Immigrant business breakout in a transnational environment: A study of Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this project is entirely my own work and that any additional sources of information have been duly cited. I hereby declare that any internet sources, published or unpublished works from which I have quoted or drawn reference have been referenced fully in the text and in the content list. I understand that failure to do this will result in a failure of this research due to Plagiarism.

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Abstract

A glaring aftermath of the emergence of a diverse transnational global space is the multiple embeddedness of immigrant entrepreneurs. Unlike in the past where immigrant entrepreneurship was shaped by local and ethnic market conditions, advances in globalisation and mobility infrastructure have made it possible for immigrant entrepreneurs to deploy multiple identities, operate in multiple locations, and use heterogeneous social networks. Until recently, immigrant business growth was frequently conceptualised by the narrow notion of 'breakout' from constrained ethnic markets within host countries. However, understanding immigrant entrepreneurship from a transnational perspective requires a reconceptualisation of immigrant business breakout to embrace the emergent strategies for immigrant business growth across host, home, and third countries. This thesis on immigrant entrepreneurship is positioned at the intersection of transnational mixed embeddedness as an explanatory framework and breakout practices of immigrant entrepreneurs from a developing country context. The use of transnational space, heterogeneous social networks, and an increasing number of second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs dominate the contemporary breakout environment. This context, however, differs from the previous contexts where earlier immigrant breakout conceptualisation emerged.

Drawing upon a study of 30 first- and second-generation Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in London, this exploratory study examined the different breakout strategies adopted by immigrant entrepreneurs and how the changing structural, relational, and cognitive embeddedness shape those strategies. The study compared breakout strategies of first- and second-generation entrepreneurs and how heterogeneous social networks of immigrants facilitate breakout. Expert and key informant in-depth interviews were conducted to capture data on Nigerian entrepreneurs in different UK business sectors who have either broken out, struggling to break out, or failed to break out. The study concretises the meaning of transnational space by identifying a continuum of markets and resource sources beyond ethnic and host country markets. Through a breakout typology developed from the study, insights into emerging breakout trajectories of immigrant entrepreneurs that resulted from their diverse spatial mobilities were provided. From a theoretical perspective, findings from the PhD yielded rich data that will build upon the mixed embeddedness framework and deal with breakout challenges in home and host countries.

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Abbreviations

BO1: Bank of Industry

BME: Black Minority Enterprises

CBN: Central Bank of Nigeria

CEEDR: Centre for Enterprise and Economic Development Research

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

GEL: Growing Entrepreneur Leaders

GEM: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor

ITF: Industrial Training Fund

MAN: Manufacturers Association of Nigeria

ME: Mixed Embeddedness

MSME: Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

NBS: National Bureau of Statistics

NDEX: Nigeria Diaspora Export

NIDO; Nigeria in Diaspora Organisation

NNVS: Nigeria national Volunteer Service

NOS: National Office of Statistics

OECD: Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development

OLGOPI: One Local Government One Product Initiative

SMEDAN: Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria

SMEs: Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

UK: United Kingdom

USD: United States Dollar

Chapter One

General Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This research examines different breakout strategies immigrant entrepreneurs employ within the changing transnational context and how their embeddedness in the transnational environment shapes those strategies. The focus is to investigate immigrant business breakout from a multidimensional perspective and emerging trajectories. This is aimed at determining if existing conceptions of breakout need reconceptualisation. Using empirical data from first- and second-generation Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK, this PhD examines the dynamic roles of transnational space, social networks, and generational shift on the ability of immigrant entrepreneurs to overcome limitations associated with immigrant businesses.

1.1 Background of the study

Immigrant entrepreneurs identified, created, exploited economic opportunities, and established economic ventures in countries they migrated to (Dheer, 2018; Maiki et al., 2020). Much past study of immigrant entrepreneurs has focused upon relatively low-skilled immigrants who faced unfavourable labour conditions and turned to entrepreneurship for survival (Chrysostome, 2010). However, an increasing number of high skilled immigrants are turning to entrepreneurship for reasons beyond survival. Portes & Rumbaut (2006) observed that in recent times, immigrant entrepreneurship has emerged as a vehicle for social mobility, self-actualisation, and stabilisation of individual and household economic conditions. Irrespective of the precise motivation for entrepreneurship, immigrant businesses need to maintain competitiveness to achieve their objectives, survive, and create value for customers.

Immigrant business breakout is defined as boundary-breaking entrepreneurial actions geared towards making ethnic minority businesses more profitable and competitive. Breakout, it is argued, enables immigrant businesses to overcome ‘ethnic traps’ (Smith & Wistrict, 2010), discover new niches (Basu, 2011), expands existing markets (Allen & Bussee, 2016), and achieve other positive

outcomes such as increased profitability for immigrant businesses in host and home countries. The broader economic benefits that flow to local, regional, and national economies from immigrant business breakout have recently attracted scholarly and policymaking attention in the entrepreneurs' home and host countries (McPherson, 2019; Shinnie et al., 2021).

Owing to structural barriers in host environments and resource inadequacy, immigrant entrepreneurs usually start their entrepreneurial activities within their ethnic market or occupy middlemen positions - serving as intermediaries between the native and other migrants by taking up abandoned niches in the neighbourhood (Rusinovic, 2008; Miera, 2008; Zhou, 2004). These approaches, however, have limited opportunities because these niches are usually on the fringes of mainstream economic activity with limited possibilities for profitability and growth. Immigrant businesses need to gain access to higher-value markets that are not constrained by ethnic loyalty, location, or insufficient purchasing power to achieve these objectives (Ram et al., 2003).

1.2 Rationale for the study

I was driven to this study area because of the increasing number of Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK and the USA who indicated an interest in establishing businesses in their home country instead of expanding in their host country. I became interested in unraveling the appropriateness of such a 'breakout' strategy. However, reading the existing literature on immigrant entrepreneur breakout, it became clear that much of breakout discussions focused on the 'ethnicity' dimension of the breakout, explaining breakout as a means to end reliance on the ethnic customer base. Other breakout dimensions, such as geographical breakout, sectoral breakout, value chain breakout, and breaking out of a customer base with low purchasing power, were under-reported. This observation reflected a static and circumscribed notion of spatiality prevalent in the immigrant entrepreneurship literature. Up until recently, immigrant entrepreneurship studies were explained in ethnic and home-host market dichotomies. This approach is championed by the mixed embeddedness framework, which argues that opportunities available to immigrant entrepreneurs are shaped by their embeddedness in the ethnic and institutional environment of the host country (Kloosterman, 2010). Such a geographical and ethnic lens for interpreting entrepreneurial actions

posit that the competitiveness, or otherwise, of immigrant businesses is dependent on location-based factors since immigrant entrepreneurs are passive in the face of these forces.

However, current realities in the 21st century immigrant entrepreneurship environment contrasts with the above assertions. These realities created by advances in technology and an increase in the number of second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs, the spatial mobility of immigrants, and the number of high skilled immigrants turning to entrepreneurship, have led to the emergence of different forms of immigrant entrepreneurs, such as returnee entrepreneurs (Gruenhagen et al. 2020), 'relocatee' entrepreneurs (Awotoye & Singh, 2018), liminal entrepreneurs (Garcia-Lorenzo et al., 2017) and transnational entrepreneurs(Portes & Martinez, 2019). Furthermore, the increase in the size and importance of diaspora communities has created contexts that have received limited attention in the literature (Solano, 2016; Bagwell, 2018). Current realities show that immigrant entrepreneurs can operate in multiple locations where they see opportunities, assume diverse identities, use heterogeneous social networks, and are unrestrained by nationality or ethnic resources (Sandoz, 2021). The presence of de-territorialised networks that produce 'translocal' homes and cities shows that opportunity structure is not localised or wholly dependent on the territorial boundaries of nation-states. Immigrant entrepreneurs have shown their agential capacity to mobilise resources and exploit opportunities beyond the home-host market even without leaving their geographical space (Sandoz, 2021; Chen & Tan, 2018). As the ontology of immigrant entrepreneurship has moved from being ethnic, static, and location-based, there is a need to re-examine breakout from a multidimensional, evolving, and transnational perspective. Transnationality in this context refers to processes that span national boundaries usually created by immigrants as they engage with their home, host, and third countries simultaneously (Bagwell, 2018; Sandoz, 2021).

The previous narrow conceptualisation of breakout led to the blanket assumption of integration into the mainstream host market as the principal goal of breakout. Previous studies on breakout hinge on ethnic communities trying to break into host community markets, usually from the perspective of first-generation immigrants (Parzar, 2016; Basu, 2011; Drori & Learner, 2002). However, studying breakout in different contexts seems likely to generate findings that contradict what the extant literature has reported. These might include contexts of multiple ethnicities, where the host community market consists of different ethnic markets and the incorporation of second or third-generation entrepreneur perspectives. The traditional conceptualisation of breakout was

based on the presence of fewer ethnicities and of one dominant culture. However, some immigrant destinations, such as major global cities, not only have many ethnicities but increasingly diverse cultural groupings, such that notions of 'mainstream market' and a dominant 'mainstream culture' have become ambiguous (Lasselle & Scott, 2018).

The perspective of first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs dominates the existing literature. In contrast, little attention is paid to the perspectives of second-generation entrepreneurs, even though the number of subsequent-generation entrepreneurs is increasing rapidly. As used in this context, First-generation immigrants consist of all immigrants who migrated to host countries as adults. In contrast, second-generation immigrants are defined as children of immigrants and other children who grew into adults in host countries (Quirke et al., 2009). Having been born and raised in a context dissimilar to the first generation, it seems likely that later generations of immigrant entrepreneurs will have a different perspective on breakout (Rusinovic, 2008). Taken together, recent changes in immigrant entrepreneurship, such as the emergence of sizeable second-generation immigrant populations and increasing reliance on heterogeneous social ties, and dependence on transnational entrepreneurship, have created situations that have affected the conceptualisation of breakout. In other words, some breakout assumptions may no longer be universally valid (You & Zhou, 2019; Chen & Tan, 2014).

Transnational entrepreneurship has received increasing attention among immigrant entrepreneurship scholars because it unlocks another feature of economic adaptation. It does this by shifting emphasis away from the protracted integration process into the domestic market towards reliance on international networks and cross-border businesses (Portes, 2001; Ojo, 2012). Bearing in mind that transnational entrepreneurship has featured prominently among immigrants since the Middle Ages, what is novel at present are the innovations in ICT and transportation. These enable near-instantaneous exchange between places easily, fast, and cheaply. This trend is given impetus by many third-country governments' initiatives built around transnational entrepreneurship and the increasing involvement of people in the home and host countries (Solano, 2019; Miera, 2008). Ojo (2012) observed an emerging trend of a direct transition of ethnic businesses from ethnic enclaves to transnational entrepreneurship. This is driven by the need to overcome structural barriers in host markets, gain a competitive advantage in emerging markets of developing countries, and contribute to home countries' economic development. This trend,

however, is dissimilar to the earlier known trajectory of an immigrant business breakout- from ethnic market to mainstream market.

Moreover, the confluence of ethnicities and cultures and the opening of transnational space have reconfigured the social networks of immigrant entrepreneurs to become multifocal. These new networks are diverse and heterogeneous, with multiple origins and performing different bridging and linking services. Consequently, the roles of social networks in breakout also need to be revisited (Goulbourne, 2010; Valenzuela-Garcia et al., 2018). According to Allen & Bussee (2016), a breakout is no longer a binary condition of the ethnic or mainstream market but a continuum where both ethnic market and mainstream markets are two extremes with various hybrids formed in between. Surprisingly, the existing literature has not paid sufficient attention to these emerging trajectories.

Addressing this imbalance is essential to avoid blanket assumptions related to immigrant entrepreneurship. Transnational entrepreneurship, dependence on heterogeneous social networks, and generational difference in immigrant entrepreneurship have become prevalent. However, empirical study of how this changing context has impacted immigrant breakout in practice has not been carried out. In the light of the foregoing, there is a need to conduct an empirical study of ethnic breakout that is sensitive to these changing contexts. There is also the need to re-conceptualise breakout to reflect multidimensional perspectives and accommodate emerging trajectories in immigrant entrepreneurship.

1.3 Research objectives and questions

The aim of this study is twofold:

a. To empirically examine breakout strategies adopted within the changing context of immigrant entrepreneurship.
b. To consider theoretically whether existing conceptualisations of breakout need reframing.

Specifically, the study is designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine breakout strategies and emerging trajectories of immigrant entrepreneurs.
2. To investigate the significance of transnational space on breakout strategies of immigrant entrepreneurs.
3. To examine how generational shifts affect breakout strategies of immigrant entrepreneurs.

4. To analyse immigrant entrepreneurs' uses of social networks in breakout within the changing context in which they operate.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions are formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the different breakout strategies employed by immigrant entrepreneurs within the changing context in which they operate?
2. How does transnational space affect immigrant entrepreneurs' breakout strategies?
3. How do the breakout strategies of first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs differ from that of second-generation?
4. What are the composition and roles of social networks in immigrant entrepreneur breakout?

1.5 Research approach

The research approach is divided into a review of the existing literature and subsequent empirical research. The first part thus guides and serves the needs of the second part. The empirical study entailed sample selection, the design and testing of the survey instrument, the collection of data, and the analysis of the obtained data. Data were collected from Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK and experts in immigrant entrepreneurship. Individual immigrant entrepreneurs provided both personal and business information in their capacity as entrepreneurs. In the same way, experts, including leaders of ethnic associations, researchers, and professional/trade associations, provided information as opinion leaders.

This analysis provided the needed insight on emerging breakout strategies. Breakout strategies in this context were defined as various trajectories through which immigrant businesses pursued growth. (Mitchelle, 2015). Data on the influence of transnational space, heterogeneous social networks, and generational shift on immigrant entrepreneurship breakout were collected. Collected data provided better explanations for how transnational environments have changed the breakout process for immigrant entrepreneurs and the particular differences of second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs. Consequently, the empirical study developed the insights generated from the literature review to answer the research questions.

1.6 Research context

The demographic and geographical context of this study is black Africans across developed-developing countries. Previous studies on breakout were conducted in the context of where the country of origin and country of residence are relatively developed and particularly in the context of Asian immigrants breaking into the European mainstream market (Lundberg & Rehnfors, 2018; Drori & Lerner, 2002; Basu, 2011; Perzer, 2016). There is a need for more context-based literature on immigrant entrepreneurs from the global south, especially from a developed-developing country perspective. This is because there are differences between Black African communities and the Asian communities whose immigrant behaviour has dominated the immigrant literature in the UK. For example, Black African communities have weaker social capital than other ethnic communities (Ram et al., 2003) and face more discrimination (Ojo, 2012). They also have less interaction with support agencies (Sepulveda & Rabeverg 2021; Barret & McEvoy, 2013) and are often dominated by necessity entrepreneurs (Ojo, 2012; Nwankwo, 2015).

Although an increasing number of Nigerian immigrants in the UK are engaged in entrepreneurial activities, most of these businesses exist in less competitive and profitable sectors. The need to remain competitive has made many first- and second-generation entrepreneurs embark on various growth activities. As globalisation transforms immigrant entrepreneurship and second-generation immigrants enter the entrepreneurship space, the opportunities available for Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in the home, host, and third countries, require scholarly attention.

1.7 Expected contributions of the study

This study is expected to make significant theoretical, conceptual, policy, and practical contributions in the following areas:

1. Theoretical contribution: This study will contribute to reconceptualizing the framework for explaining the expansion of immigrant businesses. This can take the form of modification of mixed embeddedness theory or recast the notion of the immigrant business breakout to accommodate changes brought about by increasing dependence on transnational space.
2. Empirical contribution: This study will fill the gap in the literature by investigating other dimensions of breakout such as geographical, sectoral, purchasing power, and value chain breakout, which appeared neglected in the literature. It will bring empirical knowledge of breakout activities among the UK Nigerian community to the fore, thereby projecting the

perspective of Sub-Saharan African immigrant entrepreneurs. The study will offer insight into the breakout behaviour of second-generation immigrants and provide timely data on the social network uses in breakout.

3. Contribution to policy and practice: This study will inform public debate on brain drain/brain gain debate and assist policymakers in developing diaspora-friendly policies. It will provide timely data to policymakers in home and host countries in framing unilateral, multilateral, and bilateral interventions for transnational entrepreneurship. It will also help service providers and ethnic associations understand their roles in the transnational environment. This will help reduce social-cultural tensions between first and second-generation immigrants and the unequal access to interventions observed among African immigrant entrepreneurs.

The study is intended to positively impact the lives of Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK. It will contribute to advocacy on the plight of black immigrant entrepreneurs. It will also arm business support service providers with better ways of dealing with the breakout challenges of this category of immigrants. An effort was made to ensure that the study does not enforce stereotyping of black immigrants. Instead, the goal was to influence policymaking progressively in both home and host countries.

1.8 Thesis's structure

The thesis consists of eight chapters as outlined below: Chapter one is the introduction, which contains the background of the study, the rationale, research aims, questions, and the research context. Chapters two and three are for the literature review where theories, concepts, and practices in immigrant entrepreneurship, breakout processes, transnational environment, and different dimensions of embeddedness are reviewed. The conceptual framework for the study is also provided in chapter three. Chapter four is the methodology which highlights the research philosophy, techniques, tools, and assumptions for data collection and analysis. Chapter five describes the context and characteristics of respondents and their businesses which helped to contextualise the study. Chapter six discusses the breakout experiences of the entrepreneurs, analysing data regarding breakout motives, strategies, drivers, mistakes, and learning. Chapter seven discusses embeddedness and sets out a breakout typology of the immigrant entrepreneurs

to better understand the effect of transnational space, generational shift, and social networks. Chapter eight presents a concluding discussion that summarises the research findings, discusses the study's contributions, and provides recommendations based on the empirical study.

1.9. Summary

Chapter one has pinpointed the deficient and context-insensitive conceptualisation of breakout, exacerbated by advances in digital technology, globalisation, and diverse forms of immigrant entrepreneurship, as the knowledge gap the study intends to fill. The study addresses this gap by situating the study in a transnational context that incorporates the perspective of first and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs. Aside from the conceptual and theoretical significance of the study, the research intends to yield insights that would be helpful to immigrant entrepreneurs, ethnic organisations, support service providers, and policymakers in host and home countries. Having provided a background understanding of the research, a review of relevant literature will start in the next chapter and conclude with the study's conceptual framework in Chapter three.

Chapter Two

Theorising breakout in immigrant entrepreneurship

2.0 Introduction

This chapter examines the theories in immigrant entrepreneurship that underpin practices of immigrant businesses and understands the basis for conceptualizing breakout in a transnational environment. The nature of immigrant entrepreneurs' embeddedness is particularly analysed to understand the conceptual framework adopted in the study. In addition, various empirical studies in the study area will be examined to highlight their strengths and weaknesses. Immigrant entrepreneurship theories, including transnational mixed embeddedness theory relevant to the study, will also be reviewed to identify gaps that will inform this research and that the study is meant to fill. A systematic review approach was adopted to ensure that all literature relevant to the theme of the study was considered. Publish or perish software was used to identify the relevant literature using a combination of keywords related to the study.

The structure of the chapter is as follows: It starts with a review of immigrant entrepreneurship theories and critique of mixed embeddedness framework, followed by an analysis of the different definitions of breakout and how breakout has been conceptualised. The concept of transanational environment will be reviewed before the three dimensions of immigrant entrepreneur embeddedness (structural, relational and cognitive) will be introduced.

2.1 Theories of immigrant entrepreneurship

Three main theoretical approaches, including disadvantage, culturalist, and interactive theories, dominated immigrant entrepreneurship literature before the 21st century. Early literature on immigrant entrepreneurship focused on the status gap in ethnic stratified society and discrimination as reasons for immigrant entrepreneurship. This disadvantage approach was overshadowed by culturalist theory which argued that immigrant entrepreneurship is attributed to cultural traits, ethnic resources, ethnic orientation, and distinctive group characteristics recognisable in a particular ethnic group. Then in the early 1990s, Waldinger et al. (1990) proposed an interactive model stressing opportunity structure, ethnic strategies, and group characteristics as determinants of immigrant entrepreneurship. However, this theory was criticised for being narrow and for

focusing on ethnic-specific variables. Recent theories include mixed embeddedness, simultaneous mixed embeddedness, and the transnational mixed embeddedness theories (Daniel et al., 2019, Kloosterman, 2010; Basu, 2011; You & Zhou, 2019; Bagwell, 2018). Mixed Embeddedness (ME) theory which has dominated immigrant literature in the European context since the late 1990s, was applauded as the 'greatest' single theoretical leap in the field (You & Zhou, 2019). This section will discuss key theories on immigrant entrepreneurship as they provide a basis for interpreting immigrant entrepreneur breakout.

2.1.1 Ethnic enclave theory

Previous studies in migrant entrepreneurship narrowed ethnic minority studies to ethnic enclaves where ethnic businesses and residencies are geographically clustered. Ethnic enclave theory argues that there are specific demands for ethnic products which can only be filled by a launch of ethnic enterprises (Ojo, 2013). The concept of protected market and ethnic niche is derived from ethnic enclave theory. Ethnic enclave refers to market potential found within ethnic communities that only members of an ethnic community can meet. According to Chen & Tan (2014), ethnic enclaves are a spatial concentration of ethnic firms and co-ethnic cooperation. The authors used 'Panethopolis' to describe an urban ethnic enclave made up of immigrants who share neigbourhood space and maintain relations with their home country. Although reliance on ethnic resources supports co-ethnic, clustering can lead to overcrowding, fierce competition, and less profit. Vincent et al. (2015) observed that promoting self-help group development within more marginal communities could embed disadvantage in ethnic enclaves. Waldinger et al. (1990), Rusinovic (2008), Zolin et al. (2015), and Ram & Hillin (1994) all employed ethnic enclave theory in their studies. They were influenced by the structural embeddedness perspective, which only considers entrepreneurs' resources from a market perspective.

2.1.2 Middleman minority theory

The next theory that was used in the study of immigrant entrepreneurship was the middleman minority theory. This theory attributed to Edna Bonacich postulates that some immigrants engage in entrepreneurship by playing middleman positions between elites and the masses, producers and consumers, and natives and other ethnic groups (Bonacich, 1973). Middleman minorities immigrants are found in societies marked by distinct strata boundaries which enables them to intermediate between different strata. Examples of middleman minority immigrants are the Jews in

Europe, the Chinese in Southeast Asia, the Indians in Uganda, and the Koreans in the USA (Min & Koldny, 1994). According to Ojo (2013), the theory argues that exclusion that forced ethnic entrepreneurs to take intermediary positions led to establishing such enterprises. Key features of this group of immigrants are their sojourn attitude, strong ethnic cohesion, and dominance of particular business sectors (Bonacich, 1973). These immigrants do not consider themselves permanent residents because of their overt willingness to return home. As a result, Valenzuela-Garcia, &(2018) affirmed that middleman minorities are groups of ethnic entrepreneurs who move from place to place, looking for business opportunities and in most cases mediate between local society and other immigrant communities. They usually concentrate on trade and commerce and build resources that usually circulate within the group. Members of this group practice self-segregation; they avoid getting involved in local affairs and prefer their institutions like schools, shops, banks, and residencies (Ram & Hillin, 1994). Middlemen minority prefer dealing with elites in the host society, and as a result, they face significant hostility from the masses in host countries.

2.1.3 Mixed embeddedness theory

Mixed embeddedness (ME) theory, which became prominent in the late 1990s, gained researchers' attention because it integrated some immigrant entrepreneurship theories into one framework. The authors proposed a comprehensive conceptual framework for exploring migrant economies at the macro, meso, and micro-level. The framework relates ethnic group characteristics (i.e., social, cultural, or economic resources) to the opportunity structure available (i.e., the set of opportunities that individual entrepreneurs can exploit).

"*We will show that the socioeconomic position of immigrant entrepreneurs — and, consequently, also their prospects with respect to upward social mobility — can only be properly understood by taking into account not only their embeddedness in social networks of immigrants but also their embeddedness in the socio-economic and politico-institutional environment of the country of settlement. We, therefore, propose the use of a concept, mixed embeddedness, which encompasses both sides of embeddedness to analyze processes of insertion of immigrant entrepreneurs. Complex configurations of mixed embeddedness enable immigrant businesses to survive"* (Kloosterman, Van der Leun, & Rath, 1999: pp 257).

The theory showcases the influence of institutional, political, and socio-economic structures in the emergence and development of migrant economies. It uses a multi-scale analysis to explore the

relationship between market potential and market access (Solano, 2019). The connection between what can be provided by markets, organisations, families, and co-ethnic social networks determines the niches in which immigrants' enterprises are placed. Wang (2013) observed that the interplay of opportunity structure, group characteristics; strategies; and mobilisation of resources constitute a "strategic space" for immigrant entrepreneurs.

ME theory argues that the prospects and behaviour of immigrant entrepreneurs can be understood by taking into account their embeddedness in their ethnic community and host country's institutional arrangements (Kloosterman et al., 2010). The theory stresses the importance of interaction between the entrepreneur, the environment, and contexts in determining the emergence and development of immigrant businesses. ME theory has been used in many immigrant entrepreneurship studies (Lasssell & Scot, 2018; Allen & Bussee, 2016; Slavnic, 2012; Wang & Warn, 2019; Arrighetti et al. 2014; Ram & Jones ,2008; Ojo ,2013; Drori & Lerner, 2002). It integrated structural and relational embeddedness and explained that the resources and opportunity structure available for ethnic entrepreneurs are shaped by the political, institutional, and regulatory regime in the host society where they are embedded.

2.1.4 Critique of Mixed embeddedness (ME) theory

Despite that ME provided a comprehensive framework for understanding the institutional, entrepreneurs' social capital, and entrepreneurs' individual-level variables influencing ethnic minority businesses, the following weaknesses have been identified:

Firstly, ME is criticised for its static and physical view of space which is no longer valid owing to global dynamics of the fluidity of exchange, super-diversity, and super connectivity (Valenzuela-Garcia et al., 2018). Ethnic boundaries are becoming increasingly porous. Hypermobility and the confluence of ethnicities blur mixed embeddedness' definition of micro, meso, and macro levels. The traditional understanding of migrant economies as locally circumscribed and physical is changing owing to global dynamics. According to Sandoz et al. (2021), hypermobility resulting from globalisation affirms that space is no longer a static domain but a dynamic realm. Unlike before, when a place is subject to time and space, fluidity and intensity in the flow of resources, ideas, and people reveal that space is progressively conquering place. Ethnic boundaries are increasingly becoming porous, and delineation between ethnicity is shifting. As a result, ME's definition of micro, meso and macro levels needs to be re-conceptualised.

Secondly, ME ignores the transnational perspective of immigrant entrepreneurs because of the implicit assumption that ethnic immigrants are geographically restricted. However, there is increasing evidence that immigrant entrepreneurs utilise their transnational ties (weak and strong ties) to access and exploit opportunities within the socio-political and economic context of the host community and even the global environment.

ME has always focused on the country of residence in its analysis. However, some authors argue for a shift towards transnational embeddedness to accommodate the transnational level of immigrants' experience owing to the spread of immigrant communities worldwide (Bagwell, 2015; Sandoz et al., 2021). According to Miera (2008), immigrant entrepreneurship makes less meaning, except it is conceptualised from a transnational perspective because immigrants are intrinsically transnational due to technological advances and globalisation. Neglect of transnational elements appears to be the commonest backlash against ME in recent times. There is increasing evidence that immigrants utilise their transnational ties to access and exploit opportunities in the host society and globally (Solano, 2019; Chen & Tan, 2014). According to Valenzuela-Garcia et al. (2018), the border crossing activities of immigrant entrepreneurs demonstrate that resources can be mobilised from the country of residence, country of origin, and third countries where immigrants have ties and experiences.

Thirdly, ethnic and individual resources of entrepreneurs are heterogeneous, not homogenous as ME implied. Owing to super-diversity and super connectivity, the assumption of the pre-existence of an ethnic community is becoming weaker. Some authors who argued in favour of emplacement theory against mixed embeddedness said that immigrants build new layers of networks (aside from old personal, family, and ethnic networks) as they interact with a given network of opportunities and constraints (Valenzuela-Garcia et al. 2018). The term 'glocalised network' describes the form of social networks immigrants possess, which is diverse and multifocal, cutting across ethnicity, national border, and economic regimes. Zhou (2014) criticised ME's assumption of the pre-existence of an ethnic community, arguing that immigrants do not already have existing social networks.

Finally, ME focused more on structural constraints and neglected the entrepreneurs' social agency and dynamic efforts. Villeres-Varela et al. (2018: 125) criticised mixed embeddedness theory for its emphasis on structural constraints and neglect of social agency and the entrepreneurs' efforts. The authors adopted Realist social theory (RST) in their study of ethnic entrepreneur bricolage because

they believed that ME failed to acknowledge entrepreneurs' dynamic and active role in navigating the constraints posed by institutional structure and resource inadequacies. According to them, "there is the need to operationalise the transformational potential of entrepreneurial agents." These researchers argued that entrepreneurs are active agents and resilient in the face of constraints, and they compensate for their lack of resources by activating agential capacities and bricolage. Vincent et al. (2015) criticised mixed embeddedness theory for neglecting entrepreneurs' social reality and causal force (ME assumes that entrepreneurs are docile agents who accept whatever their lots in the market are by opting for market positioning). The authors viewed immigrant entrepreneurs as people who resiliently shape the terms of the market in which they are embedded. Cortes (2009) averred that immigrant entrepreneurs as primary agents of space employ local and transnational strategies, resources, and ties to stay afloat and move beyond structural boundaries. In response to some of these criticisms, transnational mixed embeddedness theory was introduced.

2.1.5 Transnational embeddedness theory

The theory argues that immigrant entrepreneurs are embedded in the host country context and other countries' context where they have entrepreneurial interests (Bagwell, 2018; Chen & Tan, 2014). In other words, the development of immigrant businesses is influenced not just by the interaction of opportunity structure in the host society and the entrepreneur's resources, as suggested by the mixed embeddedness theory, but also by institutional regimes, economies, and markets in countries where the immigrants are embedded. This theory affirmed that new transnational opportunities could be exploited depending on access to the necessary local and transnational forms of capital. You & Zhou (2019) shared a similar opinion but related that most immigrant entrepreneurs restrict their entrepreneurial activities to home and host countries. They suggested a simultaneous embeddedness framework to demonstrate the increasing role of home country conditions in shaping entrepreneurship activities of immigrants.

Transnational mixed embeddedness addressed some weaknesses of ME by extending the spheres of opportunities and resources available to immigrant entrepreneurs to third countries (Chen & Tan, 2014). Admittedly, the immigrant business growth trajectory is shaped by factors that cut across interpersonal, socioeconomic, and institutional factors in host, home and other countries. These factors exist in multiple layers of socio-economic and political circumstances in different countries

where immigrant entrepreneurs have business ties, resources, and interests (Solano, 2019, Bagwell, 2018; Sandoz et al., 2012). Extant literature noted that not all immigrant entrepreneurs are transnational entrepreneurs, but there is increasing evidence that all immigrant entrepreneurs, regardless of size and sector, are shaped by transnational forces (You & Zhou, 2019; Sandoz et al., 2012).

Transnational mixed embeddedness is thus chosen for the study because it provides the framework for analysing the impact of both the diaspora and host society's contexts on immigrant entrepreneurship. In this globalised society, immigrant entrepreneurs are intrinsically transnational because transnational space, directly and indirectly, affect their entrepreneurship and is increasingly becoming a source of resource flow for capital, ideas, social networks, information, markets, and skills.

2.2. Contextualizing transnational environment

Transnationality is defined as processes that span the boundaries of two or more countries in an involving and simultaneous manner (Rouse, 2019). Concepts such as international and transnationality are used to refer to issues involving more than one country. However, transnationality is used when the process is between or beyond national boundaries, while international has to do with more than one country (Moghaddam et al., 2018). In another light, people and organisations initiate transnationality, unlike international, which to a large extent is initiated by public and governmental bodies. Transnationality can be a political, economic, and sociocultural process that links immigrants with their home countries or connects diaspora communities to their homeland (Rouse, 2019). Transnationality in this context refers to socio-economic processes that span national boundaries usually created by immigrants as they engage with their home, host, and third countries simultaneously (Sandoz, 2021; Solano, 2016).

A transnational environment is one where forces of globalisation, new technologies in transportation and telecommunication, and increasing scale of socioeconomic mobility integrate ethnic economies into the global production and distribution chain. It is characterised by the increasing flow of resources and people across ethnic and national boundaries, uptake of multiple identities, and embeddedness in multifocal social networks. Studying immigrant entrepreneur breakout in a transnational environment is apt because adaptation to mainstream market preferences may not be the goal of breakout (Lasselle & Scot, 2016). Immigrant entrepreneurs have

a variety of markets to break into aside from the mainstream market. Transnational space is created when immigrants connect to their home countries and other places they have socio-economic interest through economic activities, social networks, or uptake of their identities.

Globalisation and transnational forces appeared to have created a significantly different context from the traditional immigrant context. In a traditional immigrant context, 'place' is delineated and subject to similar forces, but in a transnational environment, 'place' is porous, and the influence of external forces is enormous. In a traditional immigrant environment, the social network of immigrant entrepreneurs is co-ethnic and, in some cases, bifocal (Solano, 2019). However, in a transnational environment, social networks are heterogeneous and diverse, including transnational ties and 'families' who are non-ethnic. Immigrants share similar norms and values in the traditional immigrant context because of the same ethnicity. Contrastingly, in the transnational environment, both first- and second-generation immigrants have multiple identities and share different norms due to their identifying with different orientations from the co-migrant, host society, or third countries (Bagwell, 2018). These changes have affected the breakout processes of immigrant entrepreneurs, making it imperative to reconceptualise break out in light of these realities.

2.3 Ethnic versus immigrant entrepreneurship

The two concepts of ethnic and immigrant entrepreneurship are frequently used interchangeably in literature and policy studies, to refer to the business activities of non-indigenous entrepreneurs. Despite this, the terms are legally and conceptually different. As Valdoz (2002) points out, all immigrants are ethnic entrepreneurs but all ethnic entrepreneurs are not immigrant entrepreneurs. Kloosterman (2010) defined ethnic entrepreneurs as a class of entrepreneurs that depend on ethnic markets, ethnic resources, or deal in ethnic products. Immigrant entrepreneurs on the other hand are usually first-generation entrepreneurs from another country who may not have assured residency in the host country. Light (2000) argued that second and subsequent immigrant generations are ethnic entrepreneurs, and not immigrant entrepreneurs because they have settled status and have assimilated into the host country. Valdoz (2002) defined ethnic businesses as ventures owned by immigrants and ethnic group members. The key distinction often made in the existing literature is that whereas immigrant entrepreneurs have a strong link with their home country, most ethnic entrepreneurs do not have such a strong link because they are usually citizens of the host country.

Minority entrepreneur is an umbrella name for ethnic, immigrant and other classes of non-indigenous entrepreneurs and disadvantaged groups. It is a policy-making concept for aggregating classes of entrepreneurs that lack resources or face barriers compared to established businesses. Valdoz (2002) clarified that women and senior entrepreneurs are not ethnic entrepreneurs but belong to minority entrepreneurs.

Despite that some of the entrepreneurs studied can be classified as ethnic entrepreneurs, the term 'Immigrant entrepreneur' is used in this study because it captures the circumstances of their entrepreneurial context. Kloosterman & Rath (2001) observed that minority entrepreneurs from less developed countries are different from other classes of entrepreneurs because they face discrimination, limited opportunities, and high entry barriers. The entrepreneurs studied despite their generation and citizenship status face discrimination. Owing to skin colour, even second and subsequent generations remain identified as 'immigrants' (Becker & Blumberg 2013). The concept of 'immigrant entrepreneur' was used in this study because the practices and embeddedness discussed in the research, particularly in relation to home country relations, match this concept. In the UK, the category 'ethnicity' is related to issues of identity or the recognition of the identity of the individuals and communities, sometimes beyond nationalities or citizenship. This is different in other countries where they only consider migrants in relation to their migratory status. As a result, use of the term 'immigrant entrepreneur' is more suitable in studying the UK context as it relates to where entrepreneurs come from, more than the identity they assume.

2.4 The concept of breakout

Understanding the nature of this concept is necessary to understand immigrant business breakout background. Literature acknowledged sectoral skewness of immigrant entrepreneurship. In most immigrant destinations globally, immigrants usually operate in inner-city locations (Ram et al., 2004; Basu, 2011); in less profitable sectors such as retailing or filling the void abandoned by mainstream business owners or as intermediaries to natives (Rusonovic, 2008; Kloosterman, 2010). Immigrant entrepreneurs are visible in marginal activities because of inadequate resources and possession of skills that are usually not transferable (Parzer, 2016; Drori & Lerner, 2002). Some immigrant businesses stagnate because of intense local competition, pressure to operate on the margin with ineffective product differentiation, or restricted to serving only ethnic clients. According to Ram et

al. (2004), perceived progress usually observed in immigrant entrepreneurship results from cheap labour, preferential treatment from suppliers, and interest-free credit from social networks.

Breaking out of such a situation remains the aspiration of most immigrant entrepreneurs; that is why the term 'breakout' is becoming an attractive phenomenon among immigrant business researchers (Rusonovic, 2004; McPherson, 2019; Ram et al., 2004).

In recent times, breakout cases are occurring sporadically; immigrants are becoming successful entrepreneurs and established businesses in non-traditional sectors (Razaei, 2007; Barret & McEvoy, 2013). Dheer (2018) observed that 21st-century immigrants are different owing to their class resources (transnational ties, education, experience, and access to funds). Unlike in the past, when a higher percentage of immigrants are low-skilled, an increasing percentage of recent immigrants are high-skilled driven by opportunities instead of survival. Kerr et al. (2016) revealed that the number of skilled workers migrating to OECD countries has increased by 130% since 1990 compared to a 40% increase for low-skilled workers. Skilled immigrants are effective conduits for many forms of multidimensional exchanges in the area of knowledge, investments, commerce, and technology (Parson & Winters, 2014). As immigration policies of advanced nations in America and Europe have changed from attracting low-cost labour to attracting talents, many immigrants are moving into entrepreneurship with higher human and social resources. This is happening simultaneously with emerging nations making their markets and emigration policies favourable for immigrant entrepreneurship. Mobbah et al. (2018) noted that many immigrant businesses had developed mainstream market orientation, enabling them to operate in new economies like consultancy, financial services, and professional services. Despite the hostility and discrimination of some host nations, an increasing number of immigrants are achieving economic inclusion by defying the norms with their boundary-breaking activities (Griffin-el & Olabisi, 2018). Several immigrant entrepreneurs are diversifying into flourishing sectors such as ICT, creative industry, and professional services in the UK, growing beyond the micro-scale level (Ram et al., 2004). In the views of McPherson (2019), there are noticeable changes in the disposition and narratives of immigrant entrepreneurs. A new breed of immigrants deploys intense human capital, expertise, and knowledge to establish themselves in a new economy.

There is increasing attention to understanding the processes that enabled these immigrant businesses to grow beyond their limited markets. Dheer (2018) described these processes as

strategies that enable immigrant entrepreneurs to convert and exploit opportunities. These strategies include integration into the dominant market, serving the universal market, multicultural hybridism, and exploiting locational advantage. The author also observed that some immigrant entrepreneurs prefer to grow linearly by pursuing break out after years of being in the ethnic market. Others focus on the non-ethnic market at inception. This view is dissimilar to Ram et al. (2004), who reiterated that immigrants usually start their enterprise with high dependence on ethnic resources before accumulating class resources and social credentials needed for a breakout.

2.4.1 Definition of breakout

Breakout is a term usually associated with the growth and success of ethnic minority businesses. In a broad sense, it encompasses entrepreneurial activities geared towards making ethnic minority businesses sustainable and viable. Ram & Hillin (1994), in their seminal work on the immigrant business breakout, defined breakout as *"escaping from constraining market circumstances which ethnic businesses found themselves."* The authors argued that racial constraints, unfavourable opportunity structure, and resource inadequacies restrict immigrant businesses from progressing to lucrative positions of the economy. They maintained that breakout is a necessity without which immigrant businesses will be unsustainable. Complementary to the above discussion is the concept of a break-in. This concept refers to breakout destinations. Ram & Hillin (1994) defined break-in as *gaining access into a majority market that is sustainable, expansible, and viable.* Extensive literature revealed common themes in the definition of breakout. They include escape from ethnic, spatial, and geographic constraints. Others are shifting from traditional sectors, marginal positions, and customers with low purchasing power. The ethnicity dimension was the dominant perspective, whereas purchasing power dimension was the least.

I. Breakout as ending reliance on ethnic markets

Analysis of breakout literature revealed that ethnicity was the most common dimension of breakout in immigrant entrepreneurship. Authors that defined breakout using this dimension include Drori & Lerner (2002), Rusinovic (2008), Allen & Busse (2016), and Evansluong et al. (2018). They conclude that breakout entails ending reliance on ethnic markets and resources and overcoming ethnic traps in which most immigrant businesses found themselves. The dominance of the ethnicity dimension of breakout made many authors define breakout as moving out of an ethnic enclave.

Due to structural barriers and resource inadequacy, immigrant entrepreneurs usually start their entrepreneurial activities within their ethnic market, relying heavily on ethnic resources and competing intensely in saturated markets. However, owing to the increasing number of ethnic entrepreneurs serving the same stagnated market called ethnic enclave, the market gets increasingly saturated, generating a desire for a breakout. Villeres-Varela, Ram & Jones (2018) defined breakout as a "projective response to market saturation." They construed breakout as growing beyond this 'protected market.' A protected market is a market in which an ethnic group has a unique advantage because of the nature of the product and customers.

In contrast, non-ethnic entrepreneurs do not have the credibility to serve in such markets. The unique advantage can stem from ethnic loyalty or entrepreneurs' knowledge of the product. The protected market hypothesis is derived from ethnic enclave theory and is usually construed as market demand that can only be met by members of a particular ethnic group (Ojo, 2013). The author argued that the ethnic colouring of a business and its products prevent non-ethnic customers from patronizing ethnic businesses. In his view, a breakout is an entrepreneurial activity geared towards integrating ethnic businesses into the mainstream markets. McPherson (2019) argued that most immigrant businesses assumed that they operate in mainstream business, whereas in reality, they display ethnocultural traits that trap them in ethnic markets. The author averred that immigrants' unnecessary emphasis on religious, cultural, and generational factors inhibits their acceptance of mainstream markets.

Some authors included ending socially induced constraints in their definition of breakout (Slavnic, 2012; Allen & Bussee, 2016). These authors argued that breakout is an escape from socio-economic discrimination. Evansluong et al. (2018) defined breakout as marketing strategies and actions deployed by immigrant firms to identify and grow economic enterprises amidst discrimination. Following the acculturation perspective, the authors viewed breakout as a strategy for achieving social inclusion. These scholars do not see breakout as a monolithic economic activity but as sociocultural and entrepreneurial actions within the segregation and discrimination milieu. Their definition of breakout linked breakout, entrepreneurial opportunities, and acculturation. Expanding this view, Griffin & Olabisi (2018) defined breakout as breaking socially constructed boundaries and gaining access to national and international markets. Table 2.1 illustrates some definitions of breakout and break-in following the ethnicity dimension.

Table 2.1: Synthesis of breakout/break-in definitions

Authors	Break-out	Break-in
Parzer (2016)	Ending reliance on ethnic market and resources	Becoming attractive to customers beyond ethnic community
Barret and McEnvoy (2013)	Moving out of struggling co-ethnic markets	Operating in profitable co-ethnic and non-ethnic market desirable to other firms, predominantly indigenous businesses
Smith & Wistrich (2001)	Breaking out of ethnic traps	Gaining competitive ground in markets beyond ethnic enclaves
Slavnic (2012)	Getting rid of ethnic stamp	Total assimilation into mainstream markets
Basu (2011)	Moving out of ethnic markets	Attaining breakthroughs in more promising markets with wider opportunities
Zolin et al. (2015)	Growing beyond protected markets	Operating in mainstream markets
Chen & Tan (2014)	A socio-spatial shift from inner-city enclaves	Entering high-order mainstream market unlimited by ethnicity or location
McPherson (2019)	Operating according to mainstream market customs, unconstrained by ethnic and spatial membership	Gaining acceptance in a market that span beyond ethnic and geographical neigbourhood
Arrighetti et al. (2014)	A shift away from old sectors, traditional markets, and ethnic customers.	Competing in a mainstream market and catering for universal customers in non-traditional sectors.
Deakins et al. (1997)	Overcoming being trapped in a market with a declining market share	Operating in economic sectors that are viable with high growth potentials
Rezaei (2007)	Moving out of immigrant dominated business sector	Competing in similar sectors like indigenous businesses
Wang & Warn (2019)	A shift from low return and labour intensive startup	Engaging in more competitive business activities; targeting mainstream clientele.
Ojo (2013)	Moving out of fringes of mainstream markets and stagnant sectors	Serving mainstream customers in high order markets with opportunities for growth
Ram et al.. (2003)	Exiting marginal activities historically occupied by immigrants	Operating in markets with high entry barriers

Interestingly, in Table 2.1 above, the authors defined break-in as operating in a market without ethnic restrictions. These authors believe that ethnic minority businesses have broken in when competing with other established businesses for the same customers. In their views, ethnic businesses that are not discriminated against or considered minority businesses have broken in. Break-in occurs when ethnic businesses build cross-cultural knowledge and networks and participate in mainstream markets. Barret & McEnvoy (2013) defined break-in as operating in profitable co-ethnic and non-ethnic markets desirable to other firms especially indigenous businesses. Ojo (2013) construed break-in as serving mainstream customers with growth opportunities. Break-in occurs when ethnic businesses gain respect and recognition from customers from other ethnic groups. Parzer (2016) defined break-in as attracting customers beyond an ethnic community. Rusinovic (2008) defined break-in strictly in terms of "adapting to preferences of the mainstream market." Ethnic minority entrepreneurship literature usually refers to the mainstream market as the host community's market. Slavnic (2012:42) defined break-in as "*total assimilation into the mainstream market."* His interpretation of break-in is a recognizable adaptation to the preferences and tastes of the host community.

II. Breakout as an escape from spatial constraints

Several researchers (Zolin et al., 2015; Chen & Tan, 2014; McPherson, 2019; Gonzalez & Campbell, 2018) viewed breakout as moving out of spatial constraints that hinder immigrant businesses. Owing to inadequate resources and dependence on ethnic resources, immigrant entrepreneurs tend to cluster in inner-city enclaves where they serve abandoned niches as well as ethnic markets. Ram et al. (2004) observed that immigrants located in dispersed areas are doing well compared to those in inner-city locations and advocated extension of geographical coverage as a way of breakout. This dimension construed breakout as a shift from an ethnic enclave and restrictive spatial locations. Chen & Tan (2014) defined breakout as a "socio-spatial shift from inner-city enclaves." Zolin et al. (2015) and Villeres-Varela et al. (2018), following this paradigm, defined breakout as growing beyond a protected market and dealing with consequences of market saturation.

Growing customer bases beyond neigbourhood clients and extending to regional and national markets simplify what geographical breakout entails. This approach defines breakout as dynamic strategies immigrant entrepreneurs employ to succeed beyond ethnic enclaves into other locations.

Extant literature concurred that ethnic enclaves limit business resources access (Ram et al., 2000). Immigrant entrepreneurs are trapped in neigbourhood markets because of poor articulation of business model, poor managerial acumen, and inability to delineate economic space from social space (Ojo, 2019). Following the theory of dynamic capabilities, this definition of breakout emphasises structures, skills, decisions, and processes used by immigrant entrepreneurs to shape their competence and confront business environmental factors. The authors argued that breakout consists of dynamic capabilities that enable immigrants to overcome blocked mobility and neibourhood market challenges.Whereas the definition of breakout focuses on overcoming locational constraints, break-in focuses on gaining customers in areas beyond ethnic catchment territories.

III. Breakout as moving out of immigrant dominated business sector

The sectoral dimension of breakout conceives breakout as moving out of traditional businesses, which immigrants are known for. Following the sectoral dimension, a breakout is defined as a shift from immigrants' traditional sectors to modern sectors that are less crowded and profitable. According to Wang & Warn (2019), a breakout is a shift from low return and labour-intensive start-up to a more competitive business**.** The authors viewed breakout as moving out of businesses characterised by low entry barriers. Deakins et al. (1997), Ram et al. (2003), and Arighetti et al. (2014) used terms like declining market share, overcrowded markets, abandoned niches, and industry subsectors with low entry barriers to describe traditional niches where immigrant businesses operate customarily.

Immigrant businesses are trapped in unpromising sectors such as retail, cleaning, transportation, and personal services because they lack the requisite resources to operate in competitive sectors. Class resources such as finance, managerial capabilities, and social network mix are needed to operate in high-growth sectors. Finance appears to be the most scarce resource since some immigrants depend on informal sources for their business funding (Ojo, 2013). However, breakout requires development capital aside from startup capital, usually obtainable from formal financial institutions. Breakout also requires capabilities to manage change, innovate and respond in real-time to market conditions.

Nevertheless, racial prejudice and environmental factors hinder immigrant entrepreneurs from generating these needed resources. Breakout requires more than changing the nature of ethnic

embeddedness in business processes and product offering and the sector of business activity. A review of extant literature revealed that the sectoral dimension was not studied singularly, unlike the ethnicity dimension. Most authors who studied breakout from sectoral dimension combined it with other dimensions notably, ethnicity.

Break-in is conceptualised following this perspective as establishing a business venture in a high-growth sector. Ram & Jones (2008: 78) defined break-in as *"operating in non -traditional sectors and diversifying into new areas of the economy*." In their view, break-in commences when opportunities, not survival, drive an ethnic business. An ethnic business has broken in when it operates innovative ventures in competitive sectors and when ethnicity and proximity are no longer barriers to expansion. Some definitions of breakout and break-in are presented below:

IV. Breakout as a shift to a higher position in the value chain

This dimension of breakout definition sees breakout as improving immigrant business position in the economic value chain. Authors that employed this perspective assert that a breakout is an act of resisting the tendency to remain in the lower end of the market and gain the necessary empowerment to deal with the challenges of seclusion and attract non-ethnic customers. In their view, breakout entails breaking out of informality and cultural practices that inhibit growth and keep immigrant businesses on the fringes of economic activities. The value chain dimension construes breakout in terms of a shift from a low position in the value chain (usually labour intensive and ease of entry) to a higher position in the value chain. Ram et al.. (2003) referred to breakout as exiting marginal activities historically occupied by immigrants. Wang & Warn (2019) viewed breakout as a shift from low return and labour intensive start-up to a competitive business. Value chain dimension is also not typical like ethnicity dimension. Authors who adopted the value chain perspective argued that break-in is finding expandable niches in profitable, less crowded, capital-intensive sectors where customers have high purchasing power. Villeres-Varela et al. (2018) defined break-in as breaking through from survival level towards growth. Ethnic businesses have broken in when they are no longer in low-value market spaces undesirable to indigenous firms.

2.4.2 Conceptualisation of breakout

Ram & Hillin (1994), who introduced the term 'breakout' in the study of immigrant businesses, used a multidimensional perspective consisting of ethnicity, geographical, sectoral, position in the value chain, and purchasing power. Despite that their study utilised ethnic enclave theory, it was evident

that their conceptualisation of breakout was non-ethnic. The authors used 'breakout' to explain diversification or shift to a viable, sustainable, and expansible future. However, some subsequent studies commonly view breakout as escaping from ethnic clutches.

