

**Identity Construction and Belonging of Second-Generation  
Ghanaian Immigrants in The Netherlands.**

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***Patrick Asamoah Asadu***

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Members of the Examining Committee:

Dr. Kees Biekart (Supervisor)

Dr. Antony Otieno Ong'ayo (Reader)

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***Disclaimer:***

This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

***Inquiries:***

**Postal address:**

Institute of Social Studies  
P.O. Box 29776  
2502 LT The Hague  
The Netherlands

**Location:**

Kortenaerkade 12  
2518 AX The Hague  
The Netherlands

Telephone: +31 70 426 0460  
Fax: +31 70 426 0799

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## **List of Acronyms**

1G	First Generation
2G	Second Generation
BSA	British South Asian
CILS	Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study
IPT	Identity Process Theory
ISS	Institute of Social Studies
NUFFIC	Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

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## **Abstract**

This study discusses identity construction and sense of belonging of second-generation (2G) Ghanaian immigrants in the Netherlands because of their experiences in a destination country.

The Netherlands has a strong policy on immigration. The immigrants give birth to children or bring their children from country of origin to live with them at an early age. The children, with one or both parent from Ghana, have a way of constructing their identity and sense of belonging whether to a destination country (Netherlands) or country of origin (Ghana).

This study draws on semi-structured interviews and participant observation with 17 respondents (15 second-generation children, 2 first-generation parents) in the Netherlands to assess their experiences on how they construct their identity and sense of belonging.

My findings have shown their identity is not fixed, and that second-generation construct their identity and sense of belonging based on the experiences they have encountered. Some have accepted parents' origin and some made their own personal choices of how they perceive themselves. In belonging, they feel the need to belong to The Netherlands, Ghana, and both worlds. Respondents narratives of identity construction and sense of belonging are the result of their connection to the Dutch society and Ghanaian society.

The study of identity construction and sense of belonging will further aid discussions on second-generation immigrants experiences and how it informs their choices or decisions.

## **Relevance to Development Studies**

Migrant identity and belonging of second-generation (2G) immigrant has been central issue in development studies. Research has shown that most immigrants are non-whites. The problem faced by second-generation immigrants on whether to identify or belong to destination country or origin country have been of great importance to policy makers and academics. This research shows the importance of second-generation immigrants in recognition of their identity construction and sense of belonging as a form of engagement to developmental projects of a country, since it is one of the current concern in development studies.

## **Keywords**

Identity construction, Belonging, Second generation, Acculturation, Citizenship, Adaptation, Transnationalism, Ghana, Netherlands.

# 1. Background of the Study

## 1.1 Introduction

This thesis explores identity construction and sense of belonging as experienced by the Second-Generation (2G) Ghanaian immigrants in the Netherlands. Identity is a long-standing historical term. Quite often people are asked “Who are you?” “Where do you come from?” “Where do you belong?” “How do you identify yourself?” These questions often receive different answers based on the background of a person.

Identity is part of our world which “permeates our everyday conversations, our moment-to-moment cognitive process of sense-making in a world increasingly characterized by human diversity” (Hammack 2015: 11). Every individual has own meaning and understanding on how they identify themselves and to what/where they belong to.

The position of immigrants is to be able to identify themselves with a feeling of belonging and have a higher relation to their country. However, immigration which has been problematized in the last twenty years in all European countries has an effect on immigrants (Thomassen 2010). The immigrants face challenges in successful adaptation in their new environment (Waters 1994). “As the children with immigrants backgrounds come into greater contact with the larger social world during the years of adolescence, they increasingly face the need to figure out who they are, and how they fit into the existing array of social groups and categories” (Jiang 2014: 1). Therefore, perspectives of immigrants have an influence of how they see themselves and how they relate to the dominant society (Schwartz et al. 2006).

## 1.2 Research Problem Statement

Second-Generation (2G) face the adaptation problem in a new environment due to certain “conflicting social and cultural demands” with different groups in an unfamiliar environment (Portes and Zhou 1993: 75) that is different from the parents’ country. Thus, they face the problem of integrating into a broader society of destination country (Thomassen 2010). Children of immigrants find a way in defining themselves to suit into a larger society, however, society has a way of putting a different construct on their identity (Yeboah 2007). For instance, Mesut Ozil a German player of Turkish descent quit the German national Football Team after the 2018 World Cup disaster which saw Germany already at the group stage, citing racism as his reasons and that

in the FA president's eyes, the midfielder is "German when we win, but an immigrant when we lose"<sup>1</sup>.

Immigrant children struggle relating to parents' culture due to unavailability of elements that constitute their culture like food, clothing, dance, citizenship, and language barriers between two countries<sup>2</sup>. They are caught between the dominant culture and parents' culture where they have to negotiate between two segregated or segmented identities (Bacon 1999). 2G often have better knowledge of the language of the destination society and less of their parents, thus generating complexity in communication, since in most cases the children are expected to know parents' language. At the same time some 2G are also not doing well in language of destination country due to limited practices and expectation to speak the language of the parent at home. The parents who are not good in destination society language rely on the children for translation which sometimes becomes a burden for immigrant children (Jodeyr 2003). Citizenship remains a considerable situation among immigrant children (Alba 2005) whether to identify as a national to destination country or country of origin.

Research on identity and belonging of the 2G has been carried out by Yeboah (2007), Boateng et al. (2018). Yeboah (2007) looked at the socialization and identity creation of 2G Ghanaian immigrants in Canada. Boateng et al. (2008) discussed identity and remittances patterns of 2G Ghanaians in United Kingdom (UK). In The Netherlands, there are numerous research on immigrants and their children. Mazzucato (2008) focussed on transnationalism and integration of Ghanaians immigrants lives between Netherlands and Ghana. Ong'ayo (2014) focussed on Ghanaian diaspora organizations in the Netherlands. However, research about 2G has mainly focussed on immigrants from Morocco and Turkish background on educational trend in the Netherlands (Crul and Doornenik 2003). The 2G in the Netherlands of Ghanaian background are an under-researched group.

The difficulty of studying 2G at a national level are well known (Portes and Rumbaut 2001), but the nature of how 2G are constructing their identities between two countries is unknown (Somerville 2008). Issues of identity and behaviour of 2G is an important factor to understand how they can deal with their status in life (Hiller and Chow 2005). Therefore, my work seeks to

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.goal.com/en/news/german-fa-president-ozil-controversy-will-have-no-influence/w6seyzieug9c12d9gvg21qcbv>

<sup>2</sup><http://affinitymagazine.us/2016/12/20/the-cultural-identities-of-second-generation-immigrants/>

fill the gap by investigating how 2G Ghanaian immigrants<sup>3</sup> in the Netherlands construct their identity and sense of belonging whether to destination country or to country of origin. My research focuses on data collection in The Hague Municipality.

### **1.3 Research Objectives and Questions**

The research study seeks to examine how second-generation (2G) Ghanaians in the Netherlands identify themselves whether to destination country or origin country, and the factors which influence their choices. The study will explore how their levels of adaptation in the Netherlands influence their decision.

***Main research questions:***

How do the second-generation (2G) Ghanaians construct their identity and sense of belonging?

***Specific questions:***

1. How do second-generation position themselves as ‘Dutch’ or ‘Ghanaian’ or ‘both’ (destination country? country of origin? destination-country of origin?)
2. What are the factors influencing their identity construction and belonging?
3. To what extent does the concept of adaptation shape or determine second-generation experiences in the Netherlands?

### **1.4 Relevance of the Study**

Migrant identity has become a relevant tool in development studies where various strategies have been created by governments to engage nationals in developmental projects. Unfortunately, migrant identity is something that has received little attention where minimal research has been undertaken. The issue of black immigrant pertaining to what they identify with and where they feel their sense of belonging is something which has been ignored by most institutions. The research of second-generation identity and belonging will contribute to a need for governments to incorporate and engage immigrants in public policy programmes.

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<sup>3</sup> I define a second-generation Ghanaian immigrant as a person born in the Netherlands, or someone who migrated into the Netherlands before reaching adulthood.

## 1.5 Structure of the Thesis

This paper consists of six chapters. The first chapter above consists of the research problem, research objectives and questions, and below is the methodological strategy. The second chapter explores the Theoretical and Conceptual framework of the paper, whiles the third chapter discusses the contextual background of Ghanaian immigration to The Netherlands. The fourth and fifth chapter discusses the research findings and analysis. The last chapter concludes the thesis with recommendations for future research.

## 1.6 Research Methodology

This study employed a primary and secondary data approach. The primary method of data collection was relevant for my research since I could take ownership and target specific issue of what was being explored (O'Leary 2017). Primary data involves a lot of work in transcribing and is time consuming (O'Leary 2017), however, I could get first-hand information on specific issues from respondents which gave me insight in the research process. I used a qualitative method of data approach in my research study. Qualitative methods provides experiences of individuals' lives that quantitative methods do not (O'Leary 2004). My research is not geared towards generalization since it is not based on large sample numbers. Therefore, I was able to gain deeper understanding of experiences of respondent's that is not based on statistics (O'Leary 2017).

The qualitative method was sourced using semi structured interview guide and participant observation method. Rubin and Rubin (2005: 88) posit that semi-structured interviews "allows depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewees' responses" (as cited in Alshenqeeti 2014). This data collection method provided flexibility in my research as it ensured the flow of conversation of respondents (O'Leary 2017). I could gather other historical data which may not be found in other data collection methods (Ladha 2005). This is one of my main reason in the selection of my respondents.

