The Osun Osogbo Festival in Nigeria: An investigation of Nigerian migrants in South Africa as homebound tourists and festival participants

By

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Declaration

I, Aboshioke Lillian Umejei, hereby declare that the research reported in this thesis is my original research and does not contain other persons' data, unless specifically acknowledged. All borrowed ideas, citations and references have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university. The thesis is being submitted to the School of Social Sciences, College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal for the degree, PhD in Cultural and Heritage Tourism.

Signed:

████████████████████   15 October 2021

Aboshioke Lillian Umejei   Date

As the candidate's supervisor, I approve the submission of this thesis.

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Dr. Nokuthula Cele   Date

Dedication

In loving memory of my first supervisor, Professor Sabine Marschall, who believed in me first and started this race with me but, was unfortunately, not able to see the end. Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord, and let perpetual light shine on her. May her soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God, rest in peace, Amen.

I owe this achievement to **God Almighty**, without whom I am naught.

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Abstract

This study investigated how members of the diaspora negotiate their identity during and through their return travel back to their home country. It explored the perceived significance of the tangible site, the intangible beliefs and the values which members of the diaspora attached to the Osun Osogbo sacred grove. The grove, which is the abode of Osun goddess, is one of the major cultural heritage destinations in Nigeria. Using the Osun Osogbo festival in Nigeria, the study focused on Nigerians, based in South Africa, who travel back to their birth country as VFR (Visiting Friends and Relatives) and festival participants. The study investigated the significance of migrants reconnecting with their cultural roots while exploring their spirituality. In a broader sense, the research looked at how the process of migration affected diasporic relationships to home, cultural roots, and spiritual beliefs, by probing the diasporic visitors' experiences of travelling home, their beliefs, behaviour, and activities they engage in. This qualitative study draws from in-depth interviews, conducted with Nigerian migrants based in Durban, South Africa. The conceptual framework for the study was drawn from the concept of 'the tourist gaze'; tourism as a sacred journey and identity theory. The study significance is hinged on its contribution to literature on heritage management and cultural tourism development from a Nigerian, and African context; as well as the cultural and heritage awareness it creates for Africans in the diaspora. Findings from the data collected showed that the search for a "familiar difference" was a major motivation for these return journeys. Furthermore, participation at the festival, for some attendees, goes beyond entertainment and merry making, but it is also necessitated by a host of other alternative motives. The study revealed a blurring on the distinction between tourism, pilgrimage, culture, and heritage tourism. Drawing from the findings, the study concludes that strengthening the relationship with home and root reconnection was the greatest motivation for these homebound tourists and festival participants. Enhancing cultural tourism in Africa (and in Nigeria in particular) will best be achieved if religion can be separated from culture.

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List of acronyms

AD	Latin: Anno Domini (in the year of the Lord)
AOT	Adunni Orisa Trust
ATR	African Traditional Religion
AYIDSA	The Association of Yoruba's in the Diaspora
BCE	Before the Common Era
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
NAYDA	National Association of Yoruba Descendants in South Africa
NCMM	National Commission for Museums and Monuments
NTDC	Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation
OCHC	Osogbo Cultural Heritage Council
SADC	South African Development Community
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
VFR	Visiting Friends and Relatives

Chapter one

Introduction

Yemi, is one of the many Nigerian migrants residing in South Africa. Though she was born in Nigeria, she has however, spent a larger part of her life out of Nigeria. She left Nigeria when she was about 5 years old to live with her mother in the United States of America (USA). After having been married for years and still unable to conceive, even after two failed IVF (in vitro fertilization), Yemi decided to follow her mother's suggestion to visit the Osun sacred grove and seek for assistance from the Osun goddess. She claimed to have fallen pregnant after visiting the sacred grove. As at the time of conducting the interview, the said daughter was preparing to celebrate her 6th birthday. Yemi believes so much in the efficacy and wonders of the Osun goddess that is acclaimed to reside at the sacred grove in Osogbo, the capital city of Osun State, in Nigeria. Her primary reason for attendance at the annual Osun Osogbo festival, however, was not for the fun and festivity, but mainly as a means to finding solution to her problems. This study is focused on members of the Nigerian diaspora in South Africa like Yemi, who as migrants, occupy a position in between domestic and foreign tourist to her homeland.

South Africa has become home to foreigners from across Africa, including Nigeria, many of whom return home for various reasons, such as visiting friends and relatives as well as attending spiritual activities, such as festivals. Such is the case with the Osun Osogbo festival in the South Western region in Nigeria. The festival is held annually in the month of August to celebrate the goddess of Osun. This study explores the experiences of Nigerian migrants back home as "Visiting Friends and Relatives" (VFR) tourists and festival participants. The group may also be classified as migrants on a return journey home. However, their journeys cannot simply be classified as VFR as they are also motivated by their desire to attend the annual festival, which makes them different from the regular home visitors. There is a unique quality about them because they are not just cultural enthusiasts. They are also rooted on religious, spiritual, and cultural beliefs, which makes them also stand out from the regular crowd.

1.2 Background of the study

The Osun Osogbo festival in Nigeria is an annual celebration of Osun, the goddess of fertility, prosperity, and healing (Oparanti, 2004). The festival takes place at the Sacred Grove in Osogbo town, in Osun state, South Western Region in Nigeria. The grove, the abode for Osun (Badejo et al., 1996), is a sacred sanctuary, covering approximately 75 hectares of primary rain forest vegetation (Abdul, 2012). In recognition of its global significance and cultural value, the Sacred Grove was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in July 2005 after it had attained a national monument status in 1965 (National Commission for Museums and Monuments, 2005). Annually, in the month of August, a festival is held at the grove to appease the Osun goddess, and renew the bonds of spiritualism and association that exist between the goddess and the people of the land (Oparanti, 2004). This colorful ceremony is a two-week-long event, which usually begins with the traditional cleansing of the town called "Iwopopo" (Falade, 2000). The Osogbo Cultural Heritage Council (OCHC) estimates that over fifty thousand people attend the festival annually. The majority are culture enthusiasts and tourists from Brazil, United States of America (USA), Cuba, Great Britain, China, Europe, and various African countries (Oparanti, 2004).

One of the main attractions of the Osun goddess is premised on the belief that she possesses the potency to make barren women to become fertile, provide healing, bestow wealth, and can answer all life challenges (Badejo et al., 1996). Although many members of the Nigerian diaspora use their attendance at the festival as an opportunity to reconnect with their roots and home culture, there is a section specifically motivated by the problem of their infertility and many other challenges in life. During the festival, at the grove, they seek for blessings from the Osun goddess and are able to reconnect with the spiritual roots of their identity while expressing their desire without shame or reservation. The festival is considered to be a space of comfort, and a destination of pilgrimage for these diaspora Nigerians to seek solutions to their challenges (Taha, 2016). This study is focused on members of the Nigerian diaspora in South Africa who have attended the festival. As migrants, their return visit back home makes them occupy a position that places them in-between domestic and foreign tourists. This renders their experiences unique and special, being that they are culturally close, yet geographically distant. This study explored how these members of the Nigerian diaspora in South Africa relate to the Osun Osogbo festival, their beliefs, and the intangible cultural heritage associated with it (the festival). By focusing on their return journey home, and their participation in the festival,

the study explored what these return journeys mean to migrants, and how they have shaped their sense of identity. This is explored in the context of migration related geographical distance, and its cultural influences occasioned by their migrant status.

1.3 Problem Statement

The annual Osun Osogbo Festival in Nigeria serves different purposes to attendees and interested persons. In recent years, there has been more attention towards cultural heritage, from tourists and visitor's perspective. Identifying individual visitor's needs, their motivation, and an understanding of their personal value which they gain through visitation to heritage attractions are not known. The nature of the average Nigerian diaspora is often quite conservative. However, national identity dynamics within the diaspora can range from being completely traditional to being completely non-traditional. Thus, members of the diaspora must deal with these contra values and practices from their homeland (where they are returning to) and adopted countries (where they are coming from) (Stuart et al., 1995).

This research investigated how members of the diaspora negotiate their identity during and through their return travel back home to participate in the annual Osun Osogbo Festival and visit the Osun sacred grove. It explored the perceived significance of the tangible site, and the intangible beliefs and the values which members of the diaspora attached to the grove in relation to that of other stakeholders, particularly the conservation agencies (which includes UNESCO, Museums, and Monuments, etc.), the tourism authorities (like the Federal and state tourism board) and other tourists. In a broader sense, the research looked at how the process of migration affected diasporic relationship to home, cultural roots, and spiritual beliefs by probing the diasporic visitors' experiences of travelling home, and their beliefs, behavior, and activities during the visit to the sacred Osun Osogbo grove and festival. Very little research has been undertaken to explore the experiences of South Africa-based Nigerian migrants as visitors to their home country. As participates at the annual Osun Osogbo festival, this study aims to explore the experiences of these South Africa – based Nigerian migrants as visitors to their home country in order to enhance the relevance of the grove and the festival. By tapping into tourism and heritage, the study investigates how it can be used as a tool to improve cultural and heritage tourism in the country.

1.4 Significance of the study

The Census of 2001 in South Africa estimated the number of Nigerians living in the country to be 7,172 (South Africa Census, 2001); today, this number has more than tripled, with an annual estimate of arrivals into the country being placed at approximately 36,000 between 2004 and 2010 (Statistics South Africa cited in Segatti et al., 2012). These Nigerians in South Africa are concentrated essentially in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Western Cape Provinces. Over the years, Nigerians have become increasingly involved in international migration worldwide (Segatti et al., 2012). This cadre of Nigerians living outside their country will be here defined as members of the Nigerian diaspora (Akinrinade and Ogen, 2011).

The Osun Osogbo festival can be described as a symbol of cultural identity for many members of this diasporic community. For some of these selected migrants under focus, attendance or participation at the festival was to fulfill a desire to reconnect with their roots, their cultural identity, and heritage after being away for a long time. However, for some others, these return visits to their homeland were borne out of their spiritual belief and their desire to seek divine assistance in their search for solutions to some of their life challenges (which includes, but not limited to, infertility, healing, and prosperity). This research explored the experiences of the South Africa-based Nigerian migrants as visitors to their own country, Nigeria, to participate at the festival. Rooted in the anthropology of tourism, the study contributes new knowledge to extant scholarship in the field of tourism and migration, as well as the field of heritage tourism with particular emphasis on intangible cultural heritage.

The study is significant from three main perspectives: (1) from the academic front, the study shed light on African heritage; (2) it adds to the literature on the development of tourism from Nigerian and African context; and (3) it creates awareness among the Africans in diaspora about their culture and heritage. The study is significant to academics, Nigerians and other African communities, and traditional practitioners. Furthermore, useful insights were gained from the research in terms of heritage management and cultural tourism development.

1.5 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this research was to explore the experiences of South Africa-based Nigerian migrants as visitors to their home country to participate in the annual Osun Osogbo festival. This research investigates how members of the diaspora negotiate their identity during and through their return travel back home to participate in the Osun Osogbo Festival and visit the Osun grove. It explores the perceived significance of the tangible site and the intangible beliefs and values attached to it for members of the Diaspora in relation to that of other stakeholders, notably conservation agencies (UNESCO), tourism authorities and other tourists. The originality of this study is based on its intersection between religion, tourism and pilgrimage, with particular focus from the perspective of migration study. The broader objectives of this study related to enhancing the relevance of the grove and the festival by tapping into tourism and heritage, as a tool to improving cultural tourism in the country. The above stated objected are listed below:

1. To examine how migrants, organize their visits back to their home country and the activities they pursue, apart from attending the annual festival.
2. To investigate the perception of members of the Nigerian diaspora community in South Africa regarding the Osun Osogbo festival as tourists.
3. To evaluate what these experiences at their home country mean to these migrant-tourists, and how they (the experiences) affect their sense of identity.
4. To analyze the experiences of these migrant-tourists at the festival, especially in relation to their spiritual beliefs.
5. To use the collected data to analyze current scholarly understandings of VFR tourism, migrant return travel, pilgrimage tourism and cultural heritage tourism.
6. To develop a model from the insights gathered from the research findings to contribute to the development of the site and the festival as a cultural tourism attraction.

In a broader sense, the research intends to determine how the process of migration affects diasporic relationship to home, cultural roots and spiritual beliefs by probing the diasporic visitors' experience of travelling home and their beliefs, behavior and activities during the visit of the Osun grove and festival. The broader objectives, however, draw attention to migrants as tourists and how it (the festival) enhances the relevance of the grove and the festival while linking it to cultural and heritage tourism. Migrants who travel back home are often not viewed

as tourists in official statistics, and in the general scholarly literature. Only in recent years, with an emerging body of literature, has more attention been paid to migrants as tourists. More importantly, these travelers or migrants do not think of themselves as tourists, especially Africans, because they have certain notions regarding who should be considered a tourist (Marschall, 2017b: 141). Preliminary observation suggests that these migrants think of this journey either as a measure to address personal problems, or an opportunity to visit their family; they do not regard the festival/grove as a cultural tourism attraction, but rather as a spiritual site, and resource that addresses their needs. In statistical terms, however, these migrant participants are likely to be counted as festival visitors or cultural tourists; their presence makes the festival attractive to others, thus contributing to its growth as a community event and cultural tourism destination.

1.6 Research questions

The following research questions were formulated in order to fully explore the above stated objectives of the study

1. How do migrants organize their visits back home, and what activities do they pursue at their destination, apart from attending the festival?
2. How do members of the Nigerian diaspora in South Africa relate to the Osun Osogbo festival as tourists?
3. What do these experiences, at their home country, mean to these migrant-tourists, and what effects they have on their sense of identity?
4. How do migrants as tourists experience the festival, especially in relation to their spiritual beliefs?
5. How does the data collected help in analyzing current scholarly understandings of VFR tourism, migrant return travel, pilgrimage tourism, and cultural heritage tourism?
6. How do the findings from the research conducted contribute to the development of the site/festival as a cultural tourism attraction?

1.7 Conceptual framework for the study

This study draws upon the concept of the "tourist gaze", the notion of tourism as a 'sacred journey', and the identity theory to investigate how these Nigerian migrants in South Africa experience their journey back home to attend the Osun Osogbo festival. Studies have shown that people have been travelling either for religious or spiritual reasons for thousands of years. The extant literature, especially within the fields of anthropology and religious studies, has focused on this as a pilgrimage. As mentioned earlier, Graburn, (1983) adopted the traditional concept of the pilgrimage to theorize tourism as a 'sacred journey'. Later, scholars developed typologies of tourism (notably Cohen, 1974) which confirmed that certain elements of pilgrimage, especially the desire for self-fulfillment, remains part of many touristic journeys. Graburn (1983: 16) mentioned that tourists and pilgrims are similar as both form a continuum of inseparable elements in search for authentic experience.

John Urry's (1990) proposed the concept of the 'tourist gaze' to argue that people are motivated to leave their normal place of work or residence in order to gaze, and acquaint themselves with something unique, or that which is out of the ordinary. This theory was useful in this present study because it revolves around the search or seeking out for the extra ordinary. Urry argues that the 'tourist gaze' is a particular way of looking which focuses on difference. Marschall (2017:147), in her study on transnational migrants, identified that the 'tourist gaze', for migrants on their return visit home, was not in search for a 'difference', but rather a seeking for the familiar. This study, however, was looking at the theory from another angle, the search for a 'familiar difference'. It is familiar in the sense that it used to be a routine (a normal occurrence) in their lives. However, due to migration or relocation, it is different as they now have to live with a new familiar lifestyle. Having been away from home for many years, these members of the diaspora are now used to a different routine of life, making the need to want to reconnect with their roots (and experience a change in their everyday routine) as a strong motivation to want to embark on this return journey home.

This study explored the relationship between motivation for the tourist gaze and satisfaction derived from the experiences of participants at the festival. The participants in the study are members of the diaspora who have made return journeys back home. Some of these participants have travelled primarily just to attend and participate at the festival, while some attended as mere spectators who were just opportunistic, visiting the grove because they were

accompanying friends or relatives. Members from the diaspora who were born in their homeland (that is first generation migrants) usually maintain a stronger attachment to ancestry homeland, such that their identities are not yet completely transformed (ElleLi and McKercher, 2016), even after migration. However, there are some, especially descendants, who begin to identify themselves strongly with their host country, and thus their connection with their country of origin and potential reintegration there becomes problematic. The grove thus becomes a stage for identity negotiation (Duval, 2003).

Identity negotiation is usually demonstrated when people are not sure of where they actually belong. This tends to lead to the query of "Who am I?". It has been opined that "this is a continuous lifelong task that emerges in the context of personal, social, and cultural influences" (Zygmunt, 1996:19). People tend to think of identity when they are not sure where they actually belong. What this means is that the individual is unable to state their place among the evident variety of behavioral styles and patterns, which results in a struggle to make sure that people around accept this placement as right and proper. Identity theory as developed by Stets and Burke (2000) explains that the core of an identity is the categorization of the self as an occupant of a role, and the incorporation, into the self, of the meanings and expectations associated with that role and its performance. It follows from this that the ways people categorize themselves, and the meanings that they attach to these categories, are critical determinants of social behavior. Such early scholars on identity as Tajfel (1972) reasoned that people can only understand why allocation to ostensibly meaningless groups should affect behaviors if they start by assuming that people come to define themselves in terms of group membership (Tajfel, 1972; Tajfel and Turner, 1979 cited in Reicher et al.,2010: 48). This research investigated the significance and meaning of the festival and the grove to these members of the diaspora. It also interrogated the experiences of these Nigerian migrants as visitors to their homeland, with emphasis on how their experiences at the grove affect their sense of identity.

1.8 Description of terms

In presenting the findings from this research, some concepts and colloquial terminologies were used that might not be easily understood by the reader. However, these concepts and terms have been explained and are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Description of terms used

Adunni Olorisa	Used to describe someone who is a deeply cherished person and has a deep relationship with the gods.
Afin	The King's palace.
Agboo	Native herbal medicine.
Amala	Delicacy preferred by many South Western Nigerians.
Argungu	Another Nigerian cultural festival.
Arugba	The virgin votary maid.
Atori boys	Sect consisting of boys, usually in their youth, who participate at the festival.
Atoroja	The name given to the King in Osogbo.
Calabash	Native bowls or container.
Devotee	One who believes in the goddess and has undergone some local training on the history and significance of the grove and goddess.
Ede	A town in Osun.
Ewedu	Delicacy preferred by many South Western Nigerians.
Ilobu	A town in Osun.
Ifa	Religion among the Yoruba's.
Iwopopo	One of the many rites at the festival.
Obatala, Esu, Oya, Yemoja	Names of some of the gods who reside at the grove.
Ogun	Acclaimed god of iron.
Olodumare or Olorun	Yoruba given name for God or the supreme God worth of great reverence.
Orisa	Yoruba given names for their gods and goddesses.
Pounded Yam	Delicacy preferred by many South Western Nigerians.
Shango	God of thunder.
Yeye	Great Mother.

1.9 Literature review

In the 1970s, a renowned anthropologist, Nelson Graburn, one of the pioneers of tourism studies, conceptualized tourism as a 'sacred journey', a kind of ritual that stands in opposition to the routine of everyday life, in which the tourist experiences a passage from the Profane (the ordinary mundane) to the Sacred (the holiday or precious time away) in search for leisure, self-discovery, or a quest for fulfilment (Graburn, 1977). His conceptualization was derived from the traditional phenomenon of religious pilgrimage. While tourism and pilgrimage are different social phenomena, they share the same desire for personal satisfaction, which pilgrims find in

the sacred and tourists in the secular (Cohen, 1992; Collins-Kreiner, 2010; Turnbull, 1992). The current study blends elements of both phenomena and examines them in the particular context of migration.

The Yoruba speaking community is one of the largest ethnic groups in West Africa, located mostly in the South Western region of Nigeria (World Fact Book, 2012). This community has been described as the largest concentration of Africans living in the diaspora (Ajayi, 2006). Their religion, cultural heritage, and legacy are recognizable in many geographical places, despite exposure to the effects of modernization (Oyeweso, 2012). The Osun Osogbo festival, a renewal of the mystic bond between the goddess and her people (Yusuf, 2012), is a symbol of identity for the whole Yoruba community and devotees of the Ifa divination (Oyeweso, 2013). This annual festival which revolves around the Osun goddess, her people, and the votary maid (a virgin girl who acts as an intermediary between the people and the goddess), is a community-based event and a rallying point for sons and daughters of the Yoruba land both at home and in the diaspora (Oyeweso, 2012). However, the prowess of the Osun goddess has garnered both national and global recognition as she is acclaimed to have inspired Beyoncé's Lemonade Album, and accounts for her stage display at the 2017 Grammy Awards in Los Angeles, California (Washington Post, 2017). The festival, a celebration of the goddess, represents a diversity of local cultural performances (Yusuf, 2012), and has contributed tremendously to the development of cultural tourism, regionally and nationally (Oparanti, 2004). In the last ten years, this community event has developed into an international tourism attraction.

The festival has been described as a strong motivation for many members of the Nigerian diaspora, irrespective of their ethnic group, religion, or social status, to embark on a return visit back home (Oyeweso, 2012). Many Nigerians, and African communities in general, tend to have very strong sense of family and community. Thus, when they are away from home, the need to want to maintain kinship or reconnect to familiar home environment becomes almost a kind of a spiritual motivation in its own right (Baldasar, 1998). Many members of the diaspora might not necessarily believe in the spiritual aspect of the grove or the festival. However, it serves as an opportunity to reconnect with family and the familiar. While there is a large body of literature on pilgrimage and VFR (Visiting Friends and Relations), not much literature, however, can be found on the connection between these two bodies of literature. This research looks at a possible connection from the angle of the diaspora. It explores this interconnection

through cultural heritage. The Osun Osogbo grove, a cultural heritage site, serves as a platform that brings about this connection. Temporary return visits home to see friends and relatives (VFR) are significant, especially for first-generation migrants internationally, the motive being both the maintenance and enhancement of kinship networks (Duval, 2003). Broadly, these activities are underpinned by memory, nostalgia, and longing for home as a "specific localized place of belonging and an environment of cultural familiarity" (Marschall, 2017a: 215).

For some members of the diaspora, integration and acceptance in their host is seldom fully realized (Safran, 1991), and thus the search for identity reaffirmation and a connection with one's cultural roots becomes necessary (Coles and Timothy, 2004). These return trips provide an avenue for confrontation with one's past which "may re-invigorate or shatter the myth; re-affirm or shift self-identity; fuel emotions and prompt insights about one's true sense of belonging, about the home, the host and oneself" (Marschall, 2017b: 142). This study adds to the emergent body of literature on migrant return travel (Asiedu, 2005; Marschall, 2017a, 2017b; Trew, 2010), but contributes with a particular focus on African migrants as a neglected area of tourism research (exceptions include Asiedu, 2005; Marschall, 2017(a) (b); Rogerson, 2015). In today's secular world, "the relationship between tourists and their beliefs plays a major role in influencing individuals' pilgrimages to sacred sites. Their visitation patterns all depend on the strength of religious beliefs" (Norman, 2011: 200). While some Nigerian migrants participate in the festival for spiritual reasons, others have a host of alternative motivations.

Although some participants of this study may be conceptualized as pilgrims, it is evident that this conceptualization is too narrow a perspective. The literature on the intersection between religion and tourism, notably religious tourism, and pilgrimage, is to some extent relevant to the current study (e.g., Raj and Morpeth, 2007; Stausberg, 2011). However, the journeys under consideration in this research are about spiritual beliefs, and not organized religion and its formal structures; they are also not part of organized tours, but rather individual trips which may be combined with VFR and other purposes. To the body of literature in the field of cultural and heritage tourism, as well as festivals and events tourism, (e.g., Getz, 2010; Quinn, 2009), the current study contributes a specific focus on migrants or diasporic tourists. As illustrated above, this study is focused on a very distinctive group of travelers that do not easily fit into established categories. Concentrating on this niche of travelers, the research shows how the intersectionality of the various groups leads to the participants experiencing the festival in a

very particular way. Furthermore, it explores how the process of migration affects diasporic relationships to home, cultural roots, and spiritual beliefs. It probes the diasporic visitors' experiences of travelling home, their beliefs, behavior, and activities during the visit to the sacred Osun Osogbo grove and festival.

1.10 Research methodology

This exploratory study employed a qualitative research design based on in-depth interviews. This approach of gathering evidence was identified as the best method to help in achieving the set research objectives. The advantage of the qualitative tradition is that it "explores the ways that people make sense of their social worlds, and how they express these understandings through language, sound, imagery, personal style and social rituals" (Deacon et al., 2010: 5). The techniques used in collecting data for this research include observation, in-depth interviews and review of existing documentation. Based on the aim of this study, which was to explore how members of the Nigerian diaspora in South Africa experience their journey to the Osun Osogbo festival, and how they relate to the beliefs and intangible cultural heritage associated with it (festival), the semi-structured interviews employed helped to collect the principal data for the research.

The sampling methods for this study were purposive and snowballing. The researcher decided to use these methods because the study approach comprises pinpointing and choosing personalities or groups of persons that are principally conversant about, or have some experience with, the phenomenon of interest (Creswell and Clark, 2011). The researcher was able to contact the president of a Yoruba speaking association in South Africa, that is The Association of Yoruba's in the Diaspora (AYIDSA) South Africa Chapter. The presidents of organizations of this nature are highly knowledgeable in the field under investigation. After approaching the president, the researcher was introduced to other members of the Nigerian diaspora community, who were considered credible, trustworthy and relevant enough to give the needed data for the study. The sample size for this study was twenty-five participants. The justification for that number was that, at that point, the researcher had reached the saturation level. The target population were first – generation Nigerians, of Yoruba descent, who live in South Africa and have had cause to travel back to Nigeria in the last five years. As stated earlier,

the participants were recruited with the help from the president of the Association of Yoruba in Diaspora, (AYIDSA), South Africa chapter. The President was interviewed, after which other participants were recruited through snowballing technique. The researcher also used social media (Facebook and WhatsApp groups) to recruit self-identified participants who were not members of the above-mentioned organization but were willing to participate in the study.

The location for the study was mostly in Durban, in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa, and Osogbo town in Osun state of Nigeria. Using Durban as the study location was borne out of two reasons. Firstly, Durban is one of the cities in South Africa where one can find a high number of Nigerian migrants. Secondly, the researcher (who is studying and based in Durban) wanted to be able to conduct face-to-face interviews with the participants. However, two out of the twenty-five interviews were conducted via skype. Personal or videoed face-to-face interviews are very important for qualitative studies like this because it is possible to record more than the verbal responses of the interviewee, which are often superficial (Deacon et al., 2007). The other study location was Osogbo; this location had to be included because it is where the grove is located, and also where the annual festival takes place. While conducting the interviews in Osogbo, the researcher recruited a research assistance that had a good proficiency of the Yoruba language because some of the interviews conducted in Osogbo, were in Yoruba.

Although all the participants recruited in South Africa, were from the Yoruba speaking community in Nigeria, and still had very good proficiency in their native language, the interviews, however, were all conducted in English language. This was done because, after being out of their country of birth for a while, all the recruited participants had developed their proficiency in English and thus were quite comfortable communicating with the researcher in English. Moreover, the researcher thought it best to conduct the interviews in English to avoid losing some valuable data which could occur during interpretation. With permission from the participants, all the interview sessions were recorded with a digital voice recording device. The interviews were semi-structured in nature and administered with a short list of open-ended questions. These questions led to more follow-up questions based on the responses from the participants. The researcher also travelled to Osun Osogbo in August 2018 to observe proceedings at the festival. The aim was to obtain the general knowledge of the dynamics on the site, how people move around the site, what they did, and how other people view them. During the site inspection, the researcher engaged in other informal conversations with people

at the festival for more information gathering. The information gathered are presented in the data presentation and discussion chapter.

Existing and relevant documents were also gathered from reliable sources such as the Adunni Orisa Trust (AOT), the Osun state (and local) government, and the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM). The documents were used as secondary data to compliment the data gathered during the interviews. This was done to ensure comprehensiveness and to enrich the data collected. All audio recordings of the interviews conducted were transcribed and, after reading through the transcribed interview several times, a systematic classification of themes and patterns were identified (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). The data were then analyzed using NVivo. During the course of the research, all the ethical guidelines, as prescribed by the university, were strictly adhered to.

1.11 Study structure

This study is presented in the following seven chapters.

Chapter 2. Literature Review: The review of literature will be presented in two chapters. Chapter two reviews issues on culture and monuments, transnational migration and tourism, religion and the Nigerian culture, African traditional spiritual beliefs and return journeys.

Chapter3. This section of the literature review presents an overview of the Osun Osogbo festival, its celebrations and history, as well as a profile of the Osogbo town, the people, their culture and traditions. It also reviews documents pertaining to the festival, the goddess and the grove, the tourism prospects, and some visual presentation of the festival.

Chapter 4. Conceptual framework: this chapter presents the conceptual framework and consists of components that all contribute to the experience of the festival. The concepts that will be explored are the tourist gaze, tourism as a sacred journey and identity theory.

Chapter 5. Methodology: this chapter details the methods used to achieve the objectives, these being the research design, the data collection tools and process, participant's demography details and the data analysis, and ethical issues.

Chapter 6. Results: this chapter presents the study findings that were thematically analyzed with respect to the six objectives of the study.

Chapter 7. Discussion: this chapter discusses the study findings with respect to what was found elsewhere by other authors and compares them to the findings of studies done elsewhere.

Chapter 8. Conclusion: this chapter addresses the extent to which the study objectives were addressed and the aim achieved. It provides a summary of the study, highlights the achievements, and makes recommendations about future research.

1.12 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a summary of the research. The thesis is a presentation of findings from a qualitative research case study on members of the Nigerian diaspora in South Africa. It explored the experiences of these migrants on their return journey back home to participate at the annual Osun Osogbo festival. As migrants, their return visit back home makes them occupy a position in-between domestic and foreign tourist, which rendered their experiences unique and special, as they are culturally close, yet geographically distant. The chapter presented the background and an overview of the research. It also presented the rationale for the study, the statement of the problem, the research objectives, questions, and the significance of the study. The next chapter is the literature review. It presents the existing academic conversations on the various concepts.

Chapter two

Literature Review: Part A

The Osun Osogbo festival

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is a review of existing literature on the annually celebrated Osun Osogbo festival. It begins with a look at the concepts of religion and spirituality, and attempts to explore the relationship and meaning of both notions as the site for the festival can be described in both terms. The chapter presents an overview of the state where the festival site is located and provides a survey on the culture of the Yoruba people, who are the major inhabitants of the state in the South Western region in Nigeria. It further examines the cultural tourism arena in Nigeria, with emphasis on the celebrated Osun Osogbo festival and a review of scholarly literature and local documentations on the festival. The chapter also provides a brief survey of the culture and traditions of the people from that community. The chapter concludes with a look at some challenges attributed to the celebration of the festival and the story of the famous chief priestess of the grove, Susan Wenger, who helped to bring the festival to international focus.

2.2 Religion and spirituality

The Osun Osogbo festival is regarded as a religious and spiritual festival by locals, holding an important place in their spiritual life as it has meaning to the formation of their town. In this study, "religion refers to an organized approach to the supernatural reality through human activities, which are mostly spiritual and encompass a set of narratives, beliefs, and practices (de Blot, 2011: 11). By giving the supernatural reality or supreme being a name, people create

a personal relationship with it and attempt to take part in this supernatural power. In this way, religion covers the ultimate meaning of people's lives and expresses the ultimate values of society. Spirituality, on the other hand, is a multiform search for a transcendent meaning of life based on the reflection of people's human experiences on the level of being (de Blot, 2011). In their study, Kinjerski and Skrypnek, (2004) opined that it might be a futile process to provide a definition of spirituality that is universally understood and accepted. Thus, the descriptions of spirituality vary across disciplines. However, there are similarities in terms of how different authors view their conceptual constructs of spirituality (Miner-Williams, 2006). Spirituality, as defined by Coyle (2002), is said to be "a faith relationship with the Transcendent".

The definition of spirituality, however, has experienced several changes over the past decades. Spirituality is progressively being scrutinized as a paradigm that is related to mental and physical health. Traditionally, spirituality was used to describe persons who were deeply religious, but it has now expanded to include the superficially religious person, the religious seeker, the seeker of well-being and happiness, and the completely secular person (Koenig, 2008). According to Hauser-Schäublin, (1998), historically "the search for the metaphysical or the supernatural has led people to sites where, in their minds, there was the potential to commune with the holy". In more recent times, studies show that "the search for the supernatural has been replaced by the search for cultural-exotic and the sacred" (Tomasi 2002: 1).

Bourne (2005) argues that individuals are usually prompted to address issues of their spirituality because they have a motivation to do so. "Certain triggers awaken people's spirituality and motivate them to begin or continue with their personal "spiritual quest" for meaning and life purpose (Wilson et al., 2013). For example, many people are said to become spiritually aware when they have an illness, suffer a painful loss of a loved one, experience a prominent life event or are faced with an overwhelming life challenge (Wilson et al., 2013). Scientific study of religion has shown a remarkable rise in individuals who label themselves as "being spiritual". While many believers in the United States and Europe use "spirituality" in association with "religion" (Hood et al., 2009), a seemingly growing number of people contrast the two, self-identifying as "spiritual, but not religious," or as "more spiritual than religious"

(Streib and Hood, 2011: 433). From the African perspective, religion is a way of life, and thus relates to culture and society as they affect people's worldview.

Conversations on "religion" in Africa by many scholars often speak of a "triple heritage," referring to indigenous belief systems, Islam, and Christianity which are found to coexist (Olupona, 2015). The term "African Traditional Religion", when loosely explained, embraces all African beliefs and religious practices that are neither Christian nor Islamic (MacGaffey, 2012). In its earliest presentation by G. Parrinder in 1954, the concept was different and deep-seated and was later developed further by other scholars in the 1970s. African traditional religion is more about the ethnic or autochthonous beliefs of the African people. It encompasses their cosmology, ritual practices, symbols, arts, and culture. Many who classify themselves as practitioners of traditional African religions are often in the minority, while there are numerous Africans who classify themselves as either Muslims or Christians but they are often involved in traditional religious practices to one degree or another (Olupona, 2015).

Religion is actually man made which means that it can fluctuate as widely as the human imagination allows it to. Many individuals regard religion as an organized structure of beliefs, ceremonies, practice, and worship that centers on one supreme God or a deity of high reverence that offers individuals answers to their different queries in life and its ultimate meaning (Bhatt, 2012). It has been said that it is difficult to separate the word religion from culture because religion is regarded as a collection of cultural system where culture is the totality of a people's way of life, and, it differs from one group of people or country to another (Familusi, 2012: 299). As earlier stated, no prescribed definition can be ascribed to the word religion due to its perceived diversity (Odejobi, 2014). In Nigeria, the indigenous religion commonly practiced in South-Western region have different nomenclatures. This encompasses the traditional religious, spiritual concepts, and practices of the people (Ogunbado, 2012).

Many indigenes in the South Western region in Nigeria believe in one supreme being called "Olorun or Olodumare". They also have about 200 other deities who are collectively called Orisa (Osun Osogbo council, 2007). These deities are embodiments of natural creations in the environment such as "Ogun -the Orisa of Iron", "Sango -Orisa of thunder", "Osun - Orisa of

fertility", "Obatala", "Esu", "Oya", "Yemoja", to mention, but few. Different localities, or communities, have their own specific "Orisa' which they offer reverence to (Ogunbado, 2012: 52). The basic structure of the religious belief system of the Yoruba people in Nigeria has the "Supreme Being" or "Olodumare" as the head of all things. They believe him to be the creator and controller of the universe who is ever active and in charge even when the divinities and "Orissa" became silent. This can be likened to the teachings in the Old Testament of the bible where the basic belief is in the Supreme Being, God. Such similar notions also prevail in many other African contexts (Adamo, 2011).

> "*In Africa we speak of religion in the singular. This is deliberate. We are not unconscious of the fact that Africa is a large continent with multitudes of nations who have complex cultures, innumerable languages and myriads of dialects. But, in spite of all these differences, there are many basic similarities in the religious systems—everywhere there is the concept of God (called by different names); there is also the concept of divinities and/or spirits as well as beliefs in the ancestral cult. Every locality may, and does, have its own local deities, its own festivals, its own name, or names for the Supreme Being, but in essence, the pattern is the same. There is that noticeable "Africanness" in the whole pattern" (Van der Walt, 2003: 64).*

Religion, therefore, can be regarded a fundamental fabric in many African societies as it is interwoven with the over-all existence of its people (Agbiji and Swart, 2015). Whilst it may be accepted that the African traditional religious heritage remains a potent force that still influences the values, identity, and outlook of Africans, it should be noted that Christianity and Islam are also becoming major sources of influence in the African society (Metuh, 2002).

2.3 African Traditional Religion among Nigerians

In Nigeria, the most widely practiced and accepted religions are Islam and Christianity. Statistics carried in 2008 presented that about 45 percent of the population stated Islam as their religion, whereas 11.5 percent were Catholic, and about 42 percent were from other Christian

denominations (which varied from Protestant, Pentecostals etc.). The statistics presented showed a decline in the percentage of Catholics and other Christians. This was assumed to have taken place between 2003 and 2008. The percentage of those who practice Islam saw an increase from 37.4 to 44.7% in the stated period (NPC and ICF Macro, 2009). In some parts of the country though, which includes the North East and North West, the majority of its populace are Muslim, while the South East and the South – South has a high number of Christians (Reed and Mberu, 2015). Despite often always aligning themselves with the two world religions, it is widely believed amongst many Nigerians that "ancestral spirits and gods influence the affairs of the living" (Ikechukwu, 2017: 36). It is believed that these deities do not only shield and defend the people from mishaps, they are also believed to serve as a link between the "world here and the world beyond". That is the reason why several traditional societies uphold their continuous communion with these spirits by way of offering sacrifices, libations, and other religious observances passed down to them by their forefathers (Ndemanu, 2018, p. 79).

Despite professing either Christianity or Islam, many Nigerians still practice traditional religions such as ancestral worshipping and the belief in deities (Okonkwo and Nzeh, 2009). Modernization, urbanization, and industrialization are beginning to have a profound impact on African traditional religion (Obasola, 2014), which has stoked fears among adherents of Africa religion that the end maybe near for traditional practices (Awolalu and Dopamu, 2005). However, it is interesting to note that, in spite of the disruptive influences of modernization and foreign religions, the Osun Osogbo festival and the Osun Sacred Grove are today one of the few surviving sacred places in Nigeria (Oyeweso, 2013). Religion, from the Nigerian perspective or understanding, can be termed as a notion that was passed on from the past to the present. It encompasses overt and covert votaries passed down by continuous pedigrees, mainly through oral traditions which usually include myths and folktales, songs and dances, liturgies, festivals, and rituals (Gbenda, 2006: 5). It can be defined as a longstanding sacred beliefs and practices which is rooted in the past and is slowly, but constantly being updated by each generation in the light of new religious experiences through the dialectical process of continuities and discontinuities (Kanu, 2018). In this context, Nigeria is home to a variety of co-existing religious groups, that attract their enthusiasts and followers at different centers and in different periods in the year. Religious travels are embarked on by many for the primary purpose of faith sharing and enjoying fellowship together, while exploring the various religious centers within and outside the country (Okonkwo and Nzeh, 2009). Furthermore, the numerous

festivals held by adherents to traditional religion have also made religious tourism, a "beautiful bride" in Nigeria (Uchenna and Okpoko, 2017).

2.4 Nigeria and tourism

Nigeria is blessed with rich tourism potentials and, according to Tunde (2012), the most important attraction in the country is the culture which can be developed for the purposes of tourism enhancement. He (Tunde) opined that the most important aspect of Nigerian culture that has survived and could be represented to tourists globally is festivals. Every region of the country has a major festival that can be commodified for international tourists. In Nigeria, there are well over four hundred languages with numerous dissimilar cultural expressions and artistic manifestations (Idang, 2015: 100). This has attracted lots of visitors from Europe and other parts of the world who visit the country in a bid to experience the expression of this cultural diversity. The various documentation of some cultural events has motivated, especially the younger generation, tourists to visit the region.

Some of Nigeria's heritage tourist destinations that are well utilized in Nigeria include the "Idanre Hill", the "Olumo Rock" and Ogbunike caves (Omotoba, 2016). The facilities in these destinations help to renew indigenous architectural traditions on the condition that the regions uniqueness, the ancestral legacy and traditional location are respected (PS, 2017). If well enhanced, tourism can play a prominent role in the cultural sustainability of the Osun festival in Osogbo and other cultural heritage sites in the country. Although not fully explored, cultural tourism in Nigeria can contribute to the rebirth of traditional cultural activities in a protected natural environmental setting and the promotion of indigenous arts and crafts. Some cultural destinations in Nigeria with these potentials include bead and bangles making in Bida, the dyeing pit in Kano, and, pottery and calabash carvings in other northern states in the country (Omotosho, 2012). In the most favorable case, tourism can offer a way to resuscitate the social and cultural life of the locals, thereby "strengthening the resident community's cultural pride, encouraging contacts within the country, and attracting young people into advantageous local activities" (Oluwatuyi and Ileri, 2016: 4).