Waldinger & Aldrich (1990) and Rusonovic (2008) identified two breakout pathways: direct and indirect. A direct breakout occurs when an ethnic entrepreneur that sells ethnic products to ethnic customers begins selling to non-co-ethnic customers. In the indirect breakout, the ethnic entrepreneur moves from ethnic market to middleman market and from there to niche market before arriving at the mainstream market. Rusonovic (2008) also identified two common forms of breakout: horizontal and vertical breakout. The former requires moving up the value chain while the latter requires gaining new locations. He contended that full breakout is achieved not by first-generation but by the second generation. Ram et al. (2004) reiterated the need for a multidimensional view of a breakout by defining breakout as a transition from surviving to growing that enables immigrant businesses to venture into a contested economic arena. The authors see ending reliance on ethnic customer base as an insignificant determinant of breakout. Their emphasis is on moving into high-level activities such as wholesaling, manufacturing, and services.

American and European conceptualisation of breakout differ. Whereas assimilation of immigrants into mainstream culture was common in America, most European immigrant destinations do not favour assimilation (Sepulveda et al., 2011; Vertovec, 2007). European societies appear to favour diversity and multicultural environments, making it challenging to define breakout destinations effectively. In addition, whereas ethnicity and spatial dimensions are common with retail and businesses that offer tangible products, sectoral and value chain dimensions are familiar with immigrant firms in the service industry.

The breakout concept suggests that being trapped in an unrewarding market is not fixed. Immigrant entrepreneurs can improve the prospects of their businesses by drastic alteration of the marketing mix to overcome ethnic, spatial, and psychic limitations. This change involves a dynamic use of business capabilities to exploit opportunities at the intersection of entrepreneur, firm, and environmental factors. Mitchell (2015) admitted that breakout is not a singular act but a multifaceted phenomenon involving a combination of strategic processes and resources that enable locked-in firms to improve their market prospects.

From the foregoing, breakout encompasses the following key ideas:

- A shift, moving away, crossing boundaries, and breaking existing protocol.
- The state of immigrant businesses desiring breakout is constraining, saturated, undesirable, less competitive, and labour intensive with less room for expansion.
- The constraints are imposed by the inadequacy of entrepreneurs' resources, institutional constraints, and market conditions.
- There are spatial, ethnic, sectoral, value chain, and purchasing power constraints.
- Destination of breakout is a market with growth potentials, unrestricted by usual constraints facing immigrant businesses, meeting the needs of non-ethnic customers, and competing favourably on equal footing with other indigenous businesses (Ram et al., 2004; Wang & Warn 2019; Chen & Tan, 2014).

Based on this review, the researcher defined breakout as "***branching out and diversifying away from the lower-end market and seeking opportunities to serve new customers in niches unrestricted by ethnicity, sector, location, and buying power***. This is my working definition which will be used in the rest of the study.

On the other hand, it is evident that break-in consists of:

- Gaining access, breakthrough, reasonable ground, and reputation in a market.
- The market can be new, expandable, wider, promising, profitable, free from ethnicity, purchasing power, and location constraints.
- The market may be virtual or spatial, local or transnational, ethnic-based or non- ethnic-based but has room for universal customers.

Based on this review, the researcher defined break-in as ***gaining acceptance in a profitable and promising niche market, unconstrained by ethnic loyalty, location, insufficient purchasing power, and catering for universal customers, especially in non-traditional sectors*** (My working definition).

2.4.3 Limitations of existing breakout conceptualisation

The existing conceptualisation of breakout due to recent socio-economic and technological development has some limitations. Firstly, the dominance of the assimilationist view on the study of breakout has been challenged. The Assimilationist view emphasises adaptation to mainstream market preferences as a goal of breakout (Rusinovoc, 2008; Slavnic, 2001). However, the goal of

breakout is larger than removing ethnic labels (Lasselle & Scott, 2016; Villeres-Valera et al., 2018). Serving non ethnic customers should not be the only yardstick for judging the entrepreneurial success of immigrants. Although some studies have criticised the assimilationist view, arguments against adaptation to mainstream preferences as an important breakout goal are not yet strong.

Most studies in immigrant entrepreneurship assumed that ethnic identities and networks form the basis for immigrants' actions. Differences in entrepreneurial behaviours, successes, markets, moral frameworks, and loyalties are usually attributed to ethnicity. However, this approach has denied scholars a better understanding of migrant entrepreneurship as interpretations were made using an ethnic lens (Schiller & Caglar, 2013). Some authors have called for increased focus on the emplacement perspective to address this challenge. The emplacement perspective examines the relationship between the economic, political, and cultural positioning of cities within a broader network of power and the ability of immigrants to forge a place for themselves within a specific locality. The emphasis is not on ethnicity but on place and time. Immigrant entrepreneurship from this perspective is influenced by perceived opportunities and structures in their locality and not by their ethnic identities. This non-ethnic approach seeks to understand immigrant entrepreneurship from the positioning of a city at a particular period and within situations shaped by political economy and cultural forces.

The second limitation of the present conceptualisation is the concept of breakout destination and "mainstream market." It is controversial to assert that ethnic businesses serving ethnic customers in different countries have not broken out because they are still within the ethnic market. Moreover, ethnic breakout does not end at the mainstream market as literature concurred. There is a need to move from mainstream to universal market where ethnic entrepreneurs serve the native or majority population and different ethnic nationalities.

Ethnic minority literature posits that immigrant entrepreneurs aims at gaining acceptance in the mainstream market (Lasselle & Scot, 2018; Wang & Warn, 2019). However, the definition of a mainstream market is poorly conceptualised because the definition is context-based. In some instances, the mainstream market is the host community market. However, in high cosmopolitan locations - where immigrant populations outpaced indigenous populations, the co-migrant market may fit into such description. The term 'universal market' is usually employed to define a market that is unrestricted by ethnicity. In the views of Villeres-Velera et al. (2018), it is a market where

both migrants and natives are accommodated, characterised by popular culture and cosmopolitan demand. Therefore, there is the need to re-conceptualise the 'mainstream market' to accommodate the attributes of a universal market.

Thirdly, the role of transnational space in breakout seemed neglected. Transnational entrepreneurship as a form of breakout is still underexplored. According to Miera (2008), it is difficult to assess the performance of migrant businesses without examining their transnational activities. There is an increasing flow of resources across borders due to advances in technology and diaspora activities. Valenzuela-Garcia et al. (2018) observed that migrant entrepreneurs employ transnational strategies, ties, and resources to maintain competitiveness. Chen & Tan (2014) observed that some ethnic minority entrepreneurs prefer building transnational businesses to breaking into mainstream markets.

Fourthly, the concept of a break-in was silent in most breakout studies. Most studies have focused on breakout and less on markets immigrant entrepreneurs break into. Interestingly, Basu (2011) introduced the concept of 'breakthrough' to explain the relationship between breakout and break-in. He averred that breakout does not result in a break-in because some immigrants could end reliance on the ethnic market but could not gain appreciable access into non-ethnic markets. There has been an underlying assumption of a linear relationship between breakout and break-in, revealing that breakout results in a break-in. However, since the concept of a break-in referred to assimilation into a mainstream market, immigrant entrepreneurs can end dependence on ethnic markets but still do not have access to an expandable and high-growth market.

Fifthly, breakout conceptualisation was focused on first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs while there is limited knowledge about subsequent generations. There are limited comparative studies on the breakout processes of immigrant entrepreneurs. Even though methodological issues can hinder effective comparison across ethnic nationalities, other forms of comparisons such as sectoral, geographical, and intergenerational studies are needed (Villeres- Valera et al., 2018). The contributions of few studies on generational differences between first- and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs are appreciated but need to be updated owing to changes in recent times. For instance, Rusinovic (2008) observed that first-generation entrepreneurs were trapped in ethnic and niche markets, whereas most second-generation entrepreneurs operate in mainstream markets. However, many first-generation immigrants now operate in the mainstream market due

to technological innovations, high human capital, and accumulated family and ethnic resources (Hart & Acs, 2011). Some assumptions in Rusinovic's study have become weak due to advances in transportation, globalisation, and digital technologies (Zolin et al., 2015).

Literature assumes that second-generation immigrants have higher chances of breaking into the mainstream market due to their language proficiency and high adaptation (Sui, Morgan & Baun 2015). This view, however, came from an assimilationist perspective that focuses only on breaking out of the ethnic market. According to Laselle & Scott (2018), the influence of integration and generational difference on ethnic markets and businesses remain neglected in the literature. Whether assimilation into mainstream culture, which is evident in second-generation immigrants, could positively or negatively influence immigrant entrepreneurship has not been explored. The effect of generational shift on the interplay of ethnic resources, opportunity structure, and migrant entrepreneur characteristics is still vague.

Moreover, in ethnic minority studies, emphasis has remained on first-generation entrepreneurs and less on second-generation ethnic minority entrepreneurs. Available studies on second-generation entrepreneurs focus on their enablers rather than the peculiar obstacles facing their entrepreneurial success (Chababi, 2017). There is the need to address the knowledge gap in representing only the first-generation immigrant view of a breakout to gain a multidimensional understanding of breakout. Furthermore, a breakout is assumed to commence after the business has existed sometimes, but there is evidence of immigrant businesses that started serving universal customers from inception (Oviatt & Mcdougall, 1994).

2.5. Embeddedness as a framework for understanding immigrant business breakout

There is a consensus among business scholars that economic activities are not motivated by only economic calculations and individual motives but also by institutions, networks, and norms where the participants are embedded (Granovetter, 1985). From the foregoing, understanding the concept of embeddedness is foremost for analysing individuals' economic behaviour, such as immigrant entrepreneurs. Solano (2016) referred to embeddedness as places, groups, and identities that immigrants associate with or reference in their daily lives and activities. In alignment with Granovetter's submission, immigrants' entrepreneurial activities, motivations, and strategies are shaped and driven by social contexts, norms, and institutions where they are embedded. Following earlier immigrant entrepreneurship theories, immigrants are embedded in their host environment.

However, immigrant embeddedness has been viewed from a bifocality perspective since the 2000s (Mierra, 2008; Bagwell, 2015). Bifocality indicates that immigrants are embedded in two contexts-host communities where they reside and their home country. In recent times, bifocality is overshadowed by multifocality as evidence suggests that immigrants' embeddedness is multiple and multi-sited (Solano, 2019; Bagwell, 2018; Chen & Tan, 2009). Immigrants conceptualise their decisions and actions considering different places they have lived, the sense of belongingness they share, and the different identities they assume at different times. According to Solano (2016), multifocality is not strictly about actions but frames of reference that shape the entrepreneurial activities of immigrants.

Kloosterman (2010) affirmed that the context in which immigrants are embedded conditions the interplay of entrepreneurs' resources, ethnic resources, and opportunity structure. Portes (1995) described relational embeddedness as social networks while structural embeddedness was described as attributes of a place that influence economic actions. However, unlike Solano (2016), Portes' explanation did not cover other factors influencing immigrant economic practices. Solano established that people get embedded in a context in three ways. First, by living in an area and being part of the institutions. This aspect is classified as structural embeddedness, proxied by transnational space in this study. Secondly, people get embedded in a context by having people who live or belong to a group. This aspect is classified as relational embeddedness, and it is proxied in this study by heterogeneous social networks. Immigrants can get embedded in a context by taking up the norms, identities, and perspectives of people who live in a place. This is referred to as cognitive embeddedness and proxied in this study by generational shift.

Despite spending their time more in their host society, immigrant entrepreneurs live their everyday lives with reference to different places, different groups, and different identities where they are embedded. Interaction of place, groups, and identities shape immigrant entrepreneur decisions about how, why, where, and with whom to engage in business activities.

2.5.1 Structural embeddedness (Transnational space)

Transnational space consists of spheres delineated by countries in which immigrants are embedded that simultaneously shape immigrants' socio-economic and cultural behaviour (Rusinovic, 2008b, Solano, 2016). In this context, transnational space consists of institutional, economic, political, and regulatory factors affecting immigrant entrepreneurs that span across countries but, in most cases,

between the country of residence and the home country of immigrants. Transnational space provides markets, resources, networks, opportunities, and constraints beyond the host country, creating opportunities and challenges for transnational entrepreneurs. Transnational entrepreneurs are immigrants who engage in entrepreneurial activities between host and home countries and, in some cases, third countries (Bagwell, 2018).

Transnational entrepreneurship is becoming a significant form of economic adaptation of immigrant entrepreneurs due to super connectivity and the increasing flow of people and resources across borders. Garcia et al. (2018) observed that contemporary immigrant entrepreneurs in western societies employ transnational strategies, ties, and resources to maintain competitiveness.

2.5.2 Relational embeddedness (Social network)

Social networks are defined as various social ties and relations that can be drawn upon to generate resources and achieve mutually beneficial ends (Solano, 2016). Postelnian & Hermes (2016) defined social networks as patterns of social exchange and interactions that persist over time which an individual can rely on in time of need. In their views, individuals share ties with others in where they live, work and belong and these internal and external ties form their social network. Social networks, otherwise referred to as relational embeddedness, are a significant resource for entrepreneurship and community growth because they provide support and resources that people can leverage. Anderson & Park (2007) theorised that a social network is a networking capital that enables individuals and groups to conduct social exchange and share resources and support.

Generally, a social network is a form of social capital embedded in social connections to which someone belongs. The concept of social capital has become controversial recently used to describe different forms of informal engagement that people admire (Andersen & Park, 2007). According to Coleman (1990), social capital refers to social resources embedded in relationships and resources available to people through their social connections. There is no consensus on the definition of social capital. However, there is a consensus that social capital consists of resources individuals can access directly or indirectly owing to networks they belong (Alvarez & Romani, 2017; Goulbourn et al., 2010). Evans & Syrett (2007) defined social capital as relational assets (traded or untraded) consisting of contacts, conventions, shared values, innovations, and learning that lubricate collaborative relations and institutional capacities. Woolcock (2001), similar to Bourdieu (1986), who classified social capital as one of the forms of capital, averred that social capital is a form of

capital that resides in relationships. Putnam (1988) identified social networks as one of the significant components of social capital. Other components are norms of reciprocity and trust. In this study, a social network is defined as the sum of actual and virtual resources, including knowledge, recognition, goodwill, and emotional capacity that one can mobilise through the networks they belong.

Network composition and network structure are significant components of a social network. According to Portes & Sensenbrenner (1993), network composition refers to varieties of contacts, while network structure refers to links and the nature of relationships (size and density) among the contacts. The strength of social networks refers to the degree of closeness of the contacts (Granoveter, 1973). Contacts are weak if the bond is loose such as among acquaintances. Contacts are seen as strong if the ties are strong such as among family members.

Steier (2001) observed that relationships, ties, and connectivity play critical roles in entrepreneurship. In his view, they are a strategic advantage that needs to be created, nourished, and utilised. These ties are relational wealth accumulated over time from work-related contacts, friends, acquaintances, and relatives. Literature asserts that social ties are created through succession and deliberate transfer. Social networks can also be managed by deciphering existing network structure, bringing out transactional content from the ties, striving for optimal network configuration, and reconstituting network density and structure (Masurel & Nijkamp, 2004; Steier, 2001).

The social network of immigrants has become heterogeneous because it is diverse in composition, scale, and functionality. Varieties of social networks can be developed quickly due to technological advances. For example, social networks have physical and virtual dimensions, personal and industry dimensions, strong ties and weak ties dimension, transnational and domestic dimension, ethnic and non-ethnic dimension, concentrated and dispersed dimension, individual-based and group-based dimension (Chen & Tan 2009; Solano, 2015). Bagwell (2015) insisted that the social network of immigrant entrepreneurs is multi-polar, unlike the bi-polar links suggested in the literature (Kloosterman, 2010). The reason is that opening of transnational space has created a mix of social networks that is both global and local and connects not only the home and host countries but also third countries and diaspora communities.

Social networks can exist at the micro, meso, and macro-level. The micro-level networks are individual levels that link one person to another. The meso level networks are relevant networks at organisational level. The macro-level networks are network relevant at institutional and government levels. Alvarez & Romani (2017) uncovered that most social network relevant at the micro-level could lose their utility at the macro level, revealing the complexity and heterogeneity of social networks. They can also be sentimental and emotional, not physical (Quirke et al., 2009). Functionality and composition of social ties are shaped by marriage, work, family, age, class, and cultural orientation.

Anderson & Park (2007) used the term 'reciprocity' direction to explain different types of social networks. They categorised social networks into four categories: a) Family and friends, including distant and close acquaintances b) Intergenerational social networks which consist of people who share vertical relationships such as parents, children, grandchildren, mother-in-law, uncles, bosses, and others not in the same class. c) Intra-generational networks consist of people in the same class, such as siblings, cousins, classmates, and workmates. d) Transnational social networks which consist of relatives and friends across national boundaries. Their analysis categorised families as a strong social network while friends and acquaintances were classified as intermediate and weak.

Role of social network in immigrant entrepreneurship and breakout

Bourdieue (1986) contends that social capital is fungible – the possibility of being converted into other forms of capital. This fungibility feature has attracted the attention of policymakers to social capital as a resource for solving different human maladies. The author defined social capital as a social obligation that can be converted under certain conditions into economic capital. His definition suggests that social network is a critical resource for entrepreneurship.

Social networks perform bonding, bridging, and linking services for entrepreneurs. They lubricate close ties, encouraging trust and reciprocity. Social networks offer bridging services that enable entrepreneurs with fewer class resources to reach upper markets. Through their linking services, individuals across different positions are connected to release resources and achieve desirable outcomes (Anderson et al., 2007; Bourdieu, 1986; Leanard 2004). According to Villalinga-Olives et al. (2016), bridging activities of social networks work on vertical ties while linking activities work on horizontal ties.

A social network is a resource-swapping mechanism that enables entrepreneurs to identify and exploit opportunities. Kim (2013) revealed that entrepreneurs use their current contacts to reach the links they never had. However, such beneficent effect is not applicable in all contexts (Ivan Light, 2013). According to Leonard (2004), social networks are the glue that holds other forms of capital, especially among vulnerable groups. They enable the mobilisation of resources owing to trust and reciprocity. Social networks provide connectivity to people and resources from one context to another. According to Anderson & Park (2007), they translate individual relations to network relations that provide a competitive advantage for businesses. Market opportunities are usually recognised through interactions because relational spaces are often innovative spaces. Social network reveals the extent to which businesses are embedded in the broader community. It is also a source of knowledge transfer (Allen & Busse, 2016).

Social networks are essential in adapting to the host country, enhancing opportunities, and overcoming institutional constraints (Prithi & Wright, 2019). The authors averred that a multi-scaler social network is vital in evolving entrepreneurial spaces, especially for transnational businesses. Granoveter (1973) advocated for emphasis on weak ties as they provide leverage services. However, Alverez & Romani (2017) observed that weak ties could only provide access but not unlock resources without strong ties. Kim (2013), in his study of Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese women married to Koreans, observed that weak ties might be helpful in one setting but not in the other. He concluded that the utility of social networks is not uniform but depends on institutional frameworks and needs.

Evans & Syrett (2007) observed that social capital 'rescues' entrepreneurs from relegation and confers new identity on them. It binds individuals to collective actions enabling them to leverage available resources not directly in their circle of influence. Solano (2016), in his study of transnational entrepreneurs, acknowledged that social network provides informational support, financial support, labour-market-related support, skill-related support, emotional and instrumental support. Social networks structure individual economic outcomes and pursuits and minimise selfish behavior. It also creates conditions necessary for collective actions (Portes, 1998). Masurel & Nijkamp (2004) remarked that social network generates labour flexibility and class resources. It also provides resource sponsors and facilitates a collective creation of value.

The usefulness of social networks is situational because the utility of contacts does not lie on its own but its functionality. Solano (2016) maintained that business size, location, and peculiar challenges facing businesses determine social networks' role in immigrant entrepreneurship. Evans & Syrett (2007) contend that social networks can facilitate or obstruct entrepreneurial activities and argue for an optimal blend of bonding and bridging services. This condition depends on the situation, time, and context. They maintained that a social network is a situational character that becomes potent when activated for a purpose. The purpose and context determine if it can be potent or not, positive or weak, a facilitator or an inhibitor.

Regardless that social networks can provide leverage for immigrants who lack human and economic capital, they can also obstruct entrepreneurial growth. Light & Dana (2013) observed that social network does not universally facilitate entrepreneurship. It can protect mediocrity, inhibit freedom from weak allies and impose mental conformity, especially among groups whose culture does not encourage entrepreneurship. According to Ojo (2013), some social networks are expensive to maintain, and pulling out of an ethnic-based network could be expensive. Embeddedness in social networks can lead to inbreeding and stereotyping, limiting the creativity of progressive entrepreneurs. Hatani & Migaughey (2013) admitted that social networks should be cohesive and proactive to be competitive. Some ethnic-based social networks, except in the middleman minority context, lacked these attributes, turning them into liabilities instead of assets. The usefulness of social networks thrives on the complementarity between members' objectives (Portes, 1998). The implication is that social networks may not offer many advantages when members have the same goal. Despite that immigrant entrepreneurs could have a wider social network, most are economic migrants who become entrepreneurs for survival purposes and may not have resources to spare for members of their social networks.

2.5.3 Cognitive embeddedness (Generational shift)

Smola & Sutton (2002) defined a generation as an identifiable group that shares birth years, significant life events, and historical, social life experiences. People of the same generation are usually referred to as cohorts. These individuals are commonly divided by a 5-7years gap into the first wave, core group, and last wave (Kuppers & Schimidt, 2000). Four different generations that are active in various economic spaces are the baby boomer (1946-1964), generation X (1965 – 1979),

Generation Y, also called the Millennials (1980 – 1995), and Generation Z, otherwise called digital natives (1995- date).

A generational shift is differences that exist between one generation and another. The differences here are age and belief, attitudes, preferences, and personality traits. According to Higgins (2012), generational shift refers to psychological, attitudinal, and entrepreneurial differences in different generations. Significant life experiences and historical events that occur in each generation shape the psychology and motivations of each cohort towards society, economy, and ambitions. As Ludviga & Sennikova (2016) put it, the different environments these generations grew up in influence their worldview and experiences. This view is due to the belief that generational differences are influenced not by age but by nurture. Although generational shift refers to differences in common generational profile and how they think, lead, and act, the concept can also describe significant differences in two samples of people separated by significant life events. A generational shift can also explain the differences between industrial and post-industrial populations or first- and second-generation immigrant populations.

First and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs

First-generation immigrants consist of all immigrants that migrated to the host country as adults. They left their home countries mainly because of a lack of opportunities to maximise their skills, need for education, and to escape impoverishment (Kerr et al., 2016; Ojo, 2019). Conwar & Portes (2016) considered a majority of first-generation immigrants as sojourners who wished to return when successful, at retirement, or have raised substantial capital. However, some could not return because their children have assimilated, because of health reasons or unending procrastination.

A second-generation immigrant is an umbrella name for children of immigrants and other children who grew into adults in their host countries. It consists of 2.0 generation, 1.5 generation, and 1.25 generation. 2.0 cohorts were children of immigrants born in the host country. 1.5 generations are children of immigrants born at home country but came to the host country when they were less than twelve years old. 1.25 cohorts are children of immigrants that came to the host country when they were less than eighteen years (Quirke et al. 2009; Conway & Portes, 2016). Xu (2016) observed that 1.5 are more adaptive to host society, 1.25 have competent bilingual abilities, whereas first-generation have strong bicultural flexibilities. There have been criticisms against birthplace as a yardstick for determining an immigrant generation. Masurel & Nijkamp (2004) emphasised that the

definition of generation should be based on where one grew up instead of where one was born. Following this approach, Verenman (1996) defined a second generation as all children of foreign migrants who were younger than six years at the time of migration. The author classified second-generation immigrants into three: strict, moderate, and loose. Strict are people born in the host country, moderate arrived in host society when they were less than seven years old, and loose are people who arrived in the host country when they were less than 13 years old.

Second-generation immigrants are more likely to understand the host country than their parents. They possess higher class resources and have assimilated into the host society. Dewitt (2011) admitted that this generation possesses cultural and educational credentials in mainstream practices similar to natives and has broken out of ethnic barriers that restricted their parents. However, the impact of assimilation on second-generation immigrants has been ambiguous in literature. Quirke et al. (2009) maintained that assimilation of immigrants into mainstream culture is an American approach to integration and does not have universal application. Efendili et al. (2016) provided evidence of 'segmented assimilation' among second-generation immigrants in Sweden. Despite being seen as natives, second-generation immigrants face labour market discrimination, especially those from less developed countries. Some get stuck at the bottom of the stratification system due to their parents' poor education and status. Becker & Blumberg (2013) observed that different ethnic groups follow different assimilation trajectories and occur at different paces. Ethnic groups that resemble host society more in attitude, language, and culture assimilate easily than those with less resemblance. Dewitt (2011) provided evidence that second-generation immigrants operate in dual culturalism created by assimilation into host country culture and the retention of their home country identity. They also can switch identity and ideology according to the context and people involved. This duality is evident among African and Asian second-generation immigrants whose parents insist that the status and credentials of the host country cannot replace their ethnic identity. Table 2.5 highlighted some differences in the entrepreneurial attitude of first and second-generation immigrants.

Table 2.2 Main differences between first- and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs

First-generation	Second generation
Homogenous and bi-polar social networks. Depend more on personal ties	Heterogeneous and multi-polar network. Depend more on industry ties
Transnational citizens	Global citizens
Bi-cultural flexibility	Cross-cultural competence
Necessity entrepreneurs	Opportunity entrepreneurs
Likely to break out into transnational businesses	Likely to break out into other sectors
Traditional sector: Retail, personal service, food, and agricultural sector	Knowledge economy: Textile, ICT, finance, education, entertainment sectors
Charities and collective action drive diaspora activities	Driven by opportunities and promotion of a cause
Business resources are generated from relatives and informal sources	External finance is likely
Informal management practices and ethnic constrained business practices	Depends on formal businesses practices, institutional help, and paid advisors
Business attitude is characterised by fear, ignorance, and try an error approach	Daring, explosive, adventurous, and knowledge-driven practices
Entrepreneurship is an avenue for survival and mobility	Entrepreneurship is an avenue for self-expression and fulfilment
Likely to operate in ethnic enclaves, serving ethnic clients	Likely to break out of an ethnic market and seek opportunities in the mainstream market

Source: Author's compilation from various literature.

Generational shift and immigrant entrepreneur breakout

Literature assumes that breakout is more likely among second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs than the first because they are assumed to have assimilated into mainstream culture (Rusinovic, 2008; Portes, 2003). However, Integration facilitates breakout only after the minimum threshold of integration has occurred (Becker & Blumberg, 2013). These authors observed that high integration and access to capital do not necessarily lead to significant business prospects if contextual factors

are not favourable. Correspondingly, breaking into a broad and unrestricted market by location, ethnicity, and purchasing power requires extensive effort from first- and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs. According to Dewith (2011), going into up-market requires a higher capacity to access clients of high status, glamour, and premium needs. A breakout occurs due to an accumulation of class resources leading to orientation through a move to mainstream markets and away from localised markets. (Ram et al., 2003). Second-generation immigrants appear to have higher chances for breaking out of ethnic markets because of their dual identities. They can fuse products, ideology, tastes, and lifestyles to produce hybrid products that appeal to national and international markets (Dewitt, 2011). Examples of this hybridity are seen in the fashion, music, and arts sectors. They also have more opportunities to leverage resources and access a broader customer base because of their context.

Becker & Blumberg (2013), in their longitudinal study of first- and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs in the Netherland, uncovered that second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs are increasing in size and significance in various economic sectors. Regardless of the perceived advantages of second immigrant generations in a breakout, first-generation immigrants tend to have higher entrepreneurial characteristics such as resilience, social capital, and other markets they can access (Quirke et al., 2009). They have higher chances to operate in transnational and co-migrant markets. Efendili et al. (2016) observed that education and not generational differences separate high growth firms from low growth firms. They averred that those chances of upward mobility are skewed and not random for all second-generation immigrants. Their results confirmed the assertion in Becker & Blumberg (2013), who discovered that there had been no significant difference in business growth of first- and second-generation immigrants except among the Chinese.

2.5 Chapter summary

Concepts and theories relevant to the study were reviewed to understand transformation that has occurred in the area of study and as basis for contextual understanding of concepts used in the study.

The synthetic table provided in this chapter explored the evolution and conceptualisation of breakout highlighting the convergencies and divergencies and the need for reframing breakout.

The analysis of the concept of embeddedness was relevant as it formed basis for discussing changes in transnational environment. Structural, relational and cognitive embeddedness are different ways immigrant entrepreneurs conceptualise their sense of belongingness. As globalisation and advances in technology integrate ethnic and national economies into the global production and distribution value chain, the embeddedness of immigrant entrepreneurs is becoming increasingly multidimensional as they can embed in a context without living there physically.

Having examined fundamental immigrant entrepreneurship theories, breakout concepts, and transnational context that underpin the study, the next chapter will present breakout determinants and strategies. The chapter will x-ray how breakout occurs and causative factors, establishing a basis for understanding the breakout strategies of Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs operating in a transnational environment.

Chapter Three

Breakout determinants and strategies

3.0 Introduction

This chapter examines breakout explanatory factors and pathways. The chapter deepens the understanding of the breakout concept introduced in the previous chapter by expounding breakout determinants and different growth trajectories through which immigrant entrepreneurs move from less profitable markets to markets with more opportunities. In addition, the chapter x-rays breakout and break-in market spaces. The explanatory factors discussed in this chapter are necessary for breakout study because they shape breakout trajectories and determine the speed and scope of breakout. They exist at different levels and can exhibit multiple impacts on breakout decisions. Aside from bringing breakout variables to the limelight, this chapter discusses the conceptual framework of the study which explores the relationship between transnational environment and breakout practices of immigrant entrepreneurs.

This chapter starts with discussing key concepts associated with breakout and why the term 'breakout' is peculiar to immigrant businesses. A review of breakout determinants, where factors that enable and constrain breakout, was discussed next. The strategy concept was clarified and distinguished from tactics before ten breakout strategies were reviewed. Diverse market spaces for breakout and variables for measuring breakout were discussed to highlight breakout options for immigrant entrepreneurs. The chapter ended with a discussion of the conceptual framework.

3.1 Breakout and other business growth concepts

Breakout is associated with business growth and development. However, it is different from many concepts used to describe the growth activities of businesses. The critical difference is that breakout is concerned with the developmental activities of immigrant businesses. In the broad entrepreneurship literature, the term 'breakout' is synonymous with business growth, expansion, development, diversification, market broadening, business formalisation, and business success (Nwankwo, 2005; Kloosterman, 2010; Chababi, 2014). These concepts were used interchangeably to describe business breakout until 1994, when Ram and Hillin introduced the concept of breakout in their study of ethnic and minority businesses in the UK. Business growth is described as a process of improving some measures of enterprise success by boosting revenue, profitability, or reducing

cost (Ojo, 2013). Business expansion is defined as seeking additional options to generate more profit, probably through opening new locations, increasing marketing activities, entering a new market, forming alliances, and offering new products (Lasselle & Scott, 2018). Business development is defined as an activity of pursuing strategic opportunities for a particular business by creating long-term value for markets, customers, and relationships (Kloosterman, 2010). Business diversification is a growth strategy that involves entering a new market or new sector or new product line distinct from a business's core activities to increase market share and sales volume (Lasselle & Scott, 2018). Market broadening is a strategy in which an enterprise looks beyond its existing product to the needs of present customers and widens its market offering to accommodate new customers (Jones & McEvoy, 2000). Business formalisation is the process of creating a formal structure for business processes and rationalizing decision-making processes by complying with standards, systematizing operations, and adopting organised operating procedures (Ojo, 2013). Business success is defined as the ability of an enterprise to achieve stated objectives. Business success is an indication that an economic venture is efficient, profitable, viable, effective, and sustainable (Basu, 2011). Although these terms share some similarities with a breakout, they do not capture essential breakout targets.

Table 3.1: Other concepts used by authors to describe breakout

Authors	Concepts synonymous with breakout
Ram & Hillin (1994)	Breakout
Ojo (2013)	Business growth
Laselle & Scott (2018)	Business expansion
Kloosterman (2010)	Business development
Mitchell (2015)	Strategic organisational change
Deakins et al (1997)	Business diversification
Basu (2011)	Business success
Jones et al. (2000)	Market broadening
0jo (2019)	Business formalisation
Ram et al (2004)	Business boundary-breaking activities

The most common synonym of breakout is business growth. As used in most business and entrepreneurship literature, growth goes beyond an increase in size and quantity. According to Mitchell (2015), growth is a process of organisational change that improves size and quality. Growth consists of different business activities systematically executed to boost organisational success in terms of profitability and to meet organisational objectives. On the other hand, a breakout is concerned with business growth and ending the constraining effects of ethnic, spatial, and value

chain boundaries (Ram et al., 2004). Both growth and breakout share some similarities. They involve improvement in different business processes geared toward business success. However, this study made some distinctions in using the two concepts. Whereas growth is concerned with all forms of businesses, a breakout is associated with immigrant businesses. Firms' growth is generic for all businesses, while breakout explains only a portion of firms' growth that relates to constraints of local and ethnic markets. Firms' growth is alien to immigrant entrepreneurship, just like a breakout is inappropriate to mainstream business literature. Mitchelle (2015) described breakout as a liberating activity involving immigrant businesses from stereotyping business lines and shifting to better-rewarded sectors and locations. Whereas the goal of business growth is an increment in profitability, efficiency, and market share, the goal of breakout is freedom from the limited market and access to markets not restricted by ethnicity, geographical location, and buying power.

Firm growth would have been the appropriate term to use if the focus of this study was not immigrant businesses and their associated handicaps. As used in this context, Breakout includes aspects of business growth related to immigrant firms and barriers such as diversification, upscaling market development, and immigrant form of internationalisation. Despite that Deakins et al. (1997) distinguished breakout from diversification; a multidimensional definition of breakout ought to include diversification. In their view, a breakout is gaining access to new market niches while diversification is moving into a new sector. Nevertheless, diversification into different sectors of business activity remains the surest route of ending dependence on ethnic niches.

The term 'breakout' would be used in this study despite its shortcomings because it relates to immigrant businesses more than any of the concepts highlighted. It is also a broad term covering what immigrant businesses need to do to grow and maintain competitiveness. Also, the indicators used to measure other concepts would not be appropriate for immigrant businesses due to their peculiarities. These indicators consist of both quantitative and qualitative measures of growth. Unlike other concepts that may not be amenable to such environments, they are intrinsically flexible to socio-economic and political environments. The term 'breakout' can also accommodate different dimensions of business growth that are non-economic, unlike other concepts.

3.2 Determinants of breakout

In as much as most studies failed to delineate growth variables from growth strategies, the importance of identifying factors that could cause breakout is necessary. Determinants of a

breakout are sets of variables identified primarily through qualitative studies that influence breakout, while breakout strategies are growth trajectories adopted by immigrant businesses as they break out. Mitchell (2015) observed that breakout is a combination of factors that impact the entrepreneur, the firm, and the environment. These determinants are breakout causative and inhibitive factors (discussed in chapter 5 as breakout motives, drivers, and challenges). As independent variables that can predict breakout speed and scope, their weakness lies in their inability to measure the extent of breakout. These determinants are classified as breakout motives and breakout drivers. The multiplicity of these determinants can be attributed to the lack of homogeneity in immigrant firms and their growth trajectories.

3.2.1 Breakout motives

Breakout motives of immigrant entrepreneurs influence breakout strategy and degree (McPherson, 2019; Slavnic 2012). Arrighetti et al. (2014), aside from categorising breakout motives into individual and community motives, averred that breakout rarely occurs even when economic and social-political environments are favourable except when these motives are positive and robust. Key breakout motives identified in the literature are the need for survival, the discovery of opportunity, and maximizing profit (Wang & Warn 2019; Ram et al. 2003). Jones et al. (2000) discovered that individual motives for breakout include the need to gain status, profit, need for economic independence, reaction to market disadvantage, and need for sheer growth. Mitchell (2015) identified family tradition, sojourning orientation, and professional experience as individual-level motives. Some immigrants are motivated to break out because of family legacy and home country culture. Others are motivated because of experiences they have garnered from work and studies. Immigrant entrepreneurs can be motivated to break out because they want to serve a more profitable customer base and maximise their proficiencies (Rusonovic, 2004). Kloosterman (1999) observed that immigrants are usually trapped in an ethnic and intensely competitive market with limited expansion opportunities. As a result, breakout offers an opportunity to mitigate the negative impacts of competition and survive in the marketplace. Changes in a business environment can motivate immigrant entrepreneurs to desire breakout. Demographic changes and changes in taste and fashion could motivate immigrant entrepreneurs to break out to adapt to the changes (Ojo, 2019).

Community-related motives are rooted in ethnic culture and the need to maximise ethnic resources in the home and host societies. Ram & Hillin (1994) discovered that family and cultural orientations usually temper breakout expectations and force. Some immigrants engage in a breakout to help co-ethnic members or gain social status (Ojo, 2019). Parzer (2016) observed that some immigrant entrepreneurs resist breakout for cultural reasons. The literature highlighted symbolic motives for a breakout, including building an ethnic reputation or gaining social status. According to Allen & Busse (2016), some entrepreneurs prefer to 'stay-in,' not minding the challenges of operating in ethnic/local markets for the symbolic reason of building an ethnic reputation. Parzer (2016) underscored the risk of alienating one's ethnic customers and being treated like a 'sell-out' in some cultures during a breakout. Drori & Lerner (2002) discovered that breakout is usually subjected to family priorities and argued that family expectations and needs prioritise entrepreneurs' breakout vision.

3.2.2 Breakout drivers and challenges

Breakout drivers are enabling factors that facilitate breakout, while breakout challenges are factors that inhibit breakout. These enablers consist of resources, predisposition, and institutional situations that make breakout possible. Breakout challenges delay breakout and keeps immigrants trapped in markets with fewer opportunities. Basu (2011) admitted that a combination of these factors determines breakout speed and strategy to be adopted. These factors are discussed at the entrepreneur, firm, and environmental levels.

i. Entrepreneur level factors

Possession of class resources is a prerequisite for breakout (Vewer et al., 2019). These class resources are competencies and resources that can facilitate breakout. They include language proficiency (Sui et al. 2015; Wang & Warn 2019), parents' occupation (Ndofu & Priem, 2003), managerial and marketing capabilities (Levent et al., 2003), and availability of sophisticated information sources, entrepreneurial confidence, and non-ethnic ties (Wang & Warn, 2019). Slavnic (2012) and Basu (2011) found out that the nature of social embeddedness in ethnic group affiliation, transnational links, quality of networks, nature of demand within the ethnic market, and ethnic culture can influence breakout. Ram et al. (2003) and Wang & Warn (2019) revealed that barriers to breakout include insufficient funding, discrimination, and age. Ram et al. (2003) discovered that inadequate funding is the most significant inhibitor of breakout. They deduced that African-

Caribbean immigrant entrepreneurs have less success in obtaining funding from banks, blaming discrimination and poor business plan writing. Bates & Rob (2014) also emphasised the relevance of capital but reiterated that education in some cases mitigates the effects of insufficient funding. They revealed that informal sources of funds which many immigrants depended on, could not fund breakout. Bates (1999), cited in Dheer (2018), observed that the urge to breakout declines with age and that blocked mobility generally fades with years, especially for immigrants with education.

McPherson (2019) observed that entrepreneurial intention and motivation and how entrepreneurs perceive economic and social environment determine their breakout outcome. In his study of first- and second-generation Asian immigrants in London, the author concluded that entrepreneurial intention, abilities, and the lenses through which they interpret opportunities could either facilitate or constrain breakout. He regretted that some immigrant entrepreneurs pursue survival strategies, perform routine tasks, and show little interest in transformation and business enlargement. Admittedly, most immigrant entrepreneurs he studied were more family-oriented than professionally oriented. Basu (2011) included entrepreneurial flexibility and agility as necessary variables in breakout. He sees breakout as a clash of two cultures in which the most resilient culture wins. The personal disposition of the entrepreneur is critical in breakout because the resilience and agency of the entrepreneur influence breakout. An immigrant entrepreneur can radically transform their sector using agency-structure interaction. Entrepreneurs always have space to exert significant influence and improve their condition despite stifling situations (Villeres-Varela et al., 2018).

ii. Firm-level factors

Parzer (2016) revealed that breakout is a process, not just a strategy, and does not occur until certain conditions are in place. These conditions manifest in the disposition and capabilities of immigrant firms. Key firm-level factors affecting breakout include ethnic enclave location and connection to other countries (Zolin et al., 2015; Drori & Lerner, 2002). Others are the age of the firm and business model (Mitchelle 2015), the composition of competencies in terms of human resources, and access to external funding (Wang & Warn 2019; Wang & Altinay, 2012). Dependence on mainstream media, the density of ethnic relations within and across the ethnic community, and attitude to customers can influence breakout (Basu 2011; Ram et al., 2004).

McPherson (2019) emphasised that the role of opportunity structure in shaping immigrant business growth is not as important as the size and type of customer available within the niche. He regretted

that many immigrant businesses, aside from inadequate resources, are too internally focused and rigid to change. He averred that internal organisational factors such as the capacity of principal stakeholders, the network configuration of key personnel, and the business direction of the entire firm affect breakout. Moon et al. (2014) included knowledge of regulation, getting the right location, intelligent advertising, and access to permit as significant determinants of breaking out. Analogously, Allen & Bussee (2016) underscored the significance of social gathering space for businesses intending to breakout. Their study of the social side of breakout discovered that social uses of business space facilitate or constrain breakout. Business spaces are spots for exchanging social skills, information, and emotional support. The authors suggested that how immigrant entrepreneurs design their shops/offices influences breakout because it offers cues suggestive of the customer segment a business wishes to attract.

iii. Environmental level factors

Engelen (2001) argued that a political-economic regime should be favourable to support immigrant businesses' breakout. He revealed that the institutional and regulatory framework of the host society produces what should be the object of trade, who the subjects of trade would be, the market structure, social embeddedness, and level of regulation. In other words, institutional factors can determine breakout speed and strategy. Laselle & Scott (2018) discovered that some immigrant entrepreneurs with well-thought-out breakout strategies failed. In contrast, those who did not plan to break out became successful because they were provided with conditions for a breakout. The authors concluded that the symbolic transformation of neigbourhood that manifests with a rise in acculturation and cosmopolitan culture is critical for a breakout. Mitchell (2015) also added that the level of ethnic density, size of an ethnic market, and acceptability of ethnic products determine the growth of immigrant firms.

McPherson (2019) observed that sector of operation, availability of government interventions such as supporting agencies, market conditions, region-specific resources, and infrastructure influence breakout. The relative position of immigrants' country in the comity of nations influence their acceptability and ease of mobility to high order business. Reciprocal ties with natives are easier to form when immigrants are from countries that are respected internationally. Vewer et al. (2019) affirmed that immigrants' country, mode of settlement, and the context in which they and their children venture into business determine breakout options available.

3.3 The concept of strategy

Strategy is a valuable concept, even in all its many variations. The concept has dominated the management field and constitutes a vital function of managers. It has emerged as a helpful tool for managing enterprises and achieving significant improvement. Chandler (1962: 17) provided the earliest definition of a strategy as *''determination of basic long-term goals and objectives of an organisation, adoption of courses of action and allocation of resources for carrying out the goals''*. Strategy is a decision-making pattern that determines the market to compete in, logic and competitive advantage to exploit, a sequence for activities, and allocation of resources. Mintzberg (1994) identified critical components of a strategy to include plan, pattern, position, perspective, and ploy. Strategy is both a philosophy and framework for carrying out business activities for offensive and defensive positions in the market. As a ploy, a strategy identifies opponents' weak points that can be exploited and a competitive advantage that businesses can use to gain the upper hand in the marketplace.

The strategy concept originated from the military before it was introduced into politics and business. It is a tool for outwitting the opponents and achieving the required target. In business, strategy is a framework for building competitive advantage and exploiting opportunities amidst competition. Porters (1980) defined strategy as a general formula for how a business will compete, its goal, and what policies will be needed. The importance of strategy in business has recently led to the strategic management school of thought that has dominated business disciplines. A strategy addresses how businesses should plan for the long-term, maximise their competitive advantage and adapt to environmental changes. Strategy can be intended or emergent. Intended strategy is conceived beforehand, while emergent, otherwise called realised strategy, is actually implemented or leads to a desirable outcome.

Tactics is a companion term for strategy. However, this study needs to make a distinction between the terms. Tactics refer to actions formulated when critical/broad decisions and frameworks have been set. Whereas strategy is long-term, comprehensive, and prepared by high-level management teams, tactics are short-term, individual activity-related, and can be formulated by lower-level management. Strategy is a general plan and framework within which tactical decisions are taken.

3.3.1 Breakout strategies

Breakout strategies consist of different courses of action taken by entrepreneurs to achieve breakout. In this context, breakout strategies are trajectories adopted by immigrant businesses to achieve growth and expansion. Unlike breakout determinants, which can influence breakout, breakout strategies consist of different growth processes strategically initiated with a breakout in mind. According to Mitchelle (2015), breakout strategies are various development paths through which firms' growth occurs. A breakout strategy is a process, not an activity. It involves a series of actions, systematically planned and executed towards ending constraining effects of ethnic and spatial boundaries on immigrant businesses. Dheer (2018) explained that breakout strategies are modes of organizing or mechanisms for converting and exploiting opportunities such as location, integration, and hybridity strategies. As a dynamic state of tension between market potential and entrepreneurs' response, breakout strategy can have a linear or nonlinear relationship with time. It exemplifies the pathways immigrant firms employ in organising their capability to exploit opportunities outside their captive market and the tensions that such interaction generates.

Ram & Hillin (1994) averred that breakout strategy is usually comprehensive, directional, and multidimensional, involving finance, marketing, human resource, and network. Michelle (2015) categorised these growth processes into organic growth, acquisition, internationalisation, and hybrid. An organic growth process is inward-driven and involves upscaling and modifying the internal organisational mix. An acquisition involves building alliances with related or unrelated firms through mergers or outright purchases. Internationalisation consists of different modes of establishing businesses in another country. The distinction between breakout strategies and tactics is that tactics are intermittent decisions that immigrant entrepreneurs can make to gain an advantage in the marketplace. In contrast, breakout strategies are the frameworks that determine growth direction and all business decisions for developing immigrant businesses. Key breakout strategies identified in the literature are discussed below:

i. Enclave market strategy

This strategy consists of exploiting new opportunities within the enclave through diversification and market deepening. Ethnic enclaves are regions with a high concentration of people from the same ethnicity who share similar language, preferences, and norms (Dheer, 2018). Enclaves provide immigrant entrepreneurs with a protected market, labor, capital, and social system for business

success. Laselle & Scott (2018) found out that moving out of an ethnic market is not always the best option. Diversifying product offerings to meet the needs of different segments of co-ethnic customers is a more uncomplicated breakout strategy. They theorised that an extension of enclaves is also a form of a breakout. Basu (2011) discovered that breaking out of an ethnic market is not fashionable when opportunities to deepen an ethnic market regionally and transnationally exist.

Parzer (2016) identified 'staying-in' as a form of a breakout. In his study of Turkish food retailers in Vienna, it was observed that many immigrant entrepreneurs focus on broadening their ethnic market base instead of moving out of an ethnic market. Ndofor & Priem (2011) concurred that immigrants with prior entrepreneurial experience prefer enclave strategy while those with managerial experience pursue a dominant market strategy. Enclave strategy tends to prosper in multicultural cities where middleman minority roles are needed. This strategy regenerates low-income neigbourhood by clustering immigrant businesses where capital, workers, and products are mainly ethnic. Primarily, spaces in ethnic enclaves are both physical and social constructs. Vertical and horizontal connections among operators extend beyond geographical sites to expansive social and economic spaces, including universities and trade associations. Ram & Jones (2008) noticed that strength of an enclave strategy is derived from ethnic loyalty, not proximity or convenience. Without ethnic preference and loyalty, an enclave strategy fails to survive. That is why it rarely succeeds where ethnic identity and loyalty are weak. The ethnic character of a product, as Parzer (2016) remarked, is not the essential quality of a product but the outcome of a dialectical process of external and internal categorisation acceptable to co-ethnic members.

Ethnic flavour strategy as a form of business differentiation based on perceived 'authenticity of product or expertise' is prevalent for enclave market deepening. This strategy enables immigrant entrepreneurs to accumulate non-ethnic clients who find their ethnic products attractive. In the views of Ram et al. (2000), some policymakers are involved in promoting this strategy as a way of urban regeneration. The strategy involves exploiting cultural factors of an ethnic community. Examples of such strategies include marketing ethnic enclaves such as Chinatown, Banglatown, and Balti Quarter. An outstanding example of this strategy is the Moston Lane in Manchester, UK, containing over 30 Nigerian shops (Barret & McEvoy, 2013). Immigrant entrepreneurs focus on developing their expertise in marketing and delivering ethnic products such that non-ethnic patronise them. The point of attraction in this strategy is the ethnic flavour that is difficult to find in other locations. Chrysostom & Arcand (2009) observed that this strategy is most effective when

immigrant entrepreneurs possess critical skills that natives cannot imitate and large market size. Evidence of the 'hoteling effect' exists in this approach (where new businesses are established close to existing ones to attract patronage). Marketing ethnic value/flavour has worked in many countries. However, it may mask inequalities and unfavourable conditions (Barret & McEvoy, 2013).

One of the weaknesses of this breakout strategy is an intense competitive rivalry. According to Ram et al. (2000), an enclave is rarely a place of collaboration but of competition. New entrants are usually forced out of the enclave. An Inflow of labour remains the lifeline of an enclave economy, and its low salary is justified on the altar of apprenticeship (Chen & Tan, 2014). Mobility and success in this strategy also depend on the availability of opportunities. Valenzuela et al. (2018) acknowledged that ethnic enclave lacks adequate institutional completeness, which refers to the organisational influence of a minority group and the extent it can provide members with resources to fulfill their needs. This being the case, an enclave is regarded in immigrant literature as a transitory stage of integrating into the mainstream economy. In addition, non-economic reasons can influence the choice of enclave breakout strategy. Some immigrants who opt for this strategy are motivated by a symbolic appreciation of their ethnic heritage (Parzer, 2016).

ii. Network ties strategy

Network ties provide immigrant entrepreneurs bonding, linking, and bridging services (Katila & Welback, 2012). Argument on whether network ties constrain or facilitate breakout is contentious. However, it is certain that depending on how and when they are used, network ties provide access to resources needed for a breakout. Some immigrants who follow network ties strategy build ethnic and non-ethnic networks locally and transnationally to generate information, capital, and ideas (Solano, 2016; Evans & Syrett, 2007). The assumption in network ties strategy is that building strategic networks will provide the resources needed to break out of low order market and gain acceptance in high order market. Ndofor & Priem (2011) acknowledged that network ties help immigrants deal with multilevel constraints and broker access to profitable sectors of the economy. They, however, maintained that the composition of network ties results in whether an immigrant business will choose an enclave or dominant market approach.

iii. Dominant/mainstream market strategy

The goal of a dominant market strategy is assimilation into the dominant culture. Informal barriers that facilitate the isolation of immigrant entrepreneurs are consciously tackled through boundary-

breaking activities aimed at inclusion (Griffin-el & Olabisi, 2018). Immigrant entrepreneurs pursuing dominant market strategy situate their entrepreneurship among heterogeneous resources and form new combinations and new norms, which Griffen-el & Obabisi (2018) referred to as 'Intersective market activities.' Dominant market strategy can be effective in situations where discrimination is not overt and where public services are adjusted to accommodate cultural differences, such as supporting ethnic associations and protecting the image of ethnic communities (Vertovec, 2007). Adapting products to reflect the needs and aspirations of the dominant market is an essential milestone for immigrants who choose this strategy (Rusinovic, 2008). Adaptation practices include removing ethnic labels in service delivery, marketing, and physical space. Additionally, selling in non-ethnic language, non-ethnic design, and emphasis on bridging social capital are needed to break into the mainstream market.