Moreover, I engaged in participant observations among respondents. I attended Ohemaa Foundation Our Heritage on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2018, and The Hague Africa Festival on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2018. Although these programs placed higher demands on respondents being studied (O'Leary 2017), ethnographic study of observing participants offered me rich and in-depth study of their cultural practices (O'Leary 2017). This made it possible to understand respondents world of view better.

I selected respondents from different categories where each member of the population had a chance in a sampling process. I wanted to explore and understand people's experiences so I deployed a diversifying method in selection of respondents. From my research topic, I wanted to

select participants who represent a variety of positions in the Netherlands. I selected students, entrepreneurs, politician, actor, sportsmen, and musician for my research. I chose this categorization of population so as not to be bias and provide me with stronger arguments in my research (O'Leary 2017). The criteria I used in the selection is that the 2G Ghanaians should be born in the Netherlands or have emigrated to the Netherlands at a young age before reaching adulthood, and that respondents had one or both parents from Ghana.

The respondents were recruited using snowballing method and purposive sampling method. The snowballing sampling method was used to identify 2G through referral process where respondents nominated participants who then nominated other participants for my research. In snowballing method, it was possible respondents suggested other participants who share same or similar characteristics, however, it also allowed respondents to devise estimates on social networks that connected people who are hidden (Etikan et al. 2016). The purposive sampling method was used to select 2G high profile personalities “who have in-depth knowledge about particular issues, maybe by virtue of their professional role, power, access to networks, expertise or experience” (Ball 1990, cited in Cohen et al. 2007: 115). Though I felt “powerful people may take charge, turn the interview questions to address topics on their own terms, and control the timing, pacing and length of the interview” (Charmaz 2014: 73), this research was handled appropriately without any form of control either from the respondent or the researcher. Purposive sampling is not free from bias, however, reliability and competence of respondents was ensured (Tongco 2007).

I made a sample of selecting fewer respondents to gain in-depth knowledge of rich understanding of people's stories and experiences. I selected 20 people for the interviews but only 17 responded to me. This sample process made the research manageable (O'Leary 2017). I interviewed 15 second-generation (2G) children and 2 parents from first-generation (1G). Out of the 15 second-generation respondents, 4 were males and 11 were females. 14 respondents had both parents born in Ghana, 1 had one parent born in Ghana. From the respondents 4 were students, 1 actor, 1 politician, 6 entrepreneurs, 2 sportsmen, and 1 musician. The interview was conducted between July 2018 and October 2018. All respondents could speak and write the Dutch and English language, and some could speak the Ghanaian dialects and other foreign languages. All respondents have been to Ghana before. The interviews were conducted in English, and Ghanaian language (Twi<sup>4</sup>) for those who could speak Twi language. Almost all respondents gave me the go ahead to use their names in the findings and analysis, and for confidentiality pseudonym is used for the respondents (only 2 people) who did not want their real names to be displayed. I

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<sup>4</sup> Twi is a popular language spoken in Ghana mostly by the Akan Tribe.

will use Anna Anna and Joan Joan to replace the respondents who did not want their real names to be displayed. I include a table of appendix for the reader to know who I am talking about and their respective details for easily identification (see Appendix 1 below). All respondents were between 17-32 years. 10 were born in the Netherlands and 5 born in Ghana. The 5 who migrated to the Netherlands have spent between 5 to 21 years in the Netherlands.

The participant observations method and semi-structured interviews were all conducted in The Hague. “In The Hague, the majority of Ghanaians live in the Laakkwartier, Transvaal, Valkenboskwartier and Schilderswijk districts near the city centre” (Ong’ayo 2016: 7). I conducted most of my interviews near the city centre. The time frame of the interview lasted between 20 to 30mins. I explained the benefit of the interview to respondents and they all gave me consent to interview them.

Further, I sort out information from Facebook, Phone calls, WhatsApp, and emails to contact respondents who were difficult to reach. I scheduled face to face interviews for respondents that were available. I sent open-ended questions to one respondent who requested due to distance. I followed up questions when I missed certain points, and respondents were told to call, text, WhatsApp if they have other things they would like to add after the interview was conducted. I seek permission from respondents to record interviews and permission was granted. Whilst home I was able to transcribe all recordings from the interviews I conducted.

The study further deployed secondary data from a range of sources such as online publications, academic journals, and books. I engaged with literature at every stage in time (O’Leary 2017). I spent time reading on literature and connecting to respondents narratives. Information was also attained from Growing Business Together The Hague, AfroEuro Foundation The Hague, Ghana Embassy The Hague.

In data analysis, I used thematic analysis for my research study. “Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun and Clarke 2006: 79). This strategy of data analysis is an approach commonly used in all qualitative designs (Castleberry and Nolen 2018). I used thematic analysis in my research because of the wide variety of research questions and topics that were addressed in my method of data analyses (Braun and Clarke 2006). I already had theories I had written down. However, while I was reading through, taking notes, transcribing interviews and started analysing my findings it opened up new theories for my research. This method offered flexibility and interpretation in my research (Charmaz 2014) that quantitative analysis lacks. I was able to transcribe interview myself and compiled the data for easily identification. I created meaningful groups from the data through coding, that is, “identification of topics, issues, similarities, and differences that are revealed through the

participants' narratives and interpreted by the researcher" (Sutton and Austin 2015: 228), whereby I asked specific questions to arrive at conclusion through the data. From this, I created themes from the data using the research questions and made conclusions from the data using the codes and themes.

In ethical considerations, I assured respondents of confidentiality and anonymity and kept their information private. I explained the research study for respondents and some requested for the interview guide first for full understanding which I provided. I sought permission from all respondents before recording all interviews. In addition, I assured respondents they are under no obligation to respond if they don't feel comfortable answering the question that will bring out unpleasant memories so as not to cause harm for them.. Respondents were told to stop the interview whenever they wanted to. I had to ensure the reduction of risk of going native with some respondents who spoke in Twi and kept myself neutral for the research study. Lastly, I took an introductory letter from my school, International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) (see Appendix 4 below) to undertake this research study which I showed to respondents before starting the interviewing process.

## **1.7 Limitations of Study**

A challenge I encountered was getting access to some of the respondents. The research was conducted in the period when some 2G Ghanaians were on summer holidays. Due to the categories of respondents I selected, it was difficult booking an appointment and finding an appropriate time for the interview. Some of the interviews were conducted on Phone call, and open-ended questions were sent to respondent who was not available to conduct face-to-face interview. This was difficult for the interviewer to observe respondents body language and hear what they had to say face to face. Moreover, the research was conducted only in The Hague which limited the scope of the research because other cities were not explored to compare responses from different cities. Lastly, I encountered language barrier where some respondents had difficulties translating words they said in Dutch to English, since I don't speak or understand the Dutch language. I did online translations and asked other people to be sure of what has been said.

## 1.8 Positionality and reflection of the Research

It is important to study reflexivity and positionality when conducting research of 2G identity construction and belonging. I have experience of being with family members who have given birth to 2G children. I always wonder how these immigrant children identify themselves and feel their sense of belonging. Researchers influence in research work is regarded as reflexive (Nightingale and Cromby 1999). My values, experiences, ideas, cultural beliefs, and educational background studying in a foreign country had an influence on how I collected the data and presented my findings.

I expected my position as a Ghanaian would help me connect well with respondents. From the interviews, respondents asked of my opinion on certain questions I rather asked them. This shows that throughout the data collection process my positionality was active since respondents checked my position on certain questions. I became an insider because being a Ghanaian, gaining easy access to the city, and knowledge of the Ghanaian dialect guaranteed my role as an insider. I realised being in a foreign country myself enhanced a strong cultural bond between me and the respondents. In the process of data gathering, respondents saw me as one/part of them so I felt they did not struggle relaying information to me.

My reflection on the research provided me with an opportunity to meet respondents who were open, kind, and willing to share their experiences with me. During the data gathering process, I realised I was feeling more powerful in the interview process which generated more responses from the respondents. O'Leary (2004: 43) contend that “researchers need to recognize that power can influence the research process, and that with power comes responsibility”. Respondents provided an honest response to the questions which made me to draw a credible conclusion.

Furthermore, my initial assumption was that 2G base their identity and belonging to parental background. However, I realised respondents gave me different reasons for their choice of identity and belonging. I made respondents to answer the questions rather than relying on my assumption. This research has made me to reflect more beyond the research that people base their identities and belonging as a result of different experiences in an environment. My experience in life made me to focus on and undertake this research.

## 2. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Introduction

This section explores conceptual and theoretical framework of second-generation identity construction and belonging. Second Generation will be discussed and I will use Identity, Transnationalism, Belonging, and Citizenship as my key concepts in this research. The study employs Identity Process Theory (IPT) and Theory of Acculturation as the main theoretical approach adopted in this research.. This will give more meaning to the discussion of the research study. It is important to conceptualize the research question by finding answers to how 2G Ghanaians perceive themselves.

#### 2.1.1 Second Generation (2G)

Immigrants spend their lives in the diaspora and give birth to a new generation. Some immigrant children are born in country of origin and emigrated. Scholars such as Portes (1996), Zhou (1997a), Westin (2003), Levitt and Waters (2002), and Gans (1992) have provided different definitions of second-generation. According to Zhou (1997a: 64) “the new second generation technically refers to the children of contemporary immigrants”. In the last decade an interest has been shown in the lives of the 2G (Christou 2006, Zhou 1997b). The population of 2G is growing and this represents a smaller ratio as compared to the 1G in most immigrant communities (Levitt and Waters 2002).

