.
As I reflect on the origin of my fragmented self, I still grapple with my post-immigration sense of identity. On this journey of self-reflection, I am challenged to immerse myself within the meaning-making process of my Pentecostal faith, and its role in my personal and professional life. My faith emphasizes to me the finality of spiritual values that are essentially existential. I believe my story, along with those of others, forms a basis for renewed insight into the profoundly important function of stories of faith. As an HI researcher, sharing my story calls for passionate engagement and transparency. It requires inner strength and fierce resiliency to tell everything and hold nothing back, despite the rawness of emotions evoked throughout the process. I therefore find comfort in the scriptural verse that states: “They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31, NIV). It is from this place of passion and renewed strength that I, as a Jamaican Canadian immigrant woman, explore the experience of other JCIW who use the Pentecostal faith to adapt to a new life in Canada.

In this chapter, I first discuss the relevance of the study and introduce the definitions of key concepts. I then address the purpose of the study and present the research questions. Lastly, I highlight the significance of this study to multicultural counselling scholarship, as well as offer a brief summary of the research.

Relevance of the Study

This dissertation is informed by the following perspectives: the scholarship of multicultural counselling, research on the Pentecostal faith and gender roles, critical work on cultural identity models, HI guided by a postmodern social constructionist framework, and my own subjective experience with the phenomenon. I discuss these brief perspectives
consecutively in terms of relevance to my research. However, a more thorough review of the relevant literature is provided in Chapter 2.

**Multicultural Counselling Scholarship**

According to Arthur and Collins (2010b), a multicultural counselling perspective emphasizes “the broader systemic factors that influenced an individual’s perspective, behaviour, circumstances, relationships, and mental and emotional well-being” (p. 17). This viewpoint is relevant within a Canadian multicultural context where cultural sensitivity is required when engaging with immigrants of non-dominant groups. The concept *non-dominant* refers to “those groups who are commonly marginalized in society by virtue of their differences from the dominant Anglo-Saxon, male, heterosexual culture” (Arthur & Collins, 2010b, p. 16).

Multicultural counselling is moving in the direction of integrating religion and spirituality into its general discourse. However, the intersections of such dimensions of cultural identity as gender roles, religion, and spirituality are often under-researched when addressing identity development and reconstruction. Based on the professional bodies that regulate the practice of counselling in Canada, general standards have been developed to ensure competent practice with and specific guidelines for counselling non-dominant populations (Arthur & Collins, 2010a). For example, the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association’s *Code of Ethics* emphasizes sensitivity to diversity: “Counsellors strive to understand and respect the diversity of their clients, including differences related to age, ethnicity, culture, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status” (Sheppard, Schulz, & McMahon, 2007, p. 6). In respecting the dignity of all individuals, the Canadian Psychological Association [CPA] (2000) requires the following:
Psychologists acknowledge that all persons have a right to have their innate worth as appreciated human beings, and that this worth is not dependent upon their culture, nationality, ethnicity, colour, race, religion, sex, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or mental abilities, age, socio-economic status, or any other preference or personal characteristic, condition, or status. (p. 8)

Based on these ethical guidelines, counsellors and psychologists are encouraged to acquire the competencies needed to serve diverse cultural groups in multicultural counselling practices. This encouragement calls for counselling professionals\(^2\) to attend to the religious practices of non-dominant immigrant groups (Moodley & Walcott, 2010; Parham, 2002; Vontress, 2010), including Black\(^3\) Caribbean Pentecostals whose beliefs are influenced by the Black American branch of Pentecostalism. The Jamaican Canadian sub-cultural context of this dissertation limits the examination of different forms of Pentecostalism practiced by other cultural groups, which may differ from Blacks on various socio-cultural and epistemological levels (Anderson, 2004; Cox, 1995).

**Pentecostal Faith and Gender Roles**

Over the years, gender role discourse has become a growing area of research within the Pentecostal faith tradition. The history of women in the church in relation to the nuances of power dynamics within the religious hierarchy of this sect has garnered much debate in the

\(^2\) For the purpose of this dissertation, counselling professionals include individuals in the helping profession: psychologists, counsellors, social workers, mental health practitioners, clinicians, and therapists.

\(^3\) The term *Black* can address various immigrant groups in Canada, and therefore can overlook key socio-economic status, gender, and religious differences. In this research, Black Caribbean refers to English-speaking immigrants from former British Caribbean colonies, including Jamaica, Grenada, The Bahamas, and Trinidad and Tobago. Within the Canadian context, some individuals self-identify as Black Canadians or African Canadians. Both terms will be used interchangeably within this research.
contemporary world (Shirer, 2011). Many scholars, including feminists (e.g., Boylan, 1989; Collins, 2000; Hyatt, 1998; Lawless, 2005; Sánchez-Walsh, 2009), have critiqued what it means to have biblically based femininity in a post-feminist culture where certain biblically rooted feminist ideals and principles—as endorsed by many Pentecostals—might be viewed as archaic and regressive to women’s liberty. Traditionally, the gender role expressions for many women of Pentecostal faith, which can be viewed as expressions of their individuality, have been arguably restrictive. Although women tend to outnumber men significantly in this faith group, the perceived patriarchal structure in which it functions often has tightly conscripted roles for women, primarily as helpmates to men (Sanchez-Walsh, 2009). Male gender roles are also conscripted to such authoritarian positions as leaders, providers, and spiritual heads of the household (Sanchez-Walsh, 2009). These cues for the female conscripted gender roles are usually taken from certain biblical passages, which many feminists may consider as a fundamentalist biblical interpretation of the Scriptures (Collins, 2000; Worthen, 2010).

An increasing number of women have reclaimed their voices and acquired a strong sense of personal agency within Pentecostalism, possibly due to the feminist movement and a more growing shift towards postmodern thought in the western world (Poloma, 2003). Within the multicultural counselling context, research has failed to address this paradigm shift in gender roles for many JCIW who have gradually assumed leadership positions within the Pentecostal church as evangelists and pastors (Austin-Broos, 1997; Toulis, 1997). This dissertation addresses this gap in Canadian multicultural counselling scholarship. I give attention to how JCIW of the Pentecostal faith resolve to reconstruct their cultural identities while negotiating this shift from traditional female gender roles to redefining and re-establishing what it means to be
“purposefully feminine” (Shirer, 2011, p. 35) whilst embracing the biblical role of womanhood in a modern culture.

**Cultural Identity Models**

Within the multicultural counselling discourse on cultural identity, the intersections of spirituality with gender, race, ethnicity, and social class are under-researched in a Canadian context. This project addresses the existing gap surrounding cultural identity in the multicultural counselling literature for JCIW who are Pentecostals, by drawing on the critical work on cultural identity development models, namely the Cross model (Cross, 1971, 1978), the Helms model, or minority identity development model (Helms, 1995), and the Afrocentric model (Asante, 1980, 1987, 1988). Of the proposed models to be addressed in Chapter 2, emphasis is given to the Afrocentric model, which provides a relevant framework for the deeply rooted spiritual and religion dimensions of Black people in the diaspora. Addressing the cultural identity aspect of the research offers insight into how JCIW’s religious experiences help them acculturate to further enhance counsellors’ understanding of this ethno-cultural group.

**Heuristic Inquiry and Social Constructionist Framework**

This study utilizes a Heuristic Inquiry (HI) qualitative research methodology, based on a social constructionist framework, which emphasizes multiple realities and the importance of language (Gergen, 2009; Lock & Strong, 2010). Developed by Moustakas (1990), HI is a unique research method that requires the researcher to have experience with the phenomenon in

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4 In the race/cultural identity literature, the terms Afrocentric/Africentric are used interchangeably (Dana, 1998); however, for this research, Afrocentric will be used for consistency.

5 Diaspora describes “an ethnic group who has suffered persecution and oppression, driven from its homeland and involuntarily relocated to new places or land” (Lee, Noh, Yoo, & Doh, 2007, p. 115). In this context, this term describes the Black/African diaspora.
question. Its uniqueness also allows for freedom in discovery (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985) by offering a multiplicity of experiences. In HI, participants are referred to as co-researchers because shared meanings of narratives are co-constructed between the researcher and co-researchers, based on their similar experiences (Moustakas, 1990; Sela-Smith, 2002). However, for the purpose of this dissertation, the term participant will be used because it more accurately labels individuals’ roles in this research. While participants provide data for the dissertation, the heuristic remains with me, the researcher. I believe that HI is best suited for this study because it reflects the individual nature of cultural identity, which requires exploratory discovery (Nzojibwami, 2009). Utilizing this approach will contribute to the development of rich narratives of JCIW and the cultural identity reconstruction process.

**Personal Context**

Aside from the literature, this research is anchored within my own personal context, based on my passion and subjective experience. As an immigrant woman of Afro-Caribbean descent, I fulfill this project’s requirement because my spiritual faith has played a significant role in my ability to reconstruct my cultural identity in a Canadian context. The personal context of this HI research allows me as the primary researcher to integrate my voice, drawing from my own lived experiences. The personal nature of this research also creates space for flexibility in terms of collaborative interactions between me and the participants, giving equal value to our stories through a meaning-making process of engagement and self-discovery (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010). Within this dissertation, a meaning-making process describes how my participants and I “make sense of knowledge, experience, relationships, and the self” that pertain to our cultural identity reconstruction process (Ignelzi, 2000, p. 5).
Definition of Key Terms

Within the scope of this dissertation, definitions of key concepts/terms are provided. They are (a) Pentecostalism, (b) Pentecostal faith, (c) reconstruction, (d) ethnic identity development, (e) cultural identity development, (f) Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women (JCIW), and (g) multicultural counselling. These terms, discussed successively, create clarity and structure for the research.

Pentecostalism

In this dissertation, the term Pentecostalism refers to a form of Christian faith tradition that emphasizes personal and often dramatic encounters with God through the transcendent experiences of the Holy Spirit by the believer (Poloma, 2003). It is not a church as such, but a movement that involves different denominations (Anderson, 2004; Kay, 2011; Rawlyk, 1996; Wilkinson & Alhouse, 2010). The movement stresses an effort of renewal or revival within its “Spirit-filled” believers, whose world view is experientially centred (Poloma, 2003). For many believers, God is a divine deity who is both immanent and transcendent, and can defy the laws of nature with miraculous and unexplainable phenomena. God is also viewed as an active spiritual force in all past, present, and future life experiences that culminate into a divine master plan (Poloma, 2003). The Bible holds an important position in Pentecostalism, serving as a sacred text for personal and corporate guidance rather than a manual of rigid doctrinal practices (Johns, 2010; Hollenweger, 2004).

Pentecostal Faith

The concept Pentecostal faith takes root in the scriptural paradigm of the Christian Bible (Simms, 2011). Its advent is based on the biblical verse: “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:4, King
James Version, KJV). This Scripture highlights the supernatural experience of the disciples on the Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. For many Pentecostals, this miraculous encounter signifies the “filling” or “baptism” with the Holy Spirit (Cox, 1995; Hyatt, 1998; Wilkinson & Althouse, 2010). The concepts of glossolalia (Nolen, 2010), speaking in tongues (Simms, 2012), or speaking in a heavenly language (Saayman, 1993) are often used in the literature to describe this spiritual process. Rooted in the Pentecostal faith is adherents’ belief in the Trinity, which constitutes the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; all three divinities working together as a unified force to form the Godhead. Additionally, in Christian tradition, faith carries multiple meanings, and is often affiliated with spirituality and religiosity. However, for the purpose of this dissertation, faith is defined as a spiritual view of God-consciousness, as well as a religious view of Christian practices (Plante, 2001).

**Reconstruction**

In this dissertation, the term *reconstruction* is adopted from the theoretical framework of social constructionism (Gergen, 1985, 1999; Lock & Strong, 2010). It reflects a part of the ongoing development of identity that is complex and fluid (Arthur & Collins, 2010b; Bartholomew, 2012; Berry, 1997a, 2005). This idea of *reconstruction* recognizes adaptation and negotiation within historical, social, and cultural contexts where language plays a key role. It also refers to the ability of non-dominant immigrants to reconstruct a new identity based on their spatial and chronological circumstance.

**Ethnic Identity**

In both theoretical and empirical literature, there is much ambiguity about the terms cultural identity and ethnic identity. *Ethnicity* refers to “the acceptance of group mores and practices of one’s culture of origin and the concomitant sense of belonging” (American
Psychological Association [APA], 2003, p. 9). In this dissertation, the term *ethnic identity* describes a clear sense of membership within a particular ethnic or cultural group (Phinney, 2002). However, Arthur and Collins (2010b) cautioned that when ascribing ethnic identity labelling to particular groups in Canada, one should avoid categorization, since one’s ethnic identity is individualistic and subject to various cross-cultural perspectives.

**Cultural Identity**

Drawing on Phinney’s (2002) definition, *cultural identity* is viewed as a multilayered construct. It signifies how one understands the inter-relational dynamic of social status, language, race, religion, ethnicity, values, and behaviours that permeate and influence nearly all aspects of their lived experiences (APA, 2003; Arthur & Collins, 2010b; Harper & McFadden, 2003). Most scholars conceptualize ethnicity as a subsection of culture (Arthur & Collins, 2010b), while noting the fluidity of both concepts. For the purpose of this dissertation, I have adopted a more inclusive definition of cultural identity, which takes into consideration such dimensions as race, ethnicity, gender, spirituality, and religion.

**Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women (JCIW)**

In this research, *JCIW* is classified as a cultural group that represents immigrants of Jamaican descent who migrated to Canada, and adopted it as their home country. These individuals may still embrace their original cultural and ethnic identities but are able to navigate these multiple identities in a new culture.

**Multicultural Counselling**

In this dissertation, *multicultural counselling* describes counsellors’ ability to provide culturally-sensitive counselling to individuals based on the purposeful inclusion of cultural identities. Understanding these multiple identities require counsellors’ awareness and insight
into all aspects of the contextual influences of their own biases, as well as the unique perspectives of clients (Arthur & Collins, 2010a, 2010b; Sue, Bingham, Porche-Burke, & Vasquez, 1999).

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of JCIW who use their Pentecostal faith to reconstruct a new cultural identity amidst post-immigration stressors such as systemic racism, sexism, underemployment, and unemployment (DePass, 2012a; James, 2010), as well as growing mental health concerns including stress, depression, and suicidal ideation (Este & Bernard, 2006; McKenzie, Khenti, & Vidal, 2011; Milan & Tran, 2004). As previously mentioned, within the multicultural counselling literature on cultural identity reconstruction, the intersections of spirituality with gender, race, ethnicity, and social class are under-researched in a Canadian context. From the theoretical framework of social constructionism (Gergen, 1985, 2009), *cultural identity reconstruction* refers to the process by which an identity damaged by the trauma of immigration is reconstructed. For the purpose of this research, the idea of *reconstruction* recognizes adaptation and negotiation as well as the role of language in coping with post-immigration stressors. For many African-Canadian immigrant women, post-immigration stressors are major contributors to their personal experiences of social marginalization, as well as with racial and cultural discrimination, which are likely to have damaged their collective sense of self (DePass, 2012a, 2012b; Toulis, 1997). Black women are the chosen group for this study, since they are considered to be more religious and spiritual than their male counterparts (Statistics Canada, 2013; Tastsoglou, 2002; Taylor, Chatters, Mattis, & Joe, 2010). In struggling with post-immigration issues such as racism and class exploitation (DePass, 2012a; James, 2010), they might contend with other forms of social injustices including
religious stereotypes. Thus, they may experience an even greater sense of cultural dislocation than their male counterparts, and may rely more on their spirituality to reconstruct their identity post-immigration. Black women’s Pentecostal orientation might provide them with the personal agency to reconstruct these fragmented selves.

In seeking to understand the post-immigration experiences of JCIW, this study aims to foster a sense of empowerment and shared meaning-making among this sub-cultural group. This shall be achieved through facilitating dialogue among purposefully chosen women who wish to share their stories, and give voice to their lived experiences. Pentecostalism tends to carry many negative impressions, primarily by outsiders of the faith, in terms of being associated with “fundamentalism” and “fanaticism” (Dixon, 2012; Lewis, 2011). As the primary researcher, I keep my Pentecostal identity private out of concern for being religiously categorized and misunderstood as a fanatic or a fundamentalist. In this dissertation, however, I am challenged to move beyond my fear of categorization that is often imposed on Pentecostals by outsiders to capture the intricacies and nuances of JCIW’s post-immigration lived experiences with consideration of the critical role their Pentecostal faith play in the process.

**Research Questions**

Understanding the role the Pentecostal faith plays in JCIW’s reconstruction of their cultural identities is critical to multicultural counsellors’ sensitivity to the life experiences of this subculture, and counsellors’ ability to advocate for them. However, the role of the Pentecostal faith in psychological wellbeing is often overlooked in multicultural counselling research and practice. This gap is especially lamentable given that people of African descent are considered to be deeply religious and spiritual (Este & Bernard, 2003, 2006; Wane & Sutherland, 2010), and their faith is often a critical tool for coping with adverse life challenges (Aryee, 2011). In order
for multicultural counselling practices to respond to the diverse religious world view of non-dominant immigrant groups, as well as address the growing needs for effective and culturally responsive counselling of non-dominant faith groups, this study is guided by the key question: *What is the experience of JCIW who use the Pentecostal faith to reconstruct their cultural identities?* Secondary research questions include: (a) how do notions of female gender roles change in the cultural identity reconstruction process? (b) how are these changes mediated through the Pentecostal faith? And (c) how can these insights inform multicultural counselling practices? These questions are answered by utilizing an HI methodology, a qualitative approach that allows for flexibility in its conceptualization (Moustakas, 1990). In this project, HI has been conceived to align with my social constructionist world view, which allows for multiple ways of seeing the world and take into account my passionate engagement with the topic.

**Significance to Multicultural Counselling Scholarship**

The importance of this study is four-fold: (a) to engender understanding of the spiritual and religious practices of JCIW; (b) to advance knowledge in multicultural counselling scholarship about the complex processes of acculturation and cultural identity reconstruction; (c) to enhance counsellors’ competencies in integrating the spiritual experiences of diverse clients; and (d) to increase awareness of the intersecting dimensions of spirituality, gender, race, and social class to influence mental health and suggest effective treatment interventions for diverse non-dominant populations, including JCIW. This study aims to benefit JCIW, and other non-dominant immigrant groups for whom spirituality is important, especially in the context of cultural identity reconstruction.
Summary

Immigration has led to the increase of diverse non-dominant faith groups within Canada. Black Caribbean immigrants of the Pentecostal faith, which might be considered a growing non-dominant faith group within Canada’s multicultural society (Statistics Canada, 2013), lack attention within the multicultural counselling scholarship, particularly around issues of cultural identity reconstruction. With a paradigm shift in multicultural counselling practice towards cultural sensitivity and inclusivity, counselling professionals are challenged to move towards incorporating the religious and spiritual worldviews of diverse individuals in counselling contexts, specifically JCIW. As a member of this subgroup, it is my hope that the novelty of this HI project will create space for the sharing of stories, and possibly bring about changes in multicultural counselling contexts for certain non-dominant faith groups that are often pushed to the margins of Canada’s pluralistic society. The relevance of this topic was addressed in this chapter. It outlined the genesis of my story of fragmented identity, and it also included a review of key definitions, the study’s purpose, key research questions, and the study’s significance to multicultural counselling.

In the subsequent chapters, I invite readers to journey with me as I present a thorough literature review on the topic in Chapter 2. I then offer an account of my passionate engagement with the topic, which led me to the research methodology of Heuristic Inquiry (HI), as well as HI’s background, how it’s used in this research and its ethical implications in Chapter 3. This is followed by a discussion of the inquiry’s results in Chapter 4, where I present the generation of common categories, themes, and subthemes. In Chapter 5, I revisit the literature where I discuss the results’ limitations in relation to the relevant scholarship on the topic. Finally, I consider the
future implications of this HI study for multicultural counselling contexts in the areas of theory, research, and practice.
CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

Few studies have documented the cultural identity reconstruction of Black Caribbean populations and the importance of their faith during this process. Previous studies that have attempted to examine cultural identity reconstruction among immigrants and refugees focus on other ethnic groups, such as West African migrants to Britain (Hunt, 2002), and Yugoslavian refugees to Canada (Djuraskovic, 2006). Limited research has been undertaken concerning the experiences of Black Caribbean populations (Lorick-Wilmot, 2010; Tastsoglou, 2002; Toulis, 1997), particularly Jamaican immigrants who reconstruct their cultural identities. Researchers have yet to examine how this population uses the Pentecostal faith practices as a coping tool for post-immigration stressors. This lack of research on cultural identity reconstruction among Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women (JCIW) is consistent with the lack of research on the key importance of the Pentecostal faith in the lives of many Black Caribbean Canadians.

Searching for the key words “religion,” “Pentecostals,” and “Black Caribbean immigrants” within the multicultural counselling and counselling psychology literature generated limited results. From a multicultural counselling perspective, the limitation of this research is problematic because it leaves counselling professionals who are interested in working with diverse religious clients, such as JCIW of the Pentecostal faith, without knowledge to inform their practice. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to provide a detailed review of the existing literature that addresses the experiences of JCIW who reconstruct their cultural identities through the Pentecostal faith. I begin the review with an overview of the literature on the evolution of multicultural counselling. This overview serves as a backdrop to highlight the relevance of this project and to demonstrate how multicultural counselling can incorporate the Pentecostal faith practices as well as the cultural identity reconstruction process for JCIW.
I also identify key cultural identity models, with emphasis given to the Afrocentric model and its appropriateness for this research. Arthur and Collins’s (2010a, 2010b) Culture-Infused Counselling (CIC) model of multicultural counselling competencies is introduced, along with its practical implications while working with clients of non-dominant faith groups, including JCIW of the Pentecostal faith. I conclude the chapter with considerations for ethical standards in addressing culturally insensitive psychological assessment measures and treatment interventions for JCIW.

**The Evolution of Multicultural Counselling**

Since its origin in the 1960s, multicultural counselling has been the focus of a growing body of literature (Arthur & Collins, 2010b; Moodley, 2007; Pedersen, 1991; Sue et al., 1992). The multicultural counselling movement, a major paradigm shift, is considered the “fourth force” in counselling psychology by some writers (Pack-Brown & Williams, 2003; Pedersen, Draguns, Lonner, & Trimble, 2008), following sequentially after three traditional helping orientations: psychodynamic, existential-humanistic, and cognitive-behavioural (Parham, 1996; Sue, Ivey, & Pedersen, 1996). The development of the multicultural counselling movement is a response to socio-political tensions, such as the civil rights and feminist movements (Parham, 1996; Robinson-Wood, 2013; Sue et al., 1996). The unique perspectives of multicultural scholars (e.g., Ivey, 1993; Parham, 1993; Sue et al., 1982) have been instrumental in the evolution of multicultural counselling. Their work approaches counselling as culture-bound, since its principles arise from a predominantly Eurocentric world view (Parham, 1996; Sue et al., 1996).

According to Sue and Sue (1990), worldviews are the reservoirs for “our attitudes, values, opinions, and concepts; they influence how we think, define events, make decisions, and behave” (p. 268). Worldviews also provide a framework for understanding values and
conceptualizing spiritual beliefs within a cultural context (Fukuyama & Sevig, 1999; Ibrahim, 1985; Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). Since counselling and psychotherapy originated from Western European contexts (Vontress, 2010), the world view espoused by counsellors educated in those contexts may contradict the cultural realities of some clients from diverse non-dominant faith groups. Multicultural counselling research demonstrates that some individuals from non-dominant faith groups may embrace worldviews that could be divergent from the dominant culture (Sutherland & Moodley, 2010). For non-dominant groups, such as JCIW, worldviews could include expressions of religion and spirituality. In support of the above stance, Richards (1990) argued that the communal strength and survival of Blacks in African cultures are sustained through expressions of their spirituality. In line with this argument, researchers (e.g., Este & Bernard, 2003, 2006; Hooks, 1992; Gayle, 2011) support the role of spirituality as a coping tool for Black women’s agency to help them resist issues of oppression (i.e., racism, sexism, and classism).

Therefore, for some people of African Caribbean descent, their religious worldviews are likely associated with their cultural upbringing and life experiences (Ibrahim, 1985; Treviño, 1996). The meaning-making created from their cultural identity reconstructions could reflect their experiences of oppression and the subordinate position assigned to them by the dominant culture (Clarke & Howard, 2005; Hall, 1996; Sue et al., 1996). With the understanding that cultural dimensions (e.g., spirituality, religion, and gender) may influence and shape worldviews, the theoretical orientations of many counsellors and psychologists may influence their therapeutic responses to the needs of non-dominant immigrant clients. Theoretical orientations, therefore, should consider cultural fluidity of non-dominant immigrant groups (Shippy, 2009). According to Shippy (2009), cultural fluidity describes how people adapt or shift their cultural
experiences from one cultural context to another. Based on this understanding, I therefore argue that the intersection of many Black Canadian immigrants’ cultural experiences and their ability to adapt within this cultural context is based on their faith practices and should be considered from a theoretical perspective. Sue and Sue (2003) argued that traditional theories of counselling are of limited applicability to culturally different populations, including people of African Caribbean descent in the diaspora.

Similarly, Ibrahim, Roysir-Sodwsky, and Ohnishi (2001) asserted that theories situated in a western cultural milieu may portray a narrow scope of the human condition. These theories may lead counsellors to ascribe negative traits to non-dominant clients because of the presuppositions used to judge “normality” and “healthy” or “abnormality” and “unhealthy” (Ibrahim et al., 2001). The multicultural counselling movement strives to acknowledge the cultural worldview of non-dominant groups and to increase the competency of the counsellors who help them. For JCIW of the Pentecostal faith, the reconstruction of their cultural identities might be connected to their religious and spiritual experiences, and should be recognized as sources of coping in multicultural counselling. In addressing the cultural identity reconstructions of JCIW who are Pentecostals, it is important to offer insights on the rapid growth of the Pentecostal faith in the African diaspora. Special attention is given to Black Pentecostal immigrants in the Canadian context and the role of spirituality and religiosity in their lives as tools for coping with post-immigration issues.

**Pentecostalism’s Growth in the African Diaspora**

Pentecostalism is considered a renewal movement within Christianity (Kay, 2011). The Pentecostal movement has gathered momentum and gained global interest in recent decades. According to a recent demographic report produced by the Pew Research Center’s Forum on
Religion and Public Life, there are over 279 million Pentecostals worldwide (Akdogan, 2011). This demographic of Pentecostals consists of the offshoots of three groups: “Classical” Pentecostals, those who are members of the standard Pentecostal groups, most of which originated in the first quarter of the twentieth century; the Charismatics, or those in other denominations who received the “baptism of the Holy Spirit;” and the “Neo-Charismatics” (e.g. Catholic charismatic renewal movement), the groups formed in the last half of the century, most of which are not affiliated with the Pentecostal denominations (Kay, 2011; Pentecostalism, 2008; Wilkinson, 2006).

Pentecostalism has become a fundamental hallmark of the religious terrain of western societies (Gerloff, 1999; Hunt, 2002), particularly in affiliation with Afro-Caribbean and African minorities (Clarke & Howard, 2005; Yong & Alexander, 2011). For instance, Pentecostalism is growing rapidly in the Caribbean countries such as Jamaica (Anderson, 1999b; Austin-Broos, 1997; Toulis, 1997). Boyne’s (2012) recent examination of Pentecostalism in the Jamaican context found that there was a 20% growth of the Pentecostal sect from 1960 to 2001 (i.e., 14,739 in 1960 to 295,195 in 2001). This is reported as the highest growth rate of any denomination in the country. This denominational growth seems to be a global phenomenon as membership continues to decline in traditional churches (Boyne, 2012; Bibby, 2000, 2004; Wilkinson, 2011). Scholars purport that world-wide charismatic revivals may attract adherents from some mainstream Protestant and Roman Catholic churches (Anderson, 1999a; Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997; Bibby, 1993).

Research indicates that a primary reason for this global increase in Pentecostalism could be attributed to the expressive, lively, and charismatic style of worship that incorporates musical instruments to attract and keep young people (Boyne, 2012; Butler, 2008; Cox, 1995). For a
majority of people of African descent in the diaspora, this expressive form of worship is considered an inherent aspect of their African culture (Anderson, 2004; Guenther, 2008; Yong & Alexander, 2011). Hollenweger (1999a, 1999b), one of the first scholars to research Black Pentecostalism in non-western categories, posited that the growth of the Pentecostal faith in Third World countries is partly attributed to its roots in the spirituality of nineteenth-century African American slave tradition. In the Canadian context, religious pluralism should be appreciated, in particular when addressing the spiritual practices of African Caribbean immigrant Pentecostals, whose individual and collective identities are likely to be deeply connected to their faith practices (Hall, 2010; Hunt, 2002; Toulis, 1997). With the continuous growth of Pentecostalism, there is a need for multicultural counsellors to understand the complexity of identity reconstruction for non-dominant immigrants of this denomination, especially in Canada, which has created a national identity as one of the most culturally diverse nations in the world (Arthur & Collins, 2010b; Bissoondath, 2002).

**Black Pentecostal Immigrants in Canada**

For many Canadian immigrant groups, religion plays a vital role as new arrivals deal with the challenges and difficulties that often come with reconstructing a new cultural identity in a completely different country. Within Canada, Black Pentecostals make up the highest non-dominant group at 68.1% (i.e., 47,595) (Statistics Canada, 2003; Wilkinson, 2011). Similar to other non-dominant religious immigrants (e.g., Filipinos) who use their faith to help them in the adjustment and integration process (Shingler, 2011), Black Canadians often draw on their religion and spirituality as a source of strength to cope with post-immigration stressors (Etowa, Keddy, Egbeyemi, & Eghan, 2007; James et al., 2010). Canadian studies (e.g., Donnelly et al., 2011; Etowa et al., 2007; Hansson, Tuck, Lurie, & McKenzie, 2010; McKenzie et al., 2011;
Schreiber, Stern, & Wilson, 2000; Seeman, 2011) that addressed post-immigration coping concerns (e.g., racism, acculturation⁶, employment issues, and mental illness), showed that spirituality and religion helped to improve mental health functioning. Similarly, comparison studies in the United States (Chatters, Taylor, Bullard, & Jackson, 2008, 2009; Taylor, Chatters, & Jackson, 2007) found that Black Caribbean immigrants, particularly women, were more engaged with their faith practices than other ethnic groups, such as African Americans and Non-Hispanic Whites⁷. Additionally, research completed in the United Kingdom (Sisley, Hutton, Louise, & Brown, 2011) corroborated the above findings that African Caribbean women’s faith play a critical role to help them overcome historically faced social injustices (e.g., restricted socioeconomic opportunities and racial discrimination, which is frequently associated with psychological distress and poorer mental health functioning (McKenzie et al., 2011; Paradies, 2006). Therefore, Black Pentecostal immigrant women in Canada appear better equipped emotionally to cope with life stressors because of their involvement in faith practices and the unique role of the Black church in their lives (Hall, 2012).

The aforementioned results attest to the importance of spirituality and religion in the lived experiences of many Black Caribbean immigrants. In particular, Black women, including Pentecostals, tend to use their faith-based practices (e.g., prayer, fasting, Bible reading, meditation, and church attendance) as tools for understanding and accepting adversities (Donnelly et al., 2011; Etowa et al., 2007; Poloma, 2003; Sisley et al., 2011); in other words, a meaning-making process (Freedman & Combs, 1996). Fluidity of stories within social contexts

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⁶Acculturation refers to cultural change due to direct contact between two cultural groups (Al-Issa & Tousignant, 1997).

⁷Non-Hispanic Whites refer to individuals who responded “No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino” and who reported “White” as their only entry in the race question (United States Census Bureau, 2010).
(Lock & Strong, 2010), like Black Pentecostal churches, may help members to navigate their lived experiences and engage in construction and reconstruction of meanings, both individually and collectively. For some people of African descent, the Black Pentecostal church appears to be a social institution where they can talk about their post-immigration experiences and come to some sense of meaning-making of their cultural identity, faith, and gender. This idea of meaning-making and cultural identity reconstruction is supported by Toulis’s (1997) work with Jamaican Pentecostal women in England as well as Hunt’s (2002) investigation of the importance of Pentecostalism in the reconstruction of the identities of West African migrants to Britain through Pentecostalism. According to Manglos (2010), a Pentecostal identity has transformational benefits over “attitudes, behaviours, and social relationships” (p. 411). These benefits might be salient for Black Pentecostal immigrants who use their faith as a source of strength and resiliency to overcome post-immigration issues. For this population, their faith in God transcends cultural beliefs; it is based on spiritual wisdom and awareness (Culliford, 2011).

Within the Pentecostal tradition, “testifying” is closely related to “witnessing”; believers often encourage non-believers to attend church or seek the Holy Spirit by telling them stories about their own conversion and the miracles that God has performed in their lives (Akdogan, 2011; Johns, 2010; Lawless, 1983). Some Black Pentecostal immigrants, including those from the Caribbean, may use stories of their faith (i.e., testifying) to cope with highly stressful experiences (Gayle, 2011; Hunt, 2002; Kambon & Baldwin, 1992). For many believers, speaking in tongues or glossolalia, which is a “religion-specific language” (Nielsen, Johnson, & Ellis, 2001, p. 71), is considered an important aspect of the conversion process. Glossolalia is often pathologized in the mainstream literature by associating it with fanaticism (Cox, 1995; 2009; Dixon, 2012; Manglos, 2010). Building on this argument, many researchers (e.g., Balkin,
Schlosser, & Levitt, 2009; Loue, 2009; Plante, 2011) have suggested a negative relationship between certain religious individuals who hold a fundamentalist belief, and their mental health.

**The Dark Side of Religion**

Although religion and spirituality may be considered coping resources (Larson, Swyers, & McCullough, 1998; Pargament, 1997, 2013), some people may find that aspects of faith practices cause problems that negatively impact mental health and well-being (Dein, 2010; Koenig, 2008; Koenig, McCullough, & Larson, 2001). Addressing the “dark side” of religion, scholars’ (e.g., Ellison & Lee, 2009; Plante, 2011) work examined problematic spirituality and religious engagement among clients in clinical practices. The findings from such work indicate that for certain clients who hold fundamentalist beliefs, religious and spiritual engagement can become damaging to self and others. These individuals, in turn, may be more susceptible to engage in destructive religious and spiritual beliefs when they feel rejected by their faith. For example, these individuals may believe that God does not love them anymore or that they are not worthy of joy, peace, and happiness.

Additionally, studies have shown that individuals who are rigid about their religion are typically unaware that they are “strict conformists to authority” (Balkin et al., 2009, p. 422). These “strict conformists” may demonstrate attitudes of prejudice, racism, and gender bias (Laythe, Finkel, Bringle, & Kirkpatrick, 2002). Further, certain life stressors can negatively impact a religious person psychologically, socially, and physically. For example, religious worldviews can be altered by traumatic events, such as sexual abuse by religious leaders, disappointment caused by unanswered prayers, or major losses (Koenig, 2008). These situations may cause people to struggle with their understanding of God, which can create inner conflicts with themselves. For instance, researchers (e.g., Dein, 2004, 2010; Koenig, 2008; Larson et al.,
1998; Pargament, 2013) have found evidence linking spiritual and religious struggles to higher levels of psychological distress, decreased physical health, and increased risk of mortality. Some of these religious struggles may be tied to pathology. For example, schizophrenia is traditionally associated with people of Pentecostal faith (Gruending, 2011; Kildahl, 1972; Lapsley & Simpson, 1964; Lewis 2011).

Although religion may create negative health consequences, counsellors should be wary of generalizations and stereotyping. They are advised to increase their understanding of the culture-specific life values of religious clients. Similarly, counsellors working with Black Caribbean Pentecostal clients should be aware of these religious implications in order to provide effective and culturally sensitive treatment intervention. To gain a better understanding of Black Caribbean Pentecostal clients, particularly JCIW, counsellors may want to consider how Pentecostal faith influences their gender role expressions. Below, I shed light on the discourse surrounding gender role, a key source of discussion within Pentecostal faith.

**Gender Role Discourse in Pentecostalism**

Gender discourse is not new to the Pentecostal faith tradition, as scholars have addressed the issue of gender role from diverse cultural perspectives. Studies addressing gender discourse in Pentecostalism have been carried out in various cultural contexts including the United States (Lawless, 1991, 2005), Latin America (Brusco, 1995; Ehlers, 1996; Gill, 1990), Africa (Sackey, 2006), Britain (Hunt, 2002; Toulis, 1997), and Jamaica (Austin-Broos, 1997). In Canada, gender discourse in Pentecostalism tends to include non-dominant immigrant ethnic groups from such places as Asia and Latin America, while the stories of numerous Black Caribbean immigrant women appear to be excluded (Medina, 2011). For many of these women, an emerging theme in Pentecostal denominations is that they are often marginalized, if not alienated, which varies
widely in the extent of formal authority and leadership allocated to them (Boudewijnse, Droogers, & Kamsteeg, 1998). Below, I discuss the role of gender in the reconstruction of cultural identity in Pentecostal faith for some Black Caribbean immigrants, particularly women of Jamaican descent.

**Gender Role in Reconstructing Cultural Identity**

From the context of England, Toulis (1997) described gender as “culturally constructed sexual difference” (p. 12). For African Caribbean Pentecostal women, religious beliefs are a primary ideological site for the construction of the self, including gender (Toulis, 1997). In support of this stance, Wilkinson (1999) argued that “religion as a system of meaning explains who Pentecostals are and the world they live in; it is the basis for constructing other identities including African-Caribbean immigrant women” (p. 93). In light of Wilkinson’s (1999) argument, the position can be taken that the ritualistic practices of the Pentecostal faith are salient to many African-Caribbean immigrant women’s sense of empowerment. These practices may include preaching, Bible readings, ecstatic worship, shouting, dancing, and healing (Pentecostalism, 2008; Robbins, 2004). Despite the highly salient values of these practices in the Pentecostal faith for those women who claim them, much attention is given to the oppression of women in Pentecostal scholarship. I will now critique this scholarship, which has yet to determine if women are oppressed or liberated in this faith tradition that may be influenced by patriarchal leadership (Boudewijnse, 1998; Lawless, 2005). A brief overview of women’s oppression, liberation, and leadership within this faith is provided below.

**Oppression.** From a western feminist perspective, religions including Pentecostalism, often represent a patriarchal system that contributes to the subjugation and oppression of women (Ballou, 1995; Holden, 1983; Lawless, 1991, 2005; Sackey, 2006). According to Black feminist
Patricia Collins (2000), religion can serve as a force of oppression, similar to other social constructs, such as race and gender. She further argued that religious women are often oppressed, as these male-dominated institutions tend to restrict opportunities for self-expression and, in some ways, devalue their leadership abilities (Collins, 2000). In a similar vein, Toulis (1997) made the claim that the theological position of the Pentecostal faith adopts a stance of “absolute male dominance and a substratum of negotiated gender roles” (p. 221). Despite the above perspectives, some researchers (e.g., Boudewijnse et al., 1998; Sackey, 2006) postulated that one cannot view the status of women in the Pentecostal faith solely through the lens of western feminist perspective. One cannot suggest that women are oppressed in all forms of religious ideology and practice because there are other perspectives to consider other than a western feminist one (Sackey, 2006).

**Liberation.** Contrary to the negative and despotic perspectives in which many women in religious spheres are framed, other studies have presented positive and liberating perspectives (Sered, 1994a, 1994b). The idea that numerous Black Caribbean immigrants may reconstruct their cultural identities through Pentecostal practices, is referred to in several chapters of Boudewijnse, Droogers, and Kamsteeg’s (1998) book, *More than Opium: An Anthropological Approach to Latin American and Caribbean Pentecostal Praxis*, which contains articles that address the gender role of women in the Pentecostal faith. For example, in the article by Boudewijnse (1998), she reported on a case study of a Catholic woman named Rosa, whose conversion into the Pentecostal faith signified a revolt against the ideology of the Catholic faith that kept her subordinate, docile, and mute. In experiencing the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Rosa was able to reclaim her voice by “speaking up” and “asserting” herself (Boudewijnse, 1998, p. 112).
Despite the previous example, scholars are unsure if the Pentecostal faith liberates or oppresses women because it remains rooted in patriarchal Christian tradition (Johns, 2010). Scholars examining gender and religion in churches, including Pentecostalism, affirm that traditional churches’ patriarchal systems tend to keep women in subordinate positions (Lawless, 2005; Nzojibwami, 2009). However, Austin-Broos’s (1997) critique of Jamaican Pentecostalism showed that despite men’s predominant leadership roles in Pentecostal churches, membership is primarily female. Additionally, in numerous Pentecostal churches, women’s leadership is a key contribution to the churches’ operations and global expansions (Austin-Broos, 1997; Toulis, 1997).