Parzer (2016) endorsed that breakout into a dominant market can unconsciously happen when certain conditions are in place despite whether the immigrants have a strategy or not. Firstly, rise in diversity where there are cosmopolitan residents and people who are not too attached to their ethnic way of life. Secondly, where assimilation is the expectation of social networks and co-ethnic members. The attitude of co-ethnic members to breakout is essential because some ethnic customers are alienated during a breakout. This symbolic transformation of businesses is critical and remains a prerequisite for a breakout. However, Deakins et al. (1997) argued that immigrants need to integrate into the business community and not necessarily into the host community. Integrating into a business community can be achieved by gaining membership in relevant trade associations and solidifying relationships with service providers.

iv. Diversification strategy

Michelle (2015) identified three diversification options available for immigrant firms. The first is diversification into a new non-overlapping product market which he termed related diversification. The second is integrating previously outsourced parts of value chain activity (Vertical integration). The third is diversification into unrelated activities and product lines. Laselle & Scott (2018) identified product broadening and diversification as breakout forms. Their study of Polish immigrants observed that ethnic entrepreneurs do not employ direct or indirect breakout strategies. Instead, they broaden their market offering and gradually diversify into product lines where they perceive opportunities. Deakins et al. (1997) affirmed that diversification requires

effective marketing, built on research and offering products that customers could not resist. They emphasised new product development and opined that innovative services and acquisition of social credentials are cardinal for diversification strategy to result in a breakout. Laselle & Scott (2018) advocated for diversification of product base in place of direct breakout. They argued that broadening product offerings holds more prospects for immigrant entrepreneurs than struggling to access new markets. The authors disputed the practicability of direct breakout (a shift from enclave to mainstream market), having uncovered that breakout is an incremental and dynamic process. Unlike Rusonovic (2008), who averred that direct breakout is practicable, they posited that immigrant entrepreneurs usually shift from enclave to niche and middlemen market before breaking through in the mainstream market. Their study of Polish immigrants in Glasgow concluded that broadening products and market offerings results in breakout with or without a strategy. Such diversification is driven by a perception of opportunity and rarely by a well-toned strategy.

A diversification strategy can exist in the form of serving a co-migrant market. The co-migrancy strategy involves focusing on the needs of other ethnic nationalities who co-migrated to the host society. This strategy is more effective than assimilating into mainstream markets, especially in cosmopolitan areas with many ethnic nationalities. Co-migrancy strategy is overshadowing ethnicity as a bonding process. The widely held view that migrants depend on co-ethnic resources for development is losing ground in London. Evidence posits that recent immigrants conceptualise community as migrants with similar migration and business trajectories rather than culture, language, and country of origin (Batnitzky & McDowell, 2013 cited in Villeres- Varela et al., 2018).

Portfolio entrepreneurship is a form of diversification. Some immigrant entrepreneurs adopt portfolio entrepreneurship as a breakout strategy. Portfolio entrepreneurship involves multiple business ownership. Ram et al. (2004), in their study of immigrant business in the restaurant sector, observed that immigrants employ multiple business ownership to spread risk and adapt to changing consumer preferences. Portfolio entrepreneurship enables immigrant entrepreneurs to manage multiple activities on one site and juggle family and business resources together. Some employ socio-economic hybridisation, such as working for someone and being self-employed simultaneously (Villeres- Varela et al., 2018). Immigrant entrepreneurs are active agents and resilient in the face of difficulties. They compensate for their lack of resources by juggling multiple activities and bringing different activities together. Sometimes times, it leads to a breakout.

v. Multicultural hybridity strategy - Smart organizational design

Engelen (2001) advocated for the Schumpeterian innovation approach as the basis for breakout and recommended smart organizational design and technology in marketing as breakout strategies for immigrant entrepreneurs. Arrighetti et al. (2014) identified a multicultural hybrid organizational model as a breakout strategy. Their study of immigrant entrepreneurs in two Italian cities observed that managerial and work teams are designed to have a proportion of people from the mainstream population to achieve a break out. Accordingly, recruiting a nationally diverse workforce enlarges opportunity and increases innovation, problem-solving, understanding of the marketplace/information, and internal diversity. This plurality blends ethnic and native competencies facilitating breakout (Wang & Altinay 2012). In the same way, Dheer (2018) identified hiring non-ethnic professionals as a breakout strategy.

Chimhanzi & Stewart (2005), cited in McPherson (2019), observed that tweaking HR practices are critical in facilitating breakout. Deakins et al. (1997), in their study of immigrant entrepreneurs in Scotland, identified employing the services of a 'broker' with experience and contact in host society as a breakout strategy. Some immigrant businesses believed that recruiting natives for managerial positions would generate a non-ethnic image and provide access to key stakeholders in the host society. Effective social ties contribute significantly to breakout, especially when the contacts possess existing contact and industry experience. Some immigrant entrepreneurs, however, are not willing to share decision-making privileges.

Nevertheless, in regions where prejudice and discrimination are high, this strategy enables an immigrant entrepreneur to obtain the relevant license and social credential to compete with mainstream businesses. Ram et al. (2004) identified a significant relationship between employment practices of immigrant businesses and breakout success. They observed that immigrant businesses who end their informal human resource practices and adopt modern HR practices in recruitment, training, motivation, and deployment found it easier to break out. On the other hand, immigrant businesses that failed to separate entrepreneurial and managerial activities, especially employment strategy, remained in limited markets.

vi. Business to business strategy (Selective breakout)

Basu (2011) justified using a business-to-business strategy as a breakout model. Immigrant entrepreneurs can maximise their growth potential when they shift from selling to individuals to

businesses. Such a move creates a new customer segment that is arguably more dependable and voluminous. He maintained that what propels breakout are new customer segments, strong brand name, innovative products, and profitable trading links regardless of the sector of operation. This B2B arrangement is selective because it focuses on a few customer segments with higher growth potential.

Drori & Lerner (2002) recommended selective breakout, especially in regions of resource scarcity and socio-political tension. In their study of Arab immigrants in Israel, they observed that some immigrants who satisfied their ethnic and local market selectively enter fewer markets in the mainstream economy with specialised products that are competitive but cheap. Using product development, market positioning, and strategic human resource management, these immigrants can systematically appropriate niches starting with the ones they have comparative advantages. In addition, immigrant businesses can breakout through outsourcing (Wang & Warn 2019). Part of the business process or part of the managerial process could be outsourced. The use of external experts who do not belong to ethnic or mainstream markets can fast-track breakout. However, it requires class resources to execute.

vii. Survival oriented strategy

Survival businesses have limited aspiration and short-term vision. According to Ram et al. (2004), they enjoy being small and do not worry about improving their capacity. They are not growth-oriented businesses. These businesses are known for lamentation of competition and mistrust of outsiders. They usually use 'off the book employment' and have a passive relationship with the market. The inaccessibility of funding worst hits survivalist entrepreneurs as they depend on informal credit sources. This breakout strategy is advisable when there are non-ethnic niches that immigrants can colonise. Despite that immigrant entrepreneurs are not selling ethnic products, they do not face stiff competition by natives in such business lines. Chrysostome & Arcand (2009), in their study of necessity entrepreneurs in Canada, observed that most immigrant entrepreneurs who pursue this strategy are found in the cleaning, retail, and construction industry. The size of an ethnic market and capturable non-ethnic niches are factors in this strategy, as survival is more important than growth.

Entrepreneurs that opt for this strategy are usually risk-averse and value ethnic resources. Advertising and affordable pricing remained their promotional strategy. There is a gloomy outlook

for this strategy in the long run because, aside from dependence on informal ethnic labour, exploitation, and competition are intense. Barn & McPherson (2011) cited in McPherson (2019) identified three degrees of breakout: staying put (Businesses that resist growth for personal reasons; forced to remain (businesses operating in areas where growth is unlikely); and struggling to adjust (businesses with bright prospects but the owners are unwilling to change. Low order value and local market mentality among this class of immigrant entrepreneurs are glaring. According to the authors, most of these businesses are more interested in family image than professional development. Their performance shows little interest in business transformation and does not go beyond performing routine tasks. These businesses unconsciously adopted this strategy because of entrepreneurs' disposition and opportunity structure. They operate on a margin with little profit, face unnecessary supplier pressure, and cannot differentiate their products effectively.

viii. Geographic/Locational strategy

Geographical breakout strategy involves moving into new locations, usually outside the inner city. An improved product mix especially accompanies sitting business in upcoming locations and highbrow areas to attract a class of customers different from traditional ones immigrant entrepreneurs are used to. Ram et al. (2004) noted that such move into new areas, uncolonised by competitors, depends on the accumulation of class resources and availability of experienced staff. Relocation to affluent areas is seen as a market positioning strategy for gaining premium customer niches. They observed that immigrants who are located in dispersed areas are doing well compared to those in inner-city locations. Aside from the need for experienced staff, this strategy requires substantial financial outlay, specialised recruitment, awareness of high quality, and an attractive brand image. Sadly, many first-generation immigrant businesses cannot afford this strategy. Altinay & Altinay (2008) observed that locational strategy and effective advertising are usually effective for retail-related businesses. However, Ram & Jones (2008) observed from Asian immigrants in the UK that setting up shops in neighborhoods dominated by 'whites' does not lead to a breakout.

ix. Digital and business improvement strategy

A digital business model is one of the new trajectories of breakout in a transnational environment. It creates opportunities for home-based ventures, helping immigrants to provide value to customers, enhanced choice, lower cost, and an easy way of combining limited resources. Anwar & Daniel (2017), in their work on ethnic entrepreneurs and online home businesses, evidenced that

an online strategy is a superior option because of its affordability, flexibility, and access to dispersed markets. It offers immigrant entrepreneurs the opportunity to participate in high-growth sectors, has higher financial rewards, and meets spatially diverse customer bases. According to Chen & Tan (2014), online presence reduces transaction costs associated with location and time differences. Online business provides an escape route from constraints besieging immigrant businesses. Its ease of operation and self-learning mode allowed immigrants with fewer class resources to compete in high-growth sectors. Henceforward, many South Asians and African-Caribbean immigrants can compete favourably in modern economic sectors such as education, consultancy, ICT, finance, and professional services. This strategy turns immigrants into global elites who have transferable skills to enter innovative business sectors (Kloosterman, 2010; Sandoz, 2021). As a breakout strategy, the digital business model offers access to a heterogeneous customer base and reduces the need for non-ethnic ties. It creates options for entrepreneurs with push and pull motivations and even those who work from home. However, its ease of entry is skewed in favour of skills that are not easy to acquire. Anwar & Daniel (2017) remarked that weaknesses of digital business breakout strategy aside from rigorous training is the need to manage reputation and difficulty in effective implementation of relational marketing.

Aside digitising business operations, critical business processes can be improved. This strategy requires radical improvement in business management practices in key areas such as production, marketing, HR, and use of mainstream media (Allen & Busse, 2014). Drori & Lerner (2002) found out that a non-ethnic market can be accessed by selectively entering a mainstream market with specialised products, appropriating niches, product development, and market positioning. Ram & Hillin (1994) observed that process improvement activities such as strategic planning, strategic marketing, and effective labour force management, formalisation of business processes, and use of data in business planning could lead to a breakout. Altinay & Altinay (2008) discouraged immigrant firms aiming to break out from relying on ethnic media for their marketing activities. They argued that although the educational background of the entrepreneur molds the organizational culture, environmental factors and customers' characteristics should determine the marketing practice to be adopted. Rosales (2013) included symbolic hygiene maintenance as one of the process improvement activities undertaken to breakout.

Product differentiation is another example of this strategy. It entails adapting product offerings to customers' preferences and opening up to new market trends to attract different breeds of

customers. The target is to develop products that are markedly different and appealing to a new customer base. Unlike other immigrant businesses that use haphazard marketing approaches, immigrant firms pursuing differentiation strategies do not see marketing as an unnecessary cost. Product differentiation strategy can also be used to deepen customer experiences. This can be in the form of a new product or additional services that exceed customers' expectations.

x. Transnational entrepreneurship strategy

Immigrant entrepreneurs break out of the constraining environment by exploiting opportunities in transnational space. Qui & Gupta (2015) observed that 'born global' immigrant businesses rely on the linkage between home and host country, unique knowledge of both markets, and transnational capital to grow their businesses. This unique form of business internationalisation enables immigrant entrepreneurs to escape limitations in host markets. These authors explained that immigrant transnational entrepreneurship is an easier route of internationalization because it offers an opportunity for immigrants to exploit transnational markets from their inception. Immigrant businesses build international capacity by accessing external knowledge, focusing on psychically proximate nations, using low commitment entry mode and calculated risk, and a strategic plan to escalate their coverage and commitment in a linear mode (Qui & Gupta, 2015). First-mover advantage and locational knowledge which are dependent on innovation and requisite expertise, are crucial in the transnational environment. Dheer (2018) affirmed that transnational entrepreneurship, unlike immigrant entrepreneurship, benefits both host and home countries. The viability of transnational space has also been acknowledged in literature (Solano, 2016; Bagwell, 2008; Sandoz et al., 2021).

An ethnic economy becomes viable and competitive when connected to transnational space, enabling it to overcome constraints and generate resources. According to Zhou (2004), since immigrants seemed to be restricted from accessing business resources in their host societies, cross-border activities augment available resources, ensuring that immigrant entrepreneurs diversify their activities. In the long run institutional capacities of both economies are strengthened. Preferentially, transnational strategy is acclaimed as a superior breakout strategy on account of the hypermobility resulting from globalisation. As Valenzuela et al. (2018) uncovered, space is no longer a static domain but a volatile dynamic realm. The fluidity of exchange, super-diversity, and super connectivity has given immigrants, especially those with class resources ability to access resources

and enter market niches with ease. Solano (2019) averred that some countries' liberal policies give transnational strategy impetus. Besides the mobility of financial capital, human capital is also intrinsically transnational because it is acquired from different countries. Therefore, some immigrant entrepreneurs deploy the strategy as a resilient strategy to manage risk and escape economic crises.

Evaluation of different breakout strategies identified in the literature revealed that immigrant entrepreneurs' agential properties and transformative potential seemed to be neglected. Extant literature focused on individual characteristics of the entrepreneur, social networks, and contextual factors with little emphasis on the dynamic bricolage and agential properties of entrepreneurs. Indeed, immigrant entrepreneurs as the principal agent in resource-structure interactions are active and dynamic in navigating the constraints posed by institutional structures and resource inadequacies. They have transformational potential, which they exhibit by forming a different agential relationship and power structure to allow for the flow of resources and become competitive. Valenzuela- Garcia et al. (2018) contend that immigrants are not victims of opportunity structure. They are active shapers of entrepreneurial space, and they manage spatial dispersion. They argued that immigrant entrepreneurs employ different entrepreneurial agencies such as multifocal ties to stay afloat and move beyond boundaries (Cortes, 2009). Human capital is becoming transnational because people live in different countries and acquire experiences and skills (Solano, 2019). Many immigrant entrepreneurs, especially with high human capital, do not depend wholly on ethnic resources. They employ their agential capacity in dealing with constraints facing immigrant businesses.

3.4 Market spaces immigrant entrepreneurs break out of and into

Breakout entails moving from a low-end and less competitive market to expandable markets with more growth opportunities. Jones, Barret & McEnvoy (2000) identified four markets within which ethnic entrepreneurs move across: ethnic-local market, non-ethnic local market, ethnic- nonlocal market, and non-ethnic non-local market. In the ethnic local market where immigrant entrepreneurs are presumably trapped, geographical and ethnic limitations constrain growth. A shift towards local non-ethnic markets is a form of a breakout into a low-order mainstream market. In the same way, a shift to a non-local ethnic market is a move to high order market but within an

ethnic market. However, a shift to a non-ethnic nonlocal market is seen as the actual breakout where ethnic businesses can access regional and national markets with non-ethnic products.

According to growth potential, Kloosterman (2010) theorised four types of market spaces: Vacancy chain openings, High human capital but in a stagnating market space, post-industrial/low skills market space, and post-industrial/high skills market space. Vacancy chain openings do not require high-class resources. However, the downside is that it has limited growth potential. Kloosterman's classification revealed that some market spaces require high entry barriers despite not having high growth potential. The two post-industrial markets have growth potential; one requires a high human capital threshold while the other does not.

Given that transnational entrepreneurship is becoming a desirable breakout strategy, key transnational market spaces available for immigrant entrepreneurs can be considered. Chen & Tan (2014) categorised market spaces available for transnational entrepreneurs as ethnic firm markets, markets for firms that have broken out into the mainstream market, the market for firms that are into transnational entrepreneurship only, and the market for firms that are both in mainstream and transnational space. Along with this perspective, Portes et al. (2001) outlined four types of market spaces available for immigrant transnational entrepreneurs: Import market, export market, overseas plants, and overseas resource markets.

Table 3.1 is an overview of market spaces that immigrants move out of and into. The table relates twenty-four market spaces where breakout and break-in can occur. Level 1 and level 2 represent lower market segments where immigrant businesses typically find themselves. Levels 3 and 4 represent a higher market segment they need to break into. Ram & Hillin (1994) contend that breakout is moving from these lower levels to higher levels. Regrettably, breakout does not equal break-in. Parzer (2016) insisted that pulling out of constraints facing immigrant businesses does not give them acceptance into higher market segments. Constraints facing immigrant businesses are multi-level, just like there are multilevel in acceptance into higher-order market segments. On the plus side, the benefit of multidimensional market typology is that different breakout options are provided for immigrant businesses at different life cycle stages, sectors, and opportunity structures. Conversely, the typology reveals distinct trajectories with multivariate constraints and demands.

Table 3.2 Typology of breakout market spaces and various levels of growth

	Category of market space	**Level 1 (Lowest)**	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4 (Highest)**
1	According to sector	Traditional immigrant sector	Traditional mainstream sector	Competitive sector	High growth sector
2	According to the ethnicity of clients	Co-Ethnic customers	Co-migrant customers	Mainstream customers	Universal customers
3	According to geographical location	Neigbourhood	Regional	National	Transnational
4	According to clients' purchasing power	Lower class	Middle class	Upper class	Premium class
5	According to the niche appropriated	Ethnic niche	Non-ethnic niche	National niche	Transnational niche
6	According to the entry barrier	Ethnic-related barrier	Low entry barrier	High entry barrier	Multi-level barriers

3.5 Measuring breakout

Breakout measurement variables assess whether an immigrant business has overcome typical constraints associated with immigrant businesses. According to available literature, common indicators of immigrant entrepreneur breakout include a proportion of ethnic customers, proportion of ethnic suppliers, proportion of ethnic employees, the ethnic orientation of the product, sector of economic activities, extent of link with the home country, transaction language and the extent to which ethnic customs influence business processes (Arrighetti et al., 2014, Basu, 2011, Drori & Learner, 2002). Mobbah et al. (2018) argued that focusing only on growth variables for measuring breakout is inadequate and called for the inclusion of personal satisfaction variables. This is because immigrant businesses, unlike mainstream businesses, have non-economic motives. Chrysostome & Arcand (2009) shared a similar view that opening a new business branch or

employing more workers should not be interpreted as growth because they could be driven by ethnic solidarity and not for economic reasons.

Ram et al. (2004) identified managerial style, marketing orientation, and future aspirations of the immigrant firms as breakout indicators. In addition, they included entrepreneur characteristics such as a mix of class resources, firm characteristics such as employee mix, nature of market development activities, and strategic plans as breakout indicators. Chrysostome & Arcand (2009) averred that growth indicators should be split into survival and growth indicators. They listed the age of the enterprise as an indicator of survival while financial indicators such as return on investment as a growth indicator. Authors such as Mitchell (2015) adopted growth indicators such as franchise growth, the extent of digitisation, the geographic area covered by the business, and other industry-specific measurements as measures of immigrant business breakout. McPherson (2019) included non-financial indicators such as personal experience, lifestyle, and extent of self-development of the immigrant entrepreneur as measures of immigrant business growth.

There has been a backlash against some breakout measures, especially growth indicators (Chrysostome & Arcand 2009; Mobbah et al. 2018). Delma et al. (2003), cited in Mitchelle (2015) claimed that growth indicators are interchangeable and produce different results. Consequently, no single indicator is perfect for measuring breakout as they have some weaknesses. For instance, an increase in employees and sales figures are commonly seen as growth indicators, but such an increase does not automatically mean profitability. One way to mitigate the weaknesses is the use of multiple indicators. It is also necessary to consider the context and purpose of measurement before deciding which indicator to use.

3.6 Conceptual framework

This section pulls together the key findings from the literature across the two chapters into an overview model that can explain the purpose of the study. The conceptual framework explored the current conceptualisation of embeddedness in transnational globe space and how these evolving changes are redefining immigrant business breakout.

The conceptual framework of this study is derived from the literature review conducted and in particular, by the work of Chen & Tan (2009) and Solano (2016), who studied the interplay of

transnational embeddedness. Following transnational mixed embeddedness theory, this framework maintains that how, when, and which market immigrant entrepreneurs break into depends on the context they found themselves, which cuts across national boundaries.

The central question in this research is: How has changing entrepreneurial context (transnational environment) affected immigrant entrepreneur breakout? Breakout processes of immigrant entrepreneurs are shaped by the opportunity structure of the host environment (demand side) and entrepreneur and ethnic resources from the supply side. However, this view does not accommodate emerging trajectories in immigrant entrepreneurship breakout. Changes in globalisation increase the need to study breakout in a transnational context. This context is characterised by the easy flow of resources across the national border and increasing reliance on transnational space. Increased competition from developing countries, utilisation of multifocal social networks, and the emergence of new communities are attributes of the current context.

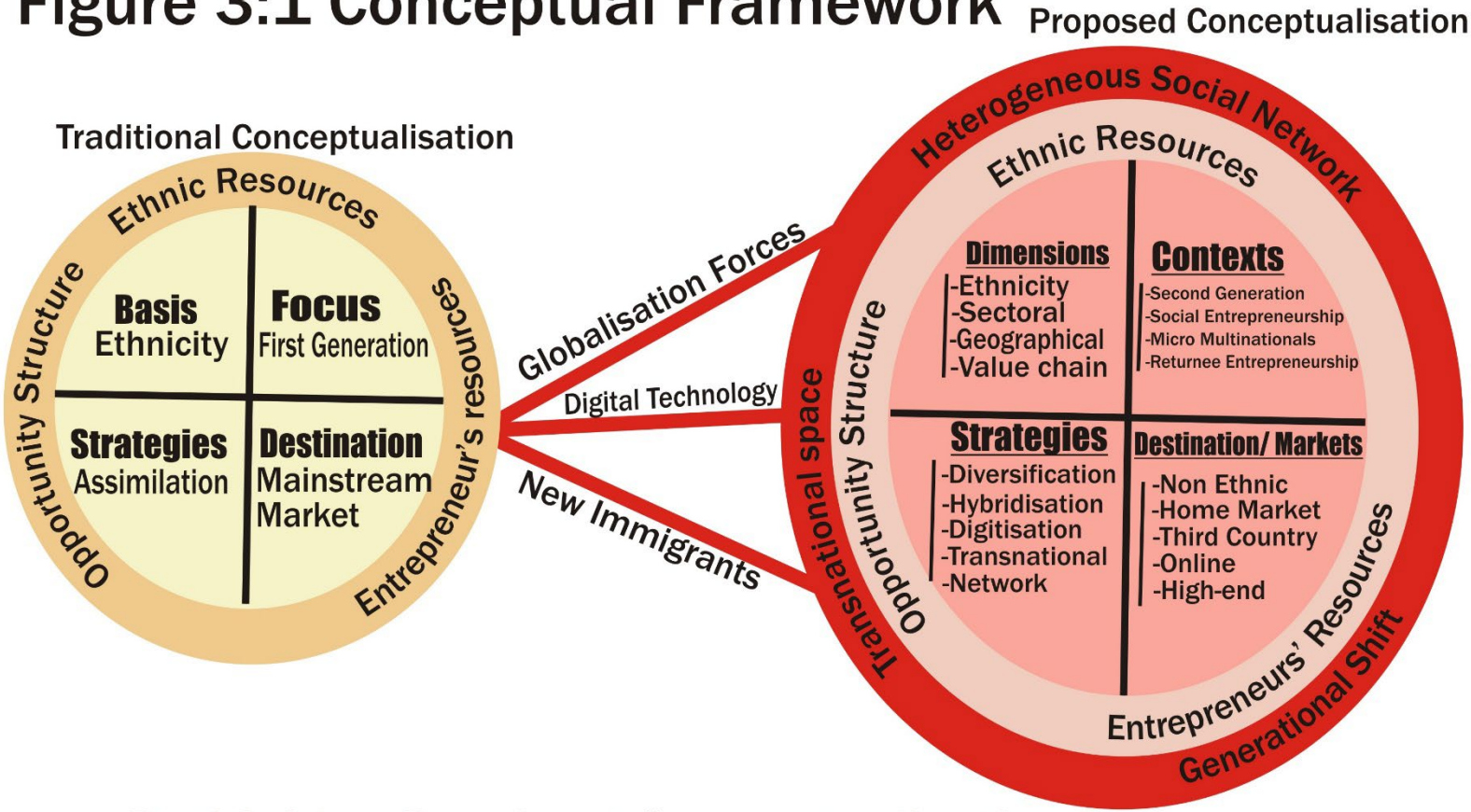
Some variables in the framework, such as breakout, transnational space, social network, and generational shift, have been discussed in previous sections. Other concepts that require explanation are ethnic resources, opportunity structure, and entrepreneur resources. According to Solano (2016), opportunity structure is the process through which opportunities are seized. Kloosterman (2010) described it as contexts that create, shape, and regulate entrepreneurial activities. It consists of socio-political end economic environment, regulatory framework, market structure, policies, and migration pathways that predetermine immigrant entrepreneurial activities.

Ethnic resources include relational and structural assets which immigrants can access for being a member of an ethnic group. Ethic resources are cultural capital and social assets peculiar to immigrants of a particular ethnic origin, predisposing them to exploit economic opportunities. They include cultural traits that a particular ethnic group is known for, goodwill, assistance, resources, support, and access to ethnic groups' resources. Entrepreneurs' resources refer to immigrant entrepreneurs' personal characteristics and assets relevant to accessing and exploiting economic opportunities. Entrepreneurs' resources are class resources and financial capital, which immigrants depend on as they exploit entrepreneurial opportunities. They include education, work experience, social ties, perceived identities, family-based resources, immigration status, savings, and entrepreneurial skills employed in entrepreneurial pursuits.

This study argues that a transnational layer in the immigrant entrepreneurial environment has influenced the interplay of demand and supply factors, adding new variables, markets, strategies, ties, players, and dimensions. As a result, there is a need for a reconceptualisation of breakout. The figure below illustrates how transnational environment 'proxied' by transnational space, heterogeneous social networks, and generational shift reshaped traditional conceptualisation of breakout. These changes affected ethnic resources, entrepreneurs' resources, and immigrant entrepreneurs' opportunity structure, creating the need for a reconceptualisation of breakout.

In the traditional conceptualisation, the basis of a breakout was ethnicity; the focus was strictly on first-generation immigrants, the common breakout strategy was integration into the host economy, and the destination was mainstream markets. The entrepreneurial context was proxied by opportunity structure on the demand side and entrepreneurs and ethnic resources on the supply side. However, a new layer (transnational environment) is added in the proposed reconceptualisation. This addition has reshaped the interplay of opportunity structure, ethnic and entrepreneur resources such that breakout basis, focus, strategies, and destination have changed. In the new conceptualisation, the breakout basis is multidimensional. The sectoral, geographical, value chain and purchasing power dimensions were represented. Breakout focus is multiple identities ranging from first to second-generation immigrants. Breakout strategies have become a continuum of variations, with the ethnic and mainstream market at extremes. Breakout destination has also enlarged from mainstream market to transnational and co-migrant markets. The conceptual framework is illustrated in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3:1 Conceptual Framework



Rethinking Breakout Conceptualisation

Immigrant breakout has been studied in an ethnic enclave, interactionist, and mixed embeddedness contexts. However, recent changes in globalisation, such as ICT, super-diversity, and intersectionality increase the need to study immigrant entrepreneur breakout in a transnational context. This context is characterised by the increasing flow of people and resources across national boundaries, the emergence of new communities cutting across ethnicity, geographical space, and utilisation of multifocal social networks. According to You & Zhou (2019), this era is characterised by multiple embeddedness in a different context, where the notion of 'home' is blurred and where immigrant entrepreneurship is shaped not only by local market conditions but multiple layers of socio-economic and politico-institutional circumstances in the transnational space.

3.7 Chapter summary

The term 'breakout' was preferred to other business growth concepts in this study because it could accommodate the peculiarities and socio-economic dimensions of immigrant business more than other concepts. This chapter emphasised the distinction between breakout variables and strategies. This is because breakout variables are unidimensional factors that can shape breakout while breakout strategies are the outcome of the tension between the entrepreneur and the environment. The discussion of other breakout strategies aside from mainstream market strategy affirm that twenty-first century immigrant entrepreneurs explore markets outside the immediate environment and rely on platforms unavailable to immigrant entrepreneurs in the 20th century.

The chapter presented the conceptual framework of the study which hinges on the intersection of transnational mixed embeddedness and breakout practices of immigrant entrepreneurs. The framework demonstrates that advances in technology, an increase in the number of immigrants with diverse competencies, and globalisation activities (such as economic liberalisation policies of different countries) have increased the scope, markets, and business strategies which immigrant entrepreneurs can explore. The literature review chapters provided a contextual understanding of key concepts, preparing the ground for the empirical research. The next chapter will present the methodology and approach used to conduct the empirical research.

Chapter Four

Research methodology

4.0 Introduction

The previous two chapters reviewed what previous authors have done in the subject area and provided the basis for the study's objectives. This chapter, therefore, outlines the assumptions, procedures, and methods used in data collection and analysis. It examined ethical, credibility, and dependability issues relevant for robust research. According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2008), research methodology generally designates the combination of techniques used to explore specific situations. As a plan of action linking research choices and methods to research objectives, this chapter discussed the theoretical and philosophical assumptions which inform methodological decisions. The chapter was designed to fill the methodological gaps observed in previous studies, as highlighted in Chapter one. With this background, the chapter first identified the assumptions inherent in the study design. The procedure for identifying study participants and their characteristics followed. Thirdly, the methods of data collection and the reasons for their selection were discussed. The chapter concludes with a discussion of data analysis methods and issues of rigour and ethics.

4.1 Research philosophy and assumptions

Research philosophy is the researcher's belief and system of thought about the way in which data about a phenomenon is collected, collected and analysed. Research philosophy is helpful because it demystifies assumptions and inconsistencies, help the researcher to understand their roles and provide basis for research methods and procedures. Positivism realism and interpretivism are common research philosophies. Positivism is concerned with observable reality and hypothesis testing. Realism emphasises that human senses determine realities that are truth. Interpretivism argues that reality is based on perception and interpretation.

The research philosophy used in this study is interpretivism, following social constructivism. Interpretivism integrates human interest into a study, focusing on shared meaning, language and consciousness instead of just words. Unlike positivism, which focuses on objective, absolute truth and single prediction, the interpretivist philosophy accommodates multiple prediction and it is relative (based on context and time). This qualitative approach provides truth value through

the credibility provided by rich data reflective of participants' knowledge. As a strong form of qualitative methodology, it goes beyond empirical objectives to understand subjective views. According to Carter & Little (2007), context is key in interpretivist philosophy. Owing to its multi-layered attributes, it can provide multiple interpretations to enrich understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

The interpretivist philosophy was selected because it is more suitable for achieving the study's objectives. The researcher is studying contextual entrepreneurial action and hence people's interpretation of such contexts matter. The study focuses on understanding multiple realities and in-depth explanation of what, why and how. This approach is suitable because the phenomenon being studied is a cultural and socio-economic condition that has existed over time where the researcher is expected to 'listen' to the data and make meaning from them. This philosophy assumes that reality and knowledge are based on lived experience and constructed through social interaction and based on perception and experience. In this approach, truth and fact are socially negotiated. The reality in the environment is understood and constructed in a time and culture-specific context (Sanders et al. 2016). It is different from objectivist philosophy which assumes that meaning and reality exist outside consciousness. Immigrant entrepreneurship is construed to be based on contexts and meanings which entrepreneurs attach to events, situations, and interactions. This interpretivist approach provided a more meaningful dimension for exploring the perception and cognitive behaviour of immigrant owner-managers. The study focuses on how immigrant entrepreneurship is construed in a context instead of an emphasis on 'objective truth.' Based on this approach, the relationship between the researcher and what is being studied is not one of rigid separation, as seen in positivism. Instead, the relationship is built on interaction, cooperation and participation.

Epistemology, ontology, and axiology are underpinning assumptions of research. Epistemological assumption focuses on the nature of acceptable knowledge, data, and contribution. Epistemology influences the entire research process as it a philosophical guide for deciding what kind of knowledge is possible and how to ensure that knowledge is adequate and legitimate. Epistemology, as the relationship between the known and what is known, explores how knowledge is gathered and from which sources. The epistemological assumption adopted in this study is that the experts' opinions, respondents' interviews and experiences, and shared meaning between the researcher and the respondents, are forms of knowledge. In order to address the research questions for this research, the phenomena of immigrant entrepreneurship required a wide range of data forms, the majority of which emanated from

individual entrepreneur experiences, perceptions, and interpretations. In most qualitative research, the ontological viewpoints are such that findings are created as the inquiry proceeds. According to Green (2000), both the researcher and the participants collaborate to co-produce negotiated outcomes.

Ontological and axiological assumptions refer to how reality is construed in research, (Hubbermile et al., 1996). Objectivism and subjectivism are common epistemological assumptions. Objectivism believes that social entities exist in realities that are external to social actors. Subjectivism on the other hand argues that social phenomena are created from perception and consequent actions of social actors. Subjectivism is the ontological assumption adopted in this study. The choice was because truth and meaning are fluid and socially constructed in the context of language and culture, reflecting multiple realities and the flux of entrepreneurs' experiences. Subjectivist research positions the world as unknowable and the role of the researchers is to construct an impression of the world as they see it.

Axiology on the other hand is the role of values in research, (Hubbermile et al., 1996). Since the researcher is part of what is being researched and his interpretation is part of acceptable knowledge, the axiological assumption adopted in the study is value-bound. Conclusively, the rationale for adopting these research assumptions is firstly, that multiple realities are studied and each reality raises more questions than positivism can address effectively. Secondly, humans are the primary data source, and the researcher need to interact to uncover multiple constructed realities. Thirdly, participants have diverse viewpoints, and the researcher should focus on the identification of the contextualised meaning of the multiple viewpoints. Lastly, context is important in this study. The knower and the known are the same, and reality cannot be isolated from the context.

4.2 Research design

The focus of the study is to explore how the emerging transnational environment shapes immigrant entrepreneur breakout among Nigerian immigrants in the UK. This study adopted a qualitative research methodological approach based on the belief that this will provide a route to entering the subjective reality of the population under study to uncover the complexities therein. This approach is suitable for exploratory studies in entrepreneurship research, especially for its evolving research design and flexibility. Hindle (2004) suggests that qualitative research into entrepreneurship fuels broader in-depth understanding and the capacity to learn directly from the research subjects. Another reason for choosing this approach is the nature of

the research questions. The research explored how breakout strategies have changed, how transnational space shapes the breakout process, how social networks facilitate breakout, and whether breakout strategies of first-generation is similar to that of the second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs. Qualitative research answers these 'how' questions better because extensive surveys may not provide the rich information needed.

The qualitative method is beneficial, especially in a study of this nature, because of its 'thick description' (Sanders et al., 2016). Apart from being rich and holistic, it is nested in a natural context. Because of the prolonged contact with life situations, findings from qualitative studies reflect the people's everyday lives and locate the meaning they attach to events, structures, assumptions, and processes and how these meanings shape their socio-economic lives. Miles & Hubberman (1994) asserted that the qualitative method goes beyond actions to understand motives, situations to understand contexts and is very useful in understanding complex and intricate circumstances and connections.

The qualitative research method was chosen because of its flexibility and ability to integrate verbal and nonverbal communication. This method improves the methodologies used in previous studies on immigrant entrepreneurship, especially by comparing the perspectives of first- and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs, the inclusion of entrepreneurs from different sectors, and the use of both in-depth interviews and expert opinions. The aim was to change the status quo and possibly contribute to a reconceptualisation of immigrant entrepreneurship breakout.

As a deductive study with elements of an inductive approach, attention was on contributing to theory building in immigrant entrepreneur breakout. The research design selected for the study was an eclectic research method because it involves a mixture of techniques relevant to exploring different layers of breakout contexts. Using this approach requires clarity in information requirements that is logical, practical, reliable, and flexible (Ojo, 2013; Sanders et al., 2016). Data collection instruments and processes also need to meet ethical correctness and within the researcher's competence.

In conducting literature review for the study, a systematic approach was adopted. Keywords in the research questions and their synonyms formed the key concepts for literature search (See the keywords in Chapters two and three). Together with the research aims, these keywords set the scope of the review. These keywords were used to reduce bias and set boundaries for the

review. Publish or perish app, library databases, and other relevant sources were used to identify all literature published in the English language within the research area. Boolean operators and proximate searching were adopted to review relevant resources. Articles generated were evaluated and synthesised, considering their validity and reliability before using them in this review. Insights from the articles were then structured into themes and sections, as seen in the literature review chapters.

Primary data were generated from first and second generation immigrant entrepreneurs who owned and manage businesses at least in the UK. In addition, opinion from experts were sought. The research questions inform the design of the study. Similarly, the nature of data needed to achieve the research objectives influences the data collection method's choice. The table below highlights the relationship between research objectives and the data collection method.

Table 4.1 Linking the objectives, research questions, and data collection methods

Objectives	Research questions	Data collection method
Objective 1- To reconfigure the conceptualisation of breakout in order to accommodate multidimensional perspectives and emerging trajectories.	What are the different breakout strategies employed by immigrant entrepreneurs within the changing context they operate?	In-depth interview, Experts' opinopinions researcher's reflection on shared interaction.
Objective 2: To investigate the significance and relationships between transnational space and breakout strategies of immigrant entrepreneurs.	How does transnational space affect immigrant entrepreneurs' breakout strategies?	In-depth interview, Expert opinion.
Objective 3: To examine how generational shifts affect the interplay of entrepreneur resources, opportunity structures, and breakout strategies of immigrant entrepreneurs.	How do first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial resources, opportunity structure, and breakout strategies differ from that of second-generation entrepreneurs?	Expert opinion, In-depth interview, Researcher's reflection on shared interaction.
Objective 4: To analyse immigrant entrepreneurs' uses of social networks in breakout within	What is the composition and roles of social networks of immigrant entrepreneurs in a breakout?	Expert opinion, In-depth interview,

the changing context in which they operate.		Researcher's reflection and interpretation.

4.3 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis adopted in this study is an individual immigrant entrepreneur. Data was collected data from one individual per organisation. This individual is usually the owner-manager of the business organisation. Unit of Analysis is the entity that frames what is being analysed in a study, or the entity being studied as a whole, within which most factors of causality and change exist (Sanders et al., 2016). It is usually challenging to separate immigrant entrepreneurs from their businesses during analysis. The reason is that the two entities are closely knitted, and the personality of the entrepreneurs robs off on the business and vice versa. The personality of the entrepreneurs is subsumed in the business, and focusing on the business as a legal entity may not provide the needed rich data. Unlike in other studies where immigrant business is the unit of analysis, this study revolved around the entrepreneur him/herself focusing on their experiences, decisions, perception, and attitude towards immigrant entrepreneurship and breakout.

Most of the immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample were into portfolio entrepreneurship. These entrepreneurs operate multiple businesses to benefit from diversification and exploit changes in market demand. This situation increased complexity in identifying which business is breaking out. To address the challenge, the researcher focussed on their leading primary business; the leading business in this context refers to the business identified by the entrepreneurs as their key business activity, where they committed a more significant proportion of resources, focus, and competence.

4.4 Area of study

London is selected as the study area for the Ph.D. primarily because it houses the largest concentration of Nigerians in Europe. One out of ten Nigerians has a family or close kin in London (Ojo, 2012). London is increasingly becoming a second home to many Nigerians because of its colonial link and reputation as a modern city (Ojo, 2013). London, one of the world's most popular migration destinations, is not only considered cosmopolitan but 'super diverse' owing to various ethnic products, customer bases, tastes, entrepreneurial orientations, and traditions that make up the socioeconomic space (Baylan- Levent & Njikamp, 2009). The UK's market relationship between host and immigrant communities can be described as diverse, encouraging cooperation instead of assimilation (Vertovec, 2007). The population is socioeconomically differentiated, ethnically autonomous, class-stratified, and transnationally connected (Sepulveda et al., 2011). As a country with a heavily integrated global network, the UK is

multicultural. London precisely fits the description of immigrant destinations where innovations in information communication and transport technology have become evident.

Aside from having an increasing number of second-generation entrepreneurs, London is also a breeding ground for heterogeneous social networks because of its multi-layered experiences in social relations, the coexistence of multiple cultures, and cultural confluence. As a city heavily integrated into a global network, it has transformed from normative transnationalism to a global pattern of sustained communication, institutional linkages, and exchange of resources among the immigrant homeland and wider diasporas (Sepulveda et al., 2011; Vertovec, 2007). The existence of creole languages, a cosmopolitan outlook, and multiple cultural competencies of London make the breakout of ethnic minority businesses possible and intriguing.

According to Vertovec (2007: 73), 'super-diversity characterised London. He defines this term as "a dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small, scattered, multiple origins, transnationally connected immigrants." People from over 180 nationalities live in the UK, each with its distinct culture, products, lifestyle, and entrepreneurial orientation. In the views of Benedictus and Godwin (2005:28), "Never had so many different kinds of people tried living together in one place before as seen in the UK." Vertovec (2007) described the UK as the 'world in one city where every nationality on earth has both a temporary and permanent home. Among immigrant destinations, London is unique. It is deeply diverse in languages, ethnicity, political affiliations, religion, and sexual orientations. Sepulveda et al. (2011) observed that the UK is experiencing an unusual level of diversity owing to different migration channels for students, workers, asylum seekers, and families, especially from countries that do not share a colonial link with the UK. The nature of migration in the UK, fuelled by global conflict, globalisation, and economic performance, has led to transformative diversification, especially in the emergence of mixed residences, age profiles, and new communities that cut across ethnicity (Vertovec, 2007).

4.5 Research strategy

The research design adopted in this study is the qualitative method as it uses expert opinion and in-depth interviews. Qualitative research is suitable for this study because of the nature of the inquiry needed. The study intends to unravel the immigrant entrepreneur breakout process in-depth, and a quantitative method might not provide the holistic insight needed for understanding such a phenomenon.

Expert opinion

Expert opinions were sought from seven experts selected from professional business associations, trade groups, academia, and ethnic associations. Data generated from them related to the issues of barriers to immigrant entrepreneur breakout, challenges in delivering intervention packages to immigrant entrepreneurs, emerging trajectories in a breakout, and the extent to which they factor in transnational space in breakout intervention packages.

These experts served as gatekeepers that helped the researcher to access the participants. The use of experts served as a 'door opening' technique that enabled the researcher to gain access and credibility with entrepreneur respondents. These experts and other gatekeepers provided referral letters, word-of-mouth recommendations, and phone calls that helped the researcher overcome the resistance and indifferent attitude of some entrepreneurs contacted for the study. The experts were interviewed after the interview of the entrepreneurs to enable the researcher to validate the findings generated from the immigrant entrepreneurs and also generate insight into some behaviour observed in the sample. The outcome of the interviews of respondents informed the questions that the experts were asked. Owing to their expertise and positions, the experts provided an in-depth explanation of trends and patterns. They offered contextualised understanding of the information provided by the immigrant entrepreneurs. This approach served as mechanism for enhancing methodological rigour and credibility of the data collected.

At the onset of the interview, the researcher was cautious about the role of these experts as gatekeepers. Findings in other studies identified that such experts can also jeopardise access to respondents in some cases (Ojo,2013). However, as discussed in the researcher's reflection (Chapter 8), the use of these experts was effectively managed such that they provided valuable help. Their effort motivated some entrepreneurs to participate in the study.

In-depth interviews

The researcher conducted 30 in-depth interviews with first- and second-generation Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs. Data generated from the interview include the history of the business, motives for the breakout, their conceptualisation of breakout, barriers to breakout, breakout strategies, level of interaction, and assistance from support agencies. Data on the

significance of transnational space on entrepreneurship activities, co-ethnic disposition towards breakout, breakout markets, use of social networks in a breakout, and sources of breakout resources were obtained.

4.6 Population of the study

Respondents for this study were drawn from both first-generation and second-generation Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs who currently run businesses in the UK. As discussed in Chapter two, a first-generation Nigerian immigrant entrepreneur refers to any entrepreneur born or grew up in Nigeria and came to the UK as an adult. A large proportion of the population came from the first-generation migrant cohort because they were easier to identify and more willing to identify with their Nigerian heritage. A second-generation cohort was needed in this study to capture the perspective of second-generation immigrants from the same community. Second-generation Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs refer to entrepreneurs of Nigerian immigrants who came to the UK as children and grew up in the UK irrespective of where they were born. The researcher had difficulty accessing this group because they do not consider themselves immigrants and do not necessarily associate with their country of origin, unlike their parents (Quirke et al., 2009).

4.7 Selection of the study participants

The selection of respondents for the study was undertaken across four steps that:

1. Generated a list of probable respondents
2. Screened the list for eligibility
3. Requested participation and consent
4. Compiled a list to form the study sample

One of the difficulties in studying black entrepreneurship is the lack of databases and statistics. To the researcher's knowledge, there was no official database of Nigerian businesses in the UK. The Black Business Observatory located at the University of East London, which generates statistics on black businesses, could not provide data on Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs. As a result, different strategies were employed in getting the required sample. In line with counsel from scholars who studied black entrepreneurs in the UK, the researcher generated a list of probable participants from religious and ethnic associations. The techniques of snowballing, chain referral, professional contacts, and other informal methods of finding participants such as walking on the high street in areas of concentration of black businesses to identify Nigerian

businesses, were also adopted. Owing to claims that female entrepreneurs are often marginalised and ignored in entrepreneurship studies, the researcher ensured that women associations and women-led leaders were consulted to provide access to female immigrant entrepreneurs. Social media platforms, magazines, and business directories were consulted in compiling a list of Nigerian entrepreneurs in London.

A list of 210 first- and second-generation Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in London who had functional businesses was generated from this process. These immigrant entrepreneurs were screened to ensure eligibility. Participants for interview were required to satisfy the following criteria:

- Be a Nigerian ethnic minority entrepreneur in the UK (various ethnic groups in Nigeria, such as Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, were accommodated to ensure representation of different tribes in Nigeria)
- Own and operate a legitimate business(es) for at least three years
- Be a first-generation or second-generation immigrant entrepreneur

Request to participate in the study was sent to eighty-six immigrant entrepreneurs who met these eligibility criteria. Some were contacted through the phone while others were reached using the experts and gatekeepers before introductory letters were sent to them. Forty-three of them indicated a willingness to participate in the research. However, thirteen of them could not join the sample owing to reasons such as Covid-19, emergencies, and lack of time. The final list consisted of thirty immigrant entrepreneurs split into 18 first generation and 12-second generation. The researcher made an effort to achieve equitable representation in terms of gender, education, and religion of the entrepreneur, sector of business activity, and length of residency of the entrepreneur in selecting respondents for interview. However, key criteria for inclusion in the sample were businesses functioning for at least three years and owned and managed by first- and second-generation Nigerian immigrants in the UK.

Three steps were followed in selecting experts for the study. Firstly, a list of probable respondents was generated from active ethnic associations, religious groups, the Nigerian embassy, and ethnic minority entrepreneurship researchers in the UK. Secondly, the names in the list were screened for eligibility and 15 of them that were eligible were contacted. Third, a final list was compiled. Out of the 15 eligible experts, only seven participated in the study. Those

that did not participate gave reasons such as lack of time and interest in the study. The experts who participated in the research comprised:

- Three leaders of ethnic associations
- One person from the Nigeria-London Business Forum
- One person from Black Women Entrepreneur Forum
- One person from the UK Federation of Small Businesses
- One academic expert on small and immigrant businesses.

4.8 Tools for data collection

The data collection tool used comprised interview guides for the immigrant entrepreneurs and the experts (see Appendix 2 and 3). The first section of the interview guide for the entrepreneurs contains a brief introduction of the research purpose, brief profile of the researcher, permission to record the interview, rights, and privileges of participants. The second section focused on immigrant entrepreneur breakout. Key themes in the topic guide were the nature of Nigerian immigrants' businesses, breakout processes, the social networks that immigrants used, ethnic resources and opportunity structure of Nigerian immigrants, transnational environment, and peculiarities of second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs.

The significant difference between the interview guide for immigrant entrepreneurs and experts was the provision to adapt the questions based on findings from interviews of the entrepreneurs. The interview guide for experts hence contained only eight major questions (with sub-questions), while the instrument for immigrant entrepreneurs contained 11 major questions. The interview guides were approved by the University of Middlesex Research Ethics Committee. These tools were forwarded to the interviewers a few days before the interview to help them prepare their responses. This approach was helpful as it enabled the interview to be enriched with statistics, insights, and valuable information.

4.9 Data collection

The interview was conducted via phone owing to the Covid-19 pandemic. A Samsung smartphone was used for the interview, while a digital recorder was used for recording. The researcher collected the data himself using field notes and a recording device. The approved research instruments guided the questions asked during the interview.

There was only one interview session for each of the 30 participants and experts. However, six immigrant entrepreneurs who required the assistance of the researcher in making some business decisions outside the interview were reached out to later. The duration of the interview range between 25- 45 minutes. The participants were assured of the purpose of the study and how their responses would be treated. They were made to understand their rights to participate or object and access the interview transcript. Consent forms were sent to the respondents before conducting the interview. The researcher highlighted the issue of privacy, confidentiality, and rights before every interview session.

The primary language used for data collection was English, but English creole was used on a few occasions. This form of language is a mixture of English and Nigerian languages that has become popular among Nigerians. Despite being fluent in English, some Nigerians prefer to use this form of language as it helps them express themselves better, especially when interacting with fellow Nigerians. Creole English has almost the same meaning as conventional English, which means that discussions conducted in creole English did not lose meaning. To ensure that few sentences provided in creole English do not lose their meaning, back-to-back translation was used.

Some concepts which had contextual meaning or were frequently misunderstood were explained in the document forwarded to the respondents and during the interview. Concepts such as breakout, capital, and social network were explained contextually. The researcher had a challenge in explaining the meaning of breakout to the respondents because people have a diverse understanding of what breakout should be. Throughout the interview, the term 'expansion into a larger and more competitive market' was used to describe breakout. Respondents were allowed to use diverse variables as they deemed fit to explain their breakout achievements. Terms like growth, expansion, scaling up, increased business activities, and moving into a new market were used interchangeably.

4.10 Nature of data required

The study needed both primary and secondary data. Primary data used include cross-sectional data in narratives, interview scripts (from immigrant entrepreneurs and experts) and the researcher's reflection on interaction with the participants. Interaction with respondents generated qualitative data on how the transnational environment influences the immigrant entrepreneurship context in general and the immigrant entrepreneur breakout in particular. The influence of the transnational environment on breakout was studied at two levels: Firstly, the influence of the transnational environment on the interplay of demand (opportunity structure) and the supply side of immigrant entrepreneurship (ethnic and entrepreneur resources).

Secondly, the influence of transnational environment on breakout strategies and breakout destinations. Correspondingly, entrepreneur-specific, ethnic-specific, sector-specific, and generational-specific data on how breakout conceptualisation has changed owing to the introduction of transnational space, heterogeneous social network, and the generational shift was generated. These data enabled the researcher to answer the research questions posed by the study.