2.5 South Western Region – Yoruba speaking community

In Nigeria and in the broader West African region, the Yoruba speaking people are usually referred to as the largest cultural collection of people that has a history of political unity as well as a "common historical tradition" (Ogunbado, 2012: 51). People from the South Western region in Nigeria make up a large percentage of this Yoruba speaking community. They are mainly indigenes from Oyo, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Ekiti and Lagos States in Nigeria. This community of people, equally form parts of Edo, Kwara, and Kogi states in Nigeria, with some, from parts of the Republic of Benin and Togo. Although these individuals are usually all recognized as Yoruba's, they are however not necessarily a homogeneous group, because they are constituted by many kings and rulers, spanning over different distinct and independent sub-ethnic groups. Their variances are recognizable and identified from their dialects, their food habits, and musical traditions (Banda and Adetomokun, 2015).

The precise origin of this community is debatable and the background information about them is quite scare (Oyebade, 2004). There are two different versions, however, which are being circulated from their oral tradition. The first version claims that the foremost fathers of the land were immigrants who arrived from a "Northern source" variously identified as either Egypt, Meroe, Yemen or Arabia. The second version, claims Ile-Ife to be the first habitable place created on earth by God. It is believed that that location was where all earthly creation began. This is why Ile-Ife is usually referred to, by members of this community, as the "cradle of the Yoruba race" (Akintoye, 2004: 1). Also, the South Western region of Nigeria have numerous religious cults. Each of these sects have their own priests that carries out their various rites and rituals under the authority of the community's king (Alaafin). "Shango", is the acclaimed god of thunder and is believed to symbolize the power of the king while "Ogboni" represents the fertility of the land and the monarchy's role in ensuring the wellbeing of the kingdom.

One of the numerous religious sects amongst members of this community is "Ifa". Adherents to this religious cult believe in "Olodumare" or "Olorun" as the supreme deity (Okonkwo and Nzeh, 2009). In many African cultures, religion is regarded as strong elements and often used

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to exerts a great influence upon the conduct of the people. This is also applicable for members of this community, for them, worship or reverence for these gods forms the nucleus of life; "By worship, we do not mean the limited area of rituals and liturgies alone, but also the totality of the people's relation to the supernatural order of the deities" (Ogunbado, 2012: 42). It is a total response to "Olodumare" (the supreme God worth of great reverence) not just in words but also in their actions. This would typically be carried out through various forms, ceremonies or rites, that may involve silent meditation, praying, prostration, appealing and addressing the spirits of the objects of worship. It could also involve, dancing, clapping, making offerings and sacrifices, sounding the bell or gong, drumming and singing, as determined by the situation.

It is believed that the different types of offerings that can be given to the goddess of Osun are effects that have sweet taste, these include honey, mead, white wine, oranges, or pumpkins, as well as perfume (Orga, 2016: 28). This offering ceremony may be performed secretly, at the convenience of an individual who has the need to make an appeasement; or it may be carried out as a collective or corporate ceremony with many people in attendance. The significant aspect of these ceremonies though is the reverence, appropriate conduct and mood in which they conducted in order to achieve the desired result (Balogun, 2007). Furthermore, adherents to these religions are known to take their devotion into their day-to-day life. Practically all their day-to-day activities are done with the consciousness of the ever – watchful eyes of the believed unseen presence of their ancestors, spirits, divinities, and of course, "Olodumare". Bearing this in mind, all members of the society, thus carry out their conduct, deeds and affairs with one another, and their surroundings, with communal respect and selflessness (Ogunade, 2010).

2.6 Osun Osogbo – the culture and the people

The state of Osun in Nigeria is one of the thirty-six states that exist in the country. Osogbo, being the capital city of the state makes it the center of all administrative, commercial, and industrial center. The present day Osun State, was formed in the early 1990s from the then old Oyo State. This was done under the military administration, then led by General Ibrahim Babangida. The indigenes of the state are mostly traders, artisans and farmers. Other major

occupations in this community include hand weaving of textiles, mat weaving, tie and dye, leather work and calabash carving (Omojola, 2011). Divided into three senatorial districts with two administrative zones, the state has about thirty local government areas with an area.

After the last national census that was conducted in Nigeria (2006), the population in Osun state was estimated to be well over five million across numerous towns, villages, and other settlements in the state. Osun state has a substantial number of urbanized settlements, some of which are "Osogbo", "Ile–Ife", "Ilesha", "Ikirun", "Iwo", "Ede", "Ila-Orangun" and "Ikire" (Olatunji and Ezenagu, 2016: 7). The name given to the state, Osun, was derived from the River Osun. According to Omojola (2011: 42), "naming the state after the Yoruba goddess and selecting Osogbo as the capital were intentional so as to acknowledge the significance of the Yoruba traditional religion in the region". Osun State prides itself on its rich culture and tradition. Oral history believes that the state is the hometown of Olodumare (the supreme God) who started the creation of the world from Ife (another town in Osun).

Contemporary literature on the Yoruba tradition indicates that the foundation of Osogbo can be traced back to the times of "Oduduwa", the acclaimed progenitor of the Yoruba race (Osogbo cultural heritage council, 2007). The goddess of the Osun River in "Oso – Igbo", is believed to be the queen and original founder of the community. She is recognized and reverenced for her many important achievements in the town. The art, literature and other social activities associated with the state denote its richness in culture and tradition. The people of Osun are mostly Yoruba speaking Nigerians who still place very high relevance to traditional institutions like kingships, which can actually be traced to the pre-colonial period. Irrespective of urbanization and modernization, which has led to some deterioration of traditional religion in many Yoruba towns, the people of this community generally still treasure their ancient cultures and traditions. Though the number of churches and mosques may appear to still be on the increase, the continually popular and mass gathering of people at the annual Osun Osogbo festival displays the reverence and importance that the people of community have for their cultural identity (Adejare, 2007).

Significant of note for the current study, the Yoruba community has also been described as the largest concentration of Africans living in the diaspora (Ajayi, 2006). For many members of the diaspora in this community, the Osun Osogbo festival is a strong motivation to make return journeys back home. The Osun Osogbo sacred grove located along the banks of the Osun River is the setting for the annual Osun-Osogbo festival. As earlier mentioned, the ceremony takes place in the month of August every year. The festival is centered around thanksgiving and making supplications to the goddess Osun. Although the festival is not the only cultural celebration in the country or in that locality, it is perhaps one of the most significant, prominent, and well-documented cultural festivals in Nigeria (Oyeweso, 2003).

2.7 The Sacred Groove – A UNESCO world heritage center

"World Heritage" is an important arena for contemporary grounds. The term is used to described "a consciousness of the world as a single place for the existing world (1992: 132). "World Heritage is the intellectual child of a major globalization push in heritage conservation during the 1960s" (Brumann, 2014). It postulates that the world's most prized natural and cultural sites should belong to all and sundry, and thus, should everyone has a responsibility to ensure that it is well cared for. Over the years, the World Heritage title has been seen to have dramatic effect on an attraction as it entices many tourists to the site and consequently leading to a boost in national and local self-esteem (Werbner, 2008: 2). The promotion of world heritage by UNESCO, is important in these present times with tourism now becoming a global phenomenon that involves, well over, a billion people. It should be noted that the listing of a site does not automatically result in an increase in funding for the protection of listed sites. Furthermore, UNESCO is often not in a position to prevent these sites from being destroyed or damaged, however, the UNESCO world heritage listing confers prestigious stance on these heritage sites. The inscription makes the site to sought after by countries who wish to promote their historical and natural assets and to also give them a spot on the world stage (Maurel, 2017).

At their Convention in Durban, South Africa in the year 2005, the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) termed the Osun grove a World Heritage Site (WHS). This pronunciation initiated the into the elite list of distinctive cultural or physical significant sites in the world (Woosnam and Aleshinloye, 2015). This was the successful conclusion of a 50-year crusade organized and championed by some artists, Yoruba priests, and an Austrian artist, Susanne Wenger (popularly known as "Adunni Olorisa") (Babalola, 2014: 354). The acknowledgement of the Osun grove by UNESCO in 2005 as a world heritage site has been associated with the popularity that the festival has enjoyed over the years and the protection of the grove's values by the people of the community (Yusuf, 2016). The inscription of Osun Osogbo sacred grove as a World Heritage center has opened the flood gate of international tourism in the destination and added to its intrinsic value (Ezenagu, 2020). Cataloguing its heritage resources has added to its touristic value which has led to an increase in touristic activities at the destination. Statistics have shown that, because of the celebration of this festival in Osogbo, noticeable infrastructural development has been recorded in the state. This ranges from the creation of job opportunities to the provision of basic amenities in the state, many of which were previously not available (Makinde, 2016).

Since the engraving of the site, the city of Osogbo has grown considerably, this has also seen an improvement in the scope, size, and profitability of the annual Osogbo festival (Whelan, 2015: 10). However, these increases and impacts of the development or potential development in the wider setting have placed some strains on the property, which was celebrated as a sacred grove. The report on the "ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission" to the Osun – Osogbo sacred grove (2014) listed the numerous challenges which were identified as the factors affecting the grove. The risk of over – commercialization of the festival has been identified a source of concern, with patronage being evidently recognized. The economic successes of the festival will also mean that financing for the festival will eventually be given more preference over funding for its conservation. Another identified area of concern was pressure from a rapidly increase growth of the community's population. The subsequent urbanization process, poaching and deforestation could result in farming practices and other activities to begin in area that should otherwise be restricted. Furthermore, threats to some art, sculptures and other natural aspects of the sacred grove have been the subject of some academic articles in recent times (Babalola, 2014; Oseghale et al., 2014).

2.7.1 The Osun Osogbo River

Yoruba mythology claims that the goddess Osun, is one of the wives of Sango (the god of Thunder). Oral history believes that Osun metamorphosed into the Osogbo sacred river after she had a misunderstanding with one of her co-wives, Oba (who was Sango's first wife) (Oyeweso, 2013). The riverbank of Osun is where water of purification is collected, and appeasements are conducted during the annual Osun Osogbo festival. Because of the traditional beliefs and history surrounding the grove, fishing, hunting, and other such activities are not allowed; the fish in the water, the animals, and trees in the forest are believed to be totemic representations of the goddess (Amosun, 2006).

Historically in African Traditional Religion, water plays a very important role in many rituals that are connected with purifications. Water also plays a significant part in oath taking and serves as an important symbolic element in divination, initiation, marriage, and burial rites (Adewale, 1986). In Yoruba land, barren women are advised to pray at the bank of the River Osun and take their bath there, with the belief that the goddess of the river would make them fruitful. The water from the Osun River is believed to have medicinal value that heals infertility in women (Falade, 2003). Many also hold the belief that evil spirits can be exorcized from sick and mad people if such persons take ritual baths in the river, especially during the festival when the potency is considered to be higher (Jegede et al., 2018: 18).

2.7.2 The goddess

The river goddess of Osun is recognized as the founder and early establishment of the Osogbo town about four hundred years ago. Oral accounts of history describe her as "Oso-Igbo", the queen and foremost initiator of Osogbo town. Her full appellation is "Osun SeegesiOlooyaIyun", which means "Osun the owner of the flawless, perfectly carved beaded comb" (Jones, 1997: 72). In their attempt to give the etymology of the word 'Osun', Murphy

and Sanford (2001: 2) explain that Osun is coined from the word "Orisun", which means "source" and, therefore, it may mean source of the river, the people, or children. Amongst other things, Osun is regarded, among the Yoruba's who adhere to her divination, as "the goddess of wealth and beauty, an herbalist or healer, a diviner, a dyer, a giver of children, a goddess of fertility, protection, blessing, and a leader of women" (Oyeweso, 2013).

The worship of the Osun deity is believed to extend beyond Osogbo to other African diaspora like in Haiti, where the goddess is known as "Erzulie, Freda or Dahomey"; in Puerto Rico and Cuba, she is known as "Ochun", and to the Brazilians, Osun is known as "Oxum" (Jones, 1997). In the Yoruba mythology, Osun, the goddess of the Osun River, is alleged to be a very influential woman and is believed to be the only female out of the sixteen major deities (Orisa) in the Yoruba community. Osun is commonly shown as a very good-looking, attractive, sensual, and coquettish young woman. In addition to her acclaimed natural beauty, Osun is also believed to be always adorned with ornaments like gold jewelries, brass bracelets, beads, mirrors, and elaborate fans (Castellanos, 2001). It is also believed that Osun is attracted to all things that are shiny and glittering. In many oral folktales, Osun is portrayed as a mermaid with a fish tail, perhaps as a reference to her status as the "goddess of sweet waters". Tradition acclaims that Osun is the goddess of fertility, protection, healing, wealth, and beauty (Probst, 2009).

The Osun goddess is everything to the people of Osogbo as she is considered the real founder, mother, protector, guard, and the nurturer of the town (Badejo, 1995). She is believed to possess magical powers which inspire her people and frightens her enemies (Folunsho, 2007). During Osun's lifetime, she was the favorite wife of Sango, the Orisa of thunder and the famous 17th century Alaafin of Old Oyo (Oyeweso, 2013). Osun as the 'Great Mother' (Yeye) in the poem denotes the ability of the goddess to heal all forms of human diseases, particularly those that affect mothers and children. It also connotes her ability to make supposedly barren women to become fertile and heal infertility in men (Badejo, 1995). To confirm this claim, Osogbo traditions, states that the conception by one of the wives of Olarooye, the first Ataoja, was made possible by the goddess. It is believed that the said wife only able to have children after drinking water from the Osun river (Kayode, 2006).

During the different ceremonies, sacrifices are usually made at the bank of the River Osun in honor of the goddess and for appeasements. These sacrifices can only be done by the Ataoja (the king of the town), the Iya Osun (the chief priestess), the Votary Maid (Arugba Osun), and other Osun devotees. Devotees of the goddess, according to the tradition, are people who have been possessed by her physical manifestation. It has been said that "when she possesses her followers, she dances, flirts and then weeps because no one can love her enough, and the world is not as beautiful as she knows it could possibly be" (Badejo, 1995).

2.7.3 The grove

In Yoruba traditional religion, groves are regarded as sacred places that are reserved for rites and rituals (Adedeji and Fadamiro, 2018). Some of the acknowledged major heritage destinations in Nigeria are the groves in Yoruba land (Omotoba, 2016). A century ago, every town had a sacred grove in Yoruba land, however, with the advent of modernization, many of these sacred plantations were abandoned and they gradually shrunk to smaller areas. Acclaimed to have been founded about some 400 years ago in southwest Nigeria, at a distance of 250 km from Lagos, is the largest sacred grove to have survived and still being reverences by many (Oseghale et al., 2014). Archaeological excavations have shown that indeed people first moved to the grove about 400 years ago, and settled at this site close to the river (Ogundiran, 2014). The dense forest of the Osun Sacred Grove is about the last of fragments of the primary high forest in South Western Nigeria. The forest meanders through the "River Osun", which is the spiritual abode of the river goddess "Osun". The grove is set within the forest reservation, and also home to about forty other shrines, sculptures, and art works. These were all erected in honor of "Osun" and other Yoruba deities; many of which were created and erected in the past forty years. The grove has two ancient palaces, five sacred places, and nine different worship points that are strung along the riverbanks with designated priests and priestesses (Okonkwo and Eyisi, 2016).

As earlier mentioned, the grove was first declared a National Monument in 1965. Its initial designation was revised and further extended in 1992 to safeguard the entire 75 hectares of the grove. The engraving of the sacred Grove as a World Heritage site in 2005 by UNESCO required that a 200-meter buffer zone be allowed around the grove; this was done to give adequate protection to biodiversity and cultural resources. "The Nigerian Cultural Policy of 1988" states that "the state shall preserve as Monuments old city walls and gates, sites, palaces, shrines, public buildings, promote buildings of historical significance, and monumental sculptures". Furthermore, the "Land Use Act of 1990" mandates the Federal Government of Nigeria to confer trusteeship of the grove to the state government. The Osun Osogbo grove is now unique because of its large component of 20th century arts and sculptures.

Many of the sculptures found in the grove were created by local traditional artists to strengthen the connection between the people, the Yoruba pantheon, and the ways by which the different towns link their establishment and growth to the spirits of the forest (Amosun, 2006). The refurbishment of the grove by the different traditional artists has given it a new importance as a sacred place for the Yoruba land, and also, as a symbol of identity for the wider Yoruba's in the diaspora (Murphy and Sanford, 2001). The grove is a lively religious site where daily, weekly, and monthly devotion and venerations take place. Furthermore, an annual ceremonial commemoration to re-establish the mystic bonds between the goddess and the people of the town takes place yearly between the months of July and August. These ceremonies are carried out to sustain the living cultural traditions of the Yoruba people. The grove is also regarded as a natural herbal pharmacy as it is believed to contain over 400 species of plants and species that are used for traditional or local medications (Oyeweso, 2013).

It is important to mention here that Osun goddess is not the only deity that is worshiped at the Grove. The Yoruba religion has more than 400 "Orisa", which are believed to be representatives of the supreme god, "Olodumare" (Van Zeiji, 2016). The grove is managed by the Osun Osogbo Heritage Council headed by the Ataoja of Osogbo (that is the paramount ruler of Osogbo). Membership of the council include key chiefs in the town (not honorary chiefs), representations from the state tourism board, Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC), and other marketing partner organizations. In charge of the actual management of the grove are the board, the Adunni Olorisa Trust Fund (AOT) and the National Commission for

Museum and Monuments. The grove gets its maintenance funding from the Federal and State government, although the yearly festivals are majorly sponsored by many private corporate organizations in the country (Festival brochure, 2018). The Osun Sacred Grove is the biggest, and possibly the only remaining model of a once common phenomenon that used to characterize many Yoruba settlements. The Osun Grove can be regarded as a tangible expression of Yoruba divinatory and cosmological classifications. The yearly festival is a living flourishing and growing response to Yoruba philosophies on the bond that exist between people, their ruler, and the goddess of Osun (Adewale, 2014).

2.7.4 The Osun Osogbo festival

The history of the Osun Osogbo festival can be traced back to the founding of Osogbo in the 1370 AD, when an agreement was made between the founding king (i.e., Ataoja) and the "Osun" deity (Probst, 2011). According to Oral history, the Osun-Osogbo festival, has been celebrated for about six centuries. The celebration of the festival revolves around the relationship between the river goddess, Osun, and the first monarch of the Osogbo kingdom, Oba Gbadewolu Larooye (Balogun, 2007). The origin of the Osun Osogbo festival is traced to the prominent role played by the Osun goddess in the founding and settlement of Osogbo. The various versions of the traditions of origin of Osogbo agree that the ancestors of Osogbo led by Lajomo, Olarooye and Olutimehin migrated from Ipole Omu in Ijesa land due to scarcity of water at that time. This made them all to settle at the flood bank of the river (Oseghale, 2014). These ancestors of Osogbo were grandsons of Ajibogun, who is believed to be a direct son of Oduduwa, the eponymous father of the Yoruba's (Oyeweso, 2013).

This festival, which is one of the most prominent cultural celebration in the country is dedicated to a traditional deity. Over the years, the festival has become an international tourist attraction, drawing thousands to the community to witness the grandeur of the festival and praise giving to the goddess of the town (Osun festival brochure, 2014: 14). Festival participants typically come to the grove to offer their prayers and petitions while many others just visit the grove to participate in the festivities of the annual convergence (Woosnam et al., 2016). The festival

always begins with the Iwopopo, a ceremony to cleanse the town in preparation for the festival. About three days after, another major ceremony is carried out, the lighting of the 16-point candle which oral history claims is about 5,000 years old. Other events celebrated within the two-week festival period include beauty pageants, children's parties, and various traditional games. All these events are filled with singing, dancing, and feasting. The Osun Osogbo festival spans sixteen days of ritual, drama, and festivities (Oyeweso, 2013: 4). It serves as an avenue for the people of Osogbo town to commemorate and renew the pact between the Osun goddess and the ancestors of Osogbo town (Adewale, 2014).

While data on attendance remain sketchy, the Osogbo Cultural Heritage Council estimates that some five thousand people attend the festival annually. However, this figure remains contested and unreliable when compared with figures quoted by other sources (Osun Osogbo festival publication, 2018; The New York times, 2016; Woosnam, 2016). The participants at the Osun Osogbo festival comprise local residents and citizens from across Nigeria, members of the diaspora, local and international tourists. The festival is a symbol of identity for the many members of the Yoruba Community, devotees of the "Ifa" divination system among Nigerians, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Americans, and the African diaspora who use the festival to reconnect to their cultural roots (Emelike, 2011). The Osun Osogbo festival is suggestive of a space of comfort and a form of pilgrimage for the diaspora.

The Osun Osogbo festival has historical, political, economic, and cultural significance for the people of Osogbo. These groups that are listed above are underpinned by three broad significances. For the historical group, which includes the conservationists, UNESCO, the Aduni Orisa Foundation, and the National Museum and Monument; their main interest is in preserving the authentic nature of the grove. Second are political and economic stakeholders, which include the state government, local council, and the Osogbo community. This group of stakeholders is interested in the marketability of both the grove as a tourism site and the festival as a tourism product. Thirdly, the pilgrimage group includes many members of the diaspora who view the Osun grove as a sacred place of worship through which they communicate the present with the past (Giovine and Garcia-Fuentes, 2016; Taha, 2016).

The celebration of the annual Osun Osogbo festival certainly has economic value for the people of Osogbo (Falade, 2003). During the festival, the town is the center of attention as it plays host to a fairly large number of guests and tourists from different parts of the world. This has impacted greatly on the economic and social activities in the town as traders, hoteliers, transporters, and other businesses experience a boost in their revenues. Moreover, support and funding for the annual Osun festival is now being undertaken by corporate bodies and large business organizations like Coca Cola, MTN, Global Bank, and a host of others (Osogbo Cultural Heritage Council, 2007). The organization and marketing of the yearly festival celebration in Osun festival is now a responsibility of the Ataoja of Osogbo, in conjunction with the Federal and Osun State Government tourism organizations.

In recent years, the festival celebration is coordinated by the state government and has become one of the cardinal aspects of the present government's tourism drive and promotion (Makinde, 2016). To make the festival more tourism friendly, plans are currently put in place to build a world class tourist resort, as the state is the foremost fountain of the Yoruba customs and traditions (Olukole and Balogun, 2011). The Osun state government being aware of the fact that many Yoruba's in the diaspora are highly conscious of their roots and heritage, has marked the Osun Osogbo festival and Olojo festival in Ile-Ife for global promotion and recognition in the nearest future (Orga, 2016). To this end, several other social events have been incorporated into current conduct at the Osun festival to add appeal and entertainment to the celebrations (Osogbo Cultural Heritage Council, 2007).

The annual celebration is performed by the people to honor the goddess, Osun (the goddess of fertility, healing, and prosperity), who, from oral history, is responsible for the progress and development of Osogbo town. Despite challenging conditions, the festival celebration has been able to survive the test of time. However, the popularity and international recognition of the festival occurred only after the grove was celebrated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in July 2005 (National Commission for Museums and Monuments, 2005). According to Oluremi Funsho Adebayo, who is the co-coordinator of the National Museum, the motivation for UNESCO to inscribe the grove, inclusive of the festival, is because of the authenticity that is involved. The festival is believed to be the only festival since 1370 AD, which has maintained some significant resemblance to the early celebrations by the presumed founders of the land.

2.7.5 Challenges associated with the festival

Tayler (1999) suggested over 20 years ago that the celebration of this yearly event needs to be better managed to guard the site from suffering from the adverse impacts of tourism which could happen if the festival is commercialization. In recent times however, few studies conducted have shown that not much has changed in terms of effective management of the festival. Orga's (2016) study on the perceptions of tourists at the annual Osun Osogbo festival listed some measures that will need to be addressed. Education of visitors at the festival was identified as a valuable contribution to visitors during the festival because too many tourists at the site might exert negative impacts on the conservation of some sculptures at the sacred grove. From the study, the following were identified as key challenges. Firstly, the Atori boys with their long sticklike canes harassed festivals. Although the Atori boys and their masquerades are an additional attraction at the festival (Orga, 2016: 44), personal safety and comfort of visitors plays a prominent role in the continued success of such events as tourist attractions (Woosnam and Aleshinloye, 2012).

Another issue of concern was the lack of effective crowd control at the festival. Crowd control measures can include the recruitment of more festival guides and/or volunteers to direct and channel the annually increasing crowd. Participant observation revealed that there were inefficient and insufficient medical personnel at the 2014 Osun Osogbo festival (Orga, 2016). At that occasion, there were many reported cases of tourists falling or choking as they struggled to catch a glimpse of the votary maid (Arugba) carrying the ritual calabash to the sacred grove. According to Gbenga Ogu (2019), however, the 2019 edition of the event highlighted good planning and a better coordinated crowd control. Although the report stated that there was a massive crowd, there were no stampedes or serious crowd-related accidents as are usually recorded.

2.8 The Nigerian diaspora community and the festival

In many African societies, especially in Nigeria, cultural festivals are often conceptualized as a medium through which humans communicate with deities. Festivals attract people from near and far, not only for social entertainment, but also to enhance the relationship with, and understanding of cultures (Taylor and Kneafsey, 2016). It is indeed not only about entertainment, but also about social bonds, culture, history, and belief. Member of the Yoruba community, often pride themselves as one of the largest ethnic groups in Black Africa and the diaspora, with the grove representing a unique point of their cultural identity (Adedeji and Fadamiro, 2018). Attendance at the festival serves as a motivation for many Nigerians living in the diaspora to "come back home", even if it just for a brief period, to reconnect with family, friends and relatives (Green and Scher, 2007). Oral history records that, in the early days, during the celebration of the festival, participants were mainly members of the locality. In recent times however, attendance and participation at the festival has become a mixture of local residents, domestic and international tourists (Chang and Hsieh, 2017). Many incoming visitors at the festival come in from parts of the country, other countries in Africa, and other countries from across the globe. Some of these participants have similar cultural roots while some others do not. The relationship between residents and tourists is usually created by the perceived behavior of tourists at the destination. The manner in which indigenes in the community receive and relate with tourist (either as primarily negative or positive), is largely determined by the cultural and moral norms of the host community (Armenski et al., 2011).

The relationship that exists between host and guest has traditionally been described as unequal, artificial, and mostly based on financial exchanges between both parties. This takes into consideration the fact that many residents are often less affluent than these visitors or tourists, and are in the position of providing services to these tourists (Holmes, 2015). Research however, has indicated that a good quality of interaction between the two groups can lead to tourists' cross-cultural understanding and residents' tolerance of visitors (Yu and Lee, 2014). As explained in the previous chapter, diaspora includes displacement, a sense of belonging, otherness, and issues of return and identity negotiation (Arabian and Rahiminezhad, 2015). For many members of the diaspora, return journeys to their ancestral point of origin are often motivated by the emotional longing for home, a search for belonging, and the desire to

reconnect with their ancestry (Huang et al., 2013). Often times, there are many barriers that exist between the imagined and actual reception for these migrants on their return to their communities of origin, especially with their now transformed identities and their different outlook on the world (Bhugra and Becker, 2005). Sometimes, the relieved experiences from making return visits are not always as positive and enriching as they may have anticipated. These experiences may sometimes be unexpected, anticlimactic, or even hostile, especially for first-generation migrants who embark on these return journeys (Ruting, 2012). It is within this context that this study explores the experiences of these South Africa-based Nigerian migrant as visitors to their home country. It examines how these different experiences shape their sense of identity and cultural influences occasioned by their migrant status.

2.9 Susan Wenger – Adunni Olorisa

The history and evolution of the grove cannot be complete without mentioning "Susan Wenger", who was an Australian artist that migrated to Nigeria in the early 1950s. According to her biography, "Susan Wenger" was born in a city called Graz, Austria in the year 1915 and grew up in a "bourgeois milieu" (Probst, 2009). She passed on in her adopted hometown in Osogbo, Nigeria, on the 12th January 2009 at the age of 93. Susan Wenger's adoption into the Yoruba community and the subsequent expansion of the "Movement of New Sacred Artists" proved to be creation of a highly productive exchange of ideas that led to the revived of the sacred Osun Grove. History has it that on her arrival to Nigeria, she had terminal illness and would have died back then but for the intervention of the goddess. She thereafter dedicated herself to the worship and veneration of the goddess. Her primary interest, in the Yoruba religion, was effecting communication between the divine and humans (Olajubu, 2002). She is said to have embarked on a spiritual voyage, which led to a kind of religious internship in "Ede" and "Ilobu" (Probst, 2009). One of the high priests of "Obatala", "Ajagemo", introduced her to the Orisa religion in "Ede", where she said to have commenced her artistic works for the different gods (Olajubu, 2002). Her dedication and commitment made her get initiations into cult groups of the two Yoruba deities, "Obatala" and "Obaluaye/Sonponna". She was also later accepted into the "Ogboni" cult, which is believed to be an important political institution, whose authority is rooted in its connection to the goddess of the earth (Probst, 2009).

When Susan Wenger first arrived at Osogbo, the Sacred Grove was said to have been speedily vanishing. The shrine in the grove had been weather-beaten by termites and, the roof of the sacred sanctuary had caved – in. Furthermore, the large area of the forest was being cultivated by farmers in the community and development in the city was expanding toward the grove. Susan Wenger assistance was requested for by the then Ifa priest, who asked that she uses her influence and knowledge to help restore some of the shrines. This she did with the help from other devotees, local craftsmen and artists (Van Zeiji, 2016). Her foremost engagement at the grove, was the restoration of the "Soponna" cult at "Ede" and subsequently, an overhauls of the different shrines of other gods in the groves (Olajubu, 2002). She began to worship the goddess after being healed of tuberculosis, a sickness which had no cure in Nigeria at the time (Okonkwo and Eyisi, 2016). Her devotion and dedication to the gods and their abode endeared her to the devotees who renamed her Aduni Orisa, an oriki, which means "a cherished person who has a deep relationship with the gods". The gods chose her to be their chief priestess (Oyeweso, 2013). Her main grind over the years, was constant reconstruction, renovation, and preservation of the different shrines in the sacred groves (Olajubu, 2002). Susan Wenger was the curator of the grove, a post she held since the mid-50s, and handled for years before her demise in January 2009. Aduni brought fame to the now internationally recognized festival. Her devotion and dedication to the grove opened it up for international recognition, and she was instrumental to the listing of the grove as a world heritage center in July 2005.

2.10 Conclusion

In the last few years, the Osun Osogbo festival, which takes place at the Osun sacred grove, has become one of the most widely celebrated indigenous festivals in Nigeria. The festival is one of the few cultural festivals in Nigeria that is well-documented. This chapter on literature review focused on the South Western region in Nigeria, with particular emphasis on the people of the Osogbo community, who are the custodians of the grove and the festival. It examined the perception of members of the Nigerian diaspora to the festival and their notion of homecoming to participate at the festival. The review also highlighted some acknowledged

challenges that are associated with the celebration activities at Sacred Grove during the festival. Similarly, the chapter looked at the distinction between the concept of religion and spirituality with a focus on what the African Traditional region means to the average Nigerian. The next is a review of some of the literatures that are related to the objectives of this study.

Chapter three

Literature Review: Part B

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the existing literature on tourism-related issues, with a particular attention on the intersection of tourism and transnational migration. More specifically, the chapter discusses different types of tourism relating to this study, and the role of migrant return journeys in identity formation and negotiation. It also covers the concept of diaspora, the mobility paradigm, issues of religion, beliefs, and cultural heritage. This chapter also reviews literature on diasporic tourism and its overlap with visiting friends and relatives (VFR) travel. The last section of this chapter presents literature on travel motivation and purpose, migrants as tourists, and cultural and heritage tourism. This literature review is based on the identified key areas that relate to the focus and objectives of the study.

3.2 Transnational migration

The process of migration is a central dynamic in the history of Nigeria. Oral history narration on all major ethnic groups in the country, including the Hausa, Yoruba, and the Igbo, believe their ancestors founded their current settlement out of a migration story (Oyeniyi, 2010). Economic hardship, the emergence of autocratic and oppressive regimes, collapse of crude oil prices in the 1980s, the search for advancement by professionals in various spheres, and more advanced educational and training opportunities are some of the reasons which propelled many Nigerians to migrate (Wapmuk et al., 2014: 295). One of the survival strategies adopted by many Nigerians at that point in time, and even till date, was to leave the country and secure a means of livelihood in more developed countries. Many Nigerian migrants overseas, have been successfully establishing themselves in their various host societies. These migrants have also managed to maintain several forms of transnational connections with their places of origin.

This has been done through return migration, staying connected to their family and social ties, by making some financial remittances home, helping with their home reconstruction, carrying out some voluntary works, and also participating in activities of diaspora organizations (Osili, 2007). Migrants who claim to have relocated voluntarily are labelled as "proactive" (Boyne et al., 2002). They are those who are motivated to move from one country to another in a bid to secure a better quality of life for themselves and their children (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009). Although many of these individuals tend to preserve the close ties that they have with their place of birth, they also seem to be eager to improve the attachments they have to their new host country. This often results in a sense of multiple attachments to both their country of birth and their host country (Gustafson, 2001).

Although earlier research touched on transnational connections, transnational migration studies did not develop as a new sub discipline until the early 1990s, when migration specialists such as Glick Schiller et al., (1992) began to pay special attention to transnationalism. Their attention on migration within a globalizing economy, drew into question the role of the nation – state in regulating the activities that migrants involve themselves in and the subsequent identities that they create. Since the 1990s, migrant transnationalism has been the topic of an ever growing and varied literature; it has been described as a social phenomenon that seems prone to a conceptual dilemma when attempting to define it (Lazar, 2011; Boccagni, 2012). Transnational migration has been defined as "a process of movement and settlement across international borders in which individuals maintain or build multiple networks of connection to their country of origin while at the same time settling in a new country" (Fouron and Glick-Schiller, 2001, p. 60). While in the mid-90s transnationalism was defined as the processes by which migrants maintain relations with societies in their place of birth and settlement (Basch et al., 1994), more recent studies (Boccagni, 2012; Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007) have shown that these linkages go beyond just maintaining social ties. They may also involve political engagement in home country policies, transmittals of funds, sustenance of family members beyond the economic level, or other cultural and social linkages. Transnationalism has subsequently remained a useful lens through which many connections with home country are viewed, including return visits to birthplace (Koppenfels et al., 2015).

According to Castles, (2005), Transnationalism can be regarded as a scholarly research agenda or a social phenomenon that has grown out of the heightened interconnectivity between people and, the retreating economic and social importance of boundaries among nation states (Castles, 2005). With the prominent role and engaging debates around immigration that has continued to make headlines in newspapers around the world, it may be difficult to deny that migration has continued to be an issue of great social and political concern. Literatures on migration abounds with many studies attempting to comprehend the processes and the subsequent outcomes of these movements of persons. This field is becoming more interdisciplinary with useful insights coming in from sociologists, demographers, economists, anthropologists, legal scholars, post colonialists, and epidemiologists (Suárez-Orozco, 2002).

3.3 Diaspora

The concept of "diaspora" in discourse refers to a scattered populace whose origin are in a different geographical location (Ember and Skoggard, 2004). This concept is useful in understanding what connects an immigrant with their place of origin (Huang et al., 2012). Originally, diaspora was used to refer to involuntary large dispersals of a populace from their indigenous territories. Most notably will be the expulsion of the Jews from the Land of Israel (popularly referred to as the Jewish diaspora). Also, the escapes of the Greeks after the fall of Constantinople is another example of early diaspora. The impression of "diaspora" being used to describe a forcible dispersion can be found in the Christians holy Bible (Deuteronomy 28: 25). This section of the bible talks about the warning that of a "scattering to other lands" which was presumed to constituted a punishment for people who had forsaken the righteous paths and abandoned the ways of God. So closely, indeed, had "diaspora" become associated to this unpropitious Jewish practice, thereby almost losing the actual meaning of the word (Cohen, 1996). The word "Diaspora" stems from the Greek words "dia" (which means through) and "speiro" (which means to scatter). Diaspora denotes the scattering of an ethno-national group from their place of origin. Contemporary use of the term "diaspora" has increased to include many populaces who have settled outside their ancestral native land; these includes immigrants, foreign workers, expatriates, refugees, and other communities.

Diaspora has been conceptualized as a "de-territorialized", and "transnational" population dispersed from an original homeland, who have developed strong ethnic group consciousness, alienation or a feeling of solidarity, and varied levels of desire to return home (Vertovec, 2004). Many foremost discourse on diaspora were deep – rooted in a conceptual dispersion of individuals from an original native land, which were often traumatic, to other distant countries (Cohen, 1996: 515). Recent scholarship on the notion, however embraces a much broader understanding to include people dispersed around the world for various reasons which include labor migration, trade, colonialization, partisan, commercial, social, and ecological cataclysm (Conway et al., 2015). A consistent theme in diaspora travel literature, regardless of nationality/ethnicity, is spontaneity and linkage; the desire of travelers to maintain a connection with their place of birth or lineage through visitation. The conceptual typology of diasporas, developed by Cohen (1997), was to include different dimensions like "victim diaspora" (e.g., the Jewish), "imperial diaspora" (e.g., the British), "labor diaspora" (e.g., the indentured Indians), "trade diaspora" (e.g., the Chinese), and "cultural diaspora" (e.g., the Caribbean). Superficially, it is believed that migrant communities consist of the same or similar ethnic groups that have live outside of their place of origin. They usually include a variety of sub – groups, defined by their motivation to migrate; the season and the wave of migration; the places that they have migrated from; how they classify themselves; and whether, or not, they feel associated to their ancestral homeland (Elle li et al, 2019).

It is believed that migration can make significant social and economic assistances to destination nations. These assistances could include cultural enhancement of the society, improving the tourism products in the country, or providing labor for travel, tourism, hospitality, and catering sectors. Migrants' transmittals and revenue derived from tourism can be useful tools for augmenting tourism – related developments and investments in the basic infrastructure at the community level in the countries of origin. This will go a long way in impacting the lives of the populace and reducing the level of poverty in the country. Migration also has a clear tourism demand generation because of its ability to stimulate an increasingly two – way flow of expatriates visiting their countries of origin, and, in turn, their relatives and friends visiting those of them that are based in the new host countries. In the last two decades, "African migration" has been the topic of an increasing body of research and policy interest (Bakewell

and Binaisa, 2016: 280). Previous research has mainly focused on the movement of Africans outside the continent. A small but growing number of studies (e.g., Bakewell, 2019) have looked at the diaspora formation of African migrants who are still within the continent as recent studies have shown that most of these migrants are actually moving within the continent (Ibrahim Forum Report, 2019). In West Africa, Nigeria, is regarded as a key regional player as the country it accounts for roughly half of the region's populace with approximately 202 million people. It is also regarded as one of the country's in the world with a large populations of youths. Nigeria is a multi – ethnic and culturally diverse confederation which is made of thirty-six independent states and the Federal Capital Territory, which is Abuja (worldbank.org, 2019). It has been estimated that well over fifteen million Nigerians live outside the country. The host countries for many of these Nigerians include other African countries, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and other European countries (Gordon, 2003). Although Nigerians have a long tradition of mobility, the volume, form and direction of the emigration has however changed over the years (Carling, 2006: 21).

3.4 Nigerians and travel

Statistic show that the entire population of Nigeria, accounts for about 2.35% of the entire earth population. What this means is that one, out of every forty-three persons in the world, regards Nigeria as home (World population prospects, 2019 revision). In terms of its social geography, Nigeria is a multi-ethnic federation comprising of well over 250 ethnic linguistic groups with the Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba ethnic groups identified and recognized by the Nigerian government as the country's dominant groups (Yesufu, 2016). The country's official language for communication however is English; this could be due to the country's colonial history. The country is seen as Africa's largest economy in Sub–Saharan Africa with the largest consumer market in Africa. The country is blessed with many natural resources, and has one of the largest natural gas reserves on the continent. Furthermore, Nigeria is one of the biggest oil exporter with Oil being the mainstay of the country's gross domestic product. Additionally, the country derives its growth from development in other sectors such as agriculture, commerce and tourism. Despite prevailing recession, Nigeria is still regarded as Africa's largest economy and one of its fastest growing economies (World Fact book, 2012).

According to Global Tourism Performance (Jan–April 2017), the number of inward bound arrivals into Nigeria increased by twelve percent to about two million trips that year. The largest source market in 2017 was the Middle East region with 671,000 trips. Beyond the Middle East, other nations with the largest source of Nigeria bound visitors were from Niger, Benin Republic and Liberia. International influxes are expected to see a six percent compound yearly growth rate (CAGR) during the forecast period (2015 to 2017: this date range was chosen based on the data available to the researcher as at the time of writing), to reach two point two million (Euro Monitor International, 2018). The domestic travel section has continued to stay strong at an estimate of about three million trips in 2017, following a growth of three percent, even though this was lower than the four percent growth recorded in 2016. Nigeria has one of the highest rankings in terms of urban markets in Africa with five of her major cities being listed in the top 25 in Africa (Fraym, 2017).