**Leadership.** Sackey’s (2006) investigation on the changing status of women in African independent churches in Ghana, namely Pentecostal or Charismatic denominations, identified ideological shifts in Pentecostal churches where women are taking leadership roles and breaking into what was once a male dominated Christian sect. In the context of Ghanaian culture, Sackey called for an adoption of gender ideology that is not westernized but “theorizes and looks at gender issues within their special circumstances, which include cultural, historical, environmental, and present economic conditions” (p. 60). Sackey’s conclusion can be expanded to the whole Pentecostal faith, where gender relations have gone through transformations since the Pentecostal movement of the 1960s (Anderson & Hollenweger, 1999; Boudewijnse et al., 1998). These transformations include increasing female leadership, social activism, missionary work, as well as ministerial duties (Blumhofer, 1997; Boylan, 1989; Johns, 2010; Kalu, 2008).

Although Rawlyk’s (1996, 1997) work on Canadian Pentecostalism provided a passing reference to the significant contributions of women, the narratives of Black Caribbean immigrant women are frequently ignored from this scholarship (Medina, 2011). The narratives of the above
non-dominant cultural group should be considered in Pentecostal scholarship, since some scholars (e.g., Austin-Broos, 1997; Toulis, 1997) have argued that the Pentecostal church offers opportunities for women to potentially reconstruct and renegotiate their identities in positions of leadership, unlike some traditional churches (e.g., Catholics). In Pentecostal churches, the symbol of the Holy Spirit represents equality for women, who are considered equal to men in God’s eye (Toulis, 1997).

Compared to previous years, a large number of women of the Pentecostal faith appear to be in a better social position to be addressed as “individuals” and not merely as “women” (Boudewijnse, 1998). In addressing the ideology of the Catholic church, Boudewijnse (1998) reasoned that “if ‘Mary’ emphasised ‘womanhood,’ the ideology of the Holy Spirit emphasized ‘personhood’” (p. 112). There appears to be gender role tension in the Pentecostal faith concerning the position of women (Sackey, 2006; Toulis, 1997; Yong & Alexander, 2011). However, the Pentecostal ideology is likely to offer women the opportunity to “[reconstruct] their personal histories” (Boudewijnse, 1998, p. 112) and “rescript their lives” (Lawless, 1991, p. 53) through the manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

From this perspective, Droogers (1998) posited that gender is being continuously constructed and reconstructed in Pentecostalism, wherein it is “subjected to a process of symbolism and meaning-making” (p. 29). This form of reconstruction requires consideration by counsellors who may be interested in working with non-dominant faith groups in diverse multicultural contexts. Particularly, for JCIW, stories about their Pentecostal faith practices may help to facilitate positive change through the therapeutic relationship with counsellors. In order to help facilitate such change, counsellors need to have a better understanding of cultural identity models and how they may assist in the cultural identity reconstruction process for Black
Caribbean Pentecostal clients. In particular, the Afrocentric model is most relevant for this research, because it considers both the racial and spiritual aspects of the Black Caribbean immigrants’ lived experiences.

**Cultural Identity Development Models**

In recent years, the multicultural movement has acknowledged non-dominant populations in North American contexts, primarily through models of cultural identity development (Cross, 1978; Cross, Parham, & Helms, 1991; Helms, 1990, 1995). *Cultural identity development* refers to “a dimension of self-concept that combines both awareness of self as a part of identifiable group with value judgments and corresponding affect towards both one’s own group and an inside referent group typically non-dominant and dominant populations” (Arthur & Collins, 2010b, p. 79). In social scientific inquiry, there is a lack of agreement about what constitutes cultural identity, particularly for non-dominant immigrant populations, like Black Caribbeans (Harvey, Blue, & Tennial, 2012; Sullivan & Esmail, 2012).

The majority of existing cultural identity models tend to focus on the construct of race to the exclusion of other salient dimensions of identity (Branch & Young, 2006; Sullivan & Esmail, 2012). In critiquing the literature on cultural identity, the construct of race could be considered problematic because it seems to provide a narrow perspective of one’s identity solely based on observable physical traits (Harvey et al., 2012). One may argue that such physical traits have promoted discriminatory classification systems in society, as well as hierarchies that favour one ethnic group.

According to Jackson and Meadows (1991), conceptual frameworks may either hinder or facilitate individuals’ understanding of the behaviours or experiences that occur in their lives and the lives of others. They argued that change in conceptual frameworks would provide new
perspectives for understanding the behaviours and experiences of diverse groups (Jackson & Meadows, 1991). Therefore, models of cultural identity development for non-dominant immigrants must offer both theoretical and empirical solutions (Sullivan & Esmail, 2012).

In the United States, identity development models that target an ethnic group tend to be racially oriented, including Black Americans (Cross, 1971; Helms & Cook, 1999), Latino/Hispanics (Casas & Pytluk, 1995; Ruiz, 1990), and Asian Americans (Atkinson & Hackett, 1998; Sue & Sue, 1971). Similarly, Canadian scholarship draws on identity development models used in the United States, resulting in the racialization of non-dominant groups, such as Black Caribbean immigrants (Dua & Robertson, 1999; James, 2010; Milan & Tran, 2004). Both the United States and Canadian models overlook other influences on identity (Cross, 1971; Helms, 1995; Ponterotto, Casas, Suzuki, & Alexander, 2010).

Research indicates that systemic racial issues impede the equal accessibility and distribution of resources to non-dominant groups, like immigrants (James, 1996; Jones, 2008). These racial issues are well-structured to outweigh most other characteristics of ethnicity, including culture, religion, and gender (Richardson, Bethea, Hayling, & William-Yaylor, 2010). Given that the racial experiences for some Blacks may be similar across the diaspora, there are many different cultural identity models that may be transferrable to African Caribbean immigrants. They include (a) the Cross model (Cross, 1971; 1978), (b) the Helms model or minority identity development model (Helms, 1995), and (c) the Afrocentric model (Asante, 1980, 1988; Belgrave, Brome, & Hampton, 2000; Kambon & Baldwin, 1992). For the purpose of this dissertation, I address the Afrocentric model because it is most cited in the following literatures: Social Work (Este & Bernard, 2003; Schiele, 1996, 1997a, 2000), Black Psychology (Phillips, 1990; Randolph & Banks, 1993; Thompson & Chambers, 2000), and Black Studies
(Jackson, 1995; Longshore, Grills, Annon, & Grady, 1998; Mazama, 2001, 2002). The use of the Afrocentric model in these literatures suggests its relevance in the helping professions. This model is relevant to this research because it acknowledges religion and spirituality, which are central to the worldview of many people of African descent. The development of this model provides a unique cultural lens through which people of African descent can learn to appreciate and respect their ancestral backgrounds, which are often denigrated in the traditional Eurocentric theories of identity development.

**Afrocentric Model**

Since the 1980s, a growing number of Black scholars (e.g., Asante, 1980, 1987, 1988; Este & Bernard, 2003; Mazama, 2001, 2002, 2003; Schiele, 1996, 1997a; Williams, 1981) have challenged the hegemony and normalization of Eurocentric theories of identity development. These Black scholars support a paradigm shift in theoretical frameworks, so that they consider the spiritual experiences of people of African descent across the diaspora. This paradigm shift has led to the development of the *Afrocentric model* (Belgrave, Brome, & Hampton, 2000; Kambon & Baldwin, 1992; Kambon, 1998; Randolph & Banks, 1993). This model proposes that Blacks across the diaspora share a common historical and cultural legacy and identity (Adeleke, 1998).

According to Asante (1990), to be Afrocentric meant “to study the world and its people, concepts, and history from an African world view” (p. 171). Asante (1987, 1988) further argued that Afrocentrism places people of African descent and the interests of Africa at the centre of Black people’s approach to solving problems within a western context. For many Blacks, Afrocentrism suggests a militant pride that insists on being acknowledged and demands social justice, equity, and redress from a history of oppression (Dana, 1998; James et al., 2010). The
concept Afrocentric is also referred to as Africentric throughout the social work literature (Este & Bernard, 2003; Pellebon, 2007; Schiele, 1996, 1997b, 2000). However, for the purpose of this dissertation, the term Afrocentric will be used. The following sections offer an in-depth critical review of the Afrocentric model. To start, I conceptualize the term Afrocentric and its relevance to the experiences of Black individuals across the diaspora. Additionally, I critique the model’s strengths and limitations as well as its relevance to this research.

**Conceptualization of Afrocentric.** The concept Afrocentric can be traced back to the early 1960s when it was used by prominent Black scholars including W. E. B. Du Bois, who made mention of it in his historical work, *Encyclopedia Africana* (Mazama 2001; Sweet, 2006; Verharen, 2003). The purpose of Du Bois’s work, which he hoped to be Afrocentric in focus, was to create the first encyclopedia to focus on the history of Africa and the African diaspora (Kwame & Gates, 1999; Sweet, 2006). Du Bois’s vision was not materialized due to his death in 1963. However, the concept was appropriated in the 1980s by Molefi Kete Asante in his work, *Afrocentricity* (Asante, 1980). Throughout his work on *Afrocentricism*, Asante (1980, 1987, 1988, 1990, 2007) expanded Du Bois’s vision by promoting black consciousness, which explored the triumphs and the tragedies of Africa’s people and their descendants around the globe. According to Mazama (2001), this sense of lack consciousness provided a framework for people of African descent that counteracts the negative portrayals of Blacks in the diaspora. Within the Canadian context, Este and Bernard (2003) defined Afrocentric as “African-centred” because of its derivative from the word “Africa” (p. 333). They assert that the scholarship describing the Afrocentric framework increased following Asante’s popularization of the concept.
(Este & Bernard, 2003). It has become a Pan-African movement\(^8\) impacting the United States, Africa, Europe, South and Central American, and the Caribbean (Mazama, 2001). The term’s prevalence can be attributed to its association with and promotion of the study of Africans and their descendants (Sweet, 2006); thus, it provides an alternative to a Eurocentric framework. This alternative challenges the issues of institutional oppression, racism, and exploitation experienced by many people of African descent (Este & Bernard, 2003; Jackson, 1995; Jeff, 1994; Mazama, 2001). Although the majority of the Afrocentric scholarship focuses on African Americans, the basic tenets of the Afrocentric model are applicable to the experiences of African Canadians, many of whom demonstrate strength and resilience when addressing cultural identity reconstruction issues.

**Strengths of the Afrocentric model.** Some scholars postulate that the Afrocentric model addresses the collective cultural experiences of people of African descent across diverse contexts (Belgrave, Brome, & Hampton, 2000; Kambon & Baldwin, 1992; Kambon, 1998; Randolph & Banks, 1993). The Afrocentric model focuses on the values, assumptions, and beliefs of people of African descent, while acknowledging their innate spiritual nature (Kambon & Baldwin, 1992). Randolph and Banks’ (1993) Afrocentric framework of racial identity highlights eight dimensions. These dimensions are (a) spirituality, (b) communalism, (c) harmony and balance, (d) time as a social phenomenon, (e) affect sensitivity to emotional cues, (f) expressive communication and morality, (g) multidimensional perception and verve, and (h) negativity to positivity. Although all the dimensions are central to identity development,

\[^8\] The Pan-African movement is considered a movement dedicated to establishing independence for African nations and cultivating unity among Black people throughout the world (Pan-African movement, 2014).
spirituality, communalism, and negativity to positivity are most relevant because of their roles in the coping experiences of many people of African heritage.

**Spirituality.** Within the Afrocentric framework, *spirituality* refers to the non-material or invisible substance that connects all elements in the universe (Schiele, 2000). Although the Eurocentric world view emphasizes the materialistic nature of life, the Afrocentric world view stresses the essentiality of non-material aspects of human beings (Wangoola, 2000). From this perspective, individuals are viewed as holistic in that their mind, body, and spirit are interconnected (Este & Bernard, 2003; James et al, 2010; Moore, 2007). Similarly, this interconnection of mind, body, and spirit is emphasized within the Pentecostal faith tradition. A majority of Pentecostals believe that faith must be experienced through the Holy Spirit, and is not found solely through ritual, contrary to other traditional Christian sects (e.g., non-charismatic Catholics; Anderson, 1999a, 1999b; Hollenweger, 1999a, 2004; Johns 2010; Pentecostalism, 2009; Rawlyk, 1997). Unlike African spirituality that considers both materialistic and non-materialistic entities, Christian Pentecostal spirituality originates from a western tradition where God is “Personal Divine, theistic or theistic-relational in nature” (Fukayama, 1999, p. 25). From a Christian Pentecostal perspective, a relationship with God is achieved through direct spiritual practices, including highly physical worship, healing, prophesy, speaking in tongues, and dreams and visions (Alexander, 2011; McDonnell, 1976; Paris, 1982; Pentecostalism, 2009).

**Communalism.** Additionally, the Afrocentric framework stresses *communalism*, in which the group or collective outweighs the individual. It emphasizes that one must integrate one’s goal with the greater community. The idea of communalism plays an integral role within Pentecostal faith. This means that many believers engage in a form of collective worship that is salient to their holistic development (Cox, 1995; Johns, 2010). As in the Afrocentric model, the
collective nature of human beings is key to cultural identity, as believers work collaboratively to solve problems and cope through communal connection.

Furthermore, embedded within the Afrocentric framework is the understanding that spirituality and morality are intricately linked. Schiele (2000), who uses an Afrocentric perspective to guide his research in social work practice, asserts that “the human’s ability to be moral and caring is believed to be linked to God’s model of morality and care” (p. 26).

**Negativity to positivity.** Schiele’s (2000) idea aligns with Randolph and Banks’ (1993) final dimension of the Afrocentric framework, *negativity to positivity.* This final dimension illustrates one’s ability to achieve positive outcomes out of negative situations. For some people of African descent, particularly Christians, this means that God will empower them with the strength and moral courage needed to overcome issues of immorality and social injustices. For these believers, faith becomes the foundation for self-worth (Fukuyama, 1999). According to Fukuyama (1999), Christians view “God as a source for love, wisdom, healing, and insight, and intervenes in the world through the concept of the Holy Spirit and grace” (p. 26). Through these Christian principles, Black believers embrace their faith in God to help them “mak[e] a way out of no way” (Harvey et al., 2012, p. 34). According to Mieder (2010), the above expression is used by many religious Black people to describe seeking God’s help to cope with issues of marginalization and oppression.

**Multicultural counselling.** From a multicultural counselling perspective, acknowledgement of the Afrocentric model stresses the responsibility of counsellors to work collaboratively with diverse religious clients to help them alleviate conditions of social injustices that might impede their cultural identity reconstruction (Este & Bernard, 2003; James et al., 2010). For clients of African descent who may be subjected to inequitable treatment,
practitioners within the multicultural counselling profession could help to empower their clients through social justice work. Afrocentric scholars (e.g., Asante, 2007; Este & Bernard, 2003; Mazama, 2003, Schiele, 2000) call on all members of society, including members of the dominant culture, to play an active role in advocating for salient social and economic changes that will impact the well-being of non-dominant groups (e.g., JCIW). Proponents of Afrocentrism support the claim that the contributions of various African people have been undervalued and discredited as part of the legacy of colonialism and slavery’s pathology of dismissing African history (Andrade, 1990; Asante, 2007; Woodson, 1933). Afrocentric scholars (e.g., Asante, 1988; 2007; Mazama, 2001, 2001; Schiele, 1997a, 1997b, 2011) argue that the Afrocentric framework provides Black individuals with a sense of agency to rise above mental subjugation, despite dislocation and colonization.

In contrast, opponents of Afrocentricity argue that an Afrocentric framework could have “dangerous political implications” (Walker, 2001, p. xxiv) because it promotes Black heritage as superior over other ethnicities. Another limitation of the Afrocentric framework is its African-centred spirituality (Gayle, 2011; Wangoola, 2000). Below I expand on the opponents’ critiques of the Afrocentric model.

**Limitations of the Afrocentric model.** Randolph and Banks’ (1993) tenets of the Afrocentric model provide a strong philosophical grounding that serve as a blueprint for the experiences of numerous people of African descent. However, some opponents of Afrocentrism note that the Afrocentric ideas, if not critically analyzed, could promote inappropriate scholarship. For example, Clarence E. Walker, a Black American historian and opponent of Afrocentrism, encouraged Black Americans to disregard Afrocentrism because it essentializes history by characterizing Africa as a vast continent with one uniform culture (Walker, 2001).
Walker (2001) described Afrocentrism as a “form of totalitarian groupthink, devoid of historical accuracy” (p. xxiv). The scholar’s critique comes from his position that Black people are not the same today as they were in the past, and although they may be of African descent, they are not African (Walker, 2001).

**Historical concerns.** Similar to Walker, Lefkowitz (1996) asserted that the historical and scientific discussions surrounding the Afrocentric model are questionable and appear to be politically motivated; thus, these discussions contradict historical evidence overlooking variations across the Black culture. Lefkowitz argued for the necessity of historical truths and standards in cultural education. In line with the above critics, Black people’s experiences across the diaspora are not only influenced by historical dislocation (Asante, 2007) but also cultural (Hall, 1990, 1992, 1999, 2005), social (Hall, 1996, 1997a, 1997b; Parham, 2002), political (Sullivan & Esmail, 2012), and economic contexts (Collins, 2006). Therefore, diverse cultural contexts and contextual boundaries should be considered when examining the experiences of numerous Black people. When using the Afrocentric model, one must consider the diversity of Black experiences, and avoid dismissing the experiences of other ethnic groups.

**Therapeutic mythology.** Another argument against the Afrocentric model is that it might be viewed as a “therapeutic mythology” (Walker, 2001, p. xxiv). This means that for many people of African descent, Afrocentricity promotes their self-esteem by creating a “new black psychology based on a positive African-centered history” (Walker, 2001, p. xxiv). Similarly, Adeleke (2009) posited that scholars and supporters of Afrocentrism often use Africa to construct and validate a monolithic, racial, and culturally essentialist worldview. From this perspective, Africa is projected as a “unifying framework for all Blacks” (Adeleke, 2009, p. 16), and Africa is depicted as “a continent inhabited by people who are morally and ethically superior
to all others” (Adeleke, 2009, p. 91). Drawing from Asante’s (2007) argument, I agree that the Afrocentric model provides Blacks with a unified framework that represents a sense of “consciousness, quality of thought, model of analysis, and an actionable perspective where [they] seek, from agency, to assert subject place within the context of African history” (p. 16). However, I disagree that the Afrocentric model places Blacks in a dominant stance above other ethnic groups because it does not impose its black consciousness as universal. Rather, the Afrocentric model acknowledges a particular historical reality of the human experience for some Blacks (Asante, 1987, 1988). The Afrocentric model also emphasizes the value and interests of Black individuals, placing them as subjects and agents of their own cultural history and human interest (Karenga, 2002). This placement does not involve other ethnic groups, which could be similarly placed within their own cultural history. Therefore, the discourse presented by critics of Afrocentrism calls for the deconstructing of a monolithic view of Black people and the “reconceptualizing constructs and paradigms that have traditionally been the underpinning of a unifying essentialist world view” (Adeleke, 2009, p. xi).

**African-centred spirituality.** While the Afrocentric model helps to integrate spiritual and racial facets of cultural identity, its spirituality focuses on an African-centred heritage that could conflict with a “framework of white-dominated denominational Christianity” (Clarke & Howard, 2005, p. 119). Felder (1994), a professor of New Testament Language and Literature and a proponent of Afrocentrism, warned against an Afrocentric tendency to stereotype all White people as embracing a distorted Eurocentric world view. He separated members of the dominant group who exploit the differences of race, gender, class, and religion in order to maintain the status quo of political power, and those who challenge these cultural issues of social injustices. Felder (1994) further indicated that while the Afrocentric approach to Bible research draws
attention to the rich contributions of Africans to world history and civilization, one should avoid uncritical, exclusive inquiries that aim to demean other cultures and races. In this vein, many scholars (e.g., Asante, 1999; Felder, 1994; Mazama, 2001) have argued that racial and ethnic inclusiveness of the Bible has been ignored by Eurocentric scholarship to create and exploit the politics of racial difference. Felder (1994) challenged theological scholars to apply a critical and corrective lens to Biblical research to bring out its messages of multiculturalism, racial harmony, pluralism, and diversity.

**African spirituality versus Christian spirituality.** Despite the important tenets of Randolph and Banks’s (1993) Afrocentric cultural identity model, they may undermine the experiences of certain Black individuals in the diaspora whose cultural identities are strongly embedded in the religious practices of a Eurocentric form of Christianity (i.e., Pentecostalism). For instance, a large majority of Canadians of Caribbean descent report that they belong to a Christian religious group (Bibby, 2000). More specifically, Jamaican immigrants of the Pentecostal faith reported higher levels of religious involvement than other Caribbean Blacks, including persons from Trinidad and Tobago (Taylor, Chatters, Mattis, & Joe, 2010). According to Wangoola (2000), in the African world view, spirituality encompassed all human and non-human entities including animals, plants, birds, and insects. Based on African heritage, these entities are in harmony with each other and gods and goddesses, thus ensuring collective survival (Gayle, 2011; Wane & Sutherland, 2010; Wangoola, 2000). This form of African spirituality appears to conflict with the Christian Pentecostal world view that emphasizes a personal connection with Jesus through the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Kay, 2011; Yong & Alexander, 2011). The Afrocentric model further conflicts with the Eurocentric Christian tradition because of Christianity’s connection with slavery and colonization (Asante, 2007; Gayle, 2011).
Pentecostalism, in particular Black Pentecostalism, is a variant of Christianity that includes elements of African’s spirituality.

**Black Pentecostalism versus Eurocentric Christian tradition.** In the context of this study, the form of Black Pentecostalism addressed share commonalities with Afrocentrism’s aesthetic tradition in terms of art, culture, music, dance, and song (Asante, 2007). However, Black Pentecostalism is quite distant from the Eurocentric Christian tradition and has a stronger parallelism with aspects of “expressive communication and orality,” which is a key element of Randolph and Banks’s Afrocentric model (Randolph & Banks, 1993, p. 206). In a communal setting, Black Pentecostals frequently engage in expressive worship practices, including shouting, dancing, speaking, and speaking in tongues (Kay, 2011; Paris, 1982; Simms, 2012). This research explores a sect of Christianity that is tied to Black culture.

I further argue that although Black Pentecostalism shares a connection with colonization, it is not a form of enforcement or spiritual entrapment. Rather, Black Pentecostalism has evolved into a new form of Christianity that offers many believers strength and resilience to help them cope with life’s challenges across diverse cultural contexts (Gerloff, 1999; Hollenweger, 1999b). The perspectives presented minimize the existing conflict between the Afrocentric model and the Eurocentric Christian tradition. It is, however, important to discuss the conceptual idea of Afrocentricity, place it in its historical and philosophical context within African thought, and demonstrate how it operates in relationship to pedagogical, multicultural, and gender discourse (Asante, 2007), which are all relevant aspects of this research on the cultural identity reconstruction of JCIW.

**Relevance to Research.** The Afrocentric framework offers an alternative to the racial identity models proposed by Cross (1971) and Helms (1990) in the cultural identity formation of
ethnic Blacks or people of African descent. Although the presented framework offers a unique perspective on the religious and spiritual dimensions of some Black people in the diaspora, I propose that its construction of race might still be problematic in its attempt to universalize Blacks’ experiences. Nevertheless, the implications of the model for understanding the cultural identity of people of African descent are considerable. This is because cultural identity tends to be connected to many social processes within the lives of Blacks, both intrapersonal and intergroup (Harvey et al., 2012). For this reason, it is critical for researchers in the field of multicultural counselling to continue to redefine the theories, models, conceptualizations, and measures used to represent Black ethnic groups in various cultural contexts (Harvey et al., 2012). By utilizing an Afrocentric model to guide this research on the cultural identity reconstruction process of JCIW who are Pentecostals, it provides the researcher with a unique perspective to interpret, explain, and analyze the world from the perspective of African agency (Asante, 2007). In this vein, this research emphasizes the relevance of spirituality and religion to multicultural counselling. It stresses the idea that spirituality is often an integral component of culture, which needs to be addressed by multiculturally aware counsellors (Fukuyama & Sevig, 1999). Mental health professions’ understanding of the Afrocentric model as well as the spiritual practices that are affiliated with the Pentecostal faith can help to facilitate culture-infused knowledge within multiculturalism. Arthur and Collins’s (2010b) model of Culture-Infused Counselling (CIC) provides a useful approach for addressing all dimensions of culture, including religion and spirituality, which are applicable to diverse ethnic groups’ cultural experiences and sense of agency. Adopting a CIC lens aligns with the postmodern social constructionist theoretical stance that guides this research. This theoretical stance supports the notion of multiple cultural identities and worldviews of individuals.
Model of Culture-Infused Counselling

Within the multicultural counselling literature, several multicultural counselling competence models have been addressed, publicizing the advancement of scholarship in this field (Mollen, Ridley, & Hill, 2003; Pope-Davis, Coleman, Liu, & Toporek, 2003; Sue & Sue, 2003). They include (a) the Tripartite Model of Multicultural Counselling Competencies (Sue et al., 1992; Sue et al., 1982), and (b) the Multidimensional Model for Developing Cultural Competence (Sue, 2001). These models, developed in the United States, addressed the notion of cultural-competence to provide effective services to diverse non-dominant ethnic groups (Dana, 1998; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). According to Sue et al. (1992), cultural competence consists of three fundamental principles: (a) counsellors’ sensitivity to their own attitudes, values, and biases; (b) cultural knowledge and understanding of clients’ worldviews; and (c) development of culturally-sensitive skills. These principles are transferable across cultures because they emerge out of the need for counsellors to provide acceptable and beneficial services to diverse cultural clients who tend to underutilize counselling services (Alderson, 2010; Arthur & Collins, 2010b; Djuraskovic, 2006, 2014; Moodley & Murphy, 2010; Palmer & Laungani, 1999; Sue & Zane, 1987). Within the Canadian multicultural context, Collins and Arthur (2010b) proposed a model of Culture-Infused Counselling (CIC) Competence that builds on Sue’s and colleagues’ works (Sue, 2001; Sue et al., 1992; Sue et al., 1982). A full representation of the CIC model is presented in Appendix B. Arthur and Collins (2010b) provided a useful definition of CIC competence:

The integration of attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, and skills essential for awareness of the impact of culture on personal assumptions, values, and beliefs, understanding of the worldview of the client, coming to agreement on goals and tasks in the context of a
trusting and culturally-sensitive working alliance, and reinforcing that alliance by embracing a social justice agenda. (p. 55)

Within this definition, it is important to consider the authors’ basic framework for CIC competencies, which comprises three core competency domains: (a) cultural self-awareness, (b) awareness of client cultural identities, and (c) culturally sensitive working alliance (Arthur & Collins, 2010b; Collins & Arthur, 2010a). Firstly, cultural self-awareness includes active awareness of personal assumptions, values, and biases. Secondly, awareness of clients’ cultural identities takes into consideration the understanding of clients’ worldviews. Lastly, culturally sensitive working alliance places emphasis on the collaborative agreement of counselling goals and the creation of tasks in the context of a trusting therapeutic relationship. It is important to highlight that Arthur and Collins (2010a) emphasize social justice as a key aspect of the working alliance. The above domains support the idea that multicultural counselling competencies are useful for conceptualizing and responding to professional challenges across and beyond cultures. Arthur and Collins’s (2010b) model accepts the challenge to infuse culture into multicultural counselling practices in working with individuals or groups from non-dominant populations, and is therefore useful for this study.

Research with Pentecostal Clients

Arthur and Collins’s (2010b) CIC model makes a unique contribution to the cultural identity reconstruction of JCIW who practice Pentecostal faith. The model also places emphasis on social justice, empowerment, and advocacy when creating a collaborative culturally-infused therapeutic relationship with non-dominant clients. For JCIW of Pentecostal faith, this model provides a framework for counsellors to recognize their unique religious and spiritual needs in reconstructing their cultural identities. This cultural identity reconstruction in turn creates “the
client-driven nature of the [therapeutic] process” (Collins & Arthur, 2010a, p. 63) for this group. The model demonstrates both a rationale for and an explanation of the ways in which infusing culture into multicultural counselling practices foster effective culturally-sensitive working alliance with clients. It presents a broad definition of culture that addresses such complex dimensions of cultural identity, which Moodley (2007) categorized as, the “big 7”: language, gender, sexual orientations, class, disability, religion, and age. These dimensions often intersect with issues of social justice and advocacy in counselling practices (Arthur & Collins, 2014: Jun, 2010; Kennedy & Arthur, 2014; Paré, 2014). The increased focus on social justice and activism are thoughtful contributions to multicultural counselling practice, particularly for certain non-dominant faith groups who are often misrepresented in the multicultural counselling literature.

Also, relevant to this research is Arthur and Collins’s (2010b) broad representation of culture, which is useful for non-dominant immigrant groups, such as JCIW, for whom religion and spirituality represent salient aspects of their cultural identities (Hall, 2010; James & Davis, 2012). The efforts made by Arthur and Collins (2010b) in their CIC competence model to reduce ambiguous terms and offer explicit, coherent definitions are useful when developing a strong working alliance with non-dominant faith groups in diverse multicultural counselling settings.

Additionally, Arthur and Collins’s (2010b) CIC model challenge practitioners to exercise cultural auditing, which is a “reflexive examination of one’s work with individual clients, groups, and systems” (p. 42). According to the authors, enhanced competencies in social justice advocacy are critical for practitioners, since traditional multicultural counselling “falls short of efforts to overcome some of the social inequities that adversely impact persons from non-dominant groups” (Arthur & Collins, 2010b, p. 142). Arthur and Collins’s promotion of a social
justice agenda in the CIC model established a strong connection with people of African descent, who Asante (2007) asserted suffer from the “dislocation, disorientation, and mental enslavement of [their African ancestors] as . . . a function of white racial hegemony” (p. 23). He further argued that many Blacks are “decentred” and “destabilized” (Asante, 2007, p. 5) within a White-dominated environment, which often leads to self-hate and self-mutilation (Asante, 2009). Like the Afrocentric model that considers an African form of spirituality, the CIC model also creates therapeutic space for spiritual and religious dimensions within the broad concept of culture. These dimensions are essential components in the cultural heritage of many JCIW (Burke, Chauvin, & Miranti, 2005); they serve as major resources of strength and survival to help them cope with their cultural identity reconstructions.

**Critiques of CIC Model**

Arthur and Collins’s (2010b) CIC model offers a comprehensive organizational framework for providing successful counselling services to all culturally diverse non-dominant groups. However, critics of the model have identified some key limitations. Firstly, the model is in its infancy stage, thus it lacks empirical support for its effectiveness in the therapeutic process (Paré, 2012). An extension of the above limitation is that due to the CIC model’s recent development, it provides a comprehensive categorization of competencies to be used in concordance with other counselling approaches, but it fails to state how its theory and practice are combined to work together during the therapeutic process. Further, the model’s multi-dimensionality in its structure may make it cognitively challenging for some unskilled counsellors working with non-dominant groups to conceptualize and integrate into practice because it requires conceptualizing various subcategories simultaneously (Paré, 2012).
In defense of this critique, Collins and Arthur (2010a) acknowledged that it is challenging to establish a comprehensive model that integrates all of the specific competencies proposed. For instance, the authors highlight numerous competencies needed to appropriately counsel culturally diverse groups, but they appear to lack clarity in how to put these competencies into practice.

Arthur and Collins’s (2010b) CIC competence model builds on Sue and colleagues’ seminal works (Sue, 2001; Sue et al., 1992; Sue et al., 1982) on multicultural competencies, which laid the foundation for the major models of multicultural counselling scholarship. However, one may argue that the future advancement of the CIC model lies in more in-depth research, which will certainly provide thorough empirical data about its effectiveness when used by counsellors. With the utilization of qualitative research, such as Heuristic Inquiry, this model can generate new knowledge that addresses issues of cultural identity for non-dominant faith groups. Counsellors should be aware that effective culture-infused counselling includes establishment and maintenance of culturally-sensitive working alliance with clients (Alderson, 2010; Collins & Arthur, 2010b; Moodley, Gielen, & Wu, 2012). For example, counselling professionals utilizing a CIC model should be culturally-sensitive to the religious and spiritual experiences of JCIW.

Addressing JCIW’s religious experiences in counselling can be beneficial for many counselling professionals to enhance their multicultural competencies when working with these clients. Considering the importance of the meaning-making experiences for JCIW through Pentecostal faith, multicultural counselling competence models need to better account for religion and spirituality in the therapeutic relationship. From this perspective, counselling professionals should be mindful of the various challenges to be addressed in working with
certain non-dominant faith groups, namely in areas of assessment, intervention, counsellor training, research, social justice, and ethical practice. These challenges are discussed below in the context of multicultural counselling practices.

**Professional Challenges in Multicultural Counselling Practices**

Multicultural models of competencies are proposed frameworks for conceptualizing and responding to professional challenges among counselling professionals (Arredondo et al., 1996; Arthur & Collins, 2010b; Lonborg & Bowen, 2004). A growing body of literature in multicultural counselling has addressed challenges associated with assessment (Boyd-Franklin, 1989; Robinson-Wood, 2013), intervention (Parham & Parham, 1997; Shafranske, 2003; Tan, 2011), counsellor training (Atkinson & Hackett, 1998; Sue et al., 1992), research (Lago, 2006; McKenzie-Mavinga, 2009; Westbrooks, 2003), social justice (Arthur & Collins, 2010b; Jun, 2010; Sue, 2001; Todd & Rufa, 2010), and ethical practice (American Counseling Association [ACA], 2005; APA, 2003; Pack-Brown & Williams, 2003). For counselling professionals, addressing these challenges are critical and should be explored to construct solid working alliances with potential clients, particularly while engaging with clients from non-dominant immigrant faith groups.

**Assessment**

According to Sattler and Hoge (2006), *psychological assessment* describes any technique used to gather information and form a judgement about the behavioural, emotional, or social attributes of an individual. Parham (2002) suggested that counselling professionals working with people of African descent would benefit from assessing “the deeper emotional and affective levels of multicultural counselling competence” (p. xi). He encouraged counsellors working with these individuals to raise the bar of measured competence in the assessment process.
Further, Parham (2002) presented four key techniques that can contribute to counsellors’ ability to accurately assess clients of African descent: (a) understanding cultural strengths, (b) understanding the client’s distress from a culturally centred frame of reference, (c) using appropriate clinical instruments, and (d) helping clients and therapists anticipate setbacks. Exploring these techniques in the counselling process may intentionally or unintentionally avoid stereotypes, biases, and assumptions for counsellors working with certain non-dominant immigrant clients whose Pentecostal faith practices are often pathologized within cultural, social, and historical contexts (Johnson, 2009; Medina; 2011; Paris, 1982).

Reflecting on the words of Becker and Geer (1960), people carry culture with them; when they leave one group setting for another, they do not shed its cultural premises. This perspective can be transferable to many JCIW clients whose fragmented cultural identities are often by-products of post-immigration stressors (DePass, 2012a; James & Davis, 2012); hence these clients may require access to mental health services. As part of counsellors’ competency in assessment, care is needed in understanding the shifting of cultural contexts of these clients in the reconstruction of their identities. According to Mpofu (2011), it is imperative for all counselling professionals to have fundamental knowledge and skills in assessment. He further added that proficiency in assessment is associated with effectiveness in counselling intervention (Mpofu, 2011).

**Intervention**

Culturally-responsive interventions are encouraged in multicultural counselling practices when working with non-dominant immigrant faith groups (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2008; Moodley & Walcott, 2010). Fukuyama and Sevig (1999) proposed that culturally competent counsellors must be aware of specific skills that are helpful for clients who are religious and
spiritual. This proposition relates directly to Collins and Arthur’s (2010b) third core competency of collaborating with clients to create culturally sensitive treatment interventions. For example, when working with JCIW of the Pentecostal faith, it might be beneficial for counselling professionals to become aware of how their religious and spiritual practices may aid in the healing process (Cervantes & Parham, 2005; Priester, Khalil, & Luvathingal, 2009). Many of these African Caribbean women recognize the importance of the Pentecostal faith community to help them cope with their post-immigration experiences (Este & Bernard, 2003; Hall, 2012; Tastsoglou, 2002).

In multicultural counselling practices, consideration of cultural dimensions are necessary for implementing sensitive and appropriate treatment interventions that incorporate the spiritual beliefs and religious practices (e.g., glossolalia) of numerous Black Pentecostal clients. When working with these clients, counsellors and clients are regarded as collaborators and co-constructors of meaningful change-oriented processes (Arthur & Collins, 2010b). During this counsellor-client change process, deciding which interventions to use with individuals from non-dominant faith groups should be done collaboratively to facilitate better treatment interventions for these clients. Counsellors need effective training to enhance multicultural and social justice competencies and to work with non-dominant immigrant clients who bring different religious worldviews and life experiences to the counselling process (Brown, Collins, & Arthur, 2014).

**Counsellor Training**

Within the Canadian context, counsellors interested in enhancing their training in multicultural counselling should understand that “cultural diversity is not a phase but rather a reality of the social fabric of Canadian society” (Arthur & Collins, 2010c, p. 455). Training in multicultural counselling should reduce the dominance of Eurocentric approaches to therapy and
promote new counselling paradigms (e.g., CIC model) that consider the unique cultural identities of non-dominant groups (Arthur & Collins, 2010b; Collins & Arthur, 2010a). Training in culture-infused counselling is likely to increase competencies for numerous counsellors who wish to operationalize issues of cultural diversity and multiculturalism in the field of counselling psychology (Parham, 1996).

Arredondo, Tovar-Blank, and Parham (2008) purported that a paradigm shift towards culturally-responsive practice begins with effective training in graduate programs in areas of multicultural competencies that expand students’ knowledge, skills, and awareness of culturally diverse communities. Parham (1996) invited counselling professionals in multicultural training contexts to acknowledge the holistic dimensions of clients. He indicated that although some psychological perspectives seek to focus on isolated dimensions, such as race (e.g., the Cross model), the Afrocentric world view recognizes a spiritual dimension to life that supersedes everything else. Hence, the spiritual and religious practices of diverse clients should be endorsed and not ignored in counselling, to help facilitate healing (Moodley, 2010b; Rastogi & Wieling, 2005; Wane & Sutherland, 2010). Research considerations addressing appropriate training in multicultural counselling for non-dominant cultural groups should move counsellors to audit assumptions of not only “what to do” but also “how to do it” (Parham, 1996, p. 117).

Research Considerations

Research aims at bringing cultural identity to the consciousness of multicultural counselling remain relatively marginal in psychology, in particular with non-dominant faith groups (Arthur & Collins, 2010a; Dana, 1998; James, 2010). It is recognized that religiosity and spirituality are often critical tools for coping with mental health challenges in response to adverse life events. However, the role of the Pentecostal faith in the cultural identity reconstruction of
JCIW tends to be under-researched in the Canadian context as more focus is given instead to immigrant Pentecostals from Latin America, Eritrea, Sri Lanka, and Korea (Wilkinson, 2006).

Nevertheless, one may argue that for many non-dominant immigrant groups in Canada, their identities may be reconstructed by their faith practices within the context of their religious communities. In support of this argument, attention is now given to a recent article published in *The Globe and Mail* addressing immigrants of the Pentecostal faith. In this article, Shingler (2013) reported that “for many immigrant groups, religion plays a vital role as new arrivals to Canada contend with the often confounding challenges and difficulties that come with establishing a new home in a completely different country” (p. A3).

Inevitably, the continual influences of post-immigration stressors for Black Caribbean immigrants to Canada are likely to impact their individual and collective identity developments. Therefore, multicultural counselling discourse should respond to the growing issues of cultural identity reconstruction for many immigrant groups (Djuraskovic, 2006). In particular, research with JCIW of the Pentecostal faith should consider intersecting dimensions of gender, religion, and spirituality for influencing mental health, and for infusing social justice to inform best practice in multicultural counselling (Arthur & Collins, 2010c).

**Infusing Social Justice**

Social justice and social advocacy work remain fundamental to the practice of multicultural counselling (Arthur & Collins, 2010c; Hays & Erford, 2010; Kennedy & Arthur, 2014). *Social justice* is the “belief in a just world that respects and protects human rights” (Chang & Gnilka, 2010, p. 53). *Social advocacy* is the “act of arguing on behalf of an individual, group, idea, or issue in the pursuit of influencing outcomes” (Chang & Gnilka, 2010, p. 53). Immigration growth prompts concerns of equitable treatment and distribution of societal
benefits for all individuals (Chang & Gnilka, 2010; James et al., 2010). In multicultural discourse, counselling professionals are encouraged to identify and confront discriminatory and oppressive practices, as well as adopt a firm social justice agenda when working with non-dominant immigrant groups (Arthur & Collins, 2014; Arthur, Collins, McMahon, & Marshall, 2009; Constantine, Hage, Kindaichi, & Bryant, 2007). According to Kenny and Romano (2009), social justice actions tackle social inequality and societal structures “that limit resources based on group or individual characteristics, including age, race, ethnicity, social class, poverty, religion, gender, immigration status, sexual orientation, and language” (p. 23). Like other non-dominant faith groups, such as Muslims, Jews, Sikhs (Bramadat, 2007), issues of social justice are also relevant to JCIW of the Pentecostal faith.

