

CROSSING THE BOUNDARY: TRANSNATIONALITY AND INTERRACIAL
MARRIAGE ENCOUNTERS IN JANE KATJAVIVI'S *UNDISCIPLINED HEART* AND
TRUDIE AMULUNGU'S *TAMING MY ELEPHANT*

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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ABSTRACT

The main focus of the study was to explore the literary presentation of transnational identities and interracial marriage encounters as presented by two Namibian autobiographical texts, *Taming my Elephant* by Amulungu (2017) and *Undisciplined Heart* by Katjavivi (2010). It evaluated the strategies employed by the authors to explore the sense of 'belonging' as well as the joys and challenges experienced in interracial marriages. Guided and informed by the autobiography theory and the diaspora and transnationalism theory as the theoretical frameworks, this qualitative study revealed the different challenges faced by the couples from different backgrounds. Issues of communication breakdowns, a lack of understanding of the partner's background, racial differences and indifferences in the communities were elucidated. The couples' families each hesitated to welcome the spouse into the family. The couples' relationships and motivations were varied and shifting and their interactions created opportunities for the circulation, promotion, and adaptation of a great range of cultural, political and social influences. Tracing these interactions within and among liberation movements, their hosts, and a wider set of external actors, reveals lasting legacies that have too often been eclipsed by dominant national histories. The couples and their families had challenges adapting to countries of varying traditions and languages. The children became misfits in the new school environments and trying to overcome adversity in strange environments. They felt distanced and alienated from their cultures, which negatively affected their family relationships and performance in school. The study postulates that the authors are pioneers and persistent beings and are portrayed as compassionate, assertive, and enduring persons. Through unity, the strong family bond, the

support of friends, and the community in which these couples lived as presented by Katjavivi and Amulungu, the authors preserved.

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DEDICATION

This Master's thesis is dedicated to my precious daughter Peyonyofi. Thank you for being the motor of my life, and thank you for giving me the strength to achieve my goals.

DECLARATION

I, Selma Shiyoka, hereby declare that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any institution of higher education.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

This chapter serves as an introduction to the study. The chapter discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitations of the study and the delimitations of the study.

1.2. Background of the study

According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in 2015 3.3% of the world's population lived outside their country of origin. This figure points to a large number of families on the move, a flux of volatile interactions, and a network of long distance communications as well as mixed race relationships. This phenomenon has found expression in literary pieces, specifically in the works of Katjavivi (2010) and Amulungu (2016). This study critically explored the literary presentations of transnationality and interracial marriages in Namibian literature through Katjavivi's *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Amulungu's *Taming my Elephant* (2016). Transnationalism, from a literary perspective, is an understanding of migration as a multi-sited social space experienced simultaneously by communities across borders (Vertovec, 1999). Migrants are thus conceptualised as "transmigrants", as they develop and maintain multiple relations – familial, economic, social, organisational, religious and political, that span borders (Charsley, 2012), as evidenced in the two selected texts.

According to Baldassar, Baldock and Wilding (2007), “the resulting idea of the ‘transnational family’ is intended to capture the growing awareness that members of families retain their sense of collectivity and kinship in spite of being spread across multiple nations” (p. 17). In order to understand the core idea presented in the selected texts with regards to the transnational family, it is befitting that an explanation of family is provided.

The definition of family includes both nuclear and extended types, whose members are actively engaged in family survival and maintenance, ranging from those whose involvement is extensive and constant to those whose roles are more marginal. These roles and the extent of engagement can change over time and across the life cycle. For this reason, the definition of transnational caregiving includes a wide variety of care exchanges (Baldassar, Baldock, & Wilding, 2007). Finch and Mason’s (1993) model of family support states that five dimensions of care are distinguished: financial and material (including cash remittances or goods such as food, clothing, and paying household and other bills), practical (exchanging advice and assisting with tasks), emotional and moral support aimed at improving psychological well-being, personal care (like feeding and bathing), and accommodation (providing shelter and security). This multidimensional definition of care enables distinctions between caring practices that can be exchanged across borders through the use of communication technologies (typically financial and emotional), proximate caring practices that occur during visits, and proxy caring practices, involving the coordination of support provided by others (Wilding, 2006; Baldassar, 2008; Kilkey & Merla, 2013). All these types of care can be exchanged in transnational settings but to varying degrees and subject to a variety of

factors, including gender, ethnic, class, and power hierarchies as well as the cultural and structural histories of welfare regimes as the two texts in this study demonstrate from a literary perspective.

Transnational caregiving, just like caregiving in all families (whether separated by migration or not), binds members together in intergenerational networks of reciprocity and obligation, love, and trust that are simultaneously fraught with tension, contest, and relations of unequal power as shown in Katjavivi's *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Amulungu's *Taming my Elephant* (2016). Baldassar (2008) claims that the exchange of care in families is inherently reciprocal and asymmetrical, governed by the norm of generalized reciprocity – the expectation that the giving of care must ultimately be reciprocated, although it may not always be realized (Finch & Mason, 1993). People give care without measuring exactly the amount they receive, but with the expectation and obligation that care will be returned to them. Family members often carefully monitor these exchanges, and they are governed by the multiple and constantly negotiated family commitments, intimate and unequal power relations that characterize family life. As this care is given and returned at different times and to varying degrees across the life course, Baldassar (2008) further argues that the care could be described as circulating among family members over time as well as distance. This care circulation frame-work helps to capture all the actors involved in family life as well as the full extent of their care activity, including practical, emotional, and symbolic, that defines their membership in a family. It also helps to avoid the narrower definition of both family and caregiving that tends to define these processes in dominant Western conceptualizations. However, this narrative is challenged when heterogeneous family

formations across renewal and political tides are put to the test, thus the present study aimed at exploring their expressions from a literary perspective.

A central concern in this study is about how interracial marriages are presented through the selected autobiographies. Interracial marriage can be defined as intimate cohabiting relationships, regardless of their legal status, comprising of partners from different nationalities, religious affiliations and/or ethnic and racial origins (Törngren, 2011). The present study sought to frame the idea of connected communities and to expound on the formation of transcultural identities and the dynamics of cultural change or retention (Garcia, 2006) as employed by various characters and themes in the selected texts. Exploring social attitudes towards transnational intermarriages also enables contending theories of the complex phenomenon of transnationalisation to be tested, which is a rich site of literary exploration using life narratives as is the case the present study. According to some modernisation theorists (Inglehart & Norris 2003) and world society (Meyer 2010), the conjecture of ‘transnational convergence’ posits that socioeconomic development, transnational trade, and population mobility between nation states may help establish a transnational marriage market and reduce social distance between countries and regions, thus fostering positive attitudes towards transnational marriages (Routledge, 2003 and Vertovec, 2009). Nevertheless, the opposite may hold true, because people may resist or resent rapid sociocultural homogenisation and pursue greater distinctions across nation states and it is such resistant views to essentialist views that pined for an exploration in the present study, as a way to offer nuanced literary criticisms to an ever-present but under-explored phenomenon in Namibian autobiographical criticism.

Through their novels, the authors forge life strategies through simultaneous positioning in several social (and territorial) locations (Williams, 2012). In an increasingly interconnected world, understanding the formation of transnational orientations is of great importance, particularly through self-reporting as is the case in autobiographical writings. Attitudes towards transnational intermarriages tell of people's view of the transnational world and their perception of the social distance between countries and regions. The transnational and interracial couples have an additional layer of raising children which involves the normative negotiation between partners of parenting roles and practices, but also the complexities that arise from differing values, the distance from extended family support, and the societal scrutiny of these parents due to their visible racial differences as seen in Katjavivi and Amulungu's autobiographies. Themes of multiculturalism, multilingualism, tolerance, intolerance and identity are prevalent in the selected texts and these themes are the foundation upon which the present study is anchored. As life stories that sprouted during a setting of immense socio-political and racial upheavals in pre-independent Namibia, the two texts share a common factor that can be expressed as a form of crossing the "boundary fence", which is a metaphor to express how the authors lived transnationally and are a visible expression of crossing the colour-bar through one of the most intimate and personal choices ever – the act of marriage.

1.3. Statement of the problem

The problem investigated is how transnationality and interracial encounters and marriages are presented in the selected autobiographies. The issue of migration and

interracial relations is of significant importance in the global world, yet it is not a widely researched phenomenon in the available Namibian literary criticisms. The societal pressures that interracial couples face are considerable and these may negatively impact their relationship. Society's dominant discourse "imposes imbalances of power and privilege" (Killian, 2001, p. 23) and shapes lives and relationships, whether people are aware of it or not. In studies of interracial couples, racial minority partners report their own sensitivity towards negative reactions in social contexts while their partners are seen as less sensitive to these responses (Killian, 2001). When the positions of the partner and parent of a multi-ethnic child in intermarriages intersect, the experience of discrimination can be further compounded. If experiences of micro-aggression and racism are not acknowledged, or are minimized, and or are rejected as being hypersensitive, partners experiencing the discrimination may feel unsupported.

The present researcher therefore investigated how the autobiographies present the exilic experiences from the perspective of transnationality and interracial marriages. This study promotes critical enquiry into the dynamics of cultural exchange, representation, mediation and interpretation from a literary perspective. This is a largely un-investigated research area in literary studies within the Namibian context; however, with increasing migration worldwide, the availability of potential partners both within and outside national borders are, to a greater extent, enhanced. Interracial relationships were considered a taboo before independence and even after independence they are still considered as such (Cindy Van Wyk, 2014). Hence the current study explored how the authors managed transnational identities and interracial marriages using their practical and lived experiences.

1.4. Objectives of the study

The study aimed to:

- Explore the literary presentation of transnational identities as presented in the autobiographies under study;
- Evaluate the strategies employed by the authors to enhance their sense of 'belonging' in the selected texts under study; and
- Examine the challenges and benefits encountered in interracial marriages as presented in the selected texts under study.

1.5. Significance of the study

The study contributes to the creation and dissemination of knowledge since it addresses contemporary overarching issues such as that of transnationalism and especially interracial marriages which appears to be a controversial issue in Namibia today. The study also contributes to the body of knowledge on transnationality and interracial marriages in a global and globalizing world and it may help clarify stereotypes associated with issues on racial assimilation as well as integration.

1.6. Limitations of the study

This study was confined to the examination of transnationalism and interracial marriage encounters in the Namibian autobiographies of Jane Katjavivi (2010) and

Trudie Amulungu (2016); hence the results cannot be generalized to other literary works on transnationality and interracial marriages and or all Namibian autobiographies.

1.7. Delimitations of the study

The scope of the study is limited to two Namibian autobiographies so as to cater for research manageability and also due to the limited scope of the study. The study was also restricted theoretically to the diaspora and transnationalism theory as well as the autobiography theoretical lens which informed this study.

1.8 Outline of Chapters

The study comprises of five chapters. Chapter 1 orients the study; it provides the introduction, spells out the gap in literature in the statement of the problem, explains the significance of the study, the objectives and limitation of the study, as well as the delimitations of the study.

Chapter 2 reviews literature on the international history of interracial marriage, whilst providing an overview of transnationality, looking at how interracial marriages are formed and how they survive. Autobiography theory, diaspora and transnationalism theory are discussed and analysed to find out how its ideas reveal the endurance of interracial marriages for transnational couples.

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology which covers the research design, the population of the study, the sample, procedure as well as the data analysis of the study and the ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 analyses the two texts and presents the challenges faced by transnational interracially married couples, how children coped and survived in the diaspora and how those challenges are experienced as presented in Jane Katjavivi's *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Trudie Amulungu's *Taming my elephant* (2016).

Chapter 5 gives the conclusion, which highlights the main arguments of the study, and presents summative conclusions on the major findings of the study. The chapter also provides recommendations for future research on mixed race encounters and transnationalism.

1.8 Chapter summary

This chapter introduced the study. It presented the background of the study; the problem statement; research objectives; the significance of the study, and the limitations as well as the delimitations of the study. The next chapter discusses the literature review for the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to orient the study by reviewing the literature related to the focus of the study, which is the literary transnationalism and interracial marriages as illustrated in Jane Katjavivi's *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Trudie Amulungu's *Taming my Elephant* (2016). The chapter is arranged according to the following subtopics: the international history of interracial marriages, the characteristics of transnational couples, the challenges within transnational marriages, theories on interracial couple formation, and characteristics of those who intermarry and issues impacting interracial marriages. The reviews of Katjavivi's *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Amulungu's *Taming my Elephant*, (2016) are also provided. The section also incorporates the autobiography theory, and the diaspora and transnationalism theory, which are the theoretical frameworks that informed this study.

This study aimed to explore the literary presentation of survival techniques of transnational citizens in interracial marriages, stemming from the understanding that international migration and the permanent settlement of immigrants globally has been heightened due to the growing number of interracial marriages and the formation of transnational families. Although interracial marriages are now legal, they are still a highly controversial topic. Interracial relationships challenge racial polarity on a broader societal level by transgressing "racist expectations of homogamy, social conformity, and segregation" (Killian, 2001, p. 40). Killian (2001) further proposes that sexually intimate

relationships, because of their privileged positioning in modern cultural life, are abler than other kinds of relations to shape and transform our being and relating practices. Attitudes towards interracial marriages in Namibia indicate the degree of transition the country has achieved thus far. As Lewis and Yancey (1995, as cited in Yancey & Yancey, 1997, p. 650) observe, “negative attitudes toward interracial unions...provide for formidable psychological and emotional barriers to interracial contact, helping to maintain a racially stratified society”. Therefore, it is this phenomenon of interracial marriages in the autobiographies under study that need to be explored as there is poverty of literary criticism on this phenomenon within the Namibian context.

Thus, this research fits into the broader context of academic enquiry into interracial relationships and transnationality. The results of the study have relevance for future research in the areas of interracial relationships, interracial families, transnationality and the diaspora, amongst others especially as presented in literary studies. This study analysed the survival of interracial relationships and transnational citizens. Although the number of interracial marriages and transnationalism is increasing each year (Kalmijn, 1993; Killian, 2001; Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan, 1990), the topic is still understudied in Namibia. The majority of the literature in the field focuses on companion selection criteria, the characteristics of those who date interracially, and why people choose to marry outside of their own race (Lewis & Yancey, 1997; Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan, 1990) and not what couples’ lives are like once they get married or form a committed union.

While it may be true that there are more acceptances of interracial marriages today than in the past, it has also been found that interracial marriages struggle for many reasons (Foeman & Nance, 1999). The texts under study explored socio-demographic profiles, transnationality, the dynamics of cultural change or retention, and the formation of transcultural identities.

2.2. The international history of interracial marriages

From as far back as biblical times, interracial marriages have been an ever-present phenomenon, and accounting for their existence in a study of limited scope as the present one cannot be exhaustive. However, in order to provide direction and perspective, the international history of interracial marriages is provided with selectivity here. Whilst these insights are not from purely literary researches, the general idea provided from other disciplines and from other geographical can help us to understand the life stories under study. In the United States of America most states (at one stage forty out of fifty) enacted laws against racially mixed unions and marriages (Phoenix & Owen, 2000). The categories of who was forbidden to marry varied between states, but all forbade marriage between black and white (Reuter, 1931, as cited in Phoenix & Owen, 2000). These laws were only declared unconstitutional as late as 1967 (Young, 1995, as cited in Phoenix & Owen, 2000). However, census data from 1980 to 1987 show a small but consistent increase of interracial marriages in the United States since 1970 (Spigner, 1994, as cited in Lewis, Yancey, & Bletzer, 1997). Research undertaken from 1992 to 1994 found that within black-white marriages in the United States, non-racial factors was more important in spouse selection than racial factors (Lewis et al., 1997). In 1998 the rate of interracial marriage in the United States was just over 24 per

1000 married couples (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1999, as cited in Crowder & Tolnay, 2000). This is extremely low, but an increase from fewer than 4 interracial marriages out of 1000 married couples in 1960 (Crowder & Tolnay, 2000). A nationally representative sample of 17219 children from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study in 1998 indicated that 10.4 per cent of the children were the products of interracial unions (Brunsma, 2005). Therefore, it indicates that most interracial liaisons produced children and this is important as it helps to foreground what is presented in the texts discussed in the present literary study.