The main outbound travel destinations for Nigerian tourists include regional countries such as "Ghana", "Benin Republic", "Niger" and "Cameroun". The country with the highest number of visits by Nigerians has over the years been the United Kingdom (UK), London, where many Nigerians reside. Over the years, the UK has maintained its spot as the most popular destination for many Nigerians; this is followed by Johannesburg, Dubai and then New York, taking second, third and fourth place respectively (Travel start website accessed Dec. 23, 2019). The UK and the United Arab Emirates are popular among Nigerians because getting visas into these countries is relatively easy (Nielson, 2017). In 2016, South Africa received an approximate of about eight million tourist arrivals from the general Africa market with Nigeria being one of its top Africa air markets. In the year 2016, 65,599 Nigerian visitors were recorded as compared to 59,002 in 2015 (African Tourism Potentials, 2018). While Nigeria comprised nearly 30% of arrivals in South Africa, it was one of six countries with a year-on-year decrease (Stats SA, 2017).

Figure 1 and 2 below, extracted from SA Tourism (2017), provides an overview of these Nigerian travelers' purpose of visiting South Africa. Statistics how that travelers from Nigeria stay in South Africa for an average of about 10 days when they visit. In 2017, the number of

days had increased to 12.7 as when compared with 11.7 and 10.8 recorded in 2016 and 2015 respectively. The mainstream of border crossings does not include migration as most of these travelers are tourists or business visitors who have no intention of staying for a long period (Castles, 2019: 152). Technically, migration only takes place once the traveler takes up residence at the destination for more than one year.

	1ST TIME	2-3 TIMES	4-5 TIMES	6-9 TIMES	10 OR MORE
2015	26,6%	32,9%	23,0%	8,5%	9,0%
2016	40,0%	30,7%	13,3%	5,9%	10,0%
2017	36,6%	30,0%	17,3%	7,0%	9,2%

Source: SA Tourism (2017)
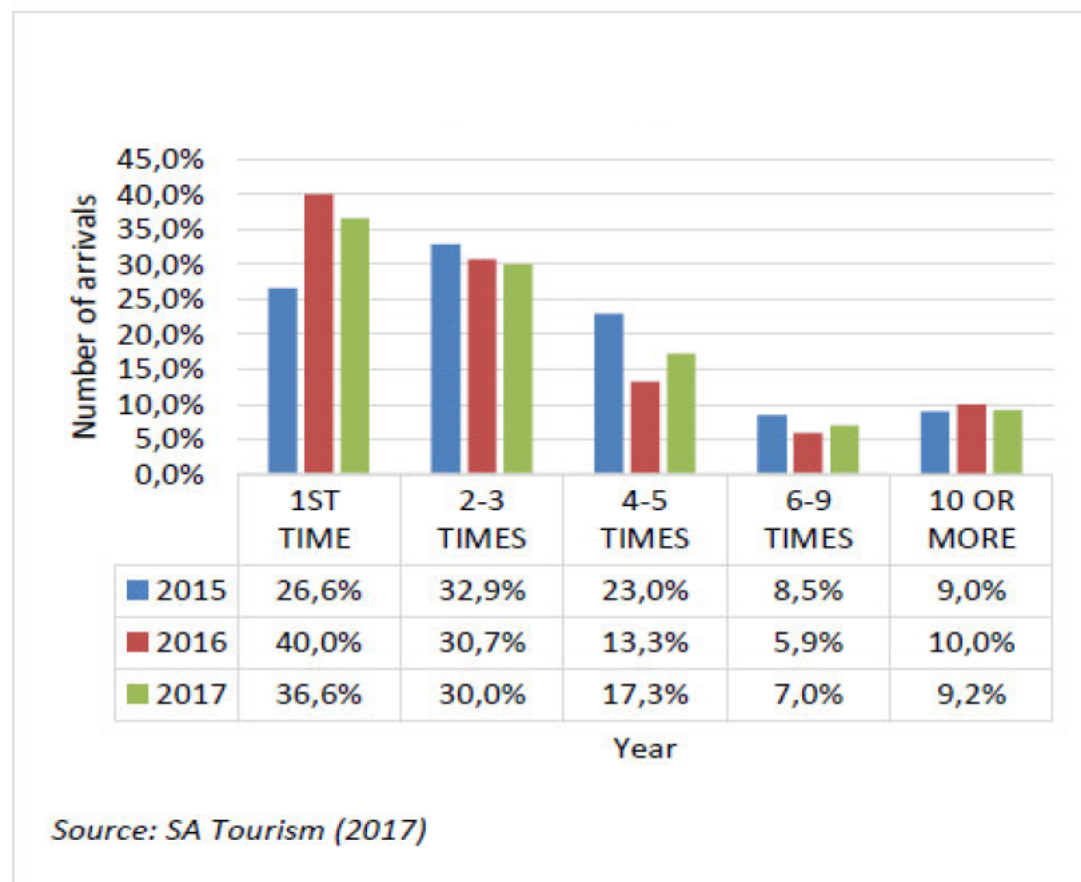
Figure 1: Nigerian tourists to SA repeater rate
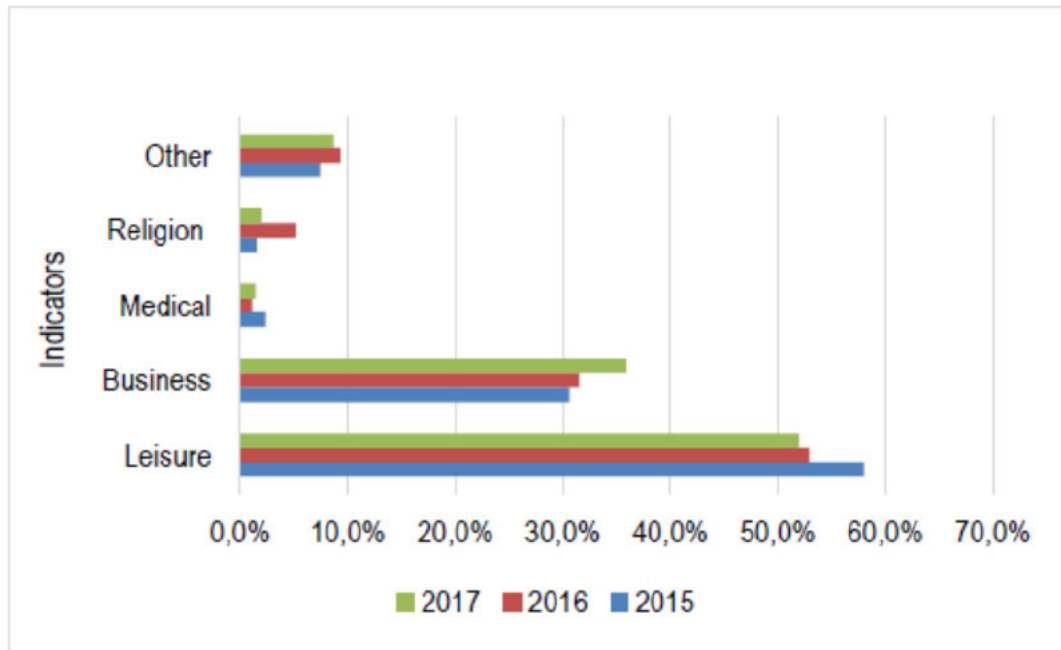
Figure 2: Nigerian tourist purpose of visit to SA

Figure 2 shows that over 50% of trips made by Nigerians to South Africa were mainly for leisure purposes. Nigerians are known to like travelling and most middle-class families have an aspiration to embark on international trips (Kazeem, 2018: 5). For many Nigerians, international travel is a status symbol (Rosa, 2018), and they pride themselves in going back home, flaunting designer items purchased from outside the country. The figure also shows less than 10% of Nigerians who come into South Africa for some other reason, which could include migration. Some within this bracket come into the country as students after having been recruited by South African universities, and because of the dismal state of many academic institutions in Nigerians (Akinrinade and Ogen, 2011). Many of these students, upon completion of their studies, find ways to renew their permits, become gainfully employed, and then settle as permanent residents in the country (Akinwunmi et al., 2012: 9).

3.5 The Nigerian diaspora

Nigerians constitute a high number of African immigrant populations in the world. It has, however, been quite difficult to estimate the actual number of immigrants. According to data

from the Nigerian Diaspora website, Nigerians can be found in practically every part of the world, but the largest populations reside in main hubs in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, and other European countries (Nigeria Diaspora Commission Bulletin, 2013). The British Nigerian population is huge and long-lasting; it can be traced back to the times of the slave trade, colonization of the country and its subsequent independence in 1960. After Nigeria's independence, the political-economic policy of the British administration was sustained such that it provided a framework for large migration of Nigerians to the UK (Afolayan et al., 2008). Till date, a large population of Nigerians are clustered around industrial cities in the UK, such as London's Peckham, which is usually referred to as "Little Lagos" (Nigeria Diaspora Commission Bulletin, 2013). The community is very well-assimilated, but there are many Nigerian own industries, eateries and places of worship that remain in the area, depicting a distinctly Nigerian character. The population of these Nigerians are predominantly Yoruba's, who travel mainly in pursuit of educational accomplishments, as against the Ibos who are more commercially inclined, or the Hausas who travel for religious/cultural reasons (Yesufu, 2016).

Some Nigerian migrants prefer the opportunities in South Africa to Europe, North America, and the Gulf States (Adepoju, 2004), despite the country's struggling economy. Studies have shown that migrants are able to simultaneously construct multiple relationships both in their new country of settlement and their homeland (Koppenfels et al., 2015; Noorloos 2013). They bring with them their culture and religion, hence affecting the sociocultural demographics of the host communities. After the era of apartheid and the inauguration of democracy in the early 1990s, the republic of South Africa opened its gates to the rest of the world. This was done to enable the country benefit from the anticipated invasion of capital and expertise of skilled professionals (Odubayo and Akinboye, 2017). The democratic deficiency and unpalatable military era in Nigeria at the time made the 'new South Africa' very attractive for many Nigerians who took advantage of the opportunity to alleviate the hardships experienced at home. South Africa thus began to experience a massive influx of people from other African countries (Bayo, 2010), including Nigeria. Large Nigerian communities can be found in four major cities: Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, and Durban, encompassing a variety of different social classes.

3.6 Diasporic tourism

According to Coles and Timothy, (2004), "diaspora tourism" encompasses all tourism events that are produced, consumed, and experienced by members of the diasporic community. "Diaspora tourism" refers to trips made by individuals to their ancestral native land or to other places in search of their roots, to connect with social contacts in other diasporic spaces, to feel connected to their personal heritage or a host of other reasons (Huang et al., 2013). It is believed that First – generation immigrants are often astounded with nostalgia when making return trips to their native land. Diaspora tourism for first-generation immigrants involves the concepts of "return" and "homecoming" (Oxfeld and Long, 2004; Stefansson, 2004). First – generation sect of migrants is often referred to as persons who immigrate into a host country as (often young) adults. Second-generation migrants on the other hand, are children born in the receiving countries by these first – generation migrants (Kebede, 2010). This class of migrants usually have the most varying degrees with home identity and attachment (Elle Li et al., 2019), their children however, may not share the same experience. To the latter, they are essentially just visiting a new place when they embark on this diaspora tourism trips. They may therefore not perceive their parents' homeland as "home" but rather as a "foreign destination" (Huang et al., 2016: 60).

Travelling back to their homeland is one of the boundary crossing activities through which immigrant communities can partake and contribute to affairs in their ancestral native land (Coles and Timothy, 2004). Migration and tourism are closely related on a macro level because both phenomena involve movement of individuals across geographical regions; the difference however being in the duration of stay (Williams and Hall, 2000). As outlined by Coles et al., (2005), the process of migration and diaspora can result in five different types of motivation to travel. Firstly, there are those group of immigrants who feel the need to travel back to their ancestral homeland to reconnect. Secondly, there are those visiting their emigrated relatives in their current place of residence in order to maintain relationships. Thirdly, there are individuals in the diaspora who make trips to destinations other than their place of origin, just to explore. Fourthly, there are those going through transit, who are just in the process of migration, such as "Ellis Island", which are also destinations that immigrants return to. Lastly, diasporic communities create their own travel destination in a place where they think they will encounter

individuals with similar ethnic backgrounds (Coles et al., 2005 cited in Huang et al., 2013: 288). This current study fits into the first motive for travel as members of the diaspora travel back to their ancestral homeland to reconnect with their roots and participate in a cultural festival.

3.7 Migration and tourism nexus

Migration is an obvious originator for the demand of tourism, with its increasingly two-way streams of expatriates. This involves taking vacations to their countries of origin, and, in turn, their relatives and friends, will visit these their relations who are based in the host countries. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2019) study, the rapid growths in both migration and travel are the two most noteworthy expressions of globalization. The "UNWTO" defines "tourism as a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes" (TSA: RMF, 2008: 12). The term visitor is used to refer to either tourists or excursionists'/ day trippers and tourism refers to their activities, many of which imply expenditure (UNWTO, 2008). Put differently, the UNWTO (2009:10) defines" tourism as the activities of travelers taking a trip to any destination outside his/her usual environment for less than a year for any purpose (business, leisure, or personal) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited".

Tourism is widely acknowledged to be a product of contemporary social engagements, with its origin being traced to Western Europe in the 17th century, though, it has several antecedents in classical antiques. Before the 19th century, travelling, particularly for non-work-related reasons, was only available to a limited class of elites, and was in itself a "mark of status" (Urry, 1990: 24). In recent times however, tourism has become a central component of the process of globalization, subsuming ever increasing numbers of travelers to virtually every part of the world, and even outer space (Bajc, 2007: 2). Tourism also, sometimes, overlaps with other activities, interests, and processes; like going on a pilgrimage, conference or for medical attention (Walton, 2009). This gives rise to shared categories, such as "business tourism", "sports tourism", "medical tourism" etc.

Tourism and migration are usually defined as different, if not diametrically opposed forms of mobility (Mohring, 2014). Modern day tourism can be described as a voluntary, temporary movement to another destination, without a purpose that goes beyond recreation and with, a more or less, confirmed date of return. In contrast, migration is defined as a (sometimes forced or inevitable) form of leaving one's place of settlement without going back for an extended period or even without ever returning. These distinctions are important and help scholars to differentiate between various forms of mobility ubiquitous since at least the late nineteenth century that characterize today's globalized world. Nevertheless, a closer look at tourism practices and the broad spectrum of migration experiences reveals many similarities between tourism and migration. Both forms of mobility overlap in many and sometimes surprising ways, so that it is not easy to get a clear cut difference between the two phenomena (Mohring, 2014). The nexus between migration and tourism is quite distinct but often restricted to VFR, that is migrants travelling to visit social relations at home or third world countries (Feng and Page, 2000; Williams and Hall, 2002).

Current studies have revealed a wider impact of migration on tourism, which involves also the components of tourism demand (e.g., holiday and business). These studies postulate that the evolving presence of immigrant communities might have a substantial effect on tourism flows in many ways (Dwyer et al., 2014). After their visits, VFR tourist-migrants are most likely bound to report or share their travel experience with other friends; this in turn might influence the latter's future choice of holiday destination. Similarly, immigrants making return trips back to their country of origin might promote their host country to individuals in their homeland which could foster further holiday trips. Furthermore, an increase in tourism movements prompted by the presence of immigrants is also perceived, as permanent, by tourism market agents and policy makers (Ivan, 2016). Consequently, it is likely that there will be an increase in the supply of both tourism services (like the hospitality sector) and tourism infrastructures (like transporters); all these will improve the competitiveness of the destination.

It is a known fact that the process of that immigration can lead to the enrichment of the cultural life of host countries, and, provide them with a wider range of consumption opportunities.

Migrants who are industrialists in their host countries often take advantage of their connections and business-related information in their country of origin to conduct and undertake profitable businesses between the two countries (Seetaram, 2012a). This could subsequently lead to a stimulation of outbound tourism at the host destination. These affirmative outlooks on the merits of migration does not downplay the negative aspects of migration. From the immigrant's perspective, there are many challenges that can result from migration, these includes possible exploitations, discrimination, xenophobia, corruption, language barrier, and poor accommodation (Serumaga – Zake, 2017). From the host community perspective, immigrants are often associated (rightly or wrongly) with an increase in crime, unfair competition, and various social ills. Proper migration management is necessary to avoid unpleasant experience for the migrants that could potentially destabilize the effects on national and regional security; or threaten inter – relationships; or even create tensions between host communities and migrants (IOM, 2006). While recent pragmatic works in the field shows that the impacts of migration on tourism demand goes beyond the VFR segment, the empirical evidence is still limited and does not cover all the central destinations of international tourism (Etzo, 2016).

3.8 Migrant return tourism

The longing for sameness; a quest for cultural bases; an opportunity for migrants to assess themselves, resolve their personal identity struggles, and connect with their forerunners are some of the reasons why many migrants make return trips to their homeland (Timothy, 2008). For present – day members of the diasporas, a longing for "home" may not necessarily mean a desire to make permanent return to the country of origin but may rather prefer to satisfy their yearning by way of tourism (Hung et al., 2018). The desire to spend some time with friends and relatives, according to Munoz et al., (2016), is an important motivation for a wide range of travel decisions across the world (UNWTO, 2014). In this world that has an increasing domestic and international migration rate, personal networks are becoming more geographically dispersed, however, it has become more easy to maintain and sustain these relationships with advancements in both communication and transportation technology (Cohen et al., 2015). Two of the most important manifestation of globalization are the growth in migration and in tourism, with both concepts involving the movement of people from one place

to another. According to UNWTO (2010: 8), temporary migrant return has a link to tourism in the following ways:

1. Its high capacity to receive family, relatives, and friends from their country of birth.
2. Its high capacity to pay visits to the country of origin for a variety of motives (private, religious, cultural, business).
3. Its high propensity to invest in second homes in the country of origin.
4. Its potential to contribute know-how, language, and technological skills to the local tourism sector.
5. Its ability to promote the country of origin among the residents of the country of immigration, thereby making it a tourist interest to other residents.

Migration has "enormous potential" for developing communities in countries of origin (de Boeck, 2004: 3; Lampert, 2012), because it is viewed as a channel through which remittances become a major source of income for developing countries (Afaha, 2013: 53). Research on transnational migration in Africa (Arnone, 2011; Asiedu, 2005; Marschall, 2017a, 2017b) is an emergent body of literature on migrant return travel. This research adds to extant scholarship by examining how the process of migration affects diasporic relationship to home, cultural roots, and spiritual beliefs by probing the diasporic visitors' experiences of travelling home.

3.9 Visiting Friends and Relatives in the context of migration

The activities of travelling to visit friends and relatives (VFR) has always been socially relevant and can actually be regarded as one of the earliest forms of mobility (Backer, 2012). VFR tourism is a type of travelling that connects tourism with migration as it involves persons, travelling between two sets of places they call home (Asiedu, 2005). Backer (2007: 368) defines VFR as a "form of travel involving a visit whereby either the main purpose of the trip or the type of accommodation at the destination involves visiting friends and / or relatives". VFR is an essential aspect of travel and also considered to be one of the largest forms of domestic tourism in many countries, including South Africa (Rogerson, 2015: 139). In more

general terms, VFR is receiving an increasing level of attention in both tourism researches and practices (Backer and King, 2015; Griffin, 2013). Increase in global dispersal of diasporic communities has led to extensive travel between migrants' host and home countries. A wider manifestation of international travel would include travelers who study abroad (Bischoff and Koenig – Lewis 2007). The link between tourism, migration, and educational travel can be easily identified in situations where the student graduates and choses to remain in their country of study afterwards (Dwyer and King, 2015: 48). This decision can be a catalyst for visits from both family, friends and relatives. Potter (2005) noted that the process of VFR in itself can actually lead to migration as many, who chose to visit friends and relatives, may later decide to migrate to that destination.

There have been some scholarly debates on whether, or not, VFR should be considered as a form of tourism or travel. Although the terms travel and tourism are often used interchangeably (Page and Connell, 2009), their meaning, however, are not. Although most scholarly studies in the field of VFR use the better – known term "VFR tourism", it could most likely be because the work had captured some travelers, who were not necessarily tourists (Backer, 2011: 74). Furthermore, the dissimilarity between the "VFR traveler" and "VFR tourist" is not well – defined in scholarly literature. However, whether a VFR trip should be categorized as "VFR tourism" or "VFR travel" is depend on the traveler's evaluation of the journey based on his/her premeditated motive for embarking on the trip, on-site experience, and the post trip memories (Zatori et al., 2017). Backer (2008) acknowledges that in the past, especially in most African countries, the VFR tourist had hardly recognized themselves as tourist because many of them thought they were just general vacationers or mere holiday makers. Marschall (2017: 141) opined that in the African context, tourism is often regarded as a leisure activity conducted by the affluent and the privileged in the society. The study identified that migrants are significant for tourism as they engage also in a host of other types of tourism related activities during their travels.

While VFR studies have largely been focused on examining its marketing and economic significance, with focus on consumer activities and expenditures (Uriely, 2010: 854), the sociological aspect of this phenomenon has not been fully explored. For migrants and expatriates, the VFR trip gives them an opportunity to witness the various changes and

transformations that might have happened in their birth country. The importance of measuring these changes and transformations is actually necessary for comparison and identity negotiation (Duval, 2003: 289). The outcome of this self-evaluation in relation to the homeland culture may lead to what Coles and Timothy (2004:13) describes as "troubling".

3.10 Identity negotiation in the context of migrant return trips

The concepts of "diaspora" and "transnationalism" is used to illustrate the various motivations, for many migrants, to desire a return visit to their birth country. Although the yearning to stay connected to one's roots may be identical, the diaspora tourism experiences may differ because of the different migration history or national origins (Huang et al., 2015: 62). While some diaspora tourists always "feel a sense of belonging" when they return to their birth country, others may not; which eventually leads to them being more alienated from their immigrant origins and heritage. The connection between "diaspora tourism" and "immigrants' emotional attachment" to their country of origin is not always positive (Huang et al., 2013). Although many migrants are interested in travelling back to their native land and reconnecting with their ancestral culture and heritage, they often, do not always get their desired experience.

The desire for social interaction, most times act as an essential precursor to travel since travel can be used to construct, maintain, or strengthen self-identity across a range of aspects, from core values such as gender, nationality, and religion through to softer, less-defined criteria (Bond and Falk, 2013; Nelson, 2015). The key theme identified from limited studies on the motivations for migrants to visits their ancestral homeland was, the search for "identity re-affirmation", reconnecting with one's cultural roots and a mission to re-affirm their sense of belonging which may be absent in their current host country (Coles and Timothy, 2004). Sometimes, however, the actual interpretations of the experiences from members of the diaspora returning to their homeland ranges from a re-enforcement of association to challenging and uncomfortable cultural interactions (Tie et al., 2015: 4). The longing being faced by members of the diasporic community to be accepted and to assimilated into their host culture is counteracted by their parallel desire to maintain their sense of identity and maintain

established links with their homeland. Studies on "transnational and diasporic identities" suggests that identities are dependent upon local senses of belonging maintained with the place of attachment (McDowell, 2003). In some cases, the travelers find that bridging the social and cultural gap between themselves and the new society is fairly easy. Sometimes, these travelers discover that this process of reorientation may requires them to absorb new cultural history and traditions. It has been argued that making these adjustments enhance the migrant's experience; otherwise, the traveler faces the risk of becoming a marginalized figure, that is separated from the surrounding society (Trew, 2010: 548).

3.11 Festival tourism

Within the ambit of culture and heritage tourism, festival and events tourism encompasses attendance and participation at traditional or contemporary celebrations of culture. This includes music, dance, cuisine, sports or arts and crafts. These events can be a once off occurrence or may happen on a regularly basis and can last for a day, several days or even several weeks (Omoregie, 2012). "Festivals" take place at auspicious times, usually set aside by the community in order to honor some historical occasion, or celebrate a significant cultural and religious event, or to perform certain rites and rituals. Such events are re-enacted to give individuals and their community "a sense of meaning" and cohesiveness (Lawal et al., 2005). Festivals have always been a part of human society "and have their origin in religious belief, historical events or some socio-political desire for social bonding" (Akporobaro, 2006: 366). For centuries, the celebration of festivals has been a cultural phenomenon that were traditionally connected to various celebrations at certain points in their religious, cultural or agricultural calendars. Many of these festival celebrations have some religious connotations and involves some rites and ritualistic activities. The average festival celebration includes lots of dancing, singing, with accompanying drumming that moves the celebrating community as well as members of the diasporic community (Smith et al., 2010: 66). The purpose of a festival is to create an occasion for a people to commemorate, worship, or perform different cultural activities together (Anyanwu, 2012).

"Festival tourism" denotes a phenomenon in which individuals, who do not reside in the respective community, decide to pay a visit to the location during the festival of the period (for a limited duration) in order to seek an "out of the ordinary" occurrence (O'Sullivan and Jackson, 2002: 326). Although Quinn (2009) argues that the main purpose of festivals is not tourism related, festivals however, can be used to boost activities in small towns and rural areas, thus, promoting regional developments (Rogerson and Collins, 2015). According to Allen et al., (2011: 14), "festivals are known to be an important expression of human activity that contributes to social cohesion and the cultural life of people". Many traditional festivals which are done to celebrate community beliefs, social values and identities, do not have tourism as their main motive, although, oftentimes, this may be the significant secondary outcome (Thomas et al., 2015). This is the case of the annual Osun Osogbo festival, being explored in this study. Over time, many festival celebrations have evolved their form and duration of its festivity. Although some of them have associated their celebration with tourism, they however, cannot be equated with events that are planned primarily for touristic purposes (Yi Fu et al., 2015: 202).

In Nigeria, as with many other African communities, there are some major traditions and associated celebrations, private and public, that migrants in the diaspora cannot afford to miss, most notably burials for aged grandparents, traditional wedding ceremonies, or cultural festivals like the annual Osun Osogbo festival. Some Nigerians who live abroad even travel home to introduce their children and grandchildren (second or third generation born outside Nigeria) to their family deity (Akinyoade, 2013). To confirm their allegiance to their practiced religious belief, it is an accepted norm for participants, who benefited from the goddess at Osun festivals to make return trips to thank the deity for whatever gift they may have obtained. The main significance of the festival is for thanksgiving to the goddess of Osun for granting their various requests, and to appeal for guidance in the year ahead (Omojola, 2011: 84).

3.12 Cultural heritage tourism

Culture has been described as a "gene" that can be passed down from one generation to another; often exhibiting great influence on the lives of individuals (Pishghadam et al., 2020). "Cultural heritage" is a legacy of physical relics and the intangible elements of society that has been inherited from past generations (Willis, 2014). It is often understood to include sites, movable and immovable artefacts, adherences, practices, items of significance, and other possessions that a sect or society has identified as deep-rooted, significant, and consequently worthy of conscious conservation, often, at the hands of specialized institutions (Brumann, 2015). Cultural heritage encompasses the preservation of culture, customs, belief systems, rites and rituals, ceremonies, ethnic knowledge, social customs and traditions, arts and crafts, music, political and philosophical beliefs that influences cultures and behaviors (Baker, 2013). In more recent times, "culture" has been accepted as a vital marketing tool that can be used to attract travelers with special interest in arts and heritage (Bai and Lee, 2016).

Culture, heritage, and the arts, have long been significant contributors to the various measures used to make some tourist destinations more appealing. Cultural heritage tourism involves visiting places associated with the past that are relevant to present day cultural identity of a particular sect of individuals. "Cultural heritage refers to the contemporary society's use of the past" (Nilson, and Thorell, 2018: 10). It encompasses practices and cultural activities that convey notions, philosophies, principles, and expressions. Cultural heritage tourism provides an opportunity for individuals to in – depth experience of their culture, which could be from visiting attractions, historical or culturally relevant places, or by taking part in traditional cultural activities. Consequently, understanding cultural heritage, now goes beyond places, landscapes, monuments, and objects, but includes meanings, associations, values, world views, and way of life (Harrington, 2009). It has been acknowledged that what people do and feel in these locations, may be, far more significant than the place itself. Article 2 of the UNESCO (2003) convection on the "safe-guarding of the intangible cultural heritage" defines intangible cultural heritage as "the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills—as well as the instruments, objects, and cultural spaces associated therewith—that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage" (UNESCO, 2003, 2.1).

To understand existing religious heritage, there has to be a foremost recognition of the intangible importance of the tangible religious object, structure, and/or place. According to Stovel (2005: 9), "understanding living religious heritage requires recognizing the intangible significance of the tangible". In the European context or western sense, the term culture often refers to 'high art' or more sophisticated forms of cultural production. However, in the African context, the terms tend to be described in an anthropological sense. Sibani (2014: 107) defines "culture as the entity that incorporates the totality, and it is synonymous with the people's way of life, transmitted from age to age, generation to generation". History record that Cultural tourism has been in existence since the days of Herodotus in ancient Greece who, in about 440 BCE, listed the seven "Miracles of the Ancient World". During the 19th century, exploring culture was a major motivation to travel because, at that time, it was considered a fundamental fragment of education for the upwardly mobile. Cultural tourism worldwide later began to experience a boom in the latter half of the 20th century (Kumar, 2017: 57). It is now being generally accepted that heritage not only refers to physical sites, i.e., places, landscapes, monuments, and objects, but also intangible elements, which comprises of processes, cultural activities that transmit ideas, beliefs, emotions, meanings, associations, values, worldviews, and ways of life (Taha, 2016).

Based on the existing studies, culture and heritage tourists usually visit buildings with historic significance, archaeological locations, state/local/national parks, art galleries or museums, etc. (Rosenfeld, 2008: 3). This however differs from cultural and heritage tourism in the African context, which is more strongly focused on natural heritage and the 'living culture' of the African people. Much of this type of tourism is based on art performances and dance; attending and participating at traditional or cultural festivals; and experiencing traditional and contemporary ways of living. Some visitors may seek to understand a bit of themselves through African traditions and cultures in addition to, or perhaps in spite of, the artefacts and trinkets that are purchased to take home as souvenirs and gifts (Akama, 2000: 15). As a more specialized niche of cultural heritage tourism, 'personal heritage tourism' refers to people travelling in search of places, people, landscapes, and sights that are relevant in terms of their own personal heritage or ancestral origin (Timothy, 1997). Genealogy tourism, for instance, is about roots, ancestry and places that are perceived to be deeply relevant to an individual's or a

family's lives. Personal heritage tourism can be structured around beliefs, interests, and identification with a particular community and associated places. Marschall (2015) described these voyages undertaken to revisit destinations associated with an individual's life history or making return trips in pursuit of reliving childhood memories as "personal memory tourism".

3.13 Religious tourism

At some point in life, when individuals are faced with life challenges, problems with physical condition, or a need to reconnect with their religious or spiritual beliefs, they tend to seek or establish a connection with "God" or a "higher power" (Schultz, 2005). Human connectedness may be to the "earth", or to "nature", or to "certain geographical locations". In a nutshell, connectedness, like spirituality generally, is individualistic and highly personal. Theoretically, there seem to be a common agreement that "religion" and "spirituality" are closely related (Marra, 2000), and as a result, many scholars tend to use the terms interchangeably. According to Wilson (2016) failure to recognize both concepts as being interrelated is failing to accept that individuals can classify themselves as both religious and spiritual. Discourse by some tourism scholars deliberated on spirituality, either from a religious perspective or in the context of experiences at a particular destination (Chen and Morrison, 2006). This current study uses the overlapping terms religion and spirituality largely interchangeably, although it acknowledges the fact that there are significant differences between both concepts.

Religion is an important component of culture and linked to different traits in human lives' (Nyaupane et al., 2015). Religiously motivated travel, mostly in the form of pilgrimage, which is as longstanding as religion itself, can arguably be considered as the oldest form of "tourism" in the world (Karar, 2010: 99). In this study, the term 'religious tourism' is used to comprise both pilgrimage and other types of travel purposes, and activities that involve religious sites or practices, including touristic visits of sacred sites and participation in ritualized gatherings and festivals with a religious or spiritual purpose. Tourism and its other related practices, interact with religious life, and the institutions of religion in almost every region in the world. For instance, every year people congregate in Jerusalem, Mecca, and travel to other holy sites on a

pilgrimage or sacred journey, which usually, also contains touristic aspects. The relationship between religion and tourism, however, goes beyond just the provision of religious tourist attractions. Thomson Gale, (2005) in his study opined that there are, at least three broad approaches to understanding the relationship between religion and tourism. These approaches are spatial, historical, and cultural, where each one brings to light, different implications of tourist participation at these sacred sites. In many instances, tourists and religious adherents often occupy the same spaces at these locations. This means that they both have a role to play in giving meaning to the site and the subsequent sustainability of the space, for both the casual visitors, and, those who are spiritually dedicated. Oftentimes, the religious sentiments that are attributed to sacred places by devotees make the site also meaningful for some tourists; even though the average sightseers and the dedicated devotee may have different sentimental attachments to, and understandings of, these sacred spaces (Thomson Gale, 2005b).

In recent years, the connection between religion and tourism is increasingly become a topic of interest for many tourism scholars (Stausberg, 2011; Wright, 2008), although many of these studies are not explored from an African perspective. The aim of this research is to add to existing literature that pertains to the characteristics, and travel patterns, of religious tourists with reference to the case study of Nigerian émigrés. In present day secular world, the connection between tourists and their beliefs, has a great influence on their choice of mobility, most especially in the form of pilgrimages to sacred sites. Norman, (2011: 200) defines religious tourism as "travel with the intention of undertaking spiritual practices and/or of attaining a sacred state or spiritual growth, involving participation in both religious and nonreligious activities". Religious tourism, also commonly referred to as faith tourism (Gannon et al., 2017), is a type of tourism, where people travel individually or as a groups for the purpose of pilgrimage, or missionary works, or for leisure purposes. Religious tourism is "aimed at gaining spiritual satisfaction" (Okpoko and Okpoko 2002). Fox (2008) adds that, whilst there still exists a strong presence of penitents and pilgrims within the religious tourism industry, many other participants in faith-based journeys specifically seek to combine a vacation with their religious travel.

Many religious tourists, usually ascribe some level of spiritual importance to certain sites they visit, these includes; a place of birth, or death, for "founders" or "saints"; a place of their

"calling" or "spiritual awakening"; a place where they experience a connection with the divine; locations where miracles are believed to have been performed or witnessed; locations where a deity is said to have live in; or any site that is believed to possess some "special spiritual powers". Some of these sites may be venerated with shrines or temples that devotees are encouraged to visit for their own spiritual benefit. Furthermore, it is believed that at these sacred sites, healing, and other issues of concerned can be resolved. Though religious related travel has existed since the ancient times, modern religious tourists are now, more than ever before, better able to visit more holy sites around the world Timothy and Olsen, 2006). The most common form of religious tourism is pilgrimage, which usually entails a search for the divine or sacredness (Rot et al., 2014). "The belief is that somewhere beyond the known world there exists a power that can make right the difficulties that appear so insoluble and intractable here and now" (Badone, 2010: 169). The search for solution to life challenges, the desire to pay respect to God or the supreme being found at sacred places, mere curiosity to see sacred places, the search for fact, clarification, or an "authentic experience" with the "divine or holy" are some of the motivations that lead people to undertake pilgrimage and travel to sacrosanct sites (Bozic et al., 2016: 34).

McKevitt, (1991 cited in Antunes et al., 2014), described pilgrimage as the journey that takes you to sacred places that lies beyond the mundane realm of the pilgrim's daily experience. Though a number of pilgrims have wandered continuously, with no defined destination, pilgrims however mostly seek for specific places, that have been purified, by association, with divinity or other forms of holy grandee (Singh, 2005). The institution of pilgrimage is visible in all world religions and they are also evident, in pagan religions. The use of the word pilgrimage cuts across cultural and historical contexts, thus making it difficult to attribute a specific meaning (Kaell, 2016). Fundamental comparisons are evident however, across disparate traditions of sacred travels. Pilgrimages usually entails some form of separation (alone or in a group) from everyday world of home. Furthermore, pilgrims may mark their new identity by wearing special clothes or abstaining from some level of physical comforts. Frequently, pilgrimages link sacred place with sacred time. According to Rojo (2007: 46), "the three major religions in the world (are) Christianity, Islam and Hinduism". These three major sects have been noted to comprise the highest proportion of religious tourists in the world. According to Gedecho, (2014: 42) Africa, though noted for its tourism potential, but with incoherent statistics for religious tourism, and its underdeveloped tourism sector, is attracting

six percent (which is about 49.4 million) out of the over three hundred million tourists identified by the UNWTO (2011) who visited key religious sites in the world

3.14 Conclusion

This chapter has presented thematically ordered literature relevant to the research. The review explores the meaning of these themes, ranging from migration, diaspora and the role of tourism in connecting both concepts. The review examined different meanings of religion with a particular focus on its meaning from an African perspective. Festivals were identified to be a motivation for many Africans to want to make return journeys back home, not just for the merriment and funfair involved, but also as a medium for a reconnect with their culture and tradition. The concept of culture and heritage was also explored with the focus on what cultural heritage tourism meant from an African perspective in contrast to the European context. The chapter explored issues of identity negotiation, sacred journeys and root reconnection. The next chapter presents the conceptual framework for the study.

Chapter 4
Conceptual framework

4.1 Introduction

The existing literature has been reviewed in the previous chapters, with discussions centered around the different types of tourism relating to this study. This chapter presents the conceptual framework that underpins this study. The study was anchored by three concepts; that is the concept of the "tourist gaze" (Urry, 1990), "tourism as a sacred journey" (Graburn, 1977) and identity theory (Burke and Stets, 2009). The selection of these concepts was based on the aim of the study, which was to explore the complex set of motivations for diasporic tourism in the Osun Osogbo community. The primary focus was to explore how the process of migration affects their relationship with home, cultural roots, and spiritual beliefs. Various theories assist in understanding the relationship between concepts and problem(s) identification, which offers possible solutions and plans to deal with the situation (Zalega, 2014).

Grand and Osanlo (2014) explained theoretical framework as an established presupposition comprising of a theory or clusters of theories that guide the researcher's understanding of the researcher's problem and concepts. Theoretical framework is therefore the lens through which the data for this research was assessed. As will be demonstrated in the proceeding pages, the justification for employing a theory or theories in a study must be in tandem with the research problem being investigated. Grand and Osanlo (2014) argued that the use of theoretical framework in a study engender a meticulous understanding of the research problem, queries, and the relevance of the study. The range of issues discussed in this chapter are those that connect and establish a link between migration, return journeys, religion, spirituality, and festivals. The chapter is devoted to discussions on the theoretical framework that guides the different assumptions raised in this study. It also offers a foundation on which these assumptions will be interpreted. The study has been approached through two theoretical lenses. This was done in order to incorporate all aspects that relate to investigating the complex set of motivations for migrants to embark on their journeys and subsequently explore their various experiences.

The Urry's concept of the "tourist gaze" and identity theory are reviewed to understand the research problem and other assumptions raised in this study. The identification of these concepts reflects the position that the utility of a single theory might not clearly unpack the different dimensions to a research problem, such as the one being investigated in this study. The use of different theories is critical to comprehend and evaluate research problems stemming from different components of literature (Agee, 2009). The chapter examines the concept of the tourist gaze, sighting a few of its critiques and some developments on its premises. Using Graburn's notion of tourism as a sacred journey, this chapter will also show some discourse on pilgrimage and its relation to tourism and migrants. The chapter ends with some discussion on the Identity theory and how it relates to the group under focus.

4.2 Conceptual framework

As earlier stated, the concepts of the tourist gaze and identity theory are the guide for the development of a framework that underpins this study. The framework, as shown in Figure 4.1, is drawn from two theories that will be extensively discussed and analyzed. These two theories were combined because of the broad nature of the study, which the use of only one theory would not have covered. This theory is explored in the context of understanding these Nigerian migrants in South Africa as homebound tourists and participants at the Osun Osogbo festival. It is safe to assume that these migrant tourists, through their longing for an opportunity to reconnect with their roots and participate in the sacred cultural and heritage practices, can develop a more extraordinary picture of the events to one that can linger on their mind for a very long time to come. As they have been away for some time, it is possible that these tourists or festival participants gazing could have been eroded, especially as these practices are not fixed or static (Manh, 2014). The way many of these migrants remember the festival may have changed and, their relationship with home or cultural practices may also have changed, affecting their sense of belonging. The framework essentially establishes the connection and links between migrants' search for the extraordinary on their return journey home, their religious or spiritual beliefs, and how they negotiate their identity when they participate/ attend the annual Osun Osogbo festival.