The researcher collated secondary data from websites of host and home government, ethnic association brochures, publications of government agencies, policy documents, and library sources. Other secondary data sources were ethnic media organisations, the National Office of Statistics, reliable informal sources, and online resources. These data were used to scope the study and review the literature regarding ethnic resources, entrepreneur resources, opportunity structure, and breakout processes of first and non-first-generation Nigerian immigrants. Secondary data were not used to generate findings for the study because they lack appropriate robustness and soundness required. However, the data helped generate background information on locations, sectors, and types of Nigerian immigrants' businesses.

4.11 Pilot study

The researcher conducted a pilot study to enhance the soundness and methodological rigour of the research. Three respondents were involved in the pilot study undertaken in English and via phone. The participants were part of the sample and as a result, their responses were included in the data analysed. Subsequent interviews were built on lessons learned from these pilot interviews. After the pilot interview, some questions and concepts that were poorly understood were refined. In the same way, assumptions about the respondents, the context and data collection tool that were not credible were revised. The pilot study informed the rest of the study in different ways. First, it tested the strength and weaknesses of the interview guide. The exercise revealed possible risks that research protocols did not highlight (Baker, 1994). Specifically, the pilot study helped the researcher adjust the research instrument especially in avoiding repetition and fine-tuning the questions to get informative responses. Secondly, it assisted the researcher in developing clearer insight into the complexities of the research context, and the ignored characteristics of respondents. It helped the researcher to understand the respondents' interpretation of some concepts and some questions which they could consider sensitive. Thirdly, the pilot study helped the researcher to estimate the timing of the interview, the participants' disposition to the timing, and how to deal with distractions that usually crop up during in depth interviews. It prepared the researcher mentally to engage the

respondents and for other contingency arrangements needed to secure the data. Similar to Sanders et al. (2016) observation, the pilot study helped to troubleshot unforeseen issues and reduce the risk of errors in research.

4.12 Data analysis procedure

This exploratory research followed a qualitative approach, involving both inductive and deductive research approaches. Historically, the inductive approach involves moving from observation to broad generalisation, while the deductive involves using generalization(theory) to test hypotheses (Sanders et al., 2016). This study used inductive and deductive approaches because of the nature of research objectives and for both pragmatic and synergistic reasons. According to Decarlo (2018), this approach is suitable for triangulation to improve data validity and derive exciting insight. It maximises the strength of both approaches and helps understand multiple components of a study, especially when previous studies have produced inconsistent results.

Existing theories informed the research questions from which the researcher derived the interview questions. The researcher observed the data generated, identified patterns, developed theory to explain the patterns, and at the same time compared with previous theories. However, a significant portion of the study followed the inductive approach because the emphasis was more on generating new insights than testing existing ideas. Although the inductive approach is criticised for its lack of bulletproof argument and weak generalisations, it is robust in providing improved understanding, generating in-depth insights, and identifying overlooked patterns (Saldana, 2016). The study used a mixture of deductive and inductive approaches. Firstly, existing breakout theories and generalisations formed the study's basis while creating room for exceptions and different contexts. Secondly, these conceptualisations were tested in the light of current realities. The researcher analysed the data generated to identify new themes, patterns, and relationships. Thirdly, some existing breakout theories and conceptualisation were affirmed while new themes, contexts, patterns, and relationships were theorised.

4.13 Method of data analysis

Thematic analysis was the method of data analysis used. Lorelli et al. (2017) defined thematic analysis as a qualitative research method for identifying, analysing, organising, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set. It is a flexible approach for harnessing rich, detailed,

and complex data that enable qualitative data researchers to communicate rigorously and insightfully. According to King (2004), the thematic analysis examines the perspectives of different research participants, highlighting their similarities and differences and generating rich insights summarily. The approach provides insight into how people construe, perceive, experience, and interpret their environment, contexts, and events.

Thematic analysis was selected for this study's data analysis method because of the objective and research questions. It is appropriate because it is flexible and can integrate data from different sources under significant themes. The method allowed for identifying thematic patterns, producing explanations, and drawing conclusions. The essential purpose of thematic analysis is to search for themes or patterns across a data set. Thematic analysis method codes data to identify themes related to the research questions and is helpful in further analysis of such themes. It allowed the researcher to identify breakout strategies employed by immigrant entrepreneurs, factors that necessitate their deployment, emerging trajectories in a breakout, and comparative analogy of breakout strategies of first- and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs. Although the approach is flexible and adaptive, emphasis was on ensuring that the analysis was rigorous.

Steps in coding, analysing and thematising the data

Although the adopted analytical method was iterative, data generated from the interviews were coded, analysed and thematised using the following steps:

- Achieving familiarity with the data through transcription, editing, and sending copies to the respondents for confirmation
- Development of coding structure (9 parent codes, child codes and their labels/categories were developed)
- Grouping of the codes and clarification of categories
- Coding of the 30 interviews and the seven expert opinions
- Looking for patterns and relationships using mindmap, search and query functions in Nvivo
- Refining themes and validation of prepositions (using expert opinions)
- Rearranging the themes and supporting evidence to answer the research questions
- Development of breakout typology to integrate the findings of the study on breakout

Achieving familiarity with the data

Gaining familiarity is a process of immersion. The researcher achieved familiarity with the data by transcribing the data himself and reading and re-reading the transcript. He generated summaries, looked for recurring themes while reading the transcripts, and made entries in a diary to aid future analysis.

Data generated were transcribed, codified, and anonymously analysed. The researcher ensured that records of the interview were kept securely in a place accessible only to the researcher. The interviews were transcribed without delay to ensure that no information was lost. Upon the conclusion of the transcription, the audio was preserved in Middlesex University data drive in line with provisions of ethical guidelines.

During transcription, the researcher used disguised names, codes, and pseudonyms to represent participants' names, locations, cultural/religious beliefs, or any other relevant identifier. This transcription exercise ensured that the value and integrity of the data were not compromised. In line with the approved ethical guideline provisions, the transcripts were sent to the participants to ensure that the transcript was a valid representation of what they intended to communicate. They were asked to approve the use of that transcript for the research. Corrections were made in four transcripts as the respondents requested before the thirty transcripts were approved for research purposes.

Appropriate coding of data

Qualitative data sets are usually large and complex, and as a result, coding helps to categorise data with similar meanings to come under a single heading. According to Sanders et al. (2016), a code is a short phrase or word that symbolises or summarises meanings. Codes label beliefs, behaviour, events, and strategies. In this study, the codes used were data-driven and reflected the context of the analysed data. The codes revealed the strength of opinion, frequency of events, and significance of conditions. Because the study used both deductive and inductive approaches, theories informed the coding process while rooms were created for information and patterns unaccommodated in literature. Nvivo software (2019 version) was used in coding the data, supplemented by the researcher’s note. A unit of data (immigrant entrepreneur) was labelled with an appropriate code, such as Respondent 1 or Respondent 2. In all instances, the researcher used the pseudo names of the entrepreneur or their businesses. The study's research objectives guided data coding. Data sets were reduced to a manageable size and rearranged in a comprehensive form before searching for themes and patterns. The researcher reviewed the

characteristics of the research questions to identify appropriate labels to give to the data and how they would be categorised. Information relevant to answering the research questions was assigned code and grouped while their frequencies were tallied (Details of coding structure used is provided in Appendix 8).

Searching for themes, patterns, and relationships

The researcher sought themes, patterns, and relationships by steadily making notes and entries, especially during data collection and analysis. Transcripts, reflective diaries, and progress summaries were produced to aid in extracting meanings from the data. Emerging themes and patterns were highlighted by regrouping coded data into analytical categories. This note-keeping helped to decide which codes can fit together and the nature of the relationship between different codes. The researcher created a list of themes that related to the research questions and incorporated codes that were related. Relevant data were interrogated to identify relationships and patterns. Themes were also generated from the categories to address the research question. In this way, interviews were converted to codes, and these codes were sorted based on key issues in the research. The researcher did not analyse the data generated strictly on a case-by-case basis. Instead, they were thematised and structured around key variables.

Refining and naming themes and validation of prepositions

Themes were evaluated to ensure they were meaningful and regrouped into main and sub-themes. Relationships between themes were revised to identify which themes to separate or condense. This evaluation enabled the researcher to come up with the tested prepositions. Prepositions were validated to ensure that they were relevant in formulating valid conclusions. Testing prepositions in some cases entailed exploring alternative explanations and explaining why negative cases occur. Experts' opinions were sought to validate the findings made and to provide in-depth explanation of significant trends observed. Reflexive objectivity was conducted to check the credibility of interpretations. This aim of reflexive objectivity was to ensure that the researcher's attitude and beliefs do not affect the judgment of the data set. Conclusions were made after testing for the credibility of prepositions.

Use of typology

Typology is a well-established analytical tool used in this study to organise explanatory claims and refine measurement. It can be "put to work" in forming concepts, refining measurement, exploring dimensionality, and organising explanatory claims. It differentiates entities into exclusive and exhaustive types, enabling further analysis of the overarching idea. According to

Collier et al. (2012), typologies effectively form concepts and map out dimensions to advance rigorous measurement. Typology can be unidimensional or multidimensional (Elman, 2005). As the name implies, multidimensional typology captures multiple dimensions and is constructed by cross-tabulating two or more variables. Significant criticism against typology was its dependence on nominal and categorical variables (King, Keohane & Verba, 1994). However, Collier et al. (2012) argued that typology could address the multidimensionality of phenomena in a rigorous and refined manner. They argued that the appropriateness of typology for qualitative and quantitative study depends on the context and use. Robust typology clarifies meanings, establishes a productive connection between meanings and terms used to designate them, situates the concepts within their semantic field, and identifies the hierarchical relationship among concepts.

Using typology with the qualitative method has attracted researchers' attention because it provides a broader explanation. Typology helps in mining theoretical insights from a restricted qualitative case study. Typology has been used in immigrant entrepreneurship research (Kloosterman 2010; Sandoz, 2020; Bagwell, 2018). The use of typology in this area of study enables effective mapping of behaviour and refinement of measurement. Typology was used in this study to organise the breakout behaviour of immigrant entrepreneurs so that their dimensionality would be effectively measured. As provided in Chapter 8, typology was used to identify six sets of breakout strategies adopted by immigrant entrepreneurs operating in a transnational environment.

4.14 Judging the soundness of the study methodology

Ensuring that methodology is rigorous is key to successful qualitative research. However, concepts such as validity, reliability and generalisability used in quantitative research may not applicable in qualitative research. Lincoln & Guba (1985) proposed credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability as criteria for judging the soundness of qualitative research. Credibility measures how believable the results are from the participants' eyes. To achieve credibility, copies of the transcribed interview were presented to the participants to verify that what was said was accurately recorded. The possibility that respondents' perception of the researcher and probable resistance to divulging some information would affect data quality was highlighted during the study design. Nevertheless, the effective use of door-opening techniques and other means of gaining trust helped ameliorate such impact.

Transferability measures the extent to which findings can be generalised or transferred to other contexts. The context of the study was clearly described and assumptions that operate in the context were explained so that anyone wishing to generalise the findings will be able to decide the suitability of the context. Like most qualitative studies, the study may not be generalisable beyond the context of the study. It is a qualitative study that focuses on a particular phenomenon in a particular place and among a particular group of people. Therefore, the study is unique and may not be able to generalise to other countries or ethnic groups that do not share some similarities with the study context. Moreover, the development of a typology provides an important basis for broader explanation through developing theoretically informed insights from a restricted qualitative case study Regardless of this, some conclusions and implications of this study for theory and practice may be applicable or relevant to understanding other contexts or informing debates beyond the Nigerian community and the London context.

Dependability measures the truthfulness of the score. This is achieved by explaining the changes in the studied context and how they may influence the research. Multiple sources of evidence and different views of themes of the study were sought to achieve dependability. A pilot test was also conducted to ensure that instruments accurately measure what they are supposed to measure (Sanders et al., 2016; Bryman, 2001). Confirmability measures the degree to which others can collaborate the result. Different studies that collaborated the result were discussed. The data generated were interrogated and negative instances that contradict the findings were explained.

4.15 Ethical consideration

Sanders et al. (2016) defined ethics as moral codes that guide the researcher and protect who and what is researched. Research ethics ensures that the research practice is sensitive and avoids taking advantage of vulnerable populations or situations. Ethical issues are critical when conducting social research because of the sensitive nature of the topic under study. People are not usually comfortable discussing their economic lives, social networks, business failures, strategies, and successes with strangers. Some may not also be comfortable with their conversation and interactions being recorded and consequently analysed.

However, the researcher addressed these concerns by meeting the Middlesex University's ethical requirements for the research. The research was designed and executed following the university research ethic guidelines as well as the approval of the ethics committee (Middlesex

University 2012). The Middlesex University ethical guidelines provide best practices for collecting data, maintaining research records, and communicating research results. The purpose of the guideline was to ensure that research conforms to the law and ensure accuracy, validity, and replication of research.

For research of this nature, involving immigrants and their sources of livelihood, sensitivity, and protection of vulnerable participants were of utmost priority. Their rights to informed consent and confidentiality were maintained. Written informed consent was sent to them and discussed verbally before interviews. The researcher made provisions to ask questions, modify the mode of participation, or decline participation, and their approval and consent were obtained in all interview sessions. They were also reminded severally that participation was free and that they could withdraw participation anytime they became uncomfortable. The respondents understood the purpose of the research and the use of the data collected.

Data generated were anonymised to maintain privacy and confidentiality. Pseudonyms and codes were used to proxy participants' identities and minimise traces of their identity. Data generated were managed safely and stored according to the university ethical guidelines and Data Protection Act. Transcripts and tapes will be stored for a minimum of five years and destroyed afterward. The safety and dignity of participants were considered before, during, and after the interviews. Participants were allowed to decide the time and whom they wished to be present during the interview. Sensitive information unexpectedly generated, such as immigration status, trade secrets, and financial data, were anonymised and, in some cases, removed. The researcher's integrity regarding accessing, collecting, and managing data was judiciously maintained by ensuring that ethics guidelines were maintained. Participants were also given access to the research findings.

4.16. Chapter summary

The research philosophy and assumptions adopted in this study were shaped by the nature of data needed and the phenomenon being studied. The research is nested in a context and research assumptions adopted needed to be multi-layered to be able to uncover multiple realities. The form of acceptable knowledge does not come only from the researcher or participants but is one that is negotiated. As a process-driven inquiry, contextulaised meanings were sought and coproduced. As the connection between the literature review and the

empirical component of this research, this chapter has set out the procedures used to ensure that the research was rigorous.

The next chapter discusses the context and profile of the respondents. The chapter explained the context of the study by providing background information about the research context and characteristics of the research participants. Chapter four would help readers to understand what was studied, who was studied, and the circumstances that defined the study.

Chapter Five

Research context and characteristics of respondents and their businesses

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the individual and business profiles of the study participants, and the context of the study. It provides a description of the unit and objects of analysis. Chapter five heralds the next chapter by describing the context so that findings and interpretations would be appropriately nested. The chapter is divided into two sections: the context and the respondents' characteristics. The context section examines the Nigerian socio-economic and entrepreneurial environment relevant for understanding the respondents' drivers, attitudes, and resources. Similarly, the Nigerian diaspora environment consisting of the first- and second-generation immigrants in the UK will be analysed. The section will also evaluate the UK immigrant entrepreneurship environment and linkages to understand the embeddedness and opportunity structure of the studied immigrant entrepreneurs. The respondents' characteristics section will evaluate the key characteristics of the sampled immigrants, who are the unit of analysis. In addition, baseline information about their businesses will be analysed.

5.1 The research context

Literature acknowledged the influence of contextual factors on immigrant entrepreneurship mainly because immigrant entrepreneurship is generally context-sensitive (Vincent et al., 2014; Gaddefors & Anderson, 2017; Chalmers & Shaw, 2015). Immigrant entrepreneurship manifests in different ways depending on the historical, societal, and communal context. Failure to account for contextual differences can create some conceptualisations that are not universally valid (Acharnya, 2014). Context can bring about a mode of immigrant entrepreneurship that stands in sharp contrast with what extant literature provided (Verver et al., 2019). The authors categorically stated that opening up of transnational space, the confluence of different ethnicities, and reliance on heterogeneous social networks tend to transform immigrant entrepreneurship such that ethnic markets will no longer be an economic reality but a mere cultural artifact. From the foregoing, the historical, cultural, and geographical contexts in which immigrant entrepreneurship subsists are critical in understanding the entrepreneurship behaviour of immigrants. Since home countries' conditions affect immigrant entrepreneurship, both home and host countries' contexts will be discussed.

5.1.1 Nigeria

Nigeria is the most populous black nation in the world and Africa's largest economy. Nigeria was a British colony for over a hundred years until 1960, when it gained its independence. Nigeria is broadly classified into six geopolitical regions encompassing thirty-six states and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Located in West Africa and shares land borders with the Republics of Niger in the north, Chad and Cameroon in the east, the Republic of Benin in the west, and the Atlantic Ocean in the south. English is the official language on account of its colonial historical ties with Britain. The country's population is about 200 million, divided into 50.2% male and 49.8% female. Nigeria is roughly split half and half between Muslims and Christians, with a tiny minority practicing traditional religion. Infrastructural and human development are also skewed favouring the south over the country's north (NBS, 2019).

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and is composed of more than 250 ethnic groups; prominent among which are: Hausa and Fulani 29%, Yoruba 21%, Igbo (Ibo) 18%, Ijaw 10%, Kanuri 4%, Ibibio 3.5%, Tiv 2.5% (Akiode, 2017). The three largest and most influential ethnic groups in Nigeria are the Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba. Obviously, with many tribal groupings, the Nigerian society, home or abroad, is culturally heterogeneous. The three dominant ethnic groups are diverse in culture, mannerism, business orientation, and lifestyle. For example, the Igbos have high entrepreneurial tendencies and easily migrate. The Igbos constitute a larger percentage of Nigerian entrepreneurs both at home and in the diaspora.

The country is rich in mineral resources, especially oil, which generates over 70% of its revenue. The GDP value in 2020 was 402 billion USD, and the real GDP growth rate was 2.4% in the same year. The literacy rate was 62%, and the life expectancy rate was 55 years, according to the NBS (2021). Table 5.1 contains the profile of Nigeria.

Table 5.1 Demographic characteristics of Nigeria

Population	200million
Landmass	920,000km2
Ethnic groups	250 ethnic groups and 500 languages
Religion	45% Christian, 45%muslim, 10% traditional religion
Language	English, Pidgin, Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba
Population growth rate	3.2%
Urban population	50.3%
Rate of urbanization	4.5
Life expectancy	51.88 years

Poverty level	31.9%
Unemployment rate	21%
Youth population (Less than 40 years)	68%
Rate of capital formation	7.3%
Economic structure	Manufacturing 44%, retail 17%, and services 39%

5.1.2 Nigerian entrepreneurial environment

The oil and gas sector that constitutes over 40% of the nation's GDP dominates the Nigerian economy (OECD, 2015). The service sector is another critical economic sector dominated by banking, real estate, tourism, and entertainment sub-sectors. The Nigerian retail subsector has become a significant sector because of imports from developed economies (Akiode, 2017). More than half of the Nigerian population are engaged in the agricultural sector characterised by a subsistence farming system and the absence of mechanization. There is also a poorly regulated, sizeable informal sector that provides sources of livelihood for many households.

The entrepreneurial rate of Nigerians is high. Every year, new businesses emerge in Nigeria (Akiode, 2017). The country ranks third highest in the sub-Saharan region and fifth in the GEM global rankings of the population running established businesses in 2015. The high rate of entrepreneurial activities in Nigeria can be partly attributed to the unemployment situation (21% unemployment rate in 2018), which forces many people into a bricolage (applying a combination of resources at hand to new opportunities). Another reason might be the large size of the Nigerian market and a growing middle-class population with increasing disposable income (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2012). Micro and small enterprises dominate the Nigerian business landscape, with over 3.2million businesses (NBS, 2021). As a result, policy initiatives and interventions in Nigeria are targeted at the growth of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) (Iwuchukwu, 2014).

In 2015, MSMEs contributed to 46% of the Nigerian GDP ($360.6 billion) and employed over 43 million individuals (OECD, 2015b). The distribution of SMEs by economic sector shows that the significant business areas were: agriculture (28%), wholesale and retail (21%), service sectors (20%), manufacturing (18%), and others (13%). Common challenges facing entrepreneurial exploits in Nigeria include access to finance, weak infrastructure, inconsistency of government policies, access to market, multiple-taxation, and obsolete technology. Akiode (2017) classified resource constraints of Nigerian businesses into two. The first is the liability of smallness which manifests in their inability to access critical resources that make economies of scale possible.

The second is the liability of newness which manifests in their inability to gain credibility required for business success. Apart from financing and staffing challenges, newly established businesses may also face challenges such as securing relationships with suppliers and buyers, attracting customers, and ultimately establishing their legitimacy. Gaining legitimacy is difficult for such MSMEs because they tend to have less credibility.

5.1.3 Nigerian government policies affecting entrepreneurship

Successive government administrations developed different policies and agencies towards mitigating MSME constraints and building a favourable entrepreneurial climate. The government believed that an effective entrepreneurial climate could help to curb high unemployment, poverty, and youth restiveness. Some of the programmes established included the One Local Government One Product Initiative (OLGOPI). Each local government area in Nigeria would identify one product that can be competitively produced for domestic consumption or exports. Another one was the YOUWIN Programme, in which grants were provided for aspiring entrepreneurs to enable them to start and scale up their businesses. Another programme is the Market Access Nigeria (MAN) programme to help SMEs with local and international market access (Iwuchukwu, 2014). Others include the GEL Programme, focusing on building the capacity of budding entrepreneurs, and different entrepreneurial intervention programmes of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN). The Nigerian Diaspora Export Programme (NDEX) was established to enhance the participation of the Nigerian diaspora in entrepreneurship development. The aim was to tap into the vast network of Nigerians worldwide to support market access and increase transnational entrepreneurship.

Government agencies were also set up and empowered to drive government entrepreneurship policies. They include the establishment of the Ministry of Trade and Investment, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), the Bank of Industry (BOI), and the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) (Oseni & Oseni 2015). The SMEDAN provides business support services to micro, small-and-medium enterprises. It is responsible for coordinating all matters relating to starting, resuscitating, and growing MSMEs in Nigeria. According to Akiode (2017), the functions of SMEDAN include business information generation and dissemination, access to market and finance, creation of business awareness, business development services, and improved business environment policy advocacy.

The BOI provides funding for eligible businesses. The bank is the Federal Government's development finance institution whose core activities include resource mobilisation, financing,

industrial policy formulation, and business development support. The Industrial Training Funds (ITF) support SMEs in skills improvement through training. It has the mandate to generate a skilled indigenous workforce to man and manage various sectors of the national economy, provide research and development services, and link producers to market (Industrial Training Fund, 2015).

These policies and programmes have made an appreciable impact on the economic lives of many entrepreneurs. Between 2010- 2018, about 10,066 businesses have been supported to scale up with about 622 billion naira funding (SMEDAN, 2019). However, corruption, incessant change in government, inadequate funding, and infrastructure deficit affected their effectiveness (Ojo, 2013).

5.1.4 Features of the Nigerian diaspora

The Nigerian community is not a monolithic group as often portrayed in the press. To allude to a Nigerian culture may seem a misnomer. Identically, Nigerian diaspora in many other developed societies has multiple layers of identification depending on the interaction context. They may refer to themselves as Nigeria only in formal settings but usually refer to their tribe/dialect and state of origin when relating informally or trying to distinguish themselves within their own racial or cultural community. The country is far from a homogenous ethnic group, as portrayed in the media. The sociocultural differences are striking in every aspect of their life, even in the diaspora. Table 5.2 contains the basic profile of the Nigeria diaspora.

Table 5.2 Nigeria diaspora profile

Diaspora population	13-15million people
Migration mean age	28 years
Largest diaspora countries	USA, UK, Spain, Italy, UAE, South Africa
Gender of the diaspora population	56% male; 44% female
Remittance amount	USD24.3billion
Migration propensity	1 out of every 4 Nigerian
Remittance share	Largest in sub–Saharan Africa
Education qualification of average diaspora	Degree
Occupation of diaspora	45% highly skilled, 41% medium; 14% low skilled
Generation of immigrant	65% first generation, 35% subsequent generation
Age of diaspora	Less than 24years 14%; 25-64 years 83%; over 65years 3%

5.1.5 Nigerian immigrants in the UK

With a population of 205,000 people, the Nigerian community is the largest group of Sub-Saharan Africans in England and the oldest black community in the UK (NOS, 2018). Although many Nigerians are scattered across several global locations in the diaspora, the UK has remained a primary destination for Nigerians (Binaisa, 2015). Like other black Africans, Nigerians have been traveling to the UK since the 1940s. Access to higher education was the primary purpose for the migration even before Nigeria's independence in 1960. Between 1950 and the early 1990s, the migration of Nigerians to the UK was scanty. The practice then was to return to Nigeria after education. However, this trend changed following political instability, harsh economic conditions, and blocked opportunities that became the order of the day since the 1990s. New migration pathways that are non-academic became popular.

Diverse push and pull factors have contributed to Nigerian migration to the UK. The pull factors Include higher income, gaining societal respect, upgrading professional qualifications, gaining experience and international exposure, and security reasons. Push factors, in turn, comprise lack of promotion prospects, poor living conditions, high levels of violence and crime, and poorly structured local postgraduate programmes (Ojo, 2011; Nwankwo & Gbadamosi, 2013). Furthermore, most Nigerians were motivated to migrate to the UK because of the lifestyle of returnees, press narratives of easy life abroad, and affluence displayed by vacationing migrants (Okome, 2017).

An increasing percentage of the Nigerian diaspora preferred to come to the UK even after they had immigrated to other European nations. The attraction of the UK includes family connections, a large black population which the migrants (legal or illegal) can engage in, and a more accessible asylum regime (Henley, 2001). However, the migration trajectory of Nigerians to the UK is increasing in complexity. Highly skilled Nigerians migrate to OECD countries aside from lack of opportunities but to benefit from agglomeration effects and spillovers (Kerr et al., 2016). The agglomeration effect occurs when individual-worker productivity is enhanced by being near or working with other skilled workers in a similar occupation. Like other skilled migrants, some Nigerians move to locations that offer advantages to access finance, technology, capital, and complementary institutions. Some skilled Nigerian immigrants are going into entrepreneurship for the opportunities identified and to benefit from the UK's reputation advantage. There is an emergence of a more competitive/ aspirational/high growth set of Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs not captured by past studies.

Large-scale and highly skilled migration has become a source of worry to the Nigerian government, leading to a 'brain drain' argument. Regardless, migration has contributed significantly to improved human capital, sufficient social capital, and remittances, and hence, the supposed 'brain drain' can also be seen as brain gain after all. Notwithstanding that migration to the UK is motivated by various reasons, a large percentage of the Nigerian Diaspora in the UK could be tagged as economic migrants as they have come to Britain to acquire capital sufficient to return home. Ultimately, business ownership has historically been a path to economic emancipation for ethnic minority groups (Fairlie & Robb, 2007). Some Nigerians operate in the informal economy due to inadequate human capital, institutional racial discrimination, and the need to survive in a hostile labour market environment. The informal economy refers to economic activities that are unregulated by law (Portes, 1995). The informal sector activities are different from criminal activities such as prostitution or drug-running. They include unlicensed street vending, auto and home repairs, or other unregistered small businesses (Portes, 1995). Informal activities are rife with potentials for fraud as no legal structure moderates their conduct. Parties to a transaction can easily default on verbal commitments (Akiode, 2017; Nwankwo et. al, 2012).

5.1.6 Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurship in the UK

Nigerian community is one of the most visible entrepreneurial ethnic groups in the UK. There are no official statistics about the Nigerian business community in the UK. Some experts estimate that over 8000 Nigerian businesses concentrate on personal services, security, retail, remittance, food, entertainment, construction, shipping, and financial services in the UK (Ojo, 2019)). Nigeria immigrant is about 1.5% of the UK total population with about 70% that arrived as the first generation, 9% as one and a half generation (those who arrived in the UK as children), and 21% as British born Nigerians (NOS, 2019).

Nigeria occupies the tenth position in the list of countries with high entrepreneurial activities in the UK (NOS 2012). Visitors from Nigeria were the UK's fourth-biggest foreign spender (Mark, 2012), and Nigerian enclaves are at Woolwich, Peckham, Barking, and Dalston. Some Nigerian businesses exist in Birmingham and Manchester, but over 70% operate in London (Nwankwo, 2005). As Baycan-Levent and Nijkamp (2005) averred, Some Nigerian entrepreneurs, like other ethnic minorities, are 'pushed' to self-employment due to lack of jobs and blocked opportunities. According to Barret & McEnvoy (2013), people with low purchasing power dominate Nigeria's ethnic consumer market. They revealed that Nigerian ethnic businesses

especially in the retail sector, are undercapitalised despite their entrepreneurial vigor, struggling for survival, and severely affected by the invasion of corporate giants like Tesco. Nwankwo (2005) observed that many Nigerian entrepreneurs are educated but far less successful than their Asian counterparts. These retail businesses operate either in the ethnic enclave or in abandoned niches within stagnated and restricted sectors (Barret & McEnvoy, 2013).

Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs face multiple business constraining factors. These factors include lack of access to local role models (Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000), dearth of predisposing solid causes such as a business tradition (CEEDR, 2000), absence of a sizeable protected market, entrepreneurial and financial over-stretch (Nwankwo, 2005), defective marketing strategies (Madichie, 2007) and restricted access to ownership as well as necessary resources, such as capital and credit (Ojo, 2019). Despite that some ethnic groups in Nigeria are culturally business inclined, they lack an ethnic culture that supports entrepreneurship compared to Asian immigrants (Ram & Jones, 2008). They lack vibrant ethnic institutions and growth-enhancing platforms that support business growth.

The magnitude of Nigerian entrepreneurship in the UK is difficult to measure; the size can only be guesswork. Informal sources reveal that one out of every eleven Nigerian is involved in one form of entrepreneurship or the other. Correspondingly, the rate at which black businesses failed is phenomenal. Nwankwo *et al*. (2009) refer to a persistent higher degree of sustainability crises among black business start-ups as higher than the average. Most Nigerian enterprises in the UK are small, operating in a predominantly pressured competitive environment, and generally struggling to survive (Nwankwo, 2005). Some engage in unwholesome practices and cut corners to stay afloat, such as failure to comply with regulations. Table 5.3 provides some features of Nigerian immigrants in the UK.

Table 5.3 Profile of Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK

Number of registered Nigerian immigrant businesses	8000
Largest concentration in the UK	London 70%; Manchester 10%, Birmingham 10%, others 10%
Estimated number of Nigerian entrepreneurs in the UK	16,400 (8% of the population)
Nigerian 'town' in London	Peckham
Remittance amount from UK based Diaspora	USD 4.1billion
Enclaves on London	Peckham, Woolwich, Thamesmead, Camberwell, Lewisham, Barking and Dagenham, Southwark
London markets	African shopping centre, Brixton village market, queens market, Barking market
Popular Nigerian shops	Stella groceries, John and Biola supermarkets, Nasseni Fabrics, Bim's food store, Olumo foods
Major business sector	Retailing, personal services, healthcare, security.
Business support institutions	Nigerian in diaspora organisation, Nigerian-UK Chamber of commerce, Nigeria-London Business forum, Urhobo UK Community, Beat FM, Vox Africa TV.

5.1.7 Nigerian government institutional linkage with the UK

The UK-based Nigerian Diaspora plays an essential part in maintaining the two countries' strong cultural and economic ties. With a significant presence in the financial, legal, educational, and health sectors, among others. The large and active Nigerian diaspora community is a dynamic asset in bilateral engagements and Nigeria's socio-economic development. The journey towards harnessing diaspora resources for home country development started formally with the formation of Nigeria in Diaspora Organisation (NIDO). This organization, formed in 2001, is a non-political organization with the mandate to harness Nigerians' tremendous skills, expertise, and knowledge base in the diaspora.

The Nigerian government had set up numerous platforms for tapping into the resources of the diaspora community. They include establishing the Nigerian National Volunteer Service (NNVS) and adopting July 25th as 'the Diaspora Day.' According to Wapmuk, Akinkuotu & Ibionye (2014), the philosophy behind Nigeria's current efforts to engage the Nigerian diaspora was recognition of the enormous capital and resources of the diaspora and the need to tap into that vast

reservoir of knowledge. However, these efforts have not yielded enough fruits as the Nigerian state wanted. This poor performance, in part, is due to the hybridised characteristics of diasporic identities that made it difficult to forge a common front for all Nigerian immigrants.

On 30 June 2017, the Nigerian Government signed the Nigerian Citizens in Diaspora Commission Establishment Bill 2017. The commission is responsible for coordinating Nigerians in and from the Diaspora to contribute human capital and material resources, including their expertise, to develop Nigeria and its constituent states while working closely with all the organs of government in Nigeria. This commission coordinates entrepreneurial linkages of Nigerian immigrants and their host communities at the government level (Akiode, 2017).

The Nigerian diaspora in the UK created various agencies and platforms to provide effective linkage to home business communities. They include the Nigerian-British Chamber of Commerce, The Nigerian-London Business Forum, and the Nigerian-UK Business and Investment Forum.

Mobilising Nigerian diasporas for entrepreneurial activities in a coordinated way is usually challenging because of increasing individualistic and self-indulgent diasporic disposition' (Lampert, 2010). They are more concerned about individual wealth than collective wealth. Another challenge is low levels of security and institutionalised corruption which makes investing at home undesirable. Incessant kidnapping and robbery attacks make the investment climate in Nigeria unattractive for the diaspora. The absence of trust in people and institutions in Nigeria is among the challenges diaspora entrepreneurs face in mobilising resources for home country investment. The need to honour extended family obligations exacerbates the situation. According to Ojo (2019), some Nigerians do not want to identify with Nigerians, while the lure of assimilating into British culture made some ignore their Nigerian identity. These conditions make mobilization of Nigerians for entrepreneurship activities homeward challenging. Notwithstanding, some institutional linkages have assisted some Nigerian immigrants to survive hard times and become competitive.

5.1.8 Entrepreneurial institutions and linkages between Nigeria and the UK

The Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurship environment is woven in ethnicity, religion, and collective cause. According to Nwankwo et al. (2012), institutions in the Nigeria-UK entrepreneurial space include religious, sociocultural, political, and media organisations. Empirical research of the Nigerian Diaspora organisations in London identified 367 London-based Nigerian diaspora organisations. Sixty-four percent were geo-ethnic organisations, and

the objectives of such groups were primarily about the interests of their shared ancestry, supporting members' businesses, and mobilising for the development of their home country (Lambert, 2012). These organisations also exist in the form of town associations, nongovernmental organisations, cooperatives, and work associations. They create a sense of sameness, solidarity, and entertainment for potential and actual members. According to Ojo (2019), these organisations generate social capital for entrepreneurial purposes and serve as platforms for accessing class and business resources.

Religious organisations appear to be the most substantial immigrant linkage organisations in the UK. This assertion is perhaps because religion is an integral part of the lives of Nigerians, whether Muslims or Christians (Nwankwo & Gbadamosi, 2013; Tragar, 1998). Religious organisations serve as means of coping and convergence, enlarging and providing leverage for personal and social resources. Through their prosperity theology, Pentecostal denominations induce self-employment and shape the socio-economic lives of adherents. In the view of Ojo (2019), both Islamic and Pentecostal clerics are constantly adapting, expanding, and redefining their entrepreneurial pursuits. They also observed that religious organisations drive entrepreneurial interest in three ways. Firstly, by providing avenues for selling some goods and services; secondly, by providing client bases and platforms for advice and nurturing of business intelligence; thirdly, by establishing church-owned businesses.

Political organisations, existing as affiliates of political parties, are platforms for shaping public opinion and engaging both home and the host government. They are strategic in driving the home country's political agenda and people who wish to benefit from government programmes. In addition, there are over ten Nigeria immigrant media organisations in the UK. They provide transnational knowledge and entertainment that help to shape immigrants' disposition to their home economy. These organisations, on many occasions, have generated entrepreneurial opportunities, symbolic goods, and linkages that Nigerian immigrants can access for entrepreneurial purposes.

5.1.9 Second generation Nigerian Immigrants in the UK

There is a consensus that the second-generation diasporas can reverse the 'brain drain curse' on Nigeria and many immigrant originating nations (Akiode, 2017). They are a vital resource and channel for the growth of new markets and internationalisation. As Ojo (2019) observed, some second-generation Nigeria may never have travelled to their ancestral homeland and may not

perceive themselves as immigrants of any generation. However, in many cases, they understand what it means to inhabit the diaspora. For instance, Hirji (2009) indicates that this group of immigrants owing to their distinct characteristics, negotiate their belonging and the process of identity construction in diverse and complex ways. Despite the claims that they are more rooted in their country of residence and relate with their homeland less, the feeling of being British does not apply in all circumstances.

The second-generation Black Africans are more integrated into the British society than their first-generation counterparts but have weaker transnational ties (Quirke et al., 2009). They possess higher human capital and do not have language difficulties or difficult unemployment situations like the first generation. Interestingly, many Nigerian families intentionally raise their children with Nigerian consciousness. Such transnational orientation made them proactive in identifying culturally, economically, and politically with Nigerians (Binaisa, 2015). They join and form different groups and deploy different forms of capital –financial, human, intellectual, social, and political – at different times and in different ways to create a conducive environment for their return. They transfer money and knowledge and technology, networks, and voice in the international arena. Their rise to enviable positions in their host societies holds great potential for forming or maintaining a global community. Second-generation immigrants possess strong social networks. While they may not all have access to economic resources, they have the social skills and competencies to do so whenever necessary (Levitt, 2009). In Binaisa (2015) views, some second-generation Nigerians are not anxious to identify with Nigerians for some personal reasons. As a result, identifying second-generation Nigerian immigrant businesses is not always easy.

Entrepreneurial pathways of second-generation Nigerians are generally assumed to be easier compared to the first generation. Apart from having the requisite resources needed to excel in self-employment, they are not subjected to some of the disadvantages experienced by the first generation. Because they possess higher resources than the first generation, some authors argue that breakout may not be relevant for them (Rusonovic, 2004). However, there is evidence that some second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs share a similar fate of being trapped in less competitive businesses and desire breakout like the first generation (Efendili et al., 2016; Becker & Blumberg, 2013).

From the foregoing, the Nigerian-UK context presents a unique situation that requires in-depth exploration. The relationship between the two nations is age-long, and both governments are

desirous of reaping the fruits of breakout. In the UK, multiple ethnicities created the need for multiple ethnic markets, with each market operator using varieties of value-added services to improve business processes and capture new niches. Insights from contexts such as this deepen understanding of breakout, especially as transnational environments present new opportunities and challenges.

5.2 Characteristics of the sampled entrepreneurs

This section describes the characteristics of the immigrant entrepreneurs that were studied. Immigrant entrepreneurship is context-sensitive, and as a result, there is a need to understand the entrepreneur's background so that interpretations would have contextual significance. This section analysed the personal and class resources of the respondents. Key variables examined include age, generation, educational qualification, gender, status at the point of migration, family entrepreneurial orientation, and length of business experience. Pseudo names were used in place of the actual names of the entrepreneurs to maintain the confidentiality of the respondents.

The sample for the study consists of thirty Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs that own and operate their businesses in the UK. Sixty percent (n=18) were first-generation, while 12 were the second generation. Similar to previous studies on immigrant entrepreneurship, respondents in this study were within the active working population and predominantly male (Ojo, 2019; Antwi, 2013; Solano, 2016). Difficulty in reaching female immigrant entrepreneurs has been established in the literature. As a result, the researcher made a concerted effort to increase the number of females in the sample. Thirteen out of 30 respondents were female, while seventeen were male. It was difficult reaching female entrepreneurs not only because they were fewer in number or limited platforms for reaching them but also because of the Nigerian socio-cultural attitude that frowns at women projecting themselves as entrepreneurs without attachment to their partners.

Despite that the respondents' age distribution did not differ from similar breakout studies, most of the respondents were not youths. All the respondents were between 35 and 59 years, except one female below 35 years. Kunle (52-year-old leader of an ethnic association and one of the experts interviewed) posited that the structure of UK migration policy influenced the Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurship age. ‘’..*It is not easy to find a first-generation Nigerian who established a business within the first five years of staying in the UK. The majority of Nigerians here came to the UK to study or for marriage purposes. They start with paid employment before*

they mobilise for entrepreneurship, and it took many up to 10 years to be ready''. This was also evident in the length of business experience of the respondents. Twenty-two out of thirty (73%) of them have more than 10years of business experience. Since many of them initially lacked business resources, they needed time to build them before launching their entrepreneurial venture.

Aside from two respondents, all other respondents were married. However, half of them reported they were divorced or not staying in the exact location with their partner. As can be seen from the details in the next chapter, marriage relationships play a significant role in starting, branching, and managing immigrant businesses. Table 5.4 contains baseline information of the sampled immigrant entrepreneurs.

Table 5.4 Profile of the sampled immigrant entrepreneurs

Resp No.	The code name for the entrepreneurs	Nature of business	Gender	Age (Years)	Highest education achieved	Immigrant generation	Family entrepreneurial orientation	Migratory status upon arrival to the UK (Migration basis)	Business experience
1	Afam	Money transfer	M	35-50	Postgraduate	First	Moderate	Study	Less than 6 years
2	Ngozi	Beauty products & services	F	Above 50	Degree	First	Moderate	Marriage	Less than 6 years
3	Ikenna	Car exporter	M	35-50	Basic	First	Low	EU relocate	Above 10 years
4	Yinka	Training and certifications	M	35-50	Postgraduate	First	Low	Study	6-10years
5	Yemi	Legal services	M	Above 50	Degree	First	High	Job	6-10years
6	Alex	Fitness	M	35-50	College	Second	Low	Born	6-10yeras
7	Nneka	Fashion	F	35-50	Degree	First	Moderate	Marriage	6-10 years
8	Shola	Recruitment agency	F	35-50	Degree	Second	Low	Accompanied parents	6-10yeras
9	Emeka	Restaurant	M	Above 50	Degree	First	High	Marriage	Above 10 year
10	Olumide	Security	M	35-50	Basic school	Second	Low	Accompanied parents	Above 10 years
11	Nonso	Phone/electronic retail & repairs	M	35-50	Basic	First	Low	EU Relocate	Above 10 years
12	Chika	Advertising agency	F	35-50	Degree	Second	Low	Accompanied parents	Above 10 years
13	Aisha	Travel agency	F	35-50	Postgraduate	First	Low	Study	Above 10 years
14	Chinedu	Food item retails	M	35-50	Basic	First	High	EU Relocate	Above 10years
15	Kate	Salon	F	35-50	College	Second	Low	Born	Above 10 years
16	Ada	Care home	F	35-50	Degree	Second	Moderate	Born	Above 10years
17	Amaka	Textile retail	F	Above 50	Degree	First	Moderate	Career	Above 10years
18	Ahmed	Programming services	M	35-50	Degree	Second	Low	Born	Above 10 years
19	Eze	Building contractor	M	35-50	Degree	First	Low	Study	Above 10years
20	Dolapo	Household items retail	F	Above 50	College	First	High	Career	Above 10years
21	Nnamdi	Consulting and training	M	Above 50	Postgraduate	First	Moderate	Study	Above 10years
22	Okey	Automobile engineering	M	Above 50	Basic	First	Moderate	EU Relocate	Above 10years
23	Ayomide	Cleaning services	M	35 -50	College	First	Low	Career	Above 10years

24	Olisa	Haulage and logistics	M	Above 50	College	First	Moderate	Career	Above 10years
25	Blessing	Recruitment services	F	35 -50	Postgraduate	Second	Low	Born	Above 10years
26	Chidi	Entertainment	F	35-50	Degree	Second	Moderate	Born	Above 10years
27	Miriam	Property management	F	35-50	Degree	Second	Low	Accompanied parents	Above 10years
28	Ekene	Security services	M	Above 50	Postgraduate	First	Low	Study	Above 10years
29	Chiugo	Management consulting	F	Above 50	Postgraduate	Second	Low	Born	Above 10years
30	Chigozie	Bakery	F	Less than 35	College	Second	Low	Born	6 -10yeras

The educational qualification of this sample seemed to be higher than what it is usually reported in studies on immigrant entrepreneurship. Table 5.4 reported that the sample was well educated as more than half had a degree and postgraduate qualifications. According to one of the experts (Leader of one of the ethnic associations), such traits were due to UK immigration policy that requires immigrants to meet some educational thresholds such as having degrees or other proof of proficiency. According to Ojo (2019), the average Nigerian diaspora in the UK holds a degree. Data from the table revealed that migration basis influences the educational qualification of the respondents. Immigrants that relocated from the EU region had the least formal education, whereas immigrants that migrated 'For study purposes' had the highest educational qualification, including two PhDs. Respondents who migrated to the UK for marriage and career purposes all had degrees and diplomas. The prevalence of educated spouses in the sample is because their spouses would love them to have good education qualifications to find work in the UK. In contrast, second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs had more education and work experience, including MBAs and professional qualifications like engineering and nursing. Despite relative differences in educational qualifications, all the respondents were fluent in English which was the language for the interview.

The study could not identify a significant trend between level of education and entrepreneurship except for the two MBA graduates whose business could be judged successful in turnover. However, nature and depth of work experience have a strong bearing on the probability of venturing into entrepreneurship. 70% of the respondents used the phrase *''….after working for some years, then I decided to establish my own…'''*. Respondents usually established businesses in sectors they had experience in. This form of sectorial inertia was evident in the sample. For example, Ada (Respondent 16), who established care homes, had over ten years of working experience as a nurse. Dolapo (Respondent 20), a 52-year-old entrepreneur, worked in top retail stores before establishing her retail business.

Similarly, Alex (Respondent 6) worked for many years in fitness centres before establishing his fitness and lifestyle business. Business experience does not only provide technical know-how but access to critical resources. Ayomide (Respondent 23), a 41-year-old entrepreneur, started a cleaning business by leveraging his contacts and experiences from cleaning and restaurant jobs. Admittedly, the length of experience was not as important as the depth. Immigrant entrepreneurs who worked in a managerial capacity or with well-established businesses tend to

establish businesses faster than those without managerial experience or who worked in less established firms.

The influence of family entrepreneurial orientation on starting and running entrepreneurial ventures was not as significant as undergoing apprenticeship. As observed in Table 5.4, entrepreneurs who came from homes with high entrepreneurial orientation were not doing better than those who passed through the apprenticeship system (Details of this type of apprenticeship are provided in section 5.3.3 under employment practices of immigrant entrepreneurs). Family entrepreneurial orientation measures whether or not the parents were entrepreneurs. This study could not identify trends supporting the assertion that entrepreneurial families breed entrepreneurs. In contrast, some entrepreneurial parents preferred their children to study and work as professionals. For instance, Emeka (Respondent 9) stated:

''…despite that mum owns a school and father owns three shops, they did not allow me to get involved in the business. They said that I should study so I can get a good job.'' (A 56-year-old male owner of a restaurant).

Interestingly, all the respondents in the sample who passed through the traditional apprenticeship system became entrepreneurs. Overall, the sample was similar to samples used in previous studies except that this sample was relatively more educated and were blacks. It would be interesting to see how results from this sample would differ from other samples used in similar studies.

5.3 Characteristics of immigrant businesses

This section describes the characteristics of the immigrant businesses that were established and managed by the respondents. Pseudo names of the businesses were used in place of their real names to maintain the confidentiality of the data. The businesses' characteristics include business duration, performance metrics, the extent of formalisation, employee relationship, customer base, and geographical coverage. Finally, the section ends with a conclusion which contains some reflections on key characteristics examined and how they relate to the findings presented in the next chapter.

5.3.1 Demographic information of businesses studied

Immigrant businesses sampled in this research were studied in relation to ten variables (sector, turnover, number of employees, duration, customer base, office locations, geographical coverage, ethnic composition of staff, nature of employee relations, and bookkeeping). The first one was the sector or area of primary activities. Sampled businesses were in seven sectors: retail, services, transportation, healthcare, entertainment, export, and construction; the service and retail sectors are the most important (53% and 20% respectively). In terms of length of operation, most of the businesses sampled were between 5-10 years (63%). Eight businesses were above ten years while only three businesses were below 5years. This result implies that businesses sampled were not start-ups and were ripe for a breakout. According to UKgov.org (2020), 99% of 5.9million private businesses in the UK were SMEs. Subdivision of businesses in the UK revealed that 95% were micro, 4% were small, and 0.6% were medium-scale businesses (Ratio of 95:4:1). This distribution pattern was represented in the study sample. Twenty-three of the businesses sampled were micro-businesses. Six of them were small-scale businesses, whereas only one qualified as a medium-scale business (76%, 20% and 3% respectively). This classification was done using annual turnover. Whereas 23 out of the 30 businesses had an annual turnover of less than £1million, only one had £10million annual turnover. The remaining six had a turnover range between £1million-£10million. The situation observed above was not different if the number of employees was used for categorisation. According to Table 5.5, 85% of the businesses sampled had less than 50 workers. Only four businesses (13%) had more than 50 workers. Aside from representing the distribution of private businesses in the UK, this categorisation revealed that the context of this research was micro and small businesses. Table 5.5 revealed the key metrics of the businesses.