The unintentional and intentional marginalization of prospective Black Caribbean Pentecostal clients by some counsellors may result from inappropriate “linear thinking” (Jun, 2010, p. 28). According to Jun (2010), a linear thinking perspective tends to project and generalize on the basis of the past, assuming that certain groups remain stagnant regardless of sociocultural and contextual shifts. Counsellors who adopt a linear perspective in practice could unconsciously discriminate, oppress, and marginalize Black Caribbean Pentecostal clients on the basis of misguided cultural beliefs regarding their religious worldviews. This, in turn, could interfere with counsellors’ abilities to develop the competency needed to appreciate and respect differences in these clients’ cultural identities (Burke et al., 2005; McKenzie-Mavinga, 2009; Mpofu, 2011). Developing a contextual consciousness for competencies in multicultural counselling could help counsellors learn to address issues of social injustices such as gender, religion, and culture in counselling (Esmiol, Knudson-Martin, & Delgado, 2012). Collins and Arthur (2010c) indicated that many challenges remain in promoting culturally-sensitive
practices, such as counsellors failing to be aware of their own biases and the biases of others.
However, continuous efforts to positively impact clients’ well-being, as well as engagement in ethical practice that promote social justice could increase counsellors’ culture-infused counselling competencies (Arthur & Collins, 2010c).

**Ethical Practice**

As the profession of counselling psychology becomes more culturally, religiously, and spiritually inclusive, practitioners are challenged by professional bodies to demonstrate ethical standards in treating religious individuals as whole entities, and not just segmented beings (Fukuyama & Sevig, 1999; Moodley, 2014; Tan, 2011). According to the ACA’s *Code of Ethics*, counsellors must ensure clients’ religious beliefs and practices are not overridden by their own cultural values and biases (ACA, 2005). Additionally, the Canadian Counselling Association’s *Code of Ethics* specifies that counsellors are required to value and respect the religious diversity of all clients without any form of prejudice that may encroach on their integrity and/or welfare (Sheppard et al., 2007). Collectively, these associations promote ethical standards in multicultural counselling, which align with the CPA’s (2000) responsibility to help assure ethical behaviour and attitudes on the part of all its members, including educators, psychologists, practitioners, and researchers.

Acknowledging the above challenges in working with non-dominant faith groups could help to better advance knowledge in multicultural counselling. In particular, increased awareness about JCIW’s Pentecostal faith may provide greater understanding about the role it plays in the complex processes of acculturation and cultural identity reconstruction. Such awareness will help to enhance counsellors’ competencies on how to integrate the spiritual and religious dimensions of clients to widen their scope of practice. Therefore, examining the
dimensions of cultural identity in relation to non-dominant immigrant faith groups has considerable future implications for multicultural counselling that require ongoing attention.

Summary

Multicultural counselling recognizes cultural diversity among diverse individuals (Robinson-Wood, 2013). It views dimensions of cultural identity, including gender, religion and spirituality, as critical to non-dominant clients’ worldviews. For some non-dominant immigrant groups, such as JCIW of Pentecostal faith, the reconstruction of cultural identity based on post-immigration factors may be facilitated by engagement in their faith practices (Hall, 2012; Thomas-Hope, 2002; Toulis, 1997), and therefore should be considered in multicultural counselling contexts. Counselling professionals are urged to enhance their competencies in multicultural counselling on issues associated with non-dominant immigrant faith groups, as well as gender diversity within cultural groups (Pack-Brown & Williams, 2003). Ethical multicultural practice calls for knowledge and skill in all aspects of the counselling profession (Jun, 2010). Best practices in multicultural counselling raise the expectation for counselling professionals to exercise cultural sensitivity in their work with non-dominant immigrant clients. Counsellors are expected to go beyond traditional counselling that is influenced by Eurocentric ideologies (McKenzie-Mavinga, 2009; Sutherland & Moodley, 2010), and reflect ways in which their attitudes, beliefs, and biases interfere with how they provide best service to clients (Arredondo et al., 1996; Collins & Arthur, 2010b).

Building on the above perspectives, Vontress (2010) asserted that individuals are more alike than different. Thus, one’s differences should be acknowledged and appreciated in multicultural counselling when confronting ethical issues of social injustice that impact the assessment, intervention, training, and research outcomes of culturally diverse clients. When
working with people of African descent, counselling issues relate closely to the cultural and
spiritual traditions of these communities (Este & Bernard, 2006; Littrell, 2001).

In this chapter I discussed the approaches to multicultural counselling and their relevance
to non-dominant groups including JCIW of Pentecostal faith. I also addressed the Afrocentric
model as a useful framework for people of African descent. Arthur and Collins’s proposed
model of CIC provides a unique lens through which to work with JCIW as they adjust to a new
cultural context. Challenges surrounding the immigration experiences of JCIW who practice the
Pentecostal faith were explored in respect to intervention, assessment, social justice, and ethical
practice.

In essence, for JCIW of the Pentecostal faith, culture, spirituality, religion as well as
gender are critical elements to infuse in the development of multicultural counselling
competencies (Arthur & Collins, 2010a, 2010b; Collins & Arthur, 2007; Sutherland & Moodley,
2010). These elements deserve further exploration and expansion in qualitative research. In the
next chapter, I describe Heuristic Inquiry (HI) as the appropriate qualitative methodology for this
study, as well as the processes used to synthesize the narratives of JCIW of the Pentecostal faith.
CHAPTER 3 – HEURISTIC INQUIRY

In the field of psychology, there has been a paradigm shift from a primary reliance on quantitative research to acknowledgement of the value of qualitative research for generating knowledge (Creswell, 1998, 2007; Ponterotto, 2005; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). One concern raised about the presumed objective nature of quantitative research is that it tends to ignore how data obtained during research is socially mediated through human interactions (Creswell, 2003; Harper & Thompson, 2012a, 2012b). Contrary to this objective stance, I argue that by considering subjective elements of individuals’ lived experiences, researchers may be better able to explore tacit knowledge of lived experience and how this form of knowledge can be interpreted in order to enhance the richness of the data analysis (Poldma, 2011; Polyani, 1966).

According to Polyani (1966), tacit knowledge refers to the implicit knowledge that exists in our human minds that perhaps is difficult to explain. This concept will be further explored later in the chapter as it relates to the heuristic approach that guides this study. From a social constructionist standpoint, knowledge is situated in human relationships. Therefore, as a researcher influenced by social constructionism, I value Gergen and Gergen’s (2012) constructionist stance that “what we believe to be true as opposed to false, objective as opposed to subjective, scientific as opposed to mythological, rational as opposed to irrational, . . . is brought into being by historically and culturally situated groups of people” (p. 65). The above stance holds a contentious position; it stands in contrast to the westernized individualist as well as communal view of knowledge.

Firstly, the individualist tradition views the person as “rational, self-directing, morally centred, and knowledgable agent of action” (Gergen & Gergen, 2012, pp. 65-66). In this
respect, social constructionists challenge individualists to consider the importance of human interactions in generating knowledge in various cultural contexts (Gergen, 2009; Lock & Strong, 2010). Secondly, the communal view emphasizes the possibility that any group including scientists are able to cast doubt on any case via objective truth. Conversely, social constructionists argue that no one account is more objective in its depiction of reality than the other. It is worth remembering that each tradition of research including qualitative should not be abandoned because it is able to generate “useful truths” from an “array of cultural and historical specific constructions” (Gergen & Gergen, 2012, p. 66).

For instance, passion or being personally implicated in one’s research is normally discouraged and not given much relevance because of its association with subjectivity (Dixon, 2014). By downplaying passion as a valuable resource, however, researchers may limit their understandings of how people subjectively think about the world and how they act and behave in it. Qualitatively-derived data tend not to lend themselves to objective analysis (Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative research involves an understanding of how the social world is constructed based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry (Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Lichtman, 2012). In following an area of research in which I am invested, I selected a congruent methodology called Heuristic Inquiry (HI). HI is an exploratory approach to research that enables me to remain true to my topic and my passion (Dixon, 2014). Since HI allows for the personal and passionate engagement of the researcher (Alderson, 1998; Hiles, 2008; Moustakas, 1990), the use of the first person represents the integration of the primary researcher’s voice throughout this dissertation.

According to Haverkamp, Morrow, and Ponterotto (2005), qualitative research offers a glimpse of “what resides beneath the surface” (p. 214). This phrase infers that qualitative
research might allow for studies in psychology that open up researchers’ knowledge and understanding of how people make meaning (i.e., meaning-making) of their lived experiences in various cultural contexts (Creswell, 1998; Morrow, 2005; Stiles, 1993). Van Manen (1997) poetically refers to lived experience as “the breathing of meaning” (Van Manen, 1997, p. 36). This reference implies that lived experience is a phenomenon (Husserl, 1983) that has value and is worth studying. Within qualitative research, the sharing of stories generated from participants’ lived experiences can facilitate a meaning-making process. According to Smith et al. (2009), meaning-making is assumed to be subjective and opens up possibilities of tolerance for other cultures’ meanings. The heuristic approach to qualitative research acknowledges the discovery of knowledge that is embedded and integrated within the self through understanding of the self in relation to how participants' make meaning of their lived experiences (Nzojibwami, 2009). The growing acceptability and ethical standing of qualitative research in psychology scholarship makes it a valuable form of inquiry in its own right (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

In this part of the dissertation, I first place HI within its historical context, which is followed by a discussion of its core concepts and phases. Next, I give an account of how I chose the HI research method. I then reposition HI from its modernist foundation into a postmodernist paradigm, emphasizing the multiplicity of stories. Acknowledgement is also given to the limitations and merits of HI, as well as arguing for its benefits in multicultural counselling. I further highlight my passion as an HI researcher and discuss the relevance of HI for my research. Lastly, to demonstrate how the study was performed, I outline the design of the study (i.e.,

9 In HI research, participants are often referred to as co-researchers because they play an essential role in bringing understanding to the experience of the primary researcher (Moustakas, 1990). However, for the purpose of this research, the term participants will be used.
procedures) and conclude the chapter by briefly describing the research to which I apply a HI methodology.

**The Historical Context of HI Research**

As a qualitative methodology, HI research is credited to American humanistic psychologist, Clark Moustakas who introduced it in his book, *Loneliness*, published in 1961 (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985; Hiles, 2008; Moustakas, 1990). By definition, the term *heuristic* derives from the Greek word *heuriskein*, which means to discover or to find (Moustakas, 1990; Rose & Loewenthal, 2006). It is akin to the word *eureka*, also Greek, which signifies what some people may identify as an “aha” moment (Bach, 2002; Moustakas, 1990). HI research aims at “discovering the nature of the problem or phenomenon itself and to explicate it as it exists in human experience” (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 42). Specific to the HI approach is the explicit involvement and deep connection of the researcher, to the degree that the researcher’s lived experience becomes the primary focus of the research (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985).

According to Alderson (1998), HI research tends to “begin within the researcher, and ends within the researcher” (p. 55) based on deep self-reflections. However, the inclusion of my participants’ stories contributed rich and in-depth understanding not otherwise acquired solely by my own story, for the purpose of this research. On the passionate quest of discovery, the researcher is expected to experience greater self-awareness and self-knowledge (Alderson, 1998; Hiles, 2001). According to Douglass and Moustakas (1985), the primary purpose of HI is “to know the essence of some aspect of life through the internal pathways of the self” (p. 39). This means that as the primary researcher, I was required to be personally connected to the phenomenon under investigation.
Further, HI attempts to discover the meaning and the essence of the unique human experiences through the process of reflection, exploration, and elucidation of the nature of the phenomenon being studied (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985). From this perspective, I was challenged as the primary researcher by the heuristic process to pursue my inner creative sources and discover their meanings. The transformative effect of HI opens the pathway for the implicit dimension of personal knowledge that we hold but are unable to express. In the words of Polanyi (1966), “we know more than we can tell” (p. 4). Through the inner pathway of the self, HI promotes a creative way of knowing. It opens up a new pathway towards creating knowledge about what a phenomenon is and what it means in the realm of the researcher’s and participants’ lived experiences. The “personal involvement” and “unshakable connection” of the researcher (Moustakas, 2001, p. 264) allow for the free and effortless movement of “self-search, self-dialogue, and self-discovery” (Moustakas, 2001, p. 263).

Based on the theoretical foundations of HI methodology, which is influenced by humanism (Moustakas, 1990), HI privileges the researcher’s story by only considering a single reality (Etherington, 2004a; Etherington, 2004c). Drawing on Etherington’s (2004a, 2004b, 2004c) ideas, the researcher-centred view of HI tends not to consider the larger dimensions, including religious diversity, power dynamics, cultural differences, and societal frameworks. These factors are relevant to my research on cultural identity reconstruction because they influence how my participants and I use the Pentecostal faith to make meaning of our lived experiences and how we reconstruct meaning from these experiences. Therefore, to study a group of people to contribute to the multicultural counselling discourse, I argue for a modification of HI methodology that understands both individual, as well as collective perspectives. Such understandings take into consideration the core concepts and processes of HI
that can help researchers reflect on their meanings related to the phenomenon under investigation.

**Core Concepts and Processes of HI Methodology**

According to Moustakas (1990) and Hiles (2001), HI methodology is a demanding process because it requires continuous relational engagement between the researcher and participants. This requires the researcher “to search introspectively, meditatively, and reflectively into the nature and meaning of the phenomenon” (Moustakas, 2001, p. 263). For this research, the participants’ perspectives are integrated in the heuristic process. This integration prompts me, as the primary researcher, to reflect on how my Pentecostal faith helps in the reconstruction of my cultural identity as a Jamaican Canadian immigrant woman. In the process of HI, the researcher may challenge, confront, or doubt his/her understanding of the phenomenon. As a heuristic researcher, I support the idea that confronting dimensions of my own cultural identity, such as my Pentecostal faith, is likely to be challenging and demanding. I view some aspects of my faith as unspoken and intuitive, and it may be threatening to shine light on it and make this aspect of my lived experience transparent. With persistence, I was able to deepen my understanding of my lived experience through the process of an inner search for knowledge aimed at discovering the qualities, conditions, and relationships that underscore this experience (Moustakas, 2001).

In essence, the key opening of the heuristic process is the researcher’s ability to discover a significant problem or question that holds the passionate commitment of the researcher (Moustakas, 1990; West, 1998). In formulating the question, Moustakas (2001) identified seven critical processes that guide the development of HI methodology. These processes influence how meaning is heuristically constructed (Stevens, 2006). They include (a) identifying with the
focus of inquiry, (b) self-dialogue, (c) tacit knowing, (d) intuition, (e) indwelling, (f) focusing, and (g) the internal frame of reference (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985; Moustakas, 1990). Below, a brief description of each process is provided, followed by the six phases of HI.

**Identifying with the Focus of Inquiry**

This concept involves aligning oneself with what one is seeking to discover (Stevens, 2006). This requires the researcher to become immersed in the research question, becoming deeply connected with it, and living with it (Hiles, 2001; Nzojibwami, 2009). The researcher’s direct experience of the phenomenon in question allows for a richer understanding through an open-ended and self-directed inquiry process (Moustakas, 1990; Sela-Smith, 2002). Additionally, the researcher’s ability to recognize his or her internal curiosity of the phenomenon is a motivating factor in the need to clarify and closely examine the lived experience (Freeman, 2012). This research is a subjective inquiry; I will use myself, as well as my participants’ lived experiences of our Pentecostal faith to explore how we may reconstruct our cultural identity in a Canadian context.

**Self-dialogue**

This process signifies a critical beginning in HI as the researcher engages in self-dialogue with the phenomenon being studied (Moustakas, 1990; Stevens, 2006). Knowledge is produced from this openness to self-inquiry (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010) and multiple meanings are discovered from this self-directed facilitated search (Nzojibwami, 2009). Using self-dialogue, the researcher is able to reflect upon his or her lived experiences within an internal frame of reference to have a better conceptualization of the phenomenon. This requires the researcher to demonstrate transparency, vulnerability, and honesty with oneself, as well as one’s experience relevant to the question or problem (Moustakas, 1990). Although self-dialogue is stressed, the
relational dimension of HI is utilized in this research to include the perspectives of the participants whose contributions to the research are invaluable and equally privileged.

**Tacit Knowing**

Moustakas (1990) drew on Polanyi’s (1964, 1966, 1969) understanding of tacit knowledge to explain how some researchers have knowledge about their research topic that they are not able to articulate. Tacit knowing is fundamental to HI because it is used in every phase of the research process. According to Sela-Smith (2002), tacit knowledge is “that internal place where experience, feeling, and meaning join together to form both a picture of the world and a way to navigate that world” (p. 60). Polanyi (1966) argued that we often hold implicit knowledge of experiences that we cannot verbalize or explain, but they form the foundation of our perceptions. Tacit knowledge consists of two factors: subsidiary and focal. Subsidiary factors are part of our conscious awareness that do not require focus or attention, such as the learned skill of riding a bike. In contrast, focal factors are abstract and intangible, such as the faith and confidence needed to ride a bike. Embracing both factors in HI “creates the path of personal knowing, tapping into the nuance and variation of experience, crawling inside the self and eventually making contact with the tacit dimension, the basis for all possible knowledge” (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 44). It is at this level of explicit knowledge where information from a variety of experiences, including myself, as well as the participants, are collected and utilized to inform our perception, and meaning-making (Moustakas, 1990), pertaining to our cultural identity reconstruction. This means that through dialogue, some aspects of implicit knowledge can be made explicit.
**Intuition**

This concept is viewed as the bridge between implicit and explicit knowledge (Hiles, 2008; Stevens, 2006). It offers a pathway to deeper insight and understanding of lived experiences (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010). To construct the meaning of the phenomenon being investigated, intuition directs researchers to appropriate clues, patterns, feelings, relationships, and perceptions (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010). By attending to these lived experiences, the researcher makes it possible for the phenomenon to be viewed holistically, rather than in several parts (Moustakas, 1990). In respect to this research, intuition will help facilitate my research questions and methods; I will attend to my internal states while interacting with my participants. This attentiveness will enable me to discover patterns and meanings that can enhance the understanding of the phenomenon being explored.

**Indwelling**

This concept refers to the conscious and deliberate process of the researcher to turn inward and seek a deeper understanding of the human experience (Moustakas, 1990, 2001). It invites openness and willingness from the researcher to focus entirely on the self with unwavering attention. Indwelling calls for a more extended comprehension of a theme of the human experience (Stevens, 2006). From this perspective, I focused on both my own experience of cultural identity, as well as my participants’ experiences. In the context of the relational dynamic between me and my participants, I also deepened the meaning of the phenomenon and provided a more accurate description of the process (Stevens, 2006).

**Focusing**

According to Moustakas (1990), this concept refers to a sustained process by which the researcher experiences “personal growth, insight, and change” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 25). By
limiting oneself of distractions, full attention can be given to the explicit knowledge gained through focusing (Nzojibwami, 2009). This form of de-cluttering encourages the researcher to make whatever shifts or changes necessary to discover new elements of the experience (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010; Douglass & Moustakas, 1985; Hiles, 2008). During this process, I reflected on my lived experience using my participants’ stories as alternate perspectives. This enabled me to find any missing elements that could provide a more comprehensive and rich understanding of the phenomenon in question (Freeman, 2012).

**The Internal Frame of Reference**

Central to the processes of HI is the internal frame of reference. This means that “to know and understand the nature, meanings, and essences of any human experience, one depends on the internal frame of reference of the person who has had, is having, or will have the experience” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 26). Essentially, the meaning of one’s lived experience can only be understood through the “perceptions, thoughts, and sense” of the experiencer (Moustakas, 1990, p. 26), since there is no substitute for experience (Maslow, 1966). Therefore, one must encourage the other person to share the meanings embedded in one’s lived experiences by creating an atmosphere of trust and openness to facilitate this disclosure. Unique to HI, the stories of the participants remain visible as that of the researcher (Moustakas, 1994), since ultimately knowledge and understanding is deepened through the eyes and voices of others (Moustakas, 1990). For this research, HI allows for this visibility as space is created for the collaborative engagement between me and my participants who both share the experience of this meaning-making process. The narratives generated from this process embody the researcher’s and participants’ worldviews, values, and beliefs, all of which contribute to the source of true subjective knowledge.
The Six Phases of HI Research

In the context of HI research, a story is created that captures the qualities, meanings, and essence of a lived human experience (Hiles, 2008). To start the heuristic process, the researcher proposes a question or problem that seeks an answer. This question or problem reflects a personal connection of the researcher who, through exploring this phenomenon, gains a better awareness of self, as well as the human world. As outlined by Moustakas (1990), there are six phases of HI that guide the direction of the research process and represent the steps in designing the research. These are (a) initial engagement, (b) immersion, (c) incubation, (d) illumination, (e) explication, and (f) creative synthesis. I will briefly summarize them in relation to this study.

Initial Engagement

In this phase, research begins with the discovery of an intense and passionate concern that holds personal meaning often within a social context with compelling implications (Hiles, 2008; Sela-Smith, 2002; Stevens, 2006). In other words, the researcher formulates the research question. Therefore, I was required to become fully immersed in self-dialogue and self-exploration to clarify the chosen topic and the research question being explored (Moustakas, 1990). I must admit that the primary question that has led to this research topic has been percolating within me for a long time. Although the topic has intensified in recent years, I approached it with a sense of trepidation of dishonouring my faith, which signifies a core dimension of my cultural identity. I managed this fear and uncertainty via transparency. For example, I reflected and journalled any intense emotional reactions that surfaced and fueled my passion as I immersed myself into the research process. Such transparency was useful in preventing my sense of trepidation from interfering with the interpretation of the participants’ stories. An in-depth exploration of this research topic provided me with the personal space
needed to confront dimensions of my cultural identity, including gender role, religion, and spirituality.

**Immersion**

During this phase, the researcher tends to immerse himself or herself in living with the question in various states: awake, asleep, in dreams, and in dialogue with others (Stevens, 2006). Essentially, the topic consumes every aspect of the researcher’s life. Moustakas (1990) posited that “everything in [one’s] life becomes crystallized around the question” (p. 28). The natural manifestation of this phase makes it noticeable to outsiders (Nzojibwami, 2009). Initially, I experienced this phase of my research with ambivalence, which changed to intense passion as the topic penetrated my thoughts. With excitement, I continued to immerse myself in the literature. I also engaged in stimulating conversations with family and friends, had meaningful discussions with colleagues, and wrote creatively in my journal as I reflected on the topic. In spite of my immersion in the topic, I was still careful with whom I shared the topic to avoid being judged, particularly by outsiders of the faith. I overcame this concern of judgment by acknowledging this research process as an integral aspect of my personal growth and development.

Despite my apprehension, I shared my story with others including outsiders of the Pentecostal faith, as part of my learning. For example, I was given the opportunity to talk about research and share my story with a group of master’s level students while working as a teaching assistant at a particular institution on several occasions. Sharing my story to a group of outsiders was anxiety-provoking for me because I felt vulnerable and exposed in disclosing an intimate dimension of my cultural identity (i.e., my Pentecostal faith). However, this experience helped
me empathize with my participants’ feelings of anxiety and vulnerability during the interview process and gained their trust to talk about their lived experiences.

**Incubation**

In this phase the researcher detaches from the intensity of the experience (Alderson, 1998). This form of detachment from the phenomenon helps to create space for the ideas to germinate. During incubation “a seed is planted; the seed undergoes silent nourishment, support, and care that produces a creative awareness of some dimension of a phenomenon or a creative integration of its parts or qualities” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 29). This phase of my research was entered following the completion of the data needed for the study, such as conducting, transcribing and analyzing the interviews, as well as reading the literature related to my topic. By stepping away from the data and re-engaging with it in the writing-up phase, I discovered new understandings of the phenomenon.

**Illumination**

This phase occurs naturally when the work in the previous phase becomes conscious awareness and the researcher is “open and receptive to tacit knowledge and intuition” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 29). While Moustakas (1990) emphasized the importance of tacit knowledge and intuition in heuristic research, one may argue that as a unique method of scientific inquiry, heuristic research often requires more than researchers’ intuition to account for quality and rigour. This means that researchers need to systematically analyze the collected data by organizing them into clusters and multiple categories of themes until they feel they have reached the most complete and representative reflection of all the participants’ experiences including their own (Alderson, 1998; Djuraskovic, 2014; Snyder, 2012). Additionally, member checking is an integral aspect of the analysis in HI; it ensures that researchers have an accurate
understanding of the participants’ stories (Freeman, 2012; Taylor, 2010). In this phase, there is also a sudden breakthrough in understanding the collected data. This breakthrough results in awareness of qualities and themes, which reflects a new understanding of the phenomenon. By contributing to this reflective process, the researcher might use tacit knowing, intuition, self-dialogue, focus, and some indwelling to discover hidden meanings of the phenomenon. While illuminating, I was able to see the topic in a different light. This involved opening a door to new awareness about the influence of my faith on my cultural identity. This led to the correction of distorted knowledge (Stevens, 2006) about my faith and cultural identity reconstruction.

**Explication**

This phase involves further indwelling, focusing, and self-searching to recognize meanings that are unique and distinctive to the phenomenon (Hiles, 2008). While explicating, the researcher allows the new knowledge, new discoveries, and new insights to take up residence (Sela-Smith, 2002). During this phase, I gained clarity on the core themes of the phenomenon. I made known to others these new discoveries of meaning (i.e., categories, themes, and subthemes), which were then written up as the presentation and analysis of data in my dissertation. In essence, I created a composite depiction of the phenomenon that reflected and honoured the stories of my participants. For me, this represented a collaborative narrative that included multiple meanings of the phenomenon (Alderson, 1998; Snyder, 2012).

**Creative Synthesis**

This represents the final phase of heuristic research. It involves a creative synthesis of the culmination of data into a connected whole (Rose & Loewenthal, 2006; Stevens, 2006). The researcher has the freedom to explore any creative means that seem appropriate to express the truest essence of the phenomenon with the world. Some examples include a narrative account,
poetry, story, drawing, painting, and a metaphor. As a heuristic researcher, I was challenged through this phase to generate multiple realities of heuristic truths that reflected the experiences of me and my participants. This creative synthesis was expressed in poetic form. Poetry reflects a hidden talent of mine that has been ignored for a while. I believed that poetry helped me to capture the narratives of myself, as well as my participants in a culturally relevant manner based on our unique lived experiences.

In summary, these phases depict my journey as a heuristic researcher to discover meaning and understanding of the phenomenon being investigated. Although, the experiences in these phases might appear in a linear and stage-like fashion, they could also evolve in a non-sequential manner (Moustakas, 2001). Therefore, being open to the fluidity of these phases and not rushing the process was beneficial for my growth and development as a HI researcher.

**Choice of HI Methodology**

HI is my chosen qualitative methodology for understanding the experience of JCIW who use the Pentecostal faith in the reconstruction of cultural identity. It is considered an innovative approach in counselling psychology (McLeod, 2011). Heuristics is concerned with “meanings, not measurements; with essence, not appearance; with quality, not quantity; and with experience, not behaviour” (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 42). According to Douglass and Moustakas (1985), HI is often based on the researcher’s intuition, as well as prior knowledge and experience. This means that formulations of hypotheses are not considered in heuristics (Gay, Mills, & Airaisian, 2009). In HI research, the emotional participation of the researcher is expected, allowing it to be described as a “personal experience method” (McLeod, 2011, p. 205), as well as a “first person research method” (Forinash, 2012). HI is also referred to as a “relational research method” (Rose & Loewenthal, 2006, p. 133) because it allows both the
researcher and participants to share their stories. In the sharing of these stories, the primary researcher and participants are treated equally, giving all sets of lived experiences equal importance.

In the context of this dissertation, HI offered both the researcher and participants the opportunity to create meaning from the reconstruction of their cultural identities through the use of Pentecostal faith. This meaning-making process reflected the primary researcher’s deep and personal connection to the phenomenon under investigation. In the section that follows, I presented further explication of HI within the qualitative research tradition.

Adapting HI from a Modernist Approach to a Post-Modernist Approach

In this section of the dissertation, I first discussed HI’s modernist foundation, based on its humanist and essentialist theories. This is followed by a critique of these theories. Next, I proposed a postmodernist adaptation of HI because the modernist paradigm tends to look for unified stories, and I am interested in the multiplicity of stories from the perspective of the researcher, as well as the participants.

Modernist Foundation of HI

Traditionally, HI grew out of humanistic theory, which is informed by modernist ontology (Bach, 2002; Eames, 2011; Etherington, 2004a; Loewenthal, 2003; Moustakas, 1990). Modernism emerges from the Enlightenment era, which is viewed as the genesis of our beliefs about the self (Gergen, 1999; Lyons, 1978). Its ideological construction is based on the notion that the individual is the centre of activity (Rose & Loewenthal, 2006). Motivated by an individualistic notion of self, Moustakas (1990) emphasized the true essences and meanings of human experience. He further argued that “the deepest currents of meaning and knowledge take place within the individual through one’s senses, perceptions, beliefs, and judgements”
There is relevance in Moustakas’s view that the acquisition of knowledge might be based on the fundamental supposition that one might know something through one’s own “basic frame of reference” (Combs, Richards, & Richards, 1976, p. 179). However, I support a relational view that acknowledges a postmodern social constructionist thinking. Critical to this research is my commitment to multiple realities and the acknowledgment of the stories presented by the participants (Djuraskovic, 2014; Lock & Strong, 2010).

My social constructionist orientation challenges me as a HI researcher to place emphasis on the “communal basis of knowledge” (Gergen, 1985, p. 272) as a way to explain and describe how individuals’ worldviews “constitute to forms of social action” (Gergen, 1985, p. 268). It is in this vein that I shift from a modernist world view to an postmodern social constructionist world view to inform the HI methodology chosen for this research because social constructionism allows for the “social interchange” (Gergen, 1985, p. 271) between the primary researcher and the participants; thus, it gives equal value to the stories of all parties involved in the research. The exploration of these stories signifies a uniquely constructed “meaning-making process of passionate engagement and self-discovery” (Dixon, 2014a, p. 5).

Critiques of the Modernist Paradigm

Although Moustakas (1990) situated HI within a humanism that embraces essentialist and individualistic assumptions about human nature and experience, its assumptions might be more reflective of the modernist zeitgeist in which it developed. Modernist HI tends to represent a useful rebellion against the procedural tradition in qualitative scholarship (Rennie, 2004a). In my opinion and the opinion of other critics (Etherington, 2004a, 2004c; Rose & Loewenthal, 2006), HI, as originally conceived, did not take the rebellion far enough. The problem with
maintaining HI in a modernist framework is that one may reduce the perspectives of participants ultimately by assimilating them to the experience of the researcher (Eames, 2011). In other words, the researcher tends to be interested in others’ stories to develop his or her own story, thereby creating a unified story of the self. With the emphasis of HI on the discovery of true human experiences, its modernist foundation embraces the assumption that researchers are central communicators of true essences and meanings (Loewenthal, 2003). In HI, situating researchers at the centre of the research (Moustakas, 1990) ultimately leaves participants “to convince the reader of the legitimacy of the researcher’s own experience” (Loewenthal, 2003, p. 372). This means that explicit attention tends to be given to researchers’ lived experiences of the phenomenon, which once explicated, are then confirmed or disconfirmed by the stories of the participants. These limitations of the modernist paradigm make it essential that HI be adapted into a postmodernist paradigm, thus allowing for the multiplicities of stories.

A Postmodernist Adaptation of HI

In support of Hiles’s (2008) idea to reinvent HI, I propose its adaptation within a postmodernist paradigm. I reject the idea of a single “truth” in support of multiple truths, meanings, understandings, and subjectivities (Gergen, 1985). In the context of multicultural counselling, postmodernism is about the plurality of knowledge (Jameson, 1992), about uncertainty, ambiguity, and complexity (Arthur & Collins, 2010a). These things have to be managed by practitioners working with diverse cultural groups. There is often a plurality of ways to understand what is occurring in multicultural contexts based on possible cultural differences that make multicultural counselling prone to ambiguity. There are benefits to adapting a postmodernist framework in multicultural counselling that addresses multiple discourses, as well as considers the dynamics of power (Burr, 2003; Gergen, 1985, 1997). Such
benefits are reflected in Freedman and Combs’s (1996) perspectives in a postmodern view of reality. The authors identified four key perspectives: (1) realities are socially constructed, (2) realities are constituted through language, (3) realities are organized and maintained through narrative, and (4) there are no essential truths (Freedman & Combs, 1996). These perspectives further support the usefulness of shifting HI to a postmodernist paradigm.

The adaptation of HI into a postmodernist stance challenges us, as researchers, to change our perspectives from the singular truths and knowledge, as well as the unitary approaches promoted by modernism (Etherington, 2004a). Further, adapting HI within a postmodernist framework invites researchers and counsellors to consider the diversity of truths and knowledge involved in multicultural counselling contexts (Ponterotto et al., 2010). This interplay of knowledge is often expressed through language, which is shared by others. Further commitments to postmodernist framework moves beyond positivist ideas, to explore the way that knowledge is socially constructed or reconstructed to make meaning of peoples’ lived experiences (Burr, 2003; White, 2007). The researcher is, therefore, interested in the situated forms of meaning-making of collaborative stories with the participants.

**Allowing HI to Consider Multiple Realities**

HI research acknowledges the assumptions of both personal and social dimensions of our own humanity (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010). In support of this stance, Moustakas (1990) argued that “the space between personal and social dimensions must be filled with uniqueness, with identity, with individual presence, while, at the same time, making a person to person connection and entering into joint life with others” (Moustakas, 1968, p. 5). Moustakas (1990) attempted to address the social dimensions of humanity by embracing the essentialist view that the researcher is developing a story about the essence of universally unique experiences.
However, this notion of essentialism fails to take into account the multiple realities of people’s stories constructed through their lived experiences (Etherington, 2004c); this is a social constructionist impulse (Freedman & Combs, 1996; Gergen, 2009; Taylor et al., 2007). These multiple perspectives are relevant to my research in honouring the diverse experiences of me and my participants.

Drawing on Etherington’s (2004a, 2004b, 2004c) ideas, the researcher-centred view of HI tends not to consider the larger dimensions, including religious diversity, power dynamics, cultural differences, and societal frameworks. These factors are relevant to my research on cultural identity reconstruction because they influenced how my participants and I used the Pentecostal faith to make meaning of our lived experiences and how we reconstructed meaning from these experiences. Therefore, to study a group of people to contribute to the multicultural counselling discourse, I argue for a modification of HI methodology that understands both individual, as well as collective perspectives.

Addressing Critiques of HI

The demanding process of HI makes it an inappropriate methodology for everyone to use. According to Hiles (2008), it is a difficult research process to set any clear boundaries to with respect to time and scope. There are many critical issues addressed in the literature regarding HI in research contexts. This section offers useful critiques of these concerns by discussing the trustworthiness of HI in terms of its rigour and validation as a qualitative research methodology. The discussion then examines the merits of HI.

Rigour in HI Research

A critique of HI is the issue of rigour (i.e., trustworthiness), which is given limited attention in the literature (Koch, 2006; Koch & Harrington, 1998). Rose and Loewenthal (2006)
argued that positioning researchers at the centre of HI research might raise critical issues around challenges and considerations that pertain to self-reflection, representation of researchers’ personal experiences, and accountability for rigour. Arguably, sole reliance on researchers’ good judgment is not sufficient to ensure rigour and trustworthiness of the research (Koch & Harrington, 1998; Sandelowski, 1986, 1993). It is recommended that researchers demonstrate trustworthiness in research via transparency regarding all aspects of the research process including their intentions, values, attitudes, and personal experiences (Alderson, 1998; Stiles, 1993). This form of transparency may be reflected in researchers’ participatory sharing with others and reflexivity, which are key elements in enhancing the accountability for rigour (Willis, 2007). Reflexivity is described as the ongoing self-critique and self-appraisal of the researcher during the research process (Koch & Harrington, 1998). I demonstrated reflexivity throughout this investigation by keeping an ongoing record of emerging self-awareness and reactions that were included in the data and analyzed (Morrow, 2005). Reflexivity enabled me to be aware of my own subjective processes, which proved to me relevant for the research findings (Rennie, 2004b).

Within the context of HI, the responsibility of establishing and maintaining rigour has been placed in the hands of researchers who are expected to systematically analyze their data, as well as do member checking (Alderson, 1998; Freeman, 2012). Increasing rigour in HI also requires researchers to engage in detailed illumination of their experiences. Rigour is further expanded by positioning the researchers’ interpretation of their lived experiences within larger social contexts where voices are equally privileged (Djuraskovic, 2014). Additionally, consideration is made for historical, social, political, and cultural forces that facilitate the research process (Koch, 2006; Koch & Harrington, 1998). Guba and Lincoln (1994) argued that
to become interpretatively rigorous, researchers must consider conceptualizing HI as a multi-layered contextual research method performed with people, which allows for the shared voice through multiple layers of interpretive collaboration.

**Validation in HI Research**

According to Moustakas (1990), the validation of HI methodology cannot be “determined by correlations and statistics” (p. 32). Rather, at the heart of this methodology is heuristic discernment, which is useful in this type of qualitative inquiry (Hiles, 2008). In the context of HI, discernment is a fundamental skill developed by researchers that validates the participatory process of reflection and discovery (Hiles, 2008). By using their discernment skills, researchers are able to identify missing elements from the data that will strengthen and verify themes and the synthesis of meanings of the research (Stevens, 2006).

Further, the subjective nature of HI that involves shifting the role of the researcher from an objectified observer to a subjective co-researcher (Rose & Loewenthal, 2006), allows for the validation of its findings through the researchers’ interpretive lens (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2009; Ikiugu et al., 2012). The researchers’ interpretations of the research process and findings become critical in determining the accuracy of derived meanings from the lived experiences. This is due to the researchers’ direct experience of the phenomenon being studied (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985; West, 2001). The researchers’ continuous engagement with the data adds to the relevance and accuracy of the research.

As earlier stated, member checking is also a useful process to ensure trustworthiness in HI where participants are invited to review all relevant research materials, and assess their accuracy and credibility (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1990; Sandelowski, 1993). By so doing, participants are able to verify any potential misrepresentations of their experiences, as well as
include additional information in their stories (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2009; Fehl, 2012; Reardon, 2013).

HI methodology acknowledges researchers’ subjectivity, and includes researchers’ experiences as an important and valid component of the research process (Siegel, 2012; West, 2001). However, the inherently subjective nature of HI could lead to researchers’ self-awareness. For instance, Djuraskovic and Arthur (2010) posited that researchers’ subjectivity could lead to biased selection of participants by selecting individuals who might confirm the researchers’ interpretations of the phenomenon. Some strategies used to reduce researchers’ bias in HI might include self-monitoring and consultation (Creswell, 2007, Vivar, 2007).

Merits of HI

An important strength of HI is that it provides a useful methodical way of exploring the lived experiences of the self and other individuals in various contexts (Hiles, 2008). It requires the highest degree of transparency and thoroughness in working with the heuristic process of others. The researcher’s deep connection with the phenomenon legitimates the findings (Rose & Loewenthal, 2006). Additionally, the relational dynamic of the researcher and participants provides diverse perspectives of the phenomenon, which adds value to the meaning-making experience. This meaning-making experience can add value to the counselling process. Identifying the contributions of HI in multicultural counselling practice can further knowledge in the area of research.

Contributions of HI to Multicultural Counselling

According to Morrow (2007), counselling psychologists have been in the forefront calling for expanded methodological diversity, in particular qualitative research methods, to adequately address multicultural agendas. In answer to this call for methodological
diversification and expansion (Ponterotto, 2005), HI methodology might be considered groundbreaking in the field of counselling psychology research because it allows for exploration and discovery of lived experiences (Sela-Smith, 1999, 2001, 2002). The relevance of HI to multicultural counselling and psychology is that it “derives knowledge and experience from the empirical world through dialogue with one’s self and others” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 173). In fact, Moustakas argued that HI methodology is useful for the therapy process because it explicitly makes the subjective experience of doing therapy accessible through self-reflection (Stevens, 2006).

In defense of this argument, engaging in self-reflection as a HI researcher has helped me become particularly attuned to the needs and interests of diverse clients in various counselling contexts. This self-reflective process challenges me to consider multiple levels of construction shaped by language from the lived experiences of potential clients that I interact with throughout my current training as a psychologist. In the context of multicultural counselling, self-reflection on the part of the counsellor connects to the domain of cultural self-awareness proposed by Arthur and Collins (2010b) in their model of culture-infused counselling. In this domain, counsellors are challenged to demonstrate active awareness of their own personal assumptions, values, and biases (Collins & Arthur, 2010b), which are important in exploring the depth and complexity of the human experience in HI research (Morrow, 2007).