Taking cognisance of the fact that Katjavivi is originally from the United Kingdom and that her relationship sprouted from there, some highlights of the country's position on mixed marriages help shed light on the context of the novel. Unlike the United States of America, there were no legal restrictions on mixed marriages in Britain (Tizard & Phoenix, 1993). This may have been due to the fact that even up until the mid-1950s, the number of black people in Britain was marginal – 15 000 or less (Tizard & Phoenix, 1993). The results of the 1991 Census Sample of Anonymised Records for Great Britain show that although 99 per cent of white men and women living with a partner had a white partner, among the three black groups, black-white couples ranged from 17.5 to 51 per cent for black males, and 14.3 to 43.8 per cent for black females (Phoenix & Owen, 2000). The percentages of South Asian people with white partners was much lower, with the highest percentage being eight per cent for Indian men with white partners, and the lowest figure being for Bangladeshi women, who had no white partners. This information is therefore important as it helps to contextualise the setting from where

Katjavivi comes from as she is of British origin and she subsequently married her husband Peter Katjavivi in Britain.

In an effort to put an end to racial hatred and vilification, Australia abolished overtly racist laws and policies towards both indigenous peoples and immigrants during the 1960s and 1970s and ushered in an era of supposed 'multiculturalism' (Castles & Vasta, 1999). Despite these and other attempts to confront racial inequalities in Australia, racism persists (Castles & Vasta, 1999; Sonn, 2006). Castles and Vasta (1999) remarked that Australia is in the "contradictory position of being both a multicultural and a multiracist society" (p. 309). By this they mean that there exists no single racism in Australia, no simple black-white dichotomy, but rather "there is a whole range of intersecting sets of ideas and practices among different groups, which in turn interact with ideas and practices concerning class and gender" (Castles & Vasta, 1999, p. 309). It is inevitable that these ideas and practices would necessarily impact upon the attitudes towards, and prevalence of, interracial intimate relationships in Australia. This is similarly experienced by authors in the texts under study as exemplified by Trudie when she explains: "So I was fully aware that my stay in Swakopmund would stand out. Although there would be many other back people moving around during day time, they would have to move where they belonged at the strike of the knocking off hour" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 276).

Returning to nineteenth century New Zealand, the Maoris were robbed of land and resources by the whites, but retained other human rights, including the right to choose a marriage partner (Grimshaw, 2002). Relationships and marriages between Maori women

and white men were common at the time. It is proposed that intermarriage offered Maori women entry to the middle class, whereas Maori men rose in class through the medium of professional training (Grimshaw, 2002). This illustrates another instance where racism and sexism converged in that Maori men could ‘improve’ themselves through education and climbing the social ladder, but the only resource seen available to Maori women was that of sexuality and reproduction. Wetherell and Potter (1992) conducted an in-depth discursive study of racism in contemporary New Zealand, and found that covert racism took the place of more overt forms. They discovered that the ideological justification of exploitative social relations was not necessarily based on “emotions of distaste, on anti-black affect, on ideas of hierarchies of civilization or on white people’s concepts of innate superiority and inferiority”, but that people’s justifications for racist beliefs and actions took the form of supposedly “less objectionable and much more familiar” arguments, such as the rhetoric of equal opportunities (Wetherell and Potter, 1992). Although their study did not specifically explore interracial intimate relationships, it can be assumed that these disguised racist discourses would impact on both the attitudes towards interracial relationships, as well as the prevalence of such relationships as discussed in chapter 4, section 4.5.3 of the study.

According to Guimarães (1999) it is commonly believed that in Brazil and in Latin America in general, there is no racial prejudice, just colour prejudice. Skin colour and appearance carry more weight than origin in the Brazilian social hierarchy. Azevedo (1955, p. 90, as cited in Guimarães, 1999, p. 319) elaborates that “since colour and somatic traits function, to a great degree, as symbols of status, resistance to intermarriage suggests both class and race prejudice”. In this system where whiter skin was

(and is) related to higher social status, colour has become the code for race. This is similar to Amulungu who recounts the shock of her father after introducing her future husband, Wilfried to him such that the father had to retort: “But this Wilfried is white” (Amulungu , 2016, p. 251). Thus the colour (race) of Amulungu’s spouse was horrific as the family did not expect it.

To say that this prejudice that is based on the skin colour is not racist would be erroneous, as Guimarães (1999) noted that a person can only have colour and be classified according to the skin colour if an ideology exists that affords meaning to the colour of people. It is only within the ideology of racism that people have ‘colour’. Hence intermarriage was sought by ‘darker’ people with ‘whiter’ people in order to improve their social standing and hence life circumstances (Guimarães, 1999). However, the autobiography of Amulungu dispute this ideology, as Amulungu recounts a description of her husband Wilfried, by her brother that: “You then met a man who is kind, caring and so forth. Provide a heap of good qualities about Wilfried to give her father a good picture of the man!” (Amulungu, 2016, p. 250). It is such aspects which are further explored in Chapter 4 to argue that the possible reason for interracial marriages for Katjavivi and Amulungu was purely out of love.

The focus on somatic features, its role in the social hierarchy, and the impact on marriage patterns closely resemble that of the West Indies, and Henriques’ (1968) discussion of Jamaica in particular. Henriques (1968) explains that in Jamaica ‘colour’ is evaluated in terms of literal skin colour, hair formation, features, and skin texture. All of these aspects are assessed in relation to the degree with which they match the white

European ideal. The value of particular characteristics varies from island to island in the West Indies. Henriques (1968) emphasises the ‘white bias’ that affects the Jamaican population, and sees the practices of hair straightening and skin bleaching, as well the male practice of marrying or cohabiting with a woman of ‘better’ or lighter colour, as indicators of the degree to which society is influenced by this ‘white bias’. It is said to be the male prerogative to ‘marry light’ in order to improve his social prestige, whereas women make do with marrying someone darker than themselves with the proviso that their husbands are financially successful. However, the texts under study provided a contrasting and positive view on interracial marriages, farther supporting the notion of equal races.

In his seminal work, *‘Black skin, white masks’*, Fanon (1967) describes the lived experience of black people in the Antilles, and in Martinique in particular. He devoted a sizeable chunk of this work to discussing interracial intimate relationships, and although his discussion thereof is marred by sexism (Hook, 2004), he sees the pursuit of white sexual or marriage partners by black individuals as attempts to ascend the social hierarchy, and moreover as motivated by the idea of “lactification” (Fanon, 1967, p. 47). Hook (2004, p. 98) defines Fanon’s lactification as the “idea of the possibility of moderating one’s race, of lessening the degree of one’s blackness, and ‘becoming whiter’”. Lactification could supposedly be achieved by the mastery of a white language, the acquisition of white culture, and the achievement of wealth. It is argued that marrying a white spouse would be an avenue to lactification or perhaps proof that lactification had been achieved. Whereas Henriques (1968) avers that black women in Jamaica would marry a darker man as long as they were compensated by his financial

status, Fanon (1967) paints a different picture of the black women in the Antilles: Fanon (1976) argues that it is always essential to avoid falling back into the pit of ‘niggerhood’, and every woman in the Antilles, whether in casual flirtation or in a serious affair, is determined to select the least black of the men (Fanon, 1967, p. 47). Therefore, it is critical that such ideas found in literature be put to the test using the Namibian literary setting as expressed by Katjavivi and Amulungu.

2.3. Characteristics of transnational couples

Transnationalism is a study of borderlines; between identities, citizenships, affiliations or belongings. Transnationalism scholars have drawn attention to the fact that the field often neglects to focus on the major focus in immigration - the people who migrate: “When we study migration rather than abstract cultural flows and representations, we see that transnational processes are located within the life experience of individuals and families, making up the contexture of daily activities, concerns, fears, and achievements” (Glick-Schiller, 1995, p. 51). The transnational experience is an individual experience, and as such, highly personalized and contextual. It is therefore, these personalised and contextual experiences that find full expression in the autobiographical text, a genre that is in itself also highly personal and contextual, that this study explored as there are gaps in the literary criticism of Namibian autobiographies.

Transnational couples are people who are active participants in the social and cultural lives of the host country. Glick-Schiller (1995) emphasizes that these couples are “at the same time, engaged elsewhere in the sense that they maintain connections, build

institutions, conduct transactions, and influence local and national events in the countries from which they emigrated” (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2003, p. 48). This concurs with the literary texts under study, as narrated by Katjavivi (2010, p. 20) “When Perivi was three, we took him to Botswana to meet Peter’s family who had driven to Gaborone from Windhoek for that purpose”. Peter and Jane lived in Oxford at the time, where they worked and studied, but they were still connected to Namibia, and had to travel to make sure that their child met his paternal relatives.

Rosenfeld (2007) has shown that people who are in the position of moving from one place to the other either temporarily or permanently are more likely to be in a transnational relationship. Mobility and the ability to travel are shown to be an important factor and catalyst for more non-traditional relationships such as transnational couples. Transnational couples are not bound by traditional views and expectations to the same degree as more traditional couples, and they tend to be freer in their mindset (Rosenfeld, 2007). There are different tendencies between males and females that are found within these groups towards their choice of partner especially those that marry interracially (Rensing, 2017). Additionally, the rates of transnational couples are very different based on the geographic location. Katjavivi and Amulungu both met their spouses outside Namibia whilst engaged in the struggle for the liberation of Namibia. Jane Katjavivi in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) met her husband Peter, in Oxford as Katjavivi narrates: “Peter had left Namibia in 1962 in search for education and to work with SWAPO for Namibian independence”. Similarly, Trudie Amulungu in *Taming my Elephant* (2016) started her journey in 1977, when SWAPO soldiers came to her Catholic school in

Anamulenge and mobilized all students and took them into exile to Angola (Amulungu, 2016).

Research has placed much emphasis on the reasons that determine transnational relationships by looking at being rebellious against strict parents and age differences between the couples (Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan, 1990). However, this is disputed by Katjavivi and Amulungu, whose parents have not played any role in their relationship choices, and the age was insignificant, Katjavivi does not state the age in her text, and for Amulungu, although she stated the age, it was a non-contributing factor.

Furthermore, studies have revealed the use of social status of the dominant group in order to gain from the minority group. This is explored by looking at the Basic Exchange Theory. The member from the minority group will trade up to marry an individual from another group to gain either influence, wealth and/or power by them trading beauty and intelligence (Troy, Lewis- Smith & Laurenceau, 2006).

Törngren (2011) points out the importance of friendship for transnational couples as the variable that has the strongest effect on attitude towards couples. Friendship with more diverse groups, not a specific group, results in more positive attitude towards transnational couples (Törngren, 2011). Such different views and disagreements in literature therefore call for confirmation and or refutation through the test of the selected Namibians autobiographies as explored in chapter 4 of this study.

Couples in these kinds of romantic relationships are seen as contributors towards the shaping of social and cultural profiles, directly and indirectly, of their host countries. Transnational couples are less likely to identifying with a single group due to their relationships with people from different cultural spheres. This is due to the ‘crossing of boundaries’ between groups when having a romantic relationship, which causes a change to ripple down from them to their descendants. This expands their networks’ knowledge of the differences within groups and in turn weakens the stereotypes which people are subjected to by belonging to a different group (Lanzieri, 2012). This is also described in the Socio-cultural perspective as the way people behave and the mental processes that are shaped partly by their cultural and social contact (Sanderson, 2010). Hence, this study aimed to not only discuss the challenges faced by transnational couples in interracial marriages but most importantly how the couples survived those challenges, and the selected texts demonstrate such phenomenon as the most challenging in their relationships.

2.4. Challenges within transnational couples

Katjavivi in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Amulungu in *Taming my Elephant* (2016) were unexpectedly faced with challenges in their transnational quest as discussed in chapter 4 of the study, section 4.4.2. Amulungu reminisces a period of a failed marriage, the cultural shock and a racist attack (Rensing, 2017). Culture has a great influence on how people think, how they act, how they feel, how they speak and how they listen in different situations. It is not only necessary for the spouses to find a common language, preferably the language spoken in the host country, but also to find an effective way of communicating without misunderstandings. In *Undisciplined Heart* (2010), Jane

experienced the difficulties with the language (Otjiherero) of her husband, Peter. In some light moments, Jane remembers how she also would try to overcome this challenge: “*Kora?* - how are you’ I tried, using one of my few Herero words. I didn’t know how to express the excitement, tiredness, fear and strangeness that I felt” (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 25). Communication barriers in relationships as these ones in the texts under study are common and this is but one of the challenges encountered in transnational and interracial marriages as Chapter 4 of the present study illustrates.

Many cross-cultural relationships break down not only because the spouses speak different languages but because they have different understandings of communication itself (Tomalin & Hurn, 2013). To be able to create a successful romantic relationship, the spouses have to acknowledge their different cultural backgrounds as these affect the way the spouses relate to the language and how they express themselves. It is therefore important for the spouses to create a shared perspective with a common foundation to stand on as shown in Chapter 4 section 4.5.1 and section 4.6 of the present study. Without a common and shared perspective, the two partners will view and interpret situations in very different ways, which can lead to irritation and conflict and in the long run lower marital satisfaction.

Therefore, from a literary perspective, this study will look at how the different transnational couples deal with the issues of multiculturalism and how they create a common and shared perspective. This study also looks at what situations transnational couples face and how they handle these situations. It is important that transnational couples realize and actively work on trying to understand each other to try to minimize

the sources of conflict by emphasizing their similarities and appreciating their interpersonal differences within the relationship (Assumpta, Paz Sandín & Paz Sandín, 2009; Chiswick & Houseworth, 2011; Fu, Tora & Kendall, 2001) and this is presented in Chapter 4, section 4.5.1 and section 4.6 of the current study.

2.5. Transnational families

Members of transnational families maintain a sense of family hood (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002) in that they continue to feel that they belong to a family even though they may not see each other or be physically present very often or for extended periods of time. Transnational families are constructed between different nation states, thereby constituting imagined and reflexive, real and changing communities (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002); and as indicated in the texts under study, both authors have lived life in different states thus forging relationships everywhere they went. This is experienced by Trudie in *Taming my Elephant* (2016), where she states that:

One day by mere coincidence I bumped into a lady who would become my mother in exile. Although I consider myself as having had a number of ‘exile mothers’, this one was going to shape my life in exile, and my future to a certain extent, significantly. (Amulungu, 2016, p.180)

Such views are explored at length in Chapter 4 of the present study. These trans-boundary processes also involve creating transnational methodologies in order to understand the construction of shared memories, feelings of belonging, network ties, mutual obligations, and strategies for the management of conflicts and power dynamics. Easily idealized as porous and cosmopolitan formations (Vertovec, 2009), transnational

families become a heuristic focus to study both processes towards conservatism and homogenisation and processes of contestation and pluralisation, as well as the emergence of different forms of cultural hybridity (Werbner, 2004). Therefore, they also constitute identity realities, characterized by a continuous exchange of judgements (between “us” and “them”, “here” and “there”, “then” and “now”) that are mobilized in the renegotiation of the value image of family units and their members (Bastos-Trovão, 2010), which is an issue which both Amulungu (2016) and Katjavivi (2010) seem to engage whether consciously or unconsciously in their autobiographies as demonstrated in the present study.

Moreover, research in some non-literary circles shows that both parents and children can feel emotional loss and display depressive and stress symptoms as a result of the separation. Ethnographic accounts of transnational parent-child separation indicate that parent-child relationships often suffer due to geographical separation. Additionally, parents reported that, while they keep parenting across borders, emotional gaps arise between them and their children (Fresnoza-Flot, 2009). In the present study, some parents such as Jane Katjavivi, separated with the son when he was still a teenager and she claims that she was unable to build a solid relationship before his departure, resulting in feelings of alienation and insecurity in the child as discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.4.2 of the present study.

Furthermore, for these parents, it is often difficult to see their children being more attached to their caregivers as opposed to them as the biological parents, and even more challenging when their children react with indifference during their visits (Banfi &

Boccagni, 2011; Fresnoza-Flot, 2009). As Jane Katjavivi's example indicates, some parents feel that they lose parental authority when the separation lengthens, leading to possible tension and conflict (Boccagni, 2012). As a result of this loss of intimacy and their longing for their children, parents' emotional well-being gets affected as parents feel alone and disempowered, and, especially in child-related crises such as the illness of a child, parents can feel hopeless and powerless (Mazzucato, 2011). In addition, as a result of given parenting ideologies, the difficulties with separation that children express, and the resulting accusations that children make, many transnational parents feel guilty, ashamed and embarrassed about 'abandoning' their children (Banfi & Boccagni, 2011; Bernhard, Landolt, & Goldring, 2009; Boccagni, 2012; Parreñas, 2005; Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012). These views therefore provide the backbone to the literary discussions presented in Chapter 4, section 4.4.2 of the current study.