Figure 3: Conceptual framework

4.3 The tourist gaze

Sociologist, John Urry, (1990) developed the "tourist gaze" concept as a basis for explaining the range of experiences tourists have while on a leisure journey. Urry's "tourist gaze" concept postulates that "when we go away and become tourists, we look at the environment… we gaze at what we encounter… and the gaze is socially constructed" (1990: 1). The concepts argue that the significance of the "visual" in contemporary culture, is mirrored in tourism. Furthermore, the concept opines that the desire of tourists when they visit places, and the ways they learn to visually appreciate those places, are not merely distinctive or independent, but are socially organized (Caletro, 2019).

The tourist gaze was inspired by "Michel Foucault's concept" of the "medical gaze". Michel Foucault (1926–1984), a French philosopher, was a professor in the history of ideas, in Paris. He was principally concerned with the exercise of power within social systems and explored ways by which social controls are created and sustained (Misselbrook, 2015). Foucault's earliest explication of the 'medical gaze' is apparent in his study *The Birth of the Clinic* (1972). He identifies the medical gaze as emblematic of the hierarchical difference between physicians

and their patients. The medical gaze summaries the distress experienced by individuals, from their sociological circumstance, and subsequently, reframes them as a "case" or a "condition". Under Foucault's notion, the medical gaze regards the human body as a "docile" and a mechanism by which problems can be fixed (Niamsri and Boonmongkon, 2017). The human body is viewed not only as the receiver of discourses, but also as a social construction of discourses (Wiersma, 2007). Taking his inspiration from Foucault, Urry's concept, opines that gazes are organized and systematized, with the tourist gaze being a matter of socially and technologically patterned and learned "ways of seeing" (Larsen, 2014).

The "gaze" is conceptualized as a structure of principle that organizes encounters amongst tourists with respect to the places visited at different times by way of creating an extraordinary experience that remains memorable (Urry, 1990). The crux of the assumption of the Urry's gaze concept neatly seeks to unpack the dynamics connected to the collection of the experiences of tourist, the complexities of tourism social organization, and the complete nature of these different procedures (Prins and Webster, 2010). Specifically, the tourist gaze allows for the accounts of how people are able to distinguish between tourist experiences and other aspects of their everyday existence, such that people are able to express ways through which the consumption of tourist merchandises has different insinuations for their social relations (Lemelin, 2006). However, the arrangement of these procedures arises, with a number of fundamentals, such as, the need to carefully chose images to look at, the tales that express the distinctiveness of their history, the culture and heritage, and, a range of other practices that contributes to tourist experiences (Daniel et al., 2007). Furthermore, the availability of experts and establishments, saddled with service provision ensures that specific tourist experience are achieved (Lisle, 2004).

The tourism literature explains tourist gaze as tourist experience of a specific way of seeing. However, the collection of images and myths often sighted tend to be unique, unfamiliar, and extraordinary (Alan, 2013). These narrative depictions of images and myths are often encouraged by the tourism marketing sector, to compare with individual's other daily activities. Yet these fictions are always explained through signs signifying a specific fantasy (McCabe, 2005). Urry (1990) explains that gaze helps tourists generate expectations concerning what they will experience during their tourist journey, while they build up desire to experience these specific imaginaries. The contention for Urry (1990) is predicated on the assertion that different gazes form a wide spectrum of anticipations towards experiencing a tourist venture, such as

those related to health, education, and the most prominent being pleasure. The assortment of experiences undoubtedly assists in amplifying different types of socialites, especially those that have to do with culture and hospitality. More importantly, the tourist gaze epitomizes something unique about tourist experience in such a way that these experiences become endowed with significance and later transform to be part of the tourist as a unique experience going forward (Hoffman, 1999; Maoz, 2006). The desire to seek out for the extraordinary through visitation to tourist attractions explains the uniqueness of tourist gaze.

As a concept, the tourist gaze has relished extensive scholarly explanation from different disciplines, including Sociology, Geography and Architecture (Chan, 2006). Embarking on such travel always provokes the necessity for some services that ordinarily are not required in their (tourists) daily life routines (Binkhorst and Dekker, 2009). Among others, the justification for such travels is characterized by the search for an experience of happiness, distinct from their daily norms. The distinction in such experiences captures, among other events, the sighting of a range of urban spaces and locations that are not part of their daily life events (Coleman and Crang, 2002). While on a visit to a new place, people are bound to conceive of the new environment with excitement and great curiosity (Becken, 2011). This in itself describes the way people appreciate the visit to their new place.

4.3.1 Critics to the gaze

Although Urry's concept of the tourist gaze, and its robust application, has contributed to broader understanding of issues in social sciences, especially tourism studies, it is not without its reproofs. In their summation, Pritchard and Morgan (2000) argued that it has become the dominant and most privileged gaze within the tourism industry. "The tourist gaze refers to an institutionalized gaze, directing the tourists to gaze at the extraordinary" (Simpson, 2013: 26). It has been argued that the notion of the gaze is underpinned by unequal power relations. Raby and Thomas (2012) argue that, as tourists are predominantly believed to be Western, the ability to gaze is a result of privileging factors such as class, ethnicity and nationality. The conceptualization of the tourist gaze assumptions has been criticized for being laden with western bias. For instance, the critics have advanced that what should be more crucial is the analysis of cross-cultural studies that influence the process of constructing and assimilating tourist experiences from different contextual settings (Hall, 2007). By advancing this at the

local level, it is possible to engender a healthier explanation of cross-cultural differences with respect to how tourists' experiences are accumulated and perceived, rather than the one-way western experience (Jenkins, 2003). Other critics have critically faulted the over reliance of the tourist gaze on the effect of everyday media events, and how tourist objects and images can influence human experiences (Holloway et al., 2011).

In the early work of this concept, the difference between "home and away", "ordinary and extraordinary", is the classifying regulator of what becomes established as an extraordinary place of the tourist gaze (Larsen, 2008). Urry contends that tourism is formed in opposition to everyday life: a key feature would be acknowledging that dissimilarities exist between the individual's normal place of residence/work, and the object of the tourist gaze. This position, however, has been readjusted in later works to dissolve this distinction. The 'tourist gaze' is also being critiqued for reducing tourism to visual experiences or mere sightseeing (Perkins and Thorns 2001). Although sightseeing is vital, "seeing", however, is not the only activity that tourist engaging in, or sense that is activated when on a journey. The tourist is not only a pair of eyes, as tourism studies focusing on the tourist gaze would sometimes seem to suggest. Tourists as well as migrants are not disembodied subjects, but experience the unknown with all of their senses (Mohring, 2014).

The tourist gaze, however, was differentiated from 'seeing' as "people gaze upon the world through a particular filter of ideas, skills, desires, and expectations, framed by social class, gender, nationality, age, and education. Gazing is a performance that orders, shapes, and classifies, rather than reflects the world" (Urry and Larsen, 2011: 2). In essence, the place of gaze in the conceptualization and understanding of tourist experiences and emotions varies with societies, social structure and, by extension, historical period. Hence, there is no singular or widely accepted experience that is unique to all tourists at any particular point in time (Ellis and Bochner, 2006). Therefore, what sets out the distinction in tourist gaze is dependent on what it is compared with. The gaze in a sense captures a structure of social activities that seek to identify with a particular tourist practice (Dong, Evans and Zou, 2008). Hence, gazing in any circumstance is independently controlled by an individual's experience and memory, and framed by procedures and styles (Becken, 2011). In other words, these frames are essential edifying lenses through which people can distinguish and identify with any material space as beautiful attraction, and without the place of these lenses the attractive order imbibed in nature can hardly be seen.

In addition, other critics challenge the over dependence of the gaze tourist analyses on the roles of tourist sites such as the resort, beach, hotel, and heritage sites in the shaping of human experiences (Jordan and Aitchison, 2008). The contention, however, is the neglect of what seems to constitute a stouter influence on the everyday experience of humans such as places of work, living rooms, and other domestic places. Therefore, the disregard for these places as important elements that shape human ideas invalidates the assumptions of Urry's Tourist Gaze Concept (Scott, Hall and Gössling, 2012). Furthermore, lacking in its analysis is the "body, performance, sound, smell, taste, and movement, identified as some of the important senses stimulated during the tourism experience" (Edensor, 2001). The analytical importance of the tourists has been criticized as limited in scope, such that it only covers the social, cultural, and geographical surroundings and, by extension, limiting the human experiences to these elements (Scott, Hall and Gössling, 2012). In other words, the incorporation of human cognitive and intellectual activities can engender more gazing activity.

Urry acknowledges that there is no single tourist gaze, it tends to vary because there cannot be a universal experience that is true for all tourists at the same time. Urry makes it clear that it would be ludicrous to claim that tourists only gaze, or that visuals are the only senses employed by tourists. Nevertheless, he maintains that the visual sense is the dominant sense, and that gazing is the most symbolic and common tourism practice (Larsen, 2014: 305). Addressing some of the critiques raised by various authors on the "concept of the tourist gaze", Urry and Larsen (2011) presented a review that examines the social relations of gazing. They accept that gazing is relational, communal, and more than just looking at an object.

4.3.2 Beyond the tourist gaze

The tourist gaze, as promulgated by Urry, is organized and systematized. It is a matter of socially and technologically structured and learned "ways of seeing." Tourist gaze articulates the related dynamics in the construction of tourist experience, the complexities of tourism social organization, and the logical nature of these processes. Different kinds of gazes have been authorized by various discourses in scholarly reviews. These discourses have provoked different "socialites" (Pomering, 2013). According to Urry and Larsen (2011:19), "these different discourses include health, group solidarity, pleasure and play, heritage and memory,

education, and nation". The need for the search for the extraordinary clearly relates to the assumptions raised in this study. Drawing on John Urry's, Foucauldian – inspired notion of "the tourist gaze", Haldrup and Larsen (2003) present the "family gaze". This concept speaks on how to capture family photography in a socially organized and systematized session of family tourism. The "family gaze" births interrogations on sociality and social relations in discussions of tourist vision and photography. Where Urry's gazes is directed at the extraordinary "material worlds", the "family gaze" is concerned with the "extraordinary ordinariness" of intimate social worlds.

Highlighting the agency and power, locals in developing countries have, that is, a situation where both tourist and local gazes exist and they affect and feed each other, Maoz (2006) introduced the "local gaze". The "local gaze" is centered on images and radical stereotypes that could probably be associated with a colonial past which most tourists do not take into consideration. The study later resulted in what was termed the 'mutual gaze'. The mutual gaze recognizes that the perception generated by 'the gaze' is garnered through more than a single lens (Sroypetch, 2016). The mutual gaze acknowledges that, when the reciprocal gaze is at play, each gaze has a consequential effect on the other. According to Moaz (2006), everyone gazes at each other in the space of tourism, and thus, a 'mutual gaze' occurs from tourists to locals, locals to tourists, and tourists to tourists, and they all have constant influences on perceptions. Moaz opined that Western tourists gaze is created mostly by the media, even before the encounter takes place, while the locals construct their gaze, based on previous and numerous encounters with tourists (2006: 229). The "memory gaze" for Marschall (2015) is a deeply engaged, perhaps emotional gaze that people generally have when they revisit their past. It is the quest for the most ordinary, familiar traces of their remembered past.

The concept of tourist gaze in relation to migrants does not clearly explain much shade of difference on their return or visit back home, but more of a shade in a search for the familiar. Again, the return or visit of migrants back to their home country as homebound tourists and festival participants can be explained through the prism of the search for a new familiar rather than difference, especially as their new migrated locations have become a conventional setting characterized with a normal occurrence in their everyday lives. In contrast, migration or relocation back home explains that they have to live with the new familiar lifestyle. To put this differently, having been away from home for many years, these members of the diaspora (migrants) are now accustomed to a new different way of life, craving the need for a

reconnection with their roots for a possible change in what used to be their everyday ways of life. In the context of the gaze by tourists, the experience encountered through gazing at an object, images, events, and activities while on this journey forms an important and extraordinary milestone in the minds of these returnees; these activities tend to create a long-lasting experience with them (Alan, 2013).

4.3.3 The sacred gaze

As tourism can be described as a difference from an individual's daily living, it is reasonable then to assume that the tourist gaze may not be the only gaze used when away from home. This confirms the possibility that multiple layers of "gazes", which can be used both at home and away, can come into play at any time during a trip (Lambert, 2010). According to Morgan (2005), the act of "seeing" can regarded as "sacred" in many religious places. The "sacred gaze" has being described as the act of seeing or viewing with spiritual significance. The concept is used to describes configuration of ideas, attitude and, customs that informs religious act of seeing as it occurs within a given cultural or historical setting (Morgan, 2005: 3). Morgan's (2005) concept of the sacred gaze provides a specific religious studies framework of gazes. The sacred gaze is "a way of seeing which invests an image, a viewer, or an act of viewing with spiritual significance" (Morgan, 2005: 6). Drawing from inspiration from various fields, David Morgan examines key aspects of vision and imagery in a range of religious traditions. In his "introduction to the Sacred Gaze", Morgan interrogates the notion of "belief" as the foundation of faith, and the way belief is mediated through words, actions, and images. Even though all those images are human creations, they however have the ability to generate feelings of awe. He therefore postulated that those images should not be regarded as common objects, but given special reverence and acknowledgement (Appadurai, 1986 cited in Terzidou et al., 2017). Consequently, these images, such as the "miraculous icon images of Jesus Christ" (Morgan, 2005); "lithographs of Hindu Gods" (Pinney, 2004), saint relics or statues, such as "Buddha", are approached with respect, worshiped with a bow, imbued with divine aura, and posited beyond the order of ordinary things (Meyer, 2008; Morgan, 2005). This style of reverence is also applicable to images and statues found at the sacred Osun Osogbo grove.

The applications of this concept in understanding the major assumptions raised in this study can be unraveled from many fronts. Firstly, the idea around the search for the extra-ordinary

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neatly explains the search for the new familiar by tourists who relocated or migrated from their traditional home to a new setting. For instance, the narration of being away for many years will no doubt be explained with the trends of the new gaze that has become the "familiar" way of life because these members of the diaspora are now used to the existing ways of life in a new location. However, the familiarity gained over the years with their new settings begins to fade with the continuous gaze of their new abode, and the urge to reconnect back to their roots becomes a robust motivation for embarking on a journey back home. In another instance, the assumption of this concept can be explained from the different cultural fascinations that are presented by the Osun Osogbo festival. In this context, the argument around the consumption of symbols as a critical component of the gaze in Urry's sense explains how the cultural symbols and artefacts displayed in a cultural festival such as the Osun Osogbo festival can capture the minds of participants for a long time to come. This analogy in itself can be extended to mean that, aside all other tourist attraction sites and images that are laced with the concept of the sacred gaze, the role of traditional and cultural symbols can as well be placed as important tourist gaze that could live with the tourists/participants for a long while, especially from the perspective of migrants as tourists and festival participants exemplified in this study.

Importantly, the return journey to their homeland and the sacred gaze of the cultural heritage associated with the festivals can be inferred to explain their sense of identity to their homeland. In the cultural, heritage and festival context, the Osun Osogbo festival is conceived as a cultural identity for members of the diaspora community (in this study context, it is South Africa). In other words, the tourist gaze assumption can be neatly laced with this narrative. For instance, a return back home as a participant in this festival can be explained as a search for an experience of happiness (especially a spiritual belief to seek solutions to some of life's challenges). In return, such cultural experiences can remain a part of their imaginations long after the participation in this festival, especially through images, nature of activities, the thoughtfulness of the events, and all the accompanying thoughts that characterized the festivals (Bianchi, 2000).

4.4 Tourism as a sacred journey

One of the earliest pioneers of tourism studies, Graburn (1977), described tourism as a kind of sacred ritual, proposing the existence of similar procedures, in both formal pilgrimage and tourism. This, he postulates, could be interpreted as "sacred journeys". He argues that these journeys are about self-transformation and the gaining of knowledge and status through contact with the sacred or extraordinary. Graburn explained the sacred journey as a kind of ritual practice different from the conventional ordinary routine of people's everyday experiences, to the extraordinary experiences in which people search for leisure, fulfilment, and discovery (Graburn, 1989). This narration is blended and utilized in this study in the context of tourists, migrants return journeys, and festival participants. Interestingly, modern day tourism is conceived as one of the recent phenomena with increased recognition. However, taking a survey back to its origin, it is clear that tourism is deeply rooted in pilgrimage (Triantafillidou et al., 2010). In contrast, the study of the intersection between religion, tourism and pilgrimage has been completely captured through a separate explanation, either religion or tourism, with little or no attention given to the integration of both issues (Sharpley and Jepson, 2011). This has remained an on-going contention because the growth of tourism cannot be completely understood without a picture of religion and pilgrimage practice (Poira et al., 2003).

In a more specific context, the argument revolving around tourism as a sacred journey is centered on tourists' response to the non-genuineness of contemporary societies, such that tourists have now transmuted to become a somewhat secular pilgrims searching for genuineness (Bar and Cohen-Hattab, 2003). In other words, the prevailing conditions of the modern societies have occasioned the need for the search for mystical meaning, and as a modern type of mass migration, tourism is conceived as the most popular and effective means for uncovering such search (Olsen and Timothy, 2006). Therefore, the on-going debates have suggested tourism as a contemporary sacred journey, the modern-day equivalent of the customary pilgrimage practice (Rizzelo and Trono, 2014). Hence, the narration of tourism and pilgrimage have come to be understood as related and similar terms. Poira et al., (2003) carefully explain this similarity in terms of the basic undertaken carried out by both tourists and pilgrims while engaging in their journey, including some form of leisure, visit to sacred, and tourist sites. Furthermore, most tourist behaviors can be equivalent to a kind of pilgrimage. In essence, most of the tourist attractions are rendered the status of a religion symbol (Conran, 2002). The obvious nexus that exists between "tourism and religion" in a sense could be

uncovered as a continuum, predicated upon by the progression and intensity of religious motivation. First instance, at the one end is scared pilgrimage, a journey motivated by faith and spiritual desire, while at the other end is profane tourists who may desire to gratify some individual or spiritual needs through embarking on tourism (Yoon and Uysal, 2014). However, between these two continua, is evidence of different forms of religious tourism and cultural practices.

The chief assumption of the conceptualization of tourism as a sacred journey can be unearthed from the difference between tourism and pilgrimage, and the individual belief devoted to each activity. Pilgrimage is considered as a purposeful and intentional journey embarked upon in the chase for some spiritual meaning and fulfilment. In contrast, tourism is practically hinged on the search for pleasure-seeking and other wishful pursuit (Gupta and Sharma, 2008). If these features are taken out, then it becomes discerning that the experience gain from tourism or pilgrimage may not be so dissimilar (Vijayanand, 2012). In other words, the dissimilarity between tourism and pilgrimage cannot be expressed in any obvious form, but maybe through the cultural symbols synonymous with tourists' travelers (Singh, 2006). Therefore, to an extent, the two concepts can be described as a sacred journey embarked in search of some form of fulfilment. Furthermore, the connection between tourism and spirituality has long been in existence (Hyde and Harman, 2011). In clear terms, embarking on travel for the purpose of fulfilling spiritual obligations, such as pilgrimage and participation in cultural festivals as evidenced in this study, has remained with human existence for a long time coming (Guttentag, 2010). As highlighted in the previous chapter, pilgrimage and other spiritually inclined journeys are ideally considered as one of the initial forms of tourism, in what has now metamorphosed into religious tourism in recent times. Tourism and religion are distinct, and yet overlapping realities (Stausberg, 2011). What used to be a clear boundary between pilgrimage and tourism is becoming blurred as "no place is intrinsically sacred" (Collins-Kreiner, 2010: 444). Many people have been known to ascribe personal meaning to a destination, as they approach it with multitudes of motives, which may even change during the journey. Both tourists and pilgrims "can shift easily from the role of tourists to devoted pilgrims and vice-versa in an articulation of identities" (Schnell and Pali, 2013: 890). Thus, a new trend of the tourism-spirituality nexus has been evoked.

With emphasis on the new trend of tourism, it is unarguably the fact that tourism is a sacred journey, a profane spiritual experience signposting as a nonspiritual spiritual experience to

religion (Hyde and Harman, 2011; Lau, 2011). In other words, the contemporary tourism practices have become a profane addition to the institutions of religion. More specific, the tourism literature has long identified religion as one of the motivating factors that sprout tourism awareness in such a way that people seek to embark on spiritual journeys or visit religious events or sites for religious desires and fulfilment (Ross, 2016). Other commentators have established the narrative that modern tourism practices have remained a somewhat secular replacement for organized religion (Henderson, 2010). Similarly, the recognition of tourism as one of the functional and symbolic events that human employs to infer fulfilment and meaning to their lives is an indication of the practice as a spiritual experience engendered through a sacred journey (Collins-Kreiner, 2016).

In what can be conceived as today's secular world, the linkage between tourists and their activities play a significant role in influencing journeys to sacred sites. For instance, the visitations pattern of pilgrims to these sacred sites extensively depends on the strength of their religious beliefs (Bond et al., 2014). With the underlying knowledge that religiously motivated tourism journeys reflect the amalgamation of sacred experiences and travel, it would not be too problematic to categorize all these types of voyages as "religious tourism" (Ateljevic, 2011). In this analogy, tourists embarking on a sacred journey are explained as those travel activities with the desire of going through spiritual activities and practices toward attaining a sacred state (Cary, 2004). Tourists experience varying places of religion in almost every angle of the world. Therefore, the identification of religious places of worship signpost with sacredness often times gives room for tourism practices such that they are able to establish visitation sites (Stone, 2006). To an extent, the significant content of these places expresses more of the bonds that religious worshippers and tourist visitors feel towards these sacred places.

While the thesis of Graburn (1989) has been well documented in terms of the conceptualization of tourism activities as a sacred journey, other commentators have reported similar sentiments in the tourism literature. Proctor (2006) reported that there is an evident linkage between tourism and the sacred practices of pilgrimage although with distinction in terms of the traditional rituals. In other words, a tourist epitomizes half a pilgrim (Proctor, 2006). Again, this supposition reflects many of the contentions that tourists intrinsically yearn to satisfy some personal or spiritual needs. Hence, to categorize tourism activities as a sacred journey to seek for spiritual fulfilment may not be too problematic in a broad sense (Digance, 2003). In contrast, other views have reported that the activities of recreational tourists who seek to relax

and re-create cannot be ascertained as a scared journey in the real sense of it (Collins-Kreiner, 2009). However, the position of this study is based on the assertion that the activities that characterize tourism and pilgrimage experiences cannot be distanced from one another as they contain many elements of overlap.

In the context of migrants as homeland tourists and festival participants, the visitation of these migrants to the Osun Osogbo festivals where spiritual rituals and other cultural activities take place cannot be described as a non-sacred journey, especially with evidence of the spiritual experiences and cultural fulfilment on the part of the migrants. In other words, the search for these spiritual fulfilments is in itself a sacred journey. As discussed previously, while the sacredness of pilgrimage and the profane of tourism function in different contextual meanings, they undoubtedly share significant similar features. With this in mind, the tourism literature has been able to report some tourists encountering similar experiences and going on similar journeys with reasons not far-fetched from pilgrims (Patwal and Agarwal, 2013). In addition, there have been reports of pilgrims whose journeys and reasons for travel cannot be entirely differentiated from tourists (Kaell, 2014). This explanation clearly put forward that, in a bid to differentiate between tourists and pilgrims, an attempt must be made not only in trying to establish what they do or practice while on the journey, but with close emphasis on the reasons why they travel.

While it is indubitably the fact that there are some tourists who participate in the same activities as that of pilgrims, specifically for the same reasons, it is still crucial to explain that what differentiates these travelers is their deficiency in being able to identify with their religious practices (Bond et al., 2014). In this context, the utility of sacredness does not entirely rest on inferring religious meanings, but with meanings derived from the ordinary to the extraordinary by way of searching for newness. Importantly, this argument remains pivotal to Graburn analysis of tourism. Sacred journeys have been argued not to be a new ideal in itself, but rather a somewhat provoking measure to understanding modern tourism. Therefore, the contention is the need to understand festivals activities with its associated cultural and spiritual rites through the lens of tourism. The tourism literature argued that embarking on a tourist travel remains one of the best forms of experiences life has to offer for it is sacred in the instance of being exhilarating, refurbishing, and naturally self-fulfilling (Hyde and Harman, 2011). Travelling therefore captures the tourists' transition from the ordinary into the non-ordinary experiences that gratify their need for desiring to travel in the first place (Bond et al., 2014). In the context

of this study, Nigerian migrants desire to travel back to their homeland not just as tourists, but also to participate in the festival activities which elucidate the non-ordinary experiences that comes with travelling.

Argument around tourism as a sacred journey is criticized on the ground that it is impossible to attribute the spiritual rites and sacredness of pilgrimage experience to tourists. Apologists to this notion opined that touristic attractions and experiences are culturally included and thus distanced from spiritual practices (Kaell, 2014). Similarly, Feldman (2014) criticized the contention of tourism as a sacred journey for lacking a dialogue that expressly establishes a link between contemporary tourism and pilgrimage. Accordingly, contemporary tourism practices and pilgrimage are established on different social formations, and the journeys of tourism and pilgrimage are socially distinct such that both cannot be explained with any similarities (Feldman, 2014; Larsen, 2005).

What this implies is that while the destinations could sometimes be argued as the same, it is evident that journeys to these destinations are clearly motivated by different reasons (Bond et al., 2014). Other denunciations are also related to the overly theoretical concentration placed on the nexus between tourism and pilgrimage. For instance, critics have established that this argument must be well examined, especially from the prism of religious organizations and recreational industries (Kaell, 2014; Weidenfeld, 2005). In this view, it can be averred that pilgrims cannot be considered as tourists. This position is substantiated because pilgrims' journey is motivated by religious or spiritual reasons, while tourists embark on a journey with the aim of visiting a site, or at least for recreational and other pleasure concerns (Ateljevic, 2011).

Understanding tourism as a sacred journey can be unearthed through the difference between tourism and pilgrimage, and the nature of individual belief systems and their perceptions of the world (Kaell, 2014). For instance, it is widely acknowledged that, at least pilgrims are habitually religious, and the chief motive for their willingness to travel is firmly religiously inclined. For Proctor (2006), this instance can be explained by the fact that pilgrims tend to attain a sense of belonging to religious and spiritual tradition more than other forms of cultural heritage and practices. On the other hand, the cravings of tourists are mainly within the scope of entertainment and other pleasurable experiences such as sporting events, consumption of food and drink, and other excitements such as cultural sightseeing (Bond et al., 2014).

The blend of these two kinds of travelers (pilgrims and tourists), in which the reasons are complementary, such that the leisure and recreational reasons are almost equivalent to religious reasons, is conceived as religious tourism (Collins-Kreiner, 2009). Certainly, what is no doubt prevalent between the tourists and pilgrims' travelers, at least in this epoch of civilization, is the modern facilities available for use by both types of travelers. To be sure, tourists and pilgrims' travelers use contemporary means of transportation, booked in the same accommodation, and share the same facilities when it comes to food and other amenities (Ateljevic, 2011). To an extent, their recreational experiences do not have a far-fetched distinction, hence they share the same sacred experiences (Feldman, 2014).

The characteristics of any pilgrimage sites include a visitation by pilgrims in terms of spiritual mission, including seeking answers to many of their problems through divine intervention (Bond et al., 2014). On arrival at the sacred sites, pilgrims undertake certain religious rituals through which they seek for blessings and answers to their varying problems (Patwal and Agarwal, 2013). Furthermore, in addition to the religious rituals performed by pilgrims, research has shown a trend of similarities in terms of how most pilgrims behave like tourists, especially with respect to how tourists purchase tour parcels which comprise of the sights and extracts of holy cities such as Jerusalem and Medina (Vijayanand, 2013). It is suggested, in a broader outlook, that aside the ritual and devotional features that encompass pilgrimage, pilgrims also undertake some forms of sightseeing, travelling and transportation, including visitation to different religious grounds. Clearly, aside from these features, almost every activity undertaken by pilgrims are also undertaken by tourists. The argument then becomes if pilgrimage is conceived as a sacred journey, the basic features and similarities exude in modern touristic experiences are a clear reflection of a sacred journey as well.

The utility of this concept to this study can be explained as follows. To start with, the Osun Osogbo festivals, amongst others, are characterized with spiritual and cultural rituals where prayers are offered for solutions to varying ranges of human problems. In this wise, the journey of Nigerians from the diaspora as tourists to participate in this spiritual exercise can as well be explained by their desire to seek solutions to specific human problems. In other words, the journey itself and the range of experiences that make up these rituals are sacred in nature and cannot be distance from Graburn (1989) postulations of the sacred journey embarked upon by people towards seeking out for solutions to their daily problems and other wordily issues. With recent studies showing where the distinction between pilgrimage and tourism becomes blurred,

the concept is applicable because amongst some of these migrants are those who also embark on this journey and attend the festival just for fun and entertainment. The assumption therefore of this concept is applied to understand the sacred experiences of these migrants as tourists in the ritual, and spiritual exercise of the Osun Osogbo festivals. Their visit to the grove on the search for the extraordinary explains the uniqueness of their gaze.

4.5 Identity theory

This study also draws on identity theory to explore how members of the Nigerian diaspora community in South Africa experience their journey back home, not just as festival participants, but also as migrants on return journeys. One of the specific aims of this study was to explore experiences of a set of migrant tourists who embark on a return journey to their country of origin to participate at an annual traditional festival. It investigates what these experiences mean to them, especially with regards to their sense of identity. This study expands the theoretical analysis of identity theory through the lens of migrants' identity formation, construction, and negotiation. It discusses the narrative of identity in relation to immigration and tourism.

Identity can be defined as a description that someone makes about him/herself and/or ascribed to them by others. As a concept, identity refers to ordinary and understandable biographical markers such as age, sex, name, occupation and others. It could also refer to personal things like moral values, traits, or personality characteristics. These factors, according to Pratama (2016), contribute to the decision by tourists on which tourism destinations or attractions to visit or participate in. Taken together, identity can be conceptualized as the awareness and perception of the individual self as informed and shaped by an array of intergenerational practices, community integration, culture, and belief system (Feitosa et al., 2012). Identity theory asserts that identity is a primary motivator of human behavior where a person has multiple identities for each position s/he occupies in society (Jun and Kyle, 2012). It therefore suggests that an individual's identity can influence their action and behavior within a social structure (Burke, 2014), and thus should have an impact on their perceptions.

Identity theory traces its roots to the works of George Herbert Mead (1934), and presents an underwriting framework to examine a wide range of sociological and social psychological

issues (cited in Stryker and Burke, 2000). The beginning of the early works of identity theory can be traced to two academics, McCall (1966) and Stryker (1968), who postulated very similar concepts on how to understand the self, and, identities within and across situations (Sets and Serpe, 2016). The popularity of identity theory has, however, continued to expand within the human and social sciences discipline (Ramelli et al., 2013). The term 'identity' varies in relatively distinct usages. However, for the purpose of this study, identity is used as a reference to parts of a self – composed meaning that individuals ascribe to the different roles they would typically play, in highly differentiated contemporary societies" (See Burke and Stets, 2009).

From an identity theory perspective, identities are adopted meanings given to the self, as a distinct individual, an occupant of a role, and/or as a member of a group (Stets and Burke 2014). It may be described as a set of meanings that defines an individual, in terms of the role they occupy, the social category or groups they belong to, and the individual characteristics that define them as unique individuals. Tourism scholars have suggested that identity influences travel motivation, destination choices, touristic behavior and experience (Pratama, 2016). In their study to understand "tourist's motivations for travel", Pearce and Lee (2005) postulated that self-actualization and self-development are major motivator for embarking on trips. Bond and Falk (2012: 10) opined that all tourist experiences are in some way motivated by their individual self – perceived identity related needs. This therefore suggests that issues of identity lie at the heart an individual's desire to travel. However, most of these perspectives are related to recreational tourists.

This study highlights a nuance discussion on migrant tourists on home journeys with careful consideration of identity formation between being home and away from home (La Barbera, 2013). A crucial primary goal of identity theory is to propose how, meanings attached to various identities, are negotiated and, managed in interactions (Stets and Serpe, 2013: 31). Since identity theory is used to reveal how identities influence behavior, the concept is applied in this study to examine the experiences of migrants on their return home to understand the identity negotiation processes, and identity verification outcomes (Stets and Serpe, 2013). One of the assumptions of the theory is that the formation of identity is not only by an individual origin, but also more influenced by the social context the individual lives in.

Identity formation, according to Smith and Silva (2011), occurs over time and is linked to the economic and social situation where an individual resides, and, the position of the self in

varying cultural contexts. Identities are understood to influence human behaviors when invoked (or activated) across social circumstances (Carter, 2013: 203). This suggests that individuals have many identities; that are social products, formed in response to particular situation or circumstance, and, maintained through interactions with others (Burke and Stets, 2009). When stimulated, individuals tend manifest in ways that are consistent with the meanings. Individuals have been known to have multiple, dynamic, and contextual identities, which can be foregrounded or activated in specific situations (Leary, 2012).

Once an identity is activated in a given situation, the individual tends to behavior in a manner that portrays an interaction of complex internal perceptual control system, that exist between the person and the atmosphere within which they find themselves. Identities may not necessarily predict human behaviors but, identities can predict meanings that are conveyed by behaviors (Stets and Burke, 2014a: 412). Within identity theory, there are diverse perceptions that can be used to describe how identity operate in motivating human behaviors (Carter, 2013). One of such is the perspective that sees identity as meanings that defines who an individual is in the context of a given role (Burke and Stets, 2009). Although not widely shared in recent times, this perspective posits that individuals who take up any defined identity seek congruency between their identity and their behavior which leads to a feeling of authenticity, or "the feeling that one is being true to himself" (Burke and Stets, 2009: 125).

According to Jongman-Sereno and Leary, (2018), finding happiness in life means to live in harmony with one's true self. Identities are understood to influence human behavior and become activated (or invoked) in circumstances where the individual perceives that the meanings of the situation matches the meaning of their identity (Carter, 2013: 204). For migrants making returning trips back to their country of origin, arrival or entrance into the country may activate their homeland identity because the meanings of the environment match the meaning of their identity. Identity theory postulates that in the social structure, individuals have different selves in different situations that comes into play and determine how the individual behaves when alone, or playing a role, or when attached to a group (Carter, 2014).

Identity therefore answers the question of what it means to an individual to be, for example, a festival participant, a Nigerian, or even a member of the diaspora community. The position, meanings and expectations attached to these different identities originates from a common culture that is shared with others. Within this common culture, people are able to understand

what it means to hold that identity and thus, link their personality to that social structure and culture (Stets and Burke, 2014b: 59). Bandyopadhyay (2008) opined that identity is a very individual notion where touristic experience, be it remembering and/or forgetting, is underlined by a subjective sense of the individual, thus affirming the notion that the identity of the tourist is embedded in their tourism experience. Palmer (2005), however, notes that identity is a social construct. Identity in tourism is a product, a construction, a representation, and belonging (Clave, 2010). The theoretical assumption of the identity theory employed in this study essentially argues that identity is an invention of social interaction which seeks to address, from different points of view, how identities are formed, constructed, and negotiated through interpersonal interaction of tourists with their host counterparts. Numerous scholars in the field have linked diaspora visit home to the search for identity (Agnew, 2005; Huang et al., 2013). The significance of existing home identities is strong enough to make people want to undertake travel.

Studies have shown that satisfying the needs and wants of a traveler is the stimuli in the decision-making process on the choice of a destination (Cohen et al., 2014). Identity theory is positioned to understand the nexus between migrant tourist and identity by unravelling the narratives of what home means, being at home and/or being away from home respectively (Ralph and Staeheli, 2011). In the canon of migratory studies, a sense of belongingness remains a fundamental component of identity formation and construction for migrants (Kim and Merriam, 2010). However, the search for this belongingness in migrants' new host communities continues to question the formation of migrants' identity. The emphasis of the identity theory clarifies that people form their identity by assimilating their differing life experiences into a growing yet unceasing narration that offers them a sense of direction in their migratory direction (Asencio and Burke, 2011). In contrast, the identity formation for migrants cannot be unraveled by only considering the individual biographical experiences (Ramelli et al., 2013). Therefore, understanding migrants' identity formation should include a consideration of the host or community locations, migration guidelines, cultural identifiers, and the value system of the host countries, not excluding migrants' country of origin (Hopkins and Greenwood, 2013).

Identity theory is used in this study to understand how their identity as migrants influences their "behaviors, thoughts, feelings or emotions"; and how it ties them to the society at large (Burke and Stets, 2009: 3). For some members of the diaspora, depending on the complexity

of individual and collective histories, subsequent homeland visits may assist in reinforcing their homeland identity (Corsale and Vuytsyk, 2016), or heighten their sense of hybridity (Tie et al., 2015). As earlier mentioned, one of the main objectives of identity theory is to specify how meanings are attached to various identities, negotiated, and, managed in interaction (Stets and Serpe, 2013: 31), this theory is therefore employed in this study to probe the experiences and significance of these migrant tourist, while on their return journey to their birth country. First generation migrants usually maintain a stronger attachment to their homeland (ElleLi and McKercher, 2016), but some begin to identify strongly with their host country. For the latter, the connection with their country of origin, and potential reintegration there becomes problematic. In other words, these migrants' identities might be transformed or shifted during the process of assimilating into the host culture and social system as they integrate with members of the host society (Bhatia and Ram, 2009). Studies have shown that several migrants suffer identity formation and construction challenges because they might have lost their sense of identity while fighting for acceptance in the new culture of migration. This results in what can be called an idealized image of the new settling point they perceive as better than their original home (Alinia and Eliassi, 2014; Owens et al., 2010).

In the context of "diaspora return travel", migrants having different identity backgrounds may experience more complex changes after their return. However, for some other individuals, like the population of this study, these return trips are used as a means of "reinforcing their bond with their place of birth" (Kang and Page, 2000). The religious, spiritual, ethno-cultural identity of these members of the diaspora play a significant role in their tourism mobility decision. Many of these visitors to the grove and Osun Osogbo festival are more intentional in their traveling decision. Their identity is a contributing factor to their motivation for their journey as some of them use it as an opportunity to reconnect with others who share similar cultural and religious background with them, while, for some others, it is to address more pressing needs like remedy to fertility issues. Some people may find that they are behaving in ways that they ordinarily will not because of situational factors. When this happens, people adjust their behavior until it matches the level of their identity standard (Grandberg, 2006: 111).

When people migrate from one setting to another, or from one culture to another, they do so with their knowledge and cultural heritage. On arrival at the new location, their cultural identity becomes altered, incorporating the new order, while still being in touch with the old order (Axelsson, 2009). The discourse of identity formation has largely been credited to individual

daily activities and experiences garnered through social engagement (Alinia and Eliassi, 2014). Therefore, the lived experiences and activities of migrants with other members of their host communities play a crucial role in the understanding and formation of their identity as migrants. Identity theory assumes that individual agency is triggered and/or constrained by the social structure, that sets limits and freedoms on their behavior; so, the theory is used in this study to connect the individual, to the society through, their interactions. Individuals are motivated to behave consistently with the self-meanings of their identities. Specific identities may be activated by a number of factors, which may be from the meanings attached to the environment or the context of the social situation (Carter, 2013: 205). Identities, therefore, are negotiable and changing depending on circumstances, context and place. What distinguishes one person from another is the identity or identities they emphasize or make salient at a certain time. The uniqueness of this study is based on the nexus or intersection between religion, tourism and pilgrimage, but with particular focus on the perspective of migration.

The Osun Osogbo grove is a tourist destination, a pilgrimage and cultural heritage site, thus placing the festival at the intersection of pilgrimage, heritage, and tourism. This makes it a viable site that invokes the process of cultural negotiation and identity formation. Identity theory, which provides a conceptual framework that links identity, attitude, and behavior (Nunkoo and Gursoy, 2012) is employed in this study to understand how these group of migrant tourists under focus, experience the Osun Osogbo festival, especially in relation to their spiritual beliefs, and how it affects their sense of identity. Identity, migration, and related studies have shown that many migrants go through the process of acculturation in a bid to assimilate and establish their identity in the new community of their host (Ramelli et al., 2013).

The theoretical importance of the theory in understanding identity formation and construction of migrants cannot be excused from its shortcomings. The argument that an individual identity is constructed and formed through interpersonal relationship is flawed and criticized on the basis that a mere interaction between two or more people does not possess the required impetus for identity formation, rather the place of socialization and the cultural identity of the individual should be given more credence (Hopkins and Greenwood, 2013). Similarly, the contention that identity formation is acquired through time has been grossly criticized. Accordingly, several criticisms have been reported in the literature that the acquisition of identity does not happen through an individual lifetime, but only formed at a specific stage in life (O'Brien, 2011). In other words, these authors argue that the formation of identity is synonymous with personality

development, at which time, personality development only happens at a specific stage of development and not through life (Eliassi, 2013; MacKinnon and Heise, 2010). Other drawbacks in relation to the formation of identity by migrants within their host communities have also been grossly flawed. For instance, critics asserted that it is still largely not plausible for a migrant to develop an identity within a short space of relating with his host community. This argument was stretched further that rather than attributing the formation of a migrant's identity to the activities and experiences acquired in his host community, much attention should be given to the role of culture, customs, and origin (Bhabha, 2014).