Westin (2003) study in Sweden define 2G as minors (0-17years) staying with their parents from diverse background. Levitt and Waters (2002) conducted study of 2G<sup>5</sup> where they focused on immigrants' children born in USA and those who immigrated to USA as children and grew up and attended school in USA. In the context of my study, I define 2G Ghanaians as Dutch born children of Ghanaian descent – true second generation, and immigrant children born in Ghana who migrated to the Netherlands before reaching adulthood.

#### 2.1.2 Identity

“To begin, it is important to note that identity remains a dynamic category and therefore, it proves itself difficult to define in strict terms” (Duchkovska 2015: 33). Identity in itself has no direct meaning since each meaning has its own differences (Brubaker and Cooper 2000). Rapport and

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<sup>5</sup> For the purpose of my research I adopt Levitt and Waters (2002) study as my definition of 2G immigrants in the Netherlands.

Dawson (1998) show a desire to dig into the nature of identity and its roots to globalization, as problems exist for immigrants in process of identity construction.

Jenkins (2014) defines identity as what is rooted in human to actually know who is who and what is actually what. Eder (2009: 2) posits that “identity is something that a person or a group has”. In addition, Jackson (1999: 9) contend that “identity is that which confers a sense of self or personhood. It also refers to self-definition”. This means individuals define their identity according to how they see themselves. Identity therefore makes an individual to seek answers on what he/she identifies with and “where we seek for our imagined roots, for the secure haven of our group, our family, our nation, writ large” (Yuval-Davis et al. 2006: 21). This is useful in understanding how some 2G identify themselves in relation to their roots, family, group or a nation. Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 7) contend identity is between “self-understanding and (narrowly understood) self-interest”. This means that people express themselves according to how they understand themselves in life, and not because of an interest from a group. Adams (2014) classify identity as personal, social, and relational. He asserts that personal identity is when individuals make choices to identify themselves with their uniqueness and distinctiveness. This allow individuals to have variations of identity options and make choices (Marcia 1993). He posits that social identity is individuals belonging to a member of a group. This means that people identify or belong to family, ethnic, or national group. For instance, Sommerville (2008) study in Canada contend that Indo-Canadian youth identify themselves with parents homeland. Adams further contend that relational identity considers the social roles that is associated to individuals.

Anthias (2002) argues identity is about location and positionality. In the context of this study, it shows how some 2G perceive their identity based on their environment and how they place (position) themselves in the social order of things. From different literature it shows how identity is not fixed, but dynamic across every sector through people’s lives and experiences. This concept of identity is helping me to explain my findings and I will apply this concept to look at how 2G use self and hybridity in identifying themselves.

### ***2.1.3 Transnationalism***

The study of Transnationalism is an important concept in migration (Mazzucato 2008). The lives of immigrants have become an issue as to whether they dedicate all their lives to destination country or to country of origin. Scholars such as Portes and Rumbaut (2001) posit that immigrants spend all their lives in receiving countries and are less directly tied to origin countries. According to Portes (2001: 190) transnationalism is a “one-generation phenomenon”. This supports Rumbaut

(2002) study of 2G young adults from Mexico, China, Vietnam, and Philippines in USA that transnational activities are relatively smaller.

Nevertheless, different scholars contend that transnationalism involves two generations. Mazzucato (2008) contend that migration has provided a link for transnational activities between Ghana and the Netherlands. For instance, the activities of Sankofa Foundation between Ghana and Netherlands provides transnational dimension between both countries (Ong'ayo 2013). According to Glick Schiller et al. (1992) immigrants children participate in social, political, cultural, religious, and economic programs across borders without losing ties to destination countries. I am applying transnationalism as a two-way phenomenon to look at the link between both (Ghana-Netherlands) countries and how it influences their values, practices, food, clothing, dance, music as a part of their identity construction and belonging.

#### ***2.1.4 Belonging***

It is interesting to understand how different authors perceive belonging in academic literature. Most scholars have different views about the concept of belonging and where to call 'home' and feel sense of belonging. According to Antonsich (2010: 645) belonging is "personal, intimate, feeling of being 'at home' in a place (place-belongingness) and belonging as a discursive resource which constructs, claims, justifies, or resists forms of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion (politics of belonging)". Likewise Yuval Davis (2006: 197) contend that "belonging is about emotional attachment, about feeling 'at home' and a place of being safe". He further argues that belonging is not only about ones rights, being a member, and duty of as a citizen of a nation but also the social place of one self of being part of a larger whole where one has a bond to such places. For example, Boateng et al. (2018) study of identity in UK posit that identity remains a central focus on how 2G British-Ghanaians relate to Ghana creating translocal belonging between Ghana and UK emotional attachment. There are layers of belonging where 2G may belong 'here' (Netherlands), 'there' (Ghana), or 'here and there' (Ghana-Netherlands).

Anthias (1998) contend that belonging is about boundaries and hierarchies. This will mean 2G who experience conflicts in a particular social location are likely to associate their sense of belonging to a different place. Nevertheless, social location could also influence social inclusion of one's belonging to a particular place, as shown in my findings. This concept of belonging is very useful as it will help me to explain how 2G feel their sense of belonging through emotions,

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<sup>6</sup> For the purpose of my research I use 'Home' and 'Belonging' interchangeably.

identifications, locations, inclusion/exclusion (politics of belonging) and multiple spaces, which really fits the purpose of my research.

### ***2.1.5 Citizenship***

Citizenship has been defined in several ways. Marshall (1981) define citizenship as rights and responsibilities of individual in a community. According to Brubaker (2009) a fundamental boundary which exist between native ethnic minorities and immigrant is about citizenship. In much of the social science literature, citizenship is being used as a form of assimilation (Brettell and Sargent 2006). What this mean is that immigrants abandon country of origin and stick to destination country to define their citizenship. However, findings from my research show this is not the case. Citizenship governs rights of citizens of a country where they feel protection as part of being a member of a country. “Tariq Ramadan, a Swiss Muslim Scholar defines citizenship as a status individuals receive which grants them equality in terms of their rights and responsibilities” (Abdel-Rahman 2009: 27). He argues a citizen lives and understands the language of the nation. Alba (2005) argue that citizenship is where one can leave and enter a country free from deportation. This shows how 2G are able to engage in frequent travels between origin and destination country. The Netherlands have a procedure of acquiring citizenship by birth, by option, and through naturalisation. In the context of my study all respondents live in the Netherlands, speak the Dutch language, are in possession of Dutch passport, and are citizens of the Netherlands. This concept will help me to explain how Dutch passport, rights and responsibilities, privileges, free movements of citizens influences 2G identity construction and belonging.

## **2.2 Identity Process Theory: Social Action and Social Change**

The study of Identity Process Theory (IPT) has a broader view in the social science discipline. Scholars such as Breakwell (1986, 2015), Jaspal and Cinnirella (2010, 2012), and Vignoles et al. (2000, 2006, 2011) have done extensive work on IPT. We live in a world where we form our own identities because of social changes that occur in our lives which has an impact on how we perceive ourselves. Breakwell (1986: 7) define identity as “the need for continuity in self-definition, the vitalizing effects of distinctiveness and the crucial role of self-esteem”. “That is, identity in the life of each person has its meaning and certain issues through time and space measure it. Thus, having one’s own identity is a way to acquire self-confidence and social value” (Sulyman 2014: 13).

Breakwell posits that there are four principles of IPT which is ‘continuity’, ‘distinctiveness’, ‘self-efficacy’, and ‘self-esteem’. Other scholars such as Vignoles et al. describe two additional principles of identity motives which is ‘belonging’ and ‘meaning’. This theory of IPT suggests that in structuring the concept of self-identity, two conceptualization should be made. These are ‘assimilation-accommodation’ and ‘evaluation process’ (Jaspal and Breakwell 2014, Jaspal and Cinnirella 2012). They contend assimilation-accommodation process is “absorption of new information in the identity structure” and evaluation process is “meaning and value on the contents of the identity” (Jaspal and Breakwell 2014: 4).

Children of immigrants may experience certain difficulties that has an influence on how they perceive themselves. This happens when they experience “changes in the social context” of engagement in a society (Jaspal and Cinnirella 2012: 3). For instance an immigrant may be asked the question, where do you come from? This means an immigrant may be identified differently from a society. In the context of this study, some 2G form their identity and belonging as a result of their colour, ethnic origin, location, racial discrimination, and experiences, which makes the individual to “engage in coping strategies” (Jaspal and Cinnirella 2012: 3). This theory is relevant in understanding how 2G chooses to be identified as ‘Ghanaian’, ‘Dutch’, or ‘Dutch-Ghanaian’ because of additional information or social changes the person has been able to acquire in relation to their identity and how they have adjusted themselves to the society which give meaning to how they see themselves to gain social acceptance in a society.

In understanding the process of identity construction it is also important to explore how one react when he/she feel their identity is threatened. What makes you to identify to a particular group? How do you describe yourself when people perceive you differently? These forms part of how one is able to cope with their identity construction and maintenance. Jaspal and Breakwell (2014) argue identity becomes a process when individuals make sense of their lives due to their experiences and feelings in their lives. This has the power to affect one’s identities.