In parallel with anthropologists and sociologists, psychologists have established an association between family separation and immigrant mental health (Horton, 2009), but this strand of research has remained limited in literary studies hence there is a gap for the current study. As indicated above, children are also impacted by the separation. Some children feel lonely and abandoned because of the separation, resulting in low emotional well-being and health, and children in transnational families have been found to display behavioural problems and perform less well at school in comparison to their peers (Parreñas, 2005; Smith, 2006). This is expressed by Jane Katjavivi in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) when her son Perivi leaves her parents' home in Namibia for the United Kingdom to study films. Jane Katjavivi pointed out how the son did not

do well as school and thereby ended up working in a night club and this point is further amplified in Chapter 4 of the present study.

One of the critical issues in the exploration of transnationality and inter-racial marriage encounters is the role that social networks play to mitigate the challenges faced by individuals. Research in other disciplines of inquiry into this phenomenon has also shown the importance of social networks. Social networks in both the country of origin and destination are crucial in deciding who migrates because these networks provide the information that is necessary to make this decision and these are also important for arranging childcare (Bernardi, 2011). Bryceson and Vuorela (2002) state that moving with the whole nuclear family, that is, parents and children of school age, is unlikely unless childcare and schooling in the host country have been seriously considered and arranged. Transnational families, Bryceson and Vuorela (2002) argue, have to cope with multiple national residences, identities and loyalties. Like other families, transnational families are not biological units per se, but social constructions or 'imagined communities' that must mediate inequality amongst their members, including differences in access to mobility, resources, various types of capital and lifestyles (Bryceson and Vuorela 2002:). Oso and Ribas-Mateos (2013) argue that continuity in social family networks across borders is generally seen as conducive to human development and often underlies the formation of transnational institutions that can further economic development in the countries of origin. Thus, the aim of this study was to find out how families manage transnationally, the constraints faced and as well as how those were survived and the two autobiographies presents these facets of life through the lived experiences of Katjavivi and Amulungu.

2.6. Theories on interracial couple formation

Several theories have been offered on why people intermarry and how those marriages progress, one of the theories is the structural theory. Structural theory states that interracial marriages are more frequent in a setting where there is a community structure in place that supports and sanctions interracial marriages as well as when society becomes increasingly desensitized to the stigma of interracial marriage (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002). Recent attention given to interracial marriage in the media and in popular literature along with more people living and working in more integrated environments has led to an increased acceptance of heterogeneous relationships (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002). In the texts under study, both narrators met their spouses outside Namibia before independence, as those countries had accepted interracial relationships unlike Namibia at the time.

Another prevalent theory on why people choose to marry outside of their race is the social exchange theory. As it pertains to interracial marriage, social exchange theory states that when white women marry black men, who usually are of higher economic status, they exchange the prestige of their skin colour for the black husband's higher economic status (Kalmijn, 1993; Lewis & Yancey, 1997). However, black women have been found to marry down in both interracial and same race unions, which seem to prove that black-white interracial marriage is more complex than just an exchange of status (Foeman & Nance, 1999). This is evident in the texts under study and chapter 4, section 4.5.1 explores this phenomenon.

Kouri and Lasswell (1993) discuss an additional theory, which attempts to account for the formation of interracial relationships; the racial motivation theory. The racial motivation theory states that many interracial marriages take place because of racial differences, not in spite of them. From this viewpoint, it is believed that curiosity about those who are different increases the sexual interest one may have to a person of a different race. This theory also says that those who intermarry may be acting in rebellion against social norms of racial endogamy and using the marriage as a way to state their independence (Kouri & Lasswell, 1993). The autobiographies under study support this argument as stated by Rensing (2017) that *Taming My Elephant* is a direct attempt to “erase the ugly scars of apartheid”- and as such Trudie and Wilfried’s romance is an example of a progressive couple attempting to counteract the consequences of colonial rule in Namibia. Their story shows how reconciliation can work in the private sphere and this line of argument is further explored in the analysis of the two autobiographies as presented in Chapter 4.

Foeman and Nance (1999) have offered one of the most comprehensive theories on “how” interracial relationships develop. They discuss what they believe are the four stages that interracial couples go through in the formation of their relationship. The four stages include (a) racial awareness, (b) coping, (c) identity emergence, and (d) maintenance. Racial awareness is defined as an interpersonal and cultural experience where two individuals become acquainted and familiar with the similarities and differences between them and subsequently create a shared belief that the relationship can work. Foeman and Nance (1999), further state that within this stage, there are four sublevels of awareness that are operating for each partner, (a) their own, (b) their

partner's, (c) their collective racial groups, and (d) their partner's racial group. It is most important during this stage for each partner to communicate their own views and experiences so that the couple can have a shared meaning for their relationship. This phenomenon is discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.5; 4.5.1 and section 4.5.2.

2.7. Characteristics of those who intermarry

Tucker and Mitchell- Kernan's (1990) research has shown that there are several common characteristics of those that choose to intermarry. It has been found that people who interracially marry tend to be younger, more likely to have been married before, live in urban areas, and be more distant in age from their spouse than people who marry within their own race. This is the case with Trudie Amulungu in *Taming My Elephant* (2016), she had been married now divorced, has a child from her failed marriage and was two years older than Wilfried.

Furthermore, rates of intermarriages vary significantly based on geographic location and gender. It is important however, to note that interracial couples often move to more hospitable areas of the country (Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan (1990). Jane Katjavivi in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) met and married her husband in Oxford, a country that had long passed laws that allowed mixed race relations. Similarly, Trudie Amulungu in *Taming My Elephant* (2016), met her husband in Lusaka, Zambia, outside of a pre-independent Namibia, as such the authors' relationships only encountered challenges from society and relatives when Katjavivi and Amulungu's families moved to the home country, Namibia.

Kalmijn (1993) studied interracial marriages specifically and found that blacks who intermarry with whites tend to have a higher level of education and have more occupational prestige than blacks who marry within their race. This is narrated by Jane Katjavivi in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010), whose husband, Peter, was well learned and worked for SWAPO stating that:

after working full time for SWAPO for 15 years, Peter resigned and went to study at University of Warwick... after completing his Masters, Peter went on to do his doctorate at Oxford University... Peter became a director of a small NGO...Peter became a member of parliament... (Katjavivi, 2010, pp. 19-34).

The autobiographies in the present study concur with the findings of Kalmijn (1993). Katjavivi's spouse went on to become ambassador to the Benelux countries and the European Union and later Berlin. Similarly, Trudie Amulungu in *Taming My Elephant* (2016), studied internationally and was appointed as an ambassador to "The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Conakry, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal" (Katjavivi, 2016, p. 296).

Kalmijn (1993) also found that black people who are in interracial marriages have a weaker level of racial group identification than those who are not, although they report more favourable opinions about the characteristics of their racial group. Lewis and Yancey (1995) argue that some individuals who are interracially married

see themselves as being victims of discrimination because of the emotional plight of “never fitting in” and this ties with how conversely the autobiographies under study use their literary works to “show the harmonious cross-cultural sense of sharing” (Mlambo & Pasi, 2010, p.156), yet this is a largely un-investigated area in Namibian literature.

2.8. Issues impacting interracial marriages

Racial discrimination is one of the areas of concern for interracially married individuals. Research conducted by Lewis and Yancey (1995) and Lewis (1994), though not in a non-literary sphere demonstrate that some individuals who are interracially married see themselves as being victims of discrimination because of their marital status. Generally, those in black/white interracial unions indicate higher occurrence of racial discrimination in comparison to those in unions without a black spouse as discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.5 of the present study. These findings were consistent across primary and secondary group relationships. Although perceptions of discrimination in secondary group situations (i.e., restaurant service, service at malls and shops, etc.) appear to occur more often in comparison to primary group situations, spouses in black/white marriages experience this more often (Yancey & Lewis, 2008). A second area which lends itself to problems for individuals married interracially is differential societal acceptance of the legal union. Anti-miscegenation laws have been declared unconstitutional in most countries in the world (Moran, 2001). However, the society has a system that continues to use race as a key identifying factor. Race still plays

an important role in how marital partners are chosen. Although racial segregation is illegal, there are still patterns of residential and school separation as well as economic inequality which influence spouse choice (Kalmijn, 1993). Amulungu (2016) elaborated on the magnitude of race in colonial Namibia: “The notion of being white in Namibia during those years was really notorious. The superiority of Whites was inevitable. They were in charge and whites were at their service.” (p. 209). These conditions are further explored in Chapter 4 of the study, section 4.5.2 and section 4.5.3.

The incidence of interracial marriages reflects an interesting pattern of colour grading with black/white marriages being the smallest percentage of all interracial unions (Lewis and Ford-Robertson, 2010). The third area involves family acceptance as explored in Chapter 4, section 4.5.2. Previous research by Lewis and Yancey (1995) reveals that family member acceptance of the interracial marriage is problematic. Individuals in black/white marriages tended to suggest they had problems, at least initially, being fully accepted as a couple by dominant group family members (Rosenfeld & Kim, 2005). Family members of the minority group member of the interracial couple tend to be more accepting in comparison to the white spouse’s family members (Root, 2001). However, recent research indicates that there is a small but consistent level of non-acceptance among minority group family members (Root, 2001; Yancey and Lewis, 2008). This justifies the relevance of the study, to investigate how interracial couples survive as presented by the authors.

2.9. Review of *Undisciplined Heart and Taming my Elephant*

This section explains the reviews of autobiographies under study. The two texts under study, being recent publications have not been extensively investigated. Mlambo and Pasi's (2010) review highlights that *Undisciplined Heart* is an "exploration of the "unsaid" and tangible connections of humanity across cultures" (p.156); further stating that the philanthropist cum-writer seeks to understand the power of love, resilience and endogenous development (p. 157).

Whilst Rensing's review of *Taming my elephant* states that the autobiography "is also a personal love story about her marriage to a white Namibian man, Recounting the development of their relationship, Trudie Amulungu exposes vestiges of colonial bodies of thought and contemporary imbalances within the Namibian society" (Rensing, 2017, p.111).

Moreover, Jane Katjavivi demonstrates how change is a progressive force that is part of life (Mlambo & Pasi, 2010); whereas Trudie Amulungu recounts the cultural shocks and huge discoveries she made along her journey (Rensing, 2017). However, there are unanswered questions on how the two families survived as transnational citizens. Jane Katjavivi and her family lived in London, and later moved to the United States of America and eventually to Namibia. "Peter decided to return to take part in the elections...I stayed with the children in the USA until we knew it

were safe for us to go as well” (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 24). Moreover, Jane Katjavivi manages change and her story is that of hope, survival and resilience (Mlambo & Pasi, 2010, p.157), and the present study furthers this argument by exploring how Katjavivi’s autobiography demonstrates how interracial marriages and being a transnational citizen. As stated by Mlambo and Pasi (2010) “the writer manages to embrace change and survive the terrains that life has to offer” (p. 157) and these views call for more elaboration and the present study manages to capture such views as shown in Chapter 4.

Furthermore, although all marriages require negotiation, cooperation, and compromise, marriages between two people from different cultural, racial, and ethnic groups face unique and complex challenges (Foeman & Nance, 1999), thus there exists a gap in knowledge with regards to the challenges that transnational relationships face in Namibia, especially from a literary perspective. Studies on transnational couples and their families reveal many of the attitudes towards the couples’ relationships and racial, ethnic, religious and cultural differences from the host or the dominant group in the societies and communities (Törngren, 2011 & Song, 2009). Couples equally ache as they both must deal with rejection from the family they marry into (Johnson & Warren, 1994) and this is an idea that this research sought to explore. Rensing (2017) observes that Amulungu generated an understanding of the difficulties of settling in Namibia as she recounted those experiences. This is evidenced by the view that “She stressed that these difficulties

were also closely linked to the complex problematic of reconciliation between black and white Namibians” (Rensing, p.15).

In a non-literary study of 19 Black and White people between the ages of 21 and 40 (Datzman & Gardner, 2000, as cited in Walker, 2005) reported that men have more positive attitudes than women, and people who are younger also have more favourable views on interracial dating. This point of view speaks to the aim of the present study and this is further discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.5.2.

Moreover, the literary texts under study “serve as catalysts for change in this post-colonial society” (Rensing, 2017, p.116) whilst providing insights into “how life gets constructed and finds meaning through an intricate web of alliances, associations...and Ubuntu” (Mlambo & Pasi, 2010, p. 156). Therefore, there is a need to further explore this dimension of “journeying” and “transnationality” and also for understanding communication within, between and across diverse cultures, which is a phenomenon that is stronger than ever in the present world.

2.10. Theoretical framework

The theoretical frameworks which this research made use of are the autobiography theory and the diaspora and transnationalism theory. The autobiography theory and

transnationalism and diaspora theories provide an appropriate template for the exploration of transnationalism and interracial marriages in the work under study. The researcher found the thoughts of the autobiography theorists and diaspora and transnationalism theorists a useful point of departure. The texts under study are autobiographies hence the autobiography theory can be the best to guide the study. In general, the theories take into account essential factors such as identity and belonging; and it is this notion of belonging that is central to transnationalism and interracial marriage encounters experienced by the authors in this study.

2.10.1. Autobiography theory

According to Smith and Watson (2010), the word autobiography was coined towards the end of the eighteenth century, three Greek components auto-biographia, meaning "self-life-writing" were combined to describe a literature already existing under other names (memoirs and confessions, for example). Some of the early writes of autobiography genre are: the first is Plato who in the fourth century B.C., wrote his autobiography in the form of letters *The Seventh Epistle*; followed by St. Augustine, at the tum of the fifth century A.D wrote it as *Confossions*; and lastly Montaigne, in the late half of the Sixteenth Century who called it *Essays*. The first 'autobiography' was written in 1834 by W. P. Scargill and was called *The Autobiography of a Dissenting Minister*. The same is not true, however of the theoretical and critical literature on autobiography (Smith & Watson, 2010).

Autobiography only came into literary, critical and theoretical focus as one of the relevant modes of self-expression, as well as the object of serious study at the beginning of World War II (Adams, 2000). This shift toward life writing as the dominant self-reflexive genre was mostly due to the fact that recent social and political circumstances have allowed a stronger influx of writings from the margin, or from hitherto unheard, suppressed, marginalized and silenced groups, such as indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, blacks, women, allowing them to tell their own histories.

According to Olney (1984), autobiography may be understood as a recollected/narrative act in which the writer, from a certain point in her life, looks back over the events of that life and recounts them in such a way as to show how that past history has led to this present state of being (p. 47). Autobiographical acts join to form human agency, history, location and the dynamics of communicative exchange. This study is situated within the framework of Polkinghorne's (2010) principle that storytelling is a natural component of life that all individuals engage in. It is within this framework that the aims of this study are established.

Moreover, "Autobiography is not possible in a cultural landscape where consciousness of self does not exist" (Gusdorf, 1980). The cultural precondition for autobiography, Gusdorf (1980) argues, is a pervasive concept of individualism. Hence the authors in the study, as stated by Rensing (2017, p.111), write themselves "from margin to centre" and put Namibia's past into the focus of attention, while highlighting their own personal roles in it.

However, the individual concept of the autobiographical self that is established by the male tradition raises serious theoretical problems for critics who recognize that the self, self-creation, and self-consciousness are profoundly different for women, minorities and many non-western people. This establishes a critical bias that leads to the misreading and marginalisation of autobiographies by women and minorities. Women's autobiographies display quite a different orientation towards the self and the others from the typical orientation to be found in the autobiographies by men. Women narrate their inner life in autobiography and "define for themselves and their readers, a woman as she is and as she dreams" (Smith & Watson, 1998). Mlambo and Pasi's review of *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) corroborate this argument by stating that "one of the issues that Katjavivi articulates so eloquently in her novel is the spirit of "womanism" and the power of unity in love" (p. 156). Moreover, Amulungu's autobiography praises the roles played by women, especially focusing on significant relationships and resulting in lasting friendships of women from the liberation struggle.