4.6 The Study Framework

The outline presented above shows the framework from which the data gathered for this research was assessed. In chapter seven, the framework was used to investigate the experiences of South Africa-based Nigerians who make return journeys home to participate in the Osun Osogbo festival. The investigation includes the significance of the journey from the perspectives of identity, motivations, and diasporic tourism in a locality, which are influenced by relationship, cultural affiliation, and spiritual beliefs. As elaborated above, the proposition of the tourist gaze is the search for the extraordinary which was a motivation for many of these migrant tourist to embark on their return journey home. The premise here is that for many of these migrants, the motivation for these journeys can be described as the search for an experience of happiness, which is usually distinct from their daily norms. The concept of tourism as a sacred journey is used in this study to "extraordinariness" that these migrants associate with these journey. It explores roots reconnection, their religious or spiritual beliefs and their relationship with home. Identity theory is applied to understand how these migrant tourists form their identity in their host community and the changes that ensues in their identity with a shift in location. However, in a bid to appreciate the identity formation of Nigerian migrants in South Africa as homebound tourist, it is important to note that there has been evidence of cultural identity diffusion between the migrants and other members of the host communities. The different chosen concepts as a framework for the analysis of the data gather, complement each other in addressing the research problem, and ultimately achieving the goal of the phenomenon being studied. The concepts were employed to investigate the significance and meaning of the festival/grove to members of the diaspora in terms of their religious beliefs and/or spirituality. As a framework, these concepts were used to interrogate the experiences of

these members of the diaspora as visitors to their homeland. It explores how their experiences at the grove affect their sense of identity and consequently the satisfaction derived from attending the festival and embarking on this return journey.

4.7 Conclusion

The focus of this chapter has been to discuss relevant theoretical framework that appropriately explains the various assumptions raised in the study. Overall, the chapter shows the rationale for the selection of the theories employed for the development of a framework that is used to analyze data gathered. The concepts of the tourist gaze and identity theory, from which the framework was drawn, was discussed and analyzed to show the justification for their use and their relevance to the study. Some arguments raised by different scholars who have come up with their own conceptualization of more specialized gazes were also highlighted. The chapter also looked at Graburn's notion of tourism as a sacred experience. It highlighted the fact that there is a spiritual dimension to tourism even though tourists do not only purposefully visit a destination in search of spiritual fulfilment. It emphasized the fact that pilgrimage usually involves some elements of leisure and recreation. The chapter concluded with a discussion on the Identity theory. It presented the rational for the employment of the theory in achieving the set aims and objectives of the study. The next chapter is a presentation of the research methodology used in answering the research study questions.

Chapter five

Research methodology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology employed to examine the perceptions and experiences of Nigerian migrants in South Africa as homebound tourists and festival participants at the Osun Osogbo festival in Nigeria. It gives an explicit explanation on the procedure for data collection and analysis. The chapter gives an overview of the research approach and design; the data collection techniques, which includes the population of the study, sampling techniques, reliability and validity of research instrument; and also the method used for the data analysis. Other areas covered in the chapter are ethical considerations, limitations of the study, and some problems encountered during the data collection process.

5.2 Research approach and design

The application of research design or strategies explains the complete plan utilized in a study by which the research problems and questions can be empirically addressed (Sovacool, 2018). In other words, it speaks to the complete outline or blueprint upon which the foundation of the study was construed. This study employed the qualitative approach to unpack the perceptions and experiences of some Nigerian migrants in South Africa on their visit to Nigeria as homebound tourists and festival participants. This approach was appropriate and more beneficial to this study as an investigation resting on the questions of "why" and "how" would have its leaning on inductive-qualitative description, rather than on the application of statistical techniques (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

There are two distinct types of research approach, these are the deductive and inductive approaches (Odetunde, 2011). Ideally, the adoption of either approach depends on the choice of philosophical assumption employed in a study (Yin, 2016).

5.2.1 Deductive and inductive approach

The deductive research approach is rooted within the discipline of the natural science, through which the objective investigation of knowledge is unearthed through hypotheses formulation and the application of statistical analysis to make meaning of the data collected (Wilson, 2010). One of the fundamental features of the deductive approach is its emphasis on the need to establish a causal relationship between two or more variables. To do this, the position of the variables to be investigated must be reflected in the hypotheses formulated along with the application of inferential statistics for generalization of findings (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005). The inductive approach expressly describes the explanation of observation through the lens of the practical real world (Nieuwenhuis, 2011). For instance, an investigation resting on the questions of "why" and "how" will have its leaning on inductive-qualitative description, rather than the application of statistical techniques (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). In other words, inductive approach was utilized to study research problem within a specific context, rather than a large number of samples. As applicable to this study, a small sample of Nigerian migrants in South Africa were interviewed, specifically the first generation of Nigerian Yoruba descent. In addition, the inductive research approach is highly result oriented, especially as participants are enquired about their feelings, perceptions, and experiences about a social problem. The approach uncovered findings through the subjective involvement of the researcher as the data collection unfolds.

With the intense examination of the presuppositions and strengths of the deductive and inductive research approaches, this study vehemently employed the inductive approach as its research approach leanings. This standpoint is in line with the assumption of the inductive approach, where deep exploration of social phenomenon is uncovered through the application of qualitative research instrument and corresponding analysis. The inductive approach was utilized to study research problem within a specific context, rather than a large number of samples. As applicable to this study, a small sample of Nigerian migrants in South Africa were interviewed which were mainly made up of first generation of Nigerians of Yoruba descent. Essentially, investigating the cultural beliefs and perceptions of Nigerian migrants in South Africa on the Osun Osogbo cultural practices departs from the application of construct

measurement and generalization of findings. Rather, it keenly validates an in-depth exploration of what can be conceived as a social or cultural phenomenon requiring a broad spectrum of investigation through participants' real-world views and experiences (Nieuwenhuis, 2011).

5.2.2 Research design

The application of research design or strategies explains the complete plan utilized in a study, by which the research problems and questions can be empirically addressed (Sovacool, 2018). In other words, it speaks to the complete outline or blueprint upon which the foundation of the study was construed. This study employed a descriptive, exploratory design to unpack the perceptions and experiences of some Nigerian migrants in South Africa on their visit to Nigeria as homebound tourists and festival participants. Any of the existing research methods, quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods can be selected in studying the phenomenon (Kelle and Erzberger, 2004). The quantitative research method is concerned with measurement and statistical analysis and values (Queirós, Faria and Almeida, 2017), which is not the focus of this study. The mixed method could also not be selected because it involves a quantitative method. The qualitative method was applied in this study primarily because the study intended to gain better understanding of a complex reality, as in the case of Nigerian migrants in South Africa. Qualitative method is associated with the inductive approach and subjective descriptions of experiences, including the analysis of data (Levitt et al., 2018). Also, qualitative method is primarily exploratory, which helps to gain an understanding of the underlying reasons, views, and rationale (Mohajan, 2018). The method provides insights into a phenomenon towards developing ideas for a possible solution from establishing answers to the "whys" and "hows" things occur (Smith, 2018). Hence, it is associated with subjectivism.

From the perspective of qualitative methods, this study employed the exploratory research design to uncover what is unknown about the Osun Osogbo festivals through the prism of Nigerian migrants in South Africa, those of the Yoruba descent. The exploratory research design was adopted based on the following justifications. Firstly, the assumption of the exploratory design is suitable within the traditions of the qualitative research method being the

research method employed in this study (Sekeran and Bougie, 2016). In addition, while it is clear that the research problem under investigation is socio-cultural, the exploratory design was employed to explore answers to these myriads of socio-cultural problems with a robust exploration of literature in order to identify a research chasm (Sekeran and Bougie, 2016). Secondly, the adoption of the exploratory research design is justified in this study on the ground that the objectives of the study inform the need to use a reasonable sample of participants for generalization (Creswell, 2014). Lastly, the need to advance new knowledge on a phenomenon, in which case little or nothing is known about the phenomenon, supports the use of the exploratory design (Morgan, 2007).

5.3 Research site

Two sites, Durban in KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa and Osogbo in Osun state of Nigeria, were selected for this study. Durban was selected primarily because the city hosts the majority of Nigerian migrants in the province where the study was conducted. Osogbo was chosen as one of the research sites because it is home to the grove where the annual celebration of the festival takes place. The festival site in Nigeria is described in terms of its physical characteristics to contextualize the activities undertaken by visitors.

5.3.1 Study location: Nigeria

The grove is managed by a board of trustees, and it has a well-developed management plan. The Federal Government of Nigeria governs the site through a site manager in the National Commission for Museums and Monument. The community's traditional responsibility and all its cultural rites are administered by the Ataoja (King), and his council, that is the Osogbo Cultural Heritage Council (OCHC). Traditional mechanisms have been put in place to protect the site from all types of threats, which includes some traditional laws, myths, taboos, or customs. Furthermore, civil restrictions have implemented to forbid people from fishing,

hunting, poaching, felling of trees, and farming to further preserve the grove. Traditional worshippers and devotees maintain the intangible heritage through spiritualism, worship, and symbolism. A management committee, made up of all cadres of stakeholders, was set up to ensure the implement of policies, actions, and activities, for the sustainable development of the site. Detailed narration of Nigeria, and Osogbo, the state capital of Osun state, has been given in the previous chapter that presented the profile of the case study site.

5.3.2 Study location: South Africa

The Republic of South Africa, located at the southern tip of the African continent, is acclaimed to be the 9th biggest country in Africa, and the 24th largest country in the world. According to the 2018 World Bank Report, South Africa, is the second largest economy in Africa and also acclaimed to be one of the fastest growing economies in Africa. As one of Africa's largest countries, South Africa is home to wonderfully diverse landscapes, from majestic mountain ranges to glorious coastlines and beaches. South Africa is amongst a minority of countries that do not have a single capital city. Instead, the country has three capital cities, with each hosting a separate segment of the country's government. Pretoria is the administrative capital while Cape Town is the legislative capital, and Bloemfontein is the judicial capital (South Africa online Fact book). The country is divided into nine provinces which extend over a total surface area of more than 1.2 million km². (Data source: UN Statistics Division, Demographic Yearbook 2015). The Durban city and Municipality (also known as eThekwini), one of the site locations for this study, is located in KwaZulu-Natal which is one of the nine provinces in the northeast of South Africa.

South Africa's history and position as a regional economic powerhouse makes it a major destination country for immigrants from the region and from further afield (Rasool and Botha, 2011). Since the early 1990s, South Africa has witnessed an increase in the movement of foreign migrants and refugees into the country (Posel, 2004: 5). Every year, hundreds of thousands of migrants from across the globe troop into the country, both legally and illegally, in search of socioeconomic and political opportunities (Klotz, 2000). Majority of these

migrants, come in from South Africa's traditional supply areas, which includes South Africa Development Community (SADC countries), others African countries, and even further afield (Kalitanyi and Visser, 2010). According to the mid-year population estimates report for 2018 released by Statistics South Africa, the country is estimated to be receiving a net immigration of over one million persons between the year 2016 and 2021. Johannesburg (in the Gauteng province), Cape Town and Durban, along with Ekurhuleni (East Rand region of the Gauteng province) and Tshwane (also known as Pretoria), are the country's core urban regions and they have also been identified as top migrant locations in the country (Nel et al., 2003). It should, however, be noted that the actual migration figures in South Africa are highly contestable because a high number of these migrants are undocumented (Marschall, 2019: 19).

The transition of South Africa from apartheid to democracy, contributed to the influx of foreigners, particularly from other African countries, including Nigeria (Adeagbo, 2011a). While the actual population of Nigerian immigrants' population in South Africa remains sketchy, Segatti et al (2012) critical examination of South Africa's Statistics Census data reported that approximately thirty-six thousand Nigerians entered South Africa yearly from 2004 to 2010. These Nigerian migrants are concentrated essentially in the Gauteng, Western Cape and the KwaZulu-Natal provinces. They range from highly to middle skilled workers, students, entrepreneurs, and dependents (Segatti et al., 2012). Durban in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province was selected as the research location mostly because the researcher is studying and based in the city. The researcher would like to conduct face-to-face personal interviews with participants in order to fully capture body language and facial expressions to allow for more in-depth data collection and comprehensive understanding. Moreover, since Durban has been identified as one of the cities with a high volume of migrants in South Africa, it makes it a suitable location for conducting this type of study.

5.4 Researcher's observation and site inspection (South Africa)

Durban is one of the three major cities in South Africa, ranked usually after Johannesburg and Cape Town. The city, formerly known as Port Natal, is the most important and the largest city at eThekwini Municipality and the province of KwaZulu-Natal in general. Durban is located

on the far-east side of the country, about 600 km from Johannesburg (Stats SA, 2011). It is one of the country's main seaside resort cities with excellent beaches and a distinctive tropical climate. The city is well equipped for the needs of tourists and has for years been the prime holiday venue for both local and international tourists (Roberts, 2008). The city boasts of a variety of natural beauty, wildlife, and an amazing coastline, thus making it one of the choice tourist destinations in the country.

The city of Durban has a humid subtropical climate. In summer, the weather is between warm, and hot, while the winter months are cool and basically comfortable. The warm season lasts for three months, spanning from December to March. The hottest days of the year are usually in the months of January and February. The cool season also lasts for about three months, from late June to early September. The coldest days of the year are usually in July. Over the course of the year, the temperature typically varies from 57°F to 82°F and is rarely below 52°F or above 87°F. The wetter season lasts about 6 months, running from October to March 28, while the drier season runs from April to September. Durban is ethnically diverse with a cultural richness of mixed beliefs and traditions. The province is occupied by different races. These include mainly black Africans, South Africans of Indian descent, South Africans of mixed inheritance usually referred to as Coloureds, the Chinese and whites. All these races come from different social-cultural and religious backgrounds. The majority of the populations of Durban are black Africans, followed by Asians, Whites, and Coloureds, respectively. The city's demographics indicates that 68% of the population are of working age, and 38% of the people in Durban are under the age of 19 years (www.durban.gov.za). The main spoken language in Durban is isiZulu followed by English and Afrikaans, respectively. Although many of the black Africans in Durban have basic knowledge of the English language, they however feel more comfortable relating in isiZulu and are quick to interject some IsiZulu words even while speaking in the English language. Durban is the largest economy on the east coast of Africa, the third richest city in South Africa, and home to Africa's premier and busiest port.

5.5 Researcher's observation and site inspection (Nigeria)

Nigeria, the local context of this study, is usually referred to by many as the giant of Africa. The country is richly endowed with human and natural resources, the major ones being crude oil and natural gas (Ogunleye, 2008). Since the discovery of crude oil resource availability, and its subsequent boom, the economy of country has been extremely dependent on oil as its mainstay. Nigeria, acclaimed to be the most populous black country in Africa, accounts for about eighteen percent of the continent's total population; however, according to World Bank Report, (2011), attesting to exactly how populous the country is, is a subject of speculation. There are well over 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria, with the three largest being Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba. With this wide array of cultural expressions and artistic manifestations, the country boasts of a variety of rich cultural festivals that showcase the country's diverse cultural heritage. One of the major cultural heritage destinations in Nigeria are the groves in the Yorubaland.

According to oral history, a century ago there were a high number of these sacred groves scattered around communities in the South West. Each community was believed to have had their sacred grove, where their "Orisa" lived. However, as modernization advanced, many of those groves have been neglected or encroached with development. The Osun grove, located in the heart of Osogbo, the capital of Osun State, was allegedly founded some 400 years ago. It is located at a distance of about 250 km from Lagos state, which is the commercial capital city in Nigeria. The Osun grove is the largest sacred grove to have survived and the only one still being revered in the region. The dense forest of the Osun Sacred Grove is some of the last remnants of primary high forest in southern Nigeria. Set within the forest sanctuary are forty shrines, sculptures, and art works erected in honor of Osun and other Yoruba deities, many of which were created in the past forty years. The grove has two ancient palaces, five sacred places, and nine worship points strung along the river banks with designated priests and priestesses.

The researcher, who is a Nigerian, had attended the festival on several occasions. However, the visit at the 2018 annual festival was more hands on as the researcher participated in aspects of the festival which she had not done before, this includes entering the sacred grove and going

to the river bank. The researcher's position as a Nigerian, and having prior knowledge of the festival and some of the proceedings at the festival, enhanced her understanding and easy interpretations of some of the behavioral observations of participants. However, during the research, the researcher had to take an outsider position, not only because she was not from the Yoruba speaking community in the country, but also because the grove itself, and the festival and belief systems associated with it, fall outside the scope of her socio-cultural background. Therefore, the heritage and cultural tourism contexts of the study, and the broader Yoruba tradition within which the festival is located as a study focus, imposed an outsider position on the researcher. It is indeed this outsider position that sparked the culture and heritage tourism interest in the study: to examine the meaning of the festival to the Nigerian migrants as homebound tourists and as participants in such annual cultural celebrations.

During the visit, the researcher was able to fully observe proceedings at the festival. These observations took place during all the days of the festival; which included the ceremonial and the non-ceremonial days. On the ceremonial days, the researcher attended all the events and observed the proceedings, taking notes and photographs and conducting a few interviews. On the non-ceremonial days, the research went round the town, to get a feel of the vibe in the community. By doing this, the researcher obtained general knowledge of what the dynamics were on the site, how people move around the site, what they do, and how other people view the festival. All these observations bolstered the researcher's understanding of some aspects of the festival, the Osogbo community, and participants at the festival. "Observation has been used in a variety of disciplines as a tool for collecting data about people, processes, and cultures in qualitative research" (Kawulich, 2005). Details on the site observation are relayed in the next chapter which presents the researcher's experience, observations of the site, visitors at the site, staff and, other dimensions.

5.6 Target population of study

A population refers to the collection of all elements in a study through which a research phenomenon will be interrogated (Creswell, 2014). For this study, the defined case was the

Nigerian migrants of Yoruba descent in South Africa, specifically those located in the Durban, Johannesburg, and Cape Town. The Osun Osogbo festival, being particularly a Yoruba cultural tradition in Nigeria, thus justified the first-generation Nigerian migrants of Yoruba descent as the most appropriate population for this study. However, this study is focused on a very distinctive group of travelers that do not easily fit into established categories. The target group is Nigerians of Yoruba descent who are based in South Africa, and who have made return journeys back to their homeland to attend the annual festival. The unique quality of these migrants is that they do not just make these journeys only as cultural enthusiasts, as VFR tourists, or even only as pilgrims, but are rather motivated by a combination of reasons.
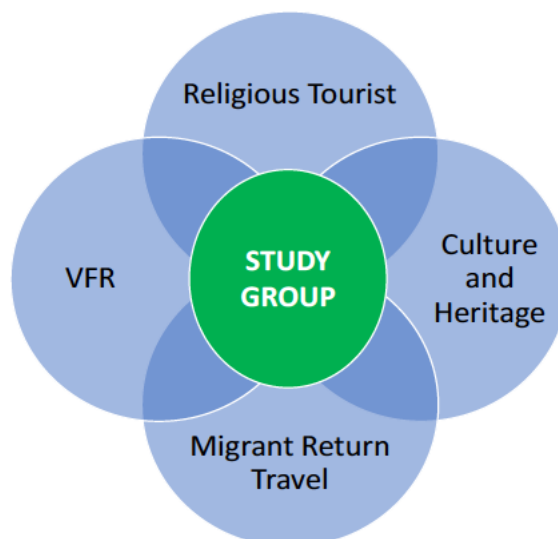
Figure 4: Target population

As earlier mentioned, to identify these people in South Africa, two prominent associations of Yoruba descent in the diaspora were utilized as the main fulcrum of the study population; that is NAYDSA and AYIDSA. These two associations were further utilized to identify specific Nigerians of the Yoruba descents as participants for this study. The study population was the first generation Nigerians who reside in South Africa and who have travelled to Nigeria in the last five years, either to attend or participate in the Osun Osogbo festival or as VFR tourists. This group has special ties with the Osun Osogbo festival and the Yoruba ethnic group of Nigeria in terms of their traditions and beliefs. Amongst the Yoruba community, their visit

and/or participation in festivals such as the Osun Osogbo festival is not just for mere participation, but usually tied to a need to satisfy a particular yearning or as a means to engender solutions to a number of their life's challenges. It was on the basis of this knowledge that this study examined the experiences of these migrants as homebound tourists and festival participants.

5.7 Sample size

A sample represents the subset of a population selected either intentionally or unintentionally from a large pool of population or elements (Creswell, 2014). Essentially, the utility of sample is to employ a representative sample wherein the findings can be engrossed on the entire population of the study, as it is not possible to sample the entire population (Ivankova et al., 2011). This means that conducting small-sized in-depth exploration was the requirement to deeply unearth the relevant information on the Osun Osogbo festival, the groves, and the events surrounding it. Therefore, based on this premonition, the study purposively selected 25 participants amongst the population of Yoruba descent Nigerians in South Africa, specifically in the KZN metropolis, as shown in Table 1. This sample size is rightly justified for a study of this magnitude. For instance, Gruce et al., (2006) argue that a sample within the range of 15-30 is appropriate to comprehend the existing commonalities between the sample of a homogenous group in a qualitative study. The range of sample employed in this study captured the participants' age, sex, duration of stay in South Africa, and their occupation.

The age range of recruited participants falls within 35 to 60 years. This age range was most suitable for the study because migrants within this age range are expected to have attained some level of stability in their host countries. They also fall within the bracket of people who have the resources needed to embark on these return trips back home. Furthermore, this was done because, at that age, participants will be knowledgeable enough about the significance of the festival to provide the data needed for the study. Both male and female participants were recruited for this study, to get a gender balanced view. All the participants are originally from the South Western region in Nigeria. However, they have all spent a minimum of 5 years out of their home country. The baseline of five years was chosen because it was considered to be

a long enough time to get the desired perspective. Furthermore, most of the participants in this study had attended the Osun Osogbo festival at least once. This was to ensure that not only those with the required knowledge on the subject matter participated in the interviews, but also those who had either participated in the festival or who visited the site as tourists.

5.8 Sampling and recruitment strategies

The recruitment strategy for this study was based on locating individuals with knowledge of the rituals, activities, and events that characterized the Osun Osogbo festival. The non-probability sampling technique was identified as most suitable for the study. After careful considerations of the strengths and weaknesses of the different types of non-probability sampling strategies, this study adopted snowballing and purposive sampling strategies as participant recruitment strategies. This sampling approach was the most relevant to effectively identify and select members of the Yoruba descent from the large pool of Nigerian migrants living in Durban, Johannesburg, and Cape Town. The presidents of NAYDA and AYIDA were contacted, and further referrals were made to contact other members of Yoruba descent living in these three cities in South Africa. The snowball sampling recruitment strategy is employed in a situation of extreme difficulties to identify a specific group of people, especially based on ethnic differences (Samuel, 2012). The idea was that one member of the Yoruba descent was identified, and referrals were made to identify other members of the same ethnic group.

The purposive sampling captures the need to draw information from specific sets of individuals who are confirmed to be in possession of, or are in the best stance to provide, the relevant information (Sekeran and Bougies, 2009). This responsibility rests on the researcher to identify these persons to provide such information. The assumption of the purposive sampling strategy becomes important in this study as it was used to strategically recruit persons who are in the best position to respond to questions about the Osun Osogbo festivals, the migrants living in South Africa. For instance, the first-generation Nigerians of Yoruba descent migrants in South Africa were purposively recruited since the Yoruba tradition is neatly tied to the practices, activities, and events that shape the Osun Osogbo festival.

5.8.1 Justifications for sampling recruitment employed

The study focused on first generation Nigerians of the Yoruba descent migrants in South Africa. It is important to state that South Africa has a wide assemblage of many different Nigerian ethnic groups living as migrants in the country. Hence, it is only critical to employ the snowballing sampling in identifying the Yoruba descent population amongst other ethnic groups of Nigerians. To do this, the researcher approached the presidents of the above mentioned organizations in Durban in the first instance, and a synopsis of the study was presented to them. Afterwards, a direction was given on how the researcher would be able to locate other Nigerians of Yoruba descent amongst the Nigerian migrants living in Durban. Several contacts were further made after the initial direction given by different presidents. Many of the referrals proved ineffective. The researcher had to solicit for further referrals from one or two other Nigerian migrants after their individual interviews. These procedures were followed until it became difficult to make more referrals. Nevertheless, in order to ensure a sufficient number of persons being recruited, the presidents of NAYDSA and AYIDSA in Johannesburg and Cape Town were contacted, and similar procedures were undertaken to recruit more participants. In addition, social media tools like Facebook and WhatsApp groups were further employed as recruitment strategies to bring in participants who are of the Yoruba descent living in either Durban, Johannesburg, and Cape Town to participate in the study, irrespective of being a member of either NAYDSA or AYIDSA. The justification for the use of the snowball sampling strategy was based on the fact that the Nigerian migrants of Yoruba descent could hardly be identified without referrals from the first sets of persons contacted.

On the use of the purposive sampling technique as a recruitment strategy, after ensuring that all the identified participants were Nigerian migrants of Yoruba descent, the purposive sampling was further employed to ensure that only those with robust knowledge of the practices, cultural rites, and activities that characterized the Osun Osogbo festival were eventually recruited as participants. In other words, each participant was enquired on their knowledge of the Osun Osogbo festival heritage, and associated issues before the commencement of each interview. This was to further strengthen the robustness of the research data by ensuring that only those with the required knowledge on the subject matter participated

in the interviews. Therefore, the purposive selection of Nigerian migrants of the Yoruba descent is justified on the premise that only Nigerians of the Yoruba decent with deep knowledge on the subject matter could participate in a study of this nature (requiring deep exploration of Osun Osogbo cultural heritage), specifically those who either participate in the festival or who visit as tourists.

5.9 Research instrument

The study employed the combination of primary and secondary research instruments for data collection. The interviews represented the primary instrument, while other sources of documentation represented the secondary instrument. "Interviews" are planned purposeful discussion that occur between two or more individuals towards uncovering answers to specific questions (Creswell, 2014). The interview process is segmented into different types: the structured, semi-structured, and unstructured, and the utility of any of these types is contingent on the aim of the research (Ivankova, Creswell and Clark, 2006). This study employed semi-structured interviewing since semi-structured interviews give room for the probe of supplementary questions as the interview unfolds to appropriately suit the aim of the study, especially when deviations are observed in the responses supplied.

An interview guide comprising lists of questions was prepared to guide the drift of questions during the interview. The intention of the interview guide was not meant to restrict the researcher, or the extent of responses being supplied. Rather, this was done to ensure that similar questions were responded to by participants, and to maintain consistency in the data being gathered as the interview unfolded (see Appendix B). The questions were drawn up based on the researcher's previous exploratory research, and the set aims and objectives of the research. The researcher had the liberty of exploring beyond the list of questions contained in the guide for more comprehensive responses. Furthermore, the probe did not in any way change the context of the questions but acted as a complement in bringing about clarity to ambiguous responses. The first section of the interview captured demographic questions including age, sex, occupation, state of origin, and participants' location in South Africa. These questions

were fundamental in order to understand the demographics of all participants. The second section of the questions reflected request for insights on the research questions and objectives.

The variety of interviewees purposively selected amongst the Nigerian migrants of Yoruba descent was to engender a rich and deeper comprehension of the research problem. The interviews took place at the participants' identified convenient location which varied from their offices to their homes. The length of each interview lasted between thirty to fifty minutes, and all responses were recorded with a digital voice recorder. In addition to the digital voice recorder, the researcher also took down some notes during the interview. This is important to ensure the quality of the transcripts, in the event that some parts of the audio are not clear while transcribing. The interview was conducted on one-on-one basis in a quiet environment to allow for lucidity in both the questions and responses given.

One of the limitations for the semi-structured interviews is that data supplied can be encumbered with the participant's prejudice, especially to misrepresent information for personal advantage (Sekaren and Bougie, 2016). However, the participants' bias was offset with confirmation of facts provided from other participants and the integration of secondary data sources from relevant documents. These data sources include the Adunni Orisa Trust (AOT), a private entity devoted to the management of the Osun Osogbo festival groves, the Osun State Government Ministry of Culture, and the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM).

5.9.1 In-depth interviews

As earlier stated, the main data collection instrument used in this study was in-depth interviews. The intention of conducting in-depth interviews is to collect rich and detailed data. These types of interviews are less structured, but more intense and probing (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). The use of in-depth interviews in this study gave the researcher an opportunity to enquire, cross-examine participants, and control the discussion to concentrate mainly on the areas under

review. The interviews were all conducted in English, even though all participants were from the Yoruba speaking community. This was done to ensure easy and correct transcription of interview records. As stated earlier, although the interviews were semi-structured, they (interviews) were loosely guided by an organized list of questions. Nevertheless, some follow up questions were generated based on responses from the participants. The researcher tried to make the interviews as comfortable as possible, to make participants relax, and open-up so that they could express themselves freely.

5.10 Data collection process

Once ethical approval to conduct the study had been obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the process of identifying potential participants began. The data collection procedure in a research context involves several stages to ensure that adequate and meaningful data are gathered to comprehensively address the research questions (Newman, 2007). Sekaran and Bougie (2010: 184) define data collection as an integral part of the research design as the use of the most appropriate method enhances the value of the research. For this study, several processes were followed, which included the exploratory pre-fieldwork work, the desktop research, and then the conduct of in-depth interviews, respectively. As mentioned above, there were two sites, Durban and Osogbo, from which field data was collected.

Permission to collect data from the site was sought from the Board of Trustee for the Conservation of Osun who manages the grove. The permission was affirmed with a gatekeeper's letter. The gatekeeper's letter is a letter from an agency or organization to the institution, confirming that the student has been given consent to conduct research on their site. In addition to the letter, certain vital information had earlier been obtained from the Board of Trustee for the Conservation of Osun Osogbo World Heritage Site located in Osun State, Nigeria. The researcher equally visited the presidents of National Association of Yoruba Descendants South Africa (NAYDA) and Association of Yoruba in Diaspora South Africa (AYIDA) in South Africa to formally brief them about the aim of the study, and how they could assist in the recruitment of other first generation Yoruba's living in South Africa (see Appendix

A- gatekeeper's letter). With different appointment dates, the researcher interviewed the presidents of these two associations, and then, subsequent referrals were made to interview other identified members of the associations. However, it should be noted that other persons who were not affiliated to the associations, but of the Yoruba descent, were also interviewed.

Although Durban was the main research site for the study in South Africa, the need to include other major cities in South Africa was based on two salient justifications. First, the realization of the total sample size could not be achieved within the KZN metropolis only. This resulted in information being sought about potential participants in Johannesburg and Cape Town, the other two major cities in South Africa that have sizable Nigerian populations. Nevertheless, most interviews were conducted in Durban. The entire interview process was divided into sections, with different dates for each interviewee. In interviewing individuals, the following steps were taken:

1. The goal of the research was discussed with the participants. This was to ensure that the interview questions were not taken out of context.
2. Participants were presented with a consent form to indicate their voluntary willingness to participate in the study, willingness not to participate, or to decline as the study unfolds (see section on ethical consideration).
3. The interview questions were directly asked of all participants by the researcher in the order in which they were contained in the research guide, and other supplementary questions were enquired to expressly reveal other hidden responses until saturation point was attained.
4. The interview responses were all audio recorded with the permission of the participants. Two different devices, digital voice recorder and a cell phone, were used in recording the interviews. The need to employ two different recording gadgets was to ensure a back-up should there be an aspect of the interview that was not lucid enough. In addition to this, note taking process was used as another means to back-up the data during the interview. All in all, the entire interview exercise lasted between August 2018 and March 2019, culminating into a total of seven months.

Other data collection procedures include a personal visit by the researcher to witness and observe the Osun Osogbo festival proceedings in Osun State, to have a broad knowledge of what characterizes the event in terms of the dynamics of the festival, costume, and the

generality of what constitutes the Osun Osogbo festival. During the inspection of the festival, few conversations were held with visitors to, and other players of, the festival, specifically to gather more information on the workings and heritage of the festival.

5.10.1 Problems encountered during data collection

Some challenges were encountered in the course of data collection for this study. Some of the problems faced by the researcher and their subsequent solutions are listed below:

Problem #1: Getting the gatekeeper's letter:

The constraint of obtaining permission from relevant establishments, in terms of the gatekeeper's letter from Nigeria, was the first major problem encountered. The researcher had assumed that getting the gatekeeper's letter would not be a problem, but events later unfolded differently. At first, the researcher was directed to the Osun State Ministry of Culture and Tourism as the highest public establishment overseeing culture and tourism in Osun state. The issuance of the gatekeeper's letter was a problem caused by several bureaucratic bottlenecks that exist within the ministry. The researcher had to travel several times to Osun State.

Solution: Eventually, after repeated correspondence (emails and phone calls), and a long period of waiting, the researcher was told that the regulation and monitoring function of the Osun Osogbo festival is not within the remits of the ministry, but that of the Board of Trustee for the Conservation of Osun Osogbo World Heritage Site where the gatekeeper's letter was eventually issued from, giving permission to the researcher to carry on with the study.

Problem #2: Identifying willing participants

During the pre-field work, identifying Nigerian migrants of the Yoruba descent who were willing to participate in the study was a huge challenge. For instance, it was difficult to locate persons of the Yoruba descent amongst other Nigerian migrants living in Durban. This problem delayed the data collection process for much longer than envisaged. Initially the researcher had thought that, by approaching the president of AYIDA, it would make the process easier.

However, on getting to the field, it was discovered that many participants whom the researcher was directed to, were very reluctant to participate, particularly women. For the women, their reluctance was mainly motivated by fear of being labelled as backward or idol worshipper in these modern times. Even though all the ethical considerations had been fulfilled, assuring them of the anonymity of their contribution, many of them were still reluctant. This added some constraints to the entire data collection procedure in terms of elongating the field work duration. There were several cancellations of confirmed appointments, and the researcher had to make several explanations and convictions to participants with regards to the aim of the study.

Solution: The fears of the participants were eventually allayed after the researcher was able to make them understand that the study is devoid of any political, ethnic, or otherwise undertone. The researcher also requested for assistance from some of those who eventually agreed to take part in the study, to help identify other interested persons. Also, they helped in facilitating appointments and meetings with other participants.

Problem #3: Reluctance of participants

Thirdly, as the interview unfolded, some identified participants were not immediately available even with the initial appointments. In fact, almost all the initial appointments were missed, and there was a need to re-arrange for other appointment dates. These changes evidently hindered the smooth operation of data collection such that additional time had to be added beyond the first scheduled time for data gathering.

Solution: Extreme patience and caution were exercised. Each of the appointments was re-arranged to fall within convenient times for the participants. Several follow-ups with each participant were made to ensure that the meetings take place at the prescribed times. Eventually, the desired number of participants was attained at saturation.

Problem #4: Financial constraint

In the process of the study, there were financial constraints which affected the swift completion of the study in one way because some major expenses, including air-ticket to the case study site, accommodation, feeding, editing and other miscellaneous expenses, were fully borne by the researcher.

Solution: The management of the university graciously covered the tuition fee which helped to relieve the burden a little. All other expenses, however, had to be undertaken from the researcher's savings and other stipends received from friends and family.

5.11 Data analysis technique

The data collected for this study was analyzed through a "qualitative analysis software", "QSR NVivo10". This software was chosen because it is used to manage large amounts of data, and allows ideas and issues to emerge more freely without compulsion to force data into already established categories (Jones, 2007: 74). Content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data gathered through interviews. However, the content analysis is only an organized qualitative analytical tool used for the analysis of text including transcripts and other types of textual reports (Creswell, 2012; Newman, 2007). The essence of analyzing the content of text or interview transcripts is to understand and make explicit meaning of the themes that emerged from the transcripts.

Therefore, the emergence or identification of themes from the interview transcripts was achieved through employing the NVivo qualitative software. This justifies the position that transcripts of more than 50 pages should be analyzed with the aid of a software for easier identification of themes (Yin, 2016). In other words, the application of the NVivo software helps in compressing the transcripts such that the main themes and sub-themes that speak to the research questions and objectives were easily identified. The various nodes in the software provide a more comprehensive means of generating codes and uncovering themes from the transcripts. After the emergence of the different themes from the transcripts, the Miles and Huberman (1994) three steps of analyzing and presenting qualitative data was employed, including data reduction, data display, and drawing inferences.

Firstly, the different themes were re-arranged and relevant themes that directly speak to the research questions were identified. However, re-arranging the themes does not mean that other

non-relevant themes were excluded, as other themes with secondary implications on the research questions were also considered as sub-themes in the broad analysis of the data. Secondly, the re-arranged themes were summarized and displayed in an explicit manner and in the order at which they address the research questions. Finally, discussions and implications were drawn from the summarized themes upon which conclusions were drawn from the findings.

5.12 Ethical consideration

Several ethical standards were complied with in this study, especially on the research methodology (the procedure for conducting the research) and the methods (the tools used for data collection and analysis), and other ethical principles. The conduct of this study appropriately complied with the ethical standard of the University of KwaZulu-Natal Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee research guidelines, wherein an ethical clearance certificate was issued with protocol number HSS/0548/018D dated 23 July 2018, certifying the study as ethically approved (see Appendix C). Other ethical standards include the access to permission (gatekeepers) from the Board of Trustee for the Conservation of Osun Osogbo World Heritage Site in Osun State, Nigeria. In line with the Code of Ethics, pseudonyms were given to all the participants to protect their identity. For example, the pseudonym RM001 represents participant male 001, while RF001 represents participant female 001. Essentially, the anonymity of all participants were strictly protected such that their names or any information that could reveal their identity were discouraged, both in the conduct of the interviews and the reports of the findings respectively.

In addition, the lists of questions contained in the interview guide were all prepared such that the privacy of all participants was not violated. It was also ensured that the views and opinions of all participants were given full respect, irrespective of their stands with the question being asked. Before the commencement of the interview, all participants were well briefed about the aim of the study, and a consent form was issued to them to indicate their willingness to participate in the study. This was to ascertain that all participants had a full grasp of the nature

of the study that they were participating in. Their rights were explained to them. For example, participants were told that they had the right either or not to participate in the study should they feel that the study would violate their human rights, or discontinue participating even as the study unfolds. All these measures were taken to ensure that the individual rights of all persons were given utmost protection. Lastly, the confidentiality of the interviews conducted was strictly safeguarded by ensuring that the audio-record interview and the transcripts were kept under close watch monitored by the university research office and the researcher's supervisor to protect unauthorized access to all information used as data for this study.

5.13 Data quality control

The need for ensuring data quality is undoubtedly an important measure for engendering high-quality research output. To be sure, the magnitude at which a research instrument undergoes quality control will greatly determine the trustworthiness of the research (Creswell, 2012). The quantitative research methods aptly support the utility of validity and reliability as measures for ensuring data quality control (Yin, 2016). However, ensuring data quality control in a qualitative study takes a different dimension. Thus, for this study, the Trochim and Donnelly (2007) four indicators of trustworthiness were employed to ascertain the quality control of the qualitative data, including "credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability". Firstly, the credibility of the qualitative data was ensured by ensuring that the views and opinions of participants were comprehensively reflected in the findings of this study, specifically by reporting the participants' responses in verbatim as reported during the interview. Secondly, the transferability of data was employed by ensuring that findings that emerged from this study are transferable to other or similar contexts. Furthermore, the dependability quality control was ensured by incorporating all ethical standards into the research procedures and the report of findings. For instance, the anonymity of all participants was adequately secured, and the data gathered were safeguarded from unauthorized persons. And lastly, the confirmability of findings was ascertained by ensuring the reliability of results by allowing for stakeholders' evaluation of the interview scripts and the research findings. This was done in order to confirm uniformity between the interview scripts and findings.

5.14 Limitations

When conducting research of this nature, there are always possibilities of shortcomings that can influence the final result. One of the limitations of the semi-structured interviews is that data supplied can be encumbered with participant's prejudice, especially to misrepresent information for personal advantage (Sekaren and Bougie, 2016). However, participants' bias was offset with the integration of secondary data sources from relevant documents. These data sources include the Adunni Orisa Trust (AOT), a private entity devoted to the management of the Osun Osogbo festival groves, the Osun State government, Ministry of Culture, and the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM). This study is also limited by its sample size. Nigeria, often described as the most populous black country in Africa, has a population of well over a hundred and eighty million people, with over 20 million of this population located in the diaspora. The sample of the local resident participants in the study represents a small percentage of residents in Durban, making it difficult to generalize the findings to the entire members of the diaspora. However, the researcher is confident that the present study sample represents an important component of members of the diaspora whose contributions are likely to have the significant impact and insights.

5.15 Conclusions

This chapter explained methodology and methods used in answering the research questions. It has succinctly given a robust discussion on the different processes undertaken by the researcher in order to achieve the set aims and objectives of the study. The exploratory research was adopted as the research design, and the study was carefully unpacked through the use of qualitative research method. The population of the study was strategically located among the Nigerian migrants of the Yoruba descent in South Africa, specifically those with some level of knowledge and understanding of the rituals and practices of the Osun Osogbo festival.