In the framework of multicultural counselling, HI offers significant contributions as an exploratory approach to research that is concerned with the understanding of human experiences (Hiles, 2008; Patton, 1990). As previously mentioned, multicultural counselling addresses various dimensions of culture, including religion and gender (APA, 1993; Arthur & Collins, 2010b). Within culturally diverse contexts, utilizing HI methodology to study culturally diverse
phenomena might increase researchers’ awareness and understanding of particular meanings that
dividuals attach to their experiences, and might provide time and space where individual and
collective voices can be heard (Morrow, 2005, 2007). In multicultural settings, the engagement
of dialogue between the researcher and participants allows for deeper understanding and creation
of new meanings (Moustakas, 1990).

Moustakas (1990) asserted that “our most significant awarenesses are developed from our
own internal searches, and from attunement and empathic understandings of others” (p. 26). In
support of this stance, one can argue that multicultural counselling invites counsellors to use
empathy as a major heuristic tool in that counsellors may regard client empowerment as a
legitimate and central purpose of the therapeutic alliance (Birchard, 2006). The collaborative
nature of multicultural counselling encourages counsellors to join clients in a process of HI,
which allows clients to develop their own stories, and facilitates deeper understandings of their
lived experiences (Nzojibwami, 2009). Therefore, the argument can be made that “perhaps the
essence of multicultural counselling is respect for cultural influences while simultaneously
holding a sense of reverence for the personal process and development of the client”
(Nzojibwami, 2009, p. 87). This argument stands in line with a relational view of HI (Rose &
Loewenthal, 2006), which might consider understanding of the self in relation to others’
perspectives.

Within this research, I ensured openness to multiple perspectives by maintaining a
balance between the participants’ stories and my own story when exploring the meaning-making
of our experiences. A central component of multicultural counselling is respect for the
worldview of others. In the capacity for examining and accepting multiple realities as a
counsellor and researcher, I was required to examine my own self-awareness and develop an
understanding of my personal worldview (Arredondo et al., 1996; Arthur & Collins, 2010b), as well as the experiential life of the participants (Polkinghorne, 2005). My choice of HI reinforced my passion to share my story, as well as to honour the experiences of my participants.

**Finding My Passion in the Choice of HI**

The HI methodology was first introduced to me by my research supervisor, Dr. Nancy Arthur. She suggested that based on my personal connection to the research topic, HI might be best suited for exploring this phenomenon in question. I was referred to a few people who had used this methodology in their research and it was recommended that I connected with them for further insight. Instantly, I became intrigued about this approach. One of the key people that I connected with to learn more about this approach was Dr. Kevin Alderson; he had used this approach for his doctoral dissertation. In my first meeting with Dr. Alderson, I vividly recalled his use of the word “passion” in describing this methodology. Following my meeting with Dr. Alderson, I was truly convinced that this approach would be the best fit to guide my study.

In reflecting on my heuristic journey, the word passion is still etched in my memory from my first meeting with Dr. Alderson over two years ago. **Passion** is defined as “any powerful or compelling emotion or feeling” ("Passion," 2013). As a Jamaican Canadian immigrant woman of the Pentecostal faith, I feel passionate about sharing my story and using the lived experience of my faith to inform this research. The idea that HI “in its purest form, is a passionate and discerning personal involvement in problem solving, an effort to know the essence of some aspect of life through the internal pathways to the self” (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 39) deeply resonates with me. Underlying my passion was also the trepidation of immersing myself in this research to the extent of becoming “naked” to outsiders who might not be familiar with this faith. This trepidation was captured well in a recent discussion with a colleague about my
faith. He affirmed that in identifying himself as a Christian psychologist, it felt as though he was “coming out.” I strongly connected with his position. I admitted to him that in many professional and social circles, I kept my Pentecostal identity “on the down-low” due to fear of being misjudged, misunderstood, and/or mislabeled. For me, this silence creates tension between who I am (a Jamaican Canadian immigrant woman) and what I believe (the faith practices of Pentecostalism, including glossolalia). I view my faith as an integral dimension of my cultural identity. In particular, my faith provides me with the strength and resiliency needed to cope with adversities, including post-immigration stress.

By situating myself as a HI researcher, I premise my story, as well as those of my participants with the hope to better understand the experiences of JCIW who use the Pentecostal faith to reconstruct their cultural identities in a Canadian context. After considerable reflection, I do believe that using HI helped me foster a collaborative relationship with my participants. Additionally, I believe that continuous reflections on my faith practices deepened my understanding of the topic. Engaging in self-reflections enabled me to learn through the multiplicities of my participants’ experiences, as well as through our participatory sharing. With this proposed research, I hope to forge a space in psychology, as well as a multicultural counselling scholarship, to include some of the unique stories of JCIW of the Pentecostal faith. This target group, like other non-dominant faith groups (e.g., Muslims and Sikhs), appear to be pushed to the margins of dominant society (Bramadat & Seljak, 2009). As an HI researcher, I was challenged through this research to consider the complexities of a social, personal, and relational world that could be viewed from different perspectives.

Further, HI research follows a long and ancient tradition of self-inquiry that is in need of re-inventing (Hiles, 2008). HI significantly departs from mainstream research (Hiles, 2008)
because as earlier stated, the researcher is passionately involved in the study, not as an objectified observer, but as a subjective participant to the process (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Rose & Loewenthal, 2006; Snyder, 2012). In many respects, HI resembles approaches such as auto-ethnography as well as autobiography. The former approach addresses the cultural context of experiences, while the latter highlights the life story (Hiles, 2008). Indeed, while both approaches above would offer unique perspectives on this research in terms of actual “autobiographical connections” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 14), the strength of HI lies in its transformative effect to provide the researcher with a systematic and transparent methodology for self-inquiry (Hiles, 2008).

Additionally, the HI paradigm is an adaptation of descriptive phenomenological inquiry that brings to the fore the personal experience and insights of the researcher (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2004; Taylor, 2010). In their article, *Heuristic Inquiry the Internal Search to Know*, Douglass and Moustakas (1985) drew four important distinctions between HI and phenomenology. However, a key difference between both approaches is that phenomenological research encourages the researcher’s detachment from the phenomenon through the concept of bracketing, while HI emphasizes the researcher’s connectedness to the phenomenon. In this case, I was not interested in the mere essence of the experience, but rather the diverse experiences of JCIW who used their Pentecostal faith to reconstruct their cultural identities.

**Relevance to Study**

HI provides a non-traditional, yet creative methodological way, of understanding unique human experiences (Moustakas, 1990), like the phenomenon being investigated here. The subjective nature of HI adds to its relevance for my research towards which I feel a deep
connectedness and passion. In answering the question, “What is the experience of JCIW who use the Pentecostal faith to reconstruct their cultural identities in a Canadian context?”, I made myself present throughout the heuristic process. In embracing a “participatory position” (Hiles, 2008, p. 389), the researcher is challenged to understand the phenomenon with increased depth, as well as growing self-awareness and self-knowledge (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985). Such understanding enables the researcher to engage, along with others, in an exploratory journey of self. In the process of reconstructing my cultural identity in collaboration with my participants, I felt no desire to impose my perspective on them. Rather, I remained committed to the importance of recognizing and validating my participants’ stories based on their own cultural and contextual worldviews. Nonetheless, our journeys did not proceed in isolation; I was able to better understand and portray the complexity and richness that characterized my own lived experience of this phenomenon by listening to the participants’ stories.

Essentially, HI results in self-transformation and the creation of a story that generates potential for transformation in others and in society (Sela-Smith, 2002). In its modernist tradition, HI involves researchers’ use of their own experiences as a framework for interpreting the experiences of others (Moustakas, 1990). However, this view is further expanded and adapted in a postmodernist paradigm, which allows the researcher to respect the multiplicity of participants’ stories and to give equal emphasis to the lived experience of others. In the context of multicultural counselling, recognition is given to the respect of all dimensions of one’s cultural identity, including religion, spirituality, and gender role. The use of HI to inform this research provides a unique opportunity to familiarize readers with the use of a methodology that is not often utilized in doctoral study, and is sparse in peer-reviewed journals (Forinash, 2012;
Dixon, 2014a). I will now address the procedures of data collection and data analysis in relation to this study.

**Procedures**

**Population Selection**

Two churches in Calgary were selected based on their Pentecostal orientation. I visited both churches to establish a rapport with the church community as well as the pastors, both of whom were females. Both pastors were provided with information about my study, as well as a recruitment notice (Appendix C) to pass along to interested members. For the purpose of confidentiality I will not identify the specific churches. During my visits, I was given permission from one pastor to speak with the congregation about my study. However, due to time restraints I was unable to speak with the other congregation. Both churches were visited on separate occasions. My study was received by both pastors who agreed to pass along the information to interested members who were encouraged to contact me via email and/or phone as indicated in the notice. A snowball technique was also used as potential participants were free to pass along the information to other interested members who met the criteria.

The response to the notice was encouraging. I had 15 participants who were interested. I randomly selected six from Calgary with the intent to portray diversity in age, education, length of time in Canada, and church membership duration. The principle of saturation of the themes determined the total number of participants that I interviewed. All the participants identified as Jamaican descent and their ages ranged from 27 to 53. In Table 1, I present the participants’ demographics.
Table 1

Participants’ Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and/or Pseudonyms</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Year(s) Living in Canada</th>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Years of Membership in the Pentecostal Church</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carol</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrior Princess</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>College</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kay</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>College</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faye</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosemarie</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>College</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above demographic information was collected at the time of the interview. In order for participants to participate in the study, they had to be a minimum of 18 years old. The rationale behind this decision was to ensure a certain level of maturity of each participant in terms of their ability to process and make meaning of their Pentecostal faith in a Canadian post-immigration context. All participants had a choice to use a pseudonym and were asked to provide one at the beginning of the interview. They were informed that to ensure confidentiality all the participants would be referred to by their chosen pseudonyms during the write up process of the study.

The Researcher’s Role

The self-exploratory approach and passionate nature of HI research (Dixon, 2014a) require me to be deeply involved in the interview process. Through self-search and self-reflection, I fully immersed myself into the experience of my Pentecostal faith to help make meaning of my cultural identity reconstruction as a Jamaican Canadian immigrant woman. Through appropriate self-disclosure I was able to increase my engagement with the participants
by developing a dialogue that aimed toward “expression, elucidation, and disclosure of the experience being investigated” (Moustakas, 2001, p. 268). In support of the above stance, Jourard (1968, 1971) pointed out that self-disclosure is a relevant aspect of the interview process. During this heuristic journey of discovery, I was engaged in reflexive journaling to understand my own experiences, the experiences of participants, overall data, and to give me the ability to enter into self-dialogue as a vehicle for self-discovery (Etherington, 2001, 2004a).

**Data Collection**

Data was collected using an interview script based on a semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix D). By utilizing this protocol, the interviews took an informal, conversational approach that created space for participants to share their stories in a natural dialogue. This dialogue is “consistent with the rhythm and flow of heuristic exploration and the search for meaning” (Moustakas, 1990, p.47). Through the free flow of conversation I was able to demonstrate authenticity in my approach by asking probing questions to help participants make meaning of their experiences, thus eliciting a richer dialogue from participants. This interview format allowed for the exploration of subjective meanings ascribed to concepts or events (Gray, 2009). Each interview lasted for approximately 90 minutes long and was audio recorded based on the participants’ permission. All interviews were transcribed verbatim by a transcriber who was required to sign a confidentiality agreement (Appendix E). The transcribed interviews and notes taken during the interview process provided relevant narratives for data analysis.

**Data Analysis**

The flexibility of the heuristic inquiry approach allows for its adaptation within a postmodern social constructionist framework (Moustakas, 1990; Djuraskovi, 2014; Nzojibwami,
Such an adaptation allows for the data analysis to be a joint reflection of the participants’ stories as well as my own. The passionate nature of my role as the primary researcher carried through from being interviewed by an outsider of the Pentecostal faith to my engagement with the participants in an informal conversational format. My story and those of the participants’ were analyzed collectively to illuminate clustering and merging patterns (Nzojibwami, 2009; Snyder, 2012). A collective analysis of the data helped me to make meaning of our lived experiences as I attempted to understand similarities in terms of how we reconciled dimensions of our fragmented cultural identities post-immigration.

Therefore, following the interviews I analyzed participants’ transcripts as well as my own. I familiarized myself with the data by reading the transcripts, reviewing notes made during the interviews, and listening to the recordings several times (Djuraskovi & Arthur, 2010; Snyder, 2012). Next, a thematic analysis of the transcripts occurred, wherein significant themes and sub-themes were coded using a structured coding process (Freeman, 2012; Nzojibwami, 2009). Upon completing the coding, a master list of similar themes and sub-themes were created, and clustered in their respective categories to reflect the multiplicity of participants’ stories (Moustakas, 1990). Selection of quotes was identified in order to represent unique aspects of the participants’ stories. Additionally, personal insights, reflections, and notes taken during the interviews were included in the data analysis process. A summary of the preliminary findings were verified by participants in order to authenticate the data. All the participants responded within one week and indicated that the results appropriately captured and reflected their experiences.

Finally, I devised a creative synthesis from the data, based on the collective experiences of the participants as well as myself. This creative process allowed me to collaborate with the
participants in choosing an artistic form—poetry—that captured our experiences. Further, this synthesis allowed me to make meaning of the multiplicity of our experiences in a collective manner.

**Ethical Considerations**

Ethical approval was obtained for this proposed project from the University of Calgary’s Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board. Ethical concerns included procedures for gathering data and accurately representing the views of participants, and disseminating the findings of the study (Smith, 2003). At the beginning of the interview, the signed consent forms were collected and reviewed (Appendix F). Participants were then invited to choose a pseudonym to ensure their anonymity and confidentiality throughout the research process. I addressed any concerns of my participants and informed them of their right to voluntarily participate or withdraw from the study at any time. In the course of the study, collected data from the participants will be stored in a secure filing cabinet and on password protected electronic files. Data will be destroyed three years after the study is completed. There were no predicted risks for this proposed project. If the participants had experienced any form of distress following the interview process, they would have been provided with the names and contact information for public counselling agencies in Calgary.

**Summary**

Given that religion and spirituality may be considered critical dimensions of the Jamaican culture (Austin-Broos, 1997), it is a primary assumption of this proposed project that the Pentecostal faith plays a role in the process of cultural identity reconstruction for this group. In this chapter, I used a HI methodology (Moustakas, 1990) to engage in the process of self-analysis, which is useful in understanding my own and my participants’ experiences of cultural
identity reconstruction as Jamaican Canadian immigrant women of the Pentecostal faith. From this perspective, I addressed the historical context of HI as well as explicated the key concepts of HI research. By shifting HI from a modernist framework and repositioning it within a postmodernism framework, I was able to consider multiple realities instead of focusing on a singular truth. I also highlighted the research design, and addressed the study’s ethical consideration. Exploring my story as well as my participants’ stories and presenting our unique experiences could enhance multicultural competencies in counselling psychology and promote the psychosocial well-being of this non-dominant faith group.
CHAPTER 4 – RESULTS

It is important to note that the results generated from the data analysis were a collective reflection of the participants’ experiences as well as my own. By honouring the narratives of the participants, their voices were equally privileged alongside my own in order to discover and understand the meaning of their lived experiences in the current research context. I felt grateful and humbled to share the lived experiences of the six participants who gave accounts of how they reconstructed their cultural identities post-immigration using the Pentecostal faith. By listening to their stories, I gained deep insights, which also solidified my meaning-making process of cultural identity reconstruction as a Pentecostal woman. It was refreshing for me to know that I was not alone on this journey of spiritual discovery. The relevance that I placed in my faith to reconstruct my cultural identity was validated by the participants, which I found empowering and worth sharing.

I believe that to stay committed to the social constructionist framework that guides this study and that emphasizes multiple realities, it was important to immerse myself in this study by having someone not affiliated with the research interview me so that I can answer the same questions as my participants; the flexibility of the heuristic inquiry process allows for this creativity (Moustakas, 1990). Therefore, I deviate from the modernized heuristic inquiry process of creating individual composites, and instead I have chosen to infuse my own experiences into this study alongside those of the participants. I believe that this integrative approach truly reflects the multiplicity of stories and contributes a “richness and depth to the data” (Nzojibwami, 2009).

Therefore, I begin this chapter by highlighting the key findings that were abstracted from the thematic analysis, which consisted of four categories, ten themes, and fourteen subthemes. It
should be noted that the order in which the results are reported does not reflect any ordinal value and is not chronological. Please refer to Table 2 for a summary of these results.

Table 2: Summary of Results

I. Lived Experiences of the Pentecostal faith
   1. Lifestyle changes
      a. Conversion
      b. A built-in community
      c. Story sharing
   2. Outsiders’ Perceptions of the Pentecostal Faith
      a. Lack of education

II. Gender Role Expectations
   1. Gender Role Pre-Immigration
      a. Traditional biblical interpretations
   2. Gender Role Post-Immigration
      a. Reconstructing biblical interpretations

III. Defining Cultural Identity
   1. Pride in Jamaican Heritage
   2. Factors Affecting Cultural Identity Reconstruction
      a. Culture shock
      b. Acculturation difficulties
   3. Spiritual grounding

IV. Seeking Counselling and Taking Action
   1. Resistance to Counselling
      a. Cultural stigma and taboo
      b. Valuing privacy
   2. Cultural Shift Towards Counselling
      a. Spiritually-wise counselling
      b. Spiritual sensitivity
   3. Taking Action
      a. Advocacy
b. Education

This will be followed by a brief introduction of each category, after which I will provide descriptions of the themes and subthemes. The four categories represent the four major sections into which this chapter is divided and include: (a) lived experiences of the Pentecostal faith, (b) gender role expectations, (c) defining cultural identity, and (d) seeking counselling and taking action. Throughout the descriptions, I will incorporate Scriptures, quotes, and commentaries from my own lived experiences as well as the multiple stories shared by the participants to fully capture the passion and richness of our lived experiences. I believe that by infusing such data, it will offer a richer understanding of the phenomenon (Gour, 2011). Lastly, this chapter concludes with a brief summary of my analysis and synthesis of the data derived from working through the heuristic inquiry process.

**Lived Experiences of the Pentecostal Faith**

In this section, I address how my participants and I make meaning of our lived experiences of the Pentecostal faith. Throughout the personal and situational contexts of our stories, it became evident that our faith was at the core of our lived experiences within pre-immigration (i.e., Jamaica) and post-immigration cultural settings (i.e., Canada). By sharing our multiple stories about our lived experiences, I realized that the common thread that brought meaning to our narratives was faith. To display the importance of our faith in all dimensions of our human existence, I draw from the Scriptures to propose that our faith serves as our “daily bread” for living (Matthew 6:11). It is through our faith in God that we “live, breathe, and have our spiritual beings” (Act 17: 28). Our faith gives us a sense of purpose; it signifies the lens through which we view life’s meaning and holistic living as members of a characterized “non-dominant” group (Arthur & Collins, 2010a).
As I immersed myself in the data and reflected on our collective experiences of the Pentecostal faith, I became aware that the participants’ accounts demonstrated that their lived experiences had been changed and influenced in profound ways by the Pentecostal faith. In other words, the Pentecostal faith remains at the core in the fabric of their everyday lives, including: education, social networks, church, family, and work. This observation was solidified through the overarching theme (i.e., lifestyle change) as well as subthemes (i.e., conversion, a built-in community, and story sharing) that emerged from participants’ stories. Providing rich accounts and impressions of our lived experiences of the Pentecostal faith, I will now address the proceeding theme and subthemes accordingly.

Lifestyle Changes

Expanding on the above discussion of the ways that faith underlies the centrality of the participants’ lived experiences, it is understandable that lifestyle changes would be identified as an important theme for participants. Within the context of this study, lifestyle change represents a process of spiritual transformation that occurs when one becomes a Christian within the Pentecostal faith and makes the personal decision to accept Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Saviour. To emphasize this theme, I draw from the Scripture that states: “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he [she] is a new creature; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17). For participants, there was a sense of rebirth and reconstruction of their identities, despite past mistakes and shortcomings. Personally, my lifestyle changes were influenced by biblical principles and were demonstrated in some of the following ways: honouring my parents, loving people who might be unlovable in their attitudes and behaviours, increased focused on my studies, increased respect for school authorities as well
as fervency and commitment to reading the Bible and memorizing Scriptures; the Bible served as a roadmap for these personal lifestyle changes.

The theme lifestyle changes was shared by one of the participants, Faye, who explained that “I had to go to church, there was no exception, and there was no way around it. Every Sunday and Wednesday night we went to prayer meetings. Sunday nights we go back for Bible study at the church.” Likewise, Rosemarie revealed, “I’m a Christian, I should be more Christ like. So, in terms of being a Christian there are certain things you don’t do or you don’t practice. You do the right thing . . . this is what the Bible says.” In essence, a lifestyle change occurred in the lives of the participants, whose faith influenced their lived experiences on many levels, including the subthemes of conversion, a built-in church community, as well as story sharing.

Conversion. It is important to note that all of the participants’ conversion occurred pre-immigration, which played an integral role in how they reconstructed their cultural identity post-immigration. All of the participants related stories about their conversions into the Pentecostal faith, which aligned with their lifestyle changes. The story of my conversion started when I was about 11 years old and I made the personal decision to get saved by accepting Christ as my personal Lord and Saviour; I got baptized at 12 years old. I saw being saved and getting baptized as acts of true renewedness and surrender to Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. To further illuminate my position, I reference the Scripture that declares, “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing [emphasis added] of your mind, that ye may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2). I believe this form of renewedness is God-given and available to anyone who believes. Within the Pentecostal faith, conversion is a personal decision that is based on free will and not coercion.
Similar to my story, the conversion process was communicated by the other participants including Faye, who explained her conversion in this way:

After the age of 14, you know my grandmother suddenly said I have to give my life to God, you know she explained everything to me. The reason why I should surrender was because *I’m responsible for my own sins* [emphasis added] and if anything happened to me *I have to give an account for my life* [emphasis added], and that’s where my conversion started from. I got baptized when I was 16 years old.

It is evident in Faye’s story that her conversion exemplified a state of personal surrender to God. Faye’s experience, although personal and subjective, was reflected in the narratives of the other participants such as Andrea, who explained:

My father was Baptist and my mother was a Pentecostal . . . at age 16, I just made a personal decision [emphasis added]. I was graduating high school that year and just made a decision at that time that I wanted to be a Christian and I had the option of either going to Baptist with my dad or going to Pentecostal with my mother. I preferred the Pentecostal church because there were lots of young people there.

Joining with Andrea, Carol stated, “I was in my teens when I got saved [emphasis added] . . . I became a Christian. I grew up in the Christian family so I attended church regularly. I got filled with the Holy Spirit and as the Lord says, I surrendered and made a personal decision [emphasis added] to get saved. Warrior Princess, another pious participant, boldly declared her conversion process:

I was born into a Christian family but I developed a deeper relationship in the Pentecostal faith. I wanted to have a more personal relationship [emphasis added] with God and I choose to do that in the Pentecostal faith. I wanted to have my own experience with God.
All of the above participants commented on their faith being a personal experience that is meaningful to them and their relationship with God. Listening to their heart felt testimonies, it became evident that God exists at the core of their conversions, for which they made no apology. I believe that Kay’s perspective of her conversion process sums it up succinctly: “I was a teenager when I went to a crusade and made the personal decision to get saved [emphasis added]. For me, being saved is a way of life in everything that I do.” I stand in agreement with Kay’s perspective that conversion within the Pentecostal faith is simply “a way of life” in everything one does as a Pentecostal believer. This way of life can be described as a transformational process that transcends a person’s finite human understanding. The participants also recognized that the Pentecostal faith was strengthened when they were connected to a built-in community of believers who could support their spiritual growth. Below, I reflect on the subtheme of a built-in community that emerged from the data.

**A built-in community.** This subtheme refers to the centrality of the church in the lives of participants. In this structural environment, there is an engagement in regular fellowships with other believers. For participants, the physical assembly of themselves together in an established church setting signifies a built-in community. The church serves as a spiritual family for believers to be encouraged, strengthened, and empowered to reach full spiritual maturity in faith. This built-in community of the church is referenced in the Scripture where it says: “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another” (Hebrews 10:25). My increased church attendance post-immigration helped me to adjust better into the Canadian culture through social engagements with other youth and church members. Within the church, I felt a sense of belonging to a built-in community that provided me with a spiritual home away from home.
Echoing my feelings, one participant (Carol) indicated, “there is another group of us, we call us the Pentecostals, when we go to the place of gathering, church, we are engaged in it.” Similarly, Andrea mentioned, “I’ve also been more involved in church work here than I was in Jamaica. So, outside of the church it would have taken me much longer to settle down.” Another participant (Rosemarie) said, “going to church has provided me with the spiritual support that I need to cope with life in another culture after leaving Jamaica. I’m actually volunteering now at the church.” Participants gave rich accounts of how the church provided them with a sense of a built-in community, which brought cultural changes in various realms of their post-immigration lives. For many of the participants, these cultural changes were reconstructed through story sharing.

**Story sharing.** In addition to developing a new sense of a built-in community within the church, the participants also came to value the need for story sharing. They viewed story sharing as a key aspect of their spiritual growth as they are able to “[b]ear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2). The participants’ abilities to share stories of their lived experiences and listen to the stories of other church members created opportunities for them to normalize their experiences and share in each other’s pain, struggles, and trials. On a deeper spiritual and religious level, these stories became their faith stories of self-acceptance and self-affirmation amidst post-immigration stressors of racism, discrimination, and gender stereotypes. Sharing my story of cultural identity reconstruction with other believers was a powerful and pervasive communication tool for me. Dialoguing with other like-minded believers helped me to establish trust by sharing my lived experiences of complex cultural adjustment issues. I was able to clarify value conflicts in terms of how I interpreted my faith, which allowed me to reconstruct new meaning of socio-cultural realities as an immigrant.
My experience of story sharing was acknowledged by other participants on many levels. For example, Kay confirms that her story sharing provides encouragement for other believers. In her comments she indicates that, “[p]eople are always sharing other experiences of how God has come through for them. So that even confirms your faith even more.” Likewise, joining with Kay’s experience, Faye reported:

    We [Pentecostal believers] believe in sharing, we believe in telling people about Christ, we believe in you know communicating with each other in the church community . . . getting involved in sharing your experience because you know sometimes its good when you can share your spiritual experiences.

I would like to add to Faye’s perspective that there is a spiritual aspect to story sharing amongst Pentecostal believers. Spiritually, participants’ abilities to share their stories help to solidify their faith, even outside the realm of the church. Embracing this position, Andrea noted:

    I really wish that the government would realize the part the church plays and give us that kind of support because we are more influential than any institution that they can establish. They don’t understand the role of the church in the community.

Adopting a similar attitude, Warrior Princess commented that, “it is a pleasure and a blessing indeed to be able to share my faith and my experience in the Canadian society . . . sharing my story is a great opportunity.”

    As highlighted in the above participants’ accounts on story sharing, the process of meaning-making that they share through the Pentecostal faith helps them to reconstruct a better sense of their lived experiences and move beyond the cultural constraints imposed on them by post-immigration stressors. Sharing my story of cultural identity reconstruction with not only believers but outsiders of the Pentecostal faith creates a space for me to address any form of
misunderstandings and misperceptions around the Pentecostal faith practices. For me, these misperceptions are often discussed through an educational platform.

**Outiders’ Perceptions of the Pentecostal Faith**

I find this theme meaningful because prior to my conversion into the Pentecostal faith, I was confused by many of its expressive and charismatic practices. In fact, I had limited understanding of these faith practices, particularly speaking in tongues (also referred to as glossolalia). My grappling with the concept of speaking in tongues was reconciled through the Scripture that declares, “For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue [heavenly language] speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries” (1 Corinthians 14:2). It is not surprising that many people outside the Pentecostal faith might harbour misunderstandings like those I had prior to my conversion. I believe that outsiders’ misperceptions of the faith might be influenced by media coverage of this faith group, outsiders’ interactions with fundamentalists that are affiliated with the faith, as well as material written and published in various scholarships by researchers that might not be reflective of the faith as a whole diverse body of believers.

By immersing myself in this study and interviewing other participants, I no longer feel the need to defend what I believe to outsiders of the faith. My faith represents an intimate aspect of my cultural identity. Despite wrestling with traditional religious beliefs and critically questioning radical biblical interpretation of Scriptures, since starting my doctoral studies, I have developed into a critically thinking scholar who is learning to reconstruct new meanings of my cultural identity in relationship with my faith as a woman of Pentecostal beliefs. As I continue to grow as a scholar, I have generated new meanings and experiences about who I am and what my faith represents to me through my dialogue with others across various scopes of my learning.
Though challenged, I have grown to accept and value my faith in a more liberal and transformative way.

As I reflect on this journey of self-discovery and my own internal searches and attunement to understand how I reconstruct my cultural identity through the Pentecostal faith, I find encouragement in the Scripture that states, “For I am not ashamed [emphasis added] of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power [emphasis added] of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth” (Romans 1:16). The words ashamed and power resonate with me because I am no longer ashamed of who I am as a Pentecostal believer and what my faith signifies in my life. In fact, I do feel empowered through my faith to educate outsiders in a respectful way, should they have questions about the Pentecostal faith practices. I argue that there is no meaningful way to foster open dialogue, in order to challenge and eliminate these misperceptions than through education that is built on trust and respect.

**Lack of education.** Many of the women expressed similar views that a majority of people outside the faith harbour certain misperceptions about the Pentecostal faith practices. For instance, they should be aware that, “worshipping is a bit different in the Pentecostal church, where you clap and you speak in tongues. I think it’s also different from other faiths like Catholics and Baptists” (Rosemarie). Some outsiders might have limited understanding about the personal engagement and charismatic form of expressiveness that is affiliated with the Pentecostal faith. Carol illustrates this form of expressive engagement by saying:

Being a Pentecostal to me, it gives me an opportunity for a vibrant engaging in what is going on and it includes you know the bodily expression of joy and happiness and that is attracting . . . when you’re engaged in it [worship] you realize that, to me, I get more. I learn, I can easily express and interpret what I learned, not just by speaking. I realize that
I can express my understanding by clapping. I can express my understanding by what is
given by the speaker, by shouting and worshipping God.

In hearing the participants’ stories, I was empathetic to their ecstatic experiences (e.g.,
singing, dancing, clapping, speaking in tongues, and crying), which are not foreign to me. I am
mindful that should one of my non-Christian friends or colleagues see me in a church setting,
that person might question my worship practices, and rightfully so, because such a person might
not have been exposed to these expressive and charismatic practices within a western cultural
context. Supporting Carol’s position of engagement and expression in worship practices, another
participant (Warrior Princess) states:

I can express myself more in terms of the way in which we pray. We express ourselves
differently, instead of being . . . more vocal. It’s a different way of worship . . . in
comparison to some other denominations within the Christian community. You are able
to sing, you are able to dance and to express yourself freely, and you know that just ties
into my personality.

The charismatic experiences shared by the above participants appeared to be connected to their
vibrant and expressive cultural identities as Jamaicans. These participants were confident in
sharing their stories despite the likely systemic misunderstandings that surround the Pentecostal
faith practices within the dominant Canadian culture.

A key practice within the Pentecostal faith that is commonly misunderstood by a majority
of outsiders is speaking in tongues. The participants felt comfortable sharing their perspectives
on this personal and intimate phenomenon. With regards to speaking in tongues, Warrior
Princess openly described her world view of this unique phenomenon:
It’s a very different and unique gift that you can’t really imitate; it has to be given to you by God in a deep or spiritual search. When I actually experienced it then I realized this is actually real and it cannot be forced, it just comes naturally. It’s not something I can explain. It’s more of a spiritual language and you have to experience it to know it. It’s a personal encounter with God.

Warrior Princess’s position reflects the aforementioned Scripture (1 Corinthians 14:2) that depicts the mysterious nature of this spiritual encounter with God through the Holy Spirit. I argue that some outsiders’ lack of education around this spiritual encounter can likely result in their misperceptions of Pentecostal believers’ way of worship. For participants, their worship practices reflect their spiritual transformative nature once they have made the personal decision to accept Christ. In the following excerpt, Kay sheds light on her lived experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit:

Pentecostal is not just being saved. Yes, I accept Christ, but I have a deep intimate relationship with God, so I seek the Holy Spirit. I become filled with the Holy Spirit . . . the Holy Spirit becomes manifested in my life. It’s just a closer walk I believe that Pentecostalism gives. People would see you come to church and you’re running around and you’re speaking in tongues and ask, “What is that about?” It’s just the way that it’s done for Pentecostals. It was like on the day of Pentecost in Acts that was described so the Holy Spirit came down. They [people] spoke in different tongues and the Holy Spirit just came and manifested and it kind of gives you discernment in preparing you for what may come.

Undoubtedly, there are many misperceptions associated with the Pentecostal faith by outsiders, which are possibly the results of their lack of education around believers’ faith
practices and stylistic form of charismatic worship. Greater efforts are required to dispel these misperceptions through increased education, which expands beyond charismatic forms of worship and influences gender roles within the Pentecostal faith.

**Gender Role Expectations**

I consider gender roles within the Pentecostal faith to be a sensitive topic to discuss both with believers and nonbelievers. This is because there are many interpretations of scriptural verses that pertain to both genders that tend to be misconstrued. I approach this category from a social constructionist perspective; I consider gender roles to be influenced by cultural expectations, which determine how males and females construct a sense of self within cultural contexts. As a woman of the Pentecostal faith who holds a social constructionist perspective, I am guided by the biblical principles of my faith but I also speak with conviction that there are many interpretations and nuances in the Bible regarding gender roles.

Therefore, my interpretation of gender roles as they pertain to biblical principles has been reconstructed based on my own lived experiences within situational and cultural contexts. Likewise, despite the restrictive gender roles described by many of the participants pre-immigration, their stories reveal reconstructions of gender roles post-immigration. Within this category, the two generated themes are gender role pre-immigration and gender role post-immigration, while the two subthemes include traditional biblical interpretations and reconstructing biblical interpretations. The themes and subthemes that emerged from the participants’ stories demonstrate that there are different ways in which people make meaning and interact across history, space, and time due to their own lived experiences based on faith practices.
Gender Role Pre-Immigration

On reflection of my lived experiences pre-immigration, my prescribed gender role was significantly influenced by my former pastor’s traditional and conservative interpretation of the Bible instead of depending on my own meaning-making process. Therefore, certain Scriptures might have been taken out of context based on the pastor’s cultural and subjective views at that time. For example, I was unequivocally forbidden to wear pants, makeup, and jewelry, and I was expected to wear a hat to church to cover my head. The pastor’s traditional world view and conservative thinking was constructed based on a literal interpretation of the Scriptures, including the biblical verse: “The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God” (Deuteronomy 22:5). If I wore pants, I was made to feel guilty because I committed a sinful act and was not living up to the biblical values of the Pentecostal faith. Pre-immigration, my gender role expectations were influenced by a traditional biblical interpretation of the Scriptures that were communicated to the members by male leaders who were considered the expert and authority figures within the church as well as the larger patriarchal Jamaican culture.

Traditional biblical interpretations. Many of the participants were in agreement that pre-immigration, the women had specific roles within the church that they had to adhere to because of their gender role expectations as Pentecostal women. More so, these gender role expectations were restricted for Pentecostal women. For example, the pre-immigration experience of gender role restrictions within the church was reflected by Faye, who stated:

The next thing that is part of the culture is that back home [Jamaica] we can’t wear pants to go to church and I had to keep my head covered. For example, my grandmother
always let me to cover my hair when I’m going to church. Also, back home I would normally wear a hat to church.

Although Faye’s attitude towards gender role could be viewed as more passive in terms of her acceptance of certain traditional views relating to women and their attire, one participant was willing to challenge such assumed traditional and patriarchal views. Challenging the traditional and conservative interpretation of certain Scriptures that address gender roles, Warrior Princess provides her perspective below, by stating:

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

I observed through the participants’ narrative that the perception of women’s dress code seemed to have changed after they migrated from the Caribbean to Canada. Therefore, I would argue that there is a part of this dress code change that has to do with changing times and the social environment of Canada being more accepting. As some participants transitioned across history, time, and space, their views might be reconstructed based on new cultural experiences as well as acculturation pressures to adapt to a more liberal way of thinking, both inside and outside of the church environment. For example, I felt the need to reconstruct my pre-immigration cultural identity in terms of my dress code in order to fit in at school and at church. Changing my dress code helped me to assimilate within the Canadian culture. Over time I felt less guilty
about wearing pants, makeup, and jewellery because I was no longer dependent on the pastor’s interpretation of the Scriptures to inform my faith as well as my gender role. Situated within a new cultural context provided space and time for me to reconstruct a more liberated and non-judgemental cultural identity without negating the biblical principles of my faith.

Expanding on Warrior Princess’s perspective, I feel that another aspect of gender role that is often prominent in the Pentecostal faith based on a traditional way of interpreting the Bible is the leadership of women. Pre-immigration, it was common practice based on my lived experience that women were restricted to certain positions in the church such as teaching Sunday School, leading worship services, secretarial duties, and taking care of the basic maintenance of the church, such as cleaning. For women, leadership positions such as pastors, evangelists, and bishops were not supported because it went against biblical teachings based on some male leaders’ conservative interpretation of the verse, “But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence” (1 Timothy 2:12). Regarding distinctive gender roles in leadership pre-immigration, Faye explained:

I think growing up in Jamaica there were more male figures such as pastors and evangelists, while the ladies would more be like choir leaders. I don’t think there should be any form of gender role barrier. I think whatever a male can do in the Pentecostal church such as a pastor and an evangelist, a female can also do.

Male dominance within Pentecostal churches in Jamaica is arguably normalized within the culture. This means that women normally would not question or challenge men’s authority. They would likely be reprimanded for usurping authority over the man, which many male leaders in the church interpret as a biblical order. Making references to the Scriptures (e.g., 1 Timothy 2:12), it is the understanding of the woman not to teach or exercise any form of
authority over the man but to remain silent both inside and outside of the church context. I would argue that the interpretation of the above Scripture verse based on the past socio-cultural context in which it was written has led to grave misunderstandings against women and their expected gender roles within the church.

Additionally, I believe that women are often made to feel inadequate and less than by some religious leaders. These leaders seem to lack critical interpretive skills around the socio-cultural contexts in which these Scriptures were written, and the underlying purpose of their messages to the targeted historical audience for which they were intended. This is not to say that the Scriptures are not relevant today but one should be mindful of their literal interpretations and transference of meanings that can be offensive towards women. I believe that taking Scriptures out of their intended biblical context can reinforce gender role stereotypes as well as be detrimental to women’s advancement and progress in a modernized and diversified society such as Canada.

Therefore, it was pleasing for me to hear that some of the participants were culturally aware of the gender gaps that existed in some of the Pentecostal churches in Jamaica. For example, similar to Faye’s perspective earlier mentioned, Warrior Princess explained her view of male dominance while living in Jamaica:

Prior to migrating to Canada, now in Jamaica you do have female pastors but the males were more dominant, so you see more male pastors than you do females. I would say there was some hierarchy there. The percentage was much higher in terms of male versus female . . . so I think there were gender differences.

Further, Carol provided an historical perspective on the church in terms of gender role expectations: “So the church of the old and even the society of old, women were subservient.
Some of them were subjected and some of them just took on this lower state position because they feel like, ‘I’m a woman, this is what I should do.’ The society they lived in men were their heads.” I stand in agreement with Carol’s above perspective of the subservience of women in the past, both in society as well as in the church; however, I have also noticed a shift in biblical thinking and interpretation of the Scriptures post-immigration. The shift was recognized in the stories of many of the participants. Further, I would argue that the growing increase of women leaders highlighted in the media in various capacities including music artists, pastors, teachers, evangelists, and independent business owners, have helped to create this cultural shift within the Pentecostal faith. I can foresee this cultural shift continuing to widen with increased education and a greater understanding of the Bible and its application of knowledge across diverse cultural contexts such as Jamaica.

**Gender Role Post-Immigration**

This theme was highlighted by the participants who reported noticing cultural shifts over time in the overall traditional biblical interpretation of Scriptures, which have created growing gender changes in church contexts. These changes were primarily reflected post-immigration for the participants, including myself. From my perspective, growing up in Canada has helped me to challenge my past conservative world view around gender role expectations and has allowed me to reconstruct a more liberal world view, which embraces gender equality. My current world view is influenced by a postmodernist interpretation of the Word of God. This means that in my meaning-making process of gender role expectations post-immigration, I have come to believe in the idea that culture and religion can be seen as situated practices and situated knowledge that people have. I believe that faith practices are shared understandings in church. Additionally, the church itself serves as a “way station” or “bridge” (T. Strong, personal communication, May 2,
for immigrants like me to challenge traditional biblical world views. As such, I am able to reconstruct new meanings and biblical interpretations of my faith to help me to better adapt to life in Canada. One participant (Carol) expressed awareness around the cultural change occurring in the church regarding gender equality. She disclosed:

The churches are made up of cultures, it’s in the church. It’s not the church creating the culture, we are cultured [emphasis added] people. It’s me, I am the church and I am aware that women are equal to men. The church is not a male governed community because the church is made of women and men who are empowered to know they are equal.