Table 5. 5. Demographic information of the immigrant businesses studied

Resp No.	Code name for business	Main sector/activity	Annual turnover in £s	No. of employee	Year of establishment	Office locations	Customer base	Geographical coverage	Ethnic composition of staff	Nature of employment relationship	Bookkeeping practices
1	Anchor	Money transfer (services)	400,000	4	2015	UK, Nigeria	Ethnic	International	Ethnic	Informal	Formal
2	Cor	Beauty products and services (Services)	600,000	12	2014	UK, Nigeria	Ethnic	International	Predominantly ethnic	Formal	Formal
3	IZI	Car exporter (Export)	260,000	6	2016	UK, Nigeria, Holland	Ethnic	International	Ethnic	informal	Informal
4	Incop	Training and certifications (Services)	2million	20	2014	UK, Nigeria, Australia	Ethnic	International	Mixed	Formal	Formal
5	AJL	Legal services (services)	500,000	5	2015	UK	Mixed	Local	Predominantly ethnic	Formal	Formal
6	BSI	Fitness (Healthcare)	800,000	6	2013	UK	Mixed	Local	Mixed	Formal	Formal
7	KDJ	Fashion (Retail)	400,000	9	2013	UK, Nigeria	Ethnic	International	Ethnic	informal	Informal
8	ITK	Recruitment agency (Services)	800,000	8	2014	UK, Nigeria	Mixed	Regional	Mixed	Formal	Formal
9	GGT	Restaurant (Entertainment)	500,000	19	2010	UK, Nigeria	Ethnic	Local	Ethnic	informal	Informal
10	SKD	Security (Services)	2.1million	54	2011	UK	Mixed	Local	Mixed	Formal	Formal
11	BON	Phone/electronic retail/repairs (Retail)	400,000	8	2012	UK, Nigeria, Holland	Mixed	International	Ethnic	Informal	Formal
12	PPY	Advertising agency(Services)	3million	24	2014	UK, Nigeria, South Africa	Mixed	International	Mixed	Formal	Formal
13	NBT	Travel agency(Services)	200,000	4	2013	UK, Nigeria	Ethnic	International	Mixed	Formal	Formal

14	BRY	Food item retail (Retail)	300,000	8	2011	UK, Ghana, Nigeria	Ethnic	Local	Ethnic	Informal	Informal
15	Akon	Salon (Services)	500,000	13	2012	UK	Mixed	Local	Mixed	Formal	Formal
16	ZTA	Care home (Healthcare)	Nil	56	2009	UK	Mixed	Local	Mixed	Formal	Formal
17	BOS	Textile retail (Retail)	100,000	3	2015	UK, Nigeria	Ethnic	International	Ethnic	Informal	Informal
18	KIK	Programming services (Services)	5million	20	2014	UK, India, Belguim	Mixed	International	Mixed	Formal	Formal
19	DES	Building contractor (Construction)	10.2million	78	2008	UK	Mixed	Regional	Mixed	Formal	Formal
20	CAG	Household items retail (Retail)	400,000	4	2004	UK	Mixed	Local	Ethnic	Formal	Formal
21	AZI	Consulting and training (Services)	2million	49	2011	UK	Mixed	Regional	Mixed	Formal	Formal
22	SLY	Automobile engineering (Services)	300,000	9	2011	UK, Nigeria	Mixed	International	Mixed	Formal	Formal
23	FRT	Cleaning services (Services)	170,000	40	2016	UK	Mixed	Local	Predominantly ethnic	Formal	Formal
24	KSO	Haulage and logistics (transportation)	300,000	9	2008	UK	Mixed	Regional	Mixed	Formal	Formal
25	TCH	Recruitment services (Services)	400,000	12	2005	UK	Mixed	Regional	Mixed	Formal	Formal
26	PHS	Music and DJ (Services)	Nil	24	2005	UK, Nigeria	Ethnic	International	Mixed	Formal	Formal
27	FST	Property management (Services)	2.4million	18	2011	UK	Mixed	Regional	Mixed	Formal	Formal
28	ABJ	Security services(services)	800,000	23	2004	UK	Mixed	Regional	Mixed	Formal	Formal
29	FTO	Management consulting (Services)	500,000	9	2013	UK	Mixed	Regional	Mixed	Formal	Formal
30	DNC	Bakery (Retail)	Nil	3	2017	UK	Mixed	Local	Mixed	Formal	Formal

5.3.2 Nature of business activities and business performance

Immigrant entrepreneurship literature posits that immigrant entrepreneurs tend to engage in portfolio entrepreneurship (Anderson, 2010). They undertake multiple activities on one site and rely on supplementary forms of income to support business activities. According to Villares-Varela et al. (2018), this form of bricolage enables them to survive and adapt to market changes. This assertion was evident in the businesses sampled. Some sample businesses engage in various income-generating activities that cut across borders and are shaped by business cycles and seasons. These immigrant entrepreneurs assume multiple entrepreneurial roles from trading to exporting, from managing to leading, from sociocultural to economic sectors. There was evidence of simultaneous ownership of several micro-business lines. However, some of these business lines were temporal or seasonal. As stated in Chapter four, immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample who had a portfolio of business lines were asked to identify their primary business. The focus of the interview and analysis was the primary business as identified by the entrepreneur. The selected primary businesses were not only the flagship business of the entrepreneur but were permanent and constitute the significant business activities/resources of the entrepreneur. Due to this multifaceted approach to entrepreneurship, assessing the growth trajectory did not focus on the number of product lines but more on customer bases and markets.

Examination of the transformation trajectory of these businesses revealed a high degree of transition from one form of business activity to another. In other words, some business activities were dropped while some were added as the business grew. It appeared that what some of these businesses set out at the outset, were not always what they ended up doing. For example, Yinka (Case 4), a 40-year-old MBA graduate and owner of a training firm, reported:

''…I officially opened the door for business on August 11, 2014, at the London office after a series of freelancing. I started as a training firm in IT,… later, I expanded to business-related training. Later, we moved into professional certifications and examinations and from there to e-work experience. And presently, we are into full consulting, e-learning, and real estate.''

One common characteristic of the businesses studied was that they usually looked for niches to capture and were willing to experiment with various products and activities. Ekene (Respondent 28), a 52-year-old first-generation entrepreneur, who was into security services, reported that their initial focus was on guarding residencies. However, they later changed to guarding luxurious apartments and VIPs and then to selling and installing security equipment. This

trajectory reveals the transient and transitory nature of immigrant entrepreneurship. Resources are moved easily among different office locations. In a particular season, attention will be on one business line or branch office, whereas in another season, entrepreneurial attention shifts according to market needs. For example, Aisha (Respondent 13), a travel agency firm, focuses on students' admission and visa processing during school resumption seasons, photography training during summertime, and event management during festive periods.

Available literature posits that immigrant businesses operate at the low end of the value chain, with fewer growth and expansion opportunities (Ram & Hillin, 1994; Rusinovic, 2008). However, the study revealed that immigrants operate in both high end and low-end of the value chain. There were immigrant businesses in the retail and personal service sector, just as they operate in high growth sectors like learning and development, entertainment, healthcare, and construction. The key difference between the low-end and high-end markets is the nature of entry barriers. Whereas low-end markets do not require substantial financial outlay or skills or institutional compliance, high-end markets require class resources, making the market inaccessible for some immigrant entrepreneurs. Although high growth firms operate in both low growth and high-end markets, findings in this study revealed that most businesses with high turnover operate in high-end markets with high entry barriers and serve diverse customers. For example, businesses in construction, programming, property management, advertising agency, and consulting/training had turnover above £1million. Two of the sampled businesses exhibit the characteristics of 'micro multinationals' firms. They did not need to break out strictly because they serve ethnic and non-ethnic customers in the UK and beyond. The majority of the businesses studied operate in low-end markets. Most of them in the sample have turnover below £1million and in sectors with low entry barriers.

5.3.3 Employment relations and general business management

Immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample deployed various human resource strategies depending on the sector of activity, job requirement, and class resources of the entrepreneur. From Eze (Case 19), a building contractor who employed 78 workers, to Chigozie (Respondent 30), a baker with three employees, the impact of culture, education, and sector best practices on HR policies is evident. As seen in Table 5.5, employment relations of seven businesses (23%) were informal. Informality in this respect entails that the employment relationship was not contractual nor documented. Instead, it follows the cultural, contextual, and personal interpretation of the parties. A typical version of this type of relationship is the traditional (informal) apprenticeship system where an apprentice serves/learns a trade for a period ranging between 4-7 years, after

which the master would set him up by providing start-up resources. Despite that this practice was common among immigrants, the transnational element observed in this study deserves attention. These apprentices run transnational businesses in different locations and in some cases, serve as business partners. According to Antwi (2017), Nigerians and some other African nationals use the traditional apprenticeship system as a labour recruitment strategy and help the socially deprived negotiate and gain better economic and social status. This practice is different from family labour because it is culturally contractual and usually may not involve relatives. Another form of informal labour practice observed in the sample was the use of co-ethnic 'just arrived' migrants who were yet to settle or undocumented immigrants who find it challenging to find jobs. Some entrepreneurs (20%; n =6) agreed that they depended on family labour for their businesses, even in the UK. Chizoba (Respondent 14), a 49-year-old first-generation entrepreneur who relocated from Italy and ran a food item retail shop, said:

'…my children help me at the shop when they are not in school. My relatives, especially those who visit seasonally from Nigeria, also help. My husband handles the logistics and finance part of the business…''.

However, this practice of informal labour relations does not apply to sectors and businesses that require professional skills like care homes, property management, or automobile engineering. The recruitment format for these businesses is contractual and salaried.

Insight from the findings revealed that immigrant entrepreneurs were careful about the ethnic composition of their staff. In some cases, employing a staff of a particular ethnicity is a strategy for winning the customer base of that ethnicity. This strategy is similar to findings made by Shinnie et al. (2021), who provided evidence that cultural hybridity is a breakout strategy. Alex (Respondent 6), a 48-year-old second-generation entrepreneur, admitted that he employed an Indian customer care professional to attract Asians to his fitness business. Ada (Respondent 16), a second-generation female entrepreneur, employed a white supervisor in her care home to blend into society and build a brand image. Insights generated from interviews suggested that immigrant entrepreneurs prefer having employees from different nationalities when dealing with diverse customers (53% of the sample expressed this view). However, a co-ethnic workforce was preferred when the product has ethnic flavours and the customer base is ethnic (23% had this view). Some workforces compose of black people who may not necessarily be Nigerian when the customer base is black. This approach enables them to attract customers from other nationalities and to appear as a mainstream business. As one of the breakout strategies, this approach will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

In line with entrepreneurship literature, registered businesses in the UK formalise their bookkeeping practices. This assumption holds for the majority of sampled businesses. However, the nature of portfolio entrepreneurship observed among these businesses, the tendency to juggle resources from different sources and disposition to move resources transnationally made it difficult to affirm that business transactions are recorded adequately. Twenty-three out of the 30 businesses observed proper bookkeeping, while seven businesses classified their bookkeeping practice as largely informal. The extent of informality range from poor recording to haphazard bookkeeping especially their transnational transactions. Poor bookkeeping practices include lack of training on bookkeeping and as a ploy for tax evasion/avoidance.

5.3.4 Customer base and geographical coverage

The usual classification of immigrant businesses as local-nonlocal and ethnic-non ethnic by Kloosterman (2010) has become unsuitable in this context. This is because of the nature of portfolio entrepreneurship observed in the sample. Some immigrant businesses could be serving a non-ethnic customer base locally and at the same time serving an ethnic customer base in the home country. For example, Okey (Respondent 22) was a 51-year-old automobile engineer with a garage in the UK for automobile maintenance and was also involved in car export and sale in some African countries. The customer base was classified based on the main customers and the geographical coverage to minimise the challenge. Table 5.5 revealed that 73.3% (n =22) served ethnic and non-ethnic customers while the remaining 26.7% (n =8) served ethnic customers only.

Immigrant entrepreneurship literature favours the existence of captive markets in the form of ethnic enclaves where immigrant entrepreneurs have control of selling ethnic products to ethnic and non-ethnic customers (Zolin et al. 2016; Shinar et al. 2011; Ram et al. 2003). However, the notion of ethnic markets seemed to have lost much ground in the 21st century owing to digital innovation, as only a handful of the sampled businesses focused on serving only ethnic customers. Even 27% of the sampled businesses selling ethnic products did not focus on the local co-ethnic market. Instead, they seek niches to serve ethnic customers in their home country and third countries where diaspora communities thrive. On the other hand, 73% of the sample who serve diverse customer-base did so because their products do not have ethnic colouration.

Our findings (see Table 5.5) revealed that whereas 12 businesses cover customers in different countries, ten and eight businesses' geographical coverage was local and regional, respectively.

These 12 businesses seek customers outside the UK, notably in Nigeria and other countries. Immigrant businesses classified under local coverage focus on their immediate environment and do not have branches outside London. However, those classified as regional cover customers in different parts of the UK. Similarly, the table affirmed that immigrant businesses in the sample were increasingly becoming transnational. The trend was not only between host and home countries but involving third countries. Half of the businesses studied (n = 15) have businesses in other countries, especially Nigeria. Third countries where these entrepreneurs have business activities were those countries where they had lived in the past or have had business contacts or growing diaspora communities. For example, all the immigrant entrepreneurs who relocated from the EU region had businesses in Nigeria and other countries such as Holland. Some of these businesses with offices in Nigeria extended their coverage to other West African countries, usually Ghana. Details of the transnational practices of these entrepreneurs were examined in Chapter seven.

5.4 Chapter summary

The research context was treated extensively in this chapter because of the research philosophy adopted in the study. The background information on Nigeria and Nigerians in the diaspora provided a basis for interpreting some entrepreneurial decisions. The UK-Nigerian environment specifies the nature of embeddedness of these entrepreneurs and how they access opportunities and personal, ethnic, and business resources. The sample used in the study were embedded in an environment unrestricted by space unlike samples used in previous studies.

The entrepreneurs' profile shows that the respondents were educated adults with reasonable business experience. The sample consists of men and women, second-generation immigrants who came to the UK from other EU regions, and those who migrated for education, marriage, and career purposes. On the other hand, the businesses examined were not medium scale, specialty, or strong brands. Instead, they were micro and small-scale businesses with diverse business portfolios scattered in different locations and adjusted according to seasons and market changes. Their entrepreneurial stories and trajectories were diverse, having come from different backgrounds and with diverse class resources. This spread helps identify trends and themes that would answer the research questions. Having examined the context and characteristics of the entrepreneurs and their businesses, the next chapter will examine the breakout processes of these businesses. Research findings on motives, trajectories, and strategies for a breakout would be analysed to justify whether conceptualisation of breakout needs reframing.

Chapter Six

Breakout experience of Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs

6.0 Introduction

Chapter five examined the characteristics of the sample of immigrant entrepreneurs and their businesses. Chapter six will examine the breakout experiences of these entrepreneurs, providing further basis for an understanding of breakout in the context of Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs. This chapter is key to achieving the research objective because it will provide evidence on how best to understand the realities of breakout in practice. The key question to be answered in this chapter is 'what are the breakout strategies of immigrant entrepreneurs and their determining factors?

Highlighting the relationship between breakout strategies and explanatory variables is essential to understand why some breakout variables are discussed in this chapter. Breakout variables such as strategies, markets, motives, drivers, and challenges will be examined in the analysis of the breakout experience of immigrant entrepreneurs. These variables, discussed in Chapter three as breakout strategies and determinants, are variables that define the breakout behaviour of immigrant entrepreneurs. This analysis will discuss these themes because they shape the immigrant entrepreneurs' breakout orientation, practices, and degree of breakout achieved.

The degree of breakout achieved by businesses in the sample will be analysed first. Next, breakout motives and drivers which shape the strategies adopted by the entrepreneurs. Different markets immigrant entrepreneurs break out of and into will be x-rayed. The greater part of this chapter focuses on breakout strategies pursued and how they differ from earlier conceptualisation. The challenges faced in a breakout will receive attention because they facilitate or constrain breakout performance and shape the decision of which breakout strategy to adopt. Breakout mistakes and lessons learned will also be examined. Illustrative cases will be provided to demonstrate the relationship between diverse breakout variables before the chapter will conclude with a discussion of implications of findings to breakout conceptualisation.

6.1 Breakout degree of sampled immigrant businesses

Breakout degree refers to the extent to which an immigrant removed constraints affecting the business and diversified into more or less competitive markets. Different indicators were employed to measure breakout degree. Both qualitative and quantitative indicators were used

to compare the previous situation of the businesses (over 3years ago) and the current situation. The use of trend data was aimed at understanding the expansion trajectory of the businesses. Quantitative indicators used include employee size, turnover, geographical coverage, and market size. Qualitative indicators include ethnic orientation of product and ethnic composition of the workforce. These indicators were used to categorise the 30 businesses studied to reflect their breakout degree, as seen in Table 6.1

Table 6.1 Categorisation of businesses studied according to the degree of breakout

Breakout degree	No. of business	Customer base	Staff diversity	Market coverage	Product orientation	Illustrative quote
Unwilling to consider breakout	2	Strictly ethnic	Strictly ethnic	Neigbourhood	Strictly ethnic	''Because I value my peace, I do not aspire to grow beyond this level'' (Nneka).
Willing but lacks know how and resources	7	Loosely ethnic	Strictly ethnic	Neigbourhood	loosely ethnic	''I need help bro!, do not know whether to relocate to Nigeria or stay here. What I have currently cannot take me far'' (Olisa).
Undergoing active breakout process	6	Loosely ethnic	Loosely ethnic	Regional market	Non-ethnic	''We are not there yet, but today is better than yesterday. From one shop to three, from struggling to pay salaries, to making investments'' (Afam).
Achieved some breakout successes	11	Loosely diverse	Loosely ethnic	Regional and transnational	Non-ethnic	''I desire to serve rich customers. Currently, we have some rich white guys as our customers'' (Alex).
Achieved both breakout and break-in into new markets	4	Diverse	Diverse	Regional and transnational	Non-ethnic	''Honestly, we have made some progress, especially in quality and volume of contracts. We have diversified into other areas such as stone works. We supply materials to industry leaders''(Eze).

Eleven out of the thirty businesses (the largest group) have achieved some breakout success. Breakout success means that they are not restricted to local and ethnic customer bases. Their products and business processes do not have ethnic labels since they have overcome significant constraints facing immigrant businesses. However, they still have not developed the capacity to compete effectively with indigenous and well-established businesses. Seven out of the thirty businesses wanted breakout but did not have the know-how and resources to do so. Their frustration was manifest in the words they used to describe their situations, such as '' *I do not know what to do again*'' '' *I am tired of where I am but have no one to help me*''. ''*Things keep getting worse, the little money I gathered has disappeared*'' *I need help, my brother!*''. Interestingly, they enjoyed the interview session and wanted a continued relationship with the researcher.

Six out of the 30 businesses were currently implementing activities to diversify their customer base, gain access to more competitive markets and overcome constraints associated with immigrant businesses. Some have opened another branch of the business, currently running partnership programmes, or have secured resources to expand business activity beyond co-ethnic environments.

Only four out of the 30 businesses sampled can compete with other indigenous and well-established businesses. They were no longer seen as immigrant businesses because their products and business processes no longer have ethnic orientation. They also served diverse customer bases in the UK and beyond. These four businesses have achieved both breakout and break-in because they have broken out of constraints that plague immigrant businesses and have gained considerable access to attractive and competitive markets. Interestingly, two survival-oriented businesses were unwilling to consider breakout. The immigrant entrepreneurs in this category were content with the niche they served and did not want to add to their 'stress' by growing the business. They projected personal reasons for refusing breakout. One of them, a first-generation female entrepreneur, argued that her religion emphasis contentment, while the other argued that her family comes first before the business.

As seen in Table 6.1, a total of twenty-one out of the thirty sampled businesses had practical experience of a breakout. However, only four businesses had succeeded in breaking out of the constrained market and gained breakthroughs in the new market. The other 17 were still liminal, transiting through a broad growth continuum from constrained niches to competitive universal

markets. These findings have some similarities with Barn & McPherson (2011), who identified four degrees of breakout: staying put (businesses that resist growth for personal reasons); forced to remain (businesses operating where growth is unlikely); struggling to adjust (businesses with bright prospects but the owners are unwilling to change); and businesses that have broken out. One significant difference is that aside from the two businesses, immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample were willing to change and have some knowledge about markets with improved opportunities.

6.2 Breakout motives and drivers

Literature identified competition and the quest for survival as the most typical motives for breakout (Ram & Hillin, 1991; Barsa, 2011). However, this research revealed that other factors are as important as competition and survival. Significant motives in order of importance include the need to exploit opportunities (n= 28 Respondents), the need to make more profit (n=26), profit motive (n=24), satisfy diverse customer base (n= 24), and to deal with competition (n = 18). Other significant motives were the need to build brand image (n=14), survival (n=6), and personal reasons (n =6). As seen in Table 6.2, frequencies were tallied to indicate the number of times the respondents mentioned breakout motives under each category. Primary and secondary breakout motives selected by each respondent were also identified.

The distinction between primary and secondary motives was essential because primary motives do not have the same decision weight as secondary motives. The primary motive in this context refers to the most prominent motive or first breakout motive as confirmed by the respondents. During the interview, respondents were allowed to list different motives, after which they were asked to pick the most prominent motive and another secondary motive for their breakout. Table 6.2 contains the categorisation of these motives and illustrative quotes.

Table 6.2 Categorisation of breakout motives and illustrative quotes

Motive category	No of the businesses that mentioned this motive	No. of businesses that selected this as a primary motive	No. of businesses that selected this as a secondary motive	Illustrative quotes
Opportunity	28	5	6	'' I saw a gap in the market which I can fill'' (53-year-old Yemi) '' It is a way of deploying skills I acquired'' (49-year-old Eze).
Maximise profit	26	3	5	''To improve revenue base'' (42-year-old Nneka); '' To play in niches where more profit lies'' (57-year-old Ekene)
Customer-driven	24	4	4	''To satisfy my customers'' (48-year-old Miriam) ''To serve new customer segment''(44-year-old Blessing)
Competition	18	4	3	''To beat competition'' (55-year-old Dolapo) '' to capture underserved niches before my competitors do''(36 year old Ayomide)
Adaptation	18	4	3	''I need to leverage environmental changes'' (Eze)
Brand building	14	2	2	''become a global brand'' (51-year-old Chiugo)
Survival	6	3	3	'' to offset rising operating cost; in order to remain relevant'' (46-year-old Chinedu)
Fraternity Mission-driven	6	1	3	''I want to help others'' (53-year-old Yemi).
Personal reasons	4	2	1	'' I am a serial entrepreneur'' (42-year-old Shola)
Others (Why I refused breakout)	2	2	0	''I am not motivated because I am content'' (48-year-old Amaka)
Total	(Multiple responses)	30	30	

The desire to exploit opportunities was the most prominent breakout motive. Specific motives under this category include the desire to rejig a poorly served market, the desire to exploit

cheaper supply sources, and the desire to leverage internet technology. Others are opportunities to fix what was lacking; fill an identified gap, and deploy skills acquired from training, experience, or networks.

Profit-maximisation stood out both as a primary and a secondary motive as 26 out of the 30 respondents mentioned it as a key motive. This category includes the desire to improve the revenue base, make more money, and remain profitable. Excerpt from an interview with a Nigerian-UK Chamber of commerce member justified increasing emphasis on profit.

‘’*Nigerian immigrants in the ’80s and ’90s only came to study. However, the present crop of immigrants came to settle and make money. Unlike the previous cohort that came to prepare for juicy positions when they returned, these cohorts came to the UK to build wealth. They are driven by profit. They are attracted to risky opportunities because they want higher* profit’’(53-year-old Martin).

Changing customer demography and behaviour was a further key motive for breaking out. Specific motives here included the desire to satisfy customers, serve a new customer segment, address expanding customer base, and bring convenience to customers. Ada, a 48-year-old female entrepreneur, opened new branches of her care home business to address the needs of her expanding customer base. She located the new homes closer to where her target customers were to bring convenience and attract new customers.

In this era of social influence, social networks and the desire to adapt to cultural shifts are becoming significant motivations for a breakout. New online and offline communities provide immigrant entrepreneurs with resources and access to new markets. Indeed, peer pressure and social networks can motivate immigrants to pursue breakout. Eighteen out of the 30 respondents affirmed that one of their motives to breakout was the desire to leverage changes in communication and social relationships, respond to referrals, and maintain relevance. As a 51-year-old automobile engineer who has managed an automobile garage for nine years stated ‘’ *I am inspired, anytime, I see what my mates are doing. Except when you don’t desire growth or have friends that put pressure on you that you won't desire expansion. Else, you always look for new areas, trends, and new behaviour that you need to adapt to*’’.

One of the areas of adaptation is the use of digital technologies. For some entrepreneurs interviewed, leveraging digital technologies generate breakout opportunities. A 46-year-old Nnamdi who manages a consulting and training firm pointed out ‘’ *Internet has opened many doors for us to grow customers outside our location. We invested in digital marketing and have*

strong online engagement with current and potential customers. We provided rewards for raffaral and created different videos. Then we started getting calls and orders from customers in countries we did not expect. Even without a plan to grow, your loyal and satisfied customers can introduce you to new customer bases''.

The intensity of competition (n =18) can motivate immigrants to break out. This motive is one of the motives that dominate breakout motives in literature. Examples include the desire to remain relevant, beat the competition, and capture underserved niches before competitors do. In particular, the inspiration and work ethics of competitors mainly, Asian (role model) entrepreneurs, have also motivated businesses to breakout. Some of them have made a good impression on African immigrants owing to their resilience and innovation. ''*You started at the same time with them…within three years, they have three shops. I get inspiration from them, study their tactics, and envy their determination*'' (Chinedu, a food item retailer).

Some motives that have not appeared in previous research were becoming apparent (see Table 6.2). Some of these uncommon motives were the need to build brand advantage. Some immigrant businesses were interested in building a brand image that appeals to ethnic and non-ethnic customers. Fourteen respondents affirmed that their motive was to build a reputation; increase their market influence; generate brand equity; gain popularity and influence perceptions of African entrepreneurs. As a 39-year-old Shola who founded a recruitment agency puts it, *''I am interested in changing people's perception about female immigrant entrepreneurs. I want to build a global brand so that I will leave a legacy that inspires others''.*

The survival motive was popular in breakout literature (Solano, 2016; Kloosterman 2010, Ram et al., 2004). However, it was not significant in this current study as only three businesses identified survival as a primary motive for a breakout. Examples of the survival motive include the desire to stabilise the busness income, offset rising operating costs, and remain relevant in the marketplace.

Other motives include the desire for fraternity and personal reasons. Examples of personal motives include the need for personal fulfillment, meeting personal targets, and experimentation to see if a particular business decision would work. Fraternity motives include creating jobs for family members, assisting co-ethnic members, making their family proud, and helping others. Regardless that these motives were not popular, they explain the reasons for embarking on a breakout. Contradictorily, two respondents acknowledged that they did not

desire to break out. These entrepreneurs argued that they did not want to break out because it might deny them the peace they enjoy or create a lifestyle they do not want. This assertion shows that the inability to break out, which is usually attributed to lack of resources, ethnic and environmental factors, also has a personal dimension. Some entrepreneurs do not crave growth and prefer to stay in their ethnic enclave because of its perceived benefit and personal reasons.

Summarily, some of the motives discussed were proactive, while others were reactive. Proactive motives include exploiting opportunities and making more profit. Reactive motives were push factors and reactions to external pressure. They include the need to adapt to market dynamics, satisfy customers, and respond to competition and peer pressures. Unlike in previous studies, proactive factors are becoming dominant, suggesting that an increasing number of immigrant businesses are becoming forward-looking in a transnational environment instead of struggling for survival. Although those entrepreneurial motives may provide a basis for understanding breakout motives, the study could not identify a significant relationship between the two motives. This insignificant relationship is because other factors such as life events, class resources, embeddedness, and opportunity structure, influence breakout motives. In other words, factors that drive people into entrepreneurship could be different from their breakout drivers.

Breakout drivers

The importance of breakout drivers cannot be overemphasised. Parzer (2016) noted that breakout is a process, not just a strategy, and does not occur until certain conditions are in place. The literature identified the following as key breakout drivers: language proficiency, competencies in the host market culture, resourceful contact, funding, and availability of supporting institutions (McPherson, 2019; Wang & Altinay, 2012). Breakout drivers are sets of variables that facilitate breakout. These drivers are different from breakout motives in that they propel breakout. Unlike motives which were reasons for embarking on a breakout, drivers are factors whose presence or absence determine breakout speed and feasibility. Mitchell (2015) observed that breakout is a combination of factors that impact the entrepreneur, the firm, and the environment. These drivers are breakout causative factors in which availability and quality determine the occurrence of breakout. Immigrant entrepreneurs who participated in this study were asked to identify critical variables that played a role in their expansion. Table 6.4 contains their responses.

Table 6.3 Breakout drivers

	Breakout drivers	No. of businesses that selected this as a primary driver	No. of businesses that selected this as a secondary driver
1	Funding	5	7
2	Quality of team	5	4
3	Digital technologies	5	3
4	Social network	4	5
5	Deeper customer experience	3	4
6	Advertising and referral	2	3
7	Market knowledge	2	0
8	Innovative mindset	2	1
9	Right timing	2	1
10	The capacity of channel members	0	2
	Total	30	30

Quality team, digital technologies, appropriate funding, partnerships, and marketing competence came atop the list of breakout drivers. Aside from appropriate funding, these factors were not prominent drivers in the literature. The findings show that quality teams and digital technology were becoming strong competitive advantages in a transnational environment, ranking higher than funding and market knowledge. It also highlighted the increasing importance of partnership and alliances with other business competencies.

Breakout motives and drivers constitute the push and pull factors that propel breakout activities. The stronger the factors, the more likely immigrant entrepreneurs would attempt a breakout. Their intensity determines breakout scope and speed. They can significantly influence breakout strategies and markets adopted by immigrant entrepreneurs.

6.3 Markets immigrants break out of and into

The literature identified diverse breakout and break-in markets (Jones et al., 2000; Kloosterman, 2010). Chapter three discussed these markets as breakout starting points and destinations. According to Table 6.4 below, immigrant businesses studied were breaking out from some market segments to different market segments that they adjudged to have superior characteristics.

Table 6.4 Markets Immigrant businesses break out of and into

	Breakout market Versus Break-in markets	No. of Respondents	Examples
1	From single product line to multiple product lines	12	''I diversified into different product lines that my customers would want'' (Kate, who runs a saloon business).
2	From local ethnic niche to transnational niche	11	''Exporting to Nigeria and Ghana'' (42-year-old Ikenna)
3	From face-to-face market to online market	8	''I expanded to include more online customers presently'' (Yinka, an owner of a training firm)
4	From ethnic market to non-ethnic market	7	''My customers are both blacks and white people'' (Ada, who runs a care home)
5	From neighbourhood market to regional/national mainstream market	6	''From one shop in Peckham to covering areas in London and Manchester'' (Afam, a 48-year-old money transfer business owner)
6	From markets with ethnic related barriers to markets with mainstream related barriers	4	''I now compete in a white-dominated market'' (49-year-old owner of construction business)
7	From labour intensive market to capital intensive market	4	''I digitised and replaced some workers with digital tools'' (Shola, owner of a recruitment firm)
8	From UK market to international markets	4	''We have branches in Australia and South Africa'' (Nnamdi who runs a consulting business)
9	From ethnic market to co-migrant market	3	''From selling to Nigerians to selling to Asian customers'' (55-year-old Dolapo)
10	From import market to export market	2	''I sent cars and clothes to Nigeria and import foodstuff'' (46-year-old Chinedu)

This finding suggests an array of market segments that immigrant businesses should consider in break-out activities. The overriding target was not non-ethnic markets; instead, markets with more attractive characteristics. These markets are co-migrant, online, regional, and transnational. The attractiveness of markets in this context is determined by ease of entry, market size, opportunities for growth, and purchasing power. Immigrant entrepreneurs also consider the availability of resources, market knowledge, and personal factors such as work/life balance in deciding which market to enter. After deciding which market to enter, the next task

is how to enter the market. Therefore, the following section will discuss different entry modes under breakout strategies.

6.4 Breakout strategies

According to Dheer (2017), breakout strategies are entrepreneurs' responses to the tension between opportunity structure and available resources. Breakout strategies are different growth paths strategically initiated with a breakout in mind. In the views of Mitchelle (2015), these paths are various trajectories through which firm growth occurs. The breakout strategy is both a process and framework for decision-making. As discussed in Chapter three, breakout strategies discussed in this section differed from tactics because they were long-term, comprehensive, and determined business courses of action and decisions.

Respondents were asked how and what they did to expand their businesses in the interview. Keywords used by the respondents to describe their breakout strategies were presented in Table 6.5, as seen below.

Table 6.5: Keywords used by respondents to describe different breakout strategies

s/n	**Breakout Strategies**	**Keywords used to describe them**
1	Horizontal Diversification	Diversify product, diversify focus, diversify the market, diversify into related sectors, diversify into related services, Affordable product, low price product, cheaper alternative.
2	Smart team/diverse workforce	Hybrid management team; self-managed team; innovative team, happy team, trained team, diverse team, non-ethnic team
3	The customer experience (Differentiation)	Strong relationship, long term relationship, best experience, deeper experience, rich experience, memorable experience, customised experience, Lifetime needs, adjust to suit new lifestyle, accommodate new demands.
4	Contacts (Network ties)	Home contact, former contacts, fanbase, professional contacts, new contact, online contacts, new partners.
5	Transnational strategy	African Experience, disruptive experience, former experience, home country experience, possess knowledge of the home market, 'relocatee' experience.
6	Digitisation	We digitised operations, strong online presence. Online customers, use digital platforms, depend on online gadgets.
7	Location/atmosphere (Geographical)	Bigger location, cozy atmosphere, high street, different location, attractive location, accessible location, convenient location, strategic location.

8	Build reputation (Purchasing power)	Brand awareness, build reputation, to project global image, strong positioning, maintain a strong reputation, link up with other brands
9	Smart processes	Respond to market changes, improve delivery speed, update technology, update customer needs, Compare and learn from, cooperate with, analyse weaknesses of, put pressure on, adapt products to, simplify processes, improve negotiation, use collective intelligence.
10	Partnership/ B2B	Leverage partnership, prioritise partnership, unlock value chain relationship, nurture partnership, deploy partnership, Other bigger businesses, go for government business, focus on corporate clients, focus on VIPs.
11	New opportunities	New niches, lookout for something new, maximise opportunities, create opportunities, unlock opportunities, take loans to exploit new routes.

Findings from the interview revealed that a deliberate and planned strategy approach was lacking in most immigrant businesses. This means that breakout was not part of a long-term plan of the businesses. Only nine respondents had some breakout strategy (Five businesses had a short-term strategy, while only four had long-term and comprehensive breakout strategy). The remaining twenty-one businesses did not have well-articulated strategies. They followed their instinct, adapted to situations around them, and depended on tactical decisions for their breakout. This emergent strategy approach arises from unplanned actions and initiatives within an organisation. It is typically viewed as spontaneous innovation and often a direct result of entrepreneurs' daily prioritization and investment decisions. Unlike the deliberate strategy approach, this emergent approach provides flexibility to adjust goals and pursue other opportunities or priorities as they emerge. The emergent strategy was popular among first-generation immigrants (15 out of 21 entrepreneurs). Tunde, a 42-year-old researcher who was part of the expert opinion sought in the study, explained that immigrant businesses prefer an emergent strategy approach when the business environment is uncertain, When the business is at the early phase of its development and when the need for speed and quick adjustment gives competitive advantages.

Breakout strategies analysed in this section emerged from the data generated and informed by diverse breakout trajectories that have appeared in breakout literature. Trajectories that were not mentioned in the literature were also accommodated. The keywords used by respondents to describe how they achieved expansion and their explanation were used in the categorisation. These keywords were sorted into appropriate categories so that common themes would emerge. As seen in Table 6.6, most respondents adopted more than one breakout strategy. The number of immigrant entrepreneurs that indicated that they used a particular strategy was tallied to indicate the extent of use of a particular strategy.

Table 6.6 Breakout Strategies of the sampled immigrant entrepreneurs

Respondents (n=28)	**Breakout strategies**										
	Horizontal diversification	Smart team	Customer experience	Network ties	Transnational	Digitisation	Geographical	Reputation	Partnership/ B2B	Smart processes	New opportunities
Afam	√	X	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	√	X
Ngozi	√	√	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	√
Ikenna	√	√	X	√	√	X	√	X	√	X	X
Yinka	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	X
Yemi	√	√	X	X	X	√	√	X	√	X	X
Alex	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	X	X	X
Shola	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	√	√	X	√
Emeka	√	√	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	X
Olumide	√	√	√	X	X	√	√	√	X	√	X
Nonso	√	√	X	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	X
Chika	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	√	√	√	X
Aisha	√	√	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	√
Chinedu	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	X	√	X	X
Kate	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	X	X	X
Ada	√	√	√	X	X	√	X	√	X	X	X
Amaka	√	√	X	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	√
Ahmed	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	X	√	√	X

Eze	√	√	√	√	X	X	X	√	X	√	X
Dolapo	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	√
Nnamdi	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	X	X	X
Okey	√	√	√	√	√	X	X	X	√	√	X
Ayomide	√	√	√	X	X	X	√	X	X	X	√
Olisa	√	√	X	√	X	X	√	X	X	√	X
Blessing	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	X	X	X
Chidi	√	X	X	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	√
Miriam	√	√	√	X	X	√	√	√	√	X	X
Ekene	√	√	√	√	X	X	√	√	X	X	X
Chiugo	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	X	X	X
Total	28	27	21	19	16	14	13	11	10	7	7

The top breakout strategy used by 28 out of the 30 businesses sampled was horizontal diversification. This strategy was followed by the smart team, differentiation, social network strategy, and transnational strategy. Admittedly, literature has highlighted some of the strategies that appeared in the table. Differentiation, diversification, and innovation were discussed as significant breakout strategies in the literature. However, findings from the study revealed that some breakout strategies not popular in literature were increasingly being adopted by immigrant entrepreneurs. Emerging breakout strategies in a transnational environment include digitization, smart team design, brand building, and attractive business models. Some of these strategies were more relevant for service-based firms than those that deal in goods. On the one hand, differentiation, smart team, and brand building strategies were popular with businesses in the services sector. On the other hand, geographical and transnational strategies were popular with businesses in the retail sector.

Evidence from the data suggests that an increasing number of immigrant entrepreneurs were embracing transnational breakout strategy. Despite that literature has not given considerable attention to the relevance of transnational breakout, this study has unveiled that setting up entrepreneurial ventures in the home and third countries is becoming attractive to immigrants. Transnational entrepreneurship helps immigrants to achieve economic, social-cultural, and competitive objectives. A detailed discussion of the transnational breakout will come in the subsequent chapter. A one-by-one discussion of breakout strategies deployed by immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample will be presented in the following section.

Horizontal diversification strategy

Twenty-eight immigrant businesses studied reported one or more forms of horizontal diversification. This is similar to Parzar (2011) findings, who observed that immigrant entrepreneurs' most familiar expansion strategy was diversification. These entrepreneurs diversified into related and unrelated activities, product lines, and markets. Notwithstanding that some researchers identified this form of diversification as a survival strategy, this finding suggests that it is also an expansion strategy that enables immigrants to adapt to market trends, maximise resources and gain competitiveness. A 49-year-old leader of an ethnic association reported ''*..markets are becoming fluid, customers' needs are constantly changing. You need to diversify to remain relevant to your customers. Some product lines become profitable while others decline. So, you need to move with the market and not be blindly loyal to a particular business line.*''

Most immigrant entrepreneurs prefer this option as it broadens customer base without discontinuing previous business activities. This strategy entails broadening market offering, integrating value chain activities, and venturing into unrelated activities that add value to a customer segment (irrespective of whether the customers are ethnic or non-ethnic). Ninety-three percent of the businesses studied engaged in different forms of diversification. According to Aisha, a 38-year-old travel agency owner, ''*We started with admissions consulting and diversified into online marketing, and we have added travel agency''.* Another example of diversification in the sample was Ikenna who started first with the repair of electronics, then to exporting electronics, and later diversified into exporting cars.

Sectoral breakout was not popular among the businesses in the sample. Instead, what was common was related and unrelated diversification. The difference between sectoral breakout and diversification is that the immigrant moves away from one sector and enters another sector. Meanwhile, in diversification, the immigrants move into a different sector while maintaining the business activity in both sectors and serving the same customer base. For example, Yinka runs a training and certification venture but has also diversified into real estate, maintaining unrelated business lines concurrently. The study observed that it was not easy for immigrants to move into a different sector because it entails acquiring new business resources and risks tend to be high. Immigrants, therefore, achieve their dream of venturing into different sectors through unrelated diversification. This assertion was supported by Laselle & Scott (2018) study of Polish immigrants. They observed that their commonest breakout strategy was product broadening and diversification. Their finding was that immigrant entrepreneurs diversify into product lines where they simultaneously perceived opportunities, growing their customer base and value chain activities. This approach was helpful for black African immigrant entrepreneurs as it feeds into their portfolio entrepreneurship tendencies. They adopted full middleman positions and served ethnic and non-ethnic markets in their locations.

Smart team strategy

This approach is known in the literature as smart organisational design. It entails innovative use of workforce characteristics and team structure to achieve breakout. Arrighetti et al. (2014) identified the multicultural hybrid organisational model as a breakout strategy, just as Engelen (2001) recommended smart organizational design and the use of technology in marketing as breakout strategies for immigrant entrepreneurs. Some businesses studied employed 'white' managers to gain acceptance from customers. Others introduced non-ethnic partners and

workers to remove ethnic labels usually attached to immigrant businesses. Blending ethnic and native competencies can facilitate breakout by increasing opportunities and understanding. A 40-year-old Afam, who founded a money transfer business, said '' *I employed a Ghanaian worker to attract Ghanaian customers''.* Another respondent who manages a care home explained that her choice of 'white' managers was to build a reputation and attract patronage from the 'mainstream market.' In support of this strategy, Wang & Warn (2019) and Arrigheti (2014), who kicked against assimilation as a breakout goal, emphasised 'flexibilisation' of business processes and smart organisational design as a better breakout option.

Network ties strategy

Argument on whether network ties constrain or facilitate breakout is contentious (Anderson & Park 2007; Solano 2016; Alverez & Romani 2017). However, this study's findings suggest that an increasing number of immigrant entrepreneurs (n=19) employ network ties strategy to access new market segments. The assumption in network ties strategy is that building strategic networks will provide the resources needed to break out of the low order market while helping them penetrate the high order market (Ndofor & Priem 2011). Social networks such as home-country contacts, professional contacts, and virtual contacts help immigrants deal with multilevel constraints and broker access to profitable sectors of the economy. A 37-year-old travel agent, Aisha was able to gain access to a more profitable market segment because of her fanbase. Admittedly, several transnational breakouts reported in the study occurred because of social networks. Some respondents were able to establish businesses in regions where they had contacts. Both formal and informal contacts could provide breakout opportunities. Yinka, who owns a training consulting firm, gained considerable market opportunities because of his professional contacts.

Differentiation strategy

This strategy involves providing customers with something unique, different, and distinct from products their competitors may offer them in the marketplace. The target is to develop markedly different and appealing products for the old and new customer bases. The appealing factors include richer customer relationships, speed, customised services, long-term relationships, valuable content, and better products. Twenty-one out of twenty-eight respondents reported adding product features and marketing activities to attract new customers. The importance of

this strategy is illustrated in the breakout result of GGT Restaurant. Aside from selling quality products, they offerred differentiated service for customers from Manchester and Birmingham during the weekend. They built a long-term relationship with customers, provided guest homes for those who could not travel back when they visited, and offer other personalised services. ''*when we started, my interest was doing something different and ensuring that customers had an experience they have not had in other restaurants. We brought in Nigerian DJs, games, and shows, bringing Nigerian flavour to London. We were not making much profit; howbeit the reputation keeps spreading.. Nigerian and African visitors to London visit my restaurant as one of the key areas to go. Even white people visit with their friends and family to have a taste of the Nigerian world. We adapted our services according to customers' needs, and we are attentive to new features we could add to excite our customers* (56-year-old Emeka, owner of GGT Restaurant). According to Altinay & Altinay (2008), this approach requires adaptation to customers' preferences and effective marketing.

Transnational strategy

Sixteen out of the 28 immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample depended on transnational capital such as accumulated experience, resources, contacts, and know-how from home countries and countries they lived in previously to achieve breakout. Evidence from the interview revealed that some immigrant businesses were 'micro multinationals.' These businesses neither target ethnic nor mainstream markets. They intended to serve customers in diverse market segments around the world. These entrepreneurs leverage the linkage between home and host markets to enter markets in ethnic and non-ethnic niches in third countries. For example, Ikenna, a 48-year-old car exporter, had a business in Holland, Nigeria and the UK. He used his influence in these markets to serve ethnic market segments in Spain and Ghana.

Co-migrant markets can provide an opportunity for a transnational breakout. Some Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs establish shops in African countries to serve the nationals in those countries and the UK. '' *Aside from the UK market, we now cover Accra and Nairobi axis. Our shops over there help us to gather items we sell here'' (*46-year-old Chinedu owner of a retail food business).

Some immigrant entrepreneurs exploit opportunities in transnational space owing to advantages created by their embeddedness in diverse contexts. According to Qui & Gupta (2015), transnational spaces offer immigrants the opportunity to minimise weaknesses

embedded in a single market. Although some of the immigrants studied have businesses in Nigeria because they grew up there, some have not lived in Nigeria but used their experience acquired in various countries to access opportunities in transnational markets.

Digitisation strategy

Fourteen out of thirty businesses studied agreed that digitisation has enabled them to enter new market segments. Digital transformation provides the platform to reach heterogeneous markets and the flexibility to customise market offerings. In the views of Chen & Tan (2014), digitisation approach enables immigrants to enter high-growth sectors. Some immigrant entrepreneurs studied were able to access customers with high purchasing power using the digitisation strategy. Despite the strategy requiring knowledge and expertise, it has become a popular strategy for global elites to create micro multinational enterprises. Chidi, a 46-year-old entertainment business owner, could access customer bases beyond the UK because of reliance on digital technology. He digitised his business processes and built a strong online presence. As a result, customers from different parts of the world interested in African music reached out to him. The strategy also offered him the opportunity to serve as an ambassador for some global brands. Blessing, a 44-year-old female who runs a recruitment agency, affirmed this strategy's centrality in her breakout journey ''*…but when we digitised our processes, we started getting calls, referrals, and customers from different areas. Now we recruit people from different countries with diverse skill sets, serving different businesses. Our online market tripled our revenue''.*

Geographical diversification strategy

Findings revealed that seventy percent of the sampled businesses in the retail sector adopted this breakout strategy. The keywords they used to describe their breakout activities include more prominent location, cozy environment, convenient location, and corner shops to high streets. Geographical breakout strategy involves moving into a new location, usually more strategic. In support of this strategy, Ram et al. (2004) argued that siting business in upcoming locations and highbrow areas especially accompanied by improved product mix attracts classes of customers different from traditional customers of immigrant businesses. According to Afam, a 48-yea- old male that runs a money transfer business, ''*We grew from one shop at Peckham to two shops outside London. Anytime we moved into new locations favoured by demographic*

trends, our customer base enlarges.''. According to Ngozi, a 52-year-old beauty and salon shop owner, *''My business stabilised when I moved to a new location. Initially, some white people were skeptical at patronising me, but proximity and convenience won the battle for me''*. On the other hand, Dolapo, a dealer on household items, gained access to a profitable market segment when she moved from corner shop to high street. Her response to her expansion strategy was *'' we grew from a smaller to a bigger shop, from a corner shop to a high street shop. Currently, we have three shops at Walthamstow, Barking, and Manchester''.*

The geographical dimension is still popular despite growth in e-commerce platforms. This growth dimension is popular among the personal service sector and retail sectors wishing to maximise location advantage. The nature of expansion ranges from establishing new branches to changing to attractive locations and enlarging office/business space. Most of the entrepreneurs studied did not believe that the digital revolution would bring the relevance of physical shops to an end. As a result, getting an attractive location remained one of their expansion strategies. Some immigrant entrepreneurs move their business locations to highbrow areas, high streets, and areas with huge human traffic to attract ethnic and non-ethnic customers.

Other breakout strategies

Brand building, business to business (B2B), and leveraging partnerships strategies were other significant breakout strategies observed in the sampled businesses. Some immigrant entrepreneurs were keen on building a strong brand as platforms for accessing better market segments. Olisah, who was into haulage and logistics, affirmed that London as a business headquaters confers a global advantage. Businesses that leverage a strong reputation can access a wider market based on that reputation in different parts of the world. Miriam, a property manager, concurred with the following statement *''the more our brand name improves, the more we can compete favourably in different markets. Potential customers from different countries see us as a global business because we are based in London and many businesses want to partner with us.''*

The business-to-business (B2B) breakout model was not popular in breakout literature. However, findings from the study revealed that businesses can breakout by selectively focusing on key clients and moving from serving individual customers to corporate customers. Alex's fitness business expanded when he shifted attention from individual customers to corporate customers. *'' I signed contracts with two higher education institutions to manage their fitness facilities. I gained access to working with community-based associations and private businesses.*

Unlike when I focussed on individual customers, my revenue increased and my brand position improved. Even the training I offer online presently targets corporate customers. It is an easier route to growth'' (39-year-old Alex).

Some businesses studied expanded into new markets through partnerships created with multinationals and public organisations. Such strategic alliances can link immigrant businesses to SMEs in a different location or to multinational enterprises. Twelve out of the thirty businesses sampled agreed to have used or currently using different forms of partnerships to access competitive markets. In support of this breakout strategy, Wang & Warn (2019) argued that external experts who do not belong to ethnic or mainstream markets can fast-track breakout.

The choice of breakout strategy depends on the type of product, target customers, breakout motive, and sector of business activity. Businesses in the technology sector tend to depend on smart organisation design, partnership and digitisation, whereas businesses that are in service sector use differentiation and network ties. Immigrants in the retail sector tend to adopt a geographical strategy, while businesses that focus on ethnic products adopt a transnational strategy. These findings showcase the dynamism in a transnational environment and diverse growth tools immigrants can deploy to expand in different dimensions. However, the success of these strategies depends on breakout drivers and the severity of breakout challenges.

6.5 Breakout challenges

Breakout challenges are factors that constrain immigrant entrepreneurs from participating in competitive markets. The literature identified funding, intense competition, language proficiency, and weak access to support agencies as key breakout challenges (Ram & Hillin, 1994, Parzer, 2014). Nonetheless, examining breakout challenges in the context of African and second-generation immigrants would deepen understanding of hindrances to breakout.

Table 6.7 Breakout challenges

	Breakout challenges	No. of businesses that selected this as a primary challenge	No. of businesses that selected this as a secondary challenge
1	Funding	6	5
2	Intense competition	4	4
4	Racism	3	3
5	High operating cost	2	3
6	Absence of support organisation	3	3
7	Poor marketing skills	3	2
9	Inaccessibility of market accelerators	1	2
11	High entry barrier	2	1
12	Customers' loyalty to famous brands	2	2
13	Smart staff usually quit	2	2
14	Corruption in home markets	1	2
15	Unfavourable loan terms	1	1

Note: Multiple responses were provided because respondents identified multiple challenges

Findings on the key hindrances to breakout were not markedly different from what was identified in the literature. Funding remains a significant challenge to breakout. This challenge is common among first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs whose attitude to loans was influenced by their cultural background (details will be discussed in Chapter 7). Some respondents, especially those with less education, prefer informal lending sources because of unfavorable bank borrowing terms. Oliseh, A 56-year-old haulage firm owner, attributed his dwindling business fortune to a loan he took from a bank. He took a loan to buy delivery trucks on terms he later realised unfavourable. He had to sell half of his trucks to repay the loan because demand for his services slowed. Nineteen out of 30 entrepreneurs in the sample complained that most banks do not understand what immigrant entrepreneurs need for scaling up. As a result, their loan structure does not support such a long business haul. Nonso, a 45-year-old owner of an electronics and repair business, narrated his ordeal with banks and has given up on borrowing from high street banks. '' *They are racists, they will give other people loans, but the story would change once they see a black man. In my case, they kept asking for unnecessary documentation and delayed the process until I lost the opportunity I needed to exploit with the loan''.*

Sahid, A 52-year-old researcher on immigrant businesses who were part of the experts interviewed in the study, argued that there was systemic racism against blacks in the UK banking system. He lamented the stereotyping of black immigrant entrepreneurs and suggested that

black immigrants should establish a bank that understands their needs as some Asian entrepreneurs have done.

Despite that 18 out of 30 respondents admitted that racism and discrimination affect their breakout activities, the effect of racism on breakout tends to be subjective. Contradictorily, some immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample refuted the claim of racism. *''forget about what our people call racism. They do not want to do the necessary things, and when you insist on following rules, they call it racism''* (Blessing, a 44-year -old female entrepreneur). This finding re-echoes Fraser's (2009) observation that a misperception of ethnic discrimination made some minority immigrant entrepreneurs feel discriminated against. He did not find significant discrimination in small-scale businesses' loan application and approval processes in the UK. However, he concluded that ethnicity could shape whether a group of entrepreneurs would feel discriminated against.

Other key breakout challenges include COVID-19, intense competition, high operating costs, and the absence of support institutions. Language proficiency which was identified as one of the key hindrances to breakout in the literature, did not appear significant. The insignificance of language proficiency is attributed to the sample used in the study, as most entrepreneurs were well educated. For transnational immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample, corruption in the home market was also a source of worry. Delay in processing shipping documents, prevalent fraudulent activities, and the tendency of workers to request bribes to access public services affect the effective operation of transnational businesses.