The sampled participants for interviews were reached through snowballing and purposive sampling approaches. To be sure, the snowballing sample was employed due to the presence of Nigerians with different ethnic backgrounds living in South Africa. Thus, this sampling approach was employed to strategically locate participants of the Yoruba descents. The semi-structured type of in-depth interviews was employed to prompt constructive responses from the identified participants. This was necessary to allow for subsequent follow-up questions towards uncovering more lucid responses. The qualitative data gathered was analyzed with the content analysis techniques, although the NVivo qualitative software was initially employed to identify themes and sub-themes which formed the basis for analysis. The study appropriately followed standard ethical procedures in both the collection and reporting of the data collected. Although few hiccups were encountered during the data collection stage, they however did not limit the study in any way.

Chapter 6
Exploring the experiences of migrants as visitors to their homeland

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the qualitative data gathered by the researcher from the twenty-five (25) participants interviewed during the field work, and from the personal observations by the researcher during the attendance of the festival in August 2018. The chapter is divided into three sections, and the conclusion. The first section will present findings from the researcher's personal visit to the grove. It will relay the researcher's experience, and her observations of the site, the visitors seen, staff of the grove, and other dimensions. The second section will present data gathered from interviews. The data gathered were grouped into themes initially determined by the interview questions. These themes were further subdivided according to thematic trends in the participants' responses. The migration history and reasons for migration from participants interviewed, their perceptions, and emotional attachments to their host and home countries, the travel logistics for temporary diasporic return trips, and their various motivations for travel will be discussed in detail.

The third section, most importantly, will present findings about the Osun Osogbo festival from participants who have attended the festival on their return journeys back home. Their beliefs about the sacred grove and the goddess, perceptions of the festival more generally and their experiences and activities during the festival will be discussed. Furthermore, the section will explore the experiences of members of the diaspora as visitors to their homeland as they participate at the annual Osun Osogbo festival. Tourism-related aspects such as travel logistics, accommodation choices, and other dimensions of touristic consumptions will form a major part of the analysis. The conclusion will present a summary of the major findings.

6.2 Researcher's observations

As explained in the methodology chapter, participant observation and site inspection were important parts of this research during the Osun Osogbo 2018 annual festival. Upon the researcher's arrival, the town was already alive with preparations for the festival which was to commence the following day. All local hotels were fully booked by foreigners who did not have relatives to stay with. Though not a foreigner, the researcher had no known relatives in the state. However, she was hosted by a family for the duration of her research visit.

To avoid poor crowd control during the festival, the researcher decided to pay a visit to the grove before the day of the festival. On arrival, she observed that the grove was being maintained in preparation for the grand finale of the festival. A local tour guide took the researcher around the grove and relayed some of the history of the goddess and the site. The local tour guides at the grove are devotees of the goddess, who have undergone professional local training on the history and significance of the grove and the goddess. The tours are only offered in English and Yoruba. The grove is open daily to visitors, with guided tours on the site. A worship is, however, held by the devotees only at the river side after every five days. Entrance into the grove attracts a fee of 500 Nigeria Naira, payable (both by local and international visitors) at an entrance office provided by the Board of Trustees (BoT) managing the grove. The fee entitles the visitor to a guided tour around the grove, and an opportunity to speak with a devotee if desired.

Although the researcher had been to the festival before, this particular visit was more hands on because she had, for the first time, to go into the grove. The grove is home to many other gods, which were introduced by the tour guide. Though the atmosphere and presence of the shrines might be perceived as disconcerting, the guides are well-trained to handle such visitor emotions. At the end of the tour, which included a visit to the suspension bridge, the first palace and the Osun River, the researcher spoke with one of the several devotees present at the grove. The conversation centered on the history of the festival, the grove, and the goddess. The devotee then invited the researcher to say a prayer and, according to the devotee, "you can ask for anything you wish for, and the prayer could be any format that you are comfortable with". Electricity is not available within the grove area, to preserve its natural state and make it safe for some animals (notably monkeys) that roam freely around the grove. Entrance into the grove

is free of charge during the festival; however, it is mandatory to remove one's shoes. The final day of the festival is also the main attraction.

The festival started with the arrival of dignitaries from all over the country. The crowd, made up of both local and international participants, was indeed the main concern for many. In general, foreigners could easily be identified within the crowd, but visiting members of the Nigerian diaspora largely seemed to blend in with the crowd. Participants at the festival comprised four different groups, who were identified based on the following:

- Indigenes of the Osogbo community: often dressed in festival regalia.
- Nigerians from other parts of Nigeria: who spoke various Nigerian languages, other than the one spoken in Osogbo.
- Nigerians in the diaspora: majority often have slightly different accent to the Nigerians.
- Non-Nigerians foreigners: some of them were white people who most times could be identified as foreigners as there are not many white Nigerian citizens.

The foreigners were calm and at peace with the crowd. They seemed excited at every activity. The locals seemed to want to avoid the crowd while most of the foreigners were mingling with the crowd, despite all the security problems in the country. In other parts of the town, on the contrary, foreigners hardly moved freely without an identified law enforcement agent. Around the various shrines, there were different groups of people gathered around the deity, offering thanks and making supplications. Most appeared to be non-locals who had come to the festival for supplications. It emerged that the locals always have access to the grove and can come at any time, while people from other parts of the country and elsewhere used the opportunity of the festival to come for prayers and thanksgiving. The researcher identified some Nigerians who were members of the diaspora and, on interaction with them, discovered that their participation at the festival was primarily an opportunity to seek for blessings from the goddess whom they had so much faith in. Their responses and statements are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

6.3 Findings of interview data collection

6.3.1 Socio-demographic details

The age range of participants falls within 35 to 60 years. This age range was most suitable for the study because migrants within this age range are expected to have attained some level of stability in their host countries. They also fall within the bracket of people who have the resources needed to embark on these return trips back home. Individuals within this age range are also knowledgeable enough about the significance of the festival to provide the data needed for the study. As shown in the table below, both males and females were interviewed. This was important to get a gender balanced view. However, as will be explained fully later on in this chapter, it became a bit challenging to achieve a balance in gender representation as many of the women approached were reluctant to share their experiences. Attendance at the festival includes all strata of people from around the world. From the table presented below, it can be seen that the occupation of participants cuts across all works of life –from both the formal and informal sectors in the society. As stated in chapter 5, all the participants are originally from the South Western region in Nigeria, who have spent a minimum of 5 years out of their home country.

Table 1: Participants demographic details

S/N	Pseudonyms	Gender	Age range	Duration in SA	Occupation
1	RM001	Male	35-40	5 years	Businessman
2	RM002	Male	40-45	5 years	Psychologist
3	RF001	Female	40-45	6 years	Fashion designer
4	RM003	Male	40-45	5 years	Lecturer
5	RM004	Male	50-55	15 years	Dentist
6	RF002	Female	35-40	10 years	Businesswoman
7	RF003	Female	40-45	5 years	Food vendor
8	RM005	Male	40-45	6 years	Lecturer
9	RM006	Male	40-45	13 years	Businessman
10	RM007	Male	55-60	10 years	Consultant
11	RM008	Male	50-55	20 years	Businessman
12	RM009	Male	50-55	10 years	Lecturer
13	RM010	Male	40-45	6 years	Lecturer
14	RM011	Male	40-45	5 years	Sales Rep.
15	RM012	Male	45-50	3 years	Student

16	RF004	Female	45-50	5 years	Beautician
17	RF005	Female	45-50	5 years	Secretary
18	RM013	Male	50-55	5 years	Consultant
19	RF006	Female	40-45	7 years	Consultant
20	RM014	Male	40-45	6 years	Lecturer
21	RF007	Female	40-45	6 years	Nurse
22	RM015	Male	60-65	22 years	Consultant
23	RF008	Female	35-40	5 years	Lecturer
24	RF009	Female	40-45	7 years	Lecturer
25	RM016	Male	35-40	5 years	Accountant

Source: Field Work, 2018/2019

Participants were purposively selected to meet certain criteria. These criteria include that they must have been out of Nigeria for some years prior, and have also been living in South Africa for a number of years. Some participants originally left Nigeria for other countries and then on-migrated to South Africa. A typical example is RF003, a married woman in her 40s. She explained that:

> "Although I was born in Nigeria, I think I have spent a larger part of my life outside Nigeria. I left Nigeria when I was about 5 years old to go live with my mom. Then she was in the US, but she has moved back home now. My dad had always been in Nigeria; I guess that's why we always have a reason to go back home. I got married to a Nigerian too, but he also had lived most of his life abroad. We relocated to South Africa in 2010 after the World Cup and this place has been home for us since then" (RF003: Cape Town [CPT], Western Cape, Dec. 2018).

The consensus was that the decision to migrate was born out of a need to seek for "greener pastures". As earlier stated during the review of literature, most members of the diaspora migrated to other countries in search of advancement which ranged from educational to economic. As one of them said:

> "I came to South Africa to seek greener pastures. The road was not easy, I suffered a lot before I could get my papers and live in the comfort that I live in today, but to the Glory of God, I can say that this land has worked for me, and I am very comfortable now" (RM007: Durban, KZN, Nov. 2018).

RM007 came to South Africa in 2006. He, like many other migrants interviewed, generally acknowledged that it was a struggle to stabilize in a new country. However, after some years, they all seemed to have integrated well. Although none of the women interviewed married South African partners, five out of the sixteen men are married to South African women. This data shows that these members of the Nigerian diaspora in South Africa, as migrants, occupy a position that makes them have two homes. The process of migration has made them create or establish a home in their host country, although all of them still have a very strong attachment to their country of origin, as discussed below.

6.3.2 Return journeys and activities at their destinations

In order to examine how these migrant tourists, organize their visits back home, and the activities they pursue while at home, participants were asked to share their experiences on how making these return trips was for them. For some of the interviewed members of the Nigerian diaspora community in South Africa, attending and participating at the festival was their main motivation to embark on these return trips back to their country of birth. For some others, however, even though the festival may have been an attraction, the prospects of reuniting with friends and family was also an equally strong motivation. Participant RM013, for instance, explained that he went to the festival because he had some friends who were visiting Nigeria from the US. "… It was combined, they came to visit but also used the opportunity to attend the festival", he said (RM013: Durban, Feb. 2019). For RM012, he had gone home to see his family and some friend in Osogbo, and since it was the festival time, he decided to just join in. RF009 explained that he attended just for the fun of it. "You know, when you travel home, you get to do as many things as you can just so that you maximize your time at home. You want to gather all the fun that you have missed all the time that you have been away", he said (RF009: Durban, Feb. 2019).

However, there are some who travel mainly to seek for solution to their problems, or to offer thanksgiving to the goddess. For this group of people, travelling is more of a mandatory task than one undertaken by choice. Even when it was not convenient for them, they still had to travel home to fulfill their obligation. According to one of the participants:

"It was sort of mandatory that I attended that year, and that was why I did... I attended the festival in 2014 as part of an obligation. It wasn't very convenient for me then, but I had to go because my mom insisted. It was just a trip that was said to be important that year, and I was able to make it" (RF004: CPT, Nov. 2018).

One of the participants who described himself as an Osun devotee, shared an experience of a certain lady he claimed to have taken along with him to the festival:

"I have taken people from Durban here to the festival twice. Once in 2011 and the other one just last year. There was a lady, she is my wife's friend … she had been married for, I think about 6 years then, and she had no children in the marriage, although she had had a son before she got married to this her present husband. We took her with us when we were travelling home that year and she participated and did all what she was asked to do. The following year I couldn't travel for the festival because of business commitments but guess what, the lady went by herself to offer thanks. I think she has two children now. For someone like that, you don't even need to preach about the goodness of Yeye [mother] to her" (RM008: Durban, Sept. 2018).

He further explained that when people are at home and attend the festival as often as they can, they may not actually fully appreciate the richness that it portrays. This changes when they sojourn abroad and do not get to see often what they had previously taken for granted; memory now comes into play, and that is when one begins to appreciate legacies forefathers left behind. One of the participants said that, since he became a devotee, attendance and participation at the festival had become compulsory for him because he needed it for his spiritual fortification" (RM008: Durban, Sept. 2018).

Before attending the festival, RF005 said, he had heard so much about it, prompting him and his friends to attend. RM010 said he had attended the festival several times before he changed his religious affiliation and became a born-again Christian. He claimed he had friends who visit Nigeria just for the purpose of attending the festival. He said he planned his trip to join them in Nigeria because he was to provide the said friends with accommodation, and he would use the opportunity to accomplish all the other things he needed to do in Nigeria. According to him:

"I even planned my travel date one time to fall within that period so that I can kill 3 birds with one stone; my friends were coming, I needed to do some things at home, and

it was also an opportunity to enjoy the fun during the festival, but that was then when I didn't really understand the spiritual implications" (RM010: Durban, Oct. 2018).

For RF002, who completed her one-year compulsory national youth service year in Osun, the season of the festival in Osogbo can be said to be similar to the Christian experience in December. She said that:

> "It's a good festival, it is enjoyable, it's like the whole of Osun is there. It's like celebrating Christmas for them. It's exciting to start with, especially for someone who are probably not familiar with the culture of the Osun people. They were finding it very exciting; it was exciting going though" (RF002: Durban, Feb. 2019).

As explained earlier, all participants had been to the festival at least once within the last five years. When asked to describe their experiences at the festival, all the participants opined that it was fun-filled, exciting, and entertaining. According to one of the participants:

> "It is always fun. I don't think anybody who attends the festival can say anything else. There is music, singing, dancing; for those who like to drink, there is always a lot of free alcohol. Different companies with their brands come and offer free drinks. A lot of people get drunk, but that is all part of the fun. It was interesting both times I went" (RM012: Durban, Sept. 2018).

RF008 admitted to have been very skeptical about the festival initially. She claimed to have heard a lot of "spooky" stories about the place, but when she got there, it was not as she had anticipated. "It was scary though, but it was nice; it was cultural", she said (RF008: Durban, Feb. 2019). Although she could not recall all the different things she saw in detail, she remembered taking a stroll around the shrine, which was only possible because they went to the grove before the festival began. The participant said:

> "We walked on this umm bridge, and then before we entered the shrine, there were so many people we met, and you know, those things we read about, we saw so many statutes, you know those things. And funny enough, we met some Brazilians there, but clearly the wife, he told us about it...he came from Brazil, and the wife was in white, and she was like deep into the river. We were just at the edge, but she was inside, and

maybe she was sick or something because she was seated and her husband and children were there too" (RF008: Durban, Feb. 2019).

Getting to the river, which is the center of all the attractions, was usually a hassle because there were lots of people also wanted to get into the grove, hence resulting in excessive pushing and struggle to pass through the entrance. If one were at the festival just for the fun of it, one of the participants thought, it would be better to just sit outside the grove. According to him:

"You can decide to stay outside and just sit and enjoy the singing and dancing, but if you go there for a concrete reason like you are looking for a child now, you can't just sit and be enjoying music, you want to get to the river so that as the Arugba (sacrifice) is being dropped, you will be around to say your prayers" (RM009: Durban, Sept. 2018).

Most interviewees concurred that the locals and devotees believe very strongly in the potency of the water from the river. "The water fetched from the Osun River is even called 'Agboo', which means an herbal drink or medicine, and you will see everyone fetching it. One of the participants admitted to fetching it from the river too. "I fetched it too when I went there, and I used it, and like I said before, it worked for me", she said. (RF005: Durban, Feb. 2019).

Those participants who attended the festival as a means to fulfill a need, particularly those praying for children, confirmed the general struggle and desperation to get to the river. During the period of the festival, all around the town, locals would be seen with cans of the supposed water for sale, which they claimed to have fetched from the river. According to RM009, those kegs of water were actually meant for those who needed the water but were not able or willing to go through the stress of making their own way down to the river site. However, he observed that, lately, people preferred to fetch the water themselves to be sure of its authenticity because of many cases of people selling ordinary water as "Agboo".

The need to get into the grove during the festival varied amongst participants. For some, their motivation to go through the stress of actually entering the grove was because they desired to meet with devotees, who are usually only accessed inside the grove. That way the devotees could assist them with prayers and supplications. For others, their motivation was because they

would like to be present at the riverside when the Arugba, the virgin girl, dropped the sacrifice for the goddess in the river. RF004 said:

> "For me, the festival would have been much more exciting if I didn't have to struggle to get into the grove. There is a problem with the crowd control at the grove. A lot of people want to go into the grove for one reason or the other, and the passage is so narrow. The pushing and struggling, I didn't find interesting at all, but outside the grove, the singing, watching people dancing, and all the cultural displays, the drumming, you know all those things are fun. Even the hotel where we stayed in, which was quite a distance from the grove, still had an ambience of festivity. The whole town sure wears a festive look" (RF004: Cape Town, Nov. 2018).

Every participant who had attended the festival but did not go into the grove attested to enjoying the ceremony. "I enjoyed all the festivities in town, but I didn't really go into the grove, one participant said (RM011: Durban, Sept. 2018). Another participant said, "I like the songs they sing during the festival and all the merry making. It's actually a very lively celebration. You know, the last time I went, they even had DJs after the whole festival thing; I remember that was in the evening" (RF002: Durban, Feb. 2019). RM011 further said:

> "We went to enjoy ourselves, and yes we did. The festival experience is worthwhile for anybody, not just for foreigners, or for visitors, or for the devotees. If you are in Osun any time in August, especially if you are in Osogbo, there is no way the festival will not get to you… If you go once, someone will not need to ask you if you will want to go again. Osun is home to everybody" (RM011: Durban, Sept. 2018).

Findings from all the interviewed migrants shows that, even when these members of the diaspora did not have absolute belief in the powers ascribed to the goddess, many of them still felt the festival was an opportunity to reconnect with their culture and fostering of social ties. Even those who claimed to now have a deeper Christian or Islamic religious belief still love to be associated with the festival, although many would appreciate it if all the "ritual" aspects were taken out.

6.3.3 Emotional attachment and notions of home

Consistent with findings from other migration studies featured in chapter 2, most participants felt a strong attachment to Nigeria as their true home, whilst also expressing some form of allegiance to South Africa as their current host country. The following quotes illustrate diversity in the emotional intensity of what they consider their home: "I naturalized in South Africa in 2003, that's when I got my South African ID and I am married to a South African woman, so my home is both Nigeria and South Africa" (RM004: Johannesburg [JHB], Dec. 2018). For RM007, "home is Nigeria, that can never change, South Africa is where I live for now, but my home is in Nigeria" (RM007: Durban Nov. 2018). Another participant said, "basically, South Africa is like home, but Nigeria is the real home" (RF002: Durban, Feb. 2019). RM008, another migrant in Durban, said "Nigeria will always be my home while South Africa is my workplace" (RM008: Durban, Sept. 2018).

As expressed above, many of the participants find some level of comfort being in South Africa, but some are still struggling to find acceptance. They believe that they are not treated fairly by the locals in their host country, which increases their desire and longing for their home country. As one of them said:

> "Nigeria, Ibadan to be precise is my home. Home is where the heart is, and my heart is in Ibadan because that is where my family, friends, and all my loved ones stay. I have never been rejected in Ibadan and I never feel out of place in Ibadan, but even me being here in South Africa, as much as I would like to continue living in the comfort and luxury that the life here seems to offer, there are some instances or incidences here that will remind you that this [is] not home, and that will never happen in Ibadan, so for me, Ibadan is and will always be home, no matter how long I spend in the diaspora" (RM005: Durban, Feb. 2019).

Even with the basic amenities such as electricity, good roads, and water, which are easily accessible in South Africa but are not in Nigeria, RM013, a consultant based in Durban, like some other participants, still feels more comfortable at "home" in Nigeria. For him, "you can't just compare it because at home you are comfortable, you see your people, it's like you can't compare the two in any context" (RM013: Durban, Feb. 2019). All participant indicated a number of sentiments regarding their 'home' "my home is Nigeria; I don't feel at home while

I'm here, I have to be honest" (RM001: Durban, Feb. 2019). To ensure a sense of stability and address homesickness, some of these Nigerians have tried to bring some of their loved ones to join them in South Africa. As one participant said, "the first 4 years I was here, I spent it schooling and trying to generally stabilize myself. Towards the end of 2014, I got my papers to legally stay in the country permanently, that was when I was able to travel to Nigeria, and when I was returning to South Africa, I came with my wife and my children" (RM011: Durban, Sept. 2018).

Family (either by blood or by association) played a huge role in most participants' desire to make temporary return journeys to their homeland. These reconnections, especially with family and friends, seemed to be the main reason why many felt the need to make return trips to their place of origin. While some of the participants had been able to create new families and make new friends in South Africa, they continued maintaining ties with home through social media, which frequently increases migrants' propensity to embark on home visits. According to one of the participants:

> "Being away from home for years does not disturb my flow with them when we eventually get to see each other again. Even if I don't see them for years, we always have a way of staying in touch, like calls, WhatsApp, you know… things like that" (RM007: Durban, Nov. 2018).

As presented in the review of literature, the motives for migrants to embark on return journeys are numerous. Furthermore, research has shown that attachment to home is a common theme in the discussion on Diasporic or VFR tourism. These assertions are also peculiar to this group under focus. Amongst the various motivations for them to embark on this return journey to their homeland, findings confirm that they also use these journeys as a way of fulfilling their desire to reconnect with their roots, their cultural identity, and heritage.

6.3.4 Perceptions and meaning of the return trips: Issues of experience and identity

One of the objectives of this study was to understand what the experience of being back home means to these migrant-tourists and how it affects their sense of identity. According to data gathered, the thought of going back home was an exciting event to look forward to for many of the participants. In terms of the logistics and modes of travel, however, many participants had a lot to complain about. Most of their experiences were characterized by complaints and bottlenecks. According to one participant, the challenge of "welcome back to Nigeria" begins from the ticket purchase (RM013: Durban, Feb. 2019). All participants complained about the cost of buying their tickets. Many of them struggled to understand how a trip within Africa would cost more than travelling out of the continent. It was gathered that it was actually cheaper to travel, for example, to a European country than to travel to Nigeria from South Africa, especially if using the country's carrier. For RM015, however, his travel frustration begins from the airport:

> "From the airport to your destination is a nightmare. On three occasions, my driver was fined by Lagos State traffic officers, and they took a ridiculous amount from me because of offences I can't even understand or tell you about now; let's not even talk about the touts at the airport. Even before all this, from your arrival, the frustration starts, you land, and then you are made to wait for over 30 minutes before they start to disembark, then you are finally released, then you now get to this narrow passage and then the immigration, and then you wait forever for your luggage, then you have to rent a trolley. I have been to many continents in the world, and my country is the only place where you have to rent a trolley when you have not even been given the opportunity to change your currency into the local currency" (RM015: Durban, Sept, 2018).

For a country keen to promote tourism, the frustration of renting a trolley at the Nigerian airport was general. Many participants did not understand why the government had not been able to put a stop to that abnormal situation. It was suggested that asking anyone to pay for a trolley was absurd, especially since they had just arrived and usually did not have the local currency. Another major concern was the bathrooms at the airports. RF008 (Durban, Sept, 2018) stated that the worst airport experience is forgetting to use the bathroom before disembarking from the plane. They claimed that the bathrooms were usually dirty and un-serviced. Other concerns

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raised were the issues of the touts found outside the airport, dealing with bad roads, poor infrastructure, and lack of some basic amenities.

For many of these migrants, however, their return journey to Nigeria is motivated by a need or desire to reconnect. All participants agreed that, having been away from home for a long time, even for those who claim to visit home at least once a year, the mere thought of a possible return trip home provides much joy. For RF002:

> "Going back home gives me that joy, like I am going back home, like I'm going home, I'm going to my father's house, I'm going to where I belong, it's just that joy that is unexplainable. I don't know, I feel like this is my thing, this is my own, you understand...so there's this joy that comes with going back home" (RF002: Durban, Feb. 2019).

One of the participants introduced himself as being from one of the royal families in Osun State. He has been in South Africa for over fifteen years. He admitted feeling so much excitement at the prospect of going back to his homeland although he believes that the situation back at home does not encourage many members of the diaspora to want to travel. He said:

> "I believe that in terms of our leadership that is what is preventing people from going home frequently, not that people don't want to reconnect with their culture, heritage where they come from, but they get frustrated with the way things are back home" (RM004: JHB, Dec. 2018).

Another participant, RM003, agreed with this position. According to him, one would really not expect to miss much because of the environment back home. He said South Africa is a lot more infrastructural developed, and "we know the situation at home, and the corruption, instability in government, the bad leadership and all" (RM003: Durban, Feb. 2019).

All participants agreed that the primary motivation to make these return journeys was for maintaining ties with home. According to one of them:

> "The feeling cannot be fully described. It is the joy of family, seeing friends you hadn't seen in a long while or is it the food. Back home they have this wonderful habit of spoiling returnees like us with well-made delicacies. Ohhh, it is absolutely divine I tell you" (RM010: Durban, Oct. 2018).

When asked how it felt to be back home after having been away for years, reactions varied, some had nostalgic looks, some others had smiles that instantly brightened their faces while, for others, their responses involved a loud cheer. According to one of the participants:

"…the greatest thing I look forward to is the gift of family. And I think for me, that is a blessing from God. So, no matter what's the economic situation is, no matter what the religious situation is, no matter what the political situation is, for me, the gift of family is the major thing I look forward to when I go home. To be able to, you know, meet my people, to see that they are in good condition to see that, you know, everyone is keeping the faith, hopeful that things will get better" (RF008: Durban, Feb. 2019).

This sentiment expressed by RF008 was a general acknowledgement by all members of the diaspora interviewed. Many talked about the joys of staying with relatives on these return trips. Some could not even imagine staying in hotels during such trips, they were of the opinion that the idea of going back home, amongst other things, was to spend time with family. However, some others felt that staying in hotels or guesthouses would be more comfortable for them.

Another major finding showed that the notion of home was also strongly associated with food. These migrants have very strong attachment to their food. The researcher discovered that Nigerians are not very adventurous when it comes to their diet. When asked what they missed most about home, and some of the things that they looked forward to on their return journeys, all the participants interviewed agreed that nothing can replace the love for their own native meals. According to one of the participants:

"There is no place like home. Even as I am here now, I miss my home. I miss our food. We have Nigerian food here too, but it is not the same as the way they make it back at home. Then the togetherness, everybody coming together to welcome you and visit you every day. It is almost like a carnival on its own" (RM009: Durban, Sept. 2018).

Another participant also reinforced this, but his assertion was more on the style of eating the delicacies. According to him, "…. but while I am back home, I can wash my hands and eat good food with my hands, you know, like Amala and Ewedu, yeah good delicacy, so typically I miss the quality of food I do eat at home…" (RM001: Durban, Feb. 2019). Some of them

have been able to find a substitute for their local diet in South Africa. As one of them said, "… let's not forget that the world is globalized so we don't miss much. Telephone has made it very easy for us to still contact people at home, and many people now ship in stuff so some of our local foods still comes here…" (RM003: Durban, Feb. 2019). Most of them, nonetheless, insisted that nothing can compare with what they get when they travel home. "…. but there is no substitute for the people. While we might be able to get substitute for our local foods here in South Africa, but nobody can replace a mother, father or whatever…." RM015 said (Durban, Sept, 2018).

Another common trend when these migrants talked about their journey back home was the "wish list" of gifts and requested items from friends and family. While some participants have a problem dealing with this aspect, for others, it is part of the joy of family and sharing. According to RM010, most African families bring up their children with the notion that they should share what they have. As shown in chapter 2, not all migrants who travel back home easily adjust to their old routine; many experiences subtle sense of alienation. For example, for RM014, the return trip was not as exciting as anticipated. As he said:

> "This my last visit was horrible. There was serious culture shock. Going back, I just discovered that I was not blending as I would have expected. Yes, I've travelled around the world now, and I felt that because I had stayed away from home for some years, huh going back home had such huge expectations for me, but now everything was practically new to me. It was hard even for me to relate with my old friends" (RM014: Durban, Feb. 2019).

The above response however, was exceptional as the view expressed did not cut across all participants. Contrary to case studies discussed, almost all other interviewees felt instantly back at home immediately upon their return. RM010 stated that anyone who feels different or perceives the need to realign himself/herself, might have only been affiliated by "namesake". That is, they do not necessarily have strong ties with their place of birth. According to one of the participants:

> "A place you've lived in for more than 30 years… there's no amount of stay you do abroad or outside your home, you will never feel out of place or struggle with your

identity. You cannot forget how to drive a car or a bicycle. You just get back into the flow of things" (RM003: Durban, Feb. 2019).

Another participant felt that the only time someone would feel out of place is if they had not been in contact with anyone from home while they were away. For RF007, she felt as though she was treated differently. Because she had traveled out of the country, when she travelled back to Nigeria, she felt a sense of admiration with people placing her in an exalted position and treated her like royalty. According to her, "I went to visit a family that even on a normal day they are supposed to give the tap water that I used to drink, but now they want to offer me tabled bottle water. So, they kind of treat you special, which to me, I feel is normal" (RF007: Durban, Feb. 2019).

RM013, too, had to undergo some readjustment on a level of personal comfort. Having lived in South Africa for some time, he was now more comfortable with a cooler weather than what one would get in Nigeria. According to him:

> "I went to Nigeria at a period that is considered cold and when most of my friends and family can't stand the fan or air conditioner, I am actually enjoying it because to me the weather was not even as cold as to what I have to deal with here, so you see, there has to be some adjustments" (RM013: Durban, Feb. 2019).

For RM015, the struggle was not being able to engage most of the people around him in intellectual conversations, even with his peers in the academia. He said:

> "Sometimes I find the way they analyze issues very tiring, or should I say unbelievable that someone will still reason like that in this present day. Even my children, when they go home and interact with their colleagues, the reasoning is quite different, so for me, I would say enjoying intellectual conversations with relatives back home when I travel is sometimes a challenge, but this is not to say that they are all dumb or not intelligent" (RM015: Durban, Sept, 2018).

The experiences shared by these participants show the different ways that some have had to renegotiate their identity when in their birth country. It showed what these return journeys meant to them, and how they shaped their sense of identity.

6.3.5 Nigerians and Religion

The objective of this study was also to explore the experience of these migrant tourists at the festival, especially as it relates to their spiritual beliefs. Significant for the purpose of this research was the religious beliefs of the participants. A common trend noticed among all participants was the constant reference and acknowledgment being given to God. During the data gathering process for this study, the researcher assumed that the Nigerian diaspora community who had personal experiences to share about the festival would be strongly rooted in local traditional spiritual belief systems. However, the snowball sampling method generated a sample overwhelmingly dominated by participants who identified themselves as "Christians". Nigeria is a secular state with several religions co-existing, but the major religious and belief systems that dominate are Christianity and Islam. There are, however, other religions which are mostly categorized as "others".

A public opinion survey in Nigeria demonstrated that Nigerians believe religion to be more central to their identity than nationality. According to the study, Nigerians are more likely to first identify themselves as Muslims or Christians before even acknowledging that they are Nigerians. Though many of these participants have being away from their homeland for some time, they all still expressed their deep religious sentiments in their responses. Many ascribed their success to the "God" factor in their life and not to their dedication, hard work or the positive economic enabling opportunities in their host country, South Africa. A typical example is RM006, who is a member of the Association of Yoruba's in the diaspora and has been in South Africa for over thirteen years. As he said:

> "For many of us, myself included, our purpose of leaving home was to come here and
> work while we do something back home that is to support our country and our families.
> I thank God that I have been able to achieve my set aim for leaving my country"
> (RM006: Durban, Sept. 2018).

Responses from many other participants also followed this pattern. This confirms that their migration status has had little or no alteration in their sense of belief or acknowledgement of the presence of a Supreme Being. As will be shown later, their levels of belief varied. But a

common trend showed that they all believed in the existence of a greater power, albeit acknowledged, with different names.

6.3.6 Participants' beliefs about the festival and the goddess

This study also investigated how members of the Nigerian diaspora in South Africa relate to the Osun Osogbo festival as tourists. The above section presented findings on the participants' migration history, experiences of settling in South Africa, and their sense of belonging, logistics of their return journey home, and the perceptions and meanings of these return trips. This section will focus on the Osun Osogbo festival as the main focus of this research. It will first present the participants' beliefs about the spiritual aspects of the festival, the sacred grove, and the goddess, followed by their general perceptions, experiences, and activities at the festival. The questions asked during interviews focused on how much these participants knew about the festival, their beliefs about the festival, their perceived significance of the festival and, more specifically, their spiritual beliefs about the grove and the goddess, given that all participants identified themselves as Christians.

Despite admitting to being affiliated to the Christian religion, two participants, RM007 and RM008, explicitly considered themselves devotees of the Osun goddess. According to the tradition, being a devotee means that they have been possessed by the goddess manifestation. Eight participants shared personal experiences of the goodness of the Osun goddess. These ranged from being able to have a child after years of trying to conceive, to overcoming financial challenges in life. Twenty participants believed strongly in the powers of the goddess, although their strengths of belief varied. Some based their beliefs on personal encounters, others based them on information or the testimonies of others.

As explained in chapter 2, the effects of modernization and contemporary society have not majorly affected the perceived significance of the festival among devotees and the wider Nigerian public. This was confirmed by the interviews carried out during this research. Except for three (male) participants who considered themselves "born-again" Christians, every participant was a strong supporter of the promotion and sustainability of the culture and

traditions of their forefathers. One participant, RM004, did not necessarily believe in the potency of the Osun water as prescribed by believers, but said that, as much as modernization has actually changed the perception of people, it has not been able to take the culture away from the people of Osun. This sentiment was echoed by participant RF002. In her remarks, she stated that, "I'm happy the Osun people are still … staying [true] to their culture and traditions" (RF002: Durban, Feb. 2019).

Another participant, RM008, a devotee, said that he could not understand why or how anyone would want to tamper with anyone's culture; the festival has been able to survive because of support from people who have been taught not to joke about or tamper with any aspect of their tradition. This doctrine was passed down to him by his own father. He said that he would also pass the same on to his children and grandchildren, hence ensuring the continuity. According to him:

> "What our fathers have been using before all these Western religions came into play cannot be undermined. These things have been our practice, so I don't encourage people to forget their roots in the name of civilization. So, the festival for me is of very great importance, and I don't joke with it" (RM008: Durban, Sept. 2018).

Another participant, RM001, strongly believed that modernization, globalization, and civilization all clearly have almost eroded certain cultures. He, however, opined that the Osun goddess and the grove has been able to survive because of people's beliefs. RF008 described the festival as a celebration of something different. As the quotation below suggests:

> "It's not modern. It's not a modernized event like we have now where you have the carnivals, you know, people dancing in different feathers and all those things. No, this is a cultural thing. Where we showcase the talking drum which is peculiar to the Yoruba tribe, where we showcase our language. You know, proverbs, and citations, and … stories, and histories that people aren't familiar with because… [In] the Nigerian system, we are not used to learning about history and all those indigenous things. So, it's nice to have that avenue to be more exposed to educate people about … what was in the past and what is now" (RF008: Durban, Feb. 2019).

Another major observation while conducting the research was the reluctance of the female participants to share their experiences; male participants on the other hand were more open and willing to share their experiences. Many of the women did not want to share their experiences

for fear of being stigmatized. RF001 is one of such participants. She was born in Nigeria, but after her long stay in the US, she is now an American citizen. She was reluctant to share details about her personal encounter with the goddess, but confirmed her belief in the goddess and her benevolence:

> "Osun is real, and the grove is a sacred place, holy as the Christians would call it. I have attended the festival since 2014, and the experience has been rewarding. I believe in the efficacy of the Osun goddess. I have a personal testimony, and it's a very visible one that my husband gives me leave to attend any time I want to even if he is not around" (RF001: Durban, Nov. 2018).

For three of the female participants, their belief in the goddess was strengthened because of the successful resolution to their fertility problems. As explained in chapter 2, apart from granting the wish for a child, the goddess is also worshipped to resolve other personal problems. Several participants, both males and females, reported testimonies of personal encounters with the goddess. For example, RM007, who completed his high school education in Osogbo, shared how he and his friends always enjoyed the festivals growing up, which at that stage in life, was primarily an entertainment event for him. However, when he left home, he could not travel back home for several years because his papers were not in order, and life was very difficult for him. He said his family went to consult the oracles on his behalf, and it was revealed to them that he had to appease the gods in order to make a headway in life. Although the deity that is worshipped in his family is Ogun, the god of iron, he was asked to make supplications to Osun. According to him:

> "Osun is one of the wives of Ogun. It is either the first wife or the most favorite wife. I am not too sure now, but they were very close. How else do you ask for something from a man, and expect it to be done, if not from his best wife? (Laughter)" (RM007: Durban, Nov. 2018).

He said after that he made a personal vow that if he ever got his papers and was well-settled in South Africa, he would travel back home and attend the festival to give thanks to the goddess. Some appeasements were made, and things began to look up for him in South Africa and. as soon he could, he did indeed travel to the festival that year. He further stated that:

"…., even as a Christian, I still believe in the goddess, and I know she has the power to grant wishes. It is just these Western standards that are trying to condemn what these gods stand for, but I personally know better because I have personal experience" (RM007: Durban, Nov. 2018).

He explained further on how beliefs in the Bible and the Christian faith can be reconciled with the traditional spiritual belief in the goddess:

"you can confirm from the Bible, but it's just that the church does not preach that anymore, but all creation came from water. In the book of Genesis, it says that the spirit of God was moving around the water and the Lord called the sand from the water and from that sand, Adam, the first man ever was created, which explains the great power in water. That is why in those days, anytime anyone was in need of something, they will go to the water, and seek the face of God, and they get what they want" (RM007: Durban, Nov. 2018).

RM015 admitted that, before he became a Christian, he used to dabble in the worship of traditional Yoruba gods, but in recent times, he would no longer like to be associated with things of that nature. "I'm going to be biased now, I am a Christian, and that will color my impression", he said (RM015: Durban, Sept, 2018). Two other participants admitted to having attended the festival but stated that they do not worship the goddess because of their Christian belief. RM012 said that he has never gone to the grove for any supplication because he can pray to God anywhere. "That's my belief. My belief is in the Almighty God who created the heavens and the earth. I know there are other lesser gods, but that is not my belief", he said (RM012: Durban, Sept. 2018). RF009, another migrant who travelled for the festival as a part of her field work for a PhD research, had a contrary opinion:

"I could also question the existence of the Christian God from that angle. I am a Christian, but what I am saying is that if we claim to believe in the existence of a big God, why we will question the belief of another? We cannot be certain who he or she is, but I think everyone should be allowed to have their own belief and not be condemned for what they believe in" (RF009: Durban, Feb. 2019).

RM003, who is also a Christian, agreed with the views raised by RF009. He claims to be a concrete believer of his culture and tradition, and thinks that Africans should do all they can to preserve indigenous traditional religion. According to him:

> "From my name, you can tell that I'm more of [a] Christian, but we must not forget that before we embrace Christianity, these are things that we are used to. As a matter of fact, when you go back [to] decoloniality, decolonialization, and stuff like that, you realize that the religions that we are practicing are foreign religions such that we are forgetting our own religion" (RM003: Durban, Feb. 2019).

RM014 also shared this sentiment with RM003. He said that it is unfortunate that "Western orientation has eroded our own mindsets about the gods of our fathers" (RM014: Durban, Feb. 2019). He went further to elaborate on a personal ideology that he had formulated. He feels that the gods of Africa are angry. According to him:

> "I personally feel that the reason why Africa is underdeveloped and perpetually remains underdeveloped is because we have left the gods of our fathers because if you look at this, when these deities protected us over time, we were developing at a pace over time. But with the caution of the European settlers and Western thoughts coming into Africa, we stopped worshiping these deities. These are significant deities in our lives. Before that, we were developing almost at the same paths with the West, but once we stopped with these deities, and we moved to start worshipping other deities of the West. So, the West continuously strive because we are, as it were like feeding the deity of the West while putting our own deity on starvation. So, at the end of the day, the deity of the West blesses their people while we are where we are today. We are where we are today technically because we have refused to give honor to where honor is due" (RM014: Durban, Feb. 2019).

Another participant, RM009, also from Osun state, and a native of Osogbo, explained that, to his understanding, the main reason for the festival was to appreciate the goddess of Osun for all the good things that they believe she has done for them. He explained that a lot of people come to the river to make supplications, maybe for a child, for economic problems, or to seek for solution to various ailments that have defied scientific healing. According to him:

"You know this life is full of challenges, so when you go and ask for something, and it is done, it is only right for you to say thank you. You see, like the issue of children, if you go and ask for a child, it will take at least a year for the result to be seen; it is after that that you go and say thank you. So, in a nutshell, that is all the festival is about" (RM009: Durban, Sept. 2018).