For my research study, I take both Breakwell and Vignoles et al. principles in the analysis of my work. I am applying this theory to describe how 2G use ‘continuity’, ‘distinctiveness’, ‘self-efficacy’, ‘self-esteem’, ‘belonging’, and ‘meaning’ to construct their identity and sense of belonging. This theory is useful as it will help in determining the social change, action of an individual, and how 2G chooses certain identity over the other.

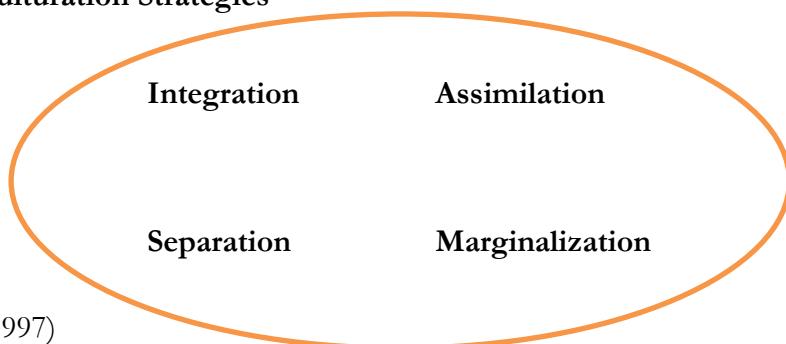
## 2.3 Theory of Acculturation

Acculturation has become a term referring to cross-cultural processes of immigrants and has highly been recognized as an important area of research study (Tadmor et al. 2009). “Acculturation is the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members” (Berry 2005: 2). Research on acculturation has been studied on immigrants as a result of their entry and settlement in the dominant society. Immigrants experience different cultures in different stages of their lives. Acculturation is part of the term biculturalism, where an individual can claim belonging to both cultures or by coming from a mixed cultural heritage (La Framboise et al. 1993).

Berry et al. (2006) argue that the 1G and 2G experience different phases as part of their acculturation processes. He describes acculturation as assimilation, integration, marginalization, and separation (AIMS). He argues that when immigrants abandon their ethnic culture and follow dominant culture, assimilation is defined. For immigrants who engage in heritage/origin culture and in the destination/national culture, integration is defined. Those with little interest in new culture and little or no relation with origin culture, marginalization is defined. When immigrants hold on to origin culture and neglect culture of destination country, then separation is defined.

In the acculturating process, Berry et al. (2006) discusses the adaptation of the well-being of the individual and how they manage their socio-cultural impact of a society. Berry (1997: 1) posits that “adaptation refers to changes that take place in individuals or groups in response to environmental demands”. He further argues that sometimes immigrants can fit into the acculturating process when the assimilation or integration into the dominant society is being accepted by the dominant group. However, sometimes a fit is not attained (separation/segregated). What this mean is that 2G may experience conflict within themselves which leads to identity crisis, because adaptation may or may not improve the fit between the immigrants and their environment (Berry 2007).

**Figure 2.1: Acculturation Strategies**



**Source:** (Berry 1997)

Immigrants experience different kinds of strategies in acculturating because of their changes in attitudes and behaviours and acculturation stress in the dominant society. Therefore, their attitudes and behaviours are a result of their experiences in their environment, and also to what kind of society they wish to engage in. For the purpose of my research, I will adopt Berrys' method to apply how acculturation influences 2G level of adaptation to the dominant society, origin society, or both.

## 2.4 Conclusion

The chapter has discussed the second-generation in addition to the theoretical and conceptual framework of the research study. These theories and key concepts has discussed the methods 2G will use in their identity construction and sense of belonging based on their own experiences, in addition to their adaptation processes. The next chapter discusses the migratory background of Ghanaian immigrants in the Netherlands.

### **3. Contextual Background: Migration From Ghana to The Netherlands**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This section describes the contextual background of migration from Ghana to The Netherlands. The first part describes the migratory history from Ghana to globally and the factors that led to their movement. The second part presents the first-generation settlement in the Netherlands which further brought about the formation of second-generation Ghanaians.

#### **3.2 Historic overview of emigration from Ghana**

“Migration is not a new phenomenon” (Alinia 2004: 75). Migration has existed in Africa over centuries (Adepoju 1998). In Ghana, after independence, the country maintained its economic advancement and governance in foreign affairs (Anarfi et al. 2003). Ghana was economically prosperous attracting a lot of migrants from other West-African regions (Twum Baah et al. 1995). International migration was low since most migrants who left Ghana was for educational purposes (De Bruijn et al. 2001). However, beginning from the 1960s economic decline, and political instability forced many Ghanaians to leave the country (De Bruijn et al 2001). Moreover, the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1983 which included the governments of Ghana’s removal of subsidies for social services contributed to poverty and unemployment which resulted in further emigration to other areas for better opportunities (Anarfi et al. 2003). In southern part of Ghana, two million Ghanaians left the country between the years 1974 and 1981 (Anarfi et al. 2003), and their paths to Europe was where it was the easiest to acquire travel permit (Peil 1995, Mazzucato 2008).

#### **3.3 Ghanaian Immigration to The Netherlands**

Historically, the Netherlands as a country was not a country of immigrants. Nonetheless, around the early 1960s most people entered into their country. After the World War 2, shortages of labour in the industries led to the demand of low-skilled workers. Most migrants from Europe and Africa were employed in the textile industries, road construction, and labour intensive industries (Crul and Heering 2008) as ‘guest workers’ and settled in major cities in the Netherlands (Crul and Heering 2008). Ghanaians constituted one of the main groups who settled in Netherlands (Koser 2003). There was registration of about 21,000 Ghanaians in the Netherlands in the year 2011. This

served as an increase of 70 percent compared to Ghanaians in the 1970s with both migrants (62 percent) and their children (38 percent) who were born in the Netherlands (De Bruin et al. 2001).

The Netherlands is the fourth EU destination country for Ghanaians (Ong'ayo 2016). Ghanaians are a larger group in the Netherlands where most people emigrated for economic and political reasons, future prospects, and family formation and family union where they acquired Dutch residency status and naturalised to become Dutch citizens (Ong'ayo 2016). Another factor is the highly skilled and semi-skilled migrants who were needed in most EU countries as a result of new policies that were introduced to attract skilled migrants (Ong'ayo et al. 2010). The gender balance is neutral accounting for both 50% of the total population of both male and female (Ong'ayo 2016) and majority of Ghanaians reside in Amsterdam, The Hague, and Rotterdam (Ong'ayo 2016).

There has been a steadily increase of Ghanaian migrants in the Netherlands from both 1G and 2G (see Table 3.1 below). The Table shows as at January 2018 the total 1G migrants was 13993, and the total 2G migrants was 9816 who were born in the Netherlands. This shows an increase in Ghanaian migrants compared to 2017 and the years below.

**Table 3.1: Population: Total Migration Background of Ghanaian migrants in Nethelands**

	2000	2005	2010	2016	2017	2018
First generation migration background	10679	11977	12988	13783	13818	13993
<b>Second generation migration background</b>						
Total 2nd generation migration background	4930	7131	7841	9385	9612	9816
One parent born abroad	1423	1850	2151	2664	2755	2832
Both parents were born abroad	3507	5281	5690	6721	6857	6984
<b>Total Population</b>	15609	19108	20829	23168	23430	23809

**Source:** (CBS Statline 2018)

### 3.4 Conclusion

This section has discussed the Ghanaian 1G migratory background and the factors which led to their emigration to the Netherlands. Migration allowed them to move to different places mostly because of economic and political failures. Most of the migrants moved for better living opportunities. The 1G moved to the Netherlands and gave birth to immigrant children, whiles some immigrant children joined the family later on, both forming the new second generation, which forms the focus of my research study. The next chapter discusses the findings of the research.

## 4. Presentation of Findings

### 4.1 Introduction

This part presents the findings of 2G Ghanaians in the Netherlands. This part makes us to understand how respondents construct their identity and sense of belonging through their experiences and the factors that impact their decisions. Phinney and Baldelomar (2016: 161) understanding on identity supports my findings that “identity is formed as a result of the actions and decisions of an individual in response to both developmental needs (eg. to resolve questions of purpose and goals in life and achieve a coherent sense of self) and the actual and perceived opportunities and affordances in the cultural community in which he or she lives”.

The themes are centred on the following issues below:

- Reflection of Identity
- Sense of Belonging
- Perception of People
- Ties to Origin/Destination Country
- Influence of Citizenship
- Differences in Language
- Levels of Adaptation

### 4.2 Reflection of Identity

Second-Generation immigrants have a way of constructing their identity. Respondents had different responses in answering about their identity. Since identity raises the question of Who am I? Where are you from? different responses were provided by respondents. Some considered themselves as ‘Ghanaian’, others as ‘Dutch-Ghanaian’, ‘Ghanaian-Dutch’, or simply ‘Dutch’. Respondents had interesting responses on how they construct their identity. These are influenced by factors such as family, roots, environment, skin colour, location.

For instance, in a conversation with Dennis an entrepreneur, and Godwin a professional kickboxer, this is how they construct their identity as ‘Ghanaian’:

Up to age of 16 I was still looking for my identity to be honest...I didn't know what I want, where do I belong to? But I see myself as a Ghanaian but raised in the Netherlands. I am a Ghanaian influenced by the Dutch ways. My parents, my culture, my background, my skin colour, the food we eat and all (Dennis, Entrepreneur).