Smith and Watson (1998) further argue that women autobiographies focus on their personal lives rather than on broad historical or public issues of their times. The emphasis is on friends, family and domestic matters. The autobiographies used in this study are both by female writers, and due to that, this study focussed on the female autobiography. Female authors occupy ample space in the autobiographical

genre in Namibia, Katjavivi and Amulungu, are two of those who, according to Rensing (2017, p.111), “join this quest” for recognition of their country’s history.

2.10.2. Diaspora and transnationalism theory

The term diaspora is derived from the Greek *diaspeirein*, meaning “dispersal or scattering of seeds” (Appadurai, 1996). The term is not new; it is a Greek word once solely used to describe Jewish, Greek, and Armenian dispersions – what some scholars often describe as the “classic” diasporas (Appadurai, 1996). However, diaspora has gained currency recently as both a conceptual and analytical tool to explain various practices of global movement and community formation. Similarly, the term transnationalism began with social scientists from the 1970s; however, it was only common in the 1990s due to migration studies and migrant ties, transnationalism suggested viewing maintenance of migrant ties with the country of origin, and migrant practices in the receiving land in correlation with each other (Baubock & Faist, 2010).

The diaspora and transnationalism theory is used to explore the survival of couples in interracial marriages in the selected texts. According to Baubock and Faist (2010), transnationalism theory ignites discussions on the integration of immigrants, whereas diaspora focuses on the endurance of a community outside its homeland (p.17).

Baubock and Faist (2010) further argue that the relationships between diasporas and space or territories have their own specificities. Belonging to a diaspora implies being able to live simultaneously on the transnational world scale, the local scale of the

community and the scale of the host or home country, thereby combining the three scales whilst privileging one or two of these. A diaspora is a patchwork of families, communities and religious networks integrated in a territory by a nation-state, within its borders.

These patchworks of families, clans, villages, cities are contained inside the borders of this nation-state where circulation and exchanges are easier inside than with the outside. The nation-state creates an arbitrary limit between the networks inside it and those that are outside. Diasporas, however, cannot benefit from this extraordinary tool of integration. They function as a hinge between different spaces and different geographical scales. Their networks belong to each of the host countries as well as to a trans-state diasporic network. Their global network, with its economic, cultural, social and political functions, can play the stabilising role that nation-states cover less and less. According to Kastoryano (as cited in Baubock & Faist, 2011), as similarly observed in the texts under study, the concept of diaspora is more aptly applied to populations scattered prior to the making of their nation-state, for whom nationalism refers to a mythical place, a territory to be recovered, a future state-building project. These theories are intertwined and therefore fit in closely with the work of Amulungu and Katjavivi.

2.11 Chapter summary

This chapter has reviewed the literature related to the topic under study. Different authors have accorded couples in transnational and interracial marriages traits that are of interest to the researcher, as they conclude that couples give in to the challenges that

they face resulting in failure of marriages and divorces and it is critical that such viewpoints be tested using the two literary texts as discussed in the present study. The next chapter will present the research methodology and it is the chapter that outlines the method of collecting and analysing data.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine how couples in the autobiographical texts survive as transnational citizens in interracial marriages, as well as to explore the representations of the experiences as well as challenges that these authors encountered. This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology used in this study. Creswell (2008) defines the research methodology as the system of collecting data for a research project. The chapter is outlined as follows: the research design, population, sample, procedure, data analysis and finally the research ethics.

3.2. Research design

Research design is the plan or strategy of shaping the research (Henn, Weinstein & Foard, 2005), that might include the entire process of research from conceptualizing a problem to writing research questions, and data collection, analysis, interpretation and report writing (Creswell, 2007). It provides the framework for the collection and analysis of data and subsequently indicated which research methods were appropriate (Walliman, 2006). The most common and useful purposes and main aims of research are exploration, description and rational explanation based on data (Babbie, 2007).

This study was a qualitative, desktop research where contemporary fiction set in Namibia was analysed. Qualitative research methods provide flexibility that can be adopted as they go along and have become increasingly important modes of inquiry for the social sciences and applied fields such as education, regional planning, nursing, social work, community development and management (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The qualitative research design is apt for this study because the data was in the form of words.

3.3. Population

Population is the group to which a researcher would like the results of the study to be generalizable. It could also be set of all cases of interest and might be virtually any size or might cover almost any geographical area (Gay & Diehl, 1992). The population of this study therefore are all Namibian texts on transnationality and interracial marriages.

3.4. Sample

A sample is a subset of the population being studied that includes the process of selecting a few (samples) from a bigger group (the sampling population) to become the basis for estimating or predicting a fact, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group (Kumar, 1996). It is advised that samples should be as large as possible, in general the larger the sample the more representative and the more generalizable the results of the study were likely to be. Minimum, acceptable

sample size for descriptive research would be 10% of population (Gay & Diehl, 1992).

However, for a literary study, some of these aspects do not apply; therefore, purposive sampling has been used to select two autobiographies, *Taming My Elephant* and *Undisciplined Heart*. The purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling, is the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities the participant possesses. The autobiographies have been selected because of the themes of transnational identities, the sense of belonging and the benefits and challenges endured as presented in the autobiographies of Katjavivi (2010) and Amulungu (2016).

3.5 Procedure

The texts were acquired and read in depth, whilst notes were written on the topic under study and ideas were grouped into themes as determined by the research objectives. In order to describe and determine the notion of transnationalism and interracial marriages, the themes in the autobiographies under study were analysed comparatively using the thematic content analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) explain thematic content analysis as a descriptive presentation of qualitative data. Anderson (2004) further argued that in conducting a thematic content analysis, the researcher's epistemological stance is objective.

In the study, the researcher grouped and distilled from the texts a list of common themes in order to give expression to the communality of voices across participants. Every

reasonable attempt was made to employ names for themes from the actual words of participants (that is textual evidence) and to group these themes in a manner that directly reflects the texts as a whole.

Using the thematic content analysis approach, the researcher analysed the selected autobiographies as guided by the research objectives, autobiography theory, and diaspora and transnationalism theory, particularly exploring the characters and themes emanating from the autobiographies. Inquiry was sought into transnational lives of the authors, providing insights on their survival techniques in host countries and looking into challenges and benefits of interracial marriages as experienced in the autobiographies of Katjavivi (2010) and Amulungu (2016).

3.5. Data analysis

The thematic content analysis was used to analyse the data collected through critically examining the two autobiographies, namely Katjavivi's *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Amulungu's *Taming my Elephant* (2016) focusing on the themes addressed in these autobiographies and selected for specific focus in this study. Qualitative data collection is usually dependent on interpretation. This means that the data requires several explanations. This is because huge amounts of qualitative evidence are often collected. Additionally, there is no distinction between data collection and its analysis (Cassell & Symon 1994). This means that there is an overlap of analysis and interpretation to reach a conclusion as observed in this study.

Thematic content analysis is considered the most appropriate for any study that seeks to discover using interpretations. It provides a systematic element to data analysis. It allows the researcher to associate an analysis of the frequency of a theme with one of the whole content. This confers accuracy and intricacy and enhances the research's whole meaning. Qualitative research requires understanding and collecting diverse aspects and data. Thematic content analysis gives an opportunity to understand the potential of any issue more widely (Marks & Yardley 2004). Thus the application of thematic content analysis in this instance became plausible as it provided various viewpoints of the autobiographies in relation to the themes of identity and belonging.

Braun and Clarke (2006) identify one weakness of thematic content analysis stating that it does not allow the researcher to make claims about language use. This means that the autobiographies under study are not analysed based on the type of literary styles employed as would be the case in for example a stylistics analysis. Holloway and Todres (2003), further criticise the thematic content analysis arguing that thematic analysis is flexible, which can lead to inconsistency and a lack of coherence when developing themes derived from the research data. However, in the present study this has been taken as strength in that such 'inconsistency' allows for multiple perspectives to be accorded to the analysis of the two autobiographies. Consistency and cohesion is promoted in this study by applying and making explicit

an epistemological position that can coherently underpin the study's empirical claims (Holloway & Todres, 2003).

Therefore, although thematic content analysis has been criticised, it has strengths, such as that it shows how different people from different cultural backgrounds understand and receive the message communicated in the autobiographies. The researcher thus used thematic content analysis to clarify the message communicated in the autobiographies by linking it with the same situations that are taking place in real life such as transnationalism, transnational identities, the challenges of interracial relationships and marriages and many others.

3.6. Research ethics

According to Creswell (2008), research ethics refers to doing what is morally and legally right in the conducting of research. This requires the researcher to be knowledgeable about what is being done; to use reasoning when making decisions; to be both intellectual and truthful in reporting and in approach; and to consider the consequences, in particular to be sure that the outcome of the research outweighs any negatives that might occur. The ethical research criterion considered in this literary study is that of being objective, using integrity, protecting confidentiality as well as avoiding harmful research. The study is based on the autobiographical works that are available in the public domain. The researcher however endeavoured to be objective and not be biased when referring to real people, events, places,

establishments and organisations through letting the analysis to be dictated by the principles of selected theories. Ethical clearance was sought from the University of Namibia Research Ethics Committee and it was granted, which the researcher used as a guide in order to remain on the ethical path.

3.8 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the researcher gave insights into the research methodology used in this study, by beginning with the research design. The population of the study was defined, and consists of the autobiographies by Namibian authors, that are written in English, and which have a focus on transnationalism and interracial marriages.

Sample and sampling procedure, data collection and data analysis details were also discussed in this chapter, and finally the research ethics considered in this study was also addressed. In the following chapter the researcher presents data analysis from the two selected autobiographies: *Undisciplined Heart* by Jane Katjavivi (2010) and *Taming my Elephant* by Trudie Amulungu (2016).

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

This study explores transnationalism and interracial marriage encounters in Katjavivi's *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Amulungu's *Taming my Elephant* (2016) respectively. It explores into the survival of the authors in "a home away from home" and the benefits and challenges encountered in interracial marriages. Autobiography, transnationalism and diaspora theories guide the analysis of this study and it is done in a narrative form. The following critical issues of concern are presented in this literary analysis: summary of *Taming my Elephant*, summary of *Undisciplined Heart*, reasons for transnationalism in the selected autobiographies, transnationalism for the struggle of independence, challenges of transnational families, challenges of interracial marriages, adjustment to marriage, family approval/disapproval, social disapproval, cultural and traditional barriers and lastly providing the coping mechanism for transnational and interracial couples.

As a way of recap, the study aimed to:

- Explore the literary presentation of transnational identities as presented in the autobiographies under study;
- Evaluate the strategies employed by the authors to explore the sense of 'belonging' in the selected texts under study; and

- Examine the challenges and benefits encountered in interracial marriages as presented in the selected texts under study.

Firstly, the summaries of the two autobiographies are given, followed by the analysis of the two texts in an alternating format. In this chapter, it has to be made clear from the onset that the name Jane (or Jane Katjavivi) is used to refer to the character in *Undisciplined Heart* as opposed to the name of the author who is Katjavivi; whilst in *Taming my Elephant*, Trudie (or Trudie Amulungu) is the character and Amulungu is the author.

4.2. Summary of *Taming My Elephant*

Taming My Elephant is a narrative by Trudie Amulungu about Trudie's embarking on different journeys in her life. Trudie's journey started in a very ordered framework as a child going through early stages of school and taking on the role of being the second mother to her siblings at 14 years old; then she moved to a hostel, where she learned that things had to be done in an ordered framework, as "all of a sudden I had to go to bed at a specific time, and once that time came, no one moved or spoke" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 66). A few years later, Trudie moved to a prestigious high school, where she was introduced to a foreign world. It is at this school that her journey for the liberation struggle begun.

Trudie Amulungu recounts organised men, entering their dormitories and hushing them to get dressed and follow them out. These girls were afraid and skeptical, hence a few of the girls hid away from the men, but Trudie Amulungu and the rest joined the men on the journey into the 'unknown'. On this journey which took days, Trudie Amulungu stated how the community provided food and water to this group. Particular households were aware of the reason for this journey and supported the acts of these men. The significance of this experience to Trudie Amulungu was the responsibility and concern that these men had for the well-being of this group of girls. Throughout the nights and days, the girls were fed and protected such that, "Whenever we stopped for the night, all these armed men cared for was our security" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 82).

In Angola, the girls found many other women, children and men. They were trained immediately and introduced to SWAPO. Each had a role to play; for Trudie Amulungu and others, the fight was through the academic sphere. She thus was sent to Zambia for studies and while in Zambia she did a few projects that allowed her to travel to African countries such as Ghana and globally to France, Yugoslavia and many others. Throughout this, she faced multiple challenges, separation from family and close friends, language barriers and cultural shock among others, but her resilience and tenacity to do her part saw her through. On this journey, Trudie Amulungu met her husband met her white husband, Wilfried and she was married to Wilfried in Namibia in 1990, a time when "the apartheid system in both Namibia and South Africa was unabated" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 288). Although faced with

several challenges in this status, Trudie and Wilfried ‘soldiered on’ as an interracial couple, and they had four children, and when Trudie was made an ambassador, her ‘transnational family’ endeavoured in this sphere and had to get used to living transnational lives.

4.3. Summary of *Undisciplined Heart*

Undisciplined Heart eloquently narrates the passion and love for people and a nation. In *Undisciplined Heart*, Jane Katjavivi (2010) who is an English born but naturalised Namibian, began her political interests during her college years in England when she “became involved in campaigns on Southern Africa” (Katjavivi, 2010, p.16). Her passion led her to meet her then future husband Peter Katjavivi. Relationships anchor this text; relationships formed with other students on the campus during her college years to advocate for Southern Africa as well as “raise funds” (Katjavivi, 2010, p.18). Jane formed great relationships with friends too, especially in her new home, Namibia, each in their pursuit to advance a newly independent Namibia.

Jane’s consecration to Namibia and her family resulted in her joining her husband to travel back to Namibia, in 1990, with her two children, a few weeks after independence. Despite the fear of the unknown, Jane adapted to the new culture and to Namibia. Soon after Jane’s arrival to Namibia, she opened up a bookstore, assisting Namibians into publishing the raw and rare art of Namibian writers as well

as offering editing skills as her “aims were to build peace, justice and unity and publish new books for the new education system” (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 38). She relentlessly held workshops to train Namibian teachers on adapting the new curriculum. In Windhoek, Jane fostered friendships with other diligent women, who too, like Jane, pledged to shape Namibia and Africa through different pursuits, as they handled personal trajectories of deaths, poor health and every so often, failures.

When her husband was made ambassador to the Benelux countries, European Union and later Berlin, Jane was introduced to new challenges in her family and as a spouse of the ambassador. She was faced with an incurable illness and had to steer on without the presence of her friends whom she had depended on for support. Jane persevered in her new ambassadorial responsibilities and became able to live with her health status.

4.4. Reasons for transnationalism in *Undisciplined Heart* and *Taming my Elephant*

One of the critical points worth exploring in relation to the core aim of this study is with regards to the reasons that have led to the transnational formations. The texts under study have shown that the authors moved around globally for different reasons. Both authors, although from worlds apart, Amulungu born in a small village in the northern part of Namibia, and Katjavivi born in a small town, Leeds, England, experience similar trajectories. In *Taming My Elephant*, Trudie Amulungu got exposed to the world outside what she had known at a very young age. Trudie had just been in her final year of high school when another life for her begun. She

was introduced to this life, one can argue, rather precipitately. As the disappearance of people from the community and rumours of men taking the youth was common, Trudie Amulungu describes the incidents of that night as shocking. As people react differently to shock, as a result, a few other girls who had been in the same group with Amulungu escaped from these men. Most of them thought of escaping too, including Trudie. Hence as narrated by Trudie, one can argue that it was force, fate and choice, all combined in one, that resulted in her transforming into a global citizen.