As explained in chapter one, the annual festival done every year in August involves a whole month of celebration. One of the participants, RF002, opined that the month of August in Osogbo is just like most people see the month of December. According to her:

"During the time of the festival, that is around August, the worshippers also put their own decorations like we do the Christmas decorations. They have the white powder, and white lappers they tie it around town. They have their own attire; they always wear white on white, the white beads on their neck, on their legs, on their ankles, and on their wrist. It's just like any celebration; they even share flyers so it's a big celebration" (RF002: Durban, Feb. 2019).

Some participants described the festival as a celebration of culture, while others thought that it goes beyond that. As another one said, it is "a belief and something that has to do with more than the ordinary. I can say it is extra ordinary; it is kind of a mix of culture, and a belief in the supernatural" (RF005: Durban, Feb. 2019). Another participant, RM014, who claimed to have a strong affiliation with the festival, said that, historically, his hometown, which is in the northern part of the state, was always protected by the goddess during the times of war in the early days. According to him:

"The history they passed to us was the fact that the river was one that always protected us. When the invaders came, the river would be full to brink. Making it impossible for the invaders to crossover you understand… but then when the indigenous people come to pass, she allows them to pass, so she was also a form of protection for people from my side" (RM014: KZN, Feb. 2019).

For them, the festival is a celebration of the goddess who protected them from harm. He further explained the importance of the virgin girl who is made to walk certain places around the town with a calabash on her head called the "Arugba". After the walk, she goes into the grove and deposits the Arugba on the river. Oral tradition believes that the goddess Osun, comes out to

receive the calabash. The idea, according to him (RM014), is to clean the land from all evil, and make it safe, and happy for the inhabitants of the community. One of the participants, who described himself as a devotee of the goddess, believed the grove to be a holy ground. According to him:

> "The grove is a holy place. You are not allowed to come in with your shoes on. You see even in the Bible, when God was speaking to Moses, He told him to take off his shoes because the ground he was stepping on was a holy ground. That is how the grove is. It is a holy ground. When you get there, you see that it is home for different gods of the land. Osun the mother of all, houses them all. Osun is a loving mother who gives her children what they ask from her in faith. There are so many people who have benefitted from her goodness. I am a devotee so my testimony should not count, but there are many people who just heard and went to ask too, and their request was granted. That is the essence of the festival; it is like an opportunity for people to come and express their gratitude for her granting their request" (RM008: Durban, Sept. 2018).

RM007, like most of the other participants who are Osun indigenes, has very high regards for the festival, the grove, and the goddess. Being also a devotee, he sees the festival as a traditional and spiritual event that is celebrated by many, both Nigerians and foreigners. He said, "I heard that the festival has been around for over 700 years now" (RM007: Durban, Nov. 2018). RF009 believes that the traditional practice carried out during the festival are basically done to honor the agreements between the goddess and the forefathers of the land who had immigrated around the land surrounding the river, and it (traditional practice) follows a series of "rituals". "I call it rituals not in the negative sense, but rites and processes", he said (RF009: Durban, Feb. 2019).

RM002, described the festival as a "carnival of sorts" which can be likened to those celebrated in Brazil. He said, " as a matter of fact, I came across many Brazilians at the festival" (RM002: Durban, Feb. 2019). For RF004, who had to attend the festival as part of her obligatory responsibility (after a request has been granted by the goddess, it is mandatory for one to retune for thanksgiving), the event is fun, but "it becomes hectic when you have to participate or, should I say, when you are not allowed to just relax and enjoy it" (RF004: CPT, Nov. 2018). Except for three participants whose beliefs demanded that they participate at the festival as an obligatory task, all other interviewees attested to the fun and gaiety present at the festival.

RM005 attended the festival because he had to take some foreign delegates who came to Nigeria for the purpose of research. To him, the festival was simply a celebration of their culture. He understood that a couple of people, because of exposure to Western ideologies, may see it as a worship of minor gods or mini gods, but he chose to see it mainly as a beautiful celebration of the culture of a group of people. RF003 agrees with him, that the festival is a worthwhile traditional activity, which should be sustained and never allowed to become extinct, especially when taking into consideration the strong attachment the town has to the grove and the goddess.

As illustrated above, the Osun Osogbo festival has different meanings and significance to different people. Consistent with responses from the different participants, is that the festival is perceived as a cultural celebration, a sacred ceremony, and a pilgrimage for those with spiritual allegiance to its cultural practices. The differences are in terms of the perceived significance of the tangible site, and the intangible beliefs, and values attached to it by these members of the diaspora.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has presented findings from the data collection process, consisting of personal observations, and interviews carried out with 25 participants. It was found that most of these migrants still have strong ties with their homelands. Migration might have been necessary for personal and economic development. However, all the participants still had emotional attachment to the notion of home. Although the participants differed in their spiritual beliefs about the goddess, the sacred sites, and the meaning of the festival, they all, however, agreed that the cultures and traditions of their homeland need to be preserved. The Yoruba's are very often considered as 'cultural' people; they are deeply rooted in traditional beliefs, customs, and other cultural aspects. Even after being outside the country for years, many of them still speak their dialect fluently, and those who have children in South Africa insist that their children speak their native dialect at home. In summary, the various experiences relayed by these migrants showed their bonds with their country of origin. While the perceptions and meaning of the return trips differed between participants, the consensus, however, was the affirmation that these return trips helped to fulfill a yearning to reconnect with their roots. The motivations

to attend the festival and the activities undertaken by the participants at the festival also varied. However, all festival participants agreed to the gaiety of the event. Data gathered showed that the festival acts as a strong motivation for these members of the diaspora to want a reconnection. Memory of home, beliefs about the goddess, and their subsequent attendance at the festival must be understood in this context. This will be further analyzed in the next chapter.

Chapter seven:

Discussion of findings

7.1 Introduction

The study focused on members of the Nigerian diaspora in South Africa as homebound tourists and visitors to the annual Osun Osogbo festival. As migrants, their return visit back home makes them occupy a unique position that places them in-between domestic and foreign tourists. They are classified as being in-between because they cannot really be classified as belonging to a particular class of tourists. This renders their experience unique and special, as they are culturally close, yet geographically distant. This chapter presents a discussion on the findings gathered during the data collection process. These major findings are discussed and presented thematically.

The themes discussed below include the quest or the search for the familiar difference, the multitude motives for these members of the diaspora to embark on return journey, and root reconnection. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the Osun Osogbo sacred grove as a tourism, religious, cultural, and heritage site; the effect of individual beliefs or belief in the goddess and its subsequent effect on cultural practices in Nigeria; and the process of reinforcement and reintegration of the self for this select group. On the basis of the discussion of these themes, findings gathered showed that the need to relive the memory of home played a significant role in these migrants' motivation to embark on return journeys to their homeland. As homebound tourists, attendance and participating at the annual Osun Osogbo festival gives them an opportunity to satisfy their quest to reconnect with their cultural identity and heritage.

7.2 The familiar difference

Urry's concept of tourist gaze (1990) captures people's inspiration and willingness to leave either their place of work or home in a bid to embark on a tourist journey for the purpose of gazing and experiencing that which explains the extraordinary. Drawing on Urry's notion of "the tourist gaze", Marschall (2015) introduced what she termed the "memory gaze". The memory gaze is a deeply engaged, perhaps emotional gaze that people have when they revisit their past. It can be described as "the search for the most ordinary, familiar traces of a remembered past". For the group under focus in this study, their search is for an opportunity to gaze on a familiar difference. It is familiar because it used to be a normal occurrence in their lives, but because they have been away from home for some time, they now have a new familiar based on their new environment. This leads to a yearning to satisfy the craving, to gaze on a familiar difference. This study thus defines 'familiar difference' as an individual's experience of the past compared with current knowledge of practices.

Responses from all the participants in this study are consistent with Urry's theory of the tourist gaze. As presented in the findings chapter, participants acknowledged that the need to embark on their return journey back to their country of birth was born out of the need to experience the unusual. That is, something different from their everyday way of living, which they perceived can be achieved when they attend the Osun Osogbo festival. As one of the participants said, "…when you are at home and you attend these festivals, you may not actually fully appreciate the richness that it portrays until when you sojourn abroad and don't get to see that which you take for granted…" (RM008: Durban, Sept. 2018). Because many of these migrants have been away from their home country for a while, activities in their host country are now termed as their new "familiar" way of life. The familiarity gained over the years within their new settings begins to fade with continuous gaze on their new abode, thus the urge to want to reconnect with the old familiar. It becomes the "familiar difference" to them because they reconcile their knowledge and experience of the past (or former) with transformation of events. In other words, it can be said to be familiar in the sense that it used to be a routine (a normal occurrence) in their lives. But, because of migration or relocation, it is now different because they now have to live with a new familiar lifestyle.

A model for migration and home bound tourism

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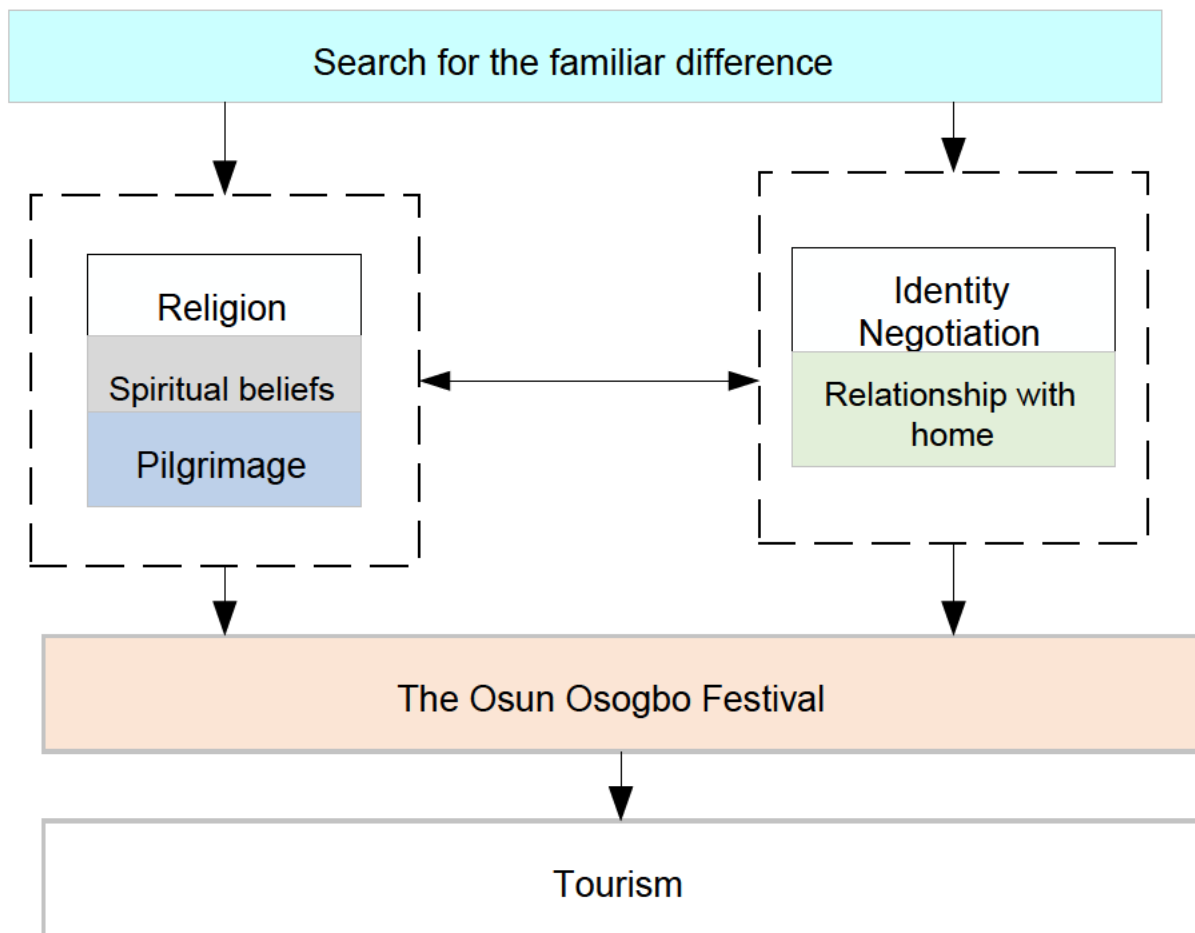
Figure 7.1: *Migration and home bound tourism*

The model presented above represents findings from data gathered. From the model presented above, it can be observed that the search for the familiar difference is at the root of the decision to embark on return journeys home. The urge to reconnect thus becomes a robust motivation for embarking on a journey that takes them back to their place of origin to experience and relive the "familiar difference". It is within this context that the sections below discuss the various motives for these migrants to make return journeys to their homeland

7.3 Multitude motives for return journeys

7.3.1 Maintaining connections

This desire to return to homeland and be reconnect with the past, has been identified as a major motivation that inspires people to travel (Pearce, 2012). This notion is particularly true for these members of the Nigerian diasporic community in South Africa. Studies have shown that traveling back to one's country of birth, helps the individual to maintain physical, social and emotional ties (Tie et al., 2015). Findings from this study showed that maintaining links and reconnecting with their place of origin was their major motivation for embarking on these return journeys. These desires to reconnect played out in different aspects as presented below.

7.3.2 The social aspect

People are often constantly on the move, from seeking asylum to the desire for better educational and economic attainment. The motives for most of these journeys vary from one class of travelers to the other (Aranda and Vaquera, 2011). As noted by Timothy (2008), the desire to belong, a quest for cultural footholds, an opportunity for migrants to evaluate themselves, resolve their personal identity conflicts, and connect with their predecessors, are some of the reasons why many migrants make return trips home. In this study, the social aspect that motivates these return journeys ranged from an opportunity to reconnect with friends and relatives, being able to communicate in their local dialects and, most importantly, to enjoy their native delicacies prepared in the native way.

One major motivation that seemed to cut across all participants, was their love and desire to return to their home delicacies. Cuisines play a major role in the country's culture, and all Nigerians, whether at home or abroad, are undeniably passionate about their food (Shermuly and Forbes-Mewett, 2016; Williams, 2008). Emezie-Egwuonwu's (2019) study alleges that, in Nigeria, from the East, West, North and South, to virtually every corner in-between the country,

there are a plethora of spice-rich flavorful dishes that always tie and bring Nigerians together. As one of the participants said, "…I miss my home. I miss our food. We have Nigerian food here too, but it is not the same as the way they make it back at home. Then, the togetherness, everybody coming together. It is almost like a carnival on its own" (RM009: Durban, Sept. 2018. Thus, the notion of the search for a familiar difference also becomes realized in food. This is because, even though these migrants have access to many of the local delicacies in their host country, South Africa, the craving for food at home still plays a role in their motivation to travel.

Traditionally, migrants who make return visits back to their homelands are usually classified as VFR tourists as their major motive is to visit friends and relatives (Asiedu, 2008). However, further studies have shown that the desire to embark on homeland visits has gone beyond this. Many studies that investigate VFR tourists have helped to shed some light on the spending and travel habits of VFR travelers. These studies have shown that the economic contribution by this class of tourists is worthy of considerable attention. Moreover, these tourist-migrants are likely to report or share their travel experiences to other friends which, in turn, might influence their future choice of holiday destination. These studies of VFR tourism however tend to focus more on the typological classifications of the tourists themselves, with little mention or discussion on the underlying motivation and social significance of these visits (Duval, 2003). The migrants under study all agreed that being able to reconnect with friends and relatives was another motivation to embark on these return journeys. They claimed that the joy of being able to communicate in their local dialects once again with both friends and relatives was great. One of the participants said:

> "Home is sweet. You get to see all your loved ones and the reception sort of covers for
> all the frustrations and stress you had to put up with while travelling home. The food,
> the joy, friendliness, everything is nice, and you know you are at home. You can speak
> in your language again, you know" (RM015: Durban, Sept, 2018).

Advancement in technology has helped many migrants to maintain frequent, fast, cheap and various points of access with their place of birth, thus making it relatively easy to maintain and sustain relationships (Levitt et al., 2003). Scholars examining return visits in transnational migration context, often postulate that, with technological advancements in transport, immigrants are now able to make more frequent visits to their country of origin, and

consequently, able to construct flexible identities (Carling and Erdal, 2014). Many of the participants agreed that maintaining ties and relationships with home is not as hectic as it used to be. This has made it a bit easier for them to reintegrate with their family and friends on their return journeys. One of the participants expressed that, "let's not forget that the world is actually globalized now, so we don't miss much. Telephone has made it very easy for us to still stay in contact with people at home. And let's not forget that our generations, my generations, we are very quick to disperse all over the world" (RM003: Durban, Feb. 2019).

According to Havitz, (2007), Tourism has become more complex in a world of increasing immigration and interconnectedness, thus making it easy for individuals to combine their leisure experiences with fulfilling and enjoying other social commitments. Findings from the study showed that, for some of these participants, participation at the festival further enriched their experiences of being home and, subsequently, the satisfaction derived from embarking on the trip. Although their main motive for making the return trip was not to attend the festival, where convenient, they scheduled their trips to fall within the season of the festival so that they fulfil their desire to reconnect with friends and relatives, and at the same time enjoy the fun and merriments that come with the festival. One of the participants said, "I even planned my travel date one time to fall within that period so that I can kill 3 birds with one stone" (RM010: Durban, Oct. 2018). Zatori et al., (2019), in their study, revealed that the motivations for many VFR travelers varies and influenced by different factors. In the context of this study, the diverse factors that come into play for these returning migrants is the desire to reconnect with home in their different ways. This could be reconnecting with friends, relatives, landscapes, local delicacies, and other interests as well as a strong social aspect. Attending and participating at the Osun festival gave many participants the opportunity to fulfil part of that craving.

While attending the festival might not necessarily be the primary motive for these migrants to make these return journeys, it still serves as an avenue for them to make social reconnections with their homeland. Consequently, as the above discussion shows, various social aspects come into play in motivating these migrants to embark on these return journeys. Attending the festival thus becomes part of the social aspects that motivate these travels. However, there are other migrants whose motivations to travel and attend the festival are born out of more serious reasons, discussed in the next section below.

7.4 Return journeys and religion

As stated above, some members of the Nigerian diaspora make these return journeys to their homeland to attend and participate at the festival, just for the fun and merriment it has to offer. However, others make these return journeys as a form of pilgrimage. These migrants attend because they believe that, by their participation at the festival, solutions to their life's challenges (for example, issues relating to infertility) will be addressed. These compelling various reasons were some of the factors identified as salient contributing factors linked to return journeys. As Oyeweso (2013) states, the yearly festival at the grove, beyond the festivities and merriment, is an opportunity for members of the Nigerian diaspora to reconnect with the gods of their homeland. As earlier mentioned, not all these homebound tourists have the festival as their primary attraction. Many of the participants interviewed, both those who are devotees and those who are not, agreed that being in the grove gives them access to communicate with the gods, should they have the desire to do so. The sacred grove has been described as a sanctuary where people consult and communicate with the different deities residing in the grove (Amusa, 2009).

One of the participants said that, "there are some people who go to the grove for the purpose of healing or in order to have children; there are many, very many testimonials to that happening after they have drank the Osun water and what not" (RM004: JHB, Dec. 2018). For these migrants, their return journey was an opportunity to offer thanks for the blessings which they believed are from the goddess. History has it that, in appreciation of the goddess for her historic assistance in helping her people to win a war, the people, led by the King, Oba Larooye, the first Ataoja, offered sacrifices to the goddess in the grove. This eventually developed into the present annual celebration of the Osun festival (Olaniyan, 2014). Thus, as part of the rituals at the grove, after a prayer has been offered and the request granted, the individual is expected to come back and offer thanksgiving to the goddess. These rituals are conducted in the shrine at the grove.

Many members of the Nigerian diaspora use the opportunity of the annual festival to meet their required obligation, particularly when they see that their prayers have been answered. Thus,

for many of these members of the Nigerian diaspora community, embarking on this return trip home is not just about them fulfilling the need to feel or have a sense of belonging; it also helps them reconnect with their spiritual roots. While it has been acknowledged that tourism and pilgrimage are different social phenomena, those who engage in it share the same desire for personal fulfilment, which pilgrims find in the sacred and tourists in the secular (Collins-Kreiner, 2010). Vijayanand (2014) opined that a pilgrim is dissimilar from a tourist. However, there are many pilgrimage centers with different characteristics and tourist profiles that also provide an avenue for people to reconnect with their faith and experience a spiritual connection (Abad-Galzacorta et al., 2016). This is also true for these group of migrants under focus, who use the opportunity of attending the festival to seek that which they consider sacred and extraordinary. This notion is further discussed below.

7.5 The Sacred gaze

The yearly festival at the grove, beyond the festivities and merriment, gives many members of the Nigerian diasporic community an opportunity to access the sacred grove, a sanctuary where people consult and communicate with their deities (Amusa, 2009). These migrants on their return journeys home attend the festival for an opportunity to visit and see or gaze at the sacred Osun Osogbo grove. The grove is considered a sacred site because of its special spiritual significance to the peoples and the communities (Oviedo and Jeanrenaud, 2006). At the sacred grove, even though all the images are human made, they generate feelings of awe, and are therefore not regarded as common objects, but call for special reverence and acknowledgement (Terzidou et al., 2017).

Many participants stated that the grove can be described as sacred. Their level of reverence, however, ranged from being "spooky" sacred to holy sacred. One of the participants stated that, "… before I went there, there were a lot of spooky ideas of what the place looked like, but when I got there, it wasn't as spooky. It was scary though, but there was just something about it all…." (RF001: Durban, Nov. 2018). The grove is regarded as a holy ground and home to different gods of the land. According to Omisore et al., (2014) the Osun grove has five main

sacred divisions which are associated with different gods and cults. Constructed, man-made sacred spaces are a representation of their manifestations, either because the place in which they are located is considered to be a manifestation of the divine, or because its construction in such a way that it embodies different symbolisms of the sacred (Aulet and Vidal, 2018).

The search for this sacred can be described as a pilgrimage of sort for these travelers as their journeys are motivated either in part or exclusively by the need to satisfy some personal or spiritual need through tourism. For most regular tourists at the grove, the sculptures and shrines scattered around the grove are quite captivating, especially for those who appreciate art works. However, for those who embark on these trips as a form of pilgrimage or as a devotee, their gaze is quite different from merely looking. There is a particular comfort and peace that they derive just by gazing at the sculptures and shrines at the grove. The statues at the grove are approached with respect and worshiped. They believe that there is a divine aura around the grove posited beyond the order of ordinary things. As one of the participants said, "the grove is a holy ground. When you get there, you see the home for different gods of the land. Osun, the mother of all, house them all. Osun is a loving mother who gives her children what they ask from her" (RM008: Durban, Sept. 2018).

For many of these members of the Nigerian diaspora, attendance or participation at this festival is explained with excitement and curiosity, especially after having been away from home for a long time. As mentioned in chapter one, the Osun grove is both a heritage attraction and a destination for pilgrimage. It serves different purposes to different groups. To some, it is a cultural heritage attraction and, to others, it is a sacred place of worship through which they communicate the present with the past (Wilson et al., 2013). The groves, shrines, and sculptures retain an intimate relationship among the Yoruba people, their art, religion, and natural environment (Oyeweso, 2003). According to Yusuf (2016), sacred groves are forested sites that have cultural or spiritual significance. Mattoso (2000: 4) stated that pilgrimage is one of the processes by which man tries to establish contact with the occult forces that enrich his existence.

It is generally believed that there is a gap in the difference between pilgrimage and tourism when looking at it from the religious perspective (Timothy and Olsen, 2006). Walton (2018),

however, posits that tourism overlaps with other activities, interests, and processes, including, for example, pilgrimage. Findings from data gathered show a blend in some elements of both tourism and pilgrimage in the context of migration. For these migrants, the groves serve purposes that transcend the spiritual, and plays a role in the conservation of their genetic heritage (Okonkwo and Eyisi, 2020). Attendance and participation at the annual festival therefore serves the purpose of both pilgrimage as well as tourism, culture, and heritage tourism. This is further discussed below.

7.6 Heritage and cultural Attraction

Cultural heritage in Nigeria and that of other African countries are unique and indigenous. They portray the vibrant, largely traditional communities that are thriving in culture of tolerance, peace, unity, diversity, and continuity amidst modernization and social change (Abara, 2015). Many Nigerians have different perceptions and relations to the grove, the goddess, and the festival as a whole. However, very few will deny the intangible cultural qualities of the grove, the goddess, and the festival. Some of the participants struggled with their religious beliefs as attendance at the festival is assumed as "sin", and is reportedly frowned upon by their Christian doctrine. However, RM005, one of the participants interviewed, attended the festival and chose to be objective instead of looking at only the spiritual meaning of the events. He stated that, "I tried to see them more as cultural celebrations, you know, like the priests that were there, studying what they were doing, why they were dressed the way they were, you know, stuff like that, I decided to see them all from the cultural angle" (RM005: Durban, Feb. 2019).

Although some people regard events like the Osun Osogbo festival as religious celebrations, for many others, the festival is regarded as a cultural celebration. Although many scholars acknowledge that the relationship between culture and religion is an old and still on-going debate (Ramadan 2012; Schilderman 2014), Beyers (2017) opined that culture and religion must be viewed as relatives when religion is seen as a segment of culture. This is particularly true for a site like the Osun Sacred grove, which is a culture and heritage site that has some level of religious connotation. Therefore, as stated above, many of the participants looked beyond the religious aspect to appreciate the rich cultural and heritage aspect of the grove. The

drive is to seek that which is not part of their normal daily routine, socially, religiously, or culturally. That is the search for the extraordinary as highlighted in the assumptions of this study. For these members of the diaspora, the social, religious, and cultural extraordinary was found at the sacred grove. In the culture and heritage tourism context, the grove serves as a model of African heritage that preserves the tangible and intangible values of the Osogbo people, the Yoruba community, and Nigerians in general. Such values attract travelers (Oyeweso, 2013). As a source of pride to them, the grove is a thriving heritage that not only has traditional landmarks, but is also a veritable means of transfer and conservation of traditional religion, culture, and indigenous knowledge systems to Africans in the diaspora. As one of the participants said:

> "Strategically, because of where I'm from, we have a strong affiliation to the grove and the festival itself. Umm historically, where I'm from, the rivers protected us during war times because my place is in the northern part of the Osun. During the war, the invasion, history they passed to us was the fact that the river was one that always protects us. When the invaders came, the river would be full to brink, and the invaders would not be able to crossover, you understand, and then when the indigenous people come to pass, she allows them to pass; so she was also a form of protection (RM014: Durban, Feb. 2019).

The Osun Osogbo festival, and the grove, thus play a significant culture and heritage role in the community (Viviers, 2010), and can be described as a space of comfort for these members of the Nigerian diasporic community (Taha, 2016). At the festival, they are able to reconnect with their cultural roots, and it also gives them an opportunity to interact with the Osun River goddess by making their prayers and petitions. Recounting her experience, one of the participants said:

> "I was told that if I go into that part of the grove and pray, whatever I prayed for will be answered. I said okay, I have a video of me there, and so I went to the place… and I said whatever I want to see happen… funny enough, I use the name of Jesus there also because I asked the devotee there to whom am I praying to? The goddess or God? And he said I should pray to whomever I wanted to, it didn't matter" (RF009: Durban, Feb. 2019).

This experience shared by RF009 confirms that the grove is a place of comfort for all. Findings from the data gathered showed that sentiment was felt by those who still had belief in the grove and the goddess.

The notion of this festival as an instrument for cultural tourism development has been widely explored by many scholars (See for example Ezenagu, 2020; Oyeweso, 2013). As highlighted in chapter one, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2005 recognized the Osun Osogbo cultural festival and Osun grove as one of the UNESCO World cultural heritage centers. "The inscription of Osun Osogbo sacred grove on the world heritage list has not only opened the flood gate of international tourism in the destination, but added to its value" (Ezenagu, 2020: 3). This is because UNESCO natural and cultural world heritage sites, such as the Osun Osogbo cultural festival and Osun grove, are among the world's most visited tourist attractions (Ahmad, 2006).

Furthermore, the "Nigerian Cultural Policy document" of 1988, enacted to oversee the systematic preservation of cultural heritages in the country, anchored on the promotion, preservation, and presentation of culture (Abara, 2015). These actions taken by the government were done as part of tourism development strategies in Nigeria (Oladokun et al., 2014). Some participants stated that Osun Osogbo festival was like a model festival in Nigeria, "it is like a tourism center and like a conventional center for many people" (RM006: Durban, Sept. 2018). They all acknowledge that whenever it was time for the festival, the town of Osogbo becomes a beehive of activities. "It is very great because you see people from all over the world, so it actually boosts the economy of Osogbo both for the government and the people (RM013: Durban, Feb. 2019). Therefore, its role in the local tourism development as a cultural and heritage attraction becomes apparent. Many travelers attend the festival as a way to reconnect with their cultural and ancestral roots as discussed below.

7.7 Roots reconnection

Migrants' motivations for these return journeys are born out of several reasons. One of these reasons is the need to reconnect with one's ancestral home. Some travel to ancestral homes to deeply seek roots and feel reconnected to one's ancestry (Basu, 2005). Many studies on migrants' motivations for embarking on return journeys to their countries of birth have most often been pinned down to the quest for a reconnection with their roots (Otoo et al., 2021), or for an opportunity to bond with the old familiar. Data gathered showed that this drive was also the case among the study's participants. For many of them, their return trips presented them with an opportunity to rediscover their roots, and they were all very conscious of the need to appreciate and sustain their cultural roots and traditions.

Having been away from home for many years, these members of the diaspora (migrants) are now accustomed to a new different way of life. This leads to a craving for a reconnection with their roots for a possible change in what used to be their everyday way of life. The same also applies to the group under focus. The festival forms a big part of their cultural rootedness and reconnection. The return of these groups of migrants to their home country as homebound tourists and festival participants confirms that they are deeply rooted in the cultural practices of their birth country. Accordingly, one of the participants stated that, "I have a strong attachment to our culture, hence my visit to this festival" (RM002: Durban, Feb. 2019). Attendance or participation at the festival gives many of these participants an opportunity to reconnect with the old familiar and gaze at the new extraordinary.

As expected, the few participants who are devotees of the goddess were particular about using these return trips home as an avenue to reconnect with their spiritual roots and reenact their bonds with the goddess. Being at the festival, or just merely paying a visit to the grove, gave a strong feeling of attachment to their culture, thus making them feel closer to their roots. One of the participants said that, "there is just something about the festival and the grove that makes you feel you are home. It brings back pleasant memories" (RM016: Durban, Feb. 2019). Being in their homeland, or other destinations that is related to their personal heritage, makes these migrants feel connected to their ancestral roots and culture (McCain and Ray, 2003).

Furthermore, as previously mentioned, this desire to reconnect with their roots might also be borne out of the need to seek for solution to challenges, which these migrants believe can be achieved at the grove. Therefore, the grove can be described as a pilgrimage, a cultural, and heritage tourist destination, thus placing the festival at the intersection of pilgrimage, culture, heritage, and tourism. This makes it a viable site that invokes the process of cultural negotiation and identity formation. The various experiences shared by these migrants showed that the desire to reconnect with their cultural roots was central in their decision to be homebound tourists and participate at the annual festival.

7.8 The Osun sacred grove: A tourism, religious, cultural and heritage site

As mentioned in Chapter two, the Yoruba community are quite attached to their culture and religion. They have been described as a set of people who find it difficult to adulterate their beliefs, irrespective of where they find themselves (Ade, 2006: 3). Long before Christianity, which is believed to have been brought in by Europeans, took root in Nigeria, the Yoruba's followed their own religion, and many have remained true to it till date. Many of the participants interviewed for this study agreed that it was important to maintain the legacy left by their forefathers. One of the most revered spots in Nigeria that showcases the Yoruba traditional religion is the Osun Osogbo sacred grove. Oral traditions relay the historic significance of the grove to the Yoruba community (Oyeweso, 2013). The grove, the abode of the goddess, and the venue for the annual festival, can be described as a symbol of cultural identity of these sect. In many instances, "Culture" is considered to be an important marketing tool in promoting tourism (Correia et al., 2011). Furthermore, it has been said that culture, heritage, and the arts have long contributed to the appeal of many tourist destinations (Van Zyl, 2005). The grove and the festival, enables the community to play host to a large number of visitors and tourists, not only during the festival, but also for those who may want to visit as pilgrims, or cultural and heritage tourists at other times in the year. This has had a great impact on the economic activities in the town as traders, hoteliers, transporters, and other vendors experience a boost in their respective businesses (Falade, 2003).

All participants that visited the grove acknowledged that it can be classified as a tourist attraction. One of the participants said that, "I think it has huge tourism potential, but sadly, I'm not sure if it is being fully tapped" (RM001: Durban, Feb. 2019). However, the significance of the attraction varied, and the variance was based on their individual beliefs. There was some inconsistency on the proper label that should be accorded to the grove. As one of the participants asked, "is it really a tourist center or a shrine?" (RM013: Durban, Feb. 2019). Bremer (2005: 9260) posits that "tourism and its associated practices interact with religious life and the institutions of religion in virtually every corner of the world". Moreover, tourists and religious adherents often occupy the same spaces, this makes it imperative that they both play a role in attributing meaning to the space. Furthermore, they are charged with the responsibility of sustaining the sacred characteristics of sites that host both casual and deeply committed visitors (Thomson Gale, 2005). For some, the grove was the location for the annual festival where they could commune with their gods and seek for solutions to their life challenges. They undertook these trips as a form of pilgrimage to visit the sacred spaces. One of the participants attested to this and said that "…I must travel for the Osun festival and the Egungun festival. It is necessary for spiritual fortification (RM008: Durban, Sept. 2018).

It is important to state here that interactions with the participants showed that many of them did not think that they could be classified as tourists. This is because they did not think they qualify to be addressed as tourists as tourism is popularly viewed as a leisure activity conducted by the prosperous and privileged, and thus they would not fit in as such (Marschall, 2017: 141). Migrants are generally ignored as tourists because the assumption is that they are merely 'just going home'. The participants did not see themselves as tourists because that would mean they are visitors to their homeland. One of the participants said, "I have never thought about it and frankly speaking, it sounds strange to me" (RM008: Durban, Sept. 2018). However, all the participants did engage in activities that classify them as tourists. These ranged from visiting attractions, patronizing hospitality outlets to the purchase of souvenirs to bring back to their host countries (Ivan, 2016). Furthermore, their arrival in their homeland shows considerable increase in the tourism related economic activities in the state ((Osogbo Cultural Heritage Council, 2007).

This study asserts that the activities that characterize tourism and pilgrimage experiences cannot be distanced. Data gathered indicates that the desire and the emotions attached to these trips made by these members of the diaspora back to their homeland to participate in the festival activities explicate the non-ordinary experiences that comes with travelling. The sacred and secular rituals associated with the celebration of the Osun festival show where the distinction between pilgrimage and tourism becomes blurred. For example, as stated above, RM008 uses the trip for spiritual fortification whereas RM001 classifies it as a tourist attraction. In this sense, the Osun Osogbo grove is both a heritage attraction and a pilgrimage site (Giovine and Garcia-Fuentes, 2016). Zara (2016) emphasizes that the blurring of boundary between heritage and pilgrimage sites invokes the "process of cultural negotiation and identity formation through the interaction and comingling of different religious and secular traditions" (Giovine and Marcia-Fuentes, 2016: 17). The Osun grove can be described as a "contact zone" or a space where people from diverse "historical, geographical, social, and cultural backgrounds intermingle and make connections". These multiplicities of actors that are linked to the Osun Osogbo festival include the local traditionalists, national, and international tourists, and members of the diaspora who are also homebound tourists. Under this guise, heritage resources and tourism are indeed complementary. On one hand, heritage resources promote tourism development and tourism, on the other, showcases and preserves people's heritage (Ezenagu and Iwuagwu, 2016). Thus, by participating in the festival, these migrants cannot only be classified as diasporic tourists, but they can also be regarded as religious, cultural, and heritage tourists.

7.9 Effect of individual beliefs on cultural practices

As stated earlier, as homebound tourists, for them attendance and participation at the festival also satisfy their search for the familiar difference. However, data gathered showed that the individual beliefs of these migrants played a very important role in their perception and acceptance of the cultural practices associated with the festival. While all the participants acknowledged the importance of cultural sustainability which the festival represents, some people shy away from partaking in local cultural practices because of their religious beliefs. One of the participants said "… as a Christian, I see those things as fetish, so we do not take

part in it, but I went [there] because I was home at that time, and it was just mainly for the singing and dancing (RF006: Durban, Sept. 2018). A quick look into history reveals that most of the age-long cultures and heritages of the founding fathers of Africans have gone into extinction with the coming of modern norms and civilization (Yusuf, 2016: 97).

The change of attitude to religion made many people undermine the worship of some of these deities for the new religion (Omisore et al., 2009). Some who had participated in the festival before claimed that they no longer do so because of their "rebirth". The phrase rebirth can be described as their acceptance of modern-day religion. Some participants expressed that they would not have a problem participating in the festival if some aspects of the festival could be scrapped out. One of the participants said, "… if the idol worships and stuff like that can be taken out, then maybe all other aspects can be appealing… (RM013: Durban, Feb. 2019). As stated earlier, participation at the festival, both within and outside the grove, was based on personal conviction about the celebration. For some, the event was a cultural celebration. For others, the event was a religious commitment that was held in high reverence.

The majority of participants interviewed, however, did not see the need or rational behind altering any aspects of the cultural celebration of the festival because that was what their forefathers had left for them. For these participants, the cultural practices at the grove were perceived to be in their authentic standard state, and therefore, any change will alter the way it was passed down to them. This attests to the school of thought that claims that many cultural traditions, events, and practices that possess cultural and heritage tourism potentials, given their rich aesthetics, have become denigrated and relegated to a state of insignificance (Ibagere and Adeseye, 2013). These participants felt that it was unfortunate that western orientation had eroded people's mindsets about the gods of their forefathers, which were previously known symbols of religion. The notion of the quest for the extraordinary and familiar difference by these members of the diaspora as festival participants can, therefore, also be said to be linked to the perceived authenticity of the cultural practices at the grove and during the festival.

In today's globalized world, tourism cannot avoid capitalization, and academics have agreed that culture is not static, but rather evolving, moving, adapting, and changing (Hopper, 2007).

However, a condition in which intellectual traditions of people are deliberately destroyed, denied or subjugated, to the point of non-existence, is quite worrisome (Bewaji, 2012). Many of the participants, particularly the devotees, opined that if people continue to view these practices in frivolous terms, chances of the culture of their forefathers going into extinction is inevitable. According to one of the participants:

> "I strongly believe that modernization has almost excluded all these little things. Modernization has actually shifted our mind from these things, especially in terms of our culture. These Western standards are trying to condemn what these gods stand for, but I personally know better (RM007: Durban, Nov. 2018).

The fear here is that, with increased condemnation of the cultures that are laced with religion of old, many will begin to shy away from it. However, this study showed that many participants still believed in the prowls of the goddess and appreciate the way the festival is being done as different aspects of the festival were considered symbolic and important. Nevertheless, there was a divide in the notion of whether, or not, some aspects, like the religious connotation associated with the festival should be scrapped. While some felt they would be more comfortable with it (Idol worship) being scrapped, others questioned the rationale behind that. One of the participants said that, "if that is the case, I could also question the worship of the Christian God from that angle. I am a Christian, but I am just saying from that angle…" (RF009: Durban, Feb. 2019). The argument here is that all the modern-day religions still have symbols of worship, which are not different from those found at the grove. Therefore, all these varied perceptions of the festival affect the travelers' participation in, and view of, the festival as a cultural as well as religious practice.

In these present day secular world, the relationship that exists between tourists and their beliefs has been noted to playing major roles in influencing individuals' journeys to sacred sites. It has been implied that tourists' "quest for authentic experiences", and residents desire to produce them, has led to a complicated power play within destinations, regarding what is considered as authentic or not. In a cultural festival setting such as the Osun Osogbo festival, the narratives are very important not only to the tourists whose primary interest is to witness the event, unadulterated, but also to the residents who are aware and want to maintain their values and

traditions (Aleshinloye et al., 2017: 29). While the challenges experienced by heritage and tourism management is beyond the scope of this study, it is necessary to mention that establishing an effective collaboration is important for sustainable tourism in any cultural tourism destination (Rangus et al., 2018). It has been stated that, without an effective partnership between host communities, tourism, culture and heritage management entities, there will always be conflicts. This is because culture and heritage management entities are more interested in the intrinsic value of the culture and heritage resources, while tourism is interested in profit, which may lead to the abuse and eventual destruction of culture and heritage sites (Mckercher and du Cros, 2002). Hence, some respondents expressed sensitivity about their cultural traditions and heritage.

As earlier mentioned, the grove and the festival have different meaning and significance to all members of the Nigerian diaspora. Every group has different views regarding the grove and the celebration of the festival. While some see the festival as an idol worship that should be scrapped, many others regard it as a cultural celebration that should be preserved and nurtured. These different positions have an effect on how travelers become involved in the cultural and religious practices associated with the festival. There was, nevertheless, a general consensus amongst all participants that the authenticity of what the festival represents, either religiously or culturally, should not be affected by the changes that come with modernization. The value of travel should not undermine the intrinsic value of what the festival stands for (Mckercher and du Cros, 2002). Many of the participants were of the opinion that the cultural, religious, and heritage intrinsic value of the festival should be protected against the pressure of modern tourism.