I see myself as a worldwide entrepreneur. Raised in Holland but definitely I feel that am Ghanaian and am proud to say that am Ghanaian so I definitely stay with my roots. Later in my life I wanna go live in Ghana so yeah I feel Ghanaian (Godwin, Professional Kickboxer).

These responses from respondents shows how they construct their identity based on parental background, colour, cultural activities, and roots.

In a conversation with Louisa Fofie an entrepreneur, and Anna Anna a musician who were both born in The Netherlands, they identified themselves as 'Dutch-Ghanaian', or 'Ghanaian-Dutch'.

I see myself as a Ghanaian-Dutch.... Because I have my Ghanaian roots.... Am from Ghanaian household...At the same time I live in the Netherlands. I speak Dutch and went to Dutch school (Louisa Fofie, Entrepreneur).

When people ask me where am from I say Ghana. I grew up sharing that...The Dutch aspect because we are here in Holland.... For international referencing I say Dutch-Ghanaian (Anna Anna, Musician).

What respondents said demonstrates how one's environment plays a role in construction of their identity. Louisa's enrolment in school illustrates how she cannot neglect the importance of the Dutch school from her identity. According to Anna Anna, a combination of both identities supports her role as a musician anytime she participates in musical activities internationally.

Interestingly, Francisca a student born in the Netherlands identified herself as 'Dutch'. This is interesting because both of her parents are Ghanaian. Though parental influence is an important factor of 2G identity choices, her response shows it has no effect on her identity. She found herself in a conducive environment among friends which plays a role in construction of her identity.

I am Dutch. I have gone to Ghana once. I have lived here all my life and I do everything here. All my friends are here too...I identify myself as a Dutch person (Francisca, Student).

From respondents, it shows that they base their identity on how they understand it to be. Others through their challenges they have encountered, and some through their perspectives in life.

### **4.3 Sense of Belonging**

In looking at how second-generation construct their sense of belonging, certain aspects came up in the conversations. Some respondents acknowledge how family play a role on where they feel their sense of belonging. For others, it is about the emotions they attach to a particular place and a place where they feel safe. Though some respondents feel inclusion plays a role in their belonging, others base it on exclusion from the society (politics of belonging). Moreover, localities play a

major factor where respondents form multiple layers of belonging and not basing it to a particular place.

Emmanuel an actor, describes Holland as his home because this a country where he was born. He explains his professional role as an actor has been accepted by the people he works with which has a way on how he constructs his sense of belonging.

I call Holland my home because this is the place where I've been born and raised. This is the language I master, more than Twi or English ..... I really engage with a lot of white people professionally. Both theatre and film. (Emmanuel, Actor).

However, in a conversation with Louisa Owusu an entrepreneur, she feels emotional attachment to Ghana. Louisa was born in Ghana and migrated to the Netherlands when she was 8 years old. She has lived in the Netherlands for 21 years, but still sees Ghana as her home as a result of her connection and bond she has built for Ghana where she wants to go back and work there in future.

I think I was brought up in a way to believe that no matter where you are I mean your home is your home and I feel like Ghana, despite the fact we have lived here all my life I always go back. Atleast once a year I go back to Ghana, and I do feel some kind of connection with Ghana because I really want to move there for a year, work there and see how things will go for me (Louisa Owusu, Entrepreneur).

In a conversation with Akwasi an Olympic sprinter, who was born in Ghana and moved to the Netherlands age 8, sense of belonging is about globalization since he is not stuck to a particular place. From the conversation, he is able to form multiple layers of belonging by explaining that he belongs to the US where he lives with his family, to the Netherlands where majority of his family lives, and to Ghana where he was born.

I live in the US but if I go on vacation am more in the Netherlands. My mum lives there, my brother lives there, my dad lives there, my sister lives there so that's where the majority of my family as in my intermediate family lives and then the US is where I live with my wife and my daughter.....I have discovered the world. Through my struggles I have been able to discover myself and be able to discover the world. I've learnt so much from being a Ghanaian, for being Dutch and also for being American...I see myself to be global to be urban I feel I belong anywhere.... Sense of belonging at the end of the day you cannot take it away that I was born in Ghana I am a Ghanaian.. But it's not where I live right now and I cannot be forced to live there because am a Ghanaian (Akwasi, Olympic Sprinter).

To conclude, some respondents show sense of belonging is about emotions and feeling safe, and for others their attachment to a society. Some also construct multiple layers as a result of living in a globalized world.

## 4.4 Perception of People

Second-Generation of Ghanaian background have different practices of how they construct their self-identity and belonging. They have different understanding of how they are perceived by people in the Dutch society and in Ghanaian society. Respondents identify themselves according to how they construct it, but according to their narratives, they are sometimes referred to as ‘foreigners’ by the Dutch natives, Ghanaian natives, colleagues, and friends..

According to Dennis an entrepreneur who migrated to the Netherlands age 6 and has spent 22 years in the Netherlands, people refer to him as a foreigner. For Dennis he doesn’t understand why people call him a foreigner when he feels he has a Dutch nationality and speaks the Dutch language frequently.

They do see me as a foreigner.... They will ask you where do you come from, what is your background. Of course you are Dutch but where are you from”?...We have this term allochtoon...a term they gave to foreigners here...They call you allochtoon, as in your roots are somewhere else, but you are a Dutch citizen (Dennis, Entrepreneur).

For Louisa and Gladys who were all born in the Netherlands, they are not fully recognized as Dutch because of their skin colour. Therefore, they draw more closer to people of the same colour in school and work which makes them to accept their position as Ghanaian.

The moment you start speaking the language they go like “oh you Dutch”? They will of course not completely accept me as Dutch because I am black, because I have my Ghanaian roots but most of them see you as Dutch with a Ghanaian background. They never completely see you as Dutch (Louisa Fofie, Entrepreneur).

They see a part of my identity they don’t see a full picture. The Ghanaians in the Netherlands often do see me as Ghanaian.... The white Dutch people also say she’s black but they don’t know exactly where am from...They have this idea that if you are Dutch it means you are white (Gladys, Phd Student).

Similarly, some respondents are perceived differently even by friends, and the Ghanaian natives when they visit Ghana. For Louisa, Joan Joan, and Emmanuel, they explain how they are sometimes stuck between both cultures because the Ghanaians don’t recognize them as Ghanaian, and the Dutch people don’t see them as Dutch also. In addition, Deborah a student says anytime she goes to Ghana she is not recognized as a Ghanaian, because they say she was born in the Netherlands and can’t speak the Ghanaian language properly.

The only thing I knew was that I was drawn closer to people of colour at the primary school for some reason.... And then later on in life, people asked me more and more where I’m from and the answer “I’m born here” was never enough. They wanted to know where I got this colour from,

where my roots lie. That was the moment I began to see myself more as a Ghanaian in public and owning it more...But It hurts me more if Ghanaian people in Ghana don't really see me as a Ghanaian, rather than the Dutch don't see me as a Dutch. (Emmanuel, Actor).

When you are among your own people too, like my Ghanaian friends here, like the ones here, the typical Ghanaians they see me as white. But among my white friends they don't see me as that. Among my white friends am too black. So it's like sometimes you don't really know exactly where you fit in (Louisa Owusu, Entrepreneur).

If I go back to Ghana you are not really accepted in Ghana...I feel like you can never be accepted in both countries because at the end of the day you will never be fully Ghanaian and never be fully Dutch...So you always be in that in-between (Joan Joan, Entrepreneur).

I don't speak the Twi properly so when I go to Ghana they don't see me as a Ghanaian. They call me the white girl from Holland (Deborah, Student)

Respondents have explained how they are perceived by others. Respondents are seen as 'foreigners' among Dutch natives and Ghanaian natives. This shows perception of people affects respondents identity construction because sometimes their identity is threatened that makes them not to belong to a particular society.

## 4.5 Ties to origin and destination country

Parents and family have an influence on how 2G construct their identity and belonging. Every respondent acknowledged the importance of family. The parents from the 1G who mostly lived with their children have instilled some values and cultural practices in them. When asked how respondents identity construction differs from, or same as parents, respondents had different answers to provide.

Dennis acknowledged the importance of family in construction of his identity and belonging due to certain information that has been shared across to him growing up. From the interactions, his parents have played a key factor by making him see himself as part of them, an aspect which is difficult to dissociate from.

My dad always told me that you live here but you are not from here and that really stick with me. I live in this country but I am not from this country. At some point I decided it on my own. But at first they are the one who told me, so I saw myself as one of them when I was young because I was hanging with Dutch friends and other allochthon who were my friends so I saw myself as them...My parents told me "You live in this country but don't forget you are not from this country" (Dennis, Entrepreneur).

In the case of Deborah who was born in the Netherlands, and Akwasi who was born in Ghana, place of birth has a role on how they construct their identity and belonging rather than relying on family.

It's because that's where I was born. And it's because that's my root, that's my foundation, not because that's where my parents are from. At the end of the day if the Dutch people took my passport and US people took my green card, where is home? Home will be Ghana (Akwasi, Olympic Sprinter).

My identity is different from my parents. It is because I was born here and grew up here so I see myself more as a Dutch person (Deborah, Student).

Second Generation sometimes experience parental clash because of being stuck between two cultures. Sometimes, the parents want the children to stick to origin culture (Ghana) and abandon destination culture (Netherlands). Therefore, it leads to distraction of parent-child relationship.

According to Emmanuel's narratives, being born in Ghanaian background is an important factor in his identity construction and belonging, but there is always the parental clash because of him having a Dutch trait.