Moreover, the responsibility to contribute and to fight for their independence surpassed their fear. As youth, they knew that they had a role to play. They were aware of what their country expected of them. The young girls were inspired by the men such that, “although this arrangement was scary, there was, at the same time, something that inspired a sense of admiration” (Amulungu, 2016, p. 77). Similarly, Jane in *Undisciplined Heart* finds interest in Southern African politics. As a university student she found herself propelled towards African students; she was intrigued by their energy and appalled by the injustices in their countries and recognised the humanity that was in them such that: “I got to know black Zimbabwean students and found out what it was like under the white minority regime headed by Ian Smith” (Katjavivi, 2010, p.16). The interests in politics, and the need to change the fate of other humans as well as to stop the plight of Africans in their home countries, saw Jane moving away from her initial course at University, which was English literature, to studying African politics. She started a youth movement on the school campus, raising awareness on real social and

political implications of the white governance in Africa because of her deep seated sense of commitment to justice and the desire to make a radical change in the practises then. This shows the efforts of specifically these authors, and their immense contribution to the Namibian liberation. However, the motivations for joining the liberation movements seem to be slightly different. For Jane, it was a more calculated and deliberate move as she was more aware and more conscious, and had more freedom of choice. This is because she was already a mature University student; whilst for Trudie a multiplex of explanations can be offered. From one angle of analysis, it can be argued that Trudie at her age was yearning for adventure as she has states that there were innumerable uncertainties about her future upon completion of high school. It could also be argued that Trudie was inevitably destined to join the liberation movement and that she had an inborn political awareness that saw her moving towards her destiny even at a tender age.

It is through this quest for justice, equality and a propensity for that which sees people being accorded an equal status with other human beings without considering their skin pigmentation that these authors began their transnational lives. They had political responsibilities in the civil struggles as the youth, not only in their home countries, but globally. As passionately narrated by Trudie,

As time went on, we started the emancipation process. We started appreciating what was happening around us. Over the weekend, we had lessons on the SWAPO constitution. We were taught about the SWAPO party structure and how everybody else fitted in. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 118)

Each author had an equally important responsibility and a way of contributing to the yielding of peaceable liberations. These authors too moved about and around the world for the sake of their spouses and their national responsibilities.

Jane was born in Leeds but made a choice to move to Africa, Namibia to stay with her husband, who is a Namibian and also their two children. Jane's husband was then given ambassadorial responsibilities which required the author and her family to travel and live in different nations. Similarly, Amulungu and her spouse are both Namibians, and Trudie was too given ambassadorial duties which similarly required her and the family to temporarily live in different nation states. These forms of migratory traits resulted in the shaping and reshaping of their multiple identities which by themselves resulted in possibly the cementing of more flexible and malleable personalities.

4.4.1. Transnationalism for the struggle for independence

It is truism that independence struggles were fought not only on the battlefield but around the negotiating table and within international institutions. Amulungu was actively involved in Namibian politics as a freedom fighter and later a diplomat, disputing the theorists of women autobiographies (see section 2.10.1). In *Taming My Elephant*, the autobiographer recounts her life at Cassinga camp in Angola, which was her first home away from home. Here she found her purpose “to fight for

the independence of Namibia” (Amulungu, 2016, p.91). Trudie, among others, was sent to Zambia to further her studies, and here her global journey begun.

These educated youths had different roles; though they were not soldiers on the battle front, their fight was to forge relationships and interactions with different bodies, circulating ideas and practices across time and space. Interactions with other students and being assigned roles to carry out in other African countries created opportunities for the circulation, promotion and adaptation of a great range of cultural and political influences. As a student, Amulungu represented the liberation movement formally and informally across the globe, and this is captured as she presents that:

As time went on, we started the emancipation process. We started appreciating what was happening around us. Over the weekend, we had lessons on the SWAPO constitution. We were taught about the SWAPO party structure and how everybody fitted into it, including a number of the Namibian staff at UNIN. So, these Namibians were not only employed as administrators and teachers, they were also part of SWAPO. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 118)

Trudie and the others embraced their role and accepted the responsibilities expected of them. They were inevitably separated and sent into strange environments that challenged them as they had to contend with new countries, intellectual abilities, strange languages and traditional norms. However, this did not deter them from successfully carrying out their duties. It is such movements and cross-cultural linkages that perhaps shaped and well prepared her to later

appreciate the codes that bind humanity and thus be able to see people as people and not some form of racial beings which have to be separated as dictated by the amount of melanin one's skin has.

In Zambia, they were introduced to different nationalities yet there were language barriers, as Zambia was officially an English-speaking country.

After a few days, we found out why we were brought here. We were here to learn, and to learn in English. It was difficult to figure out where the people in charge were from. They spoke English to us and among themselves. They were of all colours and from all nationalities, including those I had never heard of before. They did not speak English the same way... As time went on, we started the emancipation process. We started appreciating what was happening around us... We glided from the naïve, narrow minded and traditional human beings to vibrant members of a liberation movement. We were prepared to live according to the motto: Everything for the struggle. (Amulungu, 2016, pp.117-121)

It is this spirit, the common goal and the faith for an independent Namibia that motivated these youths in their long years in exile. It was their responsibility to think of the type of education that Africa needed and the languages they needed to learn to make their education acquisition and opportunities widely available. The purpose was to transmit from this generation to the future generation back

in Namibia accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society and to prepare the young people for their future membership in its maintenance and for the development of a newly independent state that has no racial boundaries.

Trudie eagerly seized the opportunity to learn, travelling to several African countries as indicated when she, for example says that: “we started off in Tanzania before proceeding to Kenya, we went on to Senegal for another two months, we then had a short stay in Mozambique” (Amulungu, 2016, p. 151). She was interested in languages too; thus she undertook French lessons which saw her landing in Europe, France and Yugoslavia. This enabled Trudie to have a widened perspective of life and to move between languages and cultures and thus to embrace diversity as a trait of life that makes one a global citizen.

Similarly, although Katjavivi knew little of Africa, her views were powerfully shaped by a strong commitment to ending colonial exploitation and beyond that, to see people as more than just the colour of their skins.

WUS wanted to start a Namibian programme and sent me to meet Bishop Colin Winter an Anglican Bishop who had been deported from Namibia by the South African authorities for speaking out against what they were doing in the country. Bishop Winter was dedicated to the cause of Namibian freedom... A meeting was convened to look at ways of providing humanitarian assistance to tens of thousands of people from Zimbabwe,

Mozambique, Angola, Namibia and South Africa, who were under the care of the liberation movements in centres in Zambia and Tanzania (Katjavivi, 2010, p.17).

Therefore, these texts can be viewed as a form of literature of commitment as authors in the new millennium extend their themes beyond the boundaries of cultural and national specificity, embracing a more cosmopolitan transnational spirit that explores the world's others, and obligations that stretch beyond those to whom they were related by the ties of kith and kin, or even the more formal ties of shared citizenship. This is corroborated by the firm assertion that Jane makes: "I may be far from the home I grew up in, but Namibia is my home now. You are my family. You are the ones who support me" (Katjavivi, 2010, p.74).

The texts cast their thematic nets wide to conceptualize the African subject as universally connected and committed to trying to solve, or at least better understand, the transnational challenges of the colonial era. Both Trudie Amulungu and Jane Katjavivi experienced somewhat similar difficulties in the pursuit of linking the African continent to the other places, and the mobilization for the common good had to take place. The mission was to instigate a social, cultural and political awakening and as a commitment stemming from deep down, at a symbolical level, this found full expression in their bold steps to choose and accept marriage partners across racial lines.

Education has to liberate both the mind and the body of a people. It has to make them more of aware and enlightened human beings as they get to grasp in full the potential inherent in other human beings. This awareness, whether made deliberately or not, should open up avenues to hatch positive and life-enhancing relationship with themselves, their neighbours and their environment. Education has to enable people to throw off the impediments to freedom which restrict their full physical and mental development. Therefore, is it noteworthy that both Jane Katjavivi and Trudie Amulungu both have some form of university education. Jane Katjavivi went to university and studied African politics, whilst Trudie Amulungu was sent as far as Europe (France) to be well educated as “Namibia needed the working class to run the country once freed from its oppressors” (Amulungu, 2016, p.152).

Moreover, it has to be emphasised that education is incomplete if it only enables one to work out elaborate schemes for universal peace as much as it teaches one how to provide good food for him/herself and his/her family. It is equally incomplete and counter-productive if it merely teaches one how to be an efficient tool user and tool maker but neglects the personality and the relationship with fellow human beings, especially those across racial line. This therefore becomes particularly interesting considering the case in point here as it can be safely argued that it was through liberal education that perhaps Jane and Trudie had more open and receptive hearts and minds which enabled them to “cross the boundary fence”.

Furthermore, what we have in both autobiographies is a form of transnational migration occasioned by the need to think beyond the now, and the creation of an imagined future of progress, social wellbeing and above all and important to this study, the recognition of diversity which is an ingredient for the formation of a new Namibia as a form of a rainbow nation. Therefore, transnational citizenry helped the two to view life in a more open and informed manner, having travelled across nations and having been exposed to diverse cultures. Trudie expresses how transnationalism in her autobiography began:

My group consisting of nine of us was going to carry out a specific assignment in five African countries. We started off in Tanzania before proceeding to Kenya. After our two months in Kenya, we went to Senegal for another two months. We then had a short stay in Mozambique before returning to Zambia for the rest of our secondment. SWAPO had planned an international Housing Policy of Namibia for the end of 1980. No one was certain when Namibia would attain its independence but policies had to be in place when that time came. The nine of us were sent out to those five countries to look at specific things in relation to housing. Amulungu, pp 151-152

According to Nyerere (1976), a liberated nation is not just a nation which has overcome alien occupation. That is an essential first part of liberation, but it is only the first. Liberation means more than that, a truly liberated nation is a self-reliant nation, one which has freed itself from economic and cultural dependence on other

nations, and is therefore able to develop itself in free and equal co-operation with other members of the world community. As corroborated by Jane:

In April, 1981, we were ready to return to France; this time for university studies...Studying abroad among Namibians in exile was nothing extraordinary. Young Namibians left so often to various destinations for studies. People were constantly leaving for or arriving from the Soviet Union, the USA, and Canada, the GDR, Nigeria, Cuba, Sierra Leon and many other countries. (Amulungu, 2016, p.160)

However, critical to note is that the nation is a sum total of its citizens and for a nation to stand strong and exemplary in a globalising world, at a micro-cosmic level, is the family. And what we have in the two autobiographies are two examples of successful interracial families.

The duty of transforming the country as a new state was not a minor responsibility and it was not always positively accepted. These authors embarked on a journey to transform a country that was ruled by South Africa, and was distorted by the South African policies and philosophy of racial segregation. Namibia was in its infancy stage and as such, novice ideas had to be executed and some adopted from different countries. As stated by Jane:

Two years after independence, the president, Sam Nujoma, appointed Peter as Special adviser to Higher Education...it was decided that a former

Academy, set up under South African rule, be transformed into the first national university. Peter brought in a group of advisers to work with him...and develop the new system. They were all black men- academics from Africa and the Caribbean. Some white staff members from the Old Academy who were taken up into the new university, did not like this at all and would not cooperate. (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 40)

This reaction of the whites against the blacks and many others as narrated by Katjavivi and Amulungu is insightful to the core purpose of this study which is to explore racial discrimination experienced and how it was survived.

4.4.2. Challenges of transnational families

One of the critical issues which speak directly to the focus of this research on transnationalism and interracial marriage encounters in the autobiographies is the challenges encountered by transnational families.

As narrated by the authors, Jane Katjavivi and Trudie Amulungu had the obligation to extend the reach of human communication and community across space and time in search for Namibian independence. The trajectories that faced the two involve taking up national responsibilities which resulted in moving beyond national boundaries; as an ambassador in the case of Trudie Amulungu and as the spouse of the ambassador in the case of Jane Katjavivi. The authors faced numerous perplexities and cultural barriers as some of the challenges encountered in this journey.

However, noteworthy is that even within Namibia; Jane Katjavivi was appalled by the African homestead and lifestyle. Having grown up in Europe which is a completely different culture and society, Jane reminisced:

A covered area in the front of the house held basins for washing and kitchen equipment. Cooking was done on the open fire in heavy three-legged, cast iron pots, blackened from the smoke. Water had to be carried from a well the other side of the valley. There were no toilets, just a roll of toilet paper and a choice of directions to head in. (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 27)

Though strange to this environment, Jane embraced the circumstances, adapting to the environment instantly, thereby proving and demonstrating the malleable qualities of the authors in this study.

By maintaining many different racial, national, and ethnic identities, transnational citizens are able to express their resistance to the global political and economic situations that engulf them, even as they accommodate themselves to living conditions marked by vulnerability and insecurity.

Another challenge experienced by the authors in the texts under study is language. The authors experienced some uneasiness due to their linguistic limitations and their lack of familiarity with the new environment which restricted their access to information. This is illustrated by Jane Katjavivi as she recounts that: “Peter’s

family were friendly towards me but distanced by language and culture. Old aunties spoke Herero and German. His sisters and cousins spoke Herero and Afrikaans” (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 32). Katjavivi (2010) further cited the importance of giving their two children a Herero and an English name, so that it is pronounceable to both sides of the family. Although not fully explored in this study, this is an aspect of hybrid identities that is common in transnational studies as experienced by Jane Katjavivi.

Amulungu also struggled with the European language and adaptation;

Learning French in the classroom was not a challenge. The challenge was practising French in real life. Good heavens, it was hard. We most unfortunately mixed up the words.as usual our stay in Vichy was filled with laughter.” (Amulungu, 2016, pp145-147)

This study finding agrees with Favell (1998) and Noble (2002, 2005, as cited in Ni’ Laoire 2007), who argue that individual migrants often fail to meet normative expectations of behaviour, language, appearance, dress, eating habits, and countless other materialities and context-dependent etiquettes, and are in consequence perceived and discursively constructed as a group that is different to dominant others. Notably, despite the challenges, the heroines in these autobiographies do not completely fail, but learn the languages to some extent and also the cultures and norms and thereby adapt to their new and ever-changing environments.

All the demands posited by living in another place require on-going adjustments that transcend cultures, generations and continents, it is also ironic to realise that living as a transnational citizen drew Amulungu more closely to her roots. She held on to whom she was and this was despite the evident novelties and distance from her roots.

As we went through all these experiences and new discoveries, we had never forgotten who we were. Despite the distance and evident novelties around us, our thoughts often went back to our national mission, the liberation struggle. Yes, France was a nice place with a number of exciting things. Yet we knew too well that back home, we had unfinished business which required input from all of us. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 147)

Though these authors express strong pride in their country of origin, they are also loyal to the host counties and they wholeheartedly carry out their responsibilities. This is a further affirmation that Jane Katjavivi and Trudie Amulungu who live within transnational social fields are exposed to a set of social expectations, cultural values, and patterns of human interaction that are shaped by more than one social, economic, and political system.

Trudie Amulungu recounted a painful experience that resulted in her being a single and young mother. She recapped meeting a significant other, getting married in haste as she felt that she had reached her destination, partly due to the situations that

she had faced including exclusion, hence she wanted to share the battle for the liberation struggle with someone. She faced constant humiliation, vulnerability and social violence created by her relationship that translated into deep pain. Ultimately “Devoid of any feeling I left Ljubljana, a town where I suffered untold pain for four weeks” (Amulungu, 2016, p.179). She was divorced shortly after marriage. In the face of this pain, the author faced an almost impossible assimilation task and feelings of fear and safety coexisted. Under such circumstances, the individual therefore, is forced to endure an excised world and an excised self that allows her to deny the sinister aspects to go on living or, simply, to keep trauma at bay. Trudie Amulungu soon discovered that she was expecting, a discovery she accepted and took on eagerly alone with the support of her ‘exile mother’. Perhaps what comes out strikingly in this autobiography is how the author, opens her heart to the reader in a more emotionally charged manner, as if to allow the writing to be both therapeutic and revelatory of the fears that may reside in the readers.

Similarly, the challenges of living far away from blood relatives is evident when Jane Katjivivi states how her mother could not be around for the birth of her daughter and how she had to inform them of the birth of her grandchild through a telephone call: “I phoned my parents, reaching them early in the morning, before breakfast, although it was middle of the night for us” (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 23). Child birth is an emotionally significant event to the parents and family, and especially the grandparents, and these texts show the challenges that transnational citizens face and how this also affects their families. However, to cope with such challenges, they

had to rely on the spouse (in the case of Katjavivi) and friends (in the case of Amulungu) for support through this ordeal.

Moreover, in some instances migration is a painful event, both for those who go and those who stay behind. Those who leave experience loneliness, sadness, discrimination, fear of living in a country “that will never be ours”. The pain begins with the sadness of leaving family, friends, the home town and its traditions. Jane Katjavivi emotively recalls the day they left Windhoek with the husband and children to Brussels on ambassadorial duties. “Wrenching ourselves out of Windhoek is acutely painful...Peter is stressed... I weep as we drive to the airport. I feel as if I am being ripped out of the land” (Katjavivi, 2010, p.140). Striking is the use of language here, especially the use of emotive diction that draws on pathos as exemplified by words such as “wrenching”, “acutely painful”, “stressed”, “weep” and “ripped out of the land”, which all show how not only Jane but Peter were affected. However, despite all the sorrow, the ultimate goal of service to one’s country makes them bear the challenge with and together as companions for a cause that is nobler than their immediate joys and comforts.