6.6 Breakout learning

The breakout journey is an iterative and nuanced undertaking. Contexts are different and strategic decisions that lead to success might sabotage the business in another area. It is a process marked by success, failures, and lessons. None of the respondents regretted considering breakout, but many of them regretted some decisions made in the process. Table 6.8 contains responses on what they listed as breakout mistakes. Two businesses did not attempt a breakout, so the findings were based on 28 businesses. These mistakes range from financial management problems to human resources and delayed use of digital innovation. Analysis of the mistakes revealed the nature of assistance immigrant businesses require, justifying the relevance of support organisations.

Table 6.8 Breakout mistakes

s/n	**Category of breakout mistakes**	**Examples of mistakes**	**No. of Respondents**
1	Marketing/customer service related	❖ Failure to use referrals effectively ❖ Underestimate competition ❖ Inability to handle customers complaints fast ❖ Unjustified lowering of prices ❖ Late attention to product branding ❖ Absence of marketing performance tracking indicators	12 9 8 6 6 5
2	Strategy related	❖ Failure to interpret trends ❖ Rigidity in planning ❖ Venturing into declining niches ❖ Failure to consider differences in business cycles	6 6 4 4
3	Cashflow management	❖ Poor bookkeeping ❖ Selling on credit. ❖ Using business money for other purposes ❖ Unauthorised use of funds by teams	13 9 7 4
4	Work team related	❖ Trusting people easily ❖ Weak delegation ❖ Ineffective team structure ❖ Hiring for wrong reasons ❖ Focusing on skills instead of attitude	12 5 5 4 3
5	Attitude related	❖ Poor negotiation ❖ Lack of confidence in one's abilities ❖ Unnecessary fear of risk ❖ Seeking expansion when credibility has not been established	9 9 6 4
6	Technology-related	❖ Delay in deploying digital technologies ❖ investing in technologies that are not profitable	13 6
7	Alienation	❖ Failure to be part of thriving communities ❖ Poor attitude to social functions ❖ Weak online engagement	5 2 6
8	Process management	❖ Poor sequencing of activities ❖ Diversifying into niches where expertise is limited ❖ Unnecessary wastage	6 3 3
9	Discrimination related	❖ Ignoring stereotyping and beliefs against blacks ❖ Venturing into 'racist white' market; failure to factor in discrimination	12 9
10	Funding related	❖ Unfavourable loan terms ❖ Poor capital base ❖ Using short term fund for long term purposes	11 7 4
11	Corrupt tendencies	❖ Relating with greedy and fraudulent individuals ❖ Following shortcuts ❖ Getting involved with corrupt government officials ❖ Theft and pilferage by workers	6 3 2 3
12	Location-related	❖ Failure to consider the impact of location on business growth	6

Analysis of these mistakes revealed that adequate knowledge of marketing and business management would improve the chances of a successful breakout by a large percentage. Jack, an ethnic association leader and one of the experts interviewed, presented this view. ''*Marketing in recent times is complex, requiring knowledge, skills, and agility. Ability to anticipate customers' needs and deliver value that exceeds expectations create valuable business opportunities''*. Mmadu, a 46-year-old leader of one of the ethnic associations, argued that immigrant businesses need to step up their marketing activities and use digital technologies. From the researcher's interaction with the respondents, most marketing issues identified occur due to lack of knowledge, attitudinal and cultural issues.

'' I doubted my abilities…. I stayed long following the market instead of dominating it. I have been defensive instead of offensive. Secondly, I never knew black entertainment would be accepted and appreciated in non-black countries'' (Chidi, a 46-year-old owner of an entertainment firm).

Some of these challenges such as alienation, doubtful attitude, corrupt tendencies, cashflow management, and process management, are attitudinal. Attitudinal problems can be managed through capacity-building programmes which support organisations can provide in this context. However, only six out of the 30 entrepreneurs studied have received assistance from support organisations in the UK. Admittedly, 88% of those who did not receive any assistance did not make any application(n=21). As a result, it is difficult to conclude whether the gap is due to non-application or perceived stereotyping against black entrepreneurs. Some of the mistakes listed above have been corrected, while others were still being corrected. The following section will examine how these businesses corrected their mistakes.

Table 6.9 Breakout learning mechanisms

s/n	**Category of learning opportunities/mechanism**	**Examples of organisational learning mechanisms**	**No. of Respondents**
1	Behavioural change	➢ Improve communication ➢ Separate family and friends from business finance ➢ Develop effective strategy ➢ Relocation ➢ Accept the loss and pull out ➢ Depending on reliable information and metrics ➢ Introduce new partners ➢ Test assumptions before execution	12 11 7 5 5 4 4 2
2	Personal development efforts	➢ Read books ➢ Listen and learn from customers. ➢ Learn from online platforms and resources	14 9 7
3	Network-based support	➢ Change circle of friends ➢ Join online communities, ➢ Join professional groups ➢ Enroll in cooperative organisations	6 5 4 3
4	Paid assistance	➢ Attend training ➢ Hire consultants ➢ Hire bookkeepers	16 6 3
5	Professional support	➢ Ask for reviews and referrals ➢ Submit to mentoring programmes ➢ Look for endorsement	22 8 7
6	Informal source of capacity building	➢ Attend training hosted by religious groups ➢ Learn from reading the holy books ➢ Seek counsel from religious leaders	5 4 4

Note: Multiple responses were used because respondents identified more than one learning mechanism

Table 6.9 highlighted methods of organisational learning. Change of behaviour was among the prominent learning mechanism(n=26). These entrepreneurs developed new skills and improved quality of decisions. Ikenna, a 42-year-old exporter, decided not to allow family and friends to handle business finance unchecked. His decision was based on his experience with a transnational business he established in Nigeria under the care of his family members. The business was run aground, and his family could not account for how the capital was wasted. In a like manner, Nonso, a 45-year-old dealer on electronics, vowed not to struggle to enter 'whit dominated' markets again because of the discrimination he suffered and money wasted on adverts that did not yield expected fruits. He was an ardent believer in societal assimilation and attended training to gain a British accent.

Nonetheless, he experienced 'subtle racism' that made him conclude that it was difficult for people of colour to integrate into mainstream British society. The story of Olise, a 54-year-old owner of a haulage firm, testified that some experiences could make people develop skewed orientation. He was doing well before he took a loan for expansion purposes. The inability to repay the loan caused the downfall of his business. He insisted that he would not approach the bank again for loans and advised people to grow organic or use friendlier sources of finance other than using high street banks. Examples of friendly funding sources were government-backed schemes, funds from specialised financial institutions, cooperatives, and private equities.

Twenty-one businesses admitted that they used various personal development programmes to improve themselves. Online platforms and resources are increasingly becoming sources for competence development among immigrants. Indeed, these businesses were adopting modern approaches to learning. The use of consultants, training, and reliance on support networks are considered suitable for building competence.

Findings show that hired consultants or coaches were becoming popular among immigrant businesses. Eze, a building contracting firm, uses consultants to validate contracts and decisions. Identically, Chika, a 38-year-old advertising firm owner, used consultants to develop business strategies and marketing campaigns. The use of quality coaches and consultants can be costly but can provide the expertise to unlock opportunities for businesses. The majority of immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample opt for cheaper ways of building capacities such as network-based support and personal development. Membership of professional associations provides opportunities for learning and networking that improve immigrant businesses' competencies and reach. Some immigrant entrepreneurs such as Nneka (Respondent 7) and Chinedu (Respondent 13) who joined cooperatives received access to funding and the opportunity to manage their cashflows effectively.

The following section will examine the relationships among breakout themes using a case study of immigrant entrepreneurs who achieved breakout and break-in. It will highlight entrepreneurial motives, breakout motives, breakout strategies, drivers, and breakout learning.

6. 7 Breakout experiences of some Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs

A wide range of breakout variables such as breakout degree, breakout strategies, breakout drivers, markets, challenges, and breakout learning mechanisms have been discussed in this

chapter. The interplay of these variables and how they manifested in breakout situations will be demonstrated using some breakout examples. Breakout experiences of three immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample will be narrated to pull together the key themes in the chapter. The next section will consider the interaction in practice between entrepreneurial motives, breakout motives, breakout strategies, drivers, and breakout learning, through some illustrative case examples

The first illustrative case was an immigrant entrepreneur that was still in transition, while the second was an immigrant entrepreneur who was willing to breakout but trapped. The third illustrative case was about an immigrant entrepreneur who has achieved a successful breakout.

Illustrative Example 1: Immigrant entrepreneur breakout - Still in transition

Kate was a single mum who established a saloon business because of her passion for hairstyling. She was born in the UK by a Nigerian mum who came to the UK for further studies 36 years ago. After getting her diploma, Kate worked as a shop assistant at retail shops and later in a salon for six years. In 2012, she opened a female salon with two staff. Her entrepreneurial motive was to turn her hobby into a business, achieve flexibility of lifestyle and maximise the opportunity to meet people from diverse backgrounds. Kate had achieved some level of success in her breakout journey. Currently, she owns shops in three locations in London. Two shops that cater to female customers were started from scratch, while the other male shop was acquired from another entrepreneur. Surprisingly, despite her effort to be seen as a mainstream business by using multi-ethnic staff and locating the business in the non-black neighbourhood, some people still refer to them as ethnic businesses.

Her breakout motive was both for survival and to exploit opportunities in the market. In her view, expansion is a way of remaining relevant and competitive. She desired to satisfy her customers better by providing what was lacking. Kate employed geographical, horizontal diversification, and differentiation as her breakout strategies. As seen in her response to how she achieved expansion, her strategy was emergent and depended on customer orientation.

''It was not a plan… I am simply good with timing. So, I started by studying what other salons were doing and not doing. Anytime I travel outside the UK, I learn new things to attract customers. I started selling hair treatment products, and when my customers got satisfied with them, I added food supplements to my product lines. I knew that satisfied customers would come back, so I avoided issues that would make me lose them. I employed workers from different

ethnic groups to create an atmosphere of diversity and use competent staff. Aside from having an attractive location. I do my best to relate well with customers.''

She attributed her few breakout achievements to an innovative mindset and deepened customer experience. Locational advantage and affordable pricing helped her to gain market visibility. Kate was one of the 11 immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample that achieved some breakout success. She regretted the tactics of lowering prices to attract customers and her inability to build a stable team, which affected her performance. Such mistakes cost her revenue and reputation, and she had learned from the mistakes. Her response to how she learned or corrected her mistakes was'' I quickly identified *what was not working, and I stopped it. I am a traveler, and I enjoy learning new things. I think I listen well too, especially to customers. We even do our best to remember their names and address them by their names''.*

This salon business typifies some immigrant businesses transitioning from ethnic to mainstream businesses. Kate has done her best to remove the ethnic label on the business by employing a multi-ethnic workforce, change of location, and advertisement but could not attract ''white customers' as she would love to. This situation illustrates the existence of liminality in breakout. Some immigrant businesses might have removed most ethnic attachment but have not yet gained ground in the mainstream market.

Illustrative Example 2: Willing to breakout but trapped

Olise migrated to the UK at 14 to join a football academy. He was from a middle-class Nigerian background as his father was a professional referee, and the mother owned a school. Unfortunately, his football career did not go as planned. After college, he worked in different football academies as a talent manager. In 2006 after he divorced and wanted to return to Nigeria, a friend introduced him to a haulage business that he launched with six workers on his fortieth birthday. His entrepreneurial motive was more of survival. ''*My initial idea was if I try it for months and it did not work, I will return home,''* Olise narrated during the interview. Surprisingly, fortune smiled at him, and the business started doing well. His desire for expansion started in 2014. He was motivated to expand because of opportunities he saw in the business-Customer-base was growing, and he believed the niche was promising. He adopted a mixture of diversification, transnational, and differentiation breakout strategies. In his words,

'' I diversified into related areas and locations and paid attention to customers with bigger accounts. I offered cheaper services than my competitors and used my influence to partner with

some people for marketing purposes. So we expanded in terms of truck and workers and routes and contracts, moving into other countries. But now, things are different.''

The funding opportunities offered to him, his relationships with other investors, and his contracts with other value chain members facilitated his breakout. Unfortunately, his expectations were cut short. Demand slowed for some of the businesses he was working with, and they cancelled some contracts. The burden of loan repayment became unbearable, and he sold half of his trucks. His breakout challenges were unfavourable loan terms, unstable market conditions, and difficulty accessing market accelerators.

Oliseh was an example of seven immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample who were desirous of the breakout but seemed trapped. Lack of know-how and breakout resources made it difficult to achieve significant breakout success. When asked to share his breakout mistakes, his response showed that he was willing to learn and improve.

''*My major mistake was the unnecessary loan. I took a loan that was not favourable for the business, coupled with slow demand. Our projection failed, and paying the loan became difficult. That was how I slipped into struggling to survive. Aside from poor financial management, I also gave my workers a free hand. I think I have more to learn. When the business was small, I was effective, but I started messing up when it grew bigger. My decisions were usually wrong, and I missed opportunities. It's clear to me that's what's required to grow a small business is not same skill when the business is bigger''.*

At the end of the interview, his only question was ''Are you a consultant? Can you help me come out of this situation?''. When asked how the mistakes were corrected, his feedback testifies that the business is stuck.

''*I do not know if they have been corrected or not… in fact, they have not been corrected. I am stuck, do not know which step to take. Going home to Nigeria in this condition is also not the best. But the state of the business is not giving me joy. Customers complain, trucks are old and need maintenance, and I am in debt''.*

His experience revealed that breakout is a tortuous iterative journey and not a permanent position for immigrant businesses. Moreover, market conditions can influence breakout trajectory and wipe out some breakout progress made. Availability of support organisations would have been helpful for an immigrant entrepreneur like Olise.

Illustrative Example 3: Achieved both breakout and break-in

Eze started a building construction company in 2008 after working for eight years as a manager in a building construction company. As the first child of a Nigerian professor, he was lucky to study engineering in the UK when he was 20. His company started operations in 2008 in London with five staff as a building contracting firm. Without distinction as an immigrant business, the business faced high entry barriers and perceived discrimination in the white-dominated sector. At inception, key customers were blacks and co-migrants who needed repair and maintenance on their residential buildings. As his reputation improved, he started bidding for sub-contracts. In 2011, he diversified into material supply owing to his expertise in the sector and logistics; as a result, revenue, reputation, and volume of transactions increased. He could access funding from banks and started bidding for contracts directly. Currently, he competes favourably with indigenous contractors, executing projects for governments and organisations. With about 78 workers, his customer base and staff were multi-ethnic. The business has moved from single to multiple product lines, adding consultancy and security installation activities.

His entrepreneurial motives were both proactive and reactive. They were proactive because he was looking for a career that could align with his lifestyle and train people, which was his hobby. At the same time, they were reactive because he disagreed with his former boss and resigned angrily. His breakout motive was to exploit opportunities identified in profitable niches where he had expertise. He believed that his experience and contacts would fit into the industry and help grow his customer base.

Like most immigrant entrepreneurs studied, he did not have any deliberate long-term strategy for a breakout. His breakout strategy was a mixture of diversification, network ties, and openness to innovation and opportunities. When asked to describe his expansion strategy, his answer was:

''To tell you the truth, nothing was planned; we follow each day as it comes. We looked out for opportunities and did our best to exploit them. We made use of contracts and experience to maximise opportunities. We are open to innovation and we succeed by making others succeed. We worked towards a lifelong relationship with clients, avoiding declining markets. We nurture partnerships and find markets for new products. I can't explain your question on how we expanded, but I am sure we have made progress so far, especially in the quality of contracts and volume. We supply to top leaders in the industry. We have also diversified from construction to

supply. We included different areas such as stonework, tiling, painting, roofing and structural management''.

He attributed his breakout success to real-time adaptation to market changes, an innovative mindset, and smart teams. The quality of the team in terms of expertise and experience was identified as his competitive advantage. Although he had not reached his dream of building skyscrapers and luxurious apartments for wealthy families and organisations, Eze believed that his preferred expansion strategy was to choose value-sensitive clients selectively. Diversification and differentiation strategies enabled him to get ahead and gain a reputation.
One of his breakout mistakes was establishing a real estate firm in Nigeria. Because he did not have experience of the Nigerian environment, the venture was unsuccessful. The experience made him doubt transnational breakout. Nonetheless, he was still optimistic about building businesses in Nigeria. At the end of the interview, his last question was about reliable links for a real estate business in Nigeria. Other mistakes included poor complaints handling, which made him lose his reputation, and poor working capital management.

His approach to learning is to identify what did not work and ask questions. He also studied industry leaders and watched what they do. He believes in preparing his team for change and going the extra mile to satisfy customers. He used consultants to validate his decisions and generate new business insights. His advice to upcoming immigrant entrepreneurs reflected his interpretation of his breakout experience.
'' … I will say a few things, I hope it would make sense to you. Firstly, there is no right or wrong time. One should go out there and take risks. Secondly, you can create and reshape customers' desires. Do your best to shape the market you serve, and do not just be a follower. Thirdly, if you don't have huge capital, then you must have valuable contacts. If you don't have both, you are doomed. Fourthly, get your logistics right so that your price would be competitive''.

Eze was one of the four businesses in the sample that broke out and gained access to mainstream markets. He competes with other leading contractors in the industry and has mainstream clients. His annual turnover was over £10million making him one of the UK's successful first-generation Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs.

6.8 Implications of findings to breakout conceptualisation

This study revealed that the gap between ethnic and mainstream markets is not discreet but continuous, suggesting a continuum of markets. There were a variety of markets where immigrants could break into aside mainstream markets. As observed from the study, examples of these markets include online markets, co-migrant markets, transnational markets, export markets, international markets, and multiple product line markets. Digitisation and multiple embeddedness have allowed immigrant businesses to serve the universal market without passing through the mainstream market.

In addition, a breakout is not a quick jump but a transition with liminal stages. Liminality in this context refers to a transition stage, the journey between breakout and break-in. Out of the 30 businesses studied, only four have broken in. About half were in transition. Seventeen out of the 30 businesses sampled were still in transition. They did not abandon one market, one customer base, one geographical location, or one sector for more attractive ones. Instead, they gradually incorporated new markets and diversified into new sectors, maintaining their previous activities. None of the businesses in the sample achieved breakout by moving away entirely from sectors or market niches they had been serving. Instead, they broadened their market offering to serve ethnic and non-ethnic customers. In addition, the study observed that immigrant entrepreneurs do not use one single breakout strategy and do not focus on a single market.

The study revealed that changes in the transnational environment had provided internationalisation opportunities such that some immigrant businesses can be described as micro multinationals. Micro multinational enterprises (MNES) are an umbrella name for SMEs irrespective of age, the volume of activity, and coverage that operates in foreign countries as a subsidiary or a full-fledged business. MMNEs are unique because they exist in different sectors and use a unique combination of capabilities and strategy to overcome liabilities that confined other SMEs to domestic markets and export growth mode (Shin, 2018; Sanchez 2018). Most MNEs depend on innovative products to internationalise. However, these MNEs use embeddedness and technology to enter foreign markets (Hatani & Migaughey 2013). Two of such businesses were identified in the study. These businesses do not classify themselves as ethnic or mainstream businesses. They leverage digital technologies, emerging transnational communities, and a new business model to serve non-ethnic nonlocal customers. The discovery of micro multinational enterprises among immigrant businesses weakens the argument that immigrant businesses usually stick to ethnic enclave or mainstream markets.

Findings revealed that 'Staying-in' and deepening ethnic market, which refers to focusing on transnational markets and other diaspora communities where co-ethnic members reside in different countries, is emerging into an attractive choice for some immigrant entrepreneurs. As Ikenna, a car exporter, puts it, *''Why should I be struggling to enter a market where you know you will never be welcomed? Is it not a better option to access markets where you can compete favourably? After all population of Europe is nothing compared to the population of Africa…''.* Perceived discrimination and stereotyping have made an increasing number of African immigrants veer away from penetrating 'white-dominated markets.' As a result, clamor for adapting market offerings to mainstream culture and market is losing popularity as a first-choice breakout strategy. Findings suggest that there are sectors in the mainstream market where being immigrants confers some advantages. For example, Shola, a 42-year-old female entrepreneur who runs a recruitment agency, observed that being an immigrant gave her a competitive advantage in the sub-sector her business operates. She found it easier to attract other immigrant recruits due to her experience with living in Nigeria. The ethnic status of her business endeared her to many immigrants who needed jobs.

Therefore, some conceptualisation of breakout needs to be revisited. Findings suggest that some breakout conceptualisation assumptions do not hold in the context studied. Firstly, breakout literature posits a unidimensional approach to breakout, whereas findings suggest a multidimensional pathway. Secondly, breakout literature posits that remaining in ethnic markets could be detrimental to the sustainability of ethnic businesses and argue in favour of breakout to end the constraints imposed by an ethnic environment. In as much as there are some elements of truth, findings in this study revealed that staying in an ethnic market can be rewarding as immigrants can focus on serving ethnic markets in various diaspora communities and engage in transnational entrepreneurship. Thirdly, breakout conceptualisation favoring assimilation posits that immigrant businesses are trapped in low-growth sectors and must assimilate into the mainstream market to be competitive. Nevertheless, the study identified high-growth immigrant firms even in low growth. Findings also revealed a variety of attractive markets immigrant entrepreneurs can move into beyond mainstream markets. Fourthly, the literature argues that breakout is for first-generation immigrants and argued that second-generation immigrants do not always require breakout because they had assimilated into the host community. However, findings suggest that breakout is needed by the second generation as they have peculiar breakout challenges just like the first generation.

Definition of breakout needs to be reconceptualised from moving into mainstream markets to markets where being an immigrant does not constitute a disadvantage. Moreover, a breakout

should be seen as multidimensional, involving a mixture of markets, strategies, and customer bases. It is myopic to consider breakout a first-generation immigrant activity because second-generation immigrants also need breakout. Another issue that requires attention in breakout conceptualisation is the concept of liminality. The gap between breakout and break-in is wide, suggesting that some businesses might have broken out but have not broken in. Findings from this study revealed a continuum of market spaces that immigrant businesses occupy as they journey from ethnic market to universal market. Immigrant businesses are transitioning businesses that can move toward universal markets or backward towards ethnic markets.

6.9 Chapter summary

The three illustrative examples provided in this chapter demonstrate the relationship among breakout variables such as motives, drivers, and breakout strategies. Significant reasons for breaking out among the sample studied include the need to exploit opportunities, maximise profit, and satisfy customers. However, unlike findings in the literature, achieving competitiveness and adapting to change motives became more significant than survival and competition motives. In the same way, transnational and horizontal diversification dimensions toppled the ethnicity dimension as popular breakout dimensions. Common breakout strategies identified in the study include smart teams, digitisation, differentiation, network ties, and geographical strategy. Whereas digital technology and team quality stood out as breakout drivers, funding and the absence of support organisations were identified as key breakout challenges. Some breakout mistakes were corrected using various means of personal development and improvement of class resources.

Insights from this chapter are strategic for understanding immigrant entrepreneur breakout. Data from the 28 out of the 30 immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample who attempted breakout revealed transitional and liminal elements of a breakout, which hitherto were given limited attention in the literature. Since findings from the data indicated a range of market options, entering the mainstream market is no longer the only attractive option for immigrant businesses. In other words, the study affirms that ethnicity or a single approach to breakout conceptualisation is not applicable in the current immigrant business environment. Using a multi-dimensional approach entails that current immigrant entrepreneurs consider breakout options in different sectors, value chains, transnational markets, and customer segments.

Notwithstanding the achievements made in this chapter the importance of exploring how changes in embeddedness influenced breakout cannot be overemphasised. On the one hand, there is the need to understand how the embeddedness structure of immigrants affects their breakout behaviour. On the other hand, there is also the need for a framework that will integrate multiple lines of investigation and reveal distinct categories to situate the cases and make further analysis possible. Analysis of embeddedness will help understand why and how the breakout behaviour of immigrant entrepreneurs is changing. This knowledge would help develop a breakout typology needed for categorising breakout paths and further analysis of breakout behaviour of a subset of cases. Typology is helpful in qualitative studies because it helps to bring clarity to multidimensional analysis requiring empirical and conceptual insights. The next chapter will examine dimensions of embeddedness of immigrant businesses and integrate findings on the study of breakout behaviour as seen in chapters 5, 6, and 7 using breakout typology.

Chapter Seven

Embeddedness and immigrant entrepreneurs: developing a typology of breakout

7.0 Introduction

Analysis of embeddedness is critical to understanding why and how immigrant entrepreneur breakout occurs. This is because economic activities are not motivated by only economic calculations and individual motives but also by institutions, networks, and norms where the participants are embedded (Solano, 2016). In this chapter, three forms of embeddedness, structural, relational, and cognitive, and their roles in immigrant entrepreneurs' breakout will be analysed in relation to the studied immigrant entrepreneurs. This analysis provides a basis for developing a breakout typology as an analytical tool to enrich understanding of immigrant entrepreneur breakout. The typology aims to provide a means for theorising and researching immigrant entrepreneurs' break-out strategies that are sensitive to dynamic changes and contexts. The typology identifies distinctive breakout strategies by drawing upon the qualitative analysis of UK-based Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs. These distinctive breakout trajectories could be meaningful in different contexts and help identify how immigrant entrepreneurs respond to constraints and opportunities to diversify into new and more competitive markets.

The chapter analysed three dimensions of immigrant entrepreneur embeddedness, highlighting the transnational element and multifocality. The multifocality approach argues that immigrant entrepreneurs engage with multiple places and rely on networks beyond a single ethnic economy (Sandoz et al., 2021). The chapter then sets out how the breakout typology was developed and provides a detailed analysis of six types of breakout typology with illustrative examples of different growth paths. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key findings related to understanding the embeddedness of immigrant entrepreneurship.

7. 1 Embeddedness dimensions of immigrant entrepreneurs

Discussion of embeddedness (fully developed in Chapter 2) shows that immigrants' entrepreneurial activities, motivations, and strategies are shaped and driven by the social contexts, norms, and institutions within which they are embedded. In this context, embeddedness is defined as places, groups, and identities immigrants associate with or refer to in their daily lives and activities (Solano, 2016).

This study argues that breakout motivations and strategies of immigrants are shaped and driven by social contexts, norms, and institutions. This aligns with Granovetter (1985)'s submission and Kloosterman (2010) affirmation that the context in which immigrants are embedded conditions the interplay of entrepreneurs' resources, ethnic resources, and opportunity structure. However, it is essential to highlight that embeddedness does not refer strictly to the spheres of action but frames of reference that shape the entrepreneurial activities of immigrants (Solano, 2016). Although immigrants were considered only to be embedded in their host environment in earlier immigrant entrepreneurship theories, since the turn of the century, immigrants' embeddedness was described from a bifocality perspective (Mierra, 2008; Bagwell, 2015). Bifocality indicates that immigrants are embedded in two contexts – the host and home countries. However, in recent times, multifocality has overshadowed bifocality due to the increasing evidence demonstrating that immigrant entrepreneurs' embeddedness is multiple and multi-sited (Solano, 2019; Bagwell, 2018; Chen & Tan, 2009).

Following the transnational mixed embeddedness theory, a multifocality form of embeddedness informs this analysis. Multifocality has added consideration of third countries and other references outside the home and home countries in shaping immigrants' entrepreneurial behaviour. In other words, their decisions and actions are conceptualised with reference to different places they have lived, different senses of belongingness they share, and different identities they assume at different times (Bagwell, 2018; Chen & Tan, 2009).

Immigrant entrepreneurship literature suggests that immigrants are embedded in different dimensions (Wehlbeck, 2018; Honig, 2020; Chen & Tan, 2009). First, the territorial level which explains their embeddedness in the host, home country, and third countries' geographical spaces and institutional contexts. Second, the network level which explains the network composition, size, ethnic diversity, and brokerage role of individual and collective social networks. Third, the individual level comprises the human capital, cultural capital, and immigration experience of the immigrant. Solano (2016) similarly argues that migrant entrepreneurs are embedded in a context across three dimensions. First, by living in an area and being part of the institutions in the area. This aspect is classified as structural embeddedness. Secondly, people get embedded in a context by being part of a group. This aspect is classified as relational embeddedness. Immigrants can get embedded in a context by taking up the norms, identities, and perspectives of people who live in a place. This aspect of embeddedness is referred to as cognitive embeddedness.

These three dimensions of embeddedness - structural, relational, and cognitive - provide a framework for analysing the breakout of immigrant entrepreneurs. Structural embeddedness, indicated by the extent of transnationality, measures the geographical coverage of entrepreneurs' activities. Cognitive embeddedness is considered here specifically in relation to the generational shift between first and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs. Network/relational embeddedness relates to the composition of social networks and their roles for immigrant entrepreneurs. Taken together, the extent of market coverage (transnationality), composition and uses of social networks, and immigrant generation are critical in understanding the breakout strategies adopted by immigrant entrepreneurs.

7.1.1 Structural embeddedness: transnationality and immigrant entrepreneur breakout

The geographical coverage of immigrant entrepreneurs' activities can be the host country, in this case, the UK, or can go beyond the host country and extend to the home country (Nigeria), or extend beyond host and home countries to a third country(ies) to provide a transnational dimension. Three categories were used to classify the geographical context of immigrant businesses in the sample; host country, host/home country, and transnational/global. Respondents were asked to explain the situational factors in the host, home, and third countries that contributed to their breakout. The response in Table 7.1 was for the 28 entrepreneurs who attempted breakout. These factors were categorised based on their roles in generating breakout resources, facilitating or constraining breakout.

Table 7.1 Structural factors influencing the choice of breakout markets

Aspects of breakout	**UK**	**Nigeria**	**Third countries and diaspora communities**
Generating breakout resource opportunities	❖ Locational/reputational advantage ❖ Advanced use of digital technology ❖ Availability of supportive business infrastructures	❖ Cheaper source of labour ❖ Convenient and reliable transportation network with the UK	❖ Possibility of moving financial resources from one country to another
Achieving breakout/Ma	❖ The increasing number of Nigerians in the UK	❖ Favourable import	❖ The increasing

rket expansion opportunities	❖ High disposable income ❖ Increasing sectoral expansion ❖ The attractiveness of the market owing to the purchasing power of the British currency ❖ The increasing number of African tourists to the UK ❖ Locational advantage as top immigrant and study destination ❖ It is a technology hub, exporting skills to different parts of the world	situation of the market ❖ Large market size with a craving for foreign products ❖ Disposition to invest in home markets ❖ Growing youth and middle-class population ❖ Existence of market for selling items considered as scrap in developed countries	emergence of diaspora communities in different countries ❖ Opportunity to serve other West African markets ❖ Increased opportunity for relocation from one country to another ❖ Availability of digital technologies
Constraining roles	❖ Discrimination and racism ❖ High cost of operating business ❖ Inadequate attention from support agencies	❖ Weak infrastructures ❖ Poor purchasing power ❖ Corruption and weak institutional framework	❖ Logistics and transportation challenges

Interview findings highlighted the situational factors in the home market that influenced breakout (see the previous discussion of the Nigerian business environment in Chapter 5). Aside from the strong transnational link which Nigeria shared with the UK owing to colonialism, education, and business, the socio-economic situation of Nigeria both facilitated and constrained breakout. Positive factors identified included the large market size, a market for cheaper products, and a societal craving for foreign products. Home country factors that constrained breakout included poor infrastructure, the absence of an institutional framework that supported businesses, and corruption. Olumide (Respondent 10), who ran a security firm, stated ''… *there is no need taking my business to Nigeria because this business sector does not flourish there. Some people claim that Nigeria is a big market but have you considered their purchasing power? Which business survives without infrastructure and with a high level of corruption? My brother, there is nothing in that country that entices me''.*

Choice of location for transnational businesses is critical because they serve immediate markets and facilitate activities between the host country, home country, and third countries. These entrepreneurs consider the size of the diaspora community in different countries, ease of transportation, and emerging transnational trends before deciding on business location. In addition, local policies and local entrepreneurial norms are increasingly influencing the type of market to enter and the expansion strategy of immigrant entrepreneurs. This assertion is in line with findings made in Portes & Martinez (2019), who observed that an increasing number of immigrant entrepreneurs consider local context and policies as essential determinants of their transnational entrepreneurship.

The host environment

Eighteen out of the twenty-eight entrepreneurs admitted that the UK environment positively influenced their breakout journey (see Table 7.1). One major positive factor identified was the reputational advantage of the UK (as an advanced economy and a global superpower). This locational image enhanced the brand identity of immigrant businesses operating transnationally. The role of the UK as a top destination for immigrants, students, and tourists and a point of reference for most business opportunities provides advantages for immigrants to benefit from access to resources and agglomeration effects. The size of the Nigerian diaspora community in the UK is the largest in Europe and second in the world. This situation provides both resources and markets for a breakout. A further significant positive factor identified from the interview was the availability of infrastructures that aid business expansion, such as digital technology and transportation network.

However, some elements of the UK environment constrained African immigrant business activities according to Table 7.1. Ten out of the 28 immigrant entrepreneurs studied argued that African immigrant businesses were hindered by perceived discrimination in the market, the high cost of doing business in the UK, and a lack of support services tailored to address the expansion needs of minority entrepreneurs. Nonso (Respondent 11), who expanded his business in Nigeria and Holland, argued,*'' I had lived in Holland and China, and I can tell you from experience that it is easier to grow your business in those countries than in the UK. Small businesses rarely survive here, or are you not seeing businesses closing down on a daily basis? The environment favours big businesses, and when you are a black immigrant business owner, you will get frustrated. That is why you see many black people who are entrepreneurs in blood looking for jobs or trying to raise money to travel back to Nigeria to establish their business.''*

Other respondents (8 in total) also corroborated the above assertion that breakout was more difficult in the UK compared to the USA, China, Holland, and other developed countries. Nevertheless, the majority of other entrepreneurs (18 in total) contested this and insisted that they would not have achieved any tangible breakout if it was not for the UK environment. Eze (Respondent 19), a construction firm owner, believed that the UK was a place where every brilliant person could succeed*. ''I have heard people complain about the environment, but I can tell you that those people are mediocre. Once you are outstanding, you will always find a way in this country. Someone like me that may not even navigate my way in Nigeria has become one of the industry players because of the platform this country provided''*. Ada (Respondent 16), who owns a care home, voiced a similar opinion. According to her, the care home business has few prospects in developing countries due to sociocultural factors and can only grow in an environment like the UK.

Transnational operation

As seen in Table 7.2, half of the immigrant businesses in the sample (N = 15) operate outside the host country. The markets were primarily in their home country (Nigeria) and third countries, where these entrepreneurs had either previously lived or had business contacts. For example, all the immigrant entrepreneurs who relocated from the EU region had business activities in Nigeria and the countries they had lived in before relocating to the UK.

Table 7.2 Countries of operation of immigrant businesses in the sample

Country of operation	Number of businesses in the sample
United Kingdom	30
Nigeria	13
Holland	2
Australia	1
Ghana	1
South Africa	1
Belgium	1
India	1

Aside from Nigeria, other countries in the African continent where these immigrant entrepreneurs had business activities included Ghana and South Africa. These countries act as hubs from which they serve wider African markets. For example, Chinedu (Respondent 14) who owns a food items firm serves customers in Ghana, Benin Republic, and Cameroon from his Ghana office, while Chika (Respondent 12) used her Nigerian office to serve customers in four West African countries. Her South African office also serves Southern African markets. Similarly, Ahmed (Respondent 18), who provides programming and consulting services, served diverse markets in the Asian sub-region from his office in India. Reasons for locating business activities in these countries also reflected the availability of social networks, ease of logistics, and the size of a Nigerian diaspora community or wider black African population in those regions. For example, Okey (Respondent 22) revealed a plan to expand his automobile engineering business to Dubai in 2022 due to the increasing number of African immigrants living in the region.

The businesses highlighted in Table 7.2 that operated in Nigeria and third countries included both first- and second-generation entrepreneurs. Whereas 11 out of the 18 first generation had businesses outside the UK, only four out of 12 second-generation entrepreneurs had businesses outside the UK. This difference indicates that although second-generation immigrants engage in transnational entrepreneurship, they do not necessarily do this to the same extent and the same way as the first generation. It also confirms that aside from 'generational' factors, other factors such as the entrepreneurial motive, nature of business, and available resources determine whether businesses could operate transnationally or not.

Together, the findings show an upward trend in transnational entrepreneurship. This trend was particularly evident regarding first-generation immigrants who operate their business also in Nigeria to contribute to the home country development and exploit opportunities in the home market.

The role of transnational space

As demonstrated in this study, the opening of transnational space has significantly influenced the breakout process. A growing diaspora community, the increasing flow of productive resources across national boundaries, and a digital revolution have provided access for breakout resources and generated increased access to breakout markets. Transnational space can positively or negatively impact breakout depending on the type of business and growth requirements. Previously, businesses that could not access and exploit breakout opportunities in their host communities did not have this option. However, in a transnational environment, businesses unable to discover opportunities in the host market can seek breakout resources and markets in the home and third country's markets.

Findings provided convincing evidence that transnational space was critical for many immigrant entrepreneurs that desired to expand into larger markets. It increased the flow of resources across markets, ensuring the adequate allocation of resources and the ability to leverage infrastructure in developed markets to serve customers in markets with inadequate infrastructures. Nneka (Respondent 7), who runs a fashion retail company, narrated how she took a loan from a UK bank to support her transnational business in Nigeria when her bank in Nigeria refused to give her a loan. Similarly, Yinka (Respondent 5) depended on the advanced digital technology in the UK to service his customers in countries that did not have reliable internet services. Moreover, the opening of transnational space has made niche marketing and focused differentiation strategies more attractive. Instead of geographical and ethnic segmentation, entrepreneurs could segment their market based on lifestyle and personality and tailor their marketing mix to meet the needs of people in a particular niche irrespective of their location.

The relationship between breakout strategies and these structural factors is that immigrant entrepreneurs' perception of these structural factors determined the breakout strategy to be adopted. Businesses that could maximise the reputational advantage of being based in the UK tended to expand beyond the UK markets. Businesses that deal in products adaptable to developing countries such as second-hand cars and clothing tended to expand to Nigeria. In contrast, businesses that saw more opportunities in the UK market or did not have the competencies to navigate intricate systems in the home/third countries tended to expand within the UK market. In other words, the nature of the opportunities and competencies of the entrepreneur determined the extent of transnationality. The subsequent section will illustrate

the features and differences in competencies of the immigrant entrepreneurs in relation to different generations.

7.1.2 Cognitive embeddedness and immigrant entrepreneur breakout

Cognitive or individual level embeddedness constitutes an immigrant entrepreneur's norms, perspectives, identities, competencies, and resources that shape breakout activities. These attributes are acquired through birth, citizenship, marriage, education, acculturation, and social mobility. The relationship between identities, norms, and competencies is such that one helps to create the other. People who possess a particular identity are expected to exhibit certain norms and competencies. In the same way, norms that people subscribe to and their competencies give them identity. Variables such as ethnicity, educational qualification, and generation have been used in literature to measure cognitive abilities. However, in this study, since the population consists of people from the same ethnicity who have relatively similar educational qualifications, the generational difference was a key element. In this study, analysis of cognitive embeddedness focussed on the differences and similarities between first- and second-generation immigrants. The concept of a generational shift was introduced in this study to analyse these differences. Since the generation, someone belongs, conditions his norms and competencies, the differences between the first and second-generation immigrants were used as a good measure of cognitive embeddedness.

Entrepreneurial characteristics of first- and second-generation immigrant

Categorising immigrants into first and second generations has generated debate in the literature because multiple indicators are used to demarcate the two generations. In this analysis, the first generation refers to people who started living or relocated to the UK after their 18th birthday. The second generation is those living in the UK before their 18th birthday (see Chapter 2 for further discussion). This analysis emphasises the environment in which they grew up, not necessarily where they were born. First-generation immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample relocated from Nigeria and other EU countries originally for studies, marriage, and career. On the other hand, second-generation immigrants were either born in the UK or relocated to the UK as infants. Having been raised in a different context, they usually exhibit hybrid or similar traits to the host society.

As seen in Table 7.3, the characteristics of first-generation and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs were compared, and differences in their cognitive abilities were highlighted.

Table 7.3 Differences in entrepreneurial characteristics of first- and second-generation immigrants

Characteristics	First-generation	Second generation
Age	Average 46 years (Minimum 36, Maximum 57)	Average 41 years (Minimum 34. Maximum 51)
Education	A higher percentage has a postgraduate degree	A higher percentage has degrees and diplomas
Business experience	Average 12 years (Minimum 5 years, maximum 20years)	Average 7years (Minimum 6years, maximum, 15years)
Social network composition	❖ Highly ethnic/ transnational. ❖ More relational and informal	❖ Mixed ethnicities ❖ More of professional and formal networks
Membership of ethnic associations	Relatively high	None
Attitude to religion	Relatively high	Relatively low
Challenges of being a Nigerian	❖ Ethnic accent ❖ Discrimination	Nigerian identity is not a significant determinant
Annual turnover	Average £1,025,000 (Minimum £100,000; Maximum £10,000,000)	Average £1,525,000 (Minimum £100,000; maximum £5,000,000)
Number of workers	Average 13 (Minimum 3; Maximum 50)	Average 20 (Minimum 3; maximum 56)
Use of support organisations	Relatively low	Relatively high

Findings revealed that second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample had lower business experience (7 years against 13 years) and slightly lower educational qualification (graduate degree against postgraduate degree). However, their businesses achieved higher turnover (£1,525,000 against £1,020,00) and employed more staff (an average of 20 staff against 13). The difference was attributed to their class resources, business activity sector, and capital quality. First, whereas first-generation entrepreneurs focused on formal university degrees like

MSC, PhD, the second generation studied professional courses and focused on industry-based qualifications, like MBAs and professional certifications. Second, whereas first-generation entrepreneurs paid attention to ethnic-related and informal social networks, the second generation instead focused on professional and formal social networks. Thirdly, whereas only 11% (two out of the 18) first-generation could access support services,33% (4 out of 12) of the second generation gained access to different support services ranging from training, networking, and funding.

The attitude of both generations towards their Nigerian identity that was analysed showed significant differences between generations. Whereas 83% (15 out of 18) of first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs were happy to be associated with Nigeria, only 33% (4 out of 12) of the second generation were proud of their Nigerian identity. This attitude was observed during field mapping. Some second-generation entrepreneurs the researcher asked to be part of the sample declined because they did not want to project their Nigerian identity, possibly because of a perceived stigma associated with blacks in the UK or personal reasons. Jack, a 46-year-old leader of an ethnic association, argued that some second-generation Nigerian immigrants do not project their Nigerian identity because of the perceived class status associated with average Nigerian immigrants. By contrast, few second-generation immigrants in the sample openly expressed pride in their Nigerian identity such as Chidi, a 46-year-old second-generation owner of an entertainment firm, who projected his Nigerian identity and had taken a Nigerian chieftaincy title.

The study noted differences in entrepreneurial satisfaction of both generations. Thirty-nine percent of first-generation entrepreneurs in the sample (n= 7) stated that they would have preferred to have gained employment to become self-employed if they were born or raised in the UK. Thirty-three (n =6) percent of them said they would like to be entrepreneurs in a sector different from that they currently operate. Only 27% (n =5) insisted that they would continue doing what they currently do, whether they were first or second generation. In contrast, only two second-generation admitted that they would prefer to work for other businesses or become entrepreneurs in another sector. The majority (83%) insisted that they will be doing the same thing they are currently doing regardless of the generation they belong. The findings imply that second-generation immigrants were more likely to have higher satisfaction for being entrepreneurs than the first generation. It affirmed that first-generation immigrants are more likely to be necessity entrepreneurs as most were pushed into entrepreneurship. The response from Dolapo summarised first-generation' perception about the opportunities they missed.

'' *Do you think I will be in this business if I was born here? Children born here have graduated from uni and gathered experience before 23. If I was born here, I would study accounting and by now would have been one of the executive directors in KPMG or in one of the leading banks''* (55-year-old owner of household items retail business).

Interestingly, second-generation entrepreneurs did not attach importance to their supposed privileges. Whereas first-generation immigrants in the sample highlighted ethnic accent, discrimination, lack of funding and, intense competition as key challenges they faced as Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs, the second-generation immigrant could not identify any particular challenge associated with being Nigerian. In line with previous findings in the literature, language proficiency, multicultural competence, and the ability to adequately understand written and unwritten business rules, which the second generation possessed, provided some entrepreneurial advantage. This study suggests that the extent and depth of host country competencies possessed by an immigrant determine whether the immigrant entrepreneur would experience discrimination because of his Nigerian identity. For example, whereas 67% of first-generation admitted that they were discriminated against because of their Nigerian identity, only 25% of second-generation concurred.

Generational differences in competitive strategy

There were also differences evident in competitive strategy. For example, the two interviews below came from first- and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs who operated in the same sector. Ekene was a 57-year-old first-generation immigrant entrepreneur who had run a security firm for 16 years. When asked to explain why he seemed to be doing better than competitors, he responded

'' We do our best to reduce cost and attract clients with attractive price offers. We satisfy our clients, and we have good knowledge of the market. We avoid taking risks that can affect our survival, looking for markets where competition is manageable. We are more interested in increasing the number of clients we serve.''

However, when a 46-year-old Olumide, a second-generation who owned a 9-year-old security firm, was asked the same question, he responded that

'' *We are selective in the market we serve. Not only that we focus on attractive market niches, but we use innovation that reduces cost and increases value. We depend on effective teams to*

remain competitive, and most of our operations are digitised so that we can easily partner with interesting parties in exploiting opportunities.''

Whereas Ekene competes based on cost and richer customer experience, Olumide uses smart organisational design, digital technology, strategic partnership, and innovative practices to maintain competitiveness. Ekene wanted a large customer base, while Olumide was selective and focused on the high net-worth customer segment. Notwithstanding that some first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample were opportunity entrepreneurs, their general approach to the market was defensive, and survivability was prominent in their business strategy. For the second generation, the emphasis was more on opportunity maximisation. This trait also was reflected in their entrepreneurial motives., A higher proportion of first-generation entrepreneurs were motivated by the need to stabilise personal and family income, while for the second generation, it was to deploy learned skills, satisfy long-term ambition and achieve a flexible lifestyle.

Generational differences in breakout strategy

One of the key differences identified was the breakout degree of first- and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs. Data generated revealed that first-generation immigrants owned 71% of businesses that lacked breakout know-how and resources. Unlike Rusonovic (2008), who argued that second-generation immigrants have better chances of breakout owing to their competencies, this study suggests that this advantage is contextual and not generally applicable. This study averred that the opening of transnational space had widened opportunities and platforms for first-generation beyond what the host market could provide. However, access to breakout resources was still a challenge for them.

Analysis of breakout behaviour of first and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs revealed areas of similarities and differences, as seen in Table 7.4. Areas of similarity resulted from a shared Nigerian identity and embedded in a similar host environment. Areas of difference existed because they had different class resources and orientations. This difference was manifest in their interpretation of breakout. The first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs were more comfortable interpreting breakout as moving out of constraints that plagued immigrant businesses. The second-generation preferred to interpret breakout as expansion into bigger, better, and more profitable markets. In other words, they paid less attention to the perceived constraints of immigrant entrepreneurs.

Table 7.4 Differences in breakout behaviour of first- and second-generation immigrants

Breakout characteristics	First generation	Second generation
Common breakout motives	❖ Beat competition/adapt/survive ❖ Exploit opportunity ❖ Maximise profit	❖ Brand building ❖ exploit opportunities ❖ personal reasons
Common breakout strategies	❖ Horizontal diversification ❖ Transnational/network ties ❖ geographical strategy ❖ differentiation	❖ Use of smart team ❖ Digitisation ❖ horizontal diversification ❖ partnership strategy
Common breakout drivers	❖ Funding ❖ Social network ❖ market knowledge ❖ customer experience	❖ Quality teams ❖ market knowledge ❖ innovation/digitisation ❖ Advertising
Common breakout challenges	❖ Funding ❖ Racism ❖ absence of support organisations	❖ Smart staff usually quit ❖ high operating cost ❖ poor marketing skills
Common breakout mistakes	❖ Corrupt tendencies ❖ Funding ❖ cashflow related ❖ Alienation/discrimination ❖ knowledge related	❖ Technology-related ❖ cashflow related ❖ Marketing-related ❖ funding
Common breakout learning mechanisms	❖ Faith-based learning ❖ personal development ❖ network-based platforms ❖ behavioural change	❖ Professional support ❖ paid assistance ❖ behavioural change ❖ network-based support

Whereas key breakout motives of first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs were to beat the competition and maintain relevance, the key motive of the second generation was to build a strong brand reputation. Secondly, the breakout strategy of the two samples seemed to be

similar, with a greater percentage of both groups adopting horizontal diversification. However, transnational and network ties strategies were popular among the first-generation while digitisation and smart team design strategies were popular among the second generation.

What was evident from the study was that digitisation and the opening of transnational space increased breakout opportunities for both first and second generation, and some first-generation immigrants who can muster resources can compete effectively. In alignment with this, increased dependence on the transnational environment had boosted the position of first-generation immigrants such that perceived privileges enjoyed by second-generation were changing. The most successful immigrant business in the sample studied (£10.2million turnover and 78 full-time workers) was owned by first-generation immigrants, showing that immigrant businesses can overcome growth constraints.

The third variable was breakout drivers. Both samples were similar in their desire for market knowledge. However, whereas social networks mainly drove first-generation immigrants, second-generation immigrants were driven far more by digital technologies. Both samples depended on digital technologies to build competitiveness, but the depth of use was much higher among second-generation entrepreneurs. They also tended to use marketing strategies and advertising far more than the first generation.

The fourth variable was breakout challenges. Aside from high operating costs, both generations' breakout challenges are different. Significant challenges for first-generation were funding and intense competition, while it was poor marketing skills for the second generation. The same trend was observed in the fifth variable, breakout mistakes. Both samples admitted that they had problems with cash flow issues and marketing. However, first-generation immigrants had peculiar problems of access to funding, a tendency to engage in corrupt practices, and alienation from relevant social networks. Corrupt tendencies existed because some of them followed short-cuts in navigating the business environment. This problem, however, was far less apparent among the second generation. Finally, both samples were similar in their use of personal development and behaviour change platforms for breakout learning. First-generation immigrant entrepreneurs were more likely to use faith-based and network-based learning platforms, while second-generation entrepreneurs were more likely to use professionals and remunerated helpers.

Whereas 72% of first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs (n=13) were engaged in transnational business, only 16% of second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs (n=4) were doing business in another country. Although second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs possessed cultural and

educational credentials required to excel in host countries, first-generation immigrants possess bi-cultural flexibility that enabled them to excel in a transnational environment. As Emeka (Respondent 9), who owns a restaurant, stated: *''…It is only a first-generation person that can do this kind of business. You need the ability to navigate two worlds to survive in this business. Some of our supplies come from Nigeria, and you need the ability to navigate the Nigerian environment and have contacts in both markets to do this…''.* The fewer transnational entrepreneurship observed among second-generation immigrants could be attributed to their more limited bi-cultural flexibility.

To sum up, key differences and similarities between first and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs were highlighted to demonstrate the generational influence on the breakout practices. The evidence indicates that the immigrant generation can influence breakout behaviour in terms of access to the breakout market and breakout resources. Broader breakout markets are open for both immigrant generations, but breakout resources such as funds seemed more available to the second generation. Immigrant entrepreneurs from developed economies are better positioned to generate resources and compete effectively in the host, home, and third countries than immigrant entrepreneurs from developing economies which lack resources to break into wider markets.

7.1.3 Relational embeddedness (Social networks) and immigrant entrepreneur breakout

Social networks are relational assets that can be drawn upon to facilitate mutually beneficial ends (Leonard, 2004). Social networks produce social capital that can be converted into other forms of capital and lubricate relative, collaborative, and institutional capacities (Evans & Syrett, 2007; Bourdieu, 1985). Social networks provide bonding, bridging, and linking services enabling immigrants to access resources, generate social credentials and improve their capabilities. This form of social capital is multifocal because it has different layers (local, ethnic, and transnational) and performs various functions (Sandoz, 2021; Solano, 2020). The social networks of immigrant entrepreneurs are heterogeneous. They are diverse and multi-layered.