Carol’s viewpoint speaks to her intelligence as an educated Jamaican woman of the Pentecostal faith whose message conveys her inner strength and resilience as a “cultured” person. Her message on gender role within the church holds much substance and truth; it needs to be given greater attention in the church. Building on Carol’s disclosure, other participants attested to their lived experiences of equality within the Pentecostal church based on education and a reconstructed biblical interpretation of the Bible.

Reconstructing biblical interpretations. This subtheme was echoed in the stories of the participants who addressed cultural shifts in the Pentecostal faith across gender issues. Often times, Scriptures are taken out of context and are misinterpreted by certain individuals to overpower, not only women but other racial groups inside and outside the church community. As a body of diverse individuals, I believe the Pentecostal church community is reconstructing space for the inclusion of new biblical interpretations that privilege gender equality. Sharing my position, Faye indicated: “I think now they have different interpretation of the Bible. [The church] is changing the Bible from using the King James Version to New International Version,
so the Bible verses have been broken down more where people can understand them. Sometimes people have misunderstood what the Scripture is saying.” Supporting Faye’s perspective, Warrior Princess expressed her viewpoints on the cultural shift occurring in the church around gender equality:

Well I don’t really see that there is a gender issue now within the Pentecostal faith. From my view, women are allowed in the pulpit, men are allowed in the pulpit. I think we all equally have the same rights and the same role you know as our male counterparts. So, in my experience I think there is a level of equality.

While I agree with the above participant, I would like to add that the issue of gender roles has been an intensified and ongoing debate in the Pentecostal faith in recent years. Based on my observation, the discourse around gender roles can be attributed to the fact that an increasing number of women including myself are pursuing higher education.

Essentially, I believe that obtaining advanced education challenges us as JCIW to become critical thinkers in our own rights without being pressured to accept the gender-prescribed roles imposed on us by a number of conservative male leaders in the church. For example, for these male leaders, women are likely expected to become wives, then transition to motherhood, after which we should stay at home to raise our children. In other words, education should not be a priority. Although this example might be ideal for some women, it should not be the expectation for all women. For some women, such as myself, our lives might take a different trajectory, which involves pursuing doctoral studies prior to getting married and having children. I believe that marriage and motherhood should be a personal choice guided by a spiritual conviction, not an obligation based on a patriarchal system of male dominance, which is rooted in a false interpretation of biblical doctrines.
The participants in this study were vocal in their liberal stance on equality and fairness for Pentecostal women who are increasingly challenging the socio-cultural status quo of male dominance. For instance, Rosemarie provides her unique perspective based on her lived experience:

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

One participant (Andrea), who is a pastor as well as a pastor’s wife, shared insights around her lived experiences of gender equality within the church community as well as in her home environment. Within the context of the church, Andrea gives a useful and in-depth description of her role in relation to her husband: “In our church we have one female pastor [i.e., Andrea] and two male pastors [i.e., Andrea’s husband and another individual] and we have equal rights [e.g., preaching and teaching]. I can do anything that my husband does and he can do almost [emphasis added] anything that I can do” (Andrea). Andrea went on to clarify her rationale for saying almost by emphasizing that “the things I don’t do is because I choose not to do them and the things I don’t let him [her husband] do is because I’m choosing for him not to do it.” From Andrea’s narrative, I observe that there is a mutual level of respect, understanding, and maturity between her and her husband. I also sensed that the participant’s post-secondary level of education might play a role in how she is able to work collaboratively with her husband without creating any form of gender role tension. Taking an assertive stance, Andrea made it clear that she did not adhere to the conservative gender role norms ascribed to Pentecostal women by some
male leaders to know their places within the church in terms of being meek, submissive, and silent.

I admired Andrea’s transparency to have an open dialogue with me about how equal gender role expectations extend to her home environment. I saw her transparency as her willingness to establish trust with me to capture her story, as well as accurately representing the humanness and integrity of her lived experience. My perception of Andrea possessing a liberal view as a pastor and a wife was confirmed when she stated:

We’re very liberal and at home we don’t have gender specific roles. However, as a female I still leave some things for my man. So, I don’t service my car. I don’t want a man’s role, but my husband doesn’t care what I do and I don’t care what he does. It’s equal [emphasis added].

In reflecting on Andrea’s story, it was evident that she does not fit the traditional view of how a woman of the Pentecostal faith is expected to perform based on gender-prescribed roles. Andrea’s liberal and modernized views did not diminish who she was as a product of her Jamaican cultural identity. Rather, her views supplemented her reconstructed self as a strong Black Jamaican woman of the Pentecostal faith who advocates for gender equality in her position as a pastor of a diverse and spiritually flourishing congregation, as well as in her role as a wife.

From my perspective, biblically misinterpreted gender-prescribed roles significantly influence how we perceive ourselves as women. I argue that the Pentecostal women in this study are critically minded humans who have the ability to reason and challenge traditional gender norms and notions of male authority. Such gender norms have been misinterpreted and taken out of context in order to promote a socially constructed view of male dominance. Evidently, the shared lived experiences of the participants reflect an increasing gender role shift within the
Pentecostal faith around treating women equally as men. The equal treatment of JCIW post-immigration was demonstrated in their adoption of a more liberal world view by reinterpreting biblical Scriptures based on being situated in a new cultural context. In the study, the JCIW’s abilities to reconstruct their gender roles within Canadian culture despite numerous setbacks speak to key aspects of their cultural identity reconstructions.

**Defining Cultural Identity**

This category looks at how participants defined themselves post-immigration. The rich accounts of the participants’ stories provide evidence that they had a strong sense of cultural identity in terms of who they are, which invariably was deeply connected to and reinforced by their faith. These findings showed that the participants’ pre-immigration cultural identities were not significantly altered post-immigration despite the reported stressors that they encountered navigating a new cultural context. Their resilience as Jamaican women by birth was proudly displayed in their stories. Underlying their cultural identities was the strength of their faith, which helped them to cope as well as navigate keys aspects of their post-immigration lived experiences. In this section, I will integrate my lived experiences with those of the participants to reflect the multiplicity of our experiences. For this category, three themes and two subthemes were identified. The themes included: (a) pride in Jamaican heritage, (b) factors affecting cultural identity, and (c) spiritual grounding. Additionally, the two subthemes that emerged from the data analysis were: (i) culture shock and (ii) acculturation difficulties.

**Pride in Jamaican Heritage**

Reflecting on the question, “How have I defined myself in terms of my cultural identity within a Canadian context?” invited many emotions to the surface. It brought me to the realization that although I was Jamaican born, I had spent most of my years living in Canada, so
what does that make me in terms of my cultural identity? I have come to embrace a bicultural identity because I consider myself to be a proud Jamaican Canadian, more so because I grew up in Canada and am more affiliated with the Canadian culture than with the Jamaican culture. However, my Jamaican heritage represents an important aspect of who I am in terms of my culture which, as I previously referenced, embodies such dimensions as gender, race, religion, and spirituality. The participants were comfortable addressing their definitions of cultural identity. Like me, Andrea acknowledged her cultural identity when she stated, “I am a defender of Jamaica! I’ll get up and say I’m Black. I’m from Jamaica and this is why I look this way.” It was obvious from Andrea’s statements that she was patriotic about her country. This participant had a deep connection to her Jamaican culture, irrespective of Canada being her host country.

Like Andrea, the above theme resonated with Faye, whose proud connection to her Jamaican cultural identity was denoted in this quote: “I will not take another place over my culture back home in Jamaica, I would not trade it for anything. It is who I am today.” Despite the often negative representations of the Jamaican culture across global contexts, it was pleasing for me to hear how proud the participants were of being Jamaican. Like Faye, Rosemarie proudly echoed these words, “I’m Jamaican . . . I’m living here [Canada] and I go places but I still consider myself to be Jamaican.” In addressing her cultural identity, Carol indicated, “If you look at me you will really see that I’m a Black woman, blackness does not define who I am. I am a Jamaican woman, I am a Christian woman. My Christianity really defines who I am because anything I do, it hangs on my belief system as a Christian.” Carol sees her cultural identity intertwined with her faith as a Jamaican. More so, her faith tends to supersede all other aspects of her cultural identity.
Additionally, Kay was explicit in drawing attention to influential figures in her culture as a way to define her cultural identity. This participant wanted to make it clear that her culture had global recognition because of trailblazers who made an impact on an international scale, such as the reggae icon Bob Marley, as well as Usain Bolt, who is regarded as the fastest sprinter in the world. In shedding light on how she defined her cultural identity, Kay shared in the following excerpt:

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

These remarks reinforce Kay’s confidence in who she is and where she comes from. She highlights key figures from her country who have achieved international fame and accolades. Additionally, Kay’s comments reflected her proud nature to educate others about her heritage if they are receptive to learn more about her cultural identity.

As a person who embraces a bicultural identity, I feel that having a strong sense of where I come from will determine where I am going. I believe that this self-awareness helped to facilitate my personal reconstruction process post-immigration. Warrior Princess was unequivocal in expressing her strong sense of self-awareness by declaring:

I’m proud [emphasis added] to say I am Jamaican, I was born there. I was raised there for 15 years of my life of which I really appreciate. I’m very honoured I was born into a place like that, the difference of cultures has equipped me to transition myself to this Canadian society, which can be very challenging in terms of self discipline and work
ethics. The way which I adjust to the Canadian culture I think I attribute that all to my Jamaican upbringing.

The above excerpts demonstrated my and my participants’ allegiances to our Jamaican cultural heritage. These allegiances reaffirm that we are proud of who we are and where we come from, which fits within Canada’s multicultural milieu.

**Factors Affecting Cultural Identity Reconstruction**

Through the participants’ lived experiences as immigrants, another theme that was generated from the data was the factors they encountered post-immigration that impacted their abilities to adjust. The impact of these factors caused post-immigration stress, which invariably affected participants’ cultural identity reconstruction in terms of two significant subthemes: culture shock and acculturation difficulties. Like all of the participants, I could identify with the identified theme and subthemes because I struggled to adjust to a new life in Canada; a new life that I felt was filled with challenges as well as purpose and possibilities.

**Culture shock.** This subtheme was identified by many participants throughout their stories. I first experienced culture shock attending a Catholic School and learning about the Theory of Evolution during a world religion class. This perspective of human existence was contrary to the foundation of my faith. As an adolescent, this was a challenging time for me because I had to lean on my faith in order to make meaning of this perspective. For example, I had to remind myself that contrary to the Theory of Evolution, I was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), and before I was formed in my mother’s womb, God had chosen me (Jeremiah 1:5). This experience of culture shock in the school system was shared by Warrior Princess, another participant who migrated to Canada at the age of 15.
Similar to me, Warrior Princess experienced culture shock in multiple ways, including lack of discipline within the school system, as well as learning about the Theory of Evolution, which conflicted with her faith. She shared:

I had experienced a huge culture shock about how the school system works. The Theory of Evolution and the Big Bang Theory wasn’t taught in our [Jamaican] schools. I’ve never really experienced that until I got here and I would say that was a culture shock. In the school system, the relaxed level of discipline was a bit of a culture shock for me too. Warrior Princess’s perspective of evolution also reflected my lived experience. However, I was able to make sense of this culture shock by grounding myself in the Scriptures, which provided me with a different way to reconstruct the issue of evolution. Additionally, I could relate to Warrior Princess’s view on the lack of discipline in the school system compared to what we were used to in Jamaica. For instance, it seemed strange to me when a student did not stand up to address a teacher, who is an authority figure. In Jamaica, students were expected to stand up while answering a question in class and addressing a teacher. This form of behaviour was seen as a sign of respect.

Another form of culture shock that was shared by a majority of the participants was that many individuals they encountered were surprised by their ability to speak fluent English. Personally, I agreed with Warrior Princess’s view that “it was a cultural shock for me to see the expectation that people have in their head about Jamaican culture as a whole.” For example, I was questioned by my classmates for speaking English and not Patois, which is the Jamaican dialect. Not surprisingly, my experience was validated by Andrea while she was attending college. She declared, “I did go to college for a while to take theology and repeatedly they would be shocked that I spoke English. They didn’t expect me to speak English.” Carol’s
experience also connected with the above participant. From her perspective, “The way Jamaicans speak, it is so distinct and different. Some people are surprised when I speak [English] . . . they will say, ‘You don’t talk like a Jamaican’ and I say, ‘How does a Jamaican sound?’” Identifying with the other participants’ experiences, Rosemarie noted her culture shock in a school context, “as a Black woman, when I go to school . . . they are like ‘are you really Jamaican?’ I’ve been asked that question many times. I’m thinking the reason for the question being asked many times is because some people think that Jamaicans only speak Patois and not English.”

Similarly, Warrior Princess voiced her lived experience around people questioning her ability to speak English. She said, “Because of the way I talk at school they just did not know I was Jamaican. So you know, they would ask, ‘How come you speak that way?’ in terms of I don’t speak in our Jamaican colloquial language and I found this shocking.” The acknowledgement of culture shock experiences that were shared by the participants was relevant to their cultural identity reconstruction. These rich experiences helped to raise their awareness around their perceived identities as Jamaicans within a dominant Anglo-Saxon culture. The participants found it culturally shocking that a key aspect of their cultural identities (i.e., language) was questioned and challenged.

**Acculturation difficulties.** In their host country, a majority of the participants realized that they were racially visible. They spoke about encountering subtle racism in various contexts including the workplace, which they considered to be an acculturation difficulty. For me, the issue of race was challenging to contend with post-immigration because I could not conceal my Black racial identity. Furthermore, within the Canadian context, I was no longer a member of the dominant group but rather the non-dominant group. In respect to race, Andrea’s quote
illustrates her lived experience: “The first thing I became aware of is that I was Black, in your own environment it’s never been a question.” Carol also demonstrates her struggle with subtle racism as a Black person in the employment context:

It [racism] would have been more in the employment world because when you go to the work place you might find they have only two or three Blacks and we are a minority. It could be a challenge. Racism, it wasn’t always in my face. Some people I deal with . . . many of them have never been closely associated with Blacks. So, there are certain things that they will say that I find offensive, and as a Black person I’m hurt. For example, they would assume I don’t know how to turn on a dryer . . . it’s a blatant disrespect for me from another culture.

In the above excerpt, it appeared that Carol felt that as a Black person, people were making ignorant and preconceived judgements about her capacities, which she considered to be racially motivated. She also found these judgements offensive to her intelligence as an educated Black Jamaica woman.

Additionally, Warrior Princess’s perspective aligned with Carol’s experience of racism. She explains, “It’s as though people have already formulated an opinion about you because they know you’re from a Third World country, so sometimes you know there is this stigma attached.” Expanding on the subtle racism expressed by another participant in the workplace, Kay offered her views by stating:

Regarding the racial aspect . . . you can sense that you’re not really fully integrated into a group but it is not really being said but the behaviours, the non-verbal cues, you know people want to make you uncomfortable. For example their cold shoulders, so you would talk to them and they are very abrupt. They are not interested in having a conversation.
with you. They are not interested in being your friend even if you tried. For me the major thing that stands out is the racism.

The issue of racism shared by the above participants in the workplace displays their struggle with acculturating to a new environment. The participants’ way of coping with this difficulty was through their faith. During these difficult times, participants talked about finding strength and refuge in reading the Scriptures, praying, and fasting, as well as leaning on the support of their faith community to normalize their experiences.

Aside from racism, another acculturation challenge that some participants faced was regression in their professional status. This regression meant that some of them had to return to school to upgrade their education because their credentials from Jamaica were devalued in Canada. For instance, Andrea expressed her frustration with taking a step back from her educational status in Jamaica, which contributed to her financial security. She states, “So I did tell a couple of people that I’ve been to the top of the mountain already and now this is a decline so that was my step backwards.” Additionally, Andrea voiced her disappointment about the discriminatory manner in which she was treated by a member of staff at a particular university (I will not disclose for confidentiality reasons) after sharing that she came to Canada to be pastor of a Pentecostal church. Below, I created space for Andrea’s voice to be heard as a way to validate the emotional impact of her lived experience on her ability to acculturate in Canada:

This is not a story, this is my experience. I applied for the Faculty of Education at this [university] because I had already done college in Jamaica and thought it was the best way to go. I got accepted and I went for my interview and the person who interviewed me at the [university] said to me, “you would do much better in Social Work based on your personality and your experiences,” and the only experiences we had shared was that
I came here to be a pastor of a Pentecostal church. “Based on your background and your experiences you would do better in Social Work! Why don’t you be a social worker?” and then she said, “you could help your own people,” and I said, “that’s not why I came here, I came here to apply to the Faculty of Education.” I said, “well my husband is a pastor; I work in the church with him. I would like to have my own private school affiliated with church.” That was the killer! Just church . . . the whole city . . . is anti-church . . . that’s what I think.

Given the blatancy and the stereotypic undertones of the above staff’s statements toward Andrea, this participant’s acculturation difficulties are justifiable. As a new immigrant, it appeared that she was not given the kind welcome and acceptance that she was expecting in the education system, in order to help her establish a strong sense of belonging in Canada. As the primary researcher, I applaud Andrea for trusting me enough to share her story, which I sensed was a painful experience for her. I believe that her lived experience of racism will encourage and empower others who might have had similar adjustment difficulties.

Andrea’s educational setback was echoed by Carol, who experienced similar acculturation difficulties. According to Carol, education was one of the factors that impacted her ability to acculturate in Canada. From Carol’s perspective: “I came here with an education that I thought I could have easily assimilated into the bigger population and get what I wanted. I realized I got to go through the whole hoops of my accreditation being evaluated to see where I fit into the working society.” Both Andrea’s and Carol’s frustrations regarding the systemic hindrances they faced to advance themselves educationally post-immigration can be validated, as both Jamaican women reported to have had a well established life in Jamaica pre-immigration. Despite these women’s setbacks, they were motivated through their Pentecostal faith to pursue
higher education. The participants saw education as a way to uplift themselves, in order to establish the economic freedom they needed in Canada as they started from the bottom. Remaining grounded in their faith, they felt empowered to persevere amidst acculturation difficulties.

**Spiritually Grounded**

Another theme that emerged from the findings was the participants’ ability to affirm their cultural identities through faith, which I identified as the participants being spiritually grounded post-immigration. All of the participants were spiritually grounded in their faith, which played an integral role in the cultural identity reconstruction process. This spiritual grounding helped them to navigate their culture shock as well as their acculturation difficulties primarily within their workplace and education contexts. This theme resonated with me because I recognized the effectiveness of my faith in overcoming post-immigration stressors. I was able to overcome these stressors solely due to my connection to God and finding encouragement in the Scriptures. I found comfort in the following Scripture verse: “And we know that *all things work together* [emphasis added] for the good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). Meditating on and deepening my understanding of the above Scripture and reading various Psalms made me realize that despite my struggles, “I am more than a conqueror” (Romans 8:37), and that “God would make a way out of no way for me” (Harvey et al., 2012, p. 34). I believed that I would become a stronger and more resilient person from these lived experiences.

Like me, all of the participants boldly expressed that being spiritually grounded in their faith played a critical role in their ability to adjust to life in Canada. For Faye, her faith helped
her to adjust during her times of loneliness. In the remarks below, she acknowledged that God has been the source of her strength since she migrated to Canada:

I’m from a different country and I’m here by myself . . . in these situations I just read more and ask God to comfort me and give me more faith. The faith part is basically the relationship that I have with God. I tell God that I’m feeling down and discouraged and He should encourage me.

Faye’s narrative was not surprising to me because our stories shared commonalities. Following my immigration to Canada, I also felt dislocated and alone in a society where I was labeled as a minority with less access to resources at both the micro and macro levels. Without the comfort of my faith, I could have easily become stifled by the double minority status (i.e., being Black and being a woman) used to stigmatize us as JCIW and keep us systemically enslaved and trapped. Similarly to Faye, Rosemarie’s perspective was similar to Faye’s, as she voiced in this excerpt:

My faith has helped me to cope with adjusting to a new culture by connecting with other people in the community who are struggling with culture shock. It’s not always easy but I find strength in my faith. Right now I am not working, which is difficult financially but I know that God will provide. He [God] will make a way out of no way [emphasis added] as my family and I remain humble and content with what we have. I know that things will get better. God will get us through the rough times.

The role of the Black church has many layers of significance in the lives of Black Caribbean people including communal, social, political, educational, and spiritual significance. The participants primarily talked about the communal and social aspects of their faith.
Like me, church provided the participants with a place of refuge to “lay their burdens down” without any form of restriction. I noticed increased excitement in the stories of the participants as they portrayed a genuine commitment to their faith and what it means to them. For example, Andrea’s commitment to her faith extended to her church community. She noted:

My faith? Oh, I’m die hard! As you would have picked up, I’m not afraid to disclose.

One of the biggest help I’ve had through my faith is that I do have a network of people.

So, outside of the church it would have taken me much longer to settle down.

Andrea demonstrated in her story that engagement in her faith community played a pivotal role in reducing the length of time it took her to adjust into a new culture. I agree with Andrea that outside of the church community, it would have taken me a longer time to adjust and to navigate the cultural identity reconstruction process. One participant’s (Carol) commitment to remain grounded in her faith transferred to her workplace. She reported:

I am just an ordinary woman who is working . . . and things happen in the work place . . . but my Christian faith has changed my vocabulary, attitude, and outlook as to how I should behave when things have been said to me that would hurt me. My Christian character takes on a different interpretation of it . . . it won’t affect me to the point that I behave a way that looks unlike what the Christian behaviour should be.

As Christians, the participants believed in living their lives through the lens of their faith wherever they were positioned. It was apparent to me that the participants’ situational responses to post-immigration conditions did not diminish their spiritual growth as women of the Pentecostal faith. Instead, their faith was reflected in every aspect of their lifestyles and was not hindered by structural restraints within the host country. The following quote illustrates another
participant’s (Warrior Princess) emphasis on the importance of her faith as well as her faith practices:

My faith keeps me grounded and I study the Word of God . . . I’m very confident in the Scripture that says that I’m more than conqueror through Him [God]. Going to the Scriptures and just looking for verses that I can identify myself with makes me feel as though I can do more. I feel empowered to be a better person. Spending time through prayer and reading His Word have equipped me to move forward and navigate myself through the challenging times. My faith in the Word of God kept me grounded.

Carol’s lived experience coincides with Warrior Princess’s commitment and grounding in her faith and faith practices. I can relate to the spiritual grounding that these women described. I have personally experienced it as a new immigrant who believed that God made a way for me to come to Canada, despite unforeseen challenges that I experienced along the way. Through personal devotions, Scripture readings, fervent praying, fasting guided by the Holy Spirit, and connecting with a church community I do continue to experience growth in my faith on a daily level.

Undoubtedly, my Pentecostal faith has been a constant in my life. This experience was also shared by Kay, who felt that God had a divine plan in allowing her to migrate to Canada:

Lord, protect me . . . you bring me here [Canada] for a purpose so I’m praying and I’m fasting. Knowing that I can pray about it and trust in God to do something about it or to protect me from within the work environment, then I have the confidence in what I can do. I tell myself, whatever people want to do, they can’t hurt me because I have a higher power that is protecting me.
All the participants, including myself, were forthcoming in affirming the key role their faith served in helping them to reconstruct their post-immigration cultural identities. The rich conversations generated by the participants reflected ways in which they were able to navigate culture shock as well as acculturation difficulties to reconstruct their cultural identities post-immigration. The fluidity of the women’s cultural identity journeys in Canada shared many commonalities. The women reflected on being proud of their Jamaican heritage, encountering cultural identity conflicts around language, as well as being categorized as racially identified members of a non-dominant group. Their resilience as JCIW was evident as they continued to remain grounded in their faith and faith practices, always believing that God would give them the spiritual strength to endure and to overcome.

**Seeking Counselling and Taking Action**

When I migrated to Canada, I was resistant to using counselling as a tool to help me adjust into a new cultural context. At the time, I did not consider counselling an option primarily because of the stigma associated with mental illness in the Jamaican culture, as well as the absence of culturally appropriate services in Canada. There is a taboo around counselling in my culture; people who seek counselling are often labelled as “crazy”, “lunatic”, or “mad”. Instead of counselling to help me make meaning of my cultural identity during that transition period, I found strength and encouragement in my faith. Many of the participants had similar experiences in leaning on their faith instead of counselling as a first resort to help them navigate their post-immigration stressors.

In this category, I share the stories of the participants’ views of counselling and taking action during their cultural identity reconstruction process. Within this category, I address three themes and four subthemes. The themes include: (a) resistance to counselling, (b) cultural shift
towards counselling, and (c) taking action. Additionally, the subthemes include: (i) cultural stigma and taboo, (ii) valuing privacy, (iii) spiritually-wise counselling, (iv) advocacy, and (v) education. My story, as well as the stories of the participants, will reflect ways in which we were willing to augment our faith with culturally sensitive counselling practices.

**Resistance to Counselling**

As I immersed myself in the data, it became apparent through the participants’ responses that a few of them expressed subtle resistance to seeking counselling as a way to help them adjust to their new life in Canada. I was able to relate to their lived experiences of resistance as I too had felt uncomfortable expressing my vulnerability to a stranger outside of my faith group who might not share my spiritual and religious world views. More so, my resistance was influenced by the cultural stigma and taboo related to mental illness and counselling within my culture. Therefore, I would argue that to a large degree within the Jamaican culture, seeking counselling to deal with life’s challenges is often undervalued and perceived in a negative manner. Therefore, I relied on my faith to help me adjust instead of seeking counselling.

**Cultural stigma and taboo.** Following a critical self-reflection for this research, which involved a deeper awareness of my cultural values, biases, assumptions, and world views, I realized that my initial resistance to counselling as well as my unwillingness to discuss my mental health struggles post-immigration was primarily due to the socio-cultural taboos associated with mental health illness in my culture. Pre-immigration, I distinctly recall people in my community who were struggling with various degrees of mental illness being labelled as “crazy” or “mad.” Based on my religious upbringing, I reconstructed new meanings of my post-immigration lived experiences to view my struggles as opportunities to develop stronger spiritual grounding in my faith.
One participant agreed with my stance that resistance to counselling within the Jamaican communication both pre- and post-immigration tends to be culturally driven. For example, when asked about accessing counselling as a way to adjust to life in Canada, Faye responded by saying, “I think my issue is more culturally related.” Taking a curiosity stance, I asked Faye to elaborate on her position. Faye went on to say the following:

[I]f it’s about the cultural changes and the cultural difference, going to a psychologist, I don’t think would help. I think talking to somebody who has been through this situation would help you feel or give you a more push or a more motivated spirit. I don’t think I would go to a counsellor for that I would literally just talk to somebody. So it’s not like, “No professional help!” It’s just that I will talk first and see how well I can adjust. If I realize it’s not helping then I have to seek professional help and I would. [However], I will try another way before I consult a professional.

It appears that Faye clearly judges her adjustment process primarily on her ability to connect with others, perhaps in her faith community, who can empathize with her lived experiences. She pointed to building a relationship with someone who can possible “push her or motivate her spirit.” I surmise that Faye’s response might be further influenced by cultural norms that encourage independence and self-reliance. As Jamaican women, there appears to be an ingrained cultural ideal for us to be strong; being strong is a culturally approved way to manage the stigmatized experiences of mental illness. This is not to say that Faye would not engage with counselling, but only as a last resort.

Agreeing with Faye’s stance, Warrior Princess expressed reliance on her faith and having a strong support system to help her adjust post-immigration. She indicated, “Sometimes it can be harder adjusting to a different culture, especially Canadian culture. However, in terms of
adjusting I think prayer and getting the right support around you, and with the right circle of friends you should be okay.” Agreeing with Warrior Princess’s emphasis on social support, Faye articulated: “I don’t think I would go to counselling for adjustment issues. I would literally just talk to somebody in my church community.” Faye, Warrior Princess, and I initially relied on our faith as well as social support to adjust to life in Canada. We all found strength in the resourcefulness of our faith practices as we navigate through the deconstruction of old identities and the reconstruction of new identities. For us, the transitioning between old and new identities came with much ambivalence. However, we were able to endure the challenges that presented themselves along the way. Additionally, each of us made mention of the emphasis placed on privacy in our cultural community.

**Valuing privacy.** The idea of disclosing personal and intimate details of my life to a stranger was not appealing to me. Within the Jamaica culture, there is an old saying that, “what happens at home stays at home.” This saying applied to me and counselling in the sense that I was forbidden from disclosing my personal affairs to anyone outside of the family unit, professional counsellor or otherwise. I would argue that within the Jamaican community, there is a sense of private suffering which involves keeping one’s self isolated from the world. Within this private space, women might choose to withdraw from the larger community including friends and relatives who these women perceive might shun them and characterize them as weak or crazy. Personally, privacy afforded me the spiritual solace to engage in prayer and fasting. These spiritual practices helped me to gain spiritual strength while I suffer in isolation to avoid culturally defined stigma of mental illness.

Agreeing with my stance on keeping her personal affairs private, Faye added, “with going to counselling, I think my issue is more culturally related where . . . I’m still a private
person and I don’t really easily open up to people. In support of Faye’s stance, Warrior Princess emphasized that, “I find a lot of people in our cultural group [i.e., Jamaican] don’t really talk a lot about things that are bothering them.” It was evident that at first, Faye, Warrior Princess, and I were resistant to counselling as a way to help us adjust to life in Canada. However, as the conversations deepened and expanded into ways in which the participants’ faith might hinder and support counselling, it was pleasing for me to see the unfolding of a cultural shift towards counselling, which is discussed in the next theme.

Cultural Shift Towards Counselling

This theme sheds light on the participants’ receptivity and openness towards counselling that extended outside of their faith. The participants talked about counselling being a personal decision, not a faith decision, which I found surprising due to their strong commitment to their faith and leaning on God “to make a way out of no way” in all things. The participants’ consideration of counselling to aid in their cultural identity reconstruction demonstrated a cultural shift in their personal growth and development as new immigrants. This showed their willingness to reconstruct new meanings of their journeys in Canada, albeit at a later stage of the adjustment process.

My first counselling experience occurred during my undergraduate years, while I was struggling to make sense of a critical event in my life. It was a difficult decision for me. In fact, I was encouraged to go to counselling by one of my psychology professors with whom I had a great connection (I will refer to her as Sue). Explicitly, I recalled that the counsellor (I will refer to him as Jim) created therapeutic space for me to integrate my faith into the counselling process. I found this experience healing and meaningful to my cultural identity as a person of faith. I remember Jim saying to me at one point, “It’s like you’re encouraging me as a counsellor.” For
the first time, I felt the inner freedom to be authentic in sharing my story. What helped me was that I had a really good relationship and connection with the therapist. Now, I would encourage everyone, including immigrants, to embrace counselling and use it, if possible, to augment their faith to help them navigate post-immigration adjustment struggles.

Conducting this research and deepening my self-awareness of the heuristic process motivated me to reflect on my initial process of counselling. Hence, I felt the need to reconnect with the professor and counsellor who helped me during this period of my life. Below, I include a brief quote of my email on March 9, 2015 to the counsellor (Jim):

With much resistance, I visited the Counselling Services at the University of Guelph to get through a difficult phase in my life . . . I distinctly remembered your encouraging words even now. You mentioned that in telling my story – “I was encouraging you.” Your words were very powerful and made a great impact on my spiritual life and mental health. Thank you for creating a safe and non-judgmental space for me to talk and regain strength in my faith and enhance my emotional stability. Your presence and encouragement were integral in me pursuing my passion to become a psychologist – to help others in the same way you helped me.

Jim was kind enough to respond to my email. He showed empathy towards my lived experience of the counselling process. He stated the following:

Wow – thanks for taking the time to send me such a wonderful and thoughtful letter! It’s always great to hear from students regarding how they are doing . . . Congratulations on your successful journey – sounds like you are doing well! Glad I was able to help out a little along the way – now you are doing the same for others. I believe that’s what the Creator would like for us all.
I found Jim’s words encouraging and heart-warming. Reminiscing on this past experience, I am reminded that at the core of counselling is the counsellor’s ability to establish a trustful working alliance with the client in a collaborative and nonjudgmental manner. During Jim’s work with me, his competency to build a strong working relationship as well as to use a culturally sensitive approach, which allowed for the integration of my faith, made a significant difference in my healing.

Furthermore, I also sent Sue an email as a way to express my gratitude to her for her support and encouragement. I believed that Sue’s concern regarding my mental health exceeded her academic responsibility as a professor. She helped me reconstruct new meanings of my struggles at a critical time in my life. By sharing our interaction, I am honouring her for making a difference in my life. In a portion of my email to Sue, I wrote:

I wanted to extend my deepest gratitude to you for getting me through a challenging time in my life. Without your help and my faith, I wouldn’t have made it through my undergraduate years. With this in mind, I would like to update you on my progress in following my passion to become a psychologist.

Within a day of receiving my email, Sue had jubilantly responded. I provide a relevant section of her response below:

How very lovely to hear from you! And yes, I do remember you! What a fabulous journey you have had. I am so glad to hear you have persevered through your issues and accomplished so much . . . It is through adversity and struggle that we have an opportunity to grow and learn and I have no doubt that your life experience will absolutely inform your work as a psychologist . . . I had no idea that our brief connection
through the course had such an impact on you! Thank you for sharing your experience with me . . . I do remember walking and talking with you outside of class.

Although I consider myself to be a private person, being a psychology major during my undergraduate years helped to increase my awareness and understanding of mental health struggles. I also believe that establishing a trusted relationship with Sue played a key role in my willingness to disclose my personal struggles with her. I chose not to confide in my friends, who I thought would judge me, which increased my motivation to seek support from Sue who directed me to counselling. Sue’s support of my adversities and Jim’s collaborative approach to counselling were instrumental in aiding with my cultural identity reconstruction.

In attentively listening to the stories of the participants, it was encouraging for me to hear that they too were open to seeking counselling. Initially, Faye, Warrior Princess, and I expressed some resistance to counselling, which I believe is culturally influenced. Counselling is not fully accepted within the Jamaican culture as a result of cultural stigma and taboo. Although some Jamaicans of religious orientation might be open to speaking with a pastor, they might be reluctant to seek counselling from secular mental health professionals. This reluctance might arise from the fear that their religious world views might be misunderstood and they might be labelled as mentally insane in their community. With a growing shift in some Jamaicans’ cultural view of counselling as a tool to augment and not diminish their faith, further exploration of the participants’ perspectives revealed their openness to explore spiritually-wise counselling.

**Spiritually-wise counselling.** I would consider my first experience with counselling as spiritually-wise in the sense that the counsellor at the time was respectful of my faith and faith practices as a Christian. I believe that he created space for me to express myself without feeling judged and embarrassed about my lived experiences as a woman of the Pentecostal faith. For all
of the participants, their faith did not hinder them from seeking counselling. In fact, many of them viewed counselling as a “personal and wise decision” that was not dependent on their faith. For example, Faye states, “The Pentecostal faith doesn’t hinder you. I think it [counselling] is a more personal and wise view; it wouldn’t be hindered by my faith.” Siding with Faye, Rosemarie adds, “I don’t think my faith would have anything to do with counselling because it has nothing to do with my faith, as in my Christianity has nothing to do with that. If it has to do with being new here and being adjusted, then to get counselling is spiritually-wise and I wouldn’t have a problem with it.” As with the above participants, Warrior Princess expressed her support of counselling, if needed, as another alternative in conjunction with her faith. She noted, “I don’t think my faith would stop me from seeking counselling in terms of transitioning into a different culture because for one, I’m seeking counselling because I need help to transition in terms of what this culture is about.” She further added, “My faith doesn’t really stop you from getting the help that you need. In fact it’s prudent for you to seek wise counselling in my faith.” I also agree with Warrior Princess who went on to offer relevant perspectives about the adjustment process:

If it’s coming to a point where adjusting [to life] in Canada is affecting your functioning, preventing you from sleeping, and exhibiting other symptoms that affect your daily life. If it gets to that stage, well I don’t think faith alone is helping you. It could be a case where maybe you just need to go and talk to somebody, get some professional counselling and then you could get better coping strategies [to help you adjust]. Having very high faith is good but you still have to use wisdom [emphasis added].

In support of the above participants’ perspectives, I believe that having faith is relevant “because in my sense faith is there to remind you that God will let it get better” (Warrior Princess). Quite
often in the church, pastors are there to provide spiritual support. However, one’s post-immigration struggles might extend beyond the expertise of the pastor’s training, which means that individuals need to be wise and seek professional counselling outside of the church community.

Seeking spiritually-wise counselling was also supported by Carol. She too felt that Christians had an obligation to get appropriate help if needed to aid in their reconstruction process. Carol expressed her position in this quote: “It [my faith] supports me. If it’s situational and I truly cannot understand it on my own or with the help of my pastor, my only option is to be wise [emphasis added] and go seek some professional help outside of the church community.”

Similarly, Andrea—who is a pastor—expressed her views in terms of counselling below:

I tell them [immigrants] and we tell each other, “If you need help ask for help!” We are not going to sit back and say God is going to help you and let you hang yourself because a lot of people are depressed. This new environment gives them a feeling of unfulfillment and they lack a sense of belonging.

Drawing from her own lived experience as a JCIW, Andrea describes many immigrants’ post-immigration struggles in terms of depression, feeling isolated, and lacking a sense of belonging. As a pastor, Andrea emphasizes the importance for immigrants to seek wise counselling outside of the church context. Below, another participant (Kay) acknowledged the need for immigrants to seek spiritually-wise counselling:

It’s wisdom [emphasis added]. Having wisdom with it to understand that yes, God can do all things but at the same time He works in mysterious ways. So, I don’t believe that God is a magic God. I believe that He will provide the resources for you . . . that is God at work for me. You know, He is providing the opportunity for me to get some help with
what I’m going through. All of us are His children so we all need to survive; we all need to live, within this world. So, He will provide the way.

The above participants offered meaningful insights on seeking spiritually-wise counselling. However, they went on to elaborate that seeking spiritually-wise counselling outside of their faith would only be considered if the counsellor, secular or otherwise, respected and demonstrated spiritual sensitivity and cultural awareness toward their faith practices.

**Spiritual sensitivity.** The counsellor that I visited during my undergraduate years did not disclose his spiritual views and I do not remember asking him whether or not he was religious and/or spiritual. However, I do recall that he did not dismiss my religious and spiritual views as I struggled to make meaning of my personal struggles. He showed empathy and unconditional regard for my pain and invited me to consider the relevance of my faith in how to better cope with my struggles. Based on the positive experience I had while engaging in counselling, I believe that counsellors working with religious and spiritual immigrants, including Pentecostal clients, should respect their faith practices and show an appreciation for all diverse clients’ cultural differences.

Using the descriptive words of Faye, “It is important for counsellors to consider the holistic aspects of Pentecostal clients and get to know them in different areas of their lives.” Similarly, Rosemarie supported Faye’s stance by emphasizing, “If you go to a counsellor part of the counsellor’s responsibility is to ask appropriate questions to know you better and your faith practices. The counsellor should be very sensitive to people who practice Pentecostal faith.” I feel the need to expand on Rosemarie’s position that counsellors need to understand that people who engage in Pentecostal form of worship such as singing, dancing, and speaking in tongues, are demonstrating other ways of self expression. This is just another way for them to feel
connected with their faith and to have a more intimate relationship with God. This connection might bear similarity to other individuals who ritualistically engage in yoga, meditation, or mindfulness practices. These individuals might see these practices as personal means to gain spiritual enlightenment and to have a higher sense of connection with a divine being. Expanding on the above point, Andrea expressed her position:

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

Andrea’s position reinforces possible stereotypes and prejudices against people of the Pentecostal faith whom some counsellor might assess as mentally unstable. This means that counsellors need to demonstrate spiritual and cultural sensitivity and “respect Pentecostal clients’ beliefs” (Carol). Additionally, Carol indicates that counsellors would benefit from learning “some of their [Pentecostals] beliefs and be more aware of how they are practicing their beliefs.” She further added that,

It’s about respect and sensitivity . . . even if you might not be able to fully understand. A counsellor might be working with someone who starts to speak in tongues depending on
what is going on in that person’s life. If the counsellor is not aware of what this is the
counsellor might think something else is happening so counsellors got to respect their
faith. If they’re [Pentecostals] going to come to your office and they are Christians try to
get an understanding of what some of their beliefs are and respect them.
I can relate to Carol’s position. Fortunately for me, my counselling experience with Jim was
respectful and positive. I was not discouraged from talking about my faith. I remembered that
during the counselling process, Jim created space for me to reconstruct my identity through a
recommitment to my faith. I discovered that my identity was embedded in my faith, which
allowed the healing process to begin.