I'm born here, with all the freedom and all the rights you have as a young child, that's where my parents and I clash. Yes, I'm raised in a Ghanaian household. But when a situation occurs with my parents, I can see that the Dutch side comes up.....I remember the fights with my parents where I was yelling 'BUT I'M 18 NOW, DON'T THINK FOR ME'.... (Emmanuel, Actor).

Louisa explains her experience in life shows where she draws more closer to. She explains her experiences in life shows her inclusion or exclusion towards a society.

With life how you live your life and how everything goes, that is when, that is why I decided which side to draw towards more I guess. Because if you have had bad experience with white people you draw more towards to black people. If you have had bad experience with black people you draw more towards to white people. I think it all depends on the kind of experience you've had in life. (Louisa Owusu, Entrepreneur).

In conclusion, respondents had different perspectives on family playing a role in their identity construction and belonging. All respondents acknowledged their connection to parents' country of origin. Interestingly, not all respondents considered family in making a case for their identity construction. This shows that, though some respondents are pressured and accepted their identity due to influence from parents, some made their own personal choices on what influences their identity.

## 4.6 Influence of Citizenship

Respondents provided different views about their citizenship. They all acknowledged the benefit of possessing the Dutch passport and the privileges that they enjoy. They enjoy certain rights and responsibilities as being legal residence and citizens of The Netherlands.

In a conversation with Anna Anna and Abena they accept being citizens of the Netherlands is a privilege which has opened doors for them due to certain identity it portrays, and it also made it easier to be accepted in school. However, respondent enjoyment of rights and privileges does not deter them from identifying to the country of origin.

My current passport doesn't have influence on how I see myself. Probably it does because you know my passport gives you a certain privilege that other people don't have you know. It also gives you a certain type of identity I guess.....But, blood is thicker than papers (Anna Anna, Musician).

To be honest when I had to make the decision to give away my Ghanaian nationality I found it very difficult. It was very difficult for me but it was kind of I'm giving it away and I'm becoming a Dutch citizen, but my school to be honest it opened so many doors for me...For me the Dutch nationality made it very easy for me on school wise..... I see myself as a Ghanaian even though am holding a Dutch nationality (Abena, Entrepreneur).

Some respondents accepted citizenship, being in possession of a Dutch passport, has a role on their sense of self and sense of belonging. Deborah acknowledged the importance of possessing a Dutch passport has an influence on how she constructs her identity and sense of belonging.

Citizenship is part of how I see myself. I am using a Dutch passport and because I have a Dutch passport it makes me to see myself as a Dutch person (Deborah, Student).

In conclusion, it shows respondents enjoy certain rights and responsibilities as citizens of the Netherlands, and that being a citizen is seen as a privilege. Though some respondent's accept citizenship has no relation on how they construct their identity, others accept citizenship has an influence on their identity construction because they use a Dutch passport.

## 4.7 Differences in Language

Respondents acknowledge the importance of the language in identity construction. All respondents interviewed could speak and write the Dutch and English language. Some of the respondents could also speak the Ghanaian dialect. Most of the respondents accepted they feel more connected to the Dutch language because they have been integrated into the Dutch society.

However, some respondents also made known that English language is what they feel most connected to.

Deborah has been to Ghana twice, and accepted the Dutch language is a strong reason on how she constructs her identity. From the conversations she never speak the Ghanaian language but is very fluent in Dutch. She spoke of her education that is mainly taught in Dutch and communicate in Dutch with family and friends. She doesn't have a special connection to Ghana and was not forced to learn the Ghanaian language by her parents.

I am connected to the Dutch language system. I have been to Ghana like twice or so and not that familiar with the Ghanaian language. The language is part of the reason I see myself strongly as a Dutch person...I speak Dutch in school (Deborah, Student).

According to Godwin a Professional Kickboxer born in the Netherlands, he decides to speak the Dutch language to her mum as a way of helping her to understand the language. Though he speaks perfect Dutch, he prefers English to Dutch since he is able to express himself freely for people to understand him properly.

I spoke Dutch so my mother could also learn the language.... But if I want to make myself clear and I don't want to make any mistakes, if I want to make myself clear then I choose English because I know definitely you will understand me.. (Godwin, Professional Kickboxer).

Likewise, Abena an entrepreneur is familiar with the English language more than the Dutch because that is what she was used to from school. Abena was born in Ghana and migrated to the Netherlands at age 12. She speaks perfect Dutch at school and at work, but she is closely related to the English language.

I feel more connected to English....I grew up in Accra and growing up in Accra you know school wise you know It was always English, you get me, and to be frank growing up in Ghana at home I spoke Twi with my family but it wasn't that intense Twi...So I always mixed it with English so I feel more connected in English because that's what I spoke most of the times in Ghana (Abena, Entrepreneur).

Samilia a politician born in the Netherlands feel connected to all languages but expresses herself better in the English language because of social activities she partakes in which is mostly communicated in the English language.

I feel connected to all three languages Dutch, English, and Twi. I express myself best in English, and then the others follow. My best expression is in English.....We go to church here church is English, people around here speak English.....Basically is from church...Church is English (Samilia, Politician).

Dutch is the official language of the Netherlands where respondent's feel connection to. However, some respondents also feel connection and expresses themselves better in the English language.

## 4.8 Levels of Adaptation

The adaptation of second-generation exist based on their experiences in the dominant society that has an influence on their choices of behaviour either psychologically or sociocultural. From the respondents experiences, they are able to fit/not fit within the acculturating stages (assimilation, integration, marginalization, and separation) through their adaptation processes. This happens through family life, work, school, and their personal and cultural identity.

Some respondents accept they stick to origin culture, because of their cultural values. Anna Anna's view of adaptation is linked to country of origin cultural values, norms and practices. When she draws more closer to people from origin country (Ghana), she feels separated from the destination country (Netherlands) and tends to adapt to the origin culture.

Here is an area where a lot of Ghanaians are so when you identify within your culture you are able to associate with people based on language, based on music, based on heritage, and the village you are from, so you are often reminded as to who we are, kind of. Eerrm not everybody has that if I were to be a Ghanaian born in the eastern part of Holland because of the fact that in community there is relatively small one which is most likely to refer to themselves as Dutch because identity and recognizing and sharing that and culture and language is less within that location. So I do believe and realize that I am actually in a location that is quite stimulating the idea of I am a Ghanaian (Anna Anna, Musician)

Some respondents have integrated into the dominant society and practice both cultures (destination-origin culture). For instance, Emmanuel has experienced the Ghanaian and Dutch Culture and has decided to stick to both cultures.

Being born here in the Netherlands, raised in Amsterdam with a lot of different cultures has shaped me. The people questioned me and I'm so thankful for that. Because that gave me the drive to figure out my story. It helped to understand my own world and my white friend's world. It is funny because Like James Baldwin said, 'You know nothing about me, but I know everything about you' And it's true. Because I'm a Ghanaian living in the Netherlands, I had to learn both systems. I got the chance to experience both worlds. And they both helped me to be my authentic self. So they're both perfect to me. I belong in the Netherlands and I belong in Ghana (Emmanuel, Actor).

In conclusion, some respondents feel separated from the dominant culture and stick to origin culture. Nonetheless, some respondents also acknowledge the role of integration from both

destination and origin society. Though some accept the need for integration into both cultures, however, others accept the need for separation to origin culture.

## **4.9 Conclusion**

This chapter described some of the narratives of respondents on their identity construction and belonging. The discussion has shown several key factors that constitute respondents identity construction and belonging. The core factors relate to how fluid their identity is, and also forming an inclusion/exclusion (politics of belonging), and the influence of family in decision making, but also the perception of people in both societies, and the role of the Dutch passport and citizenship, in addition to importance of Dutch and English language. These experiences has an influence on their adaptation processes in a cultural environment. The next section discusses the analysis of the research.

## 5. Discussion and Analysis

### 5.1 Introduction

This section presents discussion and analysis of key findings of the research. It explores respondents identification and belongingness of 'here' (Netherlands), 'there' (Ghana), and 'here and there' (Ghana-Netherlands). This part is structured into three main parts. The first part (5.2) discusses the categories of 2G identification. The second part (5.3-5.5) presents the factors of identity construction and belonging. The last part (5.6) presents the experiences of their levels of adaptation processes.

### 5.2 Categorization of Identity

The question of identity posed for respondents and their responses shows identity has no direct meaning. Respondents were asked the question of their identity choices whether they feel 'Dutch', 'Ghanaian', or 'Dutch-Ghanaian'. Respondents provided different meanings and understandings to the question. Some respondents who associate their identity as 'Ghanaian' (country of origin) explained that their identity in a way is influenced by certain factors such as cultural background, colour of skin, roots, and parental influence. This confirms the view of Adams (2014) on personal identity that an individual engages in various identity options before deciding on their life choices. Further, it supports Jackson (1999) view that identity is about the sense of self or personhood and the ability to define oneself. The influence of family have been a long-standing role on immigrant's identity. Identifying oneself to a member of a family is one thing that kept on coming up from respondents. When 2G feel belonging to a member of a group it plays a role on how they constructs their identity. They have a strong sense of commitment and feel connection to a group where expectations have/are to be met. From the findings, they form their identity having family in mind, that is individual belonging to a member of a group, which Adams (2014) posit as social identity. Jones and McEwen (2000) argue social identity is not a significant factor for participant's experience of identity. However, my findings contrast with their view, and supports what Adams (2014) contend that, in social identity, an individual belongs to a member of a group such as family, ethnic origin, or national origin. Moreover, respondents argument on roots shows the historical notion they attach to their country of origin. This supports Wessendorf (2007) view that 2G trips to country of origin are mostly linked to the search of their roots.