Respondents (n=28) were asked to identify which social network had the most significant influence on their breakout and its contributions to the breakout process. Responses were categorised into social networks' composition and roles in a breakout (see Table 7.5). Although building and sustaining some social networks could be expensive. The evidence indicates that

they played a significant role in breakout. They link immigrant entrepreneurs to opportunities, help them avoid the usual pitfalls which most immigrant entrepreneurs face, and assist in correcting breakout mistakes. Table 7.5 lists the diverse roles social networks played for immigrant entrepreneurs in their breakout journey.

Table 7.5 Composition of social networks and roles in breakout

Composition of social network	**No. of businesses that used it**	**Facilitation roles**
Transnational ties	6	i. Manage business in the home country ii. Partners for business in the third countries iii. Provide access to new market segments iv. Provide short term funding v. Provide valuable information
Remunerated Vertical ties (Mentors/coaches and professionals)	4	i. Training on specific skills ii. Preparation and evaluation of contracts and link to key stakeholders iii. Handle employment related matters
Ethnic-based ties	4	i. Hiring workers off the book ii. Avoiding complying with certain administrative obligations iii. Information and Financial support iv. Referral v. Access to market segments vi. Access to suppliers and critical resources vii. Character referencing and motivation viii. Linkage to other migrant groups
Close ties (Family and close friends)	4	Manage another branch of business Serve as bookkeepers for the business Emotional support and validation of decision Encourage risk-taking and referrals
Virtual ties	3	Assist in content and viral marketing

		Referral
Non-ethnic ties	3	Enforcement of contracts Relationship with regulatory agencies Access to partnerships
Industry-based ties	2	Link to support organisations and critical stakeholders Knowledge sharing practices Character reference/guarantor services Referrals
Group-based (Religion/lifestyle)	2	Validation of decisions and ideas Training and emotional support Referral

Six out of the 28 businesses indicated that transnational social networks were pivotal in their breakout journey. This form of social network consisted of weak and strong ties, providing bonding, linking, and bridging services for immigrant entrepreneurs (details of bonding, bridging, and linking services were provided in Chapter 2). According to the interview findings, the role of social networks in breakout included serving as partners and managers for transnational branches of the business and providing breakout resources such as information, finance, and requisite skills. This was evident from the response of Respondent 22 on the role of social networks in breakout.

'' *I had tried to use family members to expand the business in Nigeria, but they mismanaged the business and embezzled the capital twice. So, I reached out to Nnanna. He was my wife's schoolmate. He started working for me as a manager and then became a partner because he acquired a 20% stake in the business. I must confess that he has surpassed my expectations. Now we have two locations in Nigeria''* (Okey, a 52-year-old owner of an Automobile engineering firm).

Remunerated ties which consisted of coaches, experts, trainers, and mentors that immigrant were identified as having a profound influence on the breakout for four out of the 28 entrepreneurs in the sample. The use of remunerated ties is becoming an emerging trend in immigrant entrepreneurship as many immigrant entrepreneurs turned to consultants and professionals to solve business problems. Some of these consultants were remunerated for their services, while others provide mutual assistance. They are usually classified as vertical ties because they share a vertical relationship with the entrepreneurs owing to their expertise and

roles. The practice of using paid vertical ties is prevalent among second-generation immigrants. Seven out of the twelve (58%) second-generation entrepreneurs admitted relying on consultants, whereas five out of eighteen (27%) were first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs. Ada (Respondent 16), who runs a care home, disclosed why she opted for a business coach.

'' *It saves you time and money to learn from people who have done what you intend to do. I acquired ten years' experience within six months of our relationship. He helped me outsource some of our functions and trained me to perform some management functions. You see, I needed him in drafting contracts, negotiations and relating with regulatory agencies*''.

Four out of the 28 sampled businesses agreed that ethnic, social networks played the most significant role in their breakout. They included the provision of access to market and resources, referral, guarantee services/referencing, and linkage to other migrant groups. Emeka (Respondent 9) revealed that ethnic-based social networks provided unique services that other social networks could not provide. '' *In this country, you have many laws they expect you to keep. Some of these laws are meant to favour their people, and if you want to keep all of them as an African immigrant, your business will collapse. So, it would be better if you had another black person with such experience to coach you on how to do it''(*56-year-old first-generation restaurant owner).

The importance of ethnic networks depended on the type of business and generation of the entrepreneur. Businesses that served ethnic customers or sold ethnic-related products needed ethnic social networks for referral and access to new market niches. For example, Afam (Respondent 1) was able to gain access to markets in Manchester and Birmingham for his money transfer business because of the ethnic, social network he had in London. Whereas the use of ethnic and social network was common among first-generation entrepreneurs, non-ethnic networks was more common among second-generation entrepreneurs.

Immigrants' social networks were heterogeneous, producing multi-scale leverage and linking services. They provided alternative options and the intelligence needed to validate decisions. Olisa (Respondent 24), who ran a haulage company, lamented that he would not have accepted the loan that messed up his business if he had listened to his social networks. They provided leadership and managerial assistance and supported entrepreneurs to assume risks associated with a breakout. Eighty-one percent of the entrepreneurs sampled maintained that their social networks assisted them in marketing and generating online traffic. Close ties such as family and

friends assist in setting up and running transnational businesses. Eze(Respondent 19), who ran a building construction business, admitted that his social networks linked him to private equity investors who helped him address the funding challenge that hindered his breakout. Through this relationship, he accessed over £2million from a growth fund. Immigrant entrepreneurs who possess quality social networks leveraged them to reduce breakout costs and access expansive markets.

Findings from the interviews revealed that no second-generation immigrant entrepreneur admitted that ethnic networks played a significant role in their breakout process. In a like manner, 67% of respondents (n = 20) who identified non-ethnic social networks as having a significant influence on their breakout journey were the second generation. However, ethnic-based social networks can constrain breakout by betraying trust, creating unhealthy jealousy, and slandering. For example, Respondent 22, who owns an automobile business, revealed that when he refused a partnership request from one of his relatives in London, the man attempted to entice his shop assistant twice and submitted false information when he could not succeed to police. In another instance, Yinka (Respondent 4), who ran a training and consulting firm, lamented that he closed his business in Nigeria because the transnational social networks managing the business mismanaged, started their own business, and lured his customers away.

In line with findings from the existing literature, close ties play a significant role in the breakout process. In this context, close ties refer to family members and close friends. Two first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs and one second-generation indicated that their close ties played the most significant role in their breakout journey. For Amaka, who owned a textile retailing firm, her husband provided emotional support to take risks, provided access to resources, and handled the logistics part of the business. Along with this, Chiugo's story was intriguing. She had three friends whom she met during her MBA. They formed a 'mastermind group' to motivate, assist, and support each other. According to Chiugo (Respondent 29), she became a serial entrepreneur because they had an agreement that they would establish four different businesses before their 50th birthday. Close ties facilitate breakout by providing access to resources, assistance in marketing activities, and validation of decisions.

In alignment with the digital revolution, virtual social networks have become a critical aspect of immigrant entrepreneurship, especially for businesses that require online platforms. Nnamdi (Respondent 21), who ran a training and consulting firm, attributed his breakout success to an Indian friend he met online who linked him to a Fortune 500 company in Silicon Valley - providing

access to resources and market. Aisha's travel agency (Respondent 13) grew to attract a non-ethnic customer base from different countries because her online friends ensured her content went viral.

Other social networks that influenced breakout were industry-based networks and faith-based contacts. Industry-based networks included work colleagues and professional bodies. Two immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample noted that their membership of professional associations and work colleagues helped them significantly in their breakout journey. Like other weak ties, they provided linking and bridging services such as training, access to breakout resources, and linkages to key institutions. Eze (Respondent 19), who owned a construction firm, admitted that his revenue gained traction when he linked up with other firms in the industry who assisted him in securing finance and provided sub-contracts that helped him scale. The increasing role of faith-based social networks was identified in the study. Two entrepreneurs maintained that contacts from their religious groups played a profound role in their breakout journey. From Nneka (Respondent 7), who received loans and training for her saloon business from her religious group, to Chinedu (Respondent 14), whose church members helped in marketing, membership of faith-based organisations was becoming a form of capital for African immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK.

This section discussed the influence of social networks on a breakout and highlighted the diverse forms of social networks applicable in breakout and their role as breakout facilitators. Immigrant entrepreneurs' use of social networks was nuanced and included weak and close ties, physical and virtual ties, individual and group-based ties, and vertical and horizontal ties. Categories of social networks that have not received adequate attention in the existing immigrant entrepreneurship literature highlighted in this study include remunerated ties, virtual and faith-based social networks. According to findings from the study, the breakout facilitating roles of social networks were larger than their constraining roles. While it is true that some social networks were expensive to maintain or sabotage breakout efforts, the study provided evidence that social networks provided leverage, linkage, lubrication, guidance, and support services for immigrants in their breakout journey.

7.2 Linking embeddedness and immigrant entrepreneur breakout: Implications for transnational mixed embeddedness theory

Evidence from studying the different dimensions of embeddedness of immigrant entrepreneurs yielded some insights. Firstly, the activities of most immigrant entrepreneurs, regardless of size, generation and sector, are influenced by some transnational forces (You & Zhou, 2019; Solano, 2019). If immigrant entrepreneurs do not seek larger markets outside the host market, they seek resources or brand loyalty for reasons that cut across economic and social-cultural milieu. There was evidence from the study that home and third countries are increasingly becoming sources of customers and resources such as capital, ideas, social networks, information, and skills. Following Porter's diamond analysis, home country conditions can influence the competitiveness of immigrant businesses (Vlados, 2019). In situations where the host and home countries are similar in socio-economic development, breaking into the mainstream market becomes more straightforward. However, in a developed-developing country context, the breakout barrier is usually higher, forcing some immigrant businesses to explore opportunities outside the host country.

Secondly, the transnational environment is multi-scale and immigrant entrepreneurs can move up or down the scale depending on their needs and available resources. For example, an immigrant entrepreneur may have a valuable social network in the home country but not in the host country. Skills and market knowledge valuable for a neighbourhood business are inadequate for serving a regional market. Some expansion opportunities can also be neighbourhood-based, with little opportunity for expansion into faraway cities or in different regions. Some ethnic resources also have multiple scales, such as ethnic resources at the transnational, national/regional and neighbourhood levels. Immigrant Entrepreneurs equally have resources that could be useful at the transnational level but less valuable at local markets.

Thirdly, Immigrant entrepreneurs as agents of change have agential properties to configure their situation and leverage resources in a manner suitable to the context they find themselves. Immigrant entrepreneurs adopt complex configurations of mixed embeddedness to become competitive (Kloosterman, van der Leun, & Rath, 1999). Strategic use of agential abilities implies that immigrants may not significantly change the boundaries of constraints imposed by the environment but can configure their embeddedness in a relevant manner. This assertion affirms that embeddedness is fluid and malleable.

On account of these three factors, transnational mixed embeddedness theory provides an appropriate framework for this analysis because it is better placed to accommodate the current

realities of the immigrant entrepreneur's environment. If an increasing number of immigrant entrepreneurs, their resources, social networks, and opportunities are transnational, then transnational embeddedness is the basis for understanding their entrepreneurial breakout practices.

The transnational approach is essential for understanding immigrant entrepreneurship. First, national/ethnic boundaries have become more porous due to globalisation, contributing to the acculturation and export of ethnic flavour. Second, transnational mixed embeddedness is further reinforced because some immigrants have multiple embeddedness, having lived in different countries aside from the home country. This enables them to take up multiple identities as global citizens and seek opportunities in different countries. Third, there is an increase in transnational activism for political, socio-cultural, and economic reasons, which scales the impact and role of diaspora communities.

Analysis of breakout strategies reinforces the appropriateness of transnational mixed embeddedness in studying immigrant entrepreneurship. First and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs operate in the host, home, and third countries. This trend justifies the assertion that transnational space is accessible to any generation. Evidence from the analysis highlighted that reputation of the host market, digital technology, growing diaspora communities, nature of niches in transnational markets, and quality of transnational ties motivate immigrant entrepreneurs to enter transnational markets.

These findings highlight the increasing importance of virtual embeddedness in understanding immigrant entrepreneurship. Embeddedness in the online environment can reinforce and shape physical embeddedness (Anwar & Daniel, 2016). This situation occurs when immigrant entrepreneurs employ their virtual embeddedness to exploit opportunities in an environment where they are not physically embedded. Admittedly, virtual embeddedness has not received adequate attention in the literature. However, findings in this study acknowledge that it is gaining significance owing to increasing digitisation and opportunities in the online environment. Unlike in the past, where immigrants were embedded in a context by living there, having social networks in that environment, or taking up identities of people in such an environment, embeddedness can be created in contemporary times using digital platforms. Virtual embeddedness has emerged as an essential component of immigrant embeddedness due to the increasing importance of the online environment in business competitiveness.

Findings indicate that embeddedness is situational and malleable. This is because immigrant entrepreneurs can use their agential properties and multiple identities to shape their

embeddedness. As a result, immigrant entrepreneurs who have similar experiences of cognitive, relational and structural embeddedness can have different entrepreneurial outcomes owing to variance in their use of agential capabilities.

Analysis of the embeddedness dimension of immigrant entrepreneurs identified some factors in the transnational environment that can influence breakout. However, like some other studies, in-depth analysis of which type of immigrant entrepreneur experiences particular problems or employs which type of strategy is lacking. This inability to categorise breakout strategies, processes, and influencing factors affect the quality of policy and practice interventions, especially in situations where customisation would be needed. To address the challenge, there is the need for an analytical framework that synthesises findings on breakout strategies and growth paths so that the insights can be applied to a wider context and aid in tailoring policy and support interventions. The researcher adopted breakout typology to address the challenge.

7. 3 Breakout typology

This study developed a typology to integrate the multiple lines of findings regarding business breakout to enable the findings to be seen in a new light. The typology draws key variables together and provides a starting point for wider quantitative and qualitative analysis of Immigrant entrepreneur breakout strategies across differing contexts. Developing the typology enhances the theorisation of immigrant entrepreneur breakout strategies in a manner that is sensitive to dynamic changes and contexts.

The use of typologies within qualitative analysis enables generalisability from in-depth studies. Researchers use typologies to introduce conceptual and theoretical innovations that will help develop a set of related but distinct categorisation within a phenomenon. Typology, therefore, provides a means for refining measurement by creating categorical variables that are distinct and useful for further analysis.

7.3.1 Developing Breakout Typology

This chapter's typology of breakout strategies emerged from empirical analysis as informed by theoretical thinking on immigrant entrepreneurship. In other words, the typology is a product of what was found in field research informed by theoretical inputs. Theoretical thinking was synthesised from discussions in Chapters 2 and 3, while empirical analysis synthesises the results

from Chapters 5, 6, and the embeddedness section of Chapter 7. Rusonovic (2008), in his study of breakout practices of first and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs, observed that generational differences between first and second-generation accounted significantly for differences in breakout behaviour. Kloosterman (2010), Solano (2016), and Bagwell (2018) also observed that locational factors such as market boundaries determine breakout strategies to be adopted (Detailed review is in Chapter 2). These findings align with structural, cognitive, and relational dimensions of embeddedness discussed in Chapter Seven. The structural dimension refers to market boundaries, which can be home, host, or third countries. The cognitive dimension relates to the generational differences between the first and second generation, while the relational dimension refers to the composition and roles of social networks.

From an empirical point of view, the breakout behaviour of the 30 immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample was analysed to identify patterns of relationship in their strategies. After analysing their breakout patterns, all the immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample were categorised based on the three dimensions of embeddedness. An identifiable pattern was observed in the breakout behaviour of first and second-generation (generational shift) and in immigrant entrepreneurs that operated in the home, host, and other country's markets (extent of transnationality). The pattern observed in the relational embeddedness of the entrepreneurs was messy. This was because relational embeddedness cut across the other two dimensions of embeddedness. Responses on social network uses were intertwined and could not be readily grouped due to the heterogeneity of social networks as immigrants simultaneously had contacts in the host, home, and third countries. The extent of transnationality and generational shift as categorical variables were easily categorised. However, social networks' heterogeneity and malleability properties could not allow its categorisation. According to Sandoz et al. (2021), the agential properties of immigrants and the context they operate determine which social networks they develop and use, implying that social networks can be implicitly integrated into the extent of transnationality and generational shift. The typology was built with the three dimensions of embeddedness. However, whereas the extent of transnationality and generational shifts were used explicitly to generate the six categories in the typology, the social network dimension was cross-cutting.

The extent of transnationality has three categorisation: the UK market, the UK and Nigerian market, and the UK and third country's market. The cognitive dimension has two categories: first-generation and second generation. The typology of breakout strategies was a 2 x 3 matrix generated when immigrant generation and extent of transnationality were cross-tabulated. As

seen in Table 7.6, the matrix produced six breakout pathways that constitute the typology categories.

Table 7.6 Building breakout typology of immigrant entrepreneurs (The 2 x 3 matrix)

Generational shift

Extent of transnationality

	First-generation	**Second generation**
UK	Group A 'Assimilationists'	Group D 'Co-rivals'
UK and Nigeria	Group B 'Ethnic middlemen'	Group E 'Diasporic patriots'
UK and third countries	Group C 'Transnational nomads'	Group F 'Transpreneurs'

Group A consists of first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs whose growth trajectory focused on the host market, unlike **Group B**, which focused on the host and home markets. **Group C** trajectory was first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs expanding into third countries, while **Group D** trajectory was second-generation immigrants focusing only on the host market. **Groups E and F** trajectory were second-generation focusing on host/home market, and the third market respectively. Out of the 30 immigrant businesses in the sample, seven fit the characteristics of Group A, likewise Group B. Four businesses belonged to Group C; Eight belonged to Group D; two belonged to Group E, while two belonged to Group F. Table 7.7 provides descriptions of businesses in the sample and their groups.

Table 7.7. Grouping of businesses in the sample according to their breakout typology

Classification of Respondents according to the six trajectory groups	Type of business	Countries of operation	Annual revenue (£)	Generation
Group A:				
Yemi	Legal services	UK	500,000	1
Eze	Building contractor	UK	10.2million	1
Dolapo	Household item retail	UK	400,000	1
Nnamdi	Consulting & training	UK	2million	1
Ayomide	Cleaning services	UK	170,000	1
Olisa	Haulage and logistics	UK	300,000	1
Ekene	Security services	UK	800,000	1
Group B:				
Afam	Money transfer	UK, Nigeria	400,000	1
Ngozi	Beauty products	UK, Nigeria	600,000	1
Nneka	Fashion house	UK, Nigeria	400,000	1
Emeka	Restaurant	UK, Nigeria	500,000	1
Aisha	Travel agency	UK, Nigeria	200,000	1
Amaka	Textile retail	UK, Nigeria	100,000	1
Okey	Automobile engine.	UK, Nigeria	300,000	1
Group C:				
Ikenna				
Yinka	Car exporter	UK, Nigeria, Holland	260,000	1
Nonso	Training&certifications	UK,	2Million	1
Chinedu	Phone/electr retail	Nigeria,Australia	400,000	1
	Food item retail	UK, Nigeria, Holland	300,000	1
		UK, Nigeria, Ghana		
Group D:				
Alex	Fitness	UK	800,000	2
Olumide	Security services	UK	2.1 Million	2
Kate	Salon	UK	500,000	2
Blessing	Recruitment services	UK	400,000	2
Miriam	Property management	UK	2.4million	2
Chiugo	Mgt consulting	UK	500,000	2
Chigozie	Bakery	UK	Nil	2
Ada	Care home	UK	Nil	2
Group E:				
Chidi	Entertainment	UK, Nigeria	Nil	2
Shola	Recruitment services	UK, Nigeria	800,000	2
Group F:				
Chika	Advertising	UK, South Africa	3million	2
Ahmed	Programming	UK, India, Belgium	5million	2

7.3.2 Description and characteristics of the six types of breakout typology

Typology names used in the study were generated using creativity and research rigour. Each group in the category was studied to identify common characteristics. Common characteristics inherent in their breakout behaviour, social networks, cognitive abilities, and focus markets were considered in giving them names. Trajectory A – F were named Assimilationists; Ethnic middlemen; Transnational nomads, Co-rivals, Diasporic Patriots, and Transpreneurs, respectively. This section will discuss common attributes that earned them the name and fundamental features that delineate one breakout trajectory from the other.

Table 7.8: Key characteristics of the six types of the breakout typology

Breakout typology	Description	Breakout strategy	Business model	Social network	Market coverage	Cognitive/individual characteristics	Defining breakout success
Assimilationists (Group A)	Expansion by serving ethnic and non-ethnic customers	Horizontal diversification/geographical strategy	Multi-brand	Close ties/ethnic-based ties	Neighbourhood /regional markets	Bicultural flexibility/ proactive toward host market niches	Removing ethnic label
Ethnic middlemen(Group B)	Expansion by venturing into the home market	Transnational/horizontal diversification	Intermediation	Transnational ties/group-based ties	Host/home countries markets	Bicultural flexibility/ proactive to host and home market opportunities	Deepening co-ethnic customer base
Transnational nomads(Group C)	Expansion by venturing beyond home market into third countries	Digitisation/smart team	Agency-based	Virtual ties/ethnic ties	Host/home/third countries	Multicultural flexibility/ proactive in diaspora market niches	Colonising niches in diaspora communities
Corrivals(Group D)	Expansion by capturing niches in the host market	Customer experience/smart team	Integrated supply chain	Non-ethnic ties/remunerated ties	National market	Host country competencies/ proactive to diverse host market opportunities	Diversifying into sectors, locations and profitable value chain positions
Diasporic patriots(Group E)	Expanding into the home market for symbolic reasons	Partnership/brand building	Social enterprise	Virtual ties/remunerated ties	Host/home countries markets	Host county competencies/ leverage host market opportunities for	Reputable brand ambassadors

						symbolic opportunities in home market	
Transpreneurs(Group F)	Microbusinesses expanding globally	Smart team/customer experience	Born global	Industry-based ties/remunerated ties	Host/third countries market	Multicultural flexibility/ leverage host market resources for global opportunities	Serving customers in different countries

Table 7.8 summarised key characteristics of the six types of breakout typology. Elements of the typology highlighted in the table include the breakout strategy adopted, the extent of transnationality, cognitive competencies, and social network use. Others include the business model adopted and perspective to defining immigrant entrepreneur breakout.

In each group/trajectory, diverse breakout motives, strategies, drivers, mistakes, and challenges of immigrant businesses were analysed to identify common attributes. Data used were extracted from the analysis of breakout practices conducted in Chapter six. These attributes were further split into primary and secondary dimensions as seen in Table 7.9 to Table 7.14. This breakout practice's primary and secondary dimensions were introduced to create room for flexibility and accommodate differences. Primary in this context refers to the most fundamental while secondary refers to breakout practices that were not fundamental but relevant. This distinction was demonstrated during the interview as respondents were asked to identify primary and secondary practices.

Assimilationist trajectory

This breakout typology group are first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs who focus on gaining access to non-ethnic markets and serving co-ethnic markets in the host market. Entrepreneurs adopting this growth path are not as confident and offensive in their business posture because they usually see themselves as immigrants who need to go the extra mile to earn 'the right to belong.' Some pursue acculturation and seek expansion in the host market by adapting their business process to attract non-ethnic customers. Others focus on serving co-ethnic markets in other locations.

Table 7.9 Breakout characteristics of Assimilationists (First generation entrepreneurs expanding into host market)

Breakout characteristics	**Primary**	**Secondary**
Breakout motive	Survival/opportunity	Adaptation/Profit maximisation
Breakout drivers	Funding/market knowledge	Customer experience
Breakout strategy	Horizontal diversification/geographical	Customer experience/new opportunities
Breakout mistakes	Corrupt tendencies	Attitude-related
Breakout challenge	Racism	Funding
Breakout Learning mechanism	Behavioural change	Informal capacity building
Use of support organisations	None	
Uses of social network	Access to resources	Fraternal support and validation of decision
Attitude to ethnic association/resources	High dependence	

Assimilationists are first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs who use entrepreneurship platforms to gain socio-economic mobility into mainstream society. These immigrant entrepreneurs use non-ethnic managers and workers to showcase that they no longer have 'ethnic labels.' They were not too keen on deploying technological innovations as a competitive strategy. Instead, they create a portfolio of related product lines and use deeper customer experience to maintain competitiveness. They usually establish branches in new locations and use their contacts to exploit new opportunities. Immigrant entrepreneurs in this group are expected to adopt horizontal diversification, geographical diversification, or customer experience breakout strategy.

Immigrant businesses using this breakout pattern use the cash machine business model. These businesses focus on converting cash to goods and services and back into cash as quickly as possible and serving diverse customer types. They deal on multi-brand - selling competing products and depending on economies of scale as a competitive advantage. Although they have low-profit margins, these businesses survive because of the disruptive position occupied in the market. This group has seven businesses in the sample, including two entrepreneurs who do not wish to break out.

B*ox. 7.1 Illustrative example of assimilationists*

Respondent No. 20

Dolapo was one of the seven immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample whose breakout path falls under this typology. She came to the UK after attending college in Nigeria to pursue a career in healthcare. Due to midlife crises, she resigned from the healthcare sector and started retailing household items. With annual revenue of over £400,000, she has expanded into two locations in the UK. Her breakout motive was to survive high operating costs in the UK and minimise the adverse effect of intense competition from big retail firms. She believed that she had attained some breakout milestones because a large proportion of her customer-based was not blacks. She changed location twice until she secured an attractive location on a busy high street. She prefers employing white people as staff because she believes it would attract non-ethnic customers.

Meanwhile, she studies her customers to understand their needs and broaden her product lines and types to attract more customers. Interestingly, she had not applied for a bank loan or sought assistance from support agencies. She usually seeks financial assistance from her close ties and two cooperative groups she belonged.

Her breakout journey was filled with ups and downs. She had been to court twice for trying to cut corners and had lost money to pilferage and poor bookkeeping. Dolapo was not keen on gaining formal education to improve her managerial competence. Instead, she prefers to learn from experience, attend informal training opportunities organised by religious and ethnic associations, and watch her Asian counterparts in the market. She will love to open new branches in other cities in the UK if she gets funding. However, her worry is discrimination in the marketplace because of her skin colour and accent.

Assimilationists like Dolapo usually hope to gain social mobility through entrepreneurship. They face intense competition because some operate in markets with low entry barriers. They are not keen on expanding beyond the UK because of the nature their business that may not be obtainable outside the UK. Other reasons are lack of resources and competencies to operate beyond the UK market.

Ethnic middlemen

This breakout strategy entails serving as middlemen between home and host country markets. Immigrant entrepreneurs using this breakout typology provide value for customers in the home market using products from the host markets and at the same time provide value to customers in the host markets using products from the home markets. As first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs, they fill the 'status gap' and rely on the in-group for resources. Some of them had established businesses in Nigeria before relocating to the UK, while others have business interests in Nigeria.

Table 7.10 Breakout characteristics of ethnic middlemen (First generation immigrants expanding towards home and host markets)

Breakout characteristics	Primary	Secondary
Breakout motive	Intense competition/survival	Fraternity/profit maximisation
Breakout drivers	Social network/ right timing	Funding
Breakout strategy	Transnational strategy	New opportunities/horizontal diversification
Breakout mistakes	Cashflow-related	Alienation
Breakout challenge	Intense competition	Corruption in the home market
Breakout Learning mechanism	Network-based	Behavioural change
Use of support organisations	None	N/A
Uses of social network	Manage business	Provide finance and information
Attitude to ethnic association/resources	High dependence	

A typical ethnic middleman fills the gap between host and home markets and usually employs a transnational breakout strategy and horizontal diversification. They deploy their competencies in home and host markets to create utility for co-ethnic members in the home and host countries. Customer experience (differentiation) strategy is also essential to them but not as prominent as a transnational strategy. In parallel to assimilationists, they use their contacts in both home and host countries to exploit opportunities in both markets and generate business resources.

They were referred to as ethnic middlemen because they serve as market intermediaries, bridging the gap between producers/ consumers in different countries and co-ethnic producers/consumers. Breakout for them entails increasing the size of ethnic customers served

irrespective of whether they are in the host or home countries. Their business model is intermediation, entrenching and enlarging the capacity of third-party intermediaries. This business model is effective when the gap between consumers and producers is wide or producers lack the expertise or resources to link up to consumers. Breakout using ethnic middlemen growth path presents opportunities because some consumers in developing countries lack resources to get in touch with producers in developed countries. Some producers in developed countries do not have the expertise to operate in developing country contexts,. There were seven ethnic middlemen in the sample, most of whom were in the retail sector. Examples of businesses in the sample in this category include restaurant operators, money transfer agents, and food item retailers.

Box 7.2: Illustrative example of ethnic middlemen

Respondent No. 22

Okey was one of the seven immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample classified under this typology. He underwent a business apprenticeship in Nigeria before he left for Italy, where he started an automobile engineering business. Later, he relocated to the UK and continued with the business before he established the Nigerian branch of the business in 2015. His motive for expanding to Nigeria was to offset increased competition in the UK automobile sector and the opportunity for fairly used cars in the Nigerian market. The inability to find a trusted team to manage the Nigerian branch of the business delayed the expansion. However, his choice of sister's in-law helped him expand to other two locations in Nigeria and create jobs that had been his innermost desire. *'' You need the right set of people and a good understanding of the market. You can have other things, but without these two, your expansion effort will hit the rock''*. He responded when I asked about his breakout driver during the interview.

Unlike other immigrants, Okey could get loans from banks many times but have not reached out to support agencies. A significant breakout mistake he could remember was the inability to handle finances effectively, resulting in high taxation and loss of money. He learned to separate business and personal finance and employed an accountant as advised by an entrepreneur friend. He would love to expand to other locations in Nigeria and the UK but need funding to deal with competition and overcome the 'corrupt attitude' of the Nigerian custom officials.

Transnational nomads

This breakout trajectory entails serving ethnic and non-ethnic customers in markets beyond home and host countries. Immigrant entrepreneurs who adopted this breakout trajectory owned businesses in Holland, Australia, and Ghana. As first-generation immigrant

entrepreneurs, they deployed their embeddedness in contexts outside the host and home countries to explore opportunities in third countries. Some of them in the sample had lived in other EU countries before relocating to the UK or, through education, developed competencies demanded in different countries. The emergence of niche markets and diaspora communities contributes to the increase in transnational nomads who are usually skilled professionals. This breakout typology is common in service-based businesses such as media and ICT.

Table 7.11 Breakout characteristics of transnational nomads (First generation expanding into home and third countries)

Breakout characteristics	**Primary**	**Secondary**
Breakout motive	Opportunity	Customer-driven
Breakout drivers	Digital technology	Quality of team
Breakout strategy	Horizontal diversification/smart team	Digitisation/network ties
Breakout mistakes	Work team-related	Strategy-related
Breakout challenge	Funding	Absence of support organisation
Breakout Learning mechanism	Personal development	Behavioural change
Use of support organisation	None	N/A
Uses of social network	Access to market/referral	Link to critical resources
Attitude to ethnic association/resources	Partial dependence	N/A

The typical business model adopted by immigrant entrepreneurs in this trajectory is agency-based. These entrepreneurs are hired to complete specific tasks usually customised because they possess competencies which the hiring organisation lacked. They are called transnational nomads because they depend on their transnational capital (Sandoz, 2020). They have a solid attachment to ethnic resources and use the link to exploit opportunities in different diaspora communities.

Transnational nomads are more likely to use digitisation and smart team strategy alongside horizontal diversification. Their breakout strategy is built around innovations and creativity. However, they can also use their contacts and unique customer experience to gain competitiveness.

Box 7.3: Illustrative example of transnational nomads

Respondent No. 4

Yinka was one of the four immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample whose breakout path belonged to this typology. He started a training and consulting business in the UK and currently makes over £2million in revenue and offices in the UK, Nigeria, and Australia. His motive for expanding to Nigeria was to exploit the tremendous opportunities created by the digital revolution. At the same time, he was motivated to enter the Australian market because of the increasing number of blacks in the country and the reputational advantage of UK-based businesses. The expansion strategy he adopted was diversification. He started with consulting and training and later introduced certifications. Presently, he runs a digital marketing academy in Nigeria and Australia. He attributed his expansion success to the quality of team and digitisation of operations which provided a competitive advantage. He had since corrected the error associated with trusting people quickly without studying their attitude and having a dysfunctional strategy. Yinka learns by improving himself through personal study of books and online learning resources. He was keen to expand into other locations where black people live in Asia; once he could build smart teams and gain funding opportunities.

Corivals

This breakout pattern entails diversifying into sectors, locations, and niches in the host market and competing vigorously with indigenous enterprises. They are referred to as co-rivals because they tend to see indigenous businesses as rivals and usually focus on outsmarting competitors in their host markets. Unlike assimilationists, this class of immigrant entrepreneurs sees themselves as citizens, claiming equal opportunities in the host markets. As second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs, they have the required competencies to operate in the host market, and their resources are usually generated from the host market. Table 7.12 highlights the typical breakout behaviour of immigrant entrepreneurs who follow this growth path.

Table 7.12 Breakout characteristics of co-rivals (second generation expanding into host market)

Breakout characteristics	Primary	Secondary
Breakout motive	Opportunity/customer expectation	Brand building/profit maximisation
Breakout drivers	Advertising	Smart team
Breakout strategy	Customer experience/smart team	Smart process
Breakout mistakes	Work-team related	Marketing/customer related
Breakout challenge	Poor marketing	High operating cost
Breakout Learning mechanism	Paid assistance	Professional support group
Use of support organisation	Moderate	N/A
Uses of social network	Marketing/referral	Training/outsourcing
Attitude to ethnic association/resources	Indifference	N/A

Immigrant entrepreneurs that follow this growth path are more likely to adopt a smart team and customer experience breakout strategies alongside horizontal diversification. They can deploy digital technologies and geographical expansion to support their breakout strategies. Having been raised in the UK, they possess host country competencies and are more confident to compete in the host market using the integrated supply chain business model. They manage supply chain activities (horizontal and vertical) to gain a competitive advantage. They employ expertise and business processes to create value in the form of premium benefits or low prices. The corivals in the sample include care homes, recruitment agencies, a property management firm, and a fitness firm.

Box 7.4: Illustrative example of corivals

Respondent No. 16

There were eight immigrant entrepreneurs in the study sample who were classified under co-rival typology. One of them was Ada, who own healthcare homes. She was a 46year-old mother of three, born in the UK and worked as a nurse for 10 years before starting her health care home. Although she did not reveal her annual revenue during the interview, the business has grown from one location to three, and from eight workers to 56 full time staff. She was motivated to expand because she had built good reputation and also for the opportunities, she saw in poorly served markets. Her expansion strategy was 'creating Wow! Moment' for every client and she achieved that to some extent using smart team and smart processes. Owing to her passion and background, she did not pay attention to marketing and the situation affected the business growth. She had to learn the nature of ecosystem needed to run profitable care homes from support agencies and professional groups.

Ada had made work-team related mistakes. Her hiring and work delegation strategies were not effective despite attending trainings. Currently, her human resource and accounting functions are outsourced to external agency. She was uncomfortable using or discussing her Nigerian identity and most of her friends were not blacks. Her social networks were largely profession and non-ethnic based and they help her in referral, trainings and validation of decisions. Aside marketing without violating ethics of the industry, rising operating cost affect her expansion speed. She is keen on expanding into other areas in healthcare once the operational process she put in place proves effective.

Diasporic Patriots

This breakout typology entails extending entrepreneurial activities to home markets out of patriotism or for symbolic reasons such as gaining followership, influence, and relevance instead of economic reasons. They are called diasporic patriots because they are second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK but expanding to their home market for patriotic purposes. Successful breakout for this group is defined as achieving a strong brand position as good brand ambassadors. This growth path is unique because it utilises a social enterprise business model. Immigrant entrepreneurs on this typology use brand building, digitisation, and partnership breakout strategies.

Table 7.13 Breakout characteristics of diasporic patriots (second generation expanding towards home and host country markets)

Breakout characteristics	Primary	Secondary
Breakout motive	Fraternal/personal reason	Brand building
Breakout drivers	Digital technology	The capacity of channel members
Breakout strategy	Partnership	Brand building
Breakout mistakes	Strategy related	Work-team related
Breakout challenge	Loyalty to famous brands	Funding
Breakout Learning mechanism	Network-based support	Paid assistance
Use of support organisation	Moderate	
Uses of social network	Content sharing	Link to critical stakeholders
Attitude to ethnic associations/resources	Moderate	N/A

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Two immigrant entrepreneurs exhibited this growth path. They identified with the co-ethnic market and leverage ethnic resources for symbolic and social reasons. This breakout typology is unique because of its social entrepreneurship dimension. These immigrant entrepreneurs use business structures to drive social agenda in their home country.

Box 7.5 Illustrative example of diasporic patriots

Respondent No. 26

The breakout experience of Chidi would be used to highlight the breakout characteristics of this typology. Chidi was into entertainment with his late father before attending university. He was born in the UK and had not looked back at fulfilling the father's dying wish. *'' Make black music proud, do whatever it takes''.* That was his father's charge to him which has become his motivation. He expanded into Lagos-Nigeria to support and coordinate his entrepreneurial and fraternal activities in the sub-region. Digital technology and his relationship with operators in the industry helped him expand and gain access into the UK and the Nigerian market.

His expansion strategy was partnership-based. He leveraged his followership, fraternal gestures, and global market knowledge to gain partnerships with businesses. To a large extent, his entrepreneurial activity was not economical. He used his not-for-profit organisation and business name interchangeably to attract sponsorship, training opportunity, and linkages, making it difficult to separate his business from charities. As a result, some people misunderstood him as they could not explain whether his motive was altruistic. His breakout mistake revolves around working with people and planning, which were captured in the following words. *'' I had two major problems in the process. One was working with people who see themselves as champions. The second was that I was a poor planner. I had to learn the importance of environment and trends''*. To deal with these challenges, he attended training and had used paid experts and support agencies. A more significant percentage of his social networks was his online fanbase, which helped share his content. He also partners with ethnic associations to deliver welfare packages and promote Nigerian culture. Chidi has not expanded as he wished because some entertainers prefer to work with famous brands. He would love to promote African culture globally to get willing partners.

Transpreneurs

Immigrant entrepreneurs who adopted this growth path see themselves as global citizens with the world as their market. As owners of micro multinationals, they depend on smart teams and rich customer experience (differentiation) as breakout strategies. They also employ digitisation to smoothen their business processes and maintain competitiveness. According to Table 7.14, they were driven to enter international markets by opportunities seen and usually generate breakout resources from the host market.

Table 7.14 Breakout characteristics of Transpreneurs (second generation expanding into third country markets)

Breakout characteristics	**Primary**	**Secondary**
Breakout motive	Opportunity/customer expectation	Profit maximisation
Breakout drivers	Digital technology/customer experience	Smart team
Breakout strategy	Customer experience/smart team	Digitisation
Breakout mistakes	Discrimination - related/marketing	Loyalty to famous brands
Breakout challenge	Smart workers quit	Intense competition
Breakout Learning mechanism	Paid assistance	Behavioural change
Use of support organisation	None	
Uses of social network	Link to market niches	References/validation of decisions
Attitude to ethnic associations	Indifferent	

This breakout typology entails focusing on internationalisation. The second-generation immigrants who adopt this typology possess host country competencies and expand into third country's markets. They use innovations and collaboration extensively to compete internationally. Two of them in the sample include an advertising agency and a consulting firm. Born global approach is the business model adopted. This is because these businesses from inception seek to serve international customers. Their definition of breakout is expanding beyond national boundaries and serving international customers. Unlike transnational nomads, they are not attached to home country markets or depend on transnational capital. Instead, they seek niches in different parts of the world to find opportunities.

Box 7.6: Illustrative example of transpreneurs

Respondent No. 18

Ahmed was one of the two immigrant entrepreneurs in the sample that exhibit characteristics of transprenuers. He expanded into India in 2017 and Belgium in 2020, having operated in the UK for four years. Within seven years of existence, the business has grown to £5million in revenue, attracting clients from Africa, Asia, and Europe. Ahmed was motivated by opportunities he saw in the market. Cybersecurity is becoming a common challenge to businesses and governments, and new niches are opening in different markets.

Interestingly, he had not advertised the business but kept getting contracts from current and previous clients. He owes his success to digital technology and the quality of teams. His expansion strategy was to deepen customer experience and maximize their lifetime value. He digitised the business process to gain competitive advantages and add value to customers. However, there was high staff turnover as smart team members quit to start their businesses. He has been discriminated against for being black on a few occasions as some clients would prefer to work with 'white' people or famous brands.

Ahmed depends on his social network to gain access to the new market and validate his decisions. He had not applied nor received help from support agencies but had paid experts for things he could not learn by himself. Although he was skeptical about entering the Nigerian market, he would love to enter the African market if he gets a smart team to manage the business in the region.

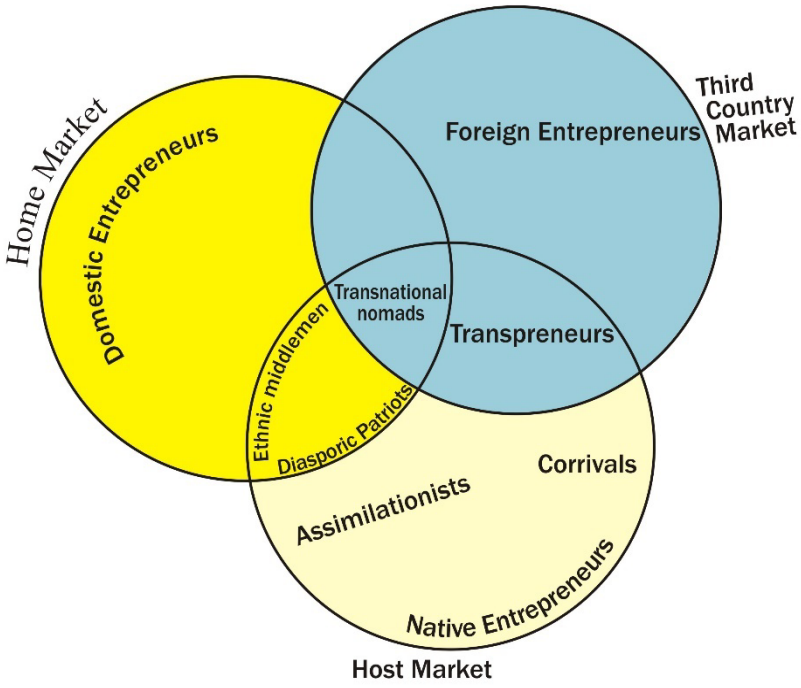
This section described the constitutive elements and categories of breakout typology, highlighting their differences to clarify distinctions among the typology's six types of breakout trajectories. The use of typology in this study provided insight into the transnational entrepreneurial landscape of typical African immigrants, highlighting different segments, strategies, and challenges. Significant factors shaping transnational entrepreneurship are contained in the typology to highlight transnational realities in immigrant entrepreneurship. Typology of breakout reveals the pattern of entrepreneurial behaviour, categories of immigrant entrepreneurs, and growth pathways. This heuristic tool makes it easier to identify which category has a particular problem. For example, it is easier to assert that discrimination and racism are common among assimilationists, just as marketing is a problem for co-rivals. It is also easier to know which group has severe funding challenges or needs marketing help. This knowledge would be beneficial in customising interventions. For example, unlike co-rivals, assimilationists and ethnic middlemen are less likely to use formal support organisations. This

knowledge will assist support organisations to partner with ethnic associations and religious groups to deliver help. In the same way, the provision of co-ethnic mentors can be helpful to ethnic middlemen and assimilationists, unlike co-rivals who would prefer professional-based support or paid consultants.

7.3.3 Comparison of the embeddedness of the six breakout typology

The previous section described the six types of breakout typology. Therefore, this section will compare the social networks, market coverage, and cognitive characteristics of the six types of breakout typology, see Figure 7.1.

Fig 7:1 Operators and markets in a transnational environment



Assimilationists usually use close, industry, and ethnic-based ties. These include close friends, and relatives living in the UK, work colleagues, members of professional bodies, industry thought leaders, ethnic association members, and ethnic friends. Ethnic middlemen usually depend on transnational, close, and group-based ties. Examples of these social networks include relatives, In-laws, childhood friends, business partners living outside the UK, ethnic association members,

and relatives. Transnational nomads depend on virtual ties and ethnic-based social networks such as online friends, online mentors, ethnic association members, and ethnic friends.

Co-rivals are different because they focus on the non-ethnic social networks, close and remunerated ties. These ties include non-Nigerian friends and acquaintances, consultants, experts and trainers, and relatives living in the UK. Diasporic patriots depend on virtual friends and remunerated ties owing to the nature of their business activities. They use social networks of online friends, mentors, consultants, experts, and trainers. Meanwhile, transpreneurs typically use industry-based social networks and remunerated ties in their breakout activities. Examples of social networks used by transpreneurs include work colleagues, professional bodies, industry thought leaders, consultants, experts, and trainers.

As seen in Table 7.8, assimilationists and co-rivals operate only within the UK market. However, they differ in market coverage. Whereas assimilationists focus on niches and neighbourhoods, co-rivals operate at the regional and national scales. Likewise, ethnic middlemen and diasporic patriots operate in both UK and Nigeria. However, the latter was more interested in symbolic opportunities in the home market, unlike the former. Transnational nomads operate in the UK, Nigeria and third countries, while transprenuers do not have any business in Nigeria but in the UK and third countries. Transpreneurs see themselves as global citizens, leveraging home market resources to exploit niche opportunities in different countries.

The categorisation of typology of breakout strategies was done along immigrant generation lines. On the one hand, assimilationists, ethnic middlemen, and transnational nomads were first-generation immigrants. On the other hand, co-rivals, diasporic patriots, and transprenuers were second-generation immigrants. Some differences were also observed in the cognitive disposition of different groups in the breakout typology presented.

Assimilationists possess both home and host country competencies. However, they were not as proficient as co-rival in some host country competencies. This is reflected in their craving for belongingness and strong interest in assimilation into the host country's culture. Ethnic middlemen are similar to assimilationists in terms of competencies. However, they are simultaneously active in home and host markets to generate resources and exploit opportunities. Transnational nomads like transprenuers possess valuable competencies beyond the home and host markets. However, unlike transprenuers that leverage host market resources to exploit opportunities in third countries, transnational nomads leverage ethnic resources to operate in third countries. Corrivals and diasporic patriots possess host market competencies

because they were raised in the host country and only depend on their resources when seeking opportunities outside the host market. However, while co-rivals appear to be more confident in pursuing opportunities in the host market, diasporic patriots engage the home market for non-economic purposes.

Having analysed the breakout behaviour of the six categories of the breakout typology, one would like to know if these growth trajectories are intertwined or discreet and the ease at which an immigrant entrepreneur in one group can change to another. Subsequent discussion focuses on the dynamics among the groups and considers the growth paths that were mutually exclusive and those that allowed movement.

7.3.4 Dynamics of breakout typology

Ram & Jones (2007) observed that immigrant businesses are primarily susceptible to transformation and mutation. In alignment with that, findings from the study revealed dynamism in the extent to which immigrant entrepreneurs move from one category of the typology to another. Immigrant entrepreneurs move to different types of breakout typology if there is a significant change in competencies and class resources. For example, Olisa (Respondent 24), whose haulage and logistics business operated in more than three European countries four years ago, has shifted to operate only in the UK: a move from transpreneurs to co-rivals. Similarly, Chika (Respondent 12), whose advertising agency operated only in the UK four years ago, has moved to three countries (thus moving from co-rivals to transpreneurs).

However, such movement was more apparent along the same immigrant generation line than across generations. A first-generation immigrant can move in and out of assimilationist, ethnic middlemen, and transnational nomads' trajectories depending on the availability of entrepreneurial resources. Dolapo (Respondent 20) was in ethnic middlemen trajectory because her brother was helping her run the business in Nigeria. When the brother relocated to Dubai, she closed the Nigerian branch and focussed only on the UK market (becoming an assimilationist). There was also a case of an assimilationist who moved into ethnic middlemen trajectory because his schoolmate agreed to manage the Nigerian branch of the business. This evidence suggests that first-generation immigrants can move along assimilationist, ethnic middlemen, and transnational nomads lines considering the availability of resources such as social networks and market knowledge.

A movement to groups in a different generation was uncommon in the sample studied. Immigrant entrepreneurs that follow assimilationist, ethnic middlemen, and transnational nomad trajectories rarely exhibit traits or follow the growth path of co-rival, diasporic patriots, and transpreneurs. Ahmed (Respondent 18) follows transpreneurs' growth path. He closed the Nigerian branch of his business because he could not cope with the system. Currently, he runs his business in the UK, India, and other places.

On the other hand, Okey (Respondent 20), who owns an automobile engineering business branch in Italy, was cajoled by co-ethnic into closing the business and establishing a branch in Nigeria. This observation reinforces the dissimilarities between first-and second-generation immigrants. Despite acculturation, the first generation still possesses traits that differentiate their entrepreneurial behaviours from the second generation.

7.4 Chapter summary

Entrepreneurial and breakout practices of first and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs differ and these differences shape their use of social networks and the extent of transnationality. First-generation immigrants are more likely to operate in the home market, employ a transnational breakout strategy and depend on transnational ties. On the other hand, second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs are more likely to remain in the host country market and serve non-ethnic customers. They tend to rely more on professional social networks and are less likely to depend on ethnic sources. Despite that horizontal diversification and customer experience were the most familiar breakout strategies among immigrant entrepreneurs studied, second-generation immigrants are more likely to use digitisation and smart team breakout strategies. Aside from discussing the facilitating roles of social networks in a breakout, the chapter identified how the structure of transnational spaces such as the UK, Nigeria and third countries influence breakout. UK reputation and locational advantage, unlike some other countries, made transnational breakout possible. Evidence presented in this chapter suggests that an immigrant generation can influence breakout behaviour in terms of access to breakout market and breakout resources. Wider breakout markets are open for both immigrant generations, but breakout resources seem more available for second-generation immigrants.

The main contribution of this chapter is the development of a breakout typology which is helpful to characterise and theorise different ideal types of immigrant entrepreneurs that operate in a

transnational environment. Attributes and breakout strategies of these six ideal types of immigrant entrepreneurs in the typology were analysed in a conceptually informed manner, which enables understanding of the different trajectories of immigrant businesses, the particular challenges they encounter, and their support needs.

The typology highlights each segment's competencies and market focus, making it easier to know which segment to target to achieve a particular policy result. For example, if the government interest is to improve overseas export, the target should focus on transpreneurs and transnational nomads. In the same way, if the target is to increase export to Nigeria, the target segment to focus on would be ethnic middlemen and transnational nomads. When focusing on growing neighbourhood economies, the target group would be assimilationists and corrivals. Insights from this typology will also enable the creation of bridging services that can help immigrant entrepreneurs transition from one typology to another. The implications of the proposed breakout typology will be fully developed in Chapter eight. The chapter will provide a synthesis of key findings and lessons from the research, contributions of the study, and the study's limitations will also be discussed to provide a reference for future researchers.