Carol’s progressive attitude and openness to the possibility of seeking counselling from a
secular counsellor appeared to be contingent on the counsellor’s respect and sensitivity toward
her faith as a Pentecostal woman. Building on Carol’s earlier stated point, Warrior Princess
explained the need for counsellors to consider the spiritual and religious dimensions of
Pentecostal clients:

I think they [counsellors] need to try to understand a person that is Pentecostal; this
person might be guarded and might not want to open up. [T]his also gives the
opportunity for that person [counsellor] to be there and help them [Pentecostals] so it’s
like God extending a hand. He [God] can perform miracles but He also gives us doctors
so we can get ourselves checked out. So, a counsellor is like a doctor but is also a
different doctor who helps you with the psychological state. I think they [counsellors]
need to know that they [Pentecostals] can be guarded, they [Pentecostals] can quote a lot
of Scriptures to them [counsellors] and tell them they don’t need their help. I would say
they [counsellors] need to be sensitive, patient, and listen and try to understand the individual and try to counsel them from a Bible based perspective.

Warrior Princess further expressed the importance for counsellors to demonstrate sensitivity to her worldview, including her faith in God. This participant’s need for counsellors to integrate her faith into the counselling process speaks to her deep spiritual conviction to cultivate an intimate relationship with God. As a Jamaican Canadian immigrant woman, Warrior Princess believes that God is actively engaging in her life, irrespective of transitioning across socio-cultural contexts. She further explains:

If I come to you for counselling and I need help, I want somebody to understand me. I don’t want to come to a counsellor who does not understand me and is going to give me a list of things that does not apply to me. This is my faith, this is what I believe in so I want somebody that can relate to my faith and who can counsel me within the context of my faith because this is what I want spiritually. If you’re not on the same page with me, there is no sense in you counselling me because it does not make any sense to me. I think that a counsellor who shows understanding and sensitivity of my faith will help to build trust in that counselling relationship.

Warrior Princess’s above point is reflective of her spiritual grounding as an educated woman of the Pentecostal faith who is also mindful of possible pitfalls in counselling for Pentecostal clients.

Another participant spoke to the need for counsellors to demonstrate spiritual sensitivity to the unique experiences that some Pentecostal clients might display in counselling. These experiences might seem unnatural and peculiar to some counsellors. However, instead of judging Pentecostal clients, including some JCIW, counsellors should work with them to
generate a mutual understanding and respect for their religious and spiritual world views. Kay offers an explanation:

It would be good for counsellors to know that [for Pentecostals] crying without a cause is okay. It’s a way of expressing your joy, you know. Sometimes God has been awesome, good to you, and you’re like, “Oh my God! You’re so awesome,” and then tears are just flowing. It’s a nice steady calm cry so that is good for counsellors to recognize and differentiate from abnormal behaviours.

Kay went on to explain other faith practices by Pentecostal clients that counsellors should learn to understand, respect, and show sensitivity toward, in order to facilitate therapeutic change and healing for these clients. She elaborates in the following excerpt:

It’s good also [for counsellors] to understand when somebody gives a shout of a, “Hallelujah, praise the Lord!” it doesn’t mean that you’re getting off of your mind or you’re going crazy. It’s basically that you’re just thanking God for maybe something that would have happened you know. Maybe by talking to the counsellor you feel so relieved you know, you’re like, “Oh, thank you Jesus!” So, I believe that counsellors should understand things like those that would kind of facilitate the whole counselling process as you go along.

The participants’ lived experiences revealed that regardless of how peculiar and different Pentecostals’ faith and faith practices might appear to be by others outside of the faith, counsellors are encouraged to respect and understand the spiritual and religious expressions of their clients. Furthermore, participants shared stories about the importance for them to take action motivated through their faith to ensure that their lived experiences are valued and appreciated in Canadian culture.
Taking Action

This theme addresses the role that participants can play in helping people outside of the Pentecostal faith better increase their understanding of this denomination. In sharing their stories, many of the participants express the need for them to take action by talking to people about their faith through respectful and open dialogue that fosters change both within and outside of the church community. It is important for Pentecostals, including JCIW, to address any kind of misunderstanding that is affiliated with their faith. I believe that often this misunderstanding might be unintentional and come from lack of knowledge. This misunderstanding is captured in the words of one of the participants: “I do not think they are choosing not to understand. I just think they have not been exposed to the Pentecostal faith” (Andrea). Like many of the participants, I see my roles as a Jamaican Canadian woman of Pentecostal faith as both an educator and an advocate to help people rethink and reconstruct their misguided interpretation of this Movement as well as its practices. Within this theme, the participants’ stories generated two subthemes: advocacy and education. These subthemes are addressed below.

Advocacy. For me, advocacy occurred outside of the confines of the church community. I do not view advocacy solely as the proselytizing of my faith to others, but more so in fostering meaningful dialogues with others about my faith in various contexts. These dialogues allow me to share my experiences of faith, but also to learn from others who might come from a different spiritual and religious world view. A majority of the participants shared their ideas about having an open and sensitive dialogue with others outside of their faith community. This form of dialogue could be identified as advocacy in terms of motivational speaking, mentoring, outreach, and evangelizing. The idea of being an advocate for her faith resonates with Carol who notes:
I could be an advocate, we all have our biases but you cannot allow it to rule you if you’re not willing to listen or hear the other side of the story. So my role is to be a very good motivational speaker [emphasis added] in allowing others to understand my faith. I’m not saying you have to believe it but to understand the Christian faith.

Carol views her advocacy role as a motivational speaker whose aim is to educate others who are open to learning more about her faith. Carol recognizes that we all have biases, which impact our world views and perceptions of others. Through advocacy, Carol sees the opportunity to make a difference in her church community and beyond. Similarly, Faye feels that her advocacy role is “first to introduce God to the person and then you could introduce your church to them secondly.” Likewise, Rosemarie emphasized her involvement in community advocacy through evangelism. She recalled a time when she participated in outreach activities with other believers:

We have gone on the streets, and handed out tracts and those things to introduce the Pentecostal faith . . . not everyone will accept it. I can remember the Sunday we went on the streets, it was not all that welcoming of such. But if I have to do that again I will, whatever I can do I will do it . . . going out and evangelizing.

This sense of involvement in advocacy work was also shared by Andrea. According to this participant, “The only step we can take is to get involved in more community activities as much as possible. As Pentecostals we should engage people in the larger community in social and cultural events, that’s the most we could do.” Andrea further adds:

If we can influence people, what a great society we would have. Our belief is also patriotism. Our belief is kindness, our belief is helping, and that is the Christian faith. Our belief is selflessness, sharing, and caring, so if you bring all of those qualities together and you can, you can influence people and be advocates for our faith.
The subtheme of advocacy also resonated with other participants including Warrior Princess. Embracing an advocacy role, Warrior Princess explains that she “could share the Bible and pray with those who are receptive to her faith practices as well as be a mentor [emphasis added] and support to them.” Warrior Princess believes in “practicing what she preaches” in terms of living out her Pentecostal faith by example. For one participant (Kay), an important aspect of advocacy work is reaching out to others in the community:

Well you can always invite them [nonbelievers] to church if they’re open to it. You can talk to them about it, you know you can have discussions. However, I’ve found that discussions can become quite heated when people don’t understand your faith and when they’re not seeing your perspective. So for me, inviting them to church so that they can see it firsthand would maybe help them to understand and then afterwards for sure you can have all of the discussions possible.

It was evident through their narratives that the participants were finding creative ways to be advocates for their faith, while respecting others’ boundaries whose religious beliefs might differ from their own. There was also the call for greater community engagement by some participants who saw this as a way to bridge the gap between the church and the larger community. In addition to advocacy, the participants viewed educating themselves and others as another way to take action. Through education, they are able to advance their learning in order to apply for and possibly obtain opportunities in varied contexts (e.g., politics, civic life, church, and employment) that can yield benefits at both the micro and macro levels.

**Education.** Acquiring a higher education has equipped me to think critically about how I have come to interpret my faith. Therefore, I have come to realize that my interpretation of the Pentecostal faith is quite subjective, and may differ from someone else’s of the same faith who
might attend the same church. I cannot hold any believer to my spiritual and religious standards because each person has his or her own lived experiences that should be valued and respected. Instead, I have to consider people’s subjective experiences and how these experiences might influence their faith on different levels. Additionally, as an emerging scholar I am able to take a stance of curiosity while imparting knowledge to others who might have interesting questions to ask about my faith. My current training as a psychologist also helps me to demonstrate cultural, spiritual, and religious sensitivity to everyone who is open to learn more about my faith practices without being forceful and intolerant. I agree with Kay’s perspective in that:

If they’re [nonbelievers] open to prayer, pray with them. Read the Bible, give them a Bible if they’re interested you know, you’re not going to force your religion on them or your faith but if they’re open to it they’re seeking for something, share God with them and that would really help.

According to Faye, she “looks for unique opportunities to educate people at work about her faith and what she believes, while respecting that their belief systems might be different from hers” in this multicultural context. Faye’s insightful words speak to her increased cultural awareness to promote respect and appreciation for the multicultural reality of Canada and its diverse cultures.

Similar to Faye, Warrior Princess placed high value on education and the fact that more people within the faith are educating themselves as a way to take action. She demonstrates this in the following quote:

I think people within the Pentecostal faith are more educated now and they are making more educated decisions. Whereas, before you know a lot of people misinterpret the Bible . . . so I find people are more educated. They’re making different and better
decisions I should say as opposed to making those that are ignorant and attached to religiosity.

As demonstrated in their stories, the participants expressed interests in taking action through advocacy and education. As JCIW of the Pentecostal faith, they shared their lived experiences in a manner that reflected agency, strength, and resilience. I felt honoured to chronicle the participants’ lived experiences because I believe that our journeys of cultural identity reconstruction are relevant within the Canadian multicultural context and beyond.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I shared the stories of JCIW and how they reconstructed their cultural identities using the Pentecostal faith. Through my analysis of the data utilizing HI methodology, four categories were extracted, all of which were reflective of the multiplicity of the participants’ lived experiences around the Pentecostal faith, gender roles expectations, defining cultural identity, and seeking counselling and taking action. Based on my reflection of the results, I conclude that the Pentecostal faith plays a critical role in the lived experiences of JCIW as they adjust to a different culture. Through this research they were given the opportunity to share their stories as well as allow their voices to be heard. In the following chapter, I will share a creative synthesis that reflects the multiplicity of the participants’ lived experiences through poetry. Additionally, I will discuss key aspects of the findings that augment as well as contrast the existing research literature. Furthermore, I will highlight limitations of the current study. I will conclude the chapter by outlining the implications for theory, research, and practice in counselling psychology.
CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The objective of the present Heuristic Inquiry (HI) research study was to investigate how JCIW reconstruct their cultural identities utilizing the Pentecostal faith. Although previous authors have acknowledged the critical role that spirituality and religion play in Black people’s ability to cope with life stressors (Aryee, 2011; Fukuyama, Sevig, & Soet, 2008; Joseph, 2006; McKenzie et al., 2011; West, 2012), to my knowledge, research has yet to examine the specific role of the Pentecostal faith in the post-immigration cultural identity process for JCIW. In a collective effort to honour the stories of the participants, I adopted a postmodern social constructionist theoretical framework because it privileges multiple realities and the process of social interaction among individuals (Shotter, 1993; Lock & Strong, 2010), which is important with respect to the way that people make meaning of their lived experiences. In sharing their multiple stories of cultural identity reconstruction, JCIW were able to reflect on their post-immigration journeys and the critical role that the Pentecostal faith plays in the process. The findings generated from this study described the rich lived experiences of JCIW and the centrality of their faith as a core dimension of their cultural identity reconstruction.

With the objective of this study in mind, the findings generated from the preceding chapter will have the potential to expand and enrich the current understanding of JCIW who use the Pentecostal faith to reconstruct their post-immigration cultural identities. Additionally, these findings will add value to the counselling psychology literature as well as inform the field of multicultural counselling within a Canadian context and beyond. In this chapter, I will start by sharing a creative synthesis in the form of poetry, which is a type of literary art that interests me because of its aesthetic and rhythmic qualities. This poem combines all the participants’ stories into one composite depiction, which includes the essential categories, themes, and subthemes
characterizing the lived experiences of JCIW who reconstructed their cultural identities through the Pentecostal faith. Next, I will address how the findings generated from the participants’ rich accounts attempt to compare and contrast the breadth of knowledge within the existing multicultural counselling literature. Following this, I will discuss the strengths as well as highlight the limitations of the current study. Further, I will consider the implications of this dissertation for theory, research, and practice in the field of multicultural counselling. Finally, I will conclude with a reflection of how this study impacted my personal and professional learning.

**The Creative Synthesis**

Engaging in this heuristic research with the participants allowed me to deepen my quest for knowledge as I experienced moments of meaning-making, understanding, and discovery through our multiple journeys of story sharing. Through the process of reflective self-awareness, reflexive self-awareness, and critical reflectivity (Kondrat, 1999), I was able to compose this creative art form, which I believe honours the lived experiences of the participants. Borrowing from Kondrat’s (1999) definitions, firstly, through *reflective self-awareness*, I was able to examine myself in order to become aware of my personal biases and the interactive process of my cultural identity reconstruction. Secondly, *reflexive self-awareness* allowed me to become aware of how I created my meaning-making process through my interactions with the participants based on our story sharing. Lastly, engaging in *critical reflectivity* created space for me to acknowledge myself as both affecting and being affected by socio-cultural contexts, which in turn influenced my lived experiences.

By creating a poetic form of the participants’ reconstructed stories as well as my own, I was able to move beyond reflective and reflexive self-awareness to a deeper level of
conceptualization of myself and my cultural assumptions as well as how these assumptions interact with social contexts (Kondrat, 1999; Larrison, 2009). Captured in a poetic form, the collective depictions of our stories, I believe, reflect the artistic nature of the Jamaican culture. This poem displays the strength and resiliency of JCIW who are able to reconstruct their cultural identities through the Pentecostal faith tradition. Although it was constructed from my interpretation of our collective experiences, the poem was sent to the participants for them to review and determine if it relates to their lived experiences of the phenomenon studied. The participants had no objections to the poem. Collectively, the women expressed that it captured their lived experiences in a creative and sensitive manner.

The Lived Experiences of Strong Women of Faith

Strong women of faith, that’s who we are

Overcoming the brutality of slavery to find freedom in the revolution of our spiritual bravery

Travelling across the seas in search of new possibilities, new dreams, new beginnings

Leaving behind a culture where life seems familiar, comfortable, and safe

Moving towards a life filled with false assumptions, culture shock, and acculturation difficulties

Trudging through snow, we confront the cold weather that pierces through our fragile bones and hardens our hearts

In search of a new home where we belong

Where our spiritual uniqueness is accepted and our religious beliefs and faith practices are celebrated

Strong women of faith, that’s who we are

“Living storied lives”
“But one day soon the stories will no longer be, they will become life”

In search of unfulfilled dreams we hope for a better existence

Broken, fragmented, and dislocated

Striving to reconstruct new cultural identities in the Canadian Dream

A place of misperceived abundance

Clinging to our faith to keep us anchored, grounded, and empowered

Praying for a more glorious day

Strong women of faith, that’s who we are

Encouraging each other through our story sharing

Creating fluid cultural identities across history, time, and space

Acquiring strength through our faith to overcome post-immigration stressors

Finding victories in our moments of defeats

We can’t give up now

We may have lost some battles on racism, sexism, and discrimination

But we will win the war on our spiritual destination

Strong women of faith, that’s who we are

Respectful of the multicultural policy that drives this nation

Trying to adjust within a culture that chooses to ignore our similarities and promote our differences

Pushed to the margins of a dominant society

Labelled as a minority and excluded from the majority
Judged by the colour of our Black skin

Misunderstood for our ecstatic spiritual expressions

Speaking in tongues, dancing, singing, and clapping our hands

Shouting through our pain without holding back any emotion

Laying our burdens down at the altar as a sign of deep repentance

Strong women of faith, that’s who we are

Boldly proclaiming our faith to those who are willing to listen

Living for today knowing that tomorrow is never guaranteed

Surrounded by a church community that provides spiritual shelter from the storms of life

Often feeling lost in the shadows of our mental health struggles

Employing the Bible as our guide to shape our cultural identities as immigrants in a new land

Finding encouragement in Scriptures to help us make meanings of our cultural identity reconstruction

Strong women of faith, that’s who we are

Carrying the torch for our ancestors who bled and died for our freedom

Creating space for the legacy of our untold stories

Holding steadfast to the spiritual hope that lays before us

Guided by our faith to reconstruct new identities and rewrite the discourses of our cultural histories

Fighting for our voices to be heard above the echoes of marginalization and racial oppression

Upholding our spiritual truths in a diverse nation
Strong women of faith, that’s who we are

Forever change through the redemptive power of the Scriptures

That bind us together with spiritual chords that cannot be broken

Awaken from our silences through the boldness of our faith

Proclaiming the truth of who we are and where we are going

Knowing that as Prayer Warriors our destiny awaits

Learning through our lived experiences that we are fashioned for a greater purpose

Believing that “God will make a way out of no way”

Our “faith is the cradle to the grave”

Situating the Results within the Context of the Relevant Literature

In the following section, I begin by discussing the results of the data analysis collected through the women’s stories, which revealed four categories: (a) Lived Experiences of the Pentecostal Faith, (b) Gender Role Expectations, (c) Defining Cultural Identity, and (d) Seeking Counselling and Taking Action. Below, I offer a more detailed discussion of how the formulated categories derived from the participants’ accounts complement and augment the existing multicultural counselling literature.

Lived Experiences of the Pentecostal Faith

Drawing from Albrecht’s (1996) work on Pentecostal spirituality, Pentecostal faith can be described as the lived experiences of a configuration of spiritual beliefs and religious practices. By understanding the Pentecostal faith from the above perspective, multicultural counselling scholarship may be better able to recognize its value in the lives of Black Caribbean immigrants in Canada. In support of the research evidence derived from this study, all the participants
attested to the importance of the Pentecostal faith in their lives within both pre- and post-immigration cultural contexts.

For JCIW, the Pentecostal faith is simply viewed as a way of life; this is succinctly captured in an expression by one of the participants (Andrea) who states that her faith is “a cradle to the grave.” As highlighted in the previous chapter, the Pentecostal faith appears to be at the centre of the participants’ cultural identities with respect to their family upbringing, educational pursuits, church involvements, social networks, and employment opportunities. Drawing from Poloma’s (2000), scholarly work on Pentecostalism, Pentecostal faith is “the blend of a biblical mandate, a personal call, and an experiential empowerment” that appears to influence several aspects of participants’ lived experiences. The women have come to identify that their acceptance of Pentecostal faith signifies the overarching theme of a lifestyle change that was consistent with three subthemes: a spiritual conversion process of being saved, a connection to a built-in community, as well as the normalization of their lived experiences through story sharing. Below, I discuss the overarching theme in addition to the primary concepts of each subtheme outlined in Chapter Four in relation to the relevant literature.

**Lifestyle change.** According to Pouchly (2012), spiritual beliefs should be incorporated into the cultural identity and functioning of clients within and across cultural contexts. Consistent with this reported research, the JCIW’s accounts demonstrated that their Pentecostal faith provided them with the spiritual strength to withstand lifestyle changes within a dominant culture. It has been documented in the social science scholarship (Este & Bernard, 2006; Pellebon, 2007; Richards, 1990; Schiele, 2011) as well as the Afrocentric literatures (Asante, 1990; Conyers, 2005; Mazama, 2002) that the survival of Blacks in African cultures is sustained through their expressions of spirituality. Studies conducted by Canadian researchers on African
Canadian individuals’ resiliency in dealing with various forms of lifestyle stressors, namely economic disadvantages or psychological issues resulting from oppression (Enang, Edmonds, Amaratunga & Atwell, 2001; Waldron, 2003); divorce (Rawlins, 2012), racism (Este & Bernard, 2006; Joseph, 2006), Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) (Aryee, 2011), and mental illness concerns such as depression (Schreiber et al., 2000), attested that for myriad of these women, spirituality serves as a source of communal strength and healing to help them cope with stressful situations. This current investigation on JCIW substantiates the above findings that the Pentecostal faith serves as a powerful spiritual force in various spheres of these women’s lives, including intrapersonal, familial, social, academic, occupational, and leisure activities. Through their lifestyle transformations, the participants gained awareness of themselves in the following areas: (a) a spiritual conversion, (b) a built-in community, and (c) story sharing.

A spiritual conversion. In revisiting the extant multicultural literature, there is a scarcity of attention given to the role Pentecostal faith plays in how African Canadian immigrants reconstruct their cultural identities. Understanding the Pentecostal faith’s role in the lived experiences of this population is critical to multicultural counsellors’ sensitivity to help these individuals handle adjustment issues. Pentecostal scholars’ (Albrecht, 1996; Johns 1999; Kärkkäinen, 2009) work on Pentecostal spirituality in global contexts demonstrated that a spiritual conversion represented a deeper spiritual relationship with God through the Holy Spirit. As recognized by Johns (1999), a unique characteristic that constitutes a Pentecostal world view is based on the holistic idea that for Spirit-filled individuals, God is not only present in all events, but God holds all things together and causes all things to work together. This idea substantiates the Scripture verse that states: “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28, KJV). One of the
ways in which the participants’ accounts of their spiritual conversion significantly influenced their lived experiences was reflected in their expressive form of worship in which they speak in tongues. From the findings, it was discovered by many of the participants that what is distinct about speaking in tongues is that it is a “very different and unique gift” that is real and cannot be “forced” and “imitated.” Some of the participants also described speaking in tongues as “a personal encounter” that has to be “given by God.” Moreover, this form of unique expression is another way for participants to “feel connected with their faith” and to have a “personal relationship with God.” Contrary to these positive outlooks by the participants, some religious writers (e.g., Forsyth, 1999; Pohl, 2001) and Christian organizations (e.g., The Berean Institute, 2012) have documented the irrelevance of speaking in tongues in modern Christianity including Pentecostalism.

Critics in both religious and non-religious spheres have alluded to the practice of speaking in tongues in a negative light. For example, in religious writings, speaking in tongues has been described as “gibberish and incomprehensive communication” (The Berean Institute, 2012) as well as “a possession fallacy” (Perry, 2015). Additionally, non-religious authors such as Guiley (1999) suggested that during the Middle Ages, speaking in tongues represented “demonic possession” (p. 206). This representation is in contrast to the notion of speaking in tongues being revived in the Pentecostal movement as an “ecstatic communion with God where worshippers rolled and writhed on the floor, putting themselves in a self-induced hypnosis” and prayed that the Spirit would possess them (Guiley, 1999, p. 206). Further, Lane’s (1994) review of case studies in the neurological literature on speaking in tongues characterized it as an internal neurological state of being that can be misinterpreted as a religious fetish that in some traditions can become ritualized over time.
While considering the pervasiveness of the above suggestions, the participants’ lived experiences of this phenomenon appeared to be “transformational” and “life-changing.” These experiences corroborate Wigglesworth’s (1999) view that being baptized by the Holy Spirit represents a life-changing and transformational experience that empowers believers to live more fulfilled lives. This form of empowerment was shared by the participants and appeared to be consistent within the literature that a key aspect of the believers’ spiritual conversion is to experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which is often evidenced by speaking in tongues (Medina, 2011; Simms, 2012; Synan, 2011; Yong & Alexander, 2011). For such believers, speaking in tongues represents the “fullness of God” when they get saved or converted into the Pentecostal faith (Russell, 2012). Following a spiritual conversion, it is assumed that the Spirit of God dwells within believers (Dixon & Arthur, 2014; Russell, 2012). For the participants, the spiritual phenomenon of speaking in tongues represents a subjectively unique and empowering aspect of their cultural identity as Jamaican women of the Pentecostal faith. This form of empowerment is supported by Macchia (1999) who noted that “tongues allow the poor, uneducated, and illiterate among the people of God to have an equal voice with the educated and the literate” (p. 18).

However, the findings in this study contradict Macchia’s (1999) suggestion that individuals who speak in tongues tend to be “poor”, “illiterate”, and “uneducated”, since all of the participants were educated and possessed the minimum of a high school education (see Table 1 in Chapter 4 for a summary of the participants’ demographic information). This is not to say that all believers who speak in tongues are highly educated and hold higher level socio-economic positions. Rather, these results show that a growing number of Pentecostals occupy diverse
educational and socio-economic spaces on a global scale (Anderson, 1999a; Cox, 2009; Kärkkäinen, 2009).

A built-in community. The current findings showed that participants viewed the church as a place where they can engage with each other in a corporate context. Within the “refuge” of the church community, the women are able to obtain the spiritual support needed to cope with post-immigration stressors in a new cultural context. Such accounts augment the existing findings by a study completed by Chatters et al. (2008), which highlights that for Caribbean Blacks, the church provided a place for “religious social networks” (p. 371). Previous Canadian research (e.g., Etowa, Keddy, Egbeymii, & Eghan, 2007) completed on depression among African Canadian women living in the province of Nova Scotia, revealed the importance of their adherence to church and faith during the difficult time of depression.

Additionally, Hunt’s (2000) investigation in Britain on the role of the Black Pentecostal churches supports these churches’ “mass converts and rapid congregational growth,” which are attractive to immigrants (p. 1). According to the author, the Black Pentecostal churches provide a response to structural conditions in Britain by functioning as a sub-community and culture for the Black community (Hunt, 2000). This observation is made by Toulis (1997) whose work on Pentecostalism and the identity of Jamaican women in England recognizes these women’s reliance on the Pentecostal faith to help them buffer their feelings of alienation. Additionally, the Pentecostal churches embody “a different genre with a distinctive set of doctrines, practices, and ethos,” which provide believers with the spiritual anchor needed to mitigate the structural restraints imposed on them by the dominant culture (Hunt, 2000, p. 1). In accordance with the preceding investigations, the subtheme generated from the current study reinforces the key role of the Black church and spirituality in the lives of people of African heritage, specifically JCIW.
**Story sharing.** Another distinct finding that emerged from the current study is participants’ ability to normalize their lived experiences of post-immigration stressors by way of story sharing. From a biblical perspective, by sharing their stories, participants were able to “bear each other’s burdens” (Galatians 6:2) in the face of such oppressive forces as racism, language discrimination, educational regression, and cultural stigmatization. For these participants, their story sharing experiences primarily occurred within the context of the church community, such as bible study and cell groups. This form of story sharing facilitates a global mandate within the Pentecostal faith; thus it reflects what Simms (2012) describes as believers possessing a sense of “love of God and neighbour” (p. 3). The previous author’s description on believers’ mandate to demonstrate universal love substantiates Miller and Yamamori’s (2007) work on global social engagements in the Pentecostal faith tradition where they suggest the importance of cell groups as a social function to “care for each other” by “praying for individual needs” and “bearing each other’s emotional burdens” (p. 193). This idea of story sharing reinforces the biblical mandate for Christian believers to love their neighbours as themselves (Mark 12:31; Simms, 2012).

Based on the current study, a key social function of story sharing among the participants operates much like “an extended family” that “bear witness to the Christian ethics of love” for one another as well as within the community (Miller & Yamamori, 2007, p. 193; Vondey, 2013). Macchia’s (2006) work on Pentecostal theology also emphasizes that empathy lies in the common sharing of believers’ lived experiences and their capacity to share agonies, ecstasies, and to share in each other’s burdens through the empathetic act of story sharing. Therefore, the participants in this research have come to know other believers on a social level, trust them, and
prayerfully carry their burdens by sharing stories about their cultural identity reconstructions (Campolo, 1994).

**Outsiders’ Perceptions of the Pentecostal Faith**

Interviews from this current study confirmed that many of the participants felt that outsiders tend to harbour certain misperceptions of the Pentecostal believers, particularly regarding their charismatic form of worship. Past researchers showed that many outsiders, including psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists have made suggestions that Pentecostals’ practice of speaking in tongues might be likened to “psycho-pathology, abnormality, and aberrant behaviour” (Kildahl, 1972), “psychological maladjustment” (Richardson, 1973), and an “altered state of consciousness” (Goodman, 1972). Aside from the misperceptions of outsiders of the Pentecostal faith, Pentecostalism has experienced a variety of divisions and controversies from various sects within the Movement. For instance, a differing view centres on challenging the doctrine of the Trinity, which is the belief in the Godhead of three persons operating as one divine entity (i.e., Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). This division has resulted in the Trinitarian and non-Trinitarian branches within the Pentecostal faith as well as the formation of various Pentecostal-tongues denominations (Pohl, 2001). Therefore, not all Pentecostal believers support the doctrine of speaking in tongues. This being said, the findings generated from the participants in this research contradict the past yet influential empirical study conducted by Kelsey (1964) that suggests that glossolalia might be “an unconscious resolution to neurosis” (p. 208). The participants’ stories alluded to a lack of education surrounding many outsiders’ misunderstanding of the Pentecostal faith.

**Lack of education.** Recent work by Cartledge (2012) that reviewed the past behavioural and cognitive patterns of glossolalia posits that “it is not a supernatural phenomenon
but one whose meaning is provided by socio-cultural contexts and, indeed, it may be the consequence of deep and meaningful spiritual worship” (p.183). The above author’s position that glossolalia is not a supernatural phenomenon does not validate the participants’ lived experiences of glossolalia. For instance, one participant describes glossolalia in the following manner: “a very different and unique gift” that “cannot be forced but comes naturally.” She further added that “it’s unexplainable and a spiritual experience that has to be experienced personally.” The above participant’s lived experience of speaking in tongues can be educational for many outsiders who might perceive this Pentecostal faith practice in a negative manner. Subsequently, the healthy perspective of glossolalia portrayed by all of the participants in this dissertation supports the idea that this form of Pentecostal practice provides them with “joy, peace as well as spiritual and emotional release” (Lapsley & Simpson, 1964, p. 18).

Similarly, another participant expressed that glossolalia represents “an opportunity for vibrant engagement in worship as well as expressions of joy and happiness.” The participants’ lived experiences helped to suspend the negative psycho-pathological and fanatical aspects of speaking in tongues. Further, the JCIW’s positive reflections on speaking in tongues can serve educational for many outsiders by shifting their prolonged misperceptions of the Pentecostal faith to a more functional positive view of the phenomenon. Such a view has been corroborated by past and current researchers (e.g., Crosby, 2012; Hine, 1969; Lapsley & Simpson, 1964; Hagin, 2011; Russell, 2012; Simms, 2012) who have depicted positive aspects of the Pentecostal faith in terms of fostering Christian unity and encouraging relationship building. The participants’ lived experiences of speaking in tongues reflect a deeper and richer spiritual connection to their faith that transcends secularized interpretations.
Gender Role Expectations

Gender role discourse is a topic of ongoing debate within the Pentecostal faith. The current scholarship and long-standing research interests in the role of women within the Pentecostal movement has greatly influenced this study. Evidently, women’s missionary work and leadership stance play integral roles in the proselytization of the Pentecostal movement, thus allowing for the expansion of this spiritual and religious force on a global framework (Cook, 1997; Jobling, 2002; Lawless, 1991, 2005; Sánchez-Walsh, 2009; Toulis, 1997). Despite its globalization, secular feminist thinkers (e.g., Collins, 2000; Hooks, 1984, 2015; Stanton, 2003) as well as Christian and evangelical feminists (e.g., Hunt & Neu, 2010; Osiek, Macdonald, & Tulloch, 2006; Sloane, 2012) have argued that Christianity is a patriarchal religion that displays women in misogynistic and oppressive ways; thus, these ways warrant reinterpretation and reconstruction from a biblical perspective.

Not discounting the tension within the Movement that often stems from biblical misunderstanding and scriptural misinterpretation, Hunt and Neu’s (2010) work provides two opposing views of the Movement. First, the authors challenge Christianity as an oppressive force against women, and second, they also merit this religion as a spiritual resource that helps to liberate women and unleash their full humanity (Hunt & Neu, 2010). In addressing gender role expectations and prescriptions within Pentecostal faith, the participants in this study provided pre- and post-immigration lived experiences. Both stances will be discussed in relation to their relevance within the feminist and theological scholarships.

Gender roles pre-immigration. Of all the ways in which participants’ lived experiences had been impacted by the Pentecostal faith, their pre-immigration accounts of gender role expectations reflected inequality in leadership positions as well as restrictions in dress code
within a Jamaican context. In addressing leadership inequality and dress code restrictions as women of the Pentecostal faith, the participants attributed these pre-immigration views to a traditional and conservative way of thinking. Such thinking is likely influenced by what researchers (Bartholomew, Hahn, Parry, Seitz, & Wolters, 2009) describe as a controversial “canonical approach” to interpreting and accepting biblical Scriptures in a literal sense, without examining the historical context in which the Bible was written (p. 1). For example, identified restrictions placed on participants within the Pentecostal faith while in Jamaica include the prohibition from wearing men’s clothing, primarily pants (Deuteronomy 22:5), and the expectation for them to cover their heads with hats while attending church (1 Corinthian 11:6).

Additionally, participants attested that women in Pentecostal churches were often restricted from being leaders in ministry capacities including teachers, pastors, evangelists, and bishops (1 Timothy 2:11). Again, these restrictions were likely influenced by a literal interpretation of the Scriptures by the Apostle Paul, which were relevant to the early Christian church. Often taken out of context, certain (as highlighted above) have been used to prescribe submissive and subservient gender roles to women by male leaders who lack understanding of the socio-cultural contexts in which Scriptures were written, and should be noted in how the Bible is interpreted and understood (Jones, 2000; Sloane, 2012). It appears that pre-immigration, participants’ gender role expectations within the Pentecostal faith were significantly influenced by a traditional biblical interpretation of the Scriptures.

**Traditional biblical interpretations.** Not undermining the critical role of the Pentecostal faith in the participants’ lived experiences, they acknowledged the erroneous interpretation of gender equality in certain Scriptures relative to women that might not fit into a modernized framework of gender inclusivity. They further reasoned that certain scriptural interpretations
might not be applicable in the modern sense based on cross-cultural and historical differences that could possible influence such interpretations. Adopting a critical stance, I argue that the tendency for some fundamentalist and conservative believers within the Pentecostal faith to misinterpret the Scriptures for their own benefit could be viewed as a “dark side” of religion (Ellison & Lee, 2010; Plante, 2011).

According to Laythe and colleagues (2002), gender bias against women by many “strict conformists” within various religious denominations including the Pentecostal faith could be considered in a negative light. Although a “dark side” of the Pentecostal faith was not specifically identified by the participants, I posit that certain Scriptures taken out of context pertaining to gender role expectations and prescriptions can cause problems that are likely to have adverse effects on individuals’ mental health and overall functioning (Dein, 2010; Koenig, 2008). For example, women within the Pentecostal faith who have been ingrained to believe that they should remain silent and be submissive to male authority, including their husbands, can be significantly impacted with low self-esteem and self-worth (Shirer, 2011). The participants in the current research did not display any form of low self-esteem or self-worth. However, such misinterpretation of the Scripture that can be identified as a “dark side” of religion is worth mentioning.

Further, some Pentecostal believers’ religious faith might be shattered by unanswered prayers because of their unwavering fundamentalist belief that “all things [must] work together for their good” (Romans 8:28). Such individuals might not have developed a realistic thinking pattern to see challenges as new areas of growth and development in their lives. Hence, certain unanswered prayers around traumatic life experiences (e.g., sexual abuse and death) might cause them to renounce their faith and struggle with their understanding of God always being loving,
sovereign, and benevolent (Dixon & Wilcox, in press). Supporting the above position, various researchers have indicated that spiritual and religious struggles are often connected to increased levels of psychological distress, reduced physical health, and higher risk of mortality (Dein, 2004; Larson et al., 1998; Pargament, 1997, 2013). These findings are relevant within the Pentecostal faith, given the assumed fundamentalist and conservative views held by some believers. Although such views might have been generated from various forms of scriptural misunderstandings surrounding the Pentecostal faith by some fundamentalist believers, these misunderstandings warrant further investigations and should not be entirely ignored on a critical level. The participants’ pre-immigration stories illuminate the rigid views of gender role expectations and behaviours assigned to women within the Pentecostal church. Conversely, I was pleased to observe that post-immigration, the participants’ multiple stories of cultural identity reconstructions affirmed and promoted the full humanity and equality of their gender role expectations within the Pentecostal faith (Klopfer, 2013).

Gender roles post-immigration. Numerous feminist theologians (e.g., Clifford, 2000; Osiek et al., 2006; Hunt & Neu, 2010; Meyers, 2001; Ruether, 1993) have argued that women’s voices have been systemically excluded from the Christian tradition and have been dominated by a sexist and patriarchal tradition that oppresses, subjugates, marginalizes, and objectifies women. Notwithstanding this controversial argument, participants in this study adopted a reconstructed view of gender role expectations post-immigration that was previously connected to a misunderstanding of Scriptures that was written and situated in different historical and cultural contexts. Richards’s and O’Brien’s (2012) thought-provoking book entitled Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes challenges individuals, particularly Christians, to “remove the cultural blinders” they often wear, allowing them “to better understand the Bible,” which is often
interpreted based on western cultural assumptions that deviate from biblical cultural assumptions (pp. 20-21). The authors, who identify as Evangelical Christian pastors with international experience, argue that a westernized way of reading the Scriptures can lead to misinterpreting biblical teachings. This argument is based on the perception that reading the Bible through a westernized lens often fails to consider such cross-cultural influences as mores, ethnicity, language, individualism, and collectivism (Bessey, 2013; Richards & O’Brien, 2012).

**Reconstructing biblical interpretations.** Richards’s and O’Brien’s (2012) perspective is relevant when considering the gender role expectations for the participants in this study, which are applicable across cultural contexts. Through their stories, JCIW challenged past gender role inequality within the Pentecostal faith relative to the traditional expectations for Christian women to cover their heads as a way to dress modestly, as well as being restricted from participating in ministry roles (e.g., preachers, pastors). The women advocated for the gender role mutuality and acceptance within the Pentecostal faith (Ruether, 1993), whereby men and women are given equal opportunities to honour and listen to each other’s perspectives, irrespective of cross-cultural differences.

Further, participants spoke against gender role restrictions for women and expressed support of a more egalitarian tradition void of sexism and male dominance. The JCIW in this study were vocal in their liberal stance to see a shift in the Pentecostal faith that promotes equality and mutual respect across gender roles. In the words of one participant (Faye), “I don’t think there should be a barrier; I think whatever a male can do in the Pentecostal church, a female can also do.” Similarly, Carol stated that “the church is not a male governed community because the church is made of women and men . . . who are empowered to know they are equal.” From the participants’ perspectives, a paradigm shift in an egalitarian direction where women
feel empowered will require the reconstruction of biblical interpretations. Such reconstruction has the potential to arise in a “reunderstanding” and reshaping of the Pentecostal faith tradition in a more gender-balanced and gender-inclusive way (Bartholomew et al., 2009), while still adhering to biblical principles. One participant (Warrior Princess) pointed out that Scriptures are often taken out of context “so there is one thing in reading Scriptures and there is another thing in understanding and applying.”

As JCIW of the Pentecostal faith, the participants believe the Bible is divinely inspired by God, but are keen to acknowledge that Scriptures are subject to reinterpretation and reunderstanding. The women further noted that the Scriptures, although God-inspired, were written in a certain historical context that promoted a patriarchal culture, and were likely shaped by the narrators’ perspectives (Klopfer, 2013; Osiek et al., 2006; Sloane, 2012). To that end, the participants’ shifts in gender role expectations post-immigration reflect postmodern thought that emphasizes that individuals’ understanding of their lived experiences is influenced by their socio-cultural and historical contexts.

Defining Cultural Identity

Borrowing from the work of Stuart Hall, a Jamaican-born cultural theorist and sociologist, cultural identity is believed to be a fluid process (Hall, 1996, 1997a, 1997b, 1999, 2005; Hall & Du Gay, 1996), which is an ongoing product of history and culture (Sherwin, 2014). In support of Hall’s position, Beckford (2011) argues that within the multicultural location of Canada, cultural identity is “not a fixed, single form or intention of being; rather the characters reflect continually shifting and variable identities” (pp. 262-263). For immigrants, this shifting in terms of cultural identity—over space, history, and time—can create a “diasporic consciousness” (Hall, 1990, p. 226), which encompasses “a sense of loss consciousness of being
an outsider, yearning for home, burden of exile, dispossession and relocation” (Puri, 2013, p. 190).

Through their stories, it became evident that the participants experienced a sense of “diasporic consciousness” in terms of them feeling displaced and alienated within a new socio-political context where there was a longing for home and what was familiar. The participants’ longing for home was reflected in their stories as proud Jamaicans despite their new cultural location. In honouring the cultural identity of JCIW and doing their stories justice, I will provide a brief overview of the Jamaican culture, thus affirming the theme of pride in the Jamaican heritage that emerged from the findings.