Findings gathered while exploring the responses from the various participants, nevertheless, still showed the intersection between culture, religion, and travel. While all the participants might indeed be from the Yoruba speaking community in Nigeria, and they were all homebound tourists, the degree of appreciation of tourism events, and satisfaction derived from participating at the festival varied from one participant to the other. While participating at the festival, they all had different gazes as the ritual of the festival holds varying significances for them, depending on their individual beliefs. This section thus concludes that, for these migrants, their individual belief played a strong role in their desire to participate at the annual

festival, and affected their views of the festival setting, even though many still struggled with acceptance and reintegration.

7.10 Reinforcing and reintegration of the self

Return journeys to homeland not only helps the African diaspora reconnect with their roots, but also leads to their identity transformation and self-realization (Haller and Ramshaw, 2013). However, "experiences of visiting the homeland are not always as positive and enriching as may be expected beforehand". Sometimes their experiences can be unexpected, anti-climactic, or even hostile, especially for returning first-generation migrants (Ruting, 2012). The general consensus among participants interviewed attests to the fact that there was a difference in how they were treated on their return journey. They all agreed that being away affords returning migrants that "special guest status" which makes their reception to be slightly altered because of "their new status or position". This type of reception received by these migrants from friends and relatives, and also from the locals both at the festival and within the community was considered acceptable by some, while others felt alienated by it.

Larsen (2008: 24) defines home as a fixed spatial point that is comfortable, safe, and a base for everyday life where it is expected that everyone can just be themselves. This is especially important for these members of the diaspora who need to re-establish their sense of home and comfort, upon arrival. These migrants felt they were regarded by the locals as mere visitors who were expected to have come into the country with foreign currencies, and thus should have more than enough money to throw around. It has been stated earlier that these homebound migrants can indeed be classified as tourists as they fit the category. This is because of their spending patterns while visiting their homeland and their subsequent contribution to local tourism development. However, many of the participants did not see or regard themselves as such. Beyene's (2015) study on some African countries showed that remittances inflows from members of the diasporic community have a multifaceted function such as humanitarian aid, financial support, conflict resolutions and, very significantly, poverty reduction.

While many of the participants acknowledged that it was not a big deal, others felt disturbed and inconvenienced. One of the participants said "…. some of my relatives don't understand that I am a student, they were coming with one problem or the other, the ones I could [help], I did, but the ones I could not, I would tell them I can't" (RM012: Durban, Sept. 2018). For those members of the diaspora whose journeys were motivated by the need to seek for solution to life challenges, these demands by the locals were frowned upon because they felt that the locals were insensitive. To them, the locals were generally not interested in their personal problems such as fertility issues, or reasons why they were attending the festival, but rather in what they had brought from their sojourn out of the country. This was highlighted by one of the participants who said "…. hmmm, the list of needs does not end. Nobody cares how you survive where you are, or even why you are back in the country, if it is for holiday or whatever, they just expect you to pick all their bills" (RF004: Cape Town, Nov. 2018). These experiences as relayed by participants as homebound tourists had a slight dent on the satisfaction derived both from embarking on the trip, and as homebound tourists.

Furthermore, many migrants, especially the group under focus, had to go through many loops in order to establish or reaffirm their identity on their return journeys home. Findings from the data gathered showed that these members of the diasporic community on their return trip home get entangled in different processes of identity negotiation. For some of them, even though they might have been in contact with home, through the various technology mediums, assimilating into what used to be home was not as easy as they had anticipated. Several studies on identity and the sense of belonging experienced by migrants show that these homebound journeys may both strengthen attachment to ancestral home countries or generate a feeling of difference and exclusion (Graf, 2017). Acceptance of this notion by participants varied. While some of them claimed to have leverages on the availability of several social media communications to stay in touch with home, a few others felt that their migration status had led to alteration in their way of life. Findings from the majority of the participants showed that there was a difference in their reception by the locals, both on the festival ground and in the community. The effect for some was that it affected how they related with friends and some family members in the course of their stay, as discussed below.

7.11 Migration effect on relationship to home, cultural roots, and spiritual beliefs

As earlier mentioned, many of these homebound tourists make these return journeys as a way to reconnect with their roots. Being away from home has had both positive and negative effects on these members of the diaspora. Some found it very easy to glide back into status quo while others struggled. For those who claimed to have had an easy transition, they attributed this to their constant communications through contact chats and calls with their folks at home. However, others felt that they were treated differently because of their migrant status. Indeed, many of them have adopted some cultural traits from their host country, South Africa. In South Africa, they still stand out because they do not completely fit in as citizens. They also stand out in Nigeria, even during the festival, because their identity has been slightly altered because of the various influences gained while staying in their host country. They therefore find themselves living in two worlds. This makes getting back into their cultural/social fold a laborious task.

To many of the locals in the community, these members of the diaspora are considered as mere tourists because, most times (if not all the time), they tend to stand out, sometimes because of their dressing, appearances, or attitude. However, as earlier mentioned, the motivation for some members of the diaspora, who attend the festival is not fun and festivities, but the hope that the emotional stress that they have travelled with will be met with at the grove. Leary (2012) opined that people have multiple, dynamic, and contextual identities, which can be foregrounded or activated in specific situations. During the festival, members of the diaspora get in contact with the locals, many of whom they have not seen in years, and yearn to be accepted back into the fold. Identity theory provides insights to understanding how these migrants under focus negotiate their identities on their return home, and most especially in relation to their spiritual beliefs (Feitosa et al., 2012). For homebound tourism and festival participation, the theory helps to unravel some identity questions raised when exploring the experiences of these Nigerian migrants in South Africa. For instance, while it is clear that these migrants, after being away, had acquired the culture and other customs practiced in South Africa, like their accent, style of dressing, and so on, it was observed that many of them still retained some cultural practices of their homeland.

The identity theory was applied to this study to understand how these migrants form their identity in their host community, and the changes that ensue in their identity with a shift in location. However, in a bid to appreciate the identity formation of Nigerian migrants in South Africa as homebound tourists, it is important to note that there has been evidence of cultural identity diffusion that may have occurred between the migrants and other members of their host community (Romaniszyn, 2004). For instance, many of these migrants have become so used to their host community that they identify with the basic ways of life of the average South African, especially in the areas of accents, lifestyles, and food. However, when they were queried to ascertain if being away from home had ever led to them needing to renegotiate their identity, many of them claimed not to have had any problem. One of them said, "…as much as I would like to continue living in the comfort and luxury that the life here seems to offer, there are some instances or incidences here that will remind you that this is not home" (RM005: Durban, Feb. 2019). The desire to return to one's homeland may never vanish (King and Christou, 2010). This is true for these migrants because their experiences in South Africa create more cultural and social yearning for the place they might be geographically distant from but has still remained close to in their hearts.

The migrant status for this group of participants has increased their yearning to constantly visit home. All participants agreed that they would not like to remain permanently in the homeland because they had migrated for a reason. As one of them said, "for many of us, myself included, our purpose of leaving home was to come here and work, while we do something back home, that is to support our country and our families" (RM006: Durban, Sept. 2018). However, the notion of being a diasporic tourist was appealing to all of them. Studies have shown that people in the diaspora often times have difficulty blending into the life and culture of the host society, most especially immigrants from undeveloped countries to developing or developed countries (Bhatia, 2002). This makes them (migrants) become what Williams et al., (2013) describe as "heritage hungry". The consequence of this eventually leads to the migrants embarking on a trip or journey in search for a reconnection with their roots and heritage. Within the context of identity assimilation, the Osun Osogbo festival, with its glamorous and colorful activities which include its art and culture, is used by these migrants to fulfill that yearning. The experiences derived from being participants at the festival renew their senses of belonging, and feeling at home again.

The practices and activities that characterize the Osun Osogbo festival play a great role in provoking these identities upon migrants' visits. In this context, participation in these activities by migrants back home, after thoroughly undergoing cultural assimilation and acculturation in their host communities, can be said to have altered their identity (Asencio and Burke, 2011). However, no identity formation can be said to be completely eroded by a new identity, although the assimilation of a new identity can, to a great extent, bring about changes in the existing one. To this effect, the identity of the Nigerian migrants in South Africa, even after a long exhaustion and assimilation in their host country, can still persist, especially in areas including belief system, customs, norms, and general way of life. As one of the participants said, "…been here in South Africa, as much as I like the comfort and luxury that the life here seems to offer, there are some instances or incidences here that will remind you that this is not home or like the home you long for" (RM005: Durban, Feb. 2019). This standpoint support many of the positions chronicled in the identity and migration literature. For instance, studies have shown that, when people migrate, they do not leave their belief systems behind, even with the consideration and the conditions around their migration (MacKinnon and Heise, 2010; Westin, 2014). This supports the findings from this study which shows that, for these members of the diaspora under focus, their migrant status did not change their attachment to the culture of their homeland. This in turn has influenced their desire to satisfy the craving to experience the familiar difference. Thus, the search for the extraordinary, the familiar difference, motivates them to become homebound tourists and participants at the annual festival. The resultant satisfaction gained from their various experiences is discussed below.

7.12 Satisfaction derived from return journeys

One of the factors that influence visitors' attachment to a destination is the level of satisfaction achieved at the setting (Morais, et al., 2005). There was a general concession among participants that their expectations on embarking on these return trips were met. In their study, Pavlic et al., (2011) postulate that unrealized expectations will result in dissatisfaction, while exceeding expectations will result in enthusiasm. Most participants interviewed attest to this assertion. Those participants who had embarked on the journey, primarily just to attend the

festival or visit the grove, still found time to be with friends and family. For example, many participants had at least one hilarious tale from their visit to share. These tales happened either while they were travelling into their homeland, or while at the festival, or during their stay, or on their way back to their host country.

Many participants, however, were of the opinion that, while they may have encountered one or two hitches in their travel, it will always be nicer being back home. Some of the adjustments that they talked about include, but not limited to, meeting the ever present "demand list" of friends and relatives, adjusting to the lack of some basic amenities that they had taken for granted in their host countries, and adjusting to the change in weather conditions. As one of the participants said, "you can't just compare because you are comfortable" (RM013: Durban, Feb. 2019). Nevertheless, all participants admitted that they will be willing to make return trips to their homeland again if given the opportunity to do so. One participant further stated:

> "…. I usually just condition my mind to see, okay this is for a short period, and I have to enjoy every bit you know every day, may not be as bubbly or lively but I try to enjoy every moment even the quiet, the silence, the noises, the arguments whatever it is about, I try to enjoy it because I know, okay in a matter of weeks I'm back to South Africa, so I just enjoy the home or homeliness, the food and you know the culture because I am a very traditional person, and those things I miss out here so I try to make up for them at home like you know getting proper meals, getting to speak my language properly, you know, asking things about family and home and of course, exposure to musical traditions all those things…" (RM015: Durban, Sept, 2018).

Studies have shown that attachment and loyalty to a destination are usually formed after repeat visitations and satisfying experiences (Lee et al., 2007; Yuksel et al., 2010). For these migrants, however, it could be said that the emotional attachment that many of them have for their homeland could be the reason for their loyalty. Nevertheless, the consensus of all participants was that the journey back home was time well spent. As participants at the festival, some were not quite happy with the organization. Many complained about the crowd control and the different forms of intimidation they had faced from some of the locals. They opined that, for a festival of that magnitude, it is only right that the organizers should put some modalities in

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place to ensure the smooth running of things, especially since they are aware that the festival is open to international tourists. As one of the participants said:

> "The festival is interesting, but I think people will enjoy it better if there is better crowd control. The place is too small for the crowd that comes every year. They need enough space. If it is possible to extend the space for the shrine, and also try to make the place cleaner. The government can assist by working on the road too" (RM009: Durban, Sept. 2018).

Some scholars maintain that, for every destination to improve its tourist attractiveness, plans should be made to make the event memorable for all participants. As Oklobdzija (2015) states, such plans should not only incorporate, but also focus on, strategic planning of the events to achieve greater satisfaction of visitors and participants at the event. This position, however, was countered by some participants. The characteristics of festivals and events are unique, and thus difficult to have a standard management style (Correia et al., 2011). The participants claimed that the crowd at the festival is the same as would be expected, considering its significance. They were of the opinion that being international tourists usually places visitors in a respected position. The devotees are more willing to take tourists around and show off the grove. One of the participants who attended the festival during her research field visit said:

> "…. yes, the festival met my expectations very much because I went into yeah, different places. I saw different things like I said, and I was privileged to actually see a lot of things because I went to different activities that they did up to the last day, and I saw a lot of things. It was way, way beyond my expectations…. It was really a great experience, and I will do it again if I have the opportunity…" (RF009: Durban, Feb. 2019).

The experience of the specific way of seeing described by these participants can be described as unique, and extraordinary, and thus satisfying to the tourists. This way of seeing epitomizes something special in their experience, endowed with significance and uniqueness (Maoz, 2006). For many of them, this type of "seeing" is regarded as sacred because the manner of seeing invests the viewer's act of gazing with reverent significance (Morgan, 2005). This usually occurs within given religious, cultural, or historical settings. As earlier stated, the quest or search for this extraordinary is the motivation for these migrants to engage in diasporic tourism and participate at the Osun Osogbo festival while visiting their country of birth. Furthermore, it should be noted that the style or type of reverence derived from the festival varied with the different homebound tourists. While all the participants are all Yoruba's,

homebound tourists, and participating at the Osun Osogbo festival for the various reasons discussed above, the one thing they all have in common is their contribution to the development of cultural tourism in the country in different ways.

7.13 Conclusion

This chapter discussed findings gathered from the field study conducted by the researcher. It explored various experiences relayed by migrants who made return journeys to their country of birth as homebound tourists. The chapter relayed some of the motivations for these members of the diaspora to embark on these trips to their homeland, and how the journey shape their sense of identity. As participants at the annual festival, the discussions on their beliefs in the festival, the divinity, and the grove were also discussed. Furthermore, the effect of modernization was also explored to understand its effect on cultural and religious practices associated with the festival. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the effect that migration has on their relationship to home, cultural roots, and spiritual beliefs. Indeed, on the basis of the findings gathered while discussing the experiences of these homebound tourists, the significance of this journey varied amongst participants. However, the value derived from various experiences explored shows that these migrants, as homebound tourists, use the opportunity of the festival to maximize the satisfaction gained from embarking on these return visits. The next chapter is a summary of the entire study and possible recommendations for further studies.

Chapter eight

Summary, recommendations, and conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This chapter is the presentation of the dissertation's synopsis. The aim of the study was to investigate the experiences of members of the Nigerian diaspora in South Africa as homebound tourists and festival participants at the annual Osun Osogbo festival. The study explored the perceived significance of this tangible site and the intangible beliefs and values attached to it and gained insights on how the unique features of the festival can be translated to improving cultural tourism in the country. In a broader sense the research looked at how the process of migration affected diasporic relationship to home, cultural roots and spiritual beliefs by probing the diasporic visitors' experience of travelling home and their beliefs, behavior and activities during the visit of the Osun grove and festival. The festival is home to traditionalism and spiritualism of the people of Osogbo, including its sons and daughters in the diaspora. The study explored the experiences of these South Africa-based Nigerian migrants as visitors to their country of birth, Nigeria. By exploring the experiences of these migrant tourist, the study provided better understanding of the impact and the significance of this journey on their sense of identity.

From the qualitative methods perspective, data was collected and analyzed to investigate the experiences of these migrants back home as VFR tourists and festival participants in their search for a "familiar difference". Based on the analysis of data gathered, this chapter highlights major findings examined while exploring the experiences of these selected migrants on their return journeys. As presented below, the summary of the study findings is discussed, in line with objectives and the research questions formulated and listed in chapter one. This chapter ends with the limitation of the study and recommendations for future research.

8.2 Summary of major findings

Some of the major findings discussed showed various sets of motivations for diasporic tourism for members of this community, and how the process of migration affects their relationship to home, their cultural roots, and spiritual beliefs. Furthermore, it drew attention to these migrants as tourists and the relevance of the grove and the festival to cultural and heritage tourism. In recent times, culture and heritage tourism has been gaining a lot of attention. Many of the studies on this area has focused notably on identifying individual visitor needs, their travel motivations, experiences, and, an understanding of the personal values that travelers or tourist seek to gain through visitations to cultural and heritage attractions. This is done to gives highlight the importance of cultural tourism development beyond the economic benefits associated with it. This study adds to existing studies on the promotion of Cultural tourism but looking it from the Nigeria perspective. The study highlights the importance of culture to these migrant tourists, emphasizing their need for heritage to add perspective and meaning to their lives. Listed below are the major findings discussed in the last three chapters which are in line with the research questions formulated to meet the set aims and objectives of the study.

8.2.1 Motivation for Return journeys

➢ Objective 1: To examine how migrants organize their visits back to their home country and the activities they pursue, apart from attending the annual festival.

Findings from this study showed that the desire for these migrants to make return journeys are motivated by a host of reason. This study adds to the discussion on various tourist motivations for travel by the members of the diaspora who embark on return journeys to their homeland. For many members of the diaspora community, embarking on return trip home is an opportunity to feel a sense of belonging and reconnect with their cultural roots (Shiladitya, 2008). Timothy and Coles (2004) described these migrations induced trips as "diaspora

tourism", that is a journey by people of migrant origins visiting their ancestral homeland. The motivation for these migrants revolved around the annual Osun Osogbo festival. Although the main reason for some participants to engage in this diasporic tourism was not solely for the festival, their reasons were, however, interwoven with the festival. Some of the reasons gathered included, but not limited to:

a) The need to fulfill a yearning for the familiar difference. Many Nigerians and African communities in general tend to have a very strong sense of family and community. Thus, when they are away from home, the need to maintain kinship or reconnect to familiar home environment becomes a motivation for them to embark on return journeys to their homeland (Poria et al., 2006). Having been away from home for some time, the need to experience the old familiar strokes a yearning that becomes a motivation to make these return visits.

b) Festival participation. Anyanwu (2012) opined that the purpose of a festival was to create an occasion for people to commemorate, worship, or perform different cultural activities. Findings from this research is in line with Oyeweso's (2012) assertion that the festival can be described as a strong motivation for many members of the Nigerian diaspora, irrespective of their ethnic group, religion, or social status, to embark on a return visit back home. The yearly festival at the grove, beyond the festivities and merriment, is an opportunity for all to access the sacred grove, a sanctuary where people consult and communicate with their deities (Amusa 2009). The sacred grove in Osun is a tourist destination, a pilgrimage, and heritage site, thus making the festival to be at the intersection of pilgrimage, heritage, and tourism.

c) Seeking for solution to life's challenges. Religion and spirituality are still among the most common motivations for travel. Many major tourism destinations have developed largely as a result of their connections to people's growing interest in sacredness associated with certain places and events (Timothy and Olsen, 2006). Some of these participants are specifically motivated by the problem of their infertility and/or other challenges in life. During the festival, at the grove, they seek for blessings from the Osun goddess, and are able to reconnect with the spiritual roots of their identity.

d) Reconnecting with their roots. Based on the findings, roots reconnections for these migrants are divided into different categories. For some it was cultural roots, while for others it was a reconnection with their spiritual roots. Fulfilling this desire was achievable by their attendance and/or participation at the annual festival, which nevertheless had both cultural and spiritual relevance among the participants as travelers.

e) Temporary return visits home to see friends and relatives (VFR) are significant, especially for first-generation migrants internationally, the motive being both the maintenance and enhancement of kinship networks (Duval, 2003). For many of these participants, their motivation to travel to their homeland was to visit friends and relatives (VFR tourist), but they also take advantage of the festival season to maximize the satisfaction derived from the journey.

These various motivations highlighted above speak to the objectives of the study that seeks to examining how these migrants organize their visits back home. Their desire to reconnect was identified as one of the motivation to organize a trip back to their birth country. It is generally believed that many diasporic travels are organized for the main purpose of seeking cultural foothold and maintaining a sense of belonging which they perceive to be missing in the host society (Elle Li et al., 2020). For these participants, their need to re-connect and experience the feeling of being at home again was germane in their decision to make these return journeys. Aside from attending the festival, the study also highlighted activities that these migrant tourists pursue while in their home country. Notable amongst findings from these participants showed that the experience of just being at home was regarded as the high point of their journey

8.2.1.2 Experiencing Home again

To many participants interviewed, the notion of "home" was not their current place of residence, but their ancestral place of origin. For the few who are married to South Africans, home could also be South Africa. Nevertheless, the general consensus was that Nigeria would

always be their "home", irrespective of the number of years they spend out of their native land. As earlier stated, the desire to return to their roots becomes a strong motivation for them to make these return journeys. Studies have shown that tourism is one of the transnational activities that allow migrants to sustain their attachment to their ancestral homeland (Huang et al., 2016). Findings from the data gathered in answering one of the research question that seeks to explores the activities that these migrants participate in while at home, showcased a wide array which ranged from Visiting Friends and relatives to savoring the local traditional delicacies.

8.2.2 The Nigerian diaspora and the Osun Osogbo festival

> Objective 2: To investigate the perceptions of members of the Nigerian diaspora community in South Africa on the Osun Osogbo festival as tourists.

Findings from the data gathered showed that members of the Nigerian diasporic community have a strong affinity with their culture and traditions. As presented in the review of Literature, the Osun Osogbo festival cut across the entire Yoruba race both at for those at home and in the diaspora (Aleshinloye, 2015). From the data gathered and analyzed, it can be seen that members of the diaspora community in South Africa still had acknowledge the grove and festival as one of the heritages passed down to them by their forefathers. For some, it can be described as a space of comfort where they are able to reconnect with their roots and interact with the Osun River goddess, should they desire to do so while some others see it as just a space for fun and merriment. The importance of Osun Osogbo festival lies in its power to remind locals of their roots and strengthen their ethnic and historical identity (Probst, 2016). Despite its strong local character, this cultural festival has gained popularity even amongst international travelers. Furthermore, for some of these members of the diaspora, participation at the festival gives them an opportunity to seek for blessing from the Osun goddess to heal their infertility and provide solutions to their other life challenges. As tourists, the general perception of these migrants, though, was that the festival, and the grove, provides an enriching cultural experience. As

visitors to their homeland, many found the festival and the grove to be a good cultural attraction that they could engage in.

8.2.3 Identity negotiation

➢ Objective 3: To evaluate what these experiences at their home country mean to these migrant-tourists, and how they (the experiences) affect their sense of identity.

As earlier stated, the desire for sameness, continuity, a search for cultural footholds are some of the reasons why many migrants desire to make return journeys to their country of birth. Furthermore, these journeys give them an opportunity to evaluate themselves, resolve their personal identity conflicts, and connect with their predecessors (Timothy, 2008). This study was focused on how the first generation migrants of Yoruba descent in South Africa negotiate their identity on their return journey home to participate at the annual Osun Osogbo festival. Return journeys to homeland do not only help the African diaspora reconnect with their roots, they also lead to their identity transformation and self-realization (Haller and Ramshaw, 2013). The premise here was that these migrants, for one reason or the other, have not been able to return to their homeland in the last five (and above) years, thus using the festival as an excuse to reconnect with home. Many migrants, especially the group under focus, had to go through loops in order to establish or reaffirm their identity on their return journeys home. Findings from data gathered showed that there was a difference in how participants were treated on their return journeys to their country of birth. While some members of the diasporic community found reintegration of the self quite easy, others had to negotiate their transnational identity in order to fit in and "feel among" with people of their kin.

8.2.4 Religion and spirituality

> ➤ Objective 4: To analyze the experiences of these migrant-tourists at the festival, especially in relation to their spiritual beliefs.

According to Timothy and Olsen (2006), religion and spirituality are still among the most common motivations for travel. This is particularly true as people consider that many major tourism destinations have developed largely as a result of their connections to sacredness associated with certain people, places, and events. However, the trips being explored in this study are more about spiritual beliefs than religion per se. Findings from this study showed that many of these homebound tourists are also spiritually committed travelers. Their individual beliefs played a major role in influencing their decision to attend or participate at the festival. They used the opportunity of their vacation to fulfil their quest for spiritual satisfaction by visiting the sacred grove. Many participants interviewed attach spiritual importance to the grove because they feel a connection with the divine at that location. Fox (2008) opined that such sites that give this spiritual awakening are locations where a deity is said to live or be "housed"; or having any special spiritual powers. Such sites like the Osun sacred grove are commemorated with shrines or temples that devotees are encouraged to visit for their own spiritual benefit: to be healed, have questions answered, or to achieve some other spiritual benefits. The experiences shared by members of this Nigerian diaspora community about the festival were strongly rooted in local traditional spiritual beliefs. Consistent with responses from the different participants, the grove and the festival are perceived as a cultural celebration, a sacred ceremony, and a pilgrimage for those with spiritual allegiance to its cultural practices.

8.2.5 Cultural and heritage tourism in Nigeria

> ➤ Objective 5: To use the collected data to analyze current scholarly understandings of VFR tourism, migrant return travel, pilgrimage tourism and cultural and heritage tourism.
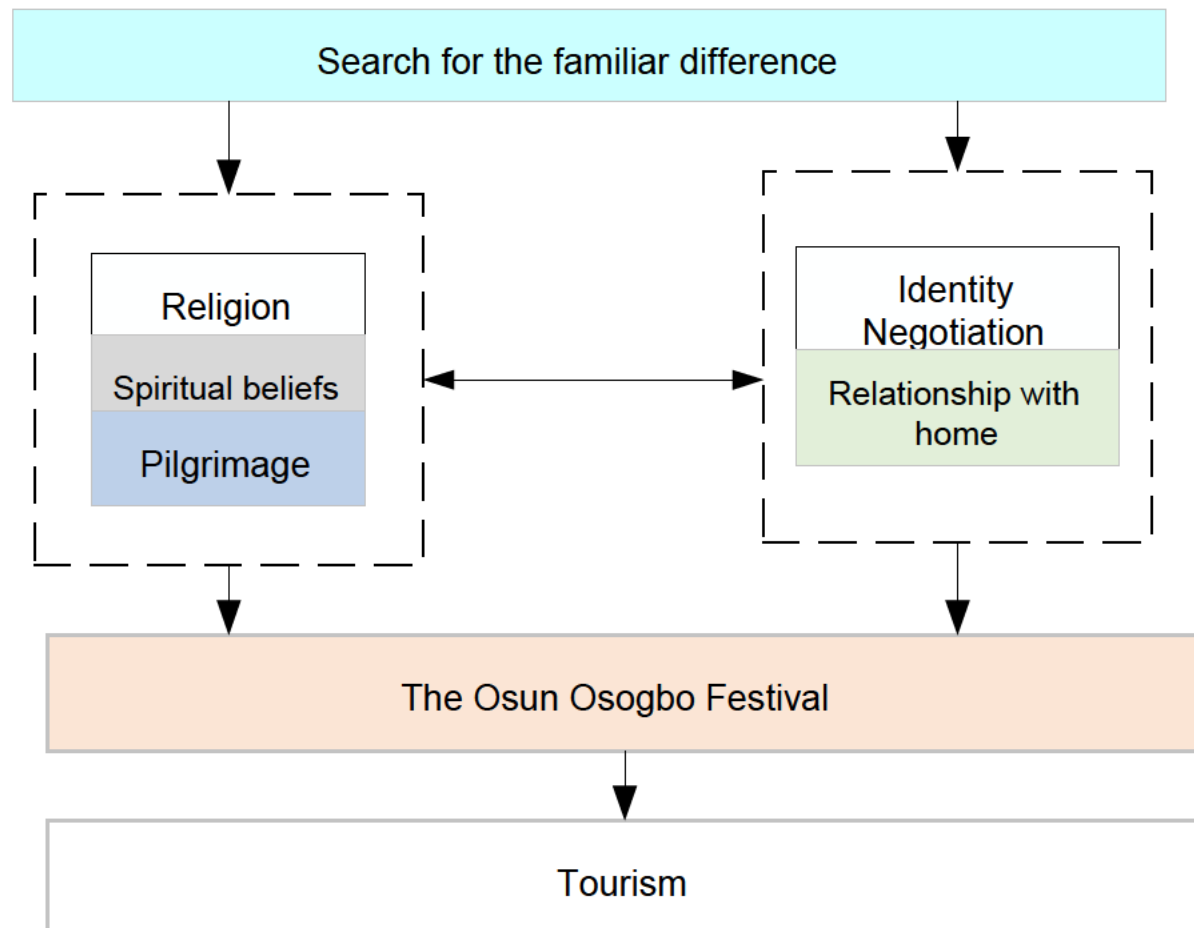
Festivals and cultural celebrations are viable tools that need to be explored in order to improve cultural tourism representations and appreciations. Before now, very little research has been undertaken to explore the experiences of South Africa-based Nigerian migrants as visitors to their home country. Although the review of literature shows a few studies that presents an African perspective on migrant return travel (Asiedu, 2005; Marschall, 2017). The experiences shared by participants in this study helped to bridge that gap. Furthermore, studies show, migrants who travel back home are often not viewed as tourists in official statistics and in the general scholarly literature. Only in recent years, with the emerging body of literature, has more attention been paid to migrants as tourists. More importantly, these travelers or migrants do not think of themselves as tourists because, especially as Africans, they have certain notions of who a tourist is. However, these migrants who travel back to their birth countries are essentially tourists. Many of them think of this journey as a measure they take to address their personal problems and, at the same time, visit their families. Visits to the grove or attendance at the festival is not viewed from the tourism perspective, but rather as a spiritual site visit to address their needs. Although this motive might be the truth, by travelling, they actually become cultural tourists. Their presence at the grove, and their attendance at the festival, contributes to the growth of festival as a community annual event and as a tourism attraction, thus making it more attractive for other people to come. Looking at it from a wider perspective, this, in turn, can lead to the growth and development in cultural tourism.

8.2.6 Model from the outcome of findings

> Objective 6: To develop a model from the insights gathered from the research findings to contribute to the development of the site and the festival as a cultural tourism attraction.

As earlier stated, this model was created from the insights gathered from the in-depth interviews conducted with participants. From the model, it seems that the festival is at the heart of this study. The festival has been described as a symbol of cultural identity by, and for, many members of the Yoruba speaking diasporic community in Nigeria. Findings gathered while exploring the experiences of some South Africa-based Nigerian migrants showed an intersection between tourism, religion and spirituality. The study investigated issues of identity, spiritual roots, the significance of reconnecting with spirituality, migration, return travel,

contact with local people and the impact of all these on their experiences in their birth country. Findings from the study show how the intersectionality of these various concepts can lead to the participants experiencing the festival in a very peculiar way.

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Migration and home bound tourism

8.3 Limitations of the study

This study is limited by the research design. The study was a qualitative investigation that gathered data from in-depth interviews conducted on a group of Nigerian migrants in Durban, South Africa. Nigeria, often described as the most populous black country in Africa, has a population of about one hundred and forty million people (source: last National Population Commission Census exercises conducted in Nigeria in 2006); with over 20 million of this population located in the diaspora. Considering this very large population of people in relation

to the sample size, it might be considered hasty to make a generalization on the study, especially when compared to the population of the study. However, the researcher is confident that the present study sample represents an important component of members of the diaspora whose contributions are likely to have the significant impact and insight. Thus, this study represents an important initial step towards achieving the set aims and objectives.

8.4 Recommendation for further studies

As earlier stated in the limitation of the study, the qualitative research design of the study might have limited the applicability of the model created. Although the qualitative design was adopted for gathering the data used in the formulation of the model presented, the study did not go further to test its applicability. It is therefore recommended that further research that incorporates a quantitative approach be undertaken, to test the applicability of the model created.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented the major findings from the data gathered in investigating the experiences of Nigerian migrants in South Africa as homebound tourists and festival participants at the annual Osun Osogbo festival. The sacred grove, which is the venue for the festival, is among the last of the sacred forests which usually adjoined the edges of most Yoruba cities before extensive urbanization (Yusuf, 2016). This community event is a traditional festival, indeed not only about merry making, but about social bond, culture, and history. The festival has remained relevant to many Nigerians, both at home and abroad. The grove and the festival still have values and significance to the local community, members of the diaspora, local and international tourists. The impact of the grove has made the community to enjoy some spotlight, especially during the festival when people troop into the town from all around the world. As a festival of international standard, which many can identify with, the grove has developed into a tourist center, thus bringing a lot of foreign currency and attracting international investors into the country.

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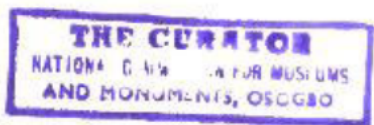
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Gate keeper letter

National Commission for Museums and Monuments

National Museum Ataojas Palace P.M.B. 4376 Osogbo-Osun State

Department:...

REF: OGS/AF.57/VOL.IV/824

DATE: 17TH AUGUST, 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

RE:REQUEST FOR GATE KEEPER LETTER
ABOSHIOKE LILLIAN UMEJE.

The above named Staff of the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation has requested for authority to conduct her PHD Research at the University of Kwa Zulu Natal Durban, South Africa.

Consequently, kindly use this letter as a Confirmation that permission has been granted to her to conduct her research at the World Heritage property.

Be assured of our highest regards.

Sincerely,

Makinde Olakunle Williams (Mr.)
Curator/Site Manager
Kunle3859@gmail.com

THE CURATOR
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR MUSEUMS
AND MONUMENTS, OSOGBO

Appendix 2: Protocol ethics approval letter

UNIVERSITY OF ™
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

23 July 2018

Mrs Aboshloke Lillian Umejei (216076189)
School of Social Science
Howard College Campus

Dear Mrs Umejei,

Protocol Reference Number : HSS/0548/018D
Project title: The Osun Osogbo Festival in Nigeria : An Investigation of Nigerian migrants in South Africa as homebound tourists and festival participants

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 23 May 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shamila Naidoo [Deputy Chair]
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committe

/pm

cc Supervisor: Professor Sabine Marschall
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Maheshvari Naidu
cc School Administrators: Mr N Memela

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0)31 260 4609 Email: ximba@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za
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Appendix 3: Research instrument

Semi Structures interviewed scheduled questions

Preamble:

My name is Shioke, I am conducting a research on The Osun Osogbo Festival in Nigeria. I am exploring the experiences of Nigerian migrants here in South Africa as homebound tourists and festival participants. I will be asking you some questions, and with your permission, I will be recording our conversation to use as part of my data collected for the research. To start with, may I please ask your age and your occupation, here in South Africa?

Questions:

Can you please tell me about your background, your migration history, and how long you have been in South Africa?

How often do you travel to Nigeria, and when was the last time you visited?

Where would you describe as home?

How did it feel to be back home again after been away from home for a while?

So, you did you at any time feel like a visitor during your stay at home?

What do you miss the most about home?

Can you share with me what you know about the Osun Osogbo festival?

So, what are your views on the festival?

How many times have you attended the festival, and what was your experience?

So, for every time you have attended the festival, have your expectations been met?

Will you describe the experience as being worth your while?

What are your personal beliefs about the goddess and the grove?

If you could, how often will you like to attend, and will you recommend it to anyone?

Appendix 4: The Osun Sacred Grove

Pictorial views at the sacred grove

The Osun Sacred Grove

Entrance to the Grove
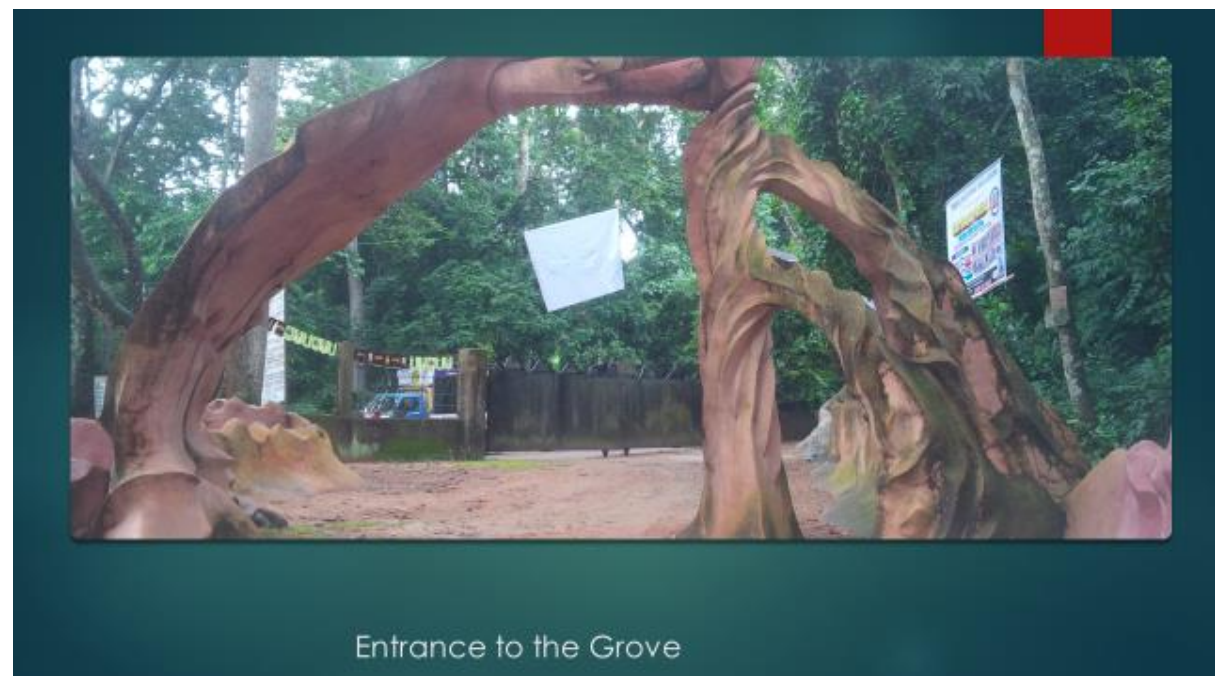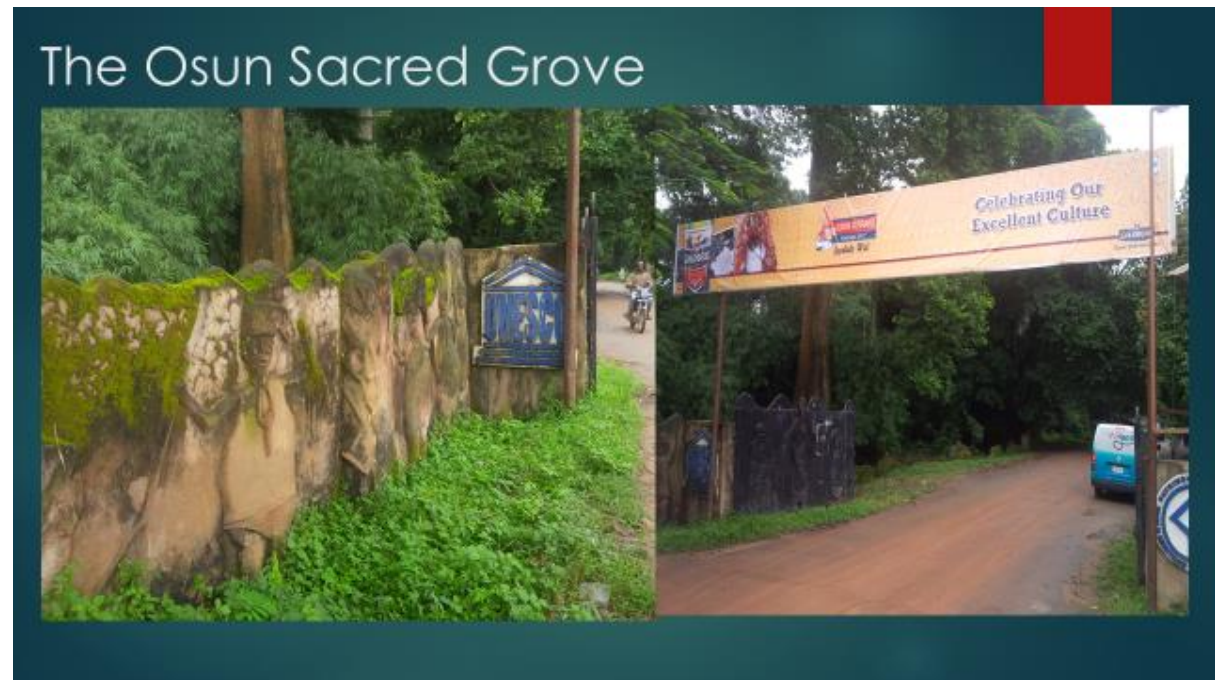
The Osun River

Pictures taken by the researcher

Appendix 5: Turnitin report

PhD thesis for turnitin 18 05 2021

by Umejei 2nd Turnitin Trail

Submission date: 18-May-2021 12:30PM (UTC+0200)
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