Chapter Eight

Concluding Discussion

8.0 Introduction

This study aimed to empirically examine breakout strategies adopted by Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs within the changing context in which they operate and to consider whether existing conceptualisations of breakout need reframing. The thesis is focussed on identifying and correcting simplistic views and ethnicity-based perspectives of immigrant entrepreneur breakout, which poses that breakout is ending reliance on ethnic customer base. The study is positioned in a transnational context which arguably produced changes that made earlier conceptualisation of breakout inappropriate to understand the nature of the phenomenon in the current context. This positioning is essential as it establishes the explanatory framework for understanding immigrant entrepreneur breakout. As discussed in Chapter One, the objectives of the study were to examine different breakout strategies adopted by immigrant entrepreneurs within the changing context and how their structural, relational, and cognitive embeddedness shape their breakout strategies. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following four research questions:

1. *What are the different breakout strategies employed by immigrant entrepreneurs within the changing context in which they operate?*
2. *How does transnational space affect immigrant entrepreneurs' breakout strategies?*
3. *To what extent and how do the breakout strategies of first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs differ from that of second-generation?*
5. *What are the composition and roles of social networks in immigrant entrepreneur breakout?*

The rest of the chapter is organised as follows: First, the summary of findings followed by a brief reflection of the PhD journey. The reflection will demonstrate learning and changes experienced in the research programme, highlighting skills, abilities, and perspectives that were transformed, especially related to the methodology, so that future researchers may benefit. Next, the research contributions to theory, empirical knowledge, policymaking, and practice will be discussed. Following the contributions of the study will be the limitations of the study, which the readers should be aware of. Based on the limitations, areas for future research in immigrant entrepreneur breakout will be discussed.

8.1 Synthesis of key research findings and response to research questions

RQ1: What are the different breakout strategies employed by immigrant entrepreneurs within the changing context in which they operate?

Findings show that the main breakout strategies employed by immigrant entrepreneurs were horizontal diversification, smart team/hybridisation, deepening customer experience, network ties, transnational, digitisation, and geographical strategy. Other minor breakout strategies identified were brand building, partnership, smart process, and new opportunities. Evidence shows that immigrant business breakout occurs in different forms. They include moving from a single product line to multiple product lines, from ethnic markets to non-ethnic markets, from domestic to transnational, and from face-to-face to online. Others are from labour-intensive market to capital intensive markets, from less position in the value chain to more competitive position, from import market to export markets, and from serving price-sensitive customers to value-sensitive customers. Unlike some studies that argue that immigrants can only expand by moving into non-ethnic markets, the study identified a diverse market continuum aside from non-ethnic markets, confirming that immigrant business breakout goes beyond the ethnicity dimension. In other words, there are the transnational, sectoral, geographical, value chain, and purchasing power dimensions of breakout.

A breakout typology was developed based on the analysis of the breakout strategies of immigrant entrepreneurs and their structural, relational, and cognitive embeddedness. The typology refers to various ideal growth paths immigrant entrepreneurs can adopt in pulling out of constraints hindering their businesses and diversifying into more competitive markets. The typology consists of six breakout trajectories:

Assimilationists are first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs using horizontal and geographical diversification to serve ethnic and non-ethnic customers in the host market.

Ethnic middlemen are first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs with bilateral competencies who adopted transnational strategy in performing intermediation roles between home and host markets.

Transnational nomads are first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs with multicultural competencies employing digitisation and smart team strategies to serve customers in the host, home, and third countries.

Corrivals are second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs interested in capturing niches in host markets using customer experience and smart team strategy.

Diasporic patriots are second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs who adopted brand building and partnership strategies to expand the home market out of symbolic motives.

Transpreneurs are second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs who serve customers in different countries. They possess multicultural competencies and use smart team and customer experience strategies to exploit global opportunities.

The breakout typology draws key variables for explaining immigrant entrepreneurship, enabling wider analysis of breakout strategies in different contexts. It builds on the theory of immigrant entrepreneurship by classifying entrepreneurs based on breakout strategies, illustrating how multiple embeddedness works. The breakout typology highlighted the differences between first- and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs and concretises types of markets in the transnational space.

RQ2: How does the transnational space affect immigrant entrepreneurs' breakout strategies?

Evidence from the study demonstrates that transnational space provided options for mobilising breakout resources and gaining access to breakout markets. Firstly, embeddedness in transnational space made it easier for immigrant entrepreneurs to establish businesses in the host, home, and host countries, unlike in the past when only large-scale businesses enjoyed such privileges. In a transnational environment, immigrant entrepreneurs have opportunities to serve multiple niche markets irrespective of locations, unlike in the past, when they were restricted to geographical and ethnic breakout. Structural factors in the transnational space that made breakout possible include the increasing number and size of diaspora communities, home market conditions, increase in resource mobility, transnational competencies of entrepreneurs, and advances in transportation and digital technology. The Favourableness of these factors determines whether an immigrant business would expand in the host country, towards the home country, or third countries.

Secondly, embeddedness in transnational space provides the opportunity to leverage infrastructures and advances in developed countries to serve developing markets. As a result, the choice of business location is critical as the emphasis is on serving immediate markets and facilitating activities between host, home, and third countries. Immigrant entrepreneurs locate

their businesses in locations that provide leverage in terms of technology, reputational advantage, access to capital, and logistics.

RQ3: To what extent and how do the breakout strategies of first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs differ from that of second-generation?

Our evidence shows the breakout strategies of first- and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs are similar because both adopt horizontal diversification, motivated by opportunities recognised and can expand into the home, host, and third countries. However, they are different in four ways. Firstly, in terms of disposition, most first-generation possess bicultural competencies that enable them to operate effectively, primarily in host and home markets; more likely to mobilise breakout resources from home countries and geographically transnational. On the other hand, the second generation seemed restricted to only host country competencies, tended to rely on host country resources, and was more likely to be digitally transnational. Secondly, in terms of breakout markets and strategies, first-generation are more likely to adopt transnational and network breakout strategies, expand abroad starting from home country and rely on diaspora communities. On the other hand, second-generation is more likely to adopt smart team and digitisation strategies and move into a third country without first operating in the home country.

Thirdly, in terms of breakout drivers and challenges, first-generation are more likely to be motivated by profit maximisation and gaining competitiveness, more likely to be hindered by racism/ discrimination, and need social networks more to drive breakout. On the other hand, second-generation are more likely to be motivated by brand building and customer satisfaction, require advertising and quality teams to drive breakout and face poor marketing and team management problems. Fourthly, use of support services. First-generation immigrant entrepreneurs are more likely to use ethnic resources and faith-based networks for learning and business support services. On the other hand, the second generation is more likely to use support service agencies, professional associations, and remunerated social networks such as consultants and coaches.

RQ4: What are the composition and roles of social networks in immigrant entrepreneur breakout?

Our findings showed that the social networks of immigrant entrepreneurs are heterogeneous. This assertion is because they consist of strong and weak ties, individual and group ties, domestic

and transnational ties, ethnic and non-ethnic ties, remunerated and non-remunerated ties, physical and virtual ties, vertical and horizontal ties. Forms of social networks that played pivotal roles in breakout include transnational, remunerated, industry-based, group-based, ethnic-based, virtual, and close ties. Meanwhile, findings affirmed that an increasing number of immigrant entrepreneurs depend on virtual, faith-based, and remunerated ties for a breakout.

Roles of social networks in breakout include access to funding, training, markets, information, suppliers, and market knowledge. They assist in marketing, providing the intelligence needed to validate decisions, managerial assistance, and emotional support. The use of social networks depends on the type of customers and market. Ethnic-related networks play pivotal roles when breakout markets are ethnic or transnational, while non-ethnic, remunerated, and industry-based networks play pivotal roles when the customers served are diverse and non-ethnic. This is because they provide bridging and linking services enabling immigrant entrepreneurs to access non-ethnic resources.

The study's synthesis of evidence demonstrates that the conceptualisation of breakout needs reframing to accommodate recent developments in immigrant entrepreneurship. In a transnational context, most immigrant entrepreneurs are transnational and engage in multiple spatialities due to their increasing mobilities enabled by technological advances and globalisation. They are embedded in more than one context, use heterogenous social networks, and access resources and markets in diverse spheres simultaneously. As a result, their business breakout is multidimensional and transnational. It goes beyond one generation, local context, and ethnicities. A breakout is more than moving out of an ethnic-dominant customer base. Instead, a breakout is breaking out of liabilities that plague typical immigrant businesses and expanding into competitive markets where being an immigrant does not constitute a disadvantage.

8.2. My reflection

My reflection was done under two headings: reflection on the PhD journey and the methodology used.

Reflection on my PhD journey

Learning is driven by various motives: achieving high grades in examinations, gaining additional knowledge, or achieving substantial transformation. When I enrolled for the PhD, my concern was to provide valid and reliable answers to my research questions. I was not aware that there would be substantial changes in my cognitive and psychomotor skills. The deeper learning

approach this programme offered to me helped me develop creativity, critical thinking, and a high level of abstraction to synthesise knowledge. This transformation came in the form of critical abilities that do not come from mere tasks but by unlearning old knowledge structures and rebuilding new ones, usually referred to as constructivism. I understood why some Nigerian immigrants in the UK and other developed economies prefer to expand their businesses towards Nigeria instead of their host countries (This was my motivation for the study, as stated in Chapter one).

Design and implementation of a deep learning approach is a gradual process that requires triangulation and adaptation. I was guided to view my area of study from diverse perspectives. Starting from my literature review, I was made to understand that my review should be systematic and not a haphazard selection of literature that supports my views. Such an approach to literature review made me study my topic and its interface with other disciplines and literature that disagreed with my perspective. I understood the danger of a 'single story' approach, the importance of context, and why rich literature should consider diverse perspectives. I was made aware of the importance of clarifying concepts and logical coherence of thought. In other words, the need for clarity of thought and connectedness of my arguments was emphasised at every supervisory meeting.

I learned to move around with my journal and document ideas at any time. I can remember thinking over ideas over and over until patterns emerge. Such documentation and reflection helped me to experience different stages of intellectual development as I started questioning things that I previously believed to be absolute truth (Perry, 1999). Updating a reflective diary helped me to appreciate Kolb's learning cycle. In my experience, it turns learning into an experience as I can relate daily experiences to what I learn. I have learned to question my experiences and interaction and evaluate feelings towards events as a basis for making future changes (Kolb, 1983). Reflective journaling in my case reveals how my cognitive abilities have transformed and how fears of not knowing the 'correct' answer have faded. Aside from improving my communication and critical analysis skills, my knowledge of digital research tools was enhanced. Unfortunately, I learned that technology can help but does not solve all problems. In the case of Nvivo, I thought it would analyse the data for me without knowing that it can only help arrange data and not assume the role of a researcher.

The major highlight in this journey was not producing this thesis but in the processes that led to it. The process was iterative, and my supervisory team encouraged me to explore further before I circumscribed. Indeed, I was actively involved in reflecting, observing, and doing for over three years. These three active learning components have sharpened me in preparation for my future academic career.

Reflection on the methodology

My reflection on the methodology is framed around six themes: Need for a different approach when studying different immigrant generations, research in the context of the paucity of secondary data, use of gatekeepers, the importance of pilot studies, the role of trust, and use of primary qualitative data.

The need for a different research approach when studying different immigrant generations: My lesson in researching second-generation immigrants is that methods that were effective with the first generation may not be effective with the second generation. The use of religious and ethnic gatekeepers was effective for first-generation but less effective for second-generation. In the future, I would use professional gatekeepers such as grant-awarding bodies and consultants for generating information from the second generation. This category of immigrants also provides summaries, unlike the first generation that would love to provide in-depth narratives. Owing to these differences, both groups may require different interview question structures because the second generation, giving only the main gist, cut off the usually rich narratives.

The paucity of secondary data: One weakness of studying developing country context is the paucity of data. This was evident during the mapping of the study. There was an absence of databases such that I had to start building from scratch. Some people and organisations expect monetary compensation for providing data during data collection. I observed uncommon distrust towards researchers among Nigerians. Many people I approached to be part of the sample declined. The majority who accepted did so based on their respect for my referrals. The lesson I learned is the importance of reaching out to researchers who could use their influence to access privately-held data or provide recommendations for alternatives.

Use of gatekeepers: Gatekeepers help researchers to gain credibility and predispose probable respondents to participate in studies. Nevertheless, the selection of gatekeepers needs to be done cautiously. Researchers need to be aware of gatekeepers' positionality because the use of gatekeepers that lack credibility and those that are selective in who they connect researchers to can negatively impact the research. One of my respondents revealed that he accepted to be part

of the study because he had seen my online write-ups and not because of the gatekeeper I used. He warned me against using divisive people or having questionable characters as gatekeepers, highlighting the reputational flaws of the gatekeeper I used to reach out to him.

Need for pilot studies: The importance of pilot study in research cannot be overemphasised. I assumed that my respondents understood key concepts I used in the research, such as breakout, capital, and social networks. However, during the pilot study, I realised that their interpretation differed from my contextual interpretation. As a result, I explained key terms I used in writing and verbal communication with them. Sending the interview guide early to my respondents to let them know the questions to answer contributed significantly to the interview's success. It made it easier for the respondents to provide rich and logical answers and helped them provide valuable data that could require time to extract. I improved the interview quality by sending interview guides ahead of interview appointments.

Role of trust in research: I learned from this research that trust is key to obtaining required data and that it does not come quick or cheap. Despite my assurance that the identity of participants would be protected and that the study was strictly for academic purposes, some participants did not trust me with some sensitive data such as annual income, number of employees, and growth strategies. One of them called me two days after the interview and gave me new figures claiming that the figures she gave were false. She claimed that she intentionally provided false information because she did not trust me. The experience made me reach out to other participants and three out of the eight immigrant entrepreneurs already interviewed provided new figures. Researchers should not assume that trust exists when they have not earned it.

Use of primary qualitative data: It is necessary to highlight the possible limitations of my methodology and how I addressed them. The first is the issue of sample size. A sample size of 30 immigrant entrepreneurs used in this study can be seen to be small and may affect the extent of generalisability of the findings. However, it is methodologically appropriate as it is suitable for the exploratory nature and for achieving the aim of the study. Moreover, the study was not meant to study the whole population. The second is the sampling technique adopted in the study. A higher proportion of the participants were first-generation immigrants because it was difficult to recruit the second generation. Moreover, the percentage of immigrant businesses owned and managed by first-generation is higher than the second generation (Ojo, 2016). The number of both generations in the sample is not equal, but such selection is proportional. The sample was an effective representative of diverse sub-groups in the population.

Having highlighted the transformation I experienced in this journey, I will highlight the key contributions of the study in the next section.

8.3 Contributions of the study

Specific contributions of the study to theory, empirical and conceptual knowledge, and policymaking and practice are discussed in this section.

8.3.1 Contribution to theory

The study enriched the understanding of immigrants' embeddedness and spatiality. It justified the increasing significance of transnational mixed embeddedness theory in understanding immigrant entrepreneurship. Yeung (2009) affirmed that cross-border entrepreneurship usually produces transnational spaces that connect multiple locations. This study, similar to Sandoz (2021), buttressed the point and argued that embeddedness is not only transnational but involves multiple locations, multiple connections, and multiple identities. The study concretises what transnational spaces mean by identifying a continuum of markets and resource sources. Although various studies have identified that immigrants' social networks and areas of operation are transnational, this study concretises how forms of social network, transnational space, and identities determine their breakout behaviour. In other words, the study highlighted how ethnic resources play roles in different transnational markets and how immigrant entrepreneurs use networks in more than one country, attend to customers in multiple countries, and assume identities that enable them to operate beyond the ethnic economy.

The study's findings confirmed that transnational mixed embeddedness theory is more appropriate for understanding the entrepreneurial activities of immigrants in recent times. This is because advances in technology and globalisation have increased the propensity of immigrant entrepreneurs to assume multiple identities, exploit opportunities in multiple countries and depend on social networks beyond ethnicity or close location. As a result, their embeddedness is beyond the home-host country environment, spanning into third countries, diaspora communities, and the virtual environment. The heterogeneity of social networks, identities, and locations has become significant because these entrepreneurs are embedded in a transnational environment. Their dependence on diverse mobility trajectories and global opportunity structure energised their agential capabilities such that their strategies are no longer deterministic or static. Hence, research or interpretation of their entrepreneurial activities should consider their multiple embeddedness, multiple identities, and multiple competencies.

Another contribution of the study to the mixed embeddedness theory is the agential roles of immigrant entrepreneurs. Unlike previous studies that perceive immigrant entrepreneurs as passive in the face of forces in the environment, this study sees immigrant entrepreneurs as the centre point of immigrant entrepreneurship who as agents of change, embody spatiality of economic processes and actions. These entrepreneurs can assume multiple identities depending on opportunities they wish to exploit and configure their embeddedness to favour their status. The study enriched mixed embeddedness theory by including the perspective of the second generation, which hitherto was assumed to be like that of first-generation. Transnational mixed embeddedness theory provides that immigrant entrepreneurs are intrinsically transnational. However, this study distinguished the nature of the transnational embeddedness of these generations. Whereas the second generation is more likely to be digitally transnational, first-generation immigrants are geographically transnational, relying on diaspora communities. In addition, it highlighted the linkage between the growth of diaspora communities and transnational entrepreneurship and provided an account of how dual and multiple embeddedness manifest. The study identified the composites of structural, relational, and cognitive embeddedness, affirming that immigrants' embeddedness is complex, interwoven, and evolving.

The study contributed to reconceptualisation of immigrant entrepreneurship breakout from a simplistic deficient ethnic-based model that ignored the roles of the transnational environment to one that is processual, layered, transnational, and transitional. The study provided convincing evidence against ethnic-based and exclusion-focussed static views of immigrant entrepreneur breakout that sees breakout as simply removing ethnic label instead of expansion into a more competitive and larger market. As Elo et al. (2018) argued, ethnic and exclusion lenses no longer capture the realities of immigrant entrepreneurship. The study brought other dimensions of breakout that were overshadowed by assimilationists' perspective and x-rayed multidimensional approach to breakout, arguing that geographical, transnational, sectoral, value chain, and purchasing power dimensions of a breakout are as important as breaking out of ethnic-based markets. Through the development of the breakout typology, the study provided insights into emerging breakout trajectories that resulted from globalisation and advances in technology and spatial mobility. The typology as an analytical tool would help understand breakout behaviour across different ethnic and population groups and in studies of immigrant entrepreneurship generally. The growth trajectories adopted by different categories of immigrant entrepreneurs in the typology have unique attributes, thereby providing an analytical framework for understanding the breakout behaviour of immigrants more widely.

8.3.2 Empirical contribution

The study has made empirical contributions to immigrant entrepreneurship by generating primary data on breakout dimensions and the perspective of Subsaharan African immigrants in the UK, framed using breakout typology.

This typology contributed to understanding the heterogeneity of immigrant entrepreneurs, diversity of growth paths, and differences between first- and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs. The breakout typology is helpful because it segmented typical black African entrepreneurs according to growth paths, cognitive competencies, and markets they break into. This segmentation is helpful in the diagnosis of challenges and tailoring interventions. The study contributed to understanding the breakout behaviour of African immigrants demystifying the myth that they are homogenous. Indeed, the major challenge with administering interventions to black entrepreneurs is the tendency to see them as a homogenous group.

Another valuable contribution of the study is enriching immigrant entrepreneurship contexts and diversity. Developed-developing country perspective, black African immigrant entrepreneur perspective, transnational perspective, low skilled-high skilled immigrant perspective, and first generation-second generation perspective were examined in the study. Studying immigrant entrepreneurs from a generation perspective contributed to understanding how differences in competencies affect breakout behaviour, dependence on ethnic resources, and perception of opportunity structure. The study explored the nature of unequal opportunities between first- and second-generation immigrant entrepreneurs and how they make up for such inequalities. Immigrant entrepreneurs are usually represented in literature as people with low skills. However, in studying them from a higher skill perspective, the study shifted immigrant entrepreneurship discussion from ethnicity-induced and location influenced activities to opportunity-induced and transnational based activities.

The study enriched the literature by bringing immigrant breakout areas that have not received adequate attention to the limelight. Aside from assimilationist motives, other motives for a breakout, such as the need to exploit opportunities, build brand image, help co-ethnic members, and personal reasons, were explored. The study provided a comprehensive account of 10 breakout strategies and different markets that immigrant entrepreneurs can break into. In addition, factors that fuel breakout and key challenges that make breakout difficult were discussed. The study highlighted emerging breakout behaviour. They included the role of virtual embeddedness, remunerated social networks, and organisational learning mechanisms.

8.3.3 Contribution to policymaking and practice

The study provided a balanced perspective to the brain-drain/brain-gain debate, which policymakers can leverage to their advantage. The nature of breakout discovered in the study confirms that home, host, and third countries benefit depending on where the pendulum of opportunities tilts. Immigrant entrepreneurship benefits home countries as it does to host countries because determinants are no longer ethnicity or location-based but opportunity-based. This knowledge will help policymakers focus on policies that maximise opportunities for their diaspora or immigrants in the form of a scale-up ecosystem. The study also explained the nature of dependency between countries and how the simplistic home-host county dichotomy has collapsed into a hub-spoke model where immigrants are connected, live-in, and operate from multiple places simultaneously. To policymakers, knowledge of this interdependence and how immigrant entrepreneurs connect distant places through leveraging technologies and social networks will help structure bilateral and multilateral relations among nations. Contingent upon findings from this study, policymakers will realise that those location-push elements that dominated immigrant entrepreneurship literature are gradually giving way for connection-push elements.

This study provides insight into different liabilities that typical African immigrant businesses face and the transnational entrepreneurial landscape of typical African immigrants, highlighting different segments, strategies, and challenges. Typology of breakout reveals patterns of entrepreneurial behaviour, immigrant entrepreneurs' categories, and markets' categories. This makes it easier for policymakers to identify which category has a particular problem. For example, it is easier to assert that complaints of discrimination and racism is common among assimilationists. It is also easier to know which group has severe funding challenges or needs marketing help. This knowledge would be beneficial in customising interventions. For example, assimilationist and ethnic middlemen are less likely to use formal support organisations, unlike co-rivals. This knowledge will assist support organisations to partner with ethnic associations and religious groups to deliver help. In the same way, the provision of co-ethnic mentors can be helpful to ethnic middlemen and assimilationists, unlike co-rivals who prefer professional-based support or paid consultants.

Knowledge of breakout typology would also benefit policymakers interested in understanding how potential immigrant entrepreneurs can move between these categories and possible constraints they could face. The typology highlights each segment's competencies and market focus, making it easier to know which segment to target to achieve a particular policy result.

Insights from this typology will also enable the creation of bridging services that can help immigrant entrepreneurs transition from one typology to another. To business support service providers and entities interested in immigrant entrepreneurship, this study has provided insight into why some African immigrants do not patronise support services and the meaning of 'perceived discrimination' usually cited in literature and interactions. The study provided an understanding of the peculiar needs of different African entrepreneurs and the most needed interventions.

Some policy recommendations based on the research findings are that:

1. Support service providers should understand the peculiarities of black African immigrant entrepreneurs and offer tailored interventions. This can be in the form of engaging ethnic associations as partners early in designing interventions and intentionally reducing complexities in intervention application process (Sepulveda & Rabbervag, 2021). Much misinformation, lack of trust, and indifference affected the relationship between these providers and Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs (especially the first generation). Partnership with ethnic associations to increase engagement and change misconceptions about their activities would be helpful. They can also encourage private support service providers to explore the niche as many of these entrepreneurs indicated willingness to pay for quality support services.
2. Immigrant entrepreneurs should build their capacity to overcome teething challenges facing them. Individualistic tendencies observed among some entrepreneurs in the sample exacerbate the liability of smallness, newness, and foreignness that immigrant businesses face. A significant part of the weaknesses identified in these businesses can be mitigated if they increase the scope/velocity of learning and cooperation. The formation of partnerships and different strategic alliances would increase capacity to attract resources, enhance competitiveness, and make them resilient.
3. Ethnic associations should reinvent themselves to be helpful in the face of current realities. To attract second-generation immigrants and provide fungible social capital, they need to reexamine their cultural and fraternal focus, making them less attractive to people who require platforms for socio-economic mobility. They need to learn from their Asian counterparts, whose significant portion of their ethnic associations provide platforms for lobbying and bridging access to business resources. Ethnic associations need to be rejigged as 21st-century organisations to engage in economic lobbying for government interventions and promoting members' businesses. They need to connect

their members to various Nigerian government entrepreneurship programmes (discussed in Chapter five).

4. Both the host and home nations need to reassess their positions on the brain-drain/brain-gain argument and work towards providing enabling environment for immigrants and diasporas. This study confirmed that choice of business location is no longer influenced by where one lives but by the nature of the opportunity to be exploited, the nature of leverage needed to exploit the opportunity, and logistics. As an increasing number of highly skilled immigrants are deploying their multifocal competencies in exploiting global opportunities, the need for an ecosystem that supports entrepreneurship beyond home and host countries becomes imperative. Government agencies need to readjust their bilateral/multilateral relations to accommodate immigrant entrepreneurs who may not qualify as foreign direct investors. These changes need to be reflected in payment processing guidelines, taxation policies, transportation, and product standards regulations.
5. The study identified lacuna in the role of business incubators and accelerators, highlighting the need for learning and development organisations to pay attention to this niche. Higher education institutions should go beyond focusing on black and minority enterprise (BME) segmentation. They should look for sub-groups such as Sub-Saharan African immigrants that require a tailored approach owing to their peculiarities. The importance of training, advice, coaching, and mentoring services for African immigrant entrepreneurs cannot be overemphasised. Business mentors and incubators who understand the immigrant African business landscape are needed to interact with these entrepreneurs, generate data, and help them develop strategies and capacities that fit these peculiarities.

8.4 Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research

Like other exploratory studies, this study is subject to limitations, and it is pertinent that they are acknowledged. First, the ethnic differences of Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs were not explored in depth. Nigeria is ethnically diverse with different cultural values and entrepreneurial practices, and such context requires further examination, but that was beyond the scope of this study.

The second limitation of the study is its focus on metropolitan and cosmopolitan contexts. The study focuses on immigrant entrepreneurs in London only, whereas Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in other UK cities and towns are not as cosmopolitan as London. Restricting the

study to one location and the inability to consider experiences of Nigerian immigrants in other UK cities that do not enjoy the transnational attributes of London limits the depth of insight. Thirdly, gender issues were not explored in detail in the study. Despite that the sample included both males and females, gender differences were not given prominent treatment in the study. Highlighting gender differences is important because studies suggest significant differences in gender dimensions of immigrant entrepreneurs. These differences could account for differences in attitudes and entrepreneurial practices (Ojo, 2013; Baycan-Levent et al., 2004).

Regarding future research, discussion on how heterogeneous social networks of immigrant entrepreneurs are maintained and what they evolve into when there is a significant change in the scale of transnational business is highly promising. Studying the cost of nurturing social networks, the extent of usefulness, and the ability to evolve with business dynamics will be critical in grasping networks' creative and transformative roles in sustaining immigrant business competitiveness.

That being the case, the six-breakout typology identified in this study needs further analysis to understand their spatial contexts and influencing factors better. It is important to examine the kind of ecosystem that each type of breakouts requires to thrive and maintain competitiveness. This knowledge will assist policymakers and practitioners in knowing the type of intervention and support services needed for scaling businesses in these growth paths. Along with this, how choices of growth path influence social integration in host and home countries require researchers' attention. Immigrant entrepreneurship can be a vehicle for social mobility, especially for African immigrants (Ojo, 2013), and transnational entrepreneurship could shape how social mobility is attained in the home, host, and third countries. As a result, a study of how different breakout typologies help immigrant entrepreneurs achieve social mobility goals is desirable.

Moreover, there is a need to advance knowledge of how opening transnational space, digitisation of financial services, and transnational entrepreneurship shaped the financing pattern of transnational entrepreneurs. Although the transnational environment offers opportunities to immigrant businesses, funding remained a key challenge, especially for first generation immigrants. Recent events show that globalisation and innovations in digital technology appeared to have transformed funding arrangements for businesses creating new funding vehicles such as crowdfunding and venture capital. However, how the financing of transnational businesses has transformed in the face of 'new communities' and social capital created by embeddedness in a transnational environment deserve scholarly attention.

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Appendix 1

Master questionnaire for immigrant entrepreneurs

Immigrant entrepreneur breakout in a transnational environment --- Master questionnaire

Introduction

Good morning/Good afternoon. My name is…. and I am a doctoral student at Middlesex University. The aim of this study is to examine how first and second generation Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK expanded into larger markets in an increasing transnational environment.

(Give him/her consent form to fill)

Business background

1) Could you tell us about yourself and why and how you became an entrepreneur? Get basic profile information (age, background occupation, educational qualification, length of residence, length of business experience and family business background)

2) Could you summarise the history of your business in the UK and key milestone from inception till present? Probe for nature of business, size of labour force, extent of meeting regulatory requirement, age of the business and business branches.

3) How would you say the business was doing under normal (pre-Covid) conditions? Probe for performance indicators such as sales, customer base, product demand and cross-border linkages.

4) How would you describe the market you serve and what are the opportunities for expansion within this context? Probe for nature of competition and what they do to counter it, motivations for seeking expansion and competitive advantages they have in the market.

5) Does your business operate outside the UK? If yes, probe for main markets and sources of import outside of the UK? (if no, why).

Attempt at expanding into larger market

6) Has your business attempted to expand into larger markets?
   I. How successful has your expansion into larger markets been? And what are your key indicators If he/she has not attempted, find out why and end the interview.

Key issues in business expansion

7) (If the entrepreneur is linked to the international market) What have been the key factors that have enabled you to consider operating the business outside the UK? Probe for

diaspora connection, technology, and home country conditions on expansion to larger market, cross-border networks and resources.

8) How has your family and/or friends or other members of the Nigerian community (including ethnic/business associations) assisted your expansion to larger markets (Probe for specific contributions e.g. in terms of resources, support)

9) What are the characteristics of the UK business environment that encourage expansion into larger markets? Probe for effects of diverse ethnic markets, locational advantage of the city and ease of doing business.
   i. Have you ever approached a business support agency for advice and help? What was your experience?
   ii. Do you know or are you aware of any business support available for market expansion?

10) Were you born in the UK or did you come to the UK as a child or an adult?
   i. What do you consider are the main advantages and disadvantages of being a first/second generation immigrant entrepreneur?
   ii. What do you think you are doing differently in your expansion into larger markets because you are first/second generation immigrant entrepreneur?

Lessons learnt

11) What lessons have you learnt from your experience of expanding into larger market? What would you have done differently if you had the chance? Why?
   i. Which pattern of expansion into larger market do you consider the most effective for businesses like yours?
   ii. What are the challenges facing Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs like you in the UK? Probe for generic and peculiar hindrances to competitiveness.
   iii. Did you make any mistakes when expanding into a larger market? If so what did you do about this

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR TIME

Interviewee code name	
Date	
Observations	

Appendix 2

Topic guide for experts' interview

Immigrant entrepreneur breakout in a transnational environment ---Experts/Key informant topic guide

Introduction

Good morning/Good afternoon. My name is… and I am a doctoral student at Middlesex University. The aim of this study is to examine how first and second generation Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK expanded into larger markets in an increasing transnational environment.

(Give him/her consent form to fill)

Support agencies, ethnic associations and researchers

12) Could you tell us your position/roles in your organisation and specific relationship of your… ….xxx (Name of the organisation) with Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK?

13) Can you describe the main characteristics of the Nigerian business community in the UK? Probe for specific sectors of specialisation, reasons for choice of sectors and businesses performance.

14) Which factors shape market expansion decisions of Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK?

    i. What are the main motivations why Nigerian immigrant businesses expand into larger markets outside their ethnic niche? Probe for reasons such as competition, innovation and import/exports related reasons.
    ii. What are the market expansion strategies used by the entrepreneurs as far as you are aware of and how successful/unsuccessful they often are? Probe for frequency of use of ethnic dimension, geographical dimension, sectoral dimension, value chain dimension and purchasing power dimension of expansion.
    iii. What are the resources needed for market expansion? How are they sourced? Probe for financial, mental, technical, managerial and networks and sources.
    iv. Based on your experience, what are the challenges facing Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK in expanding into larger markets? Probe for generic and peculiar hindrances.

15) What role do social networks play in facilitating and/or hindering expansion to larger markets?

i. Probe for specific contributions and their relevance.
ii. Probe for benefits of membership of ethnic associations towards market expansion.

iii. Probe for the role of Nigerian sociocultural characteristics in expansion to larger markets?

16) How different are first generation from the second generation immigrant entrepreneurs?
    i. Probe for differences in entrepreneurship abilities and resources such as education, managerial abilities, finance and business experience.
    ii. Probe for differences in attitude towards social networks and ethnic associations such as network composition, uses and dependence on co-ethnic and non-ethnic networks.

    iii. Probe for differences in their attitude towards expansion to larger markets such as motivations, strategies and resource acquisition.
17) What factors have enabled Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs to expand their businesses into transnational market?
    i. How has the rise in transnational entrepreneurship influenced expansion to large market?
    ii. How have economic conditions within Nigeria influenced expansion into larger markets?

18) How has the UK environment influenced expansion to larger market?
    i. Does the UK business environment inhibits/hinders market expansion for the Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs?
    I. How have support institutions (trade associations, diaspora organisations, ethnic associations, religious groups and regulatory authorities) assisted immigrants in their expansion quest? Probe for features of such initiatives, target beneficiaries and performance.

19) Are there Nigerian entrepreneurs from the first or second generation you can refer us to for interview?

Thank you for your time!

Interviewee code	
Organisation code	
Position	
Date	
Observations	

Appendix 3

Information sheet for participants

What the study is about?

The study is about how first and second-generation Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK expanded into larger markets in an increasing transnational environment. The aim is to determine how the opening up of transnational space, use of mixed social networks and generational differences affect how immigrant entrepreneurs expand into larger markets.

What are the outputs of the study?

The information we get from this study will help us to gain a more comprehensive up to date knowledge of breakout, provide policymakers with insight on how transnational space and generational shift affect immigrant entrepreneurship and project the perspective black mmigrant entrepreneurs as regard market expansion. As a participant, you will be contributing to achieving these objectives through interview on your business practices. Output of this research will benefit immigrant entrepreneurs and their communities through advocacy, policy formulation and knowledge sharing.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

The information you gave us will be held anonymously. It will be kept confidential and will not be attributed to you. Access to data generated from the interviews will not be given to any unauthorised person without your consent. Whenever the information from the study is presented or published in academic journals, no form of identifier will be disclosed.

Do I have the right to withdraw from the study?

As a participant, you have the right to withdraw from the study without giving a reason and at any time during the interview. If you would like to withdraw your participation this can be arranged by contacting me using the address below before the data will be collated and analyzed.

What if I have any question?

For any question or comment about the research, please do not hesitate to contact me: Jude Onyima. Telephone: 07485187080 Email: jo714@live.mdx.ac.uk

Thank you

Appendix 4

Interview Request letter

Re: Research on Immigrant entrepreneur breakout in a transnational environment: A case of first and second generation Nigerian immigrants in the UK

Dear Miss/Mr…

I am a doctoral student of Middlesex University London, carrying out a research on how first and second generation Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK expanded into larger markets in an increasing transnational environment. The aim of the study is to determine how opening of transnational space, use of mixed social networks and generational differences affect market expansion for this category of entrepreneurs.

I would be grateful if you would consider being interviewed for this study. The interview, which will be conducted on the telephone (re: because of the Covid-19 pandemic) would take about 20-40 minutes. The interview will be recorded if you authorise me to do so. The time would be set at your convenience. Information supplied would be treated confidentially and used strictly for research purposes. The information will be annoymised and respondents would not be identified by name in any document or publication relating this research.

Please find the attached consent form and information sheet for detailed information on the study. I will contact you via email and telephone shortly. I can be contacted on Telephone: 07485187080; Email: jo714@live.mdx.ac.uk if you have any queries.

Thank you for your attention

Yours sincerely

Jude Onyima

Appendix 5

Version Number……..

Participant Identification Number:…..

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: Immigrant entrepreneur breakout in a transnational environment: A case study of first and second generation immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK

Name of Researcher: Jude Kenechi Onyima

Please initial the boxes below to indicate consent

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the participant information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions. 1
2. I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without penalty. 2
3. I agree that this form which I ticked may be seen by a designated auditor. 3
4. I agree that my non-identifiable research data may be stored in National Archives and be used anonymously by others for future research. I am assured that the confidentiality of my data will be upheld through the removal of any personal identifiers. 4
5. I understand that my interview may be taped and subsequently transcribed. 5
6. I agree to take part in the above study. 6

Thanks.

Please note: Completion of this questionnaire is deemed to be your consent to take part in this research

Appendix 6

Business School REC

The Burroughs

Main Switchboard: 0208 411 5000

24/06/2020

APPLICATION NUMBER: 8158

Dear Jude Kenechi Onyima and all collaborators/co-investigators

Re your application title: Immigrant entrepreneur breakout in transnational environment

Supervisor: Stephen Leandro Syrett Sepulveda

Co-investigators/collaborators:

Thank you for submitting your application. I can confirm that your application has been given APPROVAL from the date of this letter by the Business School REC.

The following documents have been reviewed and approved as part of this research ethics application:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Aims, objectives and hypotheses	Research proposal for registration panel	19/06/2020	001
Materials	Master questionaire for Entrepreneurs	19/06/2020	001
Materials	Topic guide for expert opinion	19/06/2020	002
Participant Information Sheet	Consent form	19/06/2020	001
Participant Information Sheet	Interview Request letter	19/06/2020	005
Debriefing Sheet	Information sheet for participants	19/06/2020	007

Although your application has been approved, the reviewers of your application may have made some useful comments on your application. Please look at your online application again to check whether the reviewers have added any comments for you to look at.

Also, please note the following:

1. Please ensure that you contact your supervisor/research ethics committee (REC) if any changes are made to the research project which could affect your ethics approval. There is an Amendment sub-form on MORE that can be completed and submitted to your REC for further review.

2. You must notify your supervisor/REC if there is a breach in data protection management or any issues that arise that may lead to a health and safety concern or conflict of interests.

3. If you require more time to complete your research, i.e., beyond the date specified in your application, please complete the Extension sub-form on MORE and submit it your REC for review.

4. Please quote the application number in any correspondence.

5. It is important that you retain this document as evidence of research ethics approval, as it may be required for submission to external bodies (e.g., NHS,grant awarding bodies) or as part of your research report, dissemination (e.g., journal articles) and data management plan.

6. Also, please forward any other information that would be helpful in enhancing our application form and procedures - please contact MOREsupport@mdx.ac.uk to provide feedback.

Good luck with your research

Yours sincerely,

Chair David Kemohan

Business School REC

Appendix 7

Sample of transcript used (**Interview for Restaurant firm -9th participant)**

Interview date: 02/10/2020

Time: 12.00 – 12.32

Interviewee code: GGT

Interviewer: Jude

Location: Online

Jude: Good evening Sir…….! Thank you for accepting to participate in this interview. Like I discussed with you before, the purpose of the interview is to understand how your business expanded to larger markets. Your responses would be used strictly for academic and career purposes. Also note that participation in this interview is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your participation anytime you feel uncomfortable. I assure you also that your responses will be anonymised and treated confidentially.

GGT: Thank you….. Its my pleasure to be part of the interview

Jude: In the first instance, could you tell me about yourself and why you became an entrepreneur?

GGT: I had a flourishing business in Nigeria but my wife and children have been living in the UK since 2006. So after much pressure to relocate I decided to join them. I opened this restaurant to keep myself busy since I don't like the way they work here. I am 56 and have four children. In terms of school, I didn't have much opportunity. I stopped after my HND to do business. I opened my first business in Lagos which was restaurant and bar.

Jude: Have you being involved in a business before or do you come from family of business people?

GGT: This is my first business in the UK but for 12 years, I was doing business in Lagos. I came from family of business people. My father was a trader at Onitsha (Textile) and I was assisting him till I left to Lagos to pursue my future.

Jude: Great! So what was your motive for starting a business in the UK?

GGT: Hmmmm… big question… You should know the answer. The reason is survival. And to make money. When my father died six months after my HND, I had to assume responsibility of taking care of my mum and younger ones and there was no job. That was why I went to Lagos to hustle. But in the UK here, I started the business to keep myself busy and as a response to not seeing the kind of job I love.

Jude: Please, could you summarise the history of your business and key milestones from inception till now?

GGT: Ok… I arrived UK in 2009 and I tried to work but working is not my thing. I discovered that Nigerians here do not have a standard restaurant that specialise on Igbo cousine, a place one can visit and feel at home. So, because it is a business I have done for so many years and passionate about, I opened the business with my wife. We started with a restaurant and bar focusing on the Nigerian community. We offer relaxation, local movies and songs, cafeteria services, cooking for events, selling of food and drink including home delivery.

Jude: Great! How would you say the business was doing under normal condition… you know before the COVID-19?

GGT: Since we started, we have given our best and there is evidence that our efforts were not in vain. From one staff, to about 19 staff at present. Our customer base has increased and people come from different parts of UK outside London. We have diversified from restaurant to bar, to cafeteria services, to event management and services.

Jude: Would you mind giving me estimate of your annual revenue? Is it less than 100,000 pound, 100,000 – 500,000 or above 500,000 pounds?

GGT" …. I will not be able to say that… just know we serve more than 80 customers daily and each of them spend about 15 pounds.

Jude: How do you describe the market you serve and what are the opportunities for expansion within the context?

GGT: My initial target were Nigerians. But we also serve other Africans and Carribeans. Some white people also enjoy our meal. Because of diverse customers that visit us, we now serve core Nigerian menu, African dishes and general dishes for other customers.

Jude: Do your customers behave alike?

GGT: My customers are predominantly Nigerians and I would say their behaviour is related. They are more interested in enjoying themselves or giving their guest a treat in a Nigerian/Igbo atmosphere.

Jude: What about opportunities for expansion in the sector?

GGT: There is huge opportunities because the number of Nigerians, living and visiting the UK is increasing.

Jude: How would you describe competition in your market and how do you handle it?

GGT: Its was not much before but it's getting hotter now. Many women who work from home are now taking our customers away. Pockets of businesses are springing up, providing alternatives for people.

Jude: How do you handle competition?

GGT: By deepening customer experience, offering quality services and creating an amiable atmosphere. We also give discounts especially to new customers.

Jude: What do you hold on to as your competitive advantage or a competitive weakness?

GGT: They include delicious meal, impressive cooking skill, my contacts and network, the location where the business is and the type of people I work with. In terms of weaknesses I cannot remember any …Ok let me add that the location could be far for some people who may wish to come.

Jude: How do you manage your business activities in terms of workers and suppliers?

GGT: We buy ingredients in bulk from Nigeria making it cheaper and high quality. At present, I have 19 staff including waiters, cooks and supervisors.

Jude: Did they undergo any training for the business and do you have documented evidence of your relationship with them?

GGT: No, they did not do any training. I also relate with them as family and we trust each other. So no need for contract. They have the skills I needed and I talk to them if there is anything new I wish them to learn.

Jude: Who are your suppliers and how often do you seek business outside the UK?

GGT: My major suppliers are in Nigeria but I also buy items from UK vendors too. I restrict my customer base to people in the UK.

Jude: Good. What challenges do you face as a Nigerian entrepreneur both generic and peculiar?

GGT: Rent is so high… anyways, it is not because I am a Nigerian.

Jude: Ok,… lets focus on your expansion to larger market. Tell me, how successful your expansion into larger market has been?

GGT: We have grown from serving 10 customers per day to about 50. We now offer home delivery services, DJ services, cafeteria services event management, sale of foodstuff and so on. We have grown from 2 to more than 19 staff. No advert on radio or television but people who are not even Nigerians are coming.

Jude: What motivated you to seek expansion?

GGT: Nothing specifically but I can attribute it to the need to satisfy my customers, need to fill the gap I noticed in the market, need to grow my business to an enviable height as I did in Nigeria. It is not easy to run two businesses simultaneously but that's what I am doing.

Jude: Which strategy did you use in expansion and getting other customers?

GGT: I don't have any strategy… I simply follow things as they come and trust my intuition. I observed that economies of scale helped me because I buy in bulk both for the business in Lagos and the one in the UK. I diversified both in terms of products and customers that I serve. I look for new areas to improve and listen to my customers. I segmented my sitting arrangement and services for different classes of customers and offer customised services.

Jude: What have been the key factors that have enabled you to expand?

GGT: Aside God, I would say that my experience in the business, understanding of how the market functions, source of ingredients I use helped me. Also, my contacts and location of the business contributed to where we are now. Our expertise, knowledge of global market, dependence on innovation that can reach wider audience.

Jude: To what extent did digital innovations and conditions of home country contributed to your expansion?

GGT: They helped me in managing my activities like linking up with buyers, home delivery and taking order from customers. In the same way, the Igbo culture helped too. Our people are large here and like enjoying their money.

Jude: Yeah…. Please tell me how your family and friends assisted your expansion to larger markets

GGT: They have been so helpful. My wife remained my backbone. She is a good planner and enjoy taking risk. My friends are both my advisers, customers and marketers. I am a people's person and my business thrive because of kind of contacts I have.

Jude: Are these contacts strictly Nigerians or mixture of different nationalities?

GGT: Majority of them are Nigerians: family, friends, church members, tribes men, fans, associates, etc.

Jude: What about membership of ethnic associations like religious groups and town meeting, did they make any reasonable contribution?

GGT: I am a Christian and I belong to church, political, social and cultural groups. You need to be there for people to know you. At my age and level of exposure, I cannot be hiding; my presence needs to be felt.

Jude: How has the UK environment influenced your expansion to larger market?

GGT: UK environment made much impact. Firstly, you have many Nigerians with desire cultural dishes. Their income is reasonably high and they are willing to enjoy their money. Also, in the UK, the infrastructures are there that will support your business. There is also a good transportation link between Nigeria and the UK.

Jude: Do you think that being in the UK has more advantages than being in other countries?

GGT: Yes it has especially in Europe. It may not be the best but it is among the best. I am not over greedy, this country favoured me and my family!

Jude: Has any support agency, regulatory authority, trade association or Nigerian agency assisted your expansion to larger market?

GGT: No… they are all promise and fail….

Jude: As a first generation immigrant entrepreneur, what do you consider as your advantage compared to second generation entrepreneurs?

GGT: Second generation as you called them cannot do this kind of business. It requires contact, knowledge of culture and the market. You need to be a son of the soil to do well in this area…..

Jude: What about disadvantages of being a first generation? Do you think there is any?

GGT: I don't think there is from my perspective… I am grateful to God for how far I have come.

Jude: What do you think you would have done differently if you were second generation?

GGT: I would have studied well and worked in big companies. Business is good but some jobs are better.

Jude: What lessons have you learnt from your experience in expanding to larger market?

GGT: Many of them….family and friend matter… put them first and you will succeed. Carry them along and grow with them. Secondly, do a business you are passionate about and have experience in. in terms of workers, get people you trust and that you can depend on. Also, diversify into many things that will please your customers. Listen to them and pay attention to their complaints. Use your business to help people and preach your culture. Tradition is not evil and living abroad does not mean you should forget where you came from.

Jude: Which pattern of expansion do you consider most effective?

GGT: I will suggest diversifying into many things that customers would desire. Study your customers and segment your products to please them and fit into their needs. For me,

I like opening businesses in different locations once there is a large customer base. In everything, remember home, because no place is like home.

Jude: In your opinion, how significant is opening a business in your home country in expanding to larger markets?

GGT: That should be the game my brother. A stranger is always a stranger. Make money and go back home. I am waiting for my children to finish school so I can go back to Nigeria. I kept running my Lagos business so that my name will not be lost.

Jude: What mistakes did you make in expanding to larger markets and how were they corrected?

GGT: Many of them… like the first location for my business. it was difficult to locate and there was no parking space. Second one was lack of speedy service and not taking social functions serious.

Jude: So how were they corrected?

GGT: Simple, I found a better location and trained my staff on better ways if treating customers. I also joined different groups and got interested in political forums. That made it easier for me to connect to people.

Jude: Thank you a million times, I really enjoyed talking with you. Thank you for sharing your ideas with me. Thank you so much for your time and responses. Please do you have any question or comment for me?

GGT: Yes, you said you are a consultant…. I need help in making some decisions like opening new locations, investment, and managing this business… its taking time and when I delegate, those people don't deliver.

Jude: …Haaaaaahahah… This is a big issue. I will be able to help if you wish. Let's discuss that later probably after COVID….

GGT: Yes… that's very important.

Jude: I am grateful. See you next time

GGT: Have a good day!

Appendix 8

Coding structure for data analysis

Parent code, child codes and categories/labels

S/N	Parent codes and child code	Categories/labels
Q 1	**Entrepreneur profile**	
1.1	Age	1.1a. Less than 35years 1.1b. 35 -50 years 1.1c. Above 50 years
1.2	Gender	1.2a. Male 1.2b. Female 1.3c. others
1.3	Highest Education qualification	1.3a. No formal education 1.3b. Basic education 1.3c. College 1.3d. Degree 1.3e. Postgraduate
1.4	Business experience	1.4a. Less than 6 years 1.4b. 7years -10 years 1.4c. Above 10years
1.5	Entrepreneurial orientation of the family	
1.6	Immigrant generation	1.6a. First generation 1.6b. Second generation
Q 2	**Business profile**	
2.1	Nature of business	
2.2	Duration of the business	2.2a. Less than 6years 2.2b. 6- 10 years 2.2c. Above 10 years
2.3	Sector	2.3a. Retail 2.3b. Services 2.3c. Construction 2.3d. Shipping/export

		2.3e. Entertainment 2.3f. Others
2.4	Number of employees	2.4a. Less than 10(Micro) 2.4b. 11 – 50 (Small) 2.4c. 51 – 250 (Medium) 2.4d. Others
2.5	Annual sales/revenue	2.5a. Less than 1.7 million (Micro) 2.5b. 1.8- 8.2 million (Small) 2.5c. 8.3 - 41million (Medium) 2.5c. Others
2.6	Customer-base	2.6a. Local -ethnic 2.6b. Non local -ethnic 2.6c. Non ethnic -local 2.6d. Non ethnic -non local 2.6e. Others
2.7	Geographical coverage	
Q3	**Operations**	
3.1	Ethnic composition of staff	3.1a. Strictly ethnic 3.1b. Predominantly ethnic 3.1c. Mixed 3.1d. Others
3.2	Nature of relationship with staff	3.2a. Formally contractual 3.2b. Informal/helpers 3.2c. Others
3.3	Nature of business book keeping/documentation	3.3a. Formal 3.3b. Informal 3.3c. Others
3.4	Source of inputs/supplies	

Q4 **4.1** **4.2** **4.3** **4.4**	**Industry dynamics** Nature of competition in the industry Strategies for handling competition Competitive advantage of the business Competitive weakness of the business	4.1a. Intensity 4.1b. Drivers
Q5 **5.1** **5.2** **5.3** **5.4** **5.5** **5.6**	**Breakout conceptualization:** Motives for breakout Breakout dimensions Breakout trajectories(Pattern) Breakout strategies Breakout drivers Breakout challenges	
Q6 **6.1** **6.2** **6.3** **6.4** **6.5**	**Breakout experience** Breakout Mistakes Nature of organizational learning/correction Breakout artifacts/learning Opinion on breakout pattern Opinion on transnational breakout	

Q7 **7.1** **7.2** **7.3** **7.4**	**Transnational space** Influence of Home country condition on breakout Influence of digital technology on breakout Influence of third countries/diaspora communities Influence of the UK environment	
Q8 **8.1** **8.2** **8.3** **8.4** **8.5**	**First and second generation identity** Advantages of being a Nigerian entrepreneur Challenges of being Nigerian entrepreneur Generational advantage Generational disadvantages What to do if opposite identity/generation	
Q9 **9.1** **9.2** **9.3**	**Social network** Structure of social network Ethnic and religious group association Assistance from support institutions	 9.1a.Composition 9.1b. Contributions to breakout 9.3a. Membership status 9.3b. Contributions to breakout

Note:

- ✓ Parent codes/themes are in bold letters
- ✓ Child codes are the subtitles