**Pride in Jamaican heritage.** All six participants in the current study identified Jamaica as their country of birth. Please refer to Appendix G for a map of Jamaica that reflects the parishes where the participants were born. To ensure confidentiality, the names of the participants were not identified on the map. Culturally, the Jamaican population is rich in its ethnic diversity, consisting primarily of people of African ancestry (approximately 90 percent), mixed race people (approximately 7.3 percent), East Indians (approximately 1.3 percent), and several other ethnic groups round out the total (Jamaica, n. d.). The country’s national ideal for its diversity gives true meaning to the motto of the Jamaican Coat of Arms, “Out of Many, One People” (Black, 1988; Delle, Hauser, & Armstrong, 2011). Warrior Princess acknowledged her country’s diversity when she stated that she felt “honoured” and “appreciative” to be born in a place that celebrates “the differences of cultures.” In fact, Warrior Princess credits her country of birth for equipping her with the self discipline and work ethics to better adjust to a new Canadian culture.
The above participant’s position coincides with Murrell’s (2006) argument that Jamaicans are considered to be hard-working and confident people who take pride in their Jamaican heritage across the diasporas. According to James and Davis (2012), the growth of the Jamaican diaspora has become an increasingly influential force on a global level, extending beyond Britain, the United States, Canada, and West Africa. Within the context of this study, the Jamaican diaspora describes Jamaicans who have departed from their traditional homeland and dispersed to other parts of the world, while still pursuing the development of the Jamaican culture (James & Davis, 2012, Nettleford, 2003).

As a respectful way of educating outsiders of her culture, one participant (Kay) proudly described her use of identifiers to educate individuals within Canada about her cultural identity. For instance, she often asks people questions who might be ignorant of her Jamaican culture if they are familiar with her country’s international icons: “‘Have you heard about Bob Marley? Have you heard about Usain Bolt? Have you heard about reggae music?’ I would use identifiers like those to help people to understand where I am from.” Another participant (Andrea) expressed pride in her Jamaican cultural identity by indicating that she is “a defender of Jamaica!” She went on the say that, “I’ll get up and say I’m Black, I’m from Jamaica, this is why I look this way.” Andrea’s stance supports the argument reflected in the literature that Jamaicans across the diasporas are often described as assertive and not easily dominated (Murrell, 2006) despite post-immigration stressors (Archambeau, 2008; Billroy, 2014, DePass, 2012a).

Corroborating Andrea’s assertive stance, Faye proudly denotes her strong sense of pride as a Jamaican woman, stating that, “I would not take another place over my culture back home in Jamaica. I would not trade it for anything. It is who I am today.” Like the above participants,
Rosemarie’s Jamaican heritage did not diminish following her immigration over a year ago. She was clear in her statement that although she is living in Canada, she still considers herself to be a proud Jamaican.

Through the women’s lived experiences, it became evident that the participants’ patriotic attitudes for their homeland of Jamaica extend beyond its borders into their new host country of Canada. Despite the participants’ strong sense of cultural identities post-immigration, it became evident within their multiple narratives that they were all influenced by the diasporic experiences of culture shock (Amadala, 2012; Djuraskovic, 2006; Kalu, 2014), as well as acculturation difficulties, which are supported by the cross-cultural literature as factors that impact immigrants’ post-immigration cultural identities (e.g., Berry 1997a, 1997b, 2005; Birman, 1994; Burton, 2009; Chirkov, 2009; Hall, 1999, 2005). Guided by the cross-cultural literature, I expand below on both post-immigration factors as they relate to the participants.

**Factors affecting cultural identity.** Throughout their history, Jamaicans continually struggle to survive under challenging economic and social conditions (Billroy, 2014). From a historical and cultural perspective, the ongoing struggle of these individuals is essential to a broader understanding of their cultural identities upon migrating to and settling in Canada in search of a better and more prosperous life (Billroy, 2014; DePass, 2012a, 2012b; James & Davis, 2012). In this discussion, borrowing from Burton’s (2009) work that addresses cultural identity in Caribbean society as it pertains to Jamaica, the concept of cultural identity is proposed as a broad reference to “the shared beliefs and behaviours of a group, which form the basis for creating meaning for the persons who count themselves to be a part of the culture” (p. 2).

Within the above reference, Arthur and Collins’s (2010b) argument that cultural identity is comprised of multiple dimensions (e.g., gender, race, religion, and spirituality) shared by
persons who belong to a certain ethnic group remains supported for the participants in this heuristic study. Researchers have acknowledged that immigrants’ cultural identities are often impacted by various post-immigration stressors including culture shock and acculturation difficulties following their relocation to a new host country such as Canada (Amadala, 2012; Djuraskovic, 2006, 2014; Pulis, 1999; Superville, 2014). Specific to the study in question, JCIW identified the above stressors in diverse ways unique to their lived experiences. These stressors (i.e., culture shock and acculturation difficulties) impacted their ability to reconstruct their cultural identities in Canada.

**Culture shock.** Furnham and Bochner (1986) laid the foundation for understanding various individuals’ (e.g., tourists, sojourners, expatriates, international students, immigrants, and refugees) cross-cultural psychological reactions to unfamiliar environments. Ward, Bochner, and Furnham (2001) examine the psychological and social processes involved in intercultural contact. These processes have been identified as learning new culture-specific skills, managing stress and coping with an unfamiliar environment, changing cultural identities as well as enhancing intergroup relations (Ward et al., 2001). According to the above researchers, crossing cultures can be a stimulating and rewarding adventure for many individuals although it can also be a stressful and bewildering experience for those who are unable to successfully navigate the adjustment process (Ward et al., 2001). Ward and colleagues’ (2001) work corroborates with cross-cultural studies examining immigrants’ transitions to a new host country. In these studies, culture shock has been identified as characteristic of diverse immigrants (Amadala, 2012; Djuraskovic, 2014; McKenzie et al., 2011; Superville, 2014). Researchers (e.g., Ward et al., 2001; Winkelman, 1994) describe culture shock as the outcome of
strain and anxiety that is predominantly the adverse effect of trying to navigate a new culture while experiencing the loss of familiar socio-cultural cues.

Building on the above description, Arthur (2001) argues that one of the first experiences that immigrants are likely to contend with upon relocating to a new culture is culture shock—also referred to as acculturative stress. Originally introduced by Oberg (1960), culture shock is a psychological reaction that is often common for diverse immigrants—including the women in this study—because of the significant adjustments that they are expected to make as a result of encountering cultural norms and mores that are different from their own culture of origins. In a Canadian multicultural context, a majority of immigrants, including JCIW, often find themselves torn apart by conflicting cultural and religious values in the host country (Canada & the World Backgrunder, 1998; Ward, 2008). Given the sudden immersion into a nonspecific state of uncertainty within Canada’s multicultural society (Pedersen, 1995b), the women in this research voiced their uncertainty of what is expected of them as well as what they can expect from the dominant culture around them. For such immigrants, culture shock was manifested in diverse forms and was impactful to their familial (Berry, 2001; Oji, 2014), emotional/psychological (Loue, S., & Sajatovic, 2012), social (Winkelman, 1994; Zhou, Jindal-Snape, Topping, & Todman, 2008), educational (Li, 2012), occupational (Government of Alberta, 2010), and spiritual and religious functioning (Kalu, 2014).

Consistent with the previous findings, each of these outcomes was identified by various participants in the current study relative to their lived experiences. Many of the women talked about their sense of loss being uprooted from family and friends in their home country. Transitioning from a collectivistic culture to an individualistic one, the sense of loss experienced by the participants concurs with the cross-cultural counselling literature (Irwin, 2007; Monk,
Thus, the participants’ lived experiences of communal loss and cultural uprooting warrant greater understanding by counsellors in multicultural contexts. Further, myself and one of the participants who migrated as adolescents, reflected on our experiences of culture shock within the educational system when we were both exposed to the Theory of Evolution for the first time (Darwin, 1859). This form of culture shock is understandable for immigrants coming from a country where a majority of the population identifies as practicing Christians, which means that religion and spirituality influence the fibre of the Jamaican culture (Austin-Broos, 2009; Beckford, 2011; Delle et al., 2001; Mason, 2000; Nettleford, 2003; Thomson, 2011).

Another aspect of the education system that the above participants found culturally shocking was the relaxed attitude attributed to disciplining students, which one participant stated could allow immigrant students to “fall through the cracks.” Research conducted by Jamaica’s United Nations Children’s Fund discovered that a large number of parents placed heavy reliance on corporal punishment as a way to discipline children (Noorani, 2005). Moreover, corporal punishment is lawful in Jamaica, despite the fact that in 2009 the Minister of Education asked schools to stop using corporal punishment (Farrell, 2015).

Unlike Jamaica, corporal discipline in Canada has been abolished since 1971, which was pioneered by The Toronto Board of Education (Education Canada, 2015). However, the strap was still used by some teachers as a form of discipline until the 1990s. It was not until 2004 that the Supreme Court of Canada officially ruled that corporal punishment was an unreasonable disciplinary method in the classroom setting (Education Canada, 2015). Considering the religious convictions of the participants, their reactions to the lack of discipline within the Canadian classroom setting might be influenced by biblical doctrines, one of which is based on
the Old Testament’s Scripture that admonishes adults not to spare the rod and spoil the child (Hopper, 2012; Proverbs 13:24).

Aside from the aforementioned educational factors, the issue of language is another salient form of culture shock that was experienced by many of the participants. Contrary to the misunderstanding and confusion around Jamaica’s mother tongue—the language spoken in a region (Tulasiewicz & Adams, 2005)—the official language spoken in Jamaica is English; it is spoken in formal discourse as well as political discussions (Murrell, 2006; Purcell, 2007). Aside from English, Jamaican Patois is another dialect that is spoken in the nation in informal conversations (Devonish, 2012; Maps of the World, n. d.). However, there are growing debates among Jamaican critics that Patois should become an official language in its own right. This is based on the argument that the global dominance of English in Jamaica is the legacy of British colonial rule and signifies a language of social and political power (Devonish, 2012; Linton, 2008). From the perspectives of many of the women in this study, the confusion around Jamaica’s official language being colloquial English (i.e., Patois) could be viewed as a form of stereotypic ignorance displayed by many individuals within the dominant Canada culture.

Needless to say, many of the JCIW found this level of ignorance around language by many persons within the dominant culture shocking.

Many of the participants experienced this form of culture shock in such educational settings as High School and College where their nationality as Jamaicans was challenged based on the stereotypic ignorance that Jamaicans only spoke a colloquial language (i.e., Patois). One participant indicated that often Jamaicans’ way of speaking English might be “distinct and different” due to their accents. However, the uniqueness of JCIW’s language helps to define their cultural identities within their host country as they share similar experiences with each
other. Drawing from the social constructionist framework that guides this study, cultural identities are formed through the use of language and are influenced by the context individuals are in (Anderson, 2007; Lock & Strong, 2010; Shotter, 1993). Hall’s (1996 1997a, 1997b) perspective on the fluidity of identity formation substantiates the stories of JCIW around their reconstruction of cultural identity and the use of language during the process.

According to Hall (1996), “identities are about the questions of using history, language, and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not ‘who we are’ or ‘where we came from’, so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that impacts how we might represent ourselves” (p. 4). Reflecting on the above discussion on culture shock, I posit that JCIW were able to reconstruct their cultural identities as Pentecostals through the meaning-making process facilitated through language and their social interactions with others. This meaning-making in turn generated knowledge and understanding of their lived experiences within a new cultural context (Lock & Strong, 2010; Shotter, 1993).

**Acculturation difficulties.** According to Allison (2010), acculturation describes the process of becoming a part of a culture and occurs when different cultural groups come together, blending their cultural characteristics to form new cultural experiences. These experiences are often based on dominance and power, in which case the dominant group is usually exerting influence over the non-dominant group, which in turn feels pressured to change under such difficulties and stressors to accommodate the dominant group. Consequently, the non-dominant group tends to risk losing some of its cultural characteristics as it becomes immersed into a new culture (Arthur, 2001; Dow, 2011). The theories on transitions put forth by Bridges (2001) and Schlossberg (1981, 2013) provide a better understanding of how people can develop the resilience to transition through life’s challenges such as work, life, and retirement, as well as
grief and loss. Both authors argue that transitioning through life while experiencing tragedies and crises can create personal, professional, and emotional transformations for many individuals (Bridges, 2001; Schlossberg, 2013). Despite the relevance of Bridges’ and Schlossberg’s research to the transition literature, their models do not account for the lived experiences of immigrants (e.g., JCIW) who might be influenced by acculturation difficulties that occur within the cultural context of their host country.

Therefore, I draw from theory presented in cross-cultural psychology to explain the acculturation process for individuals such as international students, sojourners, immigrants, refugees, and expatriates who must unlearn old norms associated with the host culture (Allison, 2010; Arthur & Pedersen, 2008; Arthur & Popadiuk, 2013; Berry, 1997a, 1997b; Kosic, 2004). This also means that these individuals would need to unlearn any preconceived notions or stereotypes about the host culture before and after moving to the new country. Theoretically, cross-cultural psychology proposes that individuals behave in ways that are responsive to the cultural influences and expectations of the dominant culture (Arthur, 2001; Berry, 2005). Many authors have acknowledged that acculturation is a complex, multifaceted, and multidimensional process consisting of a number of adjustment phases (Berry, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c; Sam, & Oppedal, 2002; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2011; Ward, 2008). From this perspective, Berry’s (1997a, 1997b) curiosity about how individuals who grew up in one culture behave following their resettlements within a different culture, can be extended to the participants in this dissertation research.

To obtain a better understanding of how the participants in this research develop their post-immigration cultural identities within Canada, I refer to Berry’s (1980, 1997a, 1997b) conceptualization of acculturation and adaptation for immigrants. Well-known for his theory in
the field of acculturation psychology (Smokowski, & Bacallao, 2011; Ward, 2008), Berry (1980, 2001, 2005) has identified the four-fold model of acculturative strategies that individuals tend to adapt following immigration: (a) *assimilation* (individuals who assimilate into their dominant culture and abandon their original culture); (b) *separation* (individuals who reject the dominant culture and retain their original culture); (c) *marginalization* (individuals who do not feel accepted with their host culture or their original culture); (d) *integration* (individuals who attempt to maintain ties to both the host culture and their original culture). Of the four strategies, *integration* is proposed as the healthiest and most optimal strategy in the acculturation process (Berry, 2005; Smokowski, & Bacallao, 2011). Berry’s (1997a, 2006a, 2006b) theoretical conceptualization emphasizes the bidirectional aspect of the adjustment process in that the receptivity of the host culture impacts the acculturation experience for immigration. The bidirectional process informs this phase of the discussion because it provides a logical explanation of the variability in adaptation to a dominant culture by non-dominant groups at various stages of acculturation and adaptation (Coleman & Pope-Davis, 2001). Through their post-immigration stories, it became evident that the participants in this study were able to assimilate into the dominant culture, while retaining their ethnic culture and identity.

Consequently, Berry’s (1997a, 2005) bidirectional perspective offers a useful way to conceptualize the acculturation difficulties experienced by the JCIW of the Pentecostal faith who participated in this study. For instance, the women indicated that they experienced such acculturation difficulties as racism within the workplace. Systemic racism in social and employment environments is not an uncommon experience among immigrants (Alberta Network of Immigrant Women, 2006). Since the participants in this study could not conceal their Black racial identity, they were easy targets of racial statements that devalued their humanity and
questioned their intelligence as educated women of the Pentecostal faith. Many of the participants felt as though false assumptions and opinions were formulated against them merely based on their Blackness, which visibly identifies them as individuals belonging to a non-dominant cultural group. The participants’ lived experiences with racism can be difficult for them to process based on the fact that Caribbean Blacks hold a majority status in the Caribbean, where racism tends to be more subtle (Superville, 2014). Burton’s (2009) research that examines the globalization and cultural identity of Jamaicans in Caribbean society expands on the above position that across the diasporas, Jamaicans still experience oppression at the hands of the dominant European culture by a global structure of anti-black racism.

For a few of the participants who migrated at a later stage in life, another form of acculturation difficulties that they reported was the devaluing of their academic achievements from Jamaica. They reported that their educational credentials earned outside of Canada were not accepted upon migration. Within the Jamaican context, the pursuit of higher education is highly valued among the middle and upper class (Glazier, 2012; Nettleford, 2003; O’Meally-Nelson, 2013). According to the political scientist Carl Stone, Jamaicans’ pursuit of higher education expands employment opportunities to facilitate the upward mobility that demands new skills in areas of occupational competence (Smith, 2013; Stone, 1992). Consistent with the above position, it was generally recognized in the literature that immigrants have high levels of education and self-sufficiency (Alberta Network of Immigrant Women, 2006; Government of Alberta, 2010). Yet, studies indicate that immigrants face employment barriers due to acculturation difficulties related to transferring credentials between countries as well as challenges navigating the educational systems in their host country (Alberta Network of Immigrant Women, 2000; Government of Alberta, 2015).
Recent research conducted by Williams (2014) on Jamaican middle-class immigrants in Toronto confirmed the findings in the current study that some of participants’ credentials were devalued, which created barriers to their upward mobility. These findings were supported by Statistics Canada (2003), which indicated the overrepresentation of highly skilled immigrants in precarious, low wage, temporary, and unskilled jobs. Similarly, the participants in this study attributed the unfair rejection of their educational credentials to a significant loss in their economic stability. They argued that this form of educational unfairness invariably impacts their ability to be valuable members of society. Further, the systematic downgrading of their academic credentials potentially mitigates opportunities for these JCIW to improve their status within Canada for the betterment of this diverse nation that welcomed them (Billroy, 2014; DePass, 2012a; Thomas-Hope, 2002; Williams, 2014). With the understanding that for these participants, education helps to pave the path for better employment opportunities within Canadian culture, they were willing to make the sacrifice to re-enter the education field. For these JCIW, acquiring the acceptable Canadian education required to improve their socio-economic standing as new immigrants, positions them with an advantage to gain the appropriate Canadian work experience needed to advance their SES in Canada. Grounded in their Pentecostal faith, these participants were able to cope with their acculturation difficulties by holding on to their spiritual conviction that “God will make a way out of no way” (Harvey et al., 2012, p. 34).

**Spiritual grounding.** In addressing the sacrificial commitment to faith among Black Caribbean immigrants, it is imperative to draw from a culturally appropriate framework that fits the spiritual world view through which they often conceptualize their lived experiences.
Therefore, this aspect of the discussion employs an Afrocentric model, which considers the historical and cultural legacy and identity of Blacks across the diasporas (Adeleke, 1998). With the understanding that Black women’s lived experiences are often impacted by race and gender (Brown, 2013), the intersectionality of these competing identities exerts a unique effect on Black women’s cultural identity reconstructions. Therefore, spirituality serves as a great source of strength for many Black women, including JCIW. The women interviewed in this study reported that their Pentecostal faith helped them to navigate the post-immigration process as they reflected on culture shock and acculturation difficulties. Participants further acknowledged that their socio-cultural positioning as a marginalized and non-dominant group presented institutional and systemic barriers for them within a dominant Canadian culture. For instance, JCIW described how the obstruction and demoralization of their blackness posed a range of grave difficulties including racism, undervaluing of their education credentials, employment struggles, discrimination, and stereotypes around their religious beliefs and faith practices. Informing this aspect of the discussion, the Afrocentric model affords people of African descent, including the participants in this study, the ability to address salient issues to the socio-cultural determinants of their cultural identity reconstructions.

A key tenet of the Afrocentric model is spirituality, which recognizes the innate spiritual nature of people of African descent (Asante, 1990; Belgrave et al., 2000). This tenet remains salient for JCIW, whose spiritual grounding helps them to face post-immigration challenges through the daily utilization of their faith practices (e.g., prayer, reading the Scriptures, and devotional activities) and the companionship of God in their lives. Given that Afrocentric scholars such as Dei (1996) recognize the “power of lived experience” (p. 84), the participants’ utilization of faith to reconstruct the lived experience of their cultural identities attest to their
resiliency and agency as a collective group of people. The richness of these women’s stories of faith supports research that indicates that myriad Black women find religious involvement to be encouraging, nurturing, and uplifting (Aten, McMinn, & Worthington, 2011; Thompson-Rogers, 2013). Studies also show that Black women who attend church services frequently are likely to be more religious and perhaps experience more satisfactions in their lives due to reduced mental health issues including depression (Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003; McKenzie et al., 2011). This study mirrors the above findings as JCIW echoed their strong connection to their faith community as well as their ability to use their faith to circumvent post-immigration stressors, preventing them from escalating into severe mental illnesses.

There is a growing body of evidence to show that across diasporas, religion and spirituality is viewed as a source of empowerment in the lives of numerous Black Caribbean immigrants to help them cope with challenging post-immigrations issues (Belgrave & Allison, 2013; Este & Bernard, 2003; 2006; Hall, 2012; Superville, 2014; Williams, 2014). More specifically, cross-cultural studies conducted in the United States (Chatters et al., 2008, 2009; Taylor et al., 2007, 2010), Britain (Sisley, Hutton, Louise, & Brown, 2011; Toulis, 1997), and Canada (Billroy, 2014; McKenzie et al., 2011; Williams, 2014) revealed that compared to their White counterparts, Jamaican immigrants, primarily females, demonstrated more devotedness to their Christian faith practices such as regular church attendance, Bible readings, and prayers. This outcome corroborates with one of the subthemes that emerged from this dissertation’s findings, where participants in the current study boldly talked about being grounded in their Pentecostal faith. To this extent, JCIW’s faith represents their “cradle to the grave” which, in the words of one of the participants, means that they are willing to die for what they believe.
Given the importance of the Pentecostal faith in the lived experiences of JCIW, the centrality of their faith can be reflected through an Afrocentric model. Such a model provides a vision for JCIW that promotes Black consciousness in its aim to explore the triumphs and the tragedies of African people and their descendants around the globe (Asante, 1980, 1990). Armed with understanding that their “spiritual beliefs incorporate the centre of their being” (Thompson-Rogers, 2013, p. 27), the participants understood that even though they were spiritually grounded, they still had to contend with adjusting to a new culture in which their cultural identities were deconstructed and reconstructed through faith. For many immigrants, the deconstruction and reconstruction process of cultural identity can be challenging, particularly for those who might lack the skills to integrate themselves successfully within the dominant culture while retaining their cultural identities (Hall, 1990; Lock & Strong, 2010; Shotter, 1993).

Although the immigrants in the current research were able to integrate themselves within Canada with the primary help of their faith, they were also amenable to counselling approaches that were culturally responsive as suitable options to supplement their faith.

**Seeking Counselling and Taking Action**

Despite much advancement in multicultural counselling, a majority of individuals from African and Caribbean populations harbour skeptical views of traditional westernized counselling approaches (Moodley & West, 2005; Parham, 2002; Schreiber, Stern, & Wilson, 2000; Vontress, 2010). Often feeling like the “invisible others” within a Eurocentric framework (McKenzie-Mavinga, 2009, p. 292), many people of African and Caribbean descents question the effectiveness of a counselling approach influenced by westernized ideologies to address their multi-layered mental health struggles (Yakushko & Chronister, 2005; Vontress, 2003). A growing body of evidence has argued and provided support that migration is a highly stressful
experience that influences the overall well-being of many immigrants (McKenzie et al., 2011; Yakushko & Chronister, 2005). Further, Rumbaut (1991) emphasized that “migration can produce profound psychological distress among the most motivated and well prepared individuals even in the most receptive circumstances” (p. 56).

Supporting Rumbaut’s stance, Schreiber and colleagues’ (2000) study addresses how Black West-Indian Canadian women cope with mental health concerns and the stigmatization of these concerns. The researchers argue that for these women, the act of immigration, as well as their downgrading from a dominant race in their home country to that of a non-dominant group, in combination with possible lower SES positions increases their emotional vulnerability to mental health concerns. A key to understanding Black peoples’ struggles and how they cope with mental health challenges pre-and post-immigration is their spiritual grounding and seeking solace in God (Dixon & Arthur, 2014; Fukuyama, 1999; Schreiber et al., 2000). Yet, even with this knowledge, most counsellors are still reluctant to create a respectful space to infuse spirituality in counselling practices (Plumb, 2011). The participants in this study were forthcoming in admitting that their religious and spiritual beliefs were key factors in helping them to manage culturally driven post-immigration stressors such as culture shock and acculturation difficulties.

**Resistance to counselling.** A recent Canadian study completed by Kirmayer and colleagues (2011) explored the challenges that influence the mental health of immigrant and refugee women. The findings from this study reveal that for some immigrants and refugees, the lack of awareness and knowledge of mental health issues, coupled with certain cultural beliefs and practices, delayed their decisions to seek counselling. These findings might be transferable to some of the participants in this study who showed reluctance to seek help, when needed, to
manage mental health struggles. Moreover, mirroring the work of Kirmayer et al. (2011), the JCIW in this study had often drawn upon informal support systems (e.g., church communities) and practices (e.g., prayer and Scripture readings) to help them cope with post-immigration stress and its related problems. Immigrants’ resistance to counselling in their host country is not uncommon, since counselling might be an unconventional way of dealing with mental health issues in their homeland (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2009; Amadala, 2012). Furthermore, in some cultures (e.g., Africa and the Caribbean), counselling is often stigmatized and forbidden based on the mislabelling of people seeking counselling as struggling with severe mental health issues (Lago, 2006; McKenzie-Mavinga, 2009; McKenzie et al., 2011).

From a personal perspective, I was also resistant to counselling as a way to help with my post-immigration adjustment issues in Canada. My lived experience of racial and cultural discrimination damaged my sense of self, but my spiritual orientation in conjunction with counselling at a later stage of the acculturation process provided me with the personal agency to reconstruct that self. Many of the participants substantiated my lived experience as they initially voiced their resistance to counselling due to cultural stigma and taboo as well as valuing cultural privacy respectively.

**Cultural stigma and taboo.** Recent research by Nadeem, Lange, and Miranda (2008) noted that a large number of low-income, minority women (81 percent) tend to be more receptive to faith over medication for mental health issues. This finding was based on survey studies with 1,893 low-income immigrant and American-born Black, White, and Latina women in the U. S. Specifically, ethnic minorities were reported to rely more on their faith, more so than their White counterparts, who were the most likely to engage in mental health treatments. The findings of this U.S. research attest to the fact that a large number of ethnic minority women view
conventional mental health treatment as a foreign concept, and thus, may feel it would be ineffective at meeting their psychological needs. Consequently, they gravitate towards their faith for inner strength and empowerment. Therefore, Canadian-based research is required to further explore this issue among Black Caribbean women, considering that people of African descent make up the third largest of Canada’s visible minority group at 17 percent (Milan & Tran, 2004).

Expanding on the results of the above U.S. study, a few participants cited cultural taboo and stigma as their initial reluctance to access counselling. This stance reflects findings from Schreiber and colleagues’ (2000) work surrounding the cultural taboos associated with mental illness amongst Black West-Indian Canadian women that prevented them from seeking help to address their struggles with severe depression. Stigmatization against mental health and counselling is not uncommon within the Black community (Aryee, 2011; McKenzie et al., 2011; Sisley et al. 2011). Conclusive evidence from various studies completed largely with Black refugees and immigrant populations (e.g., Amadala, 2012; Canadian Collaboration for Immigrant and Refugee Health [CCIRH], 2011; Joseph, 2006; Sepali & Collins, 2008) confirms low utilization of mental health services by this population, irrespective of their report of higher levels of psychological distress. This outcome is unsettling and calls for counsellors interested in working with such populations to consider all aspects of their cultural identities for those who might be open to augment their faith with mental health practices.

Relative to this study, effort should be made by various mental health professionals to understand the Pentecostal practices of JCIW to help facilitate the counselling process and perhaps reduce the JCIW’s resistance to access counselling. It is important for counsellors to understand that spirituality plays a salient role in all dimensions of many JCIW’s cultural identities, and as such it should not be undervalued. I have come to recognize through the
participants’ narratives that spirituality is often not integrated into the counselling process. This lack of integration supports Canadian research finding, which suggests that most counsellors do not feel “competent, confident, and comfortable” in exploring their clients’ spiritual and religious world views in order to integrate these cultural dimensions into the counselling process (Plumb, 2011, p. 15). Aside from the cultural stigma and taboo expressed by many of the participants, they also talked about the expectations in the Jamaican culture to keep their personal affairs private.

Valuing privacy. When asked about seeking professional counselling to help them adjust to life in Canada, half of the participants admitted that they desired to keep personal matters private. Instead of counselling, they would rather speak to other members of their ethnic community who were affiliated with their faith and could help them normalize their experiences.

The participants’ responses coincided with a recent study conducted by Amadala (2012) on the resettlement experience of African refugee single mothers in Canada. The authors’ results revealed that some respondents reported experiencing psychological distress associated with the stress of resettlement. However, key reasons identified for them not accepting counselling was their hesitation about seeking help from a stranger, as well as their preference for keeping personal matters confidential.

Based on my cultural observation, I argue that the participants’ emphasis on privacy in this dissertation could likely be related to diverse attitudes towards mental illnesses and seeking mental health support in the Jamaican culture. Building on this argument, in some Black cultures, a common practice amongst a majority of the population is to keep their personal struggles within the family unit (Amadala, 2012; Boyd-Franklin, 1989). Generally, one is often deterred from seeking mental health support to cope with psychological distress. However, if
one needs to seek support in coping with distress, one is encouraged by family members to approach family and friends instead of mental health professionals, who are considered strangers and perhaps untrustworthy, particularly if they are of European descent (McCloud, 2011; Thompson, Bazile, & Akbar, 2004; Williams, 2011).

The possible understanding surrounding the mistrust of many counsellors of European descent can be attributed to their lack of understanding of the culture-specific values and beliefs of people of African descent. Additionally, immigrants often experience induced post-immigration issues (i.e., racism, classism, poverty, and discrimination), which are triggered by the systemic barriers imposed on them by the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture (Arthur & Collins, 2010a, 2010b; Mazama, 2002; Moodley & Murphy, 2010; Williams, 2011; Thompson-Rogers, 2013). That being said, I argue that tension may arise from differing values, beliefs, and discrepancies between JCIW’s cultural views and those of counsellors from the dominant culture whose perspective of their faith and religious practices may be prejudicial.

Additionally, for many people of Black Caribbean descent who are highly religious and spiritual (including Jamaicans), it might be an ingrained and misguided cultural belief that one’s struggles with mental illness might signify a sign of spiritual weakness. This form of spiritual weakness could be associated with the underlying belief that this person has wronged God in some way and is possibly being punished for his or her sinful actions (Gayle 2011; Wane & Sutherland, 2010; Wangoola, 2000). Although this misguided cultural belief was not presented in the current research findings, counsellors should be mindful of certain Black clients’ culture-specific beliefs and values. From this perspective, counsellors should work to create therapeutic space in counselling to gently challenge and explore these beliefs from a place of curiosity and nonjudgmental stance.
**Cultural shift towards counselling.** In recent years, a growing number of scholars working from a multicultural counselling framework have become invested in the overall mental health functioning of diverse immigrant populations, including Black people throughout the diasporas (Arthur & Collins, 2010a; McKenzie-Mavinga, 2009; Moodley, 2010a; Mpofu, 2011; Sisley et al., 2011; Sue & Lam, 2002; Vontress, 2003; Yakushko & Chronister, 2005). Through the collaborative work of multiculturally competent researchers with numerous clients of African descent, it became apparent that many of these clients were not familiar with western counselling processes (Moodley, Gielen, & Wu, 2012; Moodley, 2014; Parham, 2002; Westbrooks, 2003). Arguably, the unfamiliarity with a westernized framework for many Black immigrants, primarily women, might be multilayered due to a wide range of factors. These factors may include “fear of discrimination and stigmatization, denial of mental illness, fear of the unknown consequence of being diagnosed with mental illness (i.e., deportation, separation from family, losing children), mistrust of westernised counselling practices, as well as the multiple roles and responsibilities of women within the culture to support the family” (Donnelly et al., 2011, p. 282). Further, according to Amadala (2012), some immigrant clients might not seek counselling services due to a lack of knowledge about what counselling entails and how it can benefit them. Relevant to some of the JCIW who are devout Pentecostals in the current investigation, they might embrace the misperception that seeking professional help means that they are weak and lack spiritual resiliency. As such, the aforementioned multilayered factors might result in some Black immigrant women’s delay in their professional help-seeking via counselling to circumvent mental illness and instead depend solely on their faith. However, despite some initial hesitation to professional help-seeking by a few of the participants, further expansion on the subject of counselling improved their amenability to seeking help to cope with potential post-immigration
struggles. Moreover, these women did not view their willingness to seek counselling as contingent on their faith, but more of a personal choice that the Pentecostal faith would support. The participants were also receptive to seeking spiritually-wise counselling to achieve a sense of normalcy in their host country (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2009).

**Spiritually-wise counselling.** Another key observation from the participants was that they did not differentiate between seeking counselling from a Christian counsellor as opposed to a secular counsellor, which I found interesting considering their strong religious convictions in all aspects of their cultural identities. This observation contradicts McCloud’s (2011) proposition that often many people in the Black community feel that seeking counselling is contrary to being a Christian. Fostering a spiritually-wise counselling environment that facilitates understanding and meaning-making for diverse clients, counsellors should consider Miller’s (2003) argument:

> Counsellors do not have to be religious . . . because the option of having God or a Higher Power as part of one’s perspective on the world is up to the client. It is the quality of the client’s perspective that matters to the counsellor; quality in the sense that the perspective is consistent and helpful in living and coping in one’s environment. Counselling is done within the client’s perspective, thereby showing a respect for the client’s beliefs and values. (p. 134)

The above author’s perspective fits within the social constructionist framework that guides this study. Mindful of accepting multiple realities, counsellors are required to reflect on their own biases, values, and assumptions, in order to establish cultural sensitivity towards diverse clients’ cultural and religious world views (Arredondo et al., 1996; Arthur & Collins, 2005, 2010a). The women in this study were personally open to “seeking spiritually-wise counselling” from
individuals, irrespective of their race or spiritual beliefs and values, when this form of counselling is fostered in a respectful and sensitive way. Further, these JCIW did not conceptualize counselling as a form of indictment or weakness of their faith (McCloud, 2011), but rather a useful tool to supplement their spiritual beliefs and values. That being said, the JCIW in this research were explicit in their stance that counsellors should be sensitive to their Pentecostal beliefs and practices.

With this in mind, psychotherapy studies examining treatment outcomes among people of African descent recognize an unusually high attrition rate of early termination (Aryee, 2011; Sue & Lam, 2002; McKenzie et al., 2011). This outcome pertains to potential clients who might be JCIW of Pentecostal faith in that these clients’ spiritual values might clash with secular counsellors who could misunderstand their belief systems (Dixon & Arthur, 2014). That being said, this misunderstanding could potentially result in some secular counsellors showing insensitivity towards JCIW’s Pentecostal orientation. Such counsellors are challenged to adapt a culturally relevant counselling approach that considers and understands the impact of multiple contexts of immigrant women’s lives, particularly JCIW.

Being sensitive to the stories of the participants, I adopted a Culture-Infused Counselling (CIC) stance, which is grounded in Arthur and Collins’s (2010a, 2010b) CIC model. I believe that the tenets of this model, which emphasizes three key domains as foundations for professional practice (i.e., counsellor awareness of self, counsellor awareness of the client, and the working alliance) provide a relevant counselling approach for counsellors interested in working with JCIW of the Pentecostal faith who value spirituality as a key aspect of their cultural identities. An important aspect of the CIC model is the focus given to social justice within the working alliance domain, wherein counsellors are challenged to embrace a social
justice agenda in their work with diverse clients. I argue that applying a social justice lens to spiritually-wise counselling practices with JCIW of the Pentecostal faith has implications for how this population is viewed in a multicultural setting and the direction of relevant interventions for counsellors interested in working with this population (Collins, Arthur, McMahon, & Bisson, 2014).

**Spiritual sensitivity.** I draw on Arthur and Collins’s (2010a, 2010b) CIC model in the multicultural counselling scholarship to inform this discussion. The CIC model increases counsellors’ understanding of culture as a broad concept that encompasses salient dimensions of one’s identity including gender, race, spirituality, and their intersections (Collins et al., 2014). By utilizing a CIC model in their work with JCIW of the Pentecostal faith, counsellors can help to reduce the potential pathologizing of their spiritual and religious beliefs and experiences, which are salient to their cultural identity reconstructions. Demonstrating respect for the Pentecostal practices of JCIW means that counsellors should be willing to create a safe space wherein these clients’ cultural experiences are validated and infused in all aspects of the counselling process (Arthur & Collins, 2010a, 2010b; McWhirter, 1994, 1998). The CIC model invites counselling professionals to reflect on their professional practice and areas of competencies when working with clients of diverse-specific backgrounds like Black Pentecostal clients in the diaspora.

In critiquing Arthur and Collins’s (2010b) CIC model, I posit that the authors put forth a unique framework that values culture and places emphasis on the infusing of all dimensions of culture in counselling work. However, one might argue that the CIC model falls short in the area of practical skill-based application, such as how to facilitate the key dimensions of religion and spirituality, which are considered salient for certain cultural groups (e.g., JCIW) within Canada.
Despite this limitation, I believe that with time and ongoing research the CIC model can become more applicable to diverse populations whose faith should be integrated into counselling work as a key aspect of their cultural identity.

I would further add that for this study, the CIC model (Arthur & Collins 2010b) could be augmented with the Afrocentric model (Pellebon, 2007; Mazama, 2001) in working with JCIW of the Pentecostal faith. Although both models address the relevance of culture, the Afrocentric model places value on the intrinsic spiritual dimension of Blacks, which is perhaps downplayed in the CIC model. However, in critiquing the Afrocentric model, I tend to question the radical stance taken by proponents of the model (e.g., Asante, 2003, p. 11) in the advancement of a “collective consciousness of Afrocentricity.” According to Asante (2003), Blacks across the diasporas should “Teach it [Afrocentricity]! Practice it! And victory will surely come as we carry out the Afrocentric mission to humanize the Universe” (p. 11). Taking a critical stance, I object to Asante’s radical approach to “Afrocentricize” the entire universe. Rather, I argue for a more balanced perspective from both the CIC model and the Afrocentric model that considers the lived experiences of diverse individuals without dehumanizing any particular cultural group. Cultural acceptance and appreciation should be extended cross-culturally to diverse immigrants’ spiritual and religious world views, irrespective of how these world views might deviate from westernized traditions.

In honouring the spiritual experiences of the participants in this study, counsellors have an ethical responsibility to increase critical awareness of their faith practices in order to provide spiritually sensitive counselling. Validating the above perspective, one participant’s comments reflected her position, “It’s about respect and sensitivity . . . even if [counsellors] might not be able to fully understand.” For example, if a counsellor working with a Pentecostal client has
limited understanding of the client’s faith practice to speak in tongues and it occurs in the session, this counsellor “might think something else is happening so counsellors got to respect Pentecostal clients’ faith” (Kay). “Counsellors working within a multicultural framework should celebrate clients’ diverse and unique experiences as they consider the [holistic] aspects of Pentecostal clients and get to know them in different areas of their lives” (Faye).

Borrowing from Moodley’s (2009) work, I propose that mental health professionals working in the areas of counselling, psychology, and psychotherapy should prioritize collaborating care with Pentecostal clients in an effort to bring their “voices to the inside of the therapeutic space” (p. 297). For some JCIW clients, prioritizing care might mean the counsellor’s responsibility to ask appropriate questions to know them better and to demonstrate sensitivity towards their faith practices. Past and current scholarships (e.g., Arekion, 2010; Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997; Castelein, 1984; Hagin, 2011; Kildahl, 1972; Nolen, 2010) on the Pentecostal faith support many of the participants’ views that some outsiders of the faith, including secular counsellors, might “have preconceived ideas of who [Pentecostals] are and how [they] think.” Therefore, these women suggested that counsellors tend not to deal with the situation at hand, but what they perceive Pentecostals to be, which might impede the fluidity and transparency of the counselling process (Dixon & Arthur, 2014). Through a growing understanding of JCIW’s Pentecostal faith, counsellors can help them transition into Canadian culture by enhancing their counselling competency of these potential clients.

By enhancing their competency around these clients’ faith practices, counsellors can help to empower JCIW to deal with post-immigration stressors (Mpofu, 2011; Yakushko & Chronister, 2005). Articulating the need for spiritual sensitivity in the counselling profession, one participant (Warrior Princess) indicates that “[counsellors] need to be sensitive, patient, and
listen to the lived experiences of JCIW.” Warrior Princess emphasized that “counsellors should try to understand Pentecostal clients and counsel them from a Bible based perspective.” Borrowing from Plumb’s (2011) stance, counsellors interested in working with diverse immigrant clients should make the effort to increase their confidence, competence, and comfort levels to better acknowledge and incorporate their own spiritual and religious dimensions into counselling to facilitate clients’ cultural identity reconstruction processes. Reluctance to incorporate spiritual and religious dimensions as a means to facilitate clients’ cultural identity reconstruction process might further stigmatize their human suffering, which in turn can continue to maintain a culture of marginalization and ongoing isolation (Dujmic, 2013). Further, the argument can be made that counsellors’ silence in any degree of clients’ sufferings can potentially impact clients’ humanity as well as their ability to change (Dujmic, 2013).

Considering the importance of JCIW’s spiritual and religious cultural dimensions, I argue that increased cultural competency in the CIC and the Afrocentric models is necessary for multiculturally competent counsellors. Enhanced knowledge of these models, I believe, will equip counsellors with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to provide equitable treatment to diverse populations such as JCIW.