Using the theory of IPT, group distinctiveness is a major factor of identity construction. This 2G group have formed major uniqueness or distinctiveness which is different from others

that plays a role in their identity construction. Respondents acknowledge making a choice in identifying to an ethnic group shows the cultural differences that exist among groups (Marcia 1993). Respondents have been able to form a positive sense of ethnic pride as a result of their ethnic history and tradition, and they have attained a positive sense of “continuity across time” (Breakwell 1986: 24) and space where they have been able to identify themselves in a positive way to an ethnic group membership as ‘Ghanaian’. Therefore, the process of continuity will inform respondents of being among a long lineage of people in a particular group which is different from others, thereby identifying themselves to country or origin. This confirms De Vos (1995) argument that ethnic group members tends to have the provision of psychological connection between the past, present and future and provides continuity across time in making their own self-identifications.

This is what some respondents had to say concerning their identity as Ghanaian:

I see myself as a Ghanaian but raised in the Netherlands. I am a Ghanaian influenced by the Dutch ways. My parents, my culture, my background, my skin colour, the food we eat and all...I really started understanding my identity at age of 18, 19 because I felt like I couldn't relate to the Dutch people (Dennis, Entrepreneur).

I lived in Ghana, so I basically grew up and developed in Ghana so my self-identity and most of what I know is in Ghana. And also because of my skin colour. If am here people always ask me where are you from? They never say you from the Netherlands or you Dutch (Samilia, Politician).

From this responses, personal and social identity influence how 2G see themselves. In a study conducted by Hutnik and Street (2010) of British Muslims, most participants identified themselves from ethnic minority and were rooted among identity of ethnic minority. Likewise, Byers and Tatsoglou (2008) study of eight Jewish youth in Halifax Canada contend that majority identified as Jewish. Also, Waters (1996) study of 2G Caribbean youth in USA, they identify themselves with homeland of parents. This findings of 2G in Netherlands supports the research previously done by Hutnik and Street (2010), Waters (1996), and Byers and Tatsoglou (2008).

In contrast, though some respondents identify to parents homeland (Ghana), other respondents identify themselves to both homelands as ‘Dutch-Ghanaian’ or ‘Ghanaian-Dutch’. Some respondents construct multiple layers of identity (hybrid identity) as a result of flexibility in their identity construction due to factors such as transnational activities to both countries (Ghana-Netherlands) from visitation of family and friends, cultural activities like fashion style, clothing, food, music, language, and dance. In hybrid (hyphenated) identity, some respondents put ethnic identity first followed by citizenship (national identity), whiles others put citizenship first followed by ethnic identity. All these emphasize the importance of maintaining both ethnic and citizenship

as part of their identity having an in-between space. Rumbaut (2002) studies show that maintaining transnational ties are not important for the children of immigrants, compared to the parents. However, my findings contrast his study since respondents are fully engaged in transnational activities, part of the reason is that they form a cultural hybridity (mixture of two cultures) of identity. This confirms Glick Schiller et al. (1992) view that migrants and their descendants participate in cultural, social, economic processes of country of origin (Ghana) as they maintain their stay in destination country (Netherlands).

Using IPT model, individuals strive to construe identity which becomes inter-connected within the self-concept and shows compatibility and coherent (Jaspal and Cinnirella 2010). Through this, psychological coherence is achieved since 2G has been able to form multiple identities without having conflict in both identities. This shows that migrants can form different, over contradicting identities that has loose boundaries (Harper et al. 2013), and that 2G “could have multiple identities with each one having a particular dynamic of its own” (Hall 2006, cited in Kebede 2010: 11). The hybridity does not force 2G to choose their identity, but rather allow them to settle in a coherent and compatible sense of themselves (Jaspal and Cinnirella 2010).

In support of this findings, Chams (2015) study of Canadian society argue that individuals who maintain ties with people of Lebanese country identify themselves as Lebanese-Canadian. Also, in Elley (1993) study, among Turkish descendants in Australia, they hyphenate as Turkish-Australian. Likewise, it supports Bhabha (1994) argument that hybridity offers an ‘in-between’ where humans don’t specifically identify to ‘this or that’ but are rather ‘both this or that’ and ‘neither this or that’. Respondents show that social categories have a role to play through their understanding and interpretation of their place in the social world based on their in-between location of being ‘Ghanaian’ and being ‘Dutch’.

This is what a respondent had to say concerning her identity as Dutch-Ghanaian:

I am...Dutch-Ghanaian...When people ask me where am from I say Ghana. I grew up sharing that...The Dutch aspect because we are here in Holland...For international referencing Dutch-Ghanaian.... Because of my music I am able to work with people in the Netherlands and in Ghana (Anna Anna, Musician).

People form hyphenated identities due to engagements to both countries and at the same time without having conflicting values between both identities. This supports the view from Cohen (2000: 582) that “one can be Muslim in the Mosque, Asian in the street, Asian British at political hustings and British when travelling abroad, all in a single day”.

Moreover, some respondents considered themselves as fully ‘Dutch’ irrespective of parental background. Some respondents considered the role of their environment in making decisions as

fully ‘Dutch’ as a result of their location to a particular place. This argument of respondents confirms Anthias (2002) view that identity involves a location to a place. Fuligni et al. (2005) study supports this finding that 2G children identifies more to destination country. Additionally, this confirms Alinia (2004) study that Kurdish descendants in Sweden describe themselves as Swedish.

In this study, deducing from the argumentation, people accommodate new information or elements in identity structure to construct their identity. Breakwell (2015) contend in her IPT that people absorb new elements in their identity structure and make adjustments to become part of a structure. As some respondents identify as ‘Ghanaian’ (country of origin), others identify as Dutch-Ghanaian (destination-origin country) and some as simply ‘Dutch’ (destination country). Therefore, from my findings in the Netherlands, it suggest that respondents gave different interpretation to their identity structure offering fluidity of their identity construction.

### **5.3 Layers of Belonging**

According to Loader (2006: 214) “Where do I belong?” “Who cares about me?” and “Who am I?” cannot be isolated. Nevertheless they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. A person may identify to a place but may not feel the sense of belonging to the place, and vice versa. Respondents were able to express themselves concerning their choices of belonging. Sense of belonging is about belonging to ‘here’ (Netherlands), ‘there’ (Ghana), ‘here and there’ (Ghana-Netherlands), or ‘neither of them’ as seen from the findings.

Some respondents attach their sense of belonging to ‘there’ (Ghana). Respondents explained the kind of emotional attachment they have developed for country of origin because that is what makes them feel at home and have their safety. Respondents have established social connections and ties in a form of family, work, and businesses with people which draws them closer to country of origin. This confirms Yuval-Davis (2006) argument that belonging is about emotional attachment to a place where one feels at home and feel safe. My findings supports the findings from Bolognani (2014) that British-Pakistani young adults develop high emotional attachment to Pakistan through frequent travels back home. What respondents mean from my study is that they can express concern about being ‘here’, but not necessarily mean they belong ‘here’. Some respondent’s associate their stay mostly in the Netherlands, however, they accepted that their sense of belonging is in Ghana. This supports Hedetoft and Hjorst (2002: 7) and Yuval-Davis et al (2006: 21) view of belonging as “being in one place, and ‘lodging’ for another” and that “to belong is to be accepted as part of a community, to feel safe within it and to have a stake in the future of such

a community or membership” where respondents are hoping to build a future ‘there’. In addition, responses from some respondents show exclusion from the social world informs their choice of belonging. Respondents who do not feel accepted tend to perceive their sense of belonging to ‘there’. This confirms Anthias (2006) argument that belonging becomes more stronger when there is the sense of exclusion.

These are some of the responses from respondents forming their sense of belonging to Ghana:

Your home is your home and I feel like Ghana, despite the fact we have lived here all my life I always go back. Atleast once a year I go back to Ghana, and I do feel some kind of connection with Ghana because I really want to move there for a year, work there and see how things will go for me... I think I feel safer in Ghana. I feel more accepted in Ghana (Louisa Owusu, Entrepreneur).

My home is Ghana. I go home to Ghana.... I've stayed in Asia but I don't call myself Asian. I mean I call this home as well but where am happiest is Ghana.....I feel a sense of belonging there (Samilia, Politician).

If you don't feel accepted here, then how can you belong here? (Francisca, Student).

Using IPT as a theoretical tool, this shows that some 2G associate sense of belonging to ethnic group which is different from dominant group. Moreover, when an individual feel their identity is threatened (feeling of exclusion) they tend to draw more closer to country of origin as compared to the dominant culture. These negative aspect of threat affects the psychological level of respondents which makes them to distance themselves and draws them closer to country of origin. From the ‘distinctiveness’ principle of IPT, 2G shows differentiation from others where they belong to an in-group (origin people) and have a positive distinctive different from the out-groups (dominant people) (Vignoles et. al 2000), who are not willing to form belonging with other people in the Netherlands. From respondents, it shows that belonging to country of origin occurs as a result of certain threats that respondents have encountered in the dominant society when their feelings of self-efficacy, self-esteem, continuity, distinctiveness, and belonging is undermined or threatened. This findings from respondents supports the findings by Verkuyten (1999) that Moluccan adolescents in Holland feel sense of belonging in Moluccan ethnic group as a result of discrimination of Dutch majority in Holland. In addition, it confirms Alinia and Eliassi (2014) study of Kurds in Sweden who feel excluded from the society when they try to become part of it.