Furthermore, emotional entanglements do not just relate to the parents, they pertain as well to children who accompany their migrant parents (Zhou, 1997, as cited in Vertovec, 2003). In each case there is often a feeling of being “caught between two nations, educational systems, and ways of growing up that conveys one of the risks of transnational childhoods – feeling marginal in both places” (Orellana et al., 2001,

as cited in Vertovec, 2003). Katjavivi (2010) confirms this in her autobiography by stating that her daughter Isobel was dismayed at the news of having to move to Brussels with the parents: “You are not serious. This is my home, my Namibia. This is where my friends are. I am not going!” (Katjavivi, 2010, p.129). Furthermore, “Isabel weeps on the plane until she becomes transfixed by the display of clouds” (Katjavivi, 2010, p.140). Something positive is also discernible from Isobel’s emotionally charged pleas, which is her deep-seated love for her own country and home. When Isobel migrated with her parents what is also evident is that older people are better at making changes compared to young people. On this particular journey Isobel suffered from depression and low self-esteem which led to behavioural problems, and an increased risk of poor academic performance as well as an interruption of schooling. She described school as ‘dreadful’ and laments that “I didn’t have anyone to sit with at lunchtime. I just hung around the lockers” (Katjavivi, 201, p.149). In addition, her mother also narrates that:

She returns to school but each day she comes home looking drawn. She has less and less to say to us. She is given an essay and a poem to write for an English assignment, and she writes about slavery and about being forcibly taken across the seas, away from her home. She shows them to me before she hands them in. I am shocked at the depth of her anguish. (Katjavivi, 2010, p.149)

Migrant children suffer from various psychosocial difficulties including feelings of alienation, experiences of xenophobia, insecurity and depression. In terms of

education, migrant children often face difficulties due to language barriers, stigmatisation and ridicule by native children, causing disadvantage in the school system as supported by Banfi and Boccagni (2011) and also Fresnoza-Flot (2009).

As part of the family, Isabel also shows some anxiety and apprehension, thus another factor that potentially could harm children's education is uncertainty regarding migration. Some children about to be reunited with their parents overseas are in the "waiting to migrate" or "waiting for papers" syndrome and thus their academic performance may suffer due to lack of attendance, concentration or overall motivation at school. Since this process can be quite time consuming, it can cause considerable damage to the child's performance in the education system. Isabel joins the school when there was only two weeks of the term left, and as such she was far behind and had to be given extra work to catch up. This added pressure and stress on the child.

Furthermore, death and illness are some of the challenges encumbered. Jane struggled to come to terms with her own ill health as a wife of the ambassador to the Benelux countries, and the European Union, especially that she had to face this challenge without the support of friends and family. Her friends and family were all in Africa (some in Namibia and others South Africa). In the same manner, Trudie learnt of the passing of her mother months after it had happened since communication was only done by letter at that time. Trudie's mother died in Namibia, and Trudie was in Zambia then. Travelling to attend the funeral was financially difficult and as such she was unable to travel back home. Therefore, she

could not mourn her mother and console her siblings especially that she was the first born child and also a foster mother in this instance. As a transnational citizen going through the bereavement process, Trudie had further challenges to cope with in addition to the grief. One of the most significant challenges is the incapability of practising certain significant rituals, which can make the mourning process even more difficult. In addition to the sadness related to loss, she experienced guilt and had a longer period of denial.

I did not know what to think. I felt empty and robbed. Be that as it may, I knew too well, once death is mentioned there is no going back. And I knew too well as much as I did not want to believe it, my mother's death was real...At that time it was certain that there was no way I could be of any assistance to my young siblings...But one day, I may just be able to do something for them! (Amulungu, 2016, p.136)

Adding salt to injury, terrible death also happened to her 'adopted relatives' and comrades too in Angola:

Unexpectedly, tragedy struck. In the early hours of 4 May 1978, the SADF attacked Cassinga. What a shock! This was a home to me and so many others not so long ago. I vividly remembered the set-up of the camp, its surroundings and the nearby river. (Amulungu, 2016, p.125)

The news of the attack was difficult for Trudie. But unlike the passing of her mother which she could not mourn with her family and siblings, she could mourn the

passing of her fellow 'comrades' with her new family and friends in exile as they were all equally affected by this tragedy. Trudie and many other people had friends back in the camp in Cassinga whilst some had relatives, but mostly, almost everyone in exile knew of a person or more living in the Cassinga camp. They had all gone through that camp as it was a receiving camp for the exile children before they were trained and sent out to different countries with different responsibilities.

As migrants, the authors were already caught up in a series of multiple losses and bereavements related to their new environment, cultural framework, family ties, and socio-professional status. The loss of a loved one is included in the migratory process that is full of manifold challenges and new experiences, requiring a great deal of energy. Having to go through such important stages in the life cycle as illness and death without the presence of close family and friends adds an additional burden to these losses.

Another challenge that transnational authors in these texts have encumbered is the distance that grows between them and the close family members left behind. Trudie went into exile for twelve years, and in those twelve years she had not communicated to her siblings; she knew nothing much about their lives during those twelve years, and as such her family grew strange to her and recalls how when they finally meet:

Surprisingly, we did not have much to tell each other. After very stiff greetings and telling her of my return home, I had nothing else to tell her...for the first time I had a vague sense of the possible challenge of communication between my siblings and I. Twelve years had been a long time. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 233)

The autobiographer had to adapt to her siblings and the way of life as she had gotten accustomed to foreign ways. This is especially frustrating to the author who desperately wants life to be normal and also to return to her idyllic past. In order to reconnect, the author starts with visits to her siblings and her father back home, spending more time with them as a way to get reacquainted with her siblings and her father. She therefore captures these awkward moments as follows:

They would certainly look different by now. My father would have grown older, my sister who was just a teenager when I left was now a mother of two and my older brothers were real men by now. My youngest brother whom I had not seen was by then 12 years old. These were all new people to me. Twelve years had turned my family members into complete strangers. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 236)

Moreover, the autobiographer was perturbed too by the reaction from her family members. What Trudie experienced is confirmed by Ní Laoire (2007), who states that homecoming rarely seems to fulfil that search for a singular home and stable

identity; instead, migrants often express a continued ambivalence on return, recognising that they have changed, as has the place they had imagined so unproblematic as 'home'. As Amulungu (2016)'s autobiography demonstrates, returnees often consider the possibilities of re-emigration once the complex reality of returning is recognised, suggesting a revision of the idealised model of homecoming as restoration of a fixed identification with home (Abdelhady, 2008; Ley & Kobayashi, 2005; Tsuda, 2003).

Moreover, the gap that emerges between the dreams and the realities of return results in disenchantment among many returnees, leading some to revise their self-identities and to articulate a liminal status as both insiders and outsiders. Trudie shares these sentiments with the reader as she recounts that:

We developed a habit of just going to stand around at the Office of the SWAPO Directorate of Elections. After having lived in communities in exile, not being in touch with others became a problem... secondly, in exile, we were guided and surrounded and this sense of guidance and surrounding suddenly fell away, leaving us in a vacuum. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 235)

As seen above, through the interplay between home's mobile and moored features, returnees begin to articulate the disjuncture, and even antagonism, between the actual and the idealised meanings with which they had imbued home and their identification with it (Ralph, 2009). For these migrants, a return to a home for which they have yearned and to which they identify can be unsettling. For while they have

returned, they often feel that they no longer belong in their home place. Thus, while seeking to stabilise an identity, they encounter the complex relationships between identity and belonging and this often leads to confusion and perplexity as recounted by Amulungu as follows:

There was no camp to go to. And of course the element of insecurity was there and we spent time telling each other what we had seen and observed. The experience of others and their views were very important as we struggled to find our feet on the ground in this new but harsh environment. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 235)

Although Trudie did not wish to return to exile, she felt isolated and desolate in her home country. Trudie initially wanted to get home to her family at the village, but she found herself staying longer than she intended in Windhoek away from her family for some time as she was not ready to meet them yet. Trudie searched for her exile friends who got repatriated earlier so as to live with them whilst in Windhoek. Eventually, she managed to go home, and she had to visit her mother's grave as well, and mourn her, after a long time, together with her family. That act gave her the much needed closure, and finally she could as she confided to the reader that "it was time for me to make peace with my loss, to start closing my wound" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 245). To her utmost relief, she also learnt that the family got her letters, and knew about her marriage in 1983. As passionately narrated by Trudie's grandmother, Amulungu (2016) recounts how:

My grandmother told me how she, after receiving news of my marriage, went several times a day to her sleeping hut, pulled a blanket over her head and ululated. My poor grandmother knew too well that I would not be aware of the ululating wherever I was. She nonetheless could not miss the occasion of ululating, though only symbolically, for a granddaughter getting married in an unknown land. (p. 246)

After getting the closure, Trudie was determined to take on the ‘mothering role’ towards her siblings as the first born. Trudie put a tombstone on her mother’s grave shortly after her arrival and she found better schools and education for her young siblings.

Thus, the authors faced the challenges of transnationalism with eager and strong will to adapt to the environments. Although both were equally faced with losses, the authors managed to ‘mourn’ alone, emphasising the quality of resilience and survival energy that is prevalent in the autobiographies of Katjavivi and Amulungu.

4.5. Challenges of interracial marriages

Another challenge faced by the authors is that of the challenges of their marriages which seem to be uniquely due to them being interracial. Katjavivi in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Amulungu in *Taming my Elephant* (2016) vividly recount the challenges they encountered in their marriages. Anxiety, insecurity, guilt, anger,

depression, and identity conflict are some of the possible challenges that interracially married couples experience. In the case of an interracial couple, there is potential for greater impact because of the cultural differences. However, the causes of such issues are generally not related directly to the couples' adaptation to each other, but seem to stem more from problems of cultural or ethnic differences, racism and societal pressure (Stephan & Stephan, as cited in Hibbler & Shinew, 2002). Jane reminisces the challenges of being in an interracial marriage in England at the time: "People began to recognise us - the rare sight of an interracial family" (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 23). This shows that Jane and her family were negatively affected by this 'societal pressure'.

Furthermore, this is corroborated by research which shows that interracial couples may have a greater adjustment to marriage - in part because of society's overall attitude towards their relationship, which may range from curiosity to disapproval. Regarding the societal reaction, Chito, Childs and Dalmage (as cited in Bratter & King, 2008) state that the negative reactions to interracial couples from strangers and the diminished social support from family and friends generally characterize the couple's experience. Although these authors are currently living in Namibia, the interracial marriages in these texts happened outside Namibia. Jane whilst in Europe experienced closely similar reactions from society as a white woman married to a black man. Trudie too, in Zambia at the time, as a black woman married to a white man, was overwhelmed by the idea of being married to the 'coloniser'. This shows that the race factor was predominant globally. Donovan (2004 as cited in Sossah,

2012) has classified the challenges that cross-cultural couples face in two groups: the normative challenges that represent basically the difficulties that most of the couples face (the adjustment to marriage, personality and gender difference, and parenting) and the cultural challenges (family disapproval, language barrier, cultural norms, societal disapproval, traditions, and children's identity) and these are all some of the challenges that Trudie and Jane faced.

4.5.1. Adjustment to marriage

As couples of different races, they had to learn about their spouse's race and traditions. Jane as a white woman had to learn the 'black' way of life because of her Herero husband, Peter and vice versa. In the same manner, Trudie as a black woman married to a white man had to learn and adjust to her husband's culture and habits, whilst Wilfried too had to adjust to the Oshiwambo habits and customs. In the couples' point of view, the adjustment is a long process that at first takes one to a year and half. And even after that, adjustment continues as long as the relationship continues and as long as they continue to move (as transnational citizens) to other new places which place new and or renewed pressures upon them. Jane in *Undisciplined Heart* confesses that:

It took time to adjust to the strong gender roles and social divisions between men and women. I had already witnessed this in Oxford when young male Namibians students came to visit us. If Peter, rather than I, got up to make them cups of tea, they would be surprised, because this was a task usually performed by women in Namibia. (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 33)

This was difficult for the author to adapt to as she was not used to the distinct gender responsibilities. However, and fortunately for her, this was not a vehement form of cultural shock since her adjustment started first during their stay in England. Jane further acknowledges that her husband Peter was a receptive and more understanding man who did not stick so strongly to the observance and reinforcement of gender roles which are unfairly sided to the patriarchal tendencies and as such, this made the adaptation process fast.

Similarly, Trudie met her husband in Lusaka, Zambia whilst they were both in exile. Trudie states the shock and the confusion of meeting a white man who was born and raised in Namibia and yet who was not 'bad' and who was also not an enemy. Later Trudie and Wilfried developed a friendship, which in itself did not bother Trudie, as they were all 'comrades' and as such, comrades are friends with a common enemy. Yet the speculations of a relationship between Trudie and Wilfried by close friends shocked Trudie. A relationship between her and Wilfried was something she had never imagined: "I could hardly believe what I was hearing. There were natural reasons why a sensible Namibian couldn't come to such a conclusion" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 208. Generally speaking, blacks and whites in Namibia fought against each other, and as such they were essentially enemies, and at the time (in 1988), two years before the independence of Namibia, the idea of a black and white race relationship was completely unimaginable for many.

Both Wilfried and I were from Namibia. That was the country where we were born and bred. Race was part of our upbringing and of our lives.

Things were made clear and very obvious and we all had it fixed in our minds. Certain things were simply beyond bounds and there was no room to think about them. Once your brain had been with something as particular as race was in our case, it becomes part of the mind-set. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 208)

From the above, it can be observed that the wounds of a protracted liberation struggle that was mainly waged on racial lines were still open and fresh and it would seem hypocritical to some sectors of society to accept an interracial marriage within a split second. The autobiographer to some extent could have felt a sense of guilt and betrayal to her people and country. Trudie went on further to explain just how tyrannical some whites had been to other races in Namibia and how they had treated them over the years, justifying why the relationship between her and a white man would be unthinkable and out of the question. She therefore narrates that:

The notion of being white in Namibia during those years was really notorious. The superiority of whites was inevitable. They were in charge and blacks were at their service. This master and servant relationship was enforced not only by the system but had also been enforced by individual whites for generations... This kind of division led a deepened division between whites and non-whites. (Amulungu, 2017, pp. 208-209)

This is contrary to Jane who shows some societal openness towards interracial marriages and does not express distress and anxieties for engaging in a relationship with her black husband. It is possible that Jane could have had grown up in a more diverse and receptive world and therefore was not as aware and conscious of racial discrimination. Katjavivi grew up in England and their relationship started and grew in England, and the country seems by then to have fairly gone past racial differences and accepted all races and interracial marriages as discussed in Chapter 2, section 2.2 of the literature review.

This is contrary to Trudie who as an African woman and Namibian had an added pressure in that her home country was still under colonisation by generally white people. As an African, she was well aware of the effects of colonialism as imposed on them by the white colonialists and she was still living and surviving some of those effects. She had lost friends and family because of white colonialists, and had left her family whilst she herself was at a very young age to go into exile to fight against the white colonialists and all this was for the liberation of Namibia. It is pellucid because of her attitude towards all whites in general at that time; though moving to other countries assisted her to have a broader view point and also to be less stereotypical. She writes:

As young black adults, we knew too well that whites were there to mistreat abuse and belittle us and our minds were set to quietly find a way to protect ourselves. When possible, the best way was to stay out of their way. Later when I studied in France and lived in a university residence, I was

surprised to discover that whites were after all normal people. They eat; they drink and go to the toilet. You would not get that image from Namibian whites. They appeared just too good for many things. They were served and worshipped from a distance. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 210)

Evidently, Namibian whites were considered as the ruthless enemy that had to be viewed with the most possible anathema. It is however important to note that not all whites fought against the blacks, as is the case with Wilfried who joined the war to fight for Namibia on the side of the black race. The fact in this case therefore, is that Wilfried was actually a comrade to those who had the opportunity to understand him, his political allegiances and his cause. While Trudie still had apprehensions, she was opening up to the fortuity of a relationship between her and Wilfried partly owing to her open-mindedness, the fact that Wilfried presented himself as a genuine lover of humanity across racial lines and also because Trudie herself had travelled fairly well to be able to appreciate the fact that humanity goes beyond simplistic skin pigmentation which is touted by the narrow-minded.