**Taking action.** According to Wald, Silverman, and Fridy (2005), over the past two decades there has been a resurgence of diversity of religious expressions in political spheres. The authors argue such religious expressions are often demonstrated by religious activists advocating for the liberty of oppressed minorities (e.g., people of African descent). Conversely, the political actions of religious activists can reinforce the dominance of certain social groups (e.g., White Anglo-Saxon males) in westernized cultures (Richards & O’Brien, 2012; Wald et al., 2005). I further agree with some scholars that “religion may be active or quiescent,
supportive or subversive of the dominant order” (Wald et al., 2005, p. 140). With a new appreciation for the political force of religious expression, one can argue that a growing number of women within the Black Pentecostal church are engaging in various forms of activism and leadership both inside and outside of the church community.

Supporting the above premise, I draw attention to Peifer’s (2015) quote that, “We [Christians] will be greatly aided in our contemporary culture, if we come to believe that Jesus set the precedent, that is, set the direction in which people were to follow in their relationship to women and the utilization of their [women’s] gifts for leadership.” Outside of the Pentecostal faith, I realize that this quote might not appear relevant. However, I believe that Peifer’s (2015) words would resonate with the women in this study who view their leadership positions in the church as a form of activism to empower themselves and others through their faith. In reference to one of the JCIW in the study, it is hoped that the “government would realize the part the church plays and give us that kind of support because we are more influential than any institution that they can establish. They don’t understand the role of the church in the community” (Andrea). Reflecting on the lived experiences of the participants, I posit that the JCIW in the current investigation could be viewed as religious activists in their own rights. This is evident in their attempt to assert with “self-confidence that their Pentecostal faith dictates a certain political stance” in the wider Canadian society (Wald et al., 2005, pp. 140-141). Although, the women feel that the beneficial role of the church in bringing about social and political change is not fully recognized and embraced at the governmental level. Building upon extant research on Black women and activism in the Black church (Thompson-Rogers, 2013; Carpenter, 2001; Gayle, 2011; Williams, 2010), this study demonstrates that JCIW are actively creating social change through advocacy and education.
**Advocacy.** Through the critical work of social scientists who examine the political dimension of religion, one can argue that “most religious traditions contain rich and nuanced bodies of doctrine that can be mined [extracted] to support a wide variety of political positions” (Wald et al., 2005, p. 141). This argument has implications within the Pentecostal faith tradition in that the participants emphasized their desires to advance themselves academically with hopes to be change agents at both the micro and macro levels of society, including the political arenas. According to Carpenter (2001), since the time of slavery, Black women both participated in and assumed advocacy and leadership roles in religion that extended beyond the domains of the Black church.

Further, the Black church has served as a platform for advocacy work for many Black women in the diasporas (Thompson-Rogers, 2013). For example, historical and contemporary Black women such as Rosa Parks (Parks, 2000), Sojourner Truth (Washington, 2011), and Harriet Tubman (Peters & Anderson, 2006) were considered change agents in their socio-cultural contexts. Guided by the collective support from the Black church, these women were motivated by their spiritual convictions to ignite socio-political and racio-cultural changes within the dominant society. With their earned merits as activists and advocates, one could argue that these women advocated for the infiltration of broader social justice movements such as human rights efforts to abolish slavery and other forms of oppression, primarily against Black women.

Similar to the above Black women activists, all the women in this study, including myself, viewed ourselves as advocates based on our lived experiences in a Canadian context: educator and scholar (myself), evangelist (Rosemarie and Faye), communicator (Kay), motivational speaker (Carol), pastor (Andrea), and mentor (Warrior Princess). As advocates, the women recognized that they might have their own biases that they cannot allow to influence how
they engage with others outside of their faith community. The women displayed a great level of respect for Canada’s multicultural milieu. They further talked about the importance of respecting other’s beliefs and values, irrespective of their cultural backgrounds and religious affiliations.

Based on my interactions with the participants, I became aware that their advocacy efforts are hidden from mainstream knowledge, perhaps because as one participant (Andrea) reported, some people have “preconceived notions about the Pentecostal faith.” It is perhaps worth noting that the preconceived notions held by some outsiders might limit the “profound unshaken belief in the spiritual power” of JCIW who are Pentecostals to transform mainstream Canadian culture (Hooks, 1992, p. 8). Through increased cultural awareness, the participants expressed an eagerness to fight against various forms of cultural oppressions including racism, sexism, classism, and religious discrimination. As strong advocates for equal gender rights and employment opportunities, the participants feel a sense of empowerment through their Pentecostal faith to “live with integrity and oneness [with the dominant culture] despite oppressive social realities” (Hooks, 1992, p. 8). This study acknowledges that based on the scarcity of awareness of JCIW’s lived experiences of the Pentecostal faith within the multicultural counselling and social sciences literatures, their attempts to ignite change through advocacy and activism warrants critical investigation because their stories appear to be ignored in western knowledge.

**Education.** Increased education amongst women of the Pentecostal faith has created space for them to facilitate transformative change for diverse non-dominant groups on such issues as gender role discourse and women leadership (Johns, 2010; Peifer, 2015; Thompson-Rogers, 2013; Toulis, 1997). Through the lived experiences of the JCIW in the current study, it
became evident that the Pentecostal church represents an educational institution that equips them with the spiritual resilience needed to withstand the plights of post-immigration stressors, namely racism and other forms of discrimination within the dominant culture. Numerous past studies (e.g., Kelsey, 1964; Kiev, 1964; Kildahl, 1972) on speaking in tongues suggest that Pentecostals tend to display a variety of aberrant behaviours that relate to psychological maladjustment. Additionally, past researchers described Pentecostals who speak in tongues as “disturbed persons” (Lapsley & Simpson, 1964, pp. 20-21); the “pathological maladjustment” of such persons is usually observed in “only lower-middle class persons in urban and rural areas” (Pattison, 1968, pp. 73-78). The findings in this study contradict the above implication that Pentecostals are often psychologically disturbed in their emotional presentation. The women in this study appeared as well-adjusted individuals with advanced educational pursuits and progressive SES positionings.

Contrary to the idea that many individuals who engage in glossalalic forms of worship are “poor, uneducated, and illiterate” (Macchia, 1999, p. 18), the JCIW who participated in this study were highly intelligent, with many of them currently pursuing graduate degrees. These women value education as they see it as a way to take action as well as “make educated decisions” as change agents in their community (Warrior Princess). Some of the women emphasized the importance of acquiring higher education as a means to empower themselves to challenge socio-cultural patriarchal views in the church relative to gender role discourse. In the eloquent words of one participant (Warrior Princess), educated women of the Pentecostal faith are “making different and better decisions . . . as opposed to making [decisions] that are ignorant and attached to religiosity.”
Reflecting on the current subtheme of education, I can surmise that education will provide opportunities for JCIW of the Pentecostal faith to critically engage in dialogues, such as this research, that provides a well-rounded view of their lived experiences of cultural identity reconstruction. Advanced education can provide JCIW with the critical thinking skills to question traditional views within the Pentecostal faith that often promote gender inequality and reinforce the submissiveness and subservience of women (Bessey, 2013; Shirer, 2011).

In summary, I observed that the participants in this dissertation saw their faith as a possible spiritual weapon of engagement that empowers them to cope with post-immigration difficulties in Canada. Being a woman of the Pentecostal faith with liberal views, as well as adopting a social constructionist perspective, I have come to reconcile my faith with Scriptures that promote growth, empowerment, and equality for all humanity. The women in this study reinforced empowerment and strength through their continuous faith practices. Further, in telling their stories of cultural identity reconstruction using Pentecostal faith, JCIW are engaging in a dialogue that allows others to understand the unique role that faith plays in their reconstructed lives. The participants are able to generate new meanings about their faith through the process of story sharing. Spiritually driven to advocate for what they believe in and to take action through education, I profess that JCIW’s faith is a “form of resistance and activism” against a spiritually enslaved mind within the Pentecostal faith (Gayle, 2011, p. 107). Instead of being conformists, these women’s faith continues to equip them with the necessary tools to take action in every detail of their lived experiences.

**Strengths of the Current Study**

This Heuristic Inquiry (HI) study has many strengths that I would like to address. I consider the utilization of a heuristic methodology one of the key strengths of this investigation.
As the guiding paradigm for this investigation, this heuristic design created space for me to explore a personal phenomenon that I was passionate about. Undertaking the current study positioned me as an emerging scholar and psychologist in training to fully understand the phenomenon in question, in order to contribute new knowledge to the multicultural counselling literature. The qualitative nature of this HI study encouraged me to engage subjectively with the research as well as with the stories of the participants. Arguably, the richness of the participants’ generated stories from employing this HI can be viewed as a source of strength, as it adds to our understanding of the importance of socio-cultural contexts within which JCIW of Pentecostal faith reconstruct meaning in their lives.

Another identified strength is the postmodernist social constructionist framework that guides this study. This framework privileges multiple realities and emphasizes the negotiation of meaning-making through social interactions that bring forth diverse understanding (Andrews, 2012; Lock & Strong, 2010; Shotter, 1993). It further posits that the “way we understand the world is a product of a historical process of interaction and negotiation between groups of people” (McLeod, 1997, p. 378). Through story sharing, the participants were able to bring unique perspectives to their lived experiences and reconstruct new meaning in the process. Adopting a social constructionist stance, I ensured that equal value was given to the subjective experience of each participant without privileging one person’s story over another. Although all of the women valued their Pentecostal faith experiences, I was mindful that space needed to be created to facilitate a safe space for each woman to reconstruct their own meaning-making and subjective reality (Miller, 2003).

I also view the multicultural counselling framework in which this study is grounded as beneficial. Considering that multicultural counselling is concerned with broader systemic issues
that impacts one’s perspective, behaviour, socio-cultural contexts, and overall emotional functioning (Arthur & Collins, 2005), the lived experiences of JCIW fit within this framework. Furthermore, Arthur and Collins’s (2010a, 2010b) CIC model adds value to the framework of multicultural counselling as it recognizes the value of culture as a whole entity with various dimensions including gender, religion, spirituality, and race, which are all salient for the women who participated in this study.

A notable attribute of this research is the provision to focus on a group of people (i.e., JCIW) and a phenomenon (i.e., Pentecostal faith) that has been given little attention in the multicultural counselling scholarship. Given that religion represents a significant aspect in the lived experiences of JCIW, I felt the need to explore its effectiveness in their cultural identity reconstruction. Hence, situating JCIW’s Pentecostal faith in an Afrocentric model, I believe, is important since it addresses the spiritual dimension of Black people of African descent. The Afrocentric model has a strong influence within the discipline of social work but this influence can also be applied to the multicultural counselling context, particularly in reference to the spiritual experiences of diverse Black populations across the diasporas.

As a conceptual model, Afrocentricism validates the spiritual dimension of numerous Black individuals and it recognizes the role of spirituality as an innate force in their abilities to survive oppression within dominant cultures such as Canada. A criticism of the model is its argument for the historical impact of Christianity as a European religion in the marginalization and racialization of Blacks. However, I argue that the JCIW in this study are able to reconcile this argument through a spiritual force of love and forgiveness for all of humanity; they are motivated by the spiritual belief that “God will make a way out of no way” (Harvey et al., 2012, p. 34). That being said, the Afrocentric model adds theoretical value to this research.
Limitations of the Current Study

The HI methodology used in the present study had limitations that must be identified. While also viewed as a strength, a key limitation is that HI study involves a subjective and interpretive process that is undertaken by the primary researcher. Through member checking (Carlson, 2010), participants were able to authenticate the findings that emerged from the data, thus increasing the trustworthiness of this research. While all efforts were made to ensure accuracy of this interpretation, there is potential for the interpretive results to be considered somewhat biased. Hence, the generated results might not be representative of the experiences of the participants in this study. To limit the potential bias of this research based on my close connection to the phenomenon being studied, I engaged in ongoing reflective self-awareness, reflexive self-awareness, and critical reflectivity (Kondrat, 1999). The above concepts were earlier addressed in the chapter. I also invited support from outsiders of my faith who were not invested in this research to get diverse perspectives. Additionally, I requested the insights of my colleagues and sought feedback from my research supervisor to ensure accuracy of the results.

For this study, sample size is another potential limitation to be addressed. As the sample size for this study may be considered small with six participants, the findings cannot be generalized to the larger population (Creswell, 2007; Smith, 2003). In my research, I continued to interview participants until saturation was achieved such that I no longer gained new information. Using this procedure, I therefore feel confident that the data reflects the meanings of the multiple lived experiences of JCIW’s cultural identity reconstruction through the Pentecostal faith. Despite the limited generalizability of this study, the generated findings from the collective lived experiences of these women are perhaps applicable to other Black Caribbean immigrant women who struggle with post-immigration stressors.
Another limitation to be considered is that all the participants were of Jamaican descent and are not representative of the ethno-cultural diversity of the Caribbean populations in Canada. Therefore, there is no assurance that the participants who were involved in this study did not systematically differ from other ethno-cultural groups who were excluded from the study (e.g., Trinidadian, Guyanese, Vincentian, and Barbadians). With access to a larger and more racially diverse sample of participants, future studies can provide indications of important strategies for working with JCIW of the Pentecostal faith, in order to draw more conclusive evidence from the findings.

Additionally, the data for this investigation were collected through self-report methods. Therefore, accurate depictions of the participants’ responses were dependent on their recollected memories of post-immigration events. Subsequently, there is the possibility for selective recall of events by participants based on their perception and memory. An extension of participants’ selective recall of events is perhaps the tendency for them to overemphasize certain aspects of their lived experiences while underemphasizing other aspects of their stories, which could skew the data in favour of the more novel events (Amadala, 2012; Kennedy, 2013).

A further limitation of this HI research possibly relates to gender. Men were excluded from the study based on research findings that Black Caribbean women tend to be more religious and spiritual than their male counterparts as well as individuals of European descent (Chatters et al., 2008, 2009). Future research could benefit for the collective voices of both genders to determine if similarities and differences exist in how they are able to navigate the cultural identity reconstruction process through the utilization of the Pentecostal faith.

Moreover, volunteer bias could be considered as a limitation to this study as only participants who may have perceived high levels of post-immigration stressors may have
expressed interest to participate in the study (Djuraskovic, 2014; Kennedy, 2013). Lastly, although face-to-face semi-structured interviews allowed for greater flexibility in gathering rich data, it may also be considered limited in that the participants may have consciously or unconsciously modified their responses to meet the approval of the researcher (Smith, 2003).

Implications of the Findings for Theory, Research, and Practice

The current research that explores the Pentecostal faith’s role in reconstructing JCIW’s cultural identities is original and significant given immigration statistics and the importance of cultural identity to mental health functioning (Dixon & Arthur, 2014; McKenzie et al., 2011). With the understanding that mainstream counselling psychology does not always consider the importance of spirituality in the lived experiences of non-dominant groups such as JCIW, the current study will help to bridge potential gaps in the literature. Furthermore, this work is a step forward in enhancing counsellors’ and psychologists’ multicultural competency. There are many implications to be considered for the nature of this HI study. Taking a broad approach, I will discuss the implications of this heuristic study and the relevance of its findings for theory, research, and practice.

Implications for Theory

Existing literature on theories of religious and spiritual coping among people of African descent tends to come from research completed in the United States (Chatters et al., 2008; Fukuyama & Sevig, 1999; Taylor et al., 2007, 2010) and Britain (Kiev, 1964; Toulis, 1997), with limited attention given to the growing Black Caribbean immigrant population in Canada. Further, the concept of religiosity and spirituality is often extended to Christianity as the dominant religion for people of African descent without recognizing the many marginalized sub-groups that exist within Christianity, such as Pentecostalism. As such, theories examining
religious and spiritual coping should consider that Pentecostalism is practiced by a large number of Black Caribbean immigrants. For these people, the Pentecostal faith is a significant aspect of their cultural identity reconstruction post-immigration, and their methods of coping might produce theoretical variations from other denominations within Christianity. However, the findings in the study were consistent with the theoretical implication of prior research on religious and spiritual coping in relation to overall mental health functioning (Dixon & Wilcox, in press; Koenig, 2008; Pargament, 1997, 2013).

Another key research area to consider for theoretical advancement is existing cultural identity development models that do not sufficiently address the unique experiences of Black Caribbean immigrants. Critiques against existing culturally identity models (e.g., Cross model and the Helms model or Minority Identity Development Model) are that they provide broad generalization for diverse people of African descent (Cross, 1971, 1978; Helms, 1995). Additionally, the scholars’ models tend to exclude the spiritual and religious dimensions of Black Caribbean people, while focusing exclusively on race and ethnicity as common variables within and across defined race and ethnic group comparisons for people of African descent (Branch & Young, 2006; Sullivan & Esmail, 2012). The results from this study provided evidence to support the importance of spiritual and religious dimensions in the cultural identity reconstruction process for JCIW who practice the Pentecostal faith. Such a finding will benefit the multicultural counselling scholarship in terms of engendering an understanding of the spiritual practices of JCIW, as well as advancing knowledge of the spiritual dimension of the complex processes of acculturation and cultural identity reconstruction.

Contrary to Cross’s and Helm’s theoretical models, the Afrocentric model (Asante, 1980, 1990) appears to be an appropriate framework to better understand the spiritual dimension of
Black Caribbean immigrants. Essentially, this model gives much needed attention to the spiritual nature of the above population’s cultural identity to circumvent the dominant impact of racism and other forms of oppression that they encounter across the diasporas. Though the spiritual tenet of the Afrocentric model has relevance to many people of Black Caribbean descent, its strong objection of Christianity as a form of oppressive religion could be viewed as a critique that needs further theoretical exploration. One might argue that this exploration would serve valuable for myriad Black Pentecostals who view their faith as a progressive, transformative, and liberating global Movement, as opposed to a conservative, stagnant, and oppressive religious force embraced by many fundamentalists within the faith. Moreover, such exploration would be beneficial to outline how the Afrocentric model could be used intentionally to help mental health professionals who are interested in working with diverse Canadian immigrant groups, including JCIW.

Additionally, I believe that investigating the “dark side” of the Pentecostal faith among various non-dominant groups, including Jamaican Canadian immigrant populations, could potentially advance theoretical knowledge to the multicultural counselling literature. In reference to the Pentecostal faith, researchers could investigate both the negative and positive aspects of religious coping to determine whether or not it deviates from the premise of the Afrocentric model that highlights the innate spiritual dimension of people of African heritage. Such research could further investigate whether or not there exists an adverse impact on Pentecostal believers’ overall functioning based on the possibility of unrealistic religious thinking patterns, which are likely related to their misinterpretation of Scriptures. By undertaking the research suggested above, the outcome would have theoretical implication for counsellors. As such, counsellors would be able to educate themselves about the costs and
benefits of the Pentecostal faith prior to engaging potential clients (Dixon & Wilcox, in press). By so doing, counsellors would be in a better position to psychoeducate clients with the appropriate theoretical insights needed to promote clients’ agencies without counsellors imposing their own world views on clients.

Implications for Future Research

In the framework of multicultural counselling, HI offers significant contributions as an exploratory approach to research that is concerned with the understanding of human experiences (Hiles, 2008; Patton, 1990). As previously mentioned, multicultural counselling addresses various dimensions of culture, including religion and gender (APA, 1993; Arthur & Collins, 2010b). Within culturally diverse contexts, utilizing HI methodology to study culturally diverse phenomena has the potential to increase researchers’ self-awareness and understanding of particular meanings that individuals attach to their experiences (Dixon, 2014a; West, 2001). As determined by a growing number of HI researchers (e.g., Alderson, 1998; Christmas, 1991; Djuraskovic, 2006, 2014; Freeman 2012; Nzojibwami, 2009; Moustakas, 1990; Snyder, 2012), the flexibility of the HI approach allows me as the primary researcher the time and space to incorporate individual and collective voices, in order for them to be validated and heard.

According to Morrow (2005, 2007), counselling psychologists have been in the forefront, calling for expanded methodological diversity, in particular qualitative research methods, to adequately address multicultural agendas. In answer to this call for methodological diversification and expansion (Ponterotto, 2005), HI methodology might be considered groundbreaking in the field of counselling psychology research because it allows for exploration and discovery of lived experiences (Sela-Smith, 1999, 2001, 2002). This study emphasizes the need for continued efforts to be placed on qualitative research that incorporates the subjective
experiences of participants for richer data perspectives. Through the stories of the participants, I have demonstrated that multicultural counselling scholarship would benefit from research that considers the inclusive voices of various non-dominant groups (i.e., JCIW) within Canada for whom faith represents a key aspect of their post-immigration cultural identities.

Additionally, culturally based research would be helpful to look at the collectivistic values of Black Caribbean women, which differ from western individualistic values (Sue & Sue, 1990, 2003). The extension of such research could examine how these individualistic values influence counsellors’ assessments, diagnoses, and treatments of Black Caribbean immigrant women. Research inquiry in multicultural counselling is also encouraged to explore unique ways in which one’s religious beliefs are influential in the development of skills to cope with, survive, and flourish in a significantly different milieu (C. DePass, personal communication, May 2, 2013). Such innovative inquiry would have both national and international applications across diasporas. It would also be interesting to consider the experiences of people of Jamaican heritage who are Canadian-born to determine how they conceptualize their cultural identity reconstruction relative to spirituality and religiosity. By testing this hypothesis, we might be better able to understand how these individuals define their cultural identity and whether or not faith plays a role in this process.

Further, studies exploring the integrative practices of secular counsellors who work with women of the Pentecostal faith and the receptivity of these women to these secular approaches would add substantially to the multicultural counselling literature. According to McCloud (2011), numerous people in the Black community feel that seeking counselling to deal with mental health issues conflicts with their belief systems as Christians. Contrary to this revelation, findings from this study showed that participants were receptive to working with mental health
professionals including secular counsellors if they were respectful and sensitive to their faith practices. According to Palmer and Laungani (1999), it is also possible for counsellors from different cultural backgrounds to work effectively with African Canadian clients if they have increased knowledge of their complex socio-cultural and historical issues including “individual, institutional, and cultural racism” (p. 101). This current research is timely as viewing issues from a cultural perspective is vitally important if we are to coexist and understand each other in our multicultural society. Therefore, policymakers and mental health professionals working with Black immigrant women need to recognize the value these women place on cultural faith-based practices. One participant made it clear that counsellors working with JCIW of the Pentecostal faith should consider working from a Bible-based perspective within the context of their socio-cultural contexts. Therefore, researchers need to be aware that spirituality and the role of the church in African Canadian culture are factors that influence their cultural identity reconstruction; hence, these facts should not be downplayed (Palmer & Paungani, 1999).

In practical terms, researchers interested in investigating this faith-driven population must understand this group’s history, cultural values, conflicts, and coping mechanisms (Palmer & Laungani, 1999). Conversely, researchers need to recognize possible biases, assumptions, and prejudices that they might have against this cultural group, which might interfere with potential outcomes generated from their investigations.

**Implications for Practice**

The relevance of HI to multicultural counselling and psychology is that it “derives knowledge and experience from the empirical world through dialogue with one’s self and others” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 173). In fact, Moustakas argued that HI methodology is useful for the therapy process because it explicitly makes the subjective experience of practicing therapy
accessible through self-reflection (Stevens, 2006). In support of this argument, engaging in self-reflection as an HI researcher has helped me become particularly attuned to the needs and interests of diverse clients in various counselling contexts. This self-reflective process challenges me to consider multiple levels of construction shaped by language from the lived experiences of potential clients that I interact with throughout my current training as a psychologist.

In the context of multicultural counselling practice, counsellors’ self-reflection on their limitations working with certain non-dominant cultural groups (e.g., African immigrant clients) connects to the domain of cultural self-awareness proposed by Arthur and Collins (2010b) in their model of Culture-Infused Counselling (CIC). In this domain, counsellors are challenged to demonstrate active awareness of their own personal assumptions, values, and biases (Collins & Arthur, 2010b; Collins et al., 2014), which are important in exploring the depth and complexity of the human experience in HI research (Morrow, 2007). Considering that the number of immigrants coming to Canada has grown in recent years, mental health professionals—including counsellors and psychologists—working within a multicultural framework are challenged by the ethical standards that govern their professions. This means that mental health professionals are encouraged to respect the cultural values of their clients regardless of race, gender, and religious orientations (Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association, 2007; Canadian Psychological Association, 2000).

In multicultural research settings, the engagement of dialogue between the researcher and participants allows for deeper understanding and creation of new meanings (Dixon, 2014a; Djuraskovic, 2014). Moustakas (1990) asserted that “our most significant awarenesses are developed from our own internal searches, and from attunement and empathic understandings of
others” (p. 26). In support of this stance, one can argue that multicultural counselling invites counsellors to use empathy as a major heuristic tool in that counsellors may regard client empowerment as a legitimate and central purpose of the therapeutic alliance (Belgrave & Allison, 2013; Birchard, 2006). The collaborative nature of multicultural counselling encourages counsellors to join clients in a process of HI, which allows clients to develop their own stories and facilitates deeper understandings of their lived experiences (Nzojibwami, 2009). Therefore, the argument can be made that “perhaps the essence of multicultural counselling is respect for cultural influences while simultaneously holding a sense of reverence for the personal process and development of the client” (Nzojibwami, 2009, p. 87). This argument stands in line with a relational view of HI (Rose & Loewenthal, 2006), which might consider understanding of the self in relation to others’ perspectives.

From this relational perspective, embracing socially responsible counselling is important for counsellors who practice within Arthur and Collins’s (2010a) CIC model, which emphasizes competency in social justice within the working alliance domain. According to Dujmic (2013), socially responsible counselling values individual cultural and social contexts, personal identities, and the uniqueness of the lived experiences of diverse individuals, including immigrants and refugees. Such an approach to counselling requires multiculturally competent counsellors to create a safe space in which contexts, as well as the fluidity of lived experiences, are freely shared and meaning is created and co-created between counsellors and clients (Dujmic, 2013). I posit that when working with JCIW clients, this fluidity should be supported by mutual trust and respect, as well as counsellors’ willingness to be informed about the clients’ socio-cultural contexts, including their intrinsic commitment to the Pentecostal faith.
Particularly for JCIW of the Pentecostal faith, the issue of social justice is germane and should be facilitated by counsellors in multicultural counselling practices whether through advocacy, activism, or education (Arthur & Collins, 2014; Ratts & Pedersen, 2014). The women in this study considered themselves to be advocates for change within their faith around gender role issues, as well as taking a stance to deconstruct misperceptions around their faith and reconstruct new understanding among nonbelievers. This discovery supports a recent qualitative study completed in the United States amongst a group of self-identified Christians who are actively promoting social justice in their community through their work with injustice causes, as well as taking on roles as mentors and educators within the community (Todd & Rufa, 2010).

Being in a perceived position of power, multiculturally competent counsellors should develop skills in culturally mindful work to better help diverse clients (Dixon, 2014b; Paré, 2013), particularly Caribbean women of Pentecostal faith who identify as religiously marginalized members of a non-dominant group (Dixon & Arthur, 2014). Embracing socially responsible counselling is also important for counsellors whose knowledge, skills, and attitudes are influenced by Arthur and Collins’s (2010a) CIC model, which emphasizes competency in social justice practice. Conscious of social action and advocacy in working with JCIW, counsellors ought to be prepared to move beyond an appreciation of cultural diversity to develop a deeper understanding of social justice perspective, in order to integrate this learning into their roles and methods of intervention (Arthur, 2005). As competently trained mental health professionals, counsellors are in a position of privilege to facilitate dialogue with JCIW. Such collaborative dialogues could address issues of social justice as a means to empower these women’s agency to effect change outside of their faith community (Erford, 2010; Kennedy & Arthur, 2014; Paré, 2014). The stories shared by these women affirmed their desire to develop
their social justice skills to become change agents at both the micro and macro levels of Canadian society. Therefore, counsellors’ enhanced training in the CIC model can provide counsellors with the competency needed to provide women with the empowerment they need to act on their sense of agency (Arthur and Collins 2010b, 2014; Brown et al., 2014).

Working with JCIW of the Pentecostal faith, the possibility exists that some may not build trusting relationships with counsellors outside of their culture, due to the lack of culturally-sensitive response towards their spiritual experiences (Dixon & Arthur, 2014). Further, these women may be more likely to view issues such as racism and marginalization as bottlenecks to introducing spirituality into counselling practices. With respect to counsellors, their reluctance to introduce spirituality into conventional counselling practices may be attributed to limited training and personal orientation. Therefore, the results of this study will aid institutional training programs to diversify the curriculums to include spirituality as a strategic way of increasing the level of competencies for counsellors who work with this target group.

This study can help policymakers, administrators of social programs, and stakeholders with interest in counselling outcomes to formulate practice-based policies (e.g., specialized training guidelines for counsellors) to work with Black Caribbean immigrant populations such as JCIW. It is hoped that the results of this research will lead to a positive change in the therapeutic relationship between clients and counsellors, not only among those focused within this studied group of clients, but also across other immigrant groups who are considered to be marginalized. There is the need to implement mental health policies, strategies, and programs to parallel the changes of an evolving and diversified Canadian society, particularly in the field of counselling psychology. Finally, exploring this area will contribute significantly to knowledge and to the existing literature for Black women of Caribbean descent within Canada.
Conclusion

Exploring my story as well as my participants’ stories and presenting our unique experiences could enhance multicultural competencies in counselling psychology and promote the psychosocial well-being of this non-dominant faith group. Within this research, I ensured openness to multiple perspectives by maintaining a balance between the participants’ stories and my own story when exploring the meaning-making of our experiences. A central component of multicultural counselling is respect for the world view of others. In the capacity for examining and accepting multiple realities as a counsellor and researcher, I was required to examine my own self-awareness and develop an understanding of my personal world view (Arredondo et al., 1996; Arthur & Collins, 2010b), as well as the experiential life of the participants (Polkinghorne, 2005). Undertaking this research has enhanced my professional development as an emerging scholar and a psychologist in training who is interested in creating change in the profession of counselling psychology. My choice of HI reinforced my passion to share my story, as well as to honour the experiences of my participants.

Multiculturally competent counsellors are situated in a unique position to influence the practice of counselling. As counsellors, we are privileged to work with diverse ethno-cultural non-dominant immigrant groups who are marginalized, and as such might characterize themselves as oppressed and powerless. It is incumbent on us as counselling professionals to enhance our learning of particular models (e.g., CIC model, Afrocentric model). Incorporated into the counselling process, these models are likely to enhance our understanding of particular non-dominant groups for whom faith plays a critical role in how they cope with post-immigration stress as they navigate ways to reconstruct their cultural identities.
I believe that research in this area will advance knowledge by challenging counsellors to learn alternative counselling modalities that integrate spirituality. New paradigm shifts in spiritual world views by counsellors promote greater self-awareness and increase levels of cultural competency in counselling practices. Bridging the gap in the current Canadian literature for Black women of Caribbean descent allows for more equitable representation in research. The integration of spirituality into counselling practices for this particular cultural group in question will help them to embrace their individuality, which is integral to their sense of inclusivity in Canadian society. Conclusively, it is hoped that by sharing the findings of this research, JCIW of the Pentecostal faith will be given a voice in multicultural counselling scholarship.
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Appendix A – Declaration of Faith

Declaration of faith

The Declaration of Faith is the Church of God's doctrinal standard. It articulates both an evangelical and Pentecostal doctrinal position with Wesleyan influences. The following is a summary of the Declaration of Faith:

- The Church of God believes in the verbal inspiration of the Bible.
- It believes in one God existing as a Trinity.
- It believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary. It also believes in Christ’s Death, burial, resurrection, and ascension.
- It believes that all have sinned and that repentance is both commanded by God and necessary for forgiveness.
- It believes that justification, regeneration, and the new birth is made possible by faith in Christ’s blood.
- It believes that, after the new birth, sanctification is acquired through faith in Christ, through the Word of God, and by the Holy Spirit.
- It believes that holiness is God’s standard of living for His people, the church.
- It believes in receiving the baptism with the Holy Spirit subsequent to “a clean heart”.
- It believes that speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of baptism with the Holy Spirit.
- It believes in believer's baptism by immersion using the Trinitarian formula.
- It believes that divine healing is provided for all in Christ’s atonement.
- It believes in observing the Lord’s Supper and footwashing.
- It believes in the premillennial Second Coming of Christ.
- It believes in the resurrection of the righteous to eternal life and the wicked to eternal punishment.
Appendix B – Model of Culture-Infused Counselling

Source: As derived from Collins and Arthur’s (2010) article, Culture-Infused Counselling: A Model for Developing Multicultural Competence
Appendix C – Recruitment Notice

Are you a Jamaican Canadian immigrant woman and of Pentecostal faith?

If Yes…..Share Your Story & Be Heard!

Participants are needed for a study on the experiences of Jamaican Canadian immigrant women who use their Pentecostal faith to adapt to a new culture. This study has been approved by the University of Calgary’s Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board.

Eligible participants MUST meet the following criteria:

1. Be of Jamaican Canadian descent
2. Be female
3. Be over 18 years old
4. Be of Pentecostal faith

Participation in the study will involve the following:

Interviews will be arranged at a time that is convenient for you. All interviews will be audio-recorded and will last approximately 60-90 minutes. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. To ensure your anonymity, you will be asked to use pseudonyms or another name of their choice when referring to yourself. The interviews will be transcribed verbatim and the data generated from the interviews will be organized into themes. A final summary report of themes and findings will be sent to each participant for verification. I will use only aggregate information for any presentation or publications of results.

Your help in making this project a success is very much appreciated. If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please contact me at the information below:

Sandra Dixon, BA, MA, PhD Student
University of Calgary
Email: sdixon@ucalgary.ca
Supervisor: Dr. Nancy Arthur, PhD
Appendix D – Interview Scripts: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Introduction
I would like to thank you for your interest in participating in this study. The purpose of this research is to explore the experience of Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women (JCIW) who use Pentecostal faith to adjust to life in Canada. By engaging in this study, your stories will be heard and respected, as I hope to obtain a better understanding of this area of research for counselling professionals.

To start, I will ask you to provide the following demographic information:
Age: __________
Church membership duration: __________
Highest level of education completed: ________________
Length of time living in Canada: ________________

Initial Question
1. I would like to have a better understanding of your story. Please tell me about your conversion of the Pentecostal faith.
2. In light of your story, what does being a “Pentecostal” mean to you?

Past Focus
3. How have you defined yourself in terms of your cultural identity?
4. Describe for me what factors affected your cultural identity in Canada?
5. In what ways has your faith helped you to address these factors to adjust to life in Canada?
6. How have you integrated your Pentecostal faith in different areas of your life? (e.g., work, church, family and friends).
7. How have you defined gender role as a woman of Pentecostal faith?
8. How has this gender role changed since your immigration?
Present Focus
9. What are key practices of Pentecostal faith that you find meaningful to your cultural identity? Explain your reasoning.
10. How often do you engage in these practices?
11. How open are people outside of the Pentecostal faith to these practices?
12. How would you feel about seeking counselling as a way to adjust to life in Canada?
13. In what way would your Pentecostal faith hinder you from seeking counselling?
14. In what way would your Pentecostal faith support you in seeking counselling?

Future Focus
15. What actions would you need to take as a woman of Pentecostal faith to continue adjusting to your life in Canada?
16. For counsellors interested in working with people of Pentecostal faith, what would be useful for them to know?
17. What role could you play in helping people outside the Pentecostal faith increase their understanding of this denomination?

Last Questions
18. Do you think we have fully addressed the topic?
19. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your understanding of the topic?

I would like to thank you for your time in participating in this interview. Is there anything else you would like to add?
Appendix E – Confidentiality Agreement for Transcriber

Name of Researcher: Sandra Dixon

Title of Project: Exploring the Experiences of Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women who Reconstruct Cultural Identities through Pentecostal Faith

Prior to being hired as a transcriber for this project, I would like you to complete this oath of confidentiality agreement. By signing this agreement, you are expected not to reveal any of the contents of the tapes nor the identities of the persons involved in this project (researcher, supervisor and participants). You are also forbidden from using any of the data from this study without permission from the primary researcher. Any questions or concerns you have should be directed to the primary researcher. Should you agree to the above conditions, please sign below.

_________________  ________________________  ___________
Name               Signature            Date

Sandra Dixon, BA, MA, PhD Student
University of Calgary
Email: sdixon@ucalgary.ca
Supervisor: Dr. Nancy Arthur, PhD
Appendix F – Informed Consent Form

Name of Researcher, Faculty, Department, Telephone & Email:

Sandra Dixon, Education, Werklund School of Education, Educational Studies of Counselling Psychology, 403-875-8046, sdixon@ucalgary.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Nancy Arthur

Title of Project: Exploring the Experiences of Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women who Reconstruct Cultural Identities through Pentecostal Faith

Sponsor: N/A

This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. If you want more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this research study.

Purpose of the Study

What is the experience of Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women (JCIW) who use Pentecostal faith to reconstruct their cultural identities? This is the key research question that is asked in this innovative study of Exploring the Experiences of Jamaican Canadian Immigrant Women Who Reconstruct Cultural Identities Through Pentecostal Faith. I am inviting immigrant women of Jamaican Canadian descent (JCIW) to participate in this research project. My research aims to understand the lived experience of JCIW who may use Pentecostal faith to adapt to life in Canada. The outcome of the study will help to inform multicultural counselling practices for immigrant populations in Canada, including JCIW.

What Will I Be Asked To Do?

In this study, you will be invited to participate in an individual semi-structured interview which will last approximately 60-90 minutes. To start, you will be asked to provide the following demographic information:

Age: ____________

Church membership duration: ____________

Highest level of education completed: ________________

Length of time living in Canada: ___________________

You will then be asked questions about your lived experiences in Canada as a Jamaican
Canadian immigrant woman, and the role your Pentecostal faith may play in helping you adjust to life in Canada. To ensure confidentiality, interviews will be conducted at a time and place that is convenient to participants, including at the church, a community centre, a library, a pre-arranged room at the University of Calgary’s Werklund School of Education building, and over the telephone.

Following the completion of the audio taped interview the recording will be transcribed verbatim. The transcribing will be completed by a professional transcriber who will sign a confidentiality agreement prior to starting the process. Your name or identifying information will be deleted from the transcripts. I will follow-up with you once the data has been analyzed by emailing a summary of the findings that emerged. You will be given a 2-week period to review the summary and to provide feedback on the results. This is to ensure that I have captured your story accurately and that any misunderstandings are clarified. If no response is received within this time, I will assume that you have no concerns. Should you withdraw from the study, any partial information that is provided will be kept for data analysis.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty if you refuse to participate. You may feel free to withdraw from the study at any time and/or decline from answering any of the interview questions without penalty.

What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected?

Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to provide some basic demographic information including age, education, number of years living in Canada, and church membership.

There are several options for you to consider if you decide to take part in this research. You can choose all, some, or none of them. Please review each of these options and choose Yes or No:

I grant permission to be audio taped: Yes: ___ No: ___

I wish to remain anonymous, but you may refer to me by a pseudonym: Yes: ___ No: ___

The pseudonym I choose for myself is: ____________________________________________

Are there Risks or Benefits if I Participate?

There are no known risks to you participating in this study. You may, however, reflect about your lived experience in a new way as an immigrant in Canada, as a result of participating in the study.

What Happens to the Information I Provide?

Participation is completely voluntary. The collected data in this study will be used for the primary researcher’s PhD Dissertation work. You are free to discontinue participation during the study at any time. No one except the primary researcher, transcriber, and supervisor will be allowed to see or hear your responses to the audio recordings. To protect your anonymity, your
name or any other identifying information will be deleted from the transcripts, and only the pseudonym that you provide will be used. Note that once the data has been analyzed, it is not possible to remove the information that you have contributed during the interview process. Only group information will be summarized for any presentation or publication of results. All materials pertaining to the study are kept in a locked cabinet only accessible by the primary researcher. The anonymous data will be stored for five years on written transcripts and on a flash drive, after which it will be shredded and permanently erased.

Signatures

Your signature on this form indicates that 1) you understand to your satisfaction the information provided to you about your participation in this research project, and 2) you agree to participate in the research project.

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from this research project at any time. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Participant’s Name: (please print) _____________________________________________
Participant’s Signature: ____________________________________________________________________________ Date: ______________
Researcher’s Name: (please print) ________________________________________________
Researcher’s Signature: ____________________________________________________________________________ Date: ______________

Questions/Concerns

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

Ms. Sandra Dixon
Werklund School of Education, Educational Studies of Counselling Psychology,
sdixon@ucalgary.ca

Dr. Nancy Arthur, Werklund School of Education, Educational Studies of Counselling Psychology

If you have any concerns about the way you’ve been treated as a participant, please contact an Ethics Resource Officer, Research Services Office, University of Calgary at (403) 210-9863; email cfreb@ucalgary.ca.

A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference. The investigator has kept a copy of the consent form.
Appendix G: Map of Jamaica

Source: Retrieved from gallery4share.com/j/jamaican-map-outline.html