Therefore, Trudie's concern was not really about her and Wilfried but it was mostly about the country and the reaction of other Namibians to the idea of a relationship with a white man. She feared the anticipated rejection from family, friends and even the country. As a 'comrade' she loved her country dearly and thus she did not want to betray her fellow comrades. Instead she was committed to fighting for Namibia's liberation, and importantly, she wanted to reap the fruits of the liberation when the

time came. She also pondered about the legal barriers which were in place and as such, her situation could prove more than an emotionally and socially difficult “boundary fence” but one which could lend them both in jail. Trudie therefore thinks about how:

There is a law which prohibited multi-racial relations. Although the law had been repealed by then, it was in force during my lifetime and I knew of people who had to leave Namibia because they had become entangled in multi-racial relationships. This was no fiction. I had hard evidence on the matter and under no circumstances would I complicate my life which for practical purposes was complicated enough. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 212)

The male spouses of the authors in these texts, though of different races, were not stirred by the race factor, but appear undaunted by it. Jane proclaimed that to her spouse, the skin colour was “a non-issue”, which is what Wilfried had also expressed. Consequently, the males in these texts adapted easily to the relationship unlike their female counterparts.

Moreover, the autobiographies narrated the adjustment phases as Jane demonstrated that they each were in a relationship previously, and their decision to start a relationship with her spouse affected the other people. Romano (2008, as cited in Sossah, 2012) divides the adjustment phase into three: the honeymoon phase (everything is new and wonderful), the settling-in phase (when differences cause

major disagreements), and the life-pattern phase (when the differences are minimized). The last phase is the one where usually intercultural marriages break up because of their thinking that their differences are insurmountable. Despite the fact that Trudie experienced complications two months into their relationship as the reality of their relationship was beginning to engulf her, the relationship did not end but it withstood the challenges, thus she confides to the reader that:

The following weeks were going to be hard. I was locked up in a battle with myself. I could change my view or my position from one minute to the next. If need be, I would lock myself away somewhere and refuse to give any response or explanation. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 221)

This is corroborated by Romano (2008 as cited in Sossah, 2012) who says that the wise thing to do at this stage is to allow for differences without giving up one's own identity. The autobiographies of Katjavivi and Amulungu show that the couples managed to adjust in the marriage. In each relationship, partners sought support from each other, irrespective of the differences in race. In the case of Jane (who is white), she sought strength from her black husband, whereas Trudie (a black woman) sought for support from her white husband and this is indicated when Trudie states that: "Wilfried was going to prevail against all odds...Wilfried patiently stood by and waited for me to sort myself out" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 221).

On the other hand, two cases of adjustment are seen in these autobiographies - a longer process in case the couple has in-laws living with them, and a shorter process when the couple does not stay with the in-laws. Jane acknowledged quick adjustment in the absence of “Peter’s family and friends from Namibia” (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 33). But, in both cases, the spouse’s support, flexibility, playfulness with in-laws, and spending time together, were found to be helpful during the adjustment phase.

It can therefore be argued that the couples adjusted easily when the close friends and the community approved of the relationship. The community also played a major role in the relationship. Katjavivi state that she had no difficulties adjusting to her interracial marriage with friends because during that time most of her friends also had interracial relationships. Therefore, the topic of race was not that critical. In the same manner, Trudie confirmed relief when her community approved of the relationship: “For the first time in many months, I made peace with myself... those who mattered to me reassured me of their approval” (Amulungu, 2016, p. 225).

4.5.2. Family approval/ disapproval

The family acceptance or refusal of interracial couple marriages play a big and significant role in the survival of the marriage as seen in Katjavivi’s *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Trudie Amulungu’s *Taming my Elephant* (2016). An interracial marriage requires greater adjustments due to the societal attitude to these kinds of

unions and at the same time, the pressure brought by curiosity or family disapproval (Lewis & Yancey, 1995). In the case of Jane, her family reacted differently to the relationship in comparison to Trudie's case. Jane's family was happy about the fact that their daughter was getting married. Her spouse's family welcomed her too, Jane remembers that:

When they talked about him marrying a foreigner, they quoted an old Herero saying: "*Nokokure kuno' eenu*" - Even in faraway places, you will find your own kind. Gerson gave me a Herero name, Tuauana, meaning 'we are together'. I started to learn Herero and practised phrases with Peter, Alexia and the aunties, and on the children. (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 32)

The family looked at the couple's love and believed that the love between Jane and her husband was enough. The skin colour did not matter to Peter's family, although, there was one family member who showed disapproval as "One niece, a young professional woman, was not happy that her uncle had married a white woman" (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 32). Otherwise, the racial differences did not appear to be a problem for most in the family.

Contrary to Jane's experience, when Trudie and the husband moved to Namibia, they had to meet the in-laws of both families. Trudie's husband knew that the family would possibly not be very supportive of the relationship and as such, "Wilfried started wondering what the reaction of the family would be" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 230). This raised anxiety in Trudie and Wilfried for the fear of the unknown.

Nonetheless, Trudie introduced her husband to her family. She introduced him first to her sister, who seemed to have expected it as she was not alarmed by the presence of a white man during their meeting. Trudie commented on her sister's reaction stating that: "Although I introduced Wilfried to her, she did not react the normal way of 'glad to meet you'" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 241). But the family welcomed him shortly after, inviting him to sleep over in their home, "Wilfried we know who you are, please take your bag and follow me" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 242).

Trudie found it more difficult to tell her father about Wilfried, and worried about how her community would react to their relationship. With her siblings it was much easier, she was the oldest and in her culture, juniors do not argue or go against the senior's decisions. The siblings had heard the rumour about her relationship with a white man, which made it less difficult to tell them. She was merely confirming that which they already knew. In this web, she had to rely on her younger sibling who had gone into exile for advice on how to tell the father about this interracial relationship. Notably, the father did not seem troubled by the news, and accepted the reality as it was: "I have heard you and I do understand. My only wish is that you get married in church" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 251). The family was supportive and welcomed their son in law. This was a relief to Trudie, to have her family and especially her father's approval and following the approval: "Wilfried could finally come home with me to meet my father...I was so relieved that my battle was finally over" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 251).

In contrary, Trudie's spouse's family seem to have reacted negatively, and it took some time for them to adjust to the fact of the matter. Wilfried was anxious to tell his parents of the relationship, and chose just like Trudie, to have his siblings inform his parents for him in his absence. This is consistent with the findings of Lewis and Yance (1995) as reviewed in chapter 2, section 2.8. The parents' disapproval at first affected the relationship and especially Trudie as she expressed her dismay thus:

Till then I never imagined that I would be a real problem to anyone. Suddenly, I had become one. Wilfried's parents were increasingly concerned about their son's position in relation to me. They had not yet met me, but they knew about my skin colour. My colour was problematic. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 255)

Wilfried too was affected as the parents stopped talking to their son in the midst of this drama. To Trudie's surprise, Wilfried did not seem concerned by the absence of his parents from his life: "If his conviction would cause him to be cut off from the family, he was prepared for the eventuality" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 258). Trudie's spouse was persistent on his decision to be in the relationship with a black woman despite the parents' convictions against the relationship. This however, as Trudie revealed had serious effects since "The problem became a family crisis" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 255).

Wilfried's mother opposed the relationship the most. Unfortunately, for the family, Trudie was also expecting their grandchild with their son and as such, this controversy divided the family. And this is how Trudie explains it:

On one hand, there was Wilfried, the youngest son who was convinced that there was absolutely nothing wrong with what he was subjecting his poor parents to. On the other hand, he had parents who had been hoping to quietly get out of the situation without hurting their dear son but at the same time without having their neighbours and fellow society members raising eyebrows. (Amulungu, 2016, pp.257-258)

At the time in Namibia, the blacks and whites lived separately. Trudie's in-laws lived in Olympia, a predominantly white occupied community during that time. If they had a black daughter in-law, the whole street would know and she would be the first and only one to live among the whites. This was difficult for the parents to endure at the time, especially that "The only black people known to her were the gardener and the cleaning lady, and of course some workers at the family business" (Amulungu, 2016, p. 257).

As stated previously, the family of the couples in interracial relationships contribute significantly to the failure or success thereof of the relationship. This was the case with Wilfried's older siblings who intervened and convinced their mother that:

It was first a question of explaining to the parents that Wilfried was old enough to be allowed to take decisions over his own life. It was also important to suggest to the parents that if Wilfried reckoned that he would find happiness with a black woman, he should perhaps be allowed to do so. After all, it was further argued, the parents should realise there was not much to be done as a baby was on the way.” (Amulungu, 2010, p. 257)

The parents eventually accepted Wilfried’s choice and accepted their daughter in-law into the family. Trudie finally gets the approval as explained that: “My mother in-law stated that it was in our best interests to put our differences and misunderstandings behind us... and that she wholeheartedly welcomed us in the family...” (Amulungu, 2016, p. 259). Amulungu was overwhelmed by the message from her mother in-law, and yet also timid to meet them after what had happened. Throughout this ordeal, her spouse understood and supported her judgement to wait and meet the parents in due course, when she felt ready for it, this is consistent with the findings of Root (2001) who argues that the black spouse’s family members would be more accepting of an interracial marriage unlike the white spouse’s family members (see chapter 2, section 2.8).

Though there were negative reactions from some friends, those reactions were more related to the differences in culture than to the colour factor in the texts under study. Much as Trudie’s closest friend did not support the relationship with a white man at first, she ultimately came to terms with it to avoid further straining her friend’s life, as narrated by Trudie that:

Worried about upsetting me, and noticing my despair for her approval and support, she murmured something that sounded like she was fine with the situation and that she would come to the wedding. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 272)

The findings in Inman et al.'s (2011, as cited in Sossah, 2012) study are inconsistent with this study. Primarily, they found that it was much harder for their participants to find support from their direct family members, while friends were more open to the relationship. However as experienced by Amulungu, some of her friends did not support the relationship either and only supported much later to appease their friend.

Though the two interracial couples generally experience family disapproval, there is mostly a shift in the perception of both families when they come to know each other. In other words, events such as birthdays, weddings (as in the case of Amulungu and the husband), anniversaries or even any dramatic event help both families to learn about their different cultures (Inman et al., 2011, as cited in Sossah, 2012). Another way to reduce the tension between both families is to have a balanced or shared worldview, that is the beliefs, values, and assumptions that mediate communication, relationships, modes of problem-solving, and decision-making. Couples or families that share these values can have an easier time with adapting (Ibrahim & Schroeder, 1990, as cited in Sossah, 2012). Studies have also found that the acceptance of interracial marriages is increasing at a rapid pace and an increasing number of interracial couples are reporting that their families have

openly accepted their interracial relationship, and they feel comfortable speaking about their relationship in public in the case of the under study, the public talk is the production of the autobiographies (Fears & Deane, 2001; Rosenblatt et. al., 1995, as cited in Walker, 2005). However, attitudes regarding interracial dating have been found to vary based upon race, age, and gender. The majority of the research suggests that the Black society is often more accepting of interracial relations than White society; and therefore, Black-White interracial couples chose to live in either Black or integrated communities as opposed to White communities. Hibbler and Shiness (2002) found that the families of the Black partner in interracial relationships tend to be more accepting and supportive than the families of the white partner as found in the present study. Trudie confirms this in her autobiography, stating that: “Well I have met my parents’ in-law, but one thing was certain, we had a long way to go before we started getting along” (Amulungu, 2016, p. 267). This proves that despite being accepted into the family, Trudie still had a challenging journey of criticism from her in-laws.

4.5.3. Social disapproval

The society in which the couples live ought to be racially unified for an interracial marriage to succeed without facing too many. Unfortunately, the apartheid system that forbade interracial marriages was still in force in Namibia and it was only abolished in March 1990 when the country finally got independence hence the society as evidenced in the two autobiographies was still racially segregated and shocked by the sight of an interracial family. The reaction is almost similar to the

one witnessed in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) as Jane, although she lived in Europe at the time, and although Europe's racial segregation laws had been abolished, it was rare to find interracial couples. Jane highlights this by stating that: "People began to recognise us - the rare sight of an interracial family and walking at that" (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 23).

The society's disapproval aroused fear in the couples, Trudie was afraid of her society's reaction to her relationship with Wilfried, stating that: "I would highly appreciate it if he [Wilfried] did not make things obvious in public" (Amulungu, 2010, p. 222). This shows the effects of the society's disapproval of an interracial marriage. The couple therefore felt the need to "hide" their relationship from society. In the same manner, Jane experienced societal disapproval too such that:

Peter would gravitate towards the men in social gatherings, while women often grouped together in another area. I was used to us being together in a mixed group of men and women, frequently discussing politics. (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 33).

This form of disapproval victimises the couples in interracial relationships, especially the women in the texts under study. As Trudie describes it in *Taming my Elephant* (2016):

At the restaurant, I kept to myself and except for occasional smiles, I gave very short answers. I did not know what to expect...I needed time to get to know the society Wilfried was from. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 263)

It took the authors in these texts a long time to get used to the society and community around the family. Societal disapproval also taught the authors in these texts to adapt to situations and to be flexible. Where society expected women to behave in an unusual manner, they observed and complied accordingly, as shown by Jane in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010): “But I realised that in Namibia, I couldn’t attach myself to the men if the other women weren’t there, so I learned to join the women” (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 33). Notably, the men in these texts were not affected as much as their female counterparts yet they did all they could to help their spouses to cope. Yet despite the support, for example, Trudie could not help but feel the heaviness of the society’s disapproval as she explains that: “Our wedding was not like any other wedding. In church although I had my back to the audience, I could feel the heavy look at us” (Amulungu, 2016, p.274).

Trudie summarised the societal reactions by stating that:

The glare of whites portrayed complete perplexity at a fellow White being out of his mind. As for my people (blacks), they clearly portrayed a sense of betrayal by a fellow Black marrying an enemy. (Amulungu, 2016, p. 281)

Both races were equally disappointed in witnessing each of their own being involved in the interracial marriage. However, despite the focus on Jane's and Trudie's families by society the authors managed to live with it and even ignored it at some point.

4.5.4. Cultural and traditional barriers

Furthermore, Jane and Trudie experienced cultural shock and traditional barriers in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and *Taming my Elephant* (2016) respectively. The authors' experiences in the autobiographies under study are supported by Molina, Estrada, and Burnett (2004) who argue that although all relationships are inherently complex, the dimensions of difference are magnified for intercultural couples and families because they combine at least two distinct cultural reference groups, different levels of acculturation, and influences on social locations such as family, peers, school, and work. This is further corroborated by Ting-Toomey (2009) and Kim (2001) who argue that for mixed cultural relationships to persevere, a degree of cultural adjustment must occur, which can facilitate adaptive outcomes such as cognitive flexibility, improved social competence, increased self-awareness, and personal growth.

Jane had a fairly smooth transition in the interracial relationship; the only complication was culture as she narrates that: "Peter's family were friendly to me but distanced by culture (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 32). Jane experienced cultural shocks

as a westerner living in an African country and she often found that some of the gendered patterns of life were not in agreement with what she how she was socialised and thus she explains: “Most Herero men expect their wives to do everything in the home...children were looked after by women exclusively” (Katjavivi, 2010. p. 33).

This study is in agreement with Kim’s (2001) view, as it appears that according to the couples’ experiences, they had to adjust to each other’s culture when living with the in-laws. However, they also perceived that their adjustment was more personal than cultural.

On the other hand, although Trudie and her spouse were both Namibians, their cultures were quite different, as stated by Trudie that: “We had absolutely nothing in common and any future relationship had to be started from scratch” (Amulungu, 2016, p. 267). In an attempt to learn and adapt to the other culture, Trudie had to be open and willing to participate in her spouse’s cultural activities. This is illustrated when she expressed that: “Although swimming is not my cup of tea, I decided to go with the saying, when in Rome, do as the Romans do (Amulungu, 2016, p. 275).

Furthermore, as a way of compromise and tolerance, the couples had to have two weddings to accommodate both families as each family wanted to have a wedding that is close to their culture. Moreover, as a Vambo, Trudie also found it difficult to

adapt to the German's forms of punctuality and discipline. She was often late for family appointments and that strained her as a new family member. Similarly, Trudie's spouse struggled with adapting to her culture. However, the couple had to learn about the other family's culture and traditions to avoid offending the family members and also to allow peace and tranquillity to prevail. For the authors as people in interracial relationships, they enhanced their cultural competency through the development of a broader frame of reference, increased cultural sensitivity, and tolerance for diversity. As soon as they had managed with that, the mixed marriage status became manageable within their respective families. Jane and Trudie expressed relief after fully adapting to the other's race and put in other words, the two cultures gradually melted into one diverse culture.

4.6. Coping mechanisms for transnational and interracial couples

One of the core aims of the study is to examine the survival techniques employed by Jane in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and by Trudie in *Taming my Elephant* (2016) in relation to their lived challenging experiences as transnational citizens in interracial marriages. As transnational couples in interracial marriages, they experienced the challenges of disapproval and also some stares in all the different countries that they lived in and as such they had to learn to cope with the experiences accordingly. These texts show that transnational interracial families are always on the move due to the job of one spouse which results in the loss of job for the other spouse. As dismayed by Trudie:

I was about to complete my assignment and we both looked so much forward to returning home after five years in Paris. Wilfried was in particular happy to return to his job after over four years of being a house husband. (Amulungu, 2016, pp. 293-294)

Despite the effects on the spouses, the children in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) too had to travel with their parents and they temporarily lived in one country and then move to another country, which resulted in them losing friends and also changing schools more often than should be. Although children struggled at first to adapt with the new school and the new environment, the parents play a major role in making sure that the transition is fast. The parents attempted to avoid changing homes a lot whilst in the host country, and where they have to, they travel with their frames, books, and even curtains of the children's bedrooms so that the children can be familiarised to home in a country away from home.

Besides that, with regards to education, Jane and Peter as transnational parents enrolled their children in schools that have mixed race children and African children, so that their children would not feel strange at the new school.

Isabel starts at the British school two weeks after starting at the International school... She is in the same year, but not the same class as Sophia's daughter Shali, who introduces Isabel to other African girls at the school who are her age. They take Isabel under their wing. They meet up

with other teenagers, mostly from African embassies, show he the shops in town, and how to use the tram that passes near our house. (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 150)

It is evidently important to Isabel and her mother that she is surrounded by Africans as they resemble home, Namibia, where her other friends are also black. Isabel's parents also enrolled their children in schools that had a curriculum that is closely related to the curriculum that their children had done in the home country. Jane narrates that:

The atmosphere at the school is friendly. The accents are regional British ones, and Isabel smiles at me with recognition as she hears them. The teachers we meet explain the system there, which is almost the same as the Namibian one that Isabel has come out of. (Katjavivi, 2010, p.150)

Familiarity is important to the child, in an attempt to make the host country and the new environment, her new home as experienced by Jane. Since the Jane's family moved frequently, they tried as much as possible to stay closer, and in that way they were not overwhelmed by the experiences in the new country of residence. Children were entertained and taken to the zoo and other recreational facilities to pass the time. Parents also allowed the children to make personal decisions that could help make life easier for the children. For example, Jane allowed her young daughter to braid her hair as the rest of the children at the new school, which was a way to make

the child to look like the other children and consequently to make the child to have a sense of belonging and to feel like a part of the community and thus fit in easily.

Accordingly, Jane's family eventually forge relationships, make friends and lead a normal way of life away from home. They appreciate the experiences of a new country and its culture without losing their own. At the same time, family and friends from the home country are kept close too through frequent telephone calls back home and e-mails as shown by Jane. Moreover, whenever possible, the family and friends visit the transnational and interracial family in their temporary home country which is evidenced when Jane narrates that: "my parents are with us. They have come to stay for two weeks" (Katjavivi, 2010, p.176). This helped the family to feel at home away from home Jane felt satisfied in having the grandparents take part in the raising of their grandchildren.

Furthermore, transnational families keep updated as much as possible on the home country and keep home closer to their hearts. In that way, they appreciate their present place of dwelling without forgetting their real home. Jane explains that even though she was very far from Namibia, she tried by all means to let Namibia her home country to be part and parcel of her activities in her host country as she at one time expresses that:

I decide instead to put together an exhibition on the lives of women in Namibia. I go through all our books, magazines and tourist brochures - our

own and those at the embassy. I cut and copy and print out captions and mount them on freestanding display boards...I place woven baskets, embroidered cloths, carved animals and other crafts on tables, jewellery I have that is made of ostrich eggshells or porcupine quills and books by Namibian women writers that I have brought from home. The photos concentrate on rural women - milking, cultivating, pounding millet, making pots and sewing (Katjavivi, 2010, p.176).

The autobiographer as illustrated by Jane above represent her country as a transnational and interracial family, making sure that she stresses on the positive that is happening in Namibia. Jane further expresses how at one time they had had to “host a Namibian Sunday brunch in Berlin” (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 2710). It is in such instances that Jane made sure that she represents her country’s food, cultural traditions and ways of living to the host country, which is a way of expressing the deep-seated pride and loyalty that she has for her home country, Namibia.

At some point, the Jane’s family is forced to separate due to especially education; where in some instances the children were forced to study in another country that offered the same education system that they had done before. Jane stated that:

We return to Brussels and Perivi prepares to leave to pursue his own studies in Syracuse, in up-state New York. He is to stay with friends who teach at the same college...we sit down for a coffee, feeling tired and not wanting to say goodbye. (Katjavivi, 2010, p.157)

This was overwhelming at first; Jane, Peter and Isabel were not ready to be separated again from one of their family member but due to education, they had to let Perivi go to further his studies.

Furthermore, it is noted in Katjavivi autobiography that her children frequently visited their friends in the homeland, keeping close kin and familial relations and also participating in family gatherings. For example, when Isabel's friend from Namibia got confirmed, Jane decided to have her daughter confirmed too in Berlin and to host a party for Isabel which was similar to her friend's. Jane used this chance to remind her children about their culture as Hereros by descent through making a traditional Herero dress for her daughter, her first traditional dress which Jane described as: "it's a complete surprise for her and she starts to weep, saying how it makes her feel fully accepted as part of the Herero community" (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 285). Jane also invited Isabel's paternal and maternal family members and close friends as a way of making Isabel to feel at home. Jane passionately mentioned that: "Before the party, I had written to friends and family around the world to send messages for Isabel. Messages which I then print and give her on that day" (Katjavivi, 2010, p. 284). These momentous functions are significant to the family as they bring the family closer and remind them of their roots and to never forget them.

The authors do not claim life as transnational and interracial families to be easy, they profess to embrace the opportunities presented to them and live life as best and as normal as they can.

4.7. Chapter summary

Katjavivi's *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Amulungu's *Taming my Elephant* (2016) autobiographies express a very crucial topic, which is that of transnationalism and interracial relationships in Namibia. The authors risk losing family members and friends in the choice to be involved in interracial relationships in a newly independent Namibia that was still very aware of the differences between races and the hatred thereof. Katjavivi and Amulungu faced challenges due to their status as transnational citizens and their 'crossing the boundary fence', which is the status of their relationships. As transnational migrants, the authors missed family calamities such as deaths, and also encountered cultural shocks and language barriers which affected the transitioning process. The authors did not let these issues and challenges to completely affect or impact their relationships but did all they could to make things work and ultimately things proved to work.

The chapter also examined how family disapproval was the main source of conflict within the relationships. The results of the study were also presented in this chapter by exposing how the couples came into the different relationships with an attitude of humility and anticipation that there were going to be some challenges due to their

differences in racial and cultural backgrounds. The couples showed some increasing acceptance and acknowledgement despite the occurrences of resentment from their partner's families. Challenges within the relationship were often easier to deal with as the couples became more and more aware of their racial differences in contrast to challenges coming from society at large. The couples witnessed how they felt scrutinized and challenged by their surroundings as they experienced a lack of understanding, disapproval and suspicion owing to their physical and cultural differences. These challenges were often not so easy to handle and they affected both partners. Jane and Trudie indicated that they often felt betrayed and questioned by their surroundings. One aspect was obvious with many of the couples, when children came into the picture the differences in race came more into the limelight and this was one of the major obstacles for the transnational couples. This was due to the exposure of children that brought forward previously hidden differences in cultural values and norms.

According to Beck and Berk- Gernsheim (2014), the future of a child not only reminds people of their childhood but also processes of socialisation experienced in their past. The findings of the study revealed that Katjavivi's children had names from the two languages that the child was born into, as an expression of acceptance and acknowledgement of both races and cultures that are part of the child's world and heritage. With the identification of their racial differences and the acknowledgement that they come from very different backgrounds came a strong willingness to learn more about each other and to gain a deeper understanding of the

partner's way of thinking. Beck and Beck- Gernsheism (2014) explain that if either partner within a romantic relationship ignores racial differences, this will become a major source of misunderstandings and conflict. Jane in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Trudie in *Taming my Elephant* (2016) used their different races as tool kits to create a new and mixed race that was based on the highlights from both races.

The next chapter provides the conclusions, recommendations for further research and indications of how study has contributed to the body of knowledge.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter concludes the study that was carried out to explore transnationalism and interracial marriage encounters in Jane Katjavivi's *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Trudie Amulungu's *Taming my Elephant* (2016) respectively. This study was developed out of the researcher's curiosity about how transnational migrants survive away from the home country as well as the challenges encountered in interracial marriages in Namibia as explored through the two texts. It was conducted by examining the representations of their experience in autobiographical works; probing on the objections experienced by the authors as transnational migrants as well as the criticism encountered in interracial marriage, and the strenuousness of surviving in such a family.

This study sought to enlighten the public on the issue of transnationalism and race and the impacts thereof as presented by the two authors. It was conducted in order to expose interracial marriages as they are unique and disparate from same race marriages and to revise the idea of transnationalism. The autobiographical works under study presents transnational migrants as strong and persevering beings.

The autobiography theory and transnationalism and diaspora theories were the theoretical frameworks employed in this qualitative, desktop study which used

thematic content analysis as a method to analyse the two literary works. This chapter, gives a summary of the findings and recommendations that are critical in illustrating how the study paves way for a new perception regarding transnationalism and interracial relationships and marriages. It is divided into three sections which are conclusion and findings, contribution to knowledge and recommendations for further research. The main findings are summarised below.

5.2. Summary of the major study findings as related to the research objectives

This section presents the conclusions and findings of this study. The autobiographical works in this study show the strength and vigour that the authors had, in travelling across the globe for the country as well as for love. Jane and Trudie were indeed transnationals who exhibited strong connections to their home and host societies and in the process; they contributed to the development of their home countries as well as host countries. The authors exhibit passion and forgiving hearts towards their spouse's families. Katjavivi (2010) and Amulungu's (2016) endurance in the autobiographical works show how reconciliation can positively work for a country and its citizens, thus Jane and Trudie served as pioneers of change and spurred a new cosmopolitan view of the globalised world.

In order to achieve the aim of the study, three objectives were proposed (see Section 1.5); thus the findings are presented in the following subsections organised

according to the research objectives, to indicate in which ways the aims of the study were met.

5.2.1. Explore the literary presentation of transnational identities as presented in the autobiographies under study

Jane Katjavivi and Trudie Amulungu managed transnational identities through sending remittances and maintaining ties to their nations of origin. The authors indicated that they were important sources of support for the health and well-being of their family members and at the same time, these linkages benefited the development of Namibia as a newly independent country. Although Jane in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Trudie in *Taming my Elephant* (2016) experienced racism as well as the challenges emanating from the intersection of race, gender and class in their lives, they also forged relationships with other communities that hosted them and in that manner, they managed to survive and also to flourish as international citizens.

Through their many activities, the authors assisted in the rebuilding of the Namibia and re-creating “home”. Jane as a renowned author came to Namibia and immediately opened a book store to foster the culture of reading in Namibia and ultimately she developed the country in many ways. She went further on to start training seminars for teachers in Namibia, to familiarise Namibia teachers to a curriculum that was adapted shortly after independence. In the same manner, Trudie

sacrificed her safety, went into exile to fight for the liberation of Namibia. In this, she independently took on the roles assigned to her, and that was to be well educated so that Namibia “has its own policy makers” for when independence happened. Therefore, their transnational identities straddle many nations but there is a deep rooted sense of belonging to Namibia as home.

5.2.2. Evaluate the strategies employed by the authors to explore the sense of belonging in the selected autobiographies

The authors worked tirelessly, to contribute to the development of Namibia. In the migration, as transnationals, Jane Katjavivi and Trudie Amulungu stumbled over cultural differences as well as psychological turmoils affecting their children with the decisions to travel with them and even leaving them in foreign countries for a number of years.

Despite the challenges, Jane Katjavivi and Trudie Amulungu, show how the characters resiliently survived, by relentlessly educating themselves and adapting themselves to the cultures they experienced and the countries they lived in temporarily. The dominant themes in both Katjavivi and Amulungu’s autobiographies are that of keeping home close though they may be away from home. This they did, by regularly communicating with family and close friends. The authors managed transnational lives too by inhabiting the new societies with an open mind to learn and adapt to the host countries.

5.2.3. Examine the challenges and benefits encountered in interracial marriages as presented in the selected autobiographies

Moreover, Jane Katjavivi in *Undisciplined Heart* (2010) and Trudie Amulungu in *Taming my Elephant* (2016) possessed the spirit of perseverance in their interracial marriage status. Although they were confronted by resistance, some friends and society, Katjavivi and Amulungu being the warriors that they were, quickly habituated themselves to the status of a mixed race marriage, and exhibited to the doubters that love survives through perseverance, and ultimately they united the different races, families and cultures. As a result, they enjoyed and still enjoy successful marriages owned by appreciative families and friends, children and a heightened and defended sense of “rainbrownism”.

5.3. Contribution to knowledge

The researcher recognised the need to explore the theme of transnationalism and interracial marriage as this has never been explored in Namibia. Firstly, this thesis serves as an epiphany to the Namibian academic writers, to find ways to further interrogate the notion of transnationalism and interracial relationships, because it is through tracing migration and mixed race relationships thereof that one is able to understand the present. People of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds have become part of the present Namibian society, and as such; interracial relationships have become inevitable in Namibia. Hence the study contributes to the knowledge of transnationalism and interracial marriage thereby sensitising readers about this controversy in Namibia.

Secondly, many academic writers cited in this thesis have presented transnational and interracial families as victims of their status, but this thesis re-directs the thought pattern of literary and academic writers. In literature, researchers depicted couples as vulnerable, and this view fails to recognise the fact that the world is ever changing, and so do the people's attitudes towards what used to be taboo such as black and white intimate relationships. This study has given us a new way of viewing transnational migrants and interracial families because literature of the modern times hardly depicts them only as sufferers, but also as survivors, educators and persevering beings.

Finally, this study contributes to developing this field by achieving a more comprehensive understanding of the multidimensional experiences and outcomes of interracial marriage, including the nature and degree of adaptation of mixed couples and their families, and the wider implications of transnationalism and interracial marriage on a growing number of societies around the world. This pioneering literary study gives an introspection of the lived experiences and challenges of transnational interracial families as presented in Namibian autobiographies. The study maintains that transnational migrants are developers and shapers of the future and the interracial families unify societies and Namibia at large.

5.4 Recommendations for further research

The study revealed that transnational migrants and interracial families are not as weak as they are portrayed by some literary and academic writers. It brings out that they have important characteristics of perseverance and determination that are worth noting. It is therefore against this background that the researcher deems it necessary to recommend that further studies interrogate the notion of transnationalism and interracial relationships as presented by both male and female autobiographies in order to extend the understanding regarding this theme. The researcher, therefore, recommends further research on the following areas:

- It could be useful to study how parents cope with parenting issues as their mixed race children grow into adulthood with hybrid identities which may result in feelings of double consciousness
- Literary research that re-examines the personal characteristics of partners in interracial marriages is also needed. Early research, which attributed a variety of negative characteristics to them, occurred at a time when interracial marriage was less frequent than it is today.
- Further research should also look at the effect of discrimination on interracial relationships as presented by other writers in Africa, and
- Lastly, further research should be conducted in other genres other than autobiographies to explore mixed race children and the diaspora in Namibia and Africa, and compare what these children have in common and if they struggle with racial identity and belonging.

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