While some respondents feel sense of belonging to ‘there’, on the contrary, some respondents feel their sense of belonging to ‘here’ (Netherlands). Belonging is about social place where one has a bond to the place (Yuval Davis 2006). Some respondents acknowledged their social location to a place as a form of their belongingness to a place. Response from respondents expressed how

their profession and environment (location and positionality) position them in the construction of their sense of belonging. This occurs through experiences and practices of respondents as social inclusion of being accepted. This shows belonging as perceived by some respondents is about practices and sharing values and networks (Anthias 2006) of belonging to a larger group in a society. Vignoles et. al (2000, 2006, 2011) principle of identity motives contend 'belonging' allows people to maintain feelings of closeness and people to be accepted in a society. When 2G feels accepted as part of a society they feel the need for inclusion of belonging to a society that serves as a fundamental motivation of feeling confident and taking control of their lives.

This is a response from one respondent expressing his sense of belonging to the Netherlands.

I call Holland my home because this is the place where I've been born and raised. This is the language I master, more than Twi or English.... I really engage with a lot of white people professionally. Both theatre and film. It is my dream to become an International acclaimed actor so I belong here (Emmanuel, Actor).

This findings from respondent confirm Alinia and Eliassi (2014) study of Iraqi Kurdish that those born in Sweden or raised in Sweden have lots of attachment to Swedish society.

Meanwhile, some respondents spoke of their belonging as being 'here and there' (Ghana-Netherlands) where they form multiple layers of belonging. Zhou and Xiong (2005: 1121) posit that "immigrants are, after all, a transitional generation, caught between here and there". Respondents define their belonging as living in a globalized world. Waldinger (2008) contend that globalization is the other of the day in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. My findings show respondent's experiences in transnational activities from their daily activities are a result of their networks that shows how they belong to multiple spaces of being 'here and there'. Transnational social activities of respondents confirms Vertovec (2001: 573) argument that transnational engagement is because of living in the "social worlds that span more than one place". In a study conducted by Abebe (2009:62) he argues of Ethiopian Diasporic migrants of "not belonging here, not belonging there ... [but] belonging everywhere". Respondents show they are comfortable everywhere, and that their home is not associated to a particular place and that it goes beyond locality. This confirms Magdalena (2007) view that home localized in a network is not about a territory.

Below are some of the expressions about respondents multiple layers of belonging:

I have discovered the world. Through my struggles I have been able to discover myself and be able to discover the world. I've learnt so much from being a Ghanaian, for being Dutch... I see myself to be global to be urban I feel I belong anywhere I go I can make it happen wherever I go... I

think the world is now open to everybody... I think the world belongs to all of us (Akwasi, Olympic Sprinter).

When I go to Ghana and I am working and do other things I have to do it feels like home. But when I am here in the gym and I am doing my work here this feels like home. Home is where I do what I feel most comfortable doing.....I believe I am someone who can live everywhere as long as I can do what I have to do (Dennis, Entrepreneur).

Because I'm a Ghanaian living in the Netherlands, I had to learn both systems. I got the chance to experience both worlds. And they both helped me to be my authentic self. So they're both perfect to me. I belong in the Netherlands and I belong in Ghana (Emmanuel, Actor)

From respondents, it shows that, "globalisation of people's lives, transnationalism and the concomitant creation of transnational social spaces have greatly affected the meaning of home for migrants" (Lucas and Purkayastha 2007: 243). This confirms Lucas and Purkayastha (2007) study of Canadian migrants in USA who classify home as a multi-dimensional due to movement across the US-Canada border. This has influenced the experiences of respondents in the social fields they live. This study of 'here and there' and being in a globalised world (Ghana-Netherlands/everywhere) contrast with Bolognani (2014) of 'there' (Ghana), and Alinia and Eliassi (2014) study of 'here' (Netherlands).

In conclusion, my findings show respondents experience different levels of belonging because of how they identify their sense of belonging. As some belong to 'here' due to maintenance of closeness and acceptance by other people (belonging), and their significance purpose of belongingness (meaning), others belong to 'there' because of forming a continual process (continuity), and being distinct from others (distinctiveness), some also belong to 'here and there' because of combination of all motives. Respondents sense of belonging confirms Ryan and Deci (2003: 254) view that "the principal function of identity formation is fostering the experience of secure belongingness or relatedness". Respondent's view supports Kebede (2010: 11) argument that "Identification in belonging to a group can thus function both as an inclusionary and exclusionary tool".

## 5.4 Influence of Family

Respondents acknowledge the influence of family on their identity choices. Family serves as important component in identity construction (Soehl and Waldinger 2012). Respondents explained they have lived and spent most of their lives with their families and have picked up the cultural trait and language of their parents making it difficult for respondents to abandon origin culture totally.

Some respondents spoke about the maintenance of close relations and visit to country of origin as a form of spending time with family members.

This is what some respondent's (1 G parent, 2G children) said about family influence:

I was born in Holland. My parents introduced me to Ghana. I have my family in Ghana. I go to Ghana often to visit my family members (Francisca, Student).

I am a Ghanaian. I have been in Holland for 30 years. I gave birth to all my children here in Holland.... I have taught them the Ghanaian values. All my children see themselves as Ghanaian because of how I raised them. I send them to Ghana every Christmas...I taught them Twi at home and also send them to Twi school to learn the local language from Ghana (Esther, Parent).

From the responses, it shows parental role in children's identity construction and how showing them to Ghana has influenced these respondents. Collective identity answers the question "Who do I belong to" (Eder 2009: 431) where social relations play a role in belonging to a group, such as family where they introduce children to ethnic and national identity through cultural values and visits, as seen from the respondents. This confirms the view of Getahun (2007) study of young diasporic Ethiopian who feel ethnic pride in Ethiopian-ness and assign their pride to their parents. Moreover, it also confirms Wolf (1997) study of Filipino immigrants in USA that strong and emotional attachments about the family is the main centre of being a Filipino. This further strengthens how intergenerational relations are passed on to immigrant children.

Nonetheless, intergenerational identity sometimes leads to intergenerational struggles. Some respondents explain how there are conflict of interest with parents. Some parents fear their children will become westernised and attempt to impose restrictions and cultural practices, values, and norms on their children. From the respondents, parents expect children to accept their norms and practices, and values which becomes a sign of internal struggle for the respondent. Zhou (1997a: 83) posit that the fear is not from acculturation but from the migration process which "disrupts normal parent-child relationships in a number of observable ways". This argument is supported by Wolf (1997) view on Filipino immigrants in USA that they experience multiple pressures and contradictory tugs and pushes and pulls between parents' and children.

This is a response from respondent narrating the struggles with parents':

I'm born here, with all the freedom and all the rights you have as a young child, that's where my parents and I clash. Yes, I'm raised in a Ghanaian household. But when a situation occurs with my parents, I can see that the Dutch side comes up. I remember the fights with my parents where I was yelling 'BUT I'M 18 NOW, DON'T THINK FOR ME' (Emmanuel, Actor).

According to some respondents, family plays no role in their self-identification, even though they have paid visits to country of origin. Their meanings of self-identification have nothing to do with parents' identity. This argument supports Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 6) argument on identity as "self-understanding rather than by putatively universal self-interest". Some respondent's acknowledged the fact that they use "everyday settings to make sense of themselves, of their activities, of what they share with, and how they differ from, others" (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 4). This further supports Burke and Stets (2009: 4) argument that "the nature of the individual depends upon the society in which he/she lives"

This is reiterated from the responses below:

My identity is different from my parents. It is because I was born here and grew up here so I see myself more as a Dutch person (Deborah, Student).

I live my children to make their life choices. I am a Ghanaian but I can't force my children. I teach them the Ghanaian values especially the Ghanaian language but I can't force them to accept (Peter, Parent).

In conclusion, though some respondents could exercise their own agency by making decisions where they negotiate and choose (Kabeer 2001) their own self-identity, however, it seems some respondents "experience difficulties in reconciling their ethnic and national identities, given the differing norms, values and social representations associated with these identities" (Ghuman 2003, cited in Jaspal and Cinnirella 2012: 507). These difficulties confirm Hopkins (2004) study of British South Asians (BSA) young Muslim form of exclusion from British society by White British because their practices, values, and norms are different from Britishness. This can be applied to the study from my findings as some respondents' experience difficulties in cultural norms from parents.

## 5.5 Role of Citizenship

Citizenship has become an important factor in relation to 2G identity construction and belonging. Citizenship provides privileges and rights and responsibilities others do not enjoy. All respondents were students and workers and legal residents in the Netherlands and have obtained Dutch passport and citizenship. So I set up to ask the question, does citizenship influence how you construct your identity and sense of belonging?

According to some respondents, citizenship makes them to enjoy their rights and responsibilities in the Netherlands.

Yeah I feel privileged to have it to be honest because I am never stuck to anything. If I want to go to Ghana I can go to Ghana if I want to be in Europe I will be in Europe. Let me say the word privilege. That is the influence it has on me.... See am always gonna be Ghanaian

whatever I do, wherever am going. I see as myself as Dutch yes because to some extent am integrated in the system. I grew up here people know me here. I understand the Dutch culture. Do I see myself as Dutch because I have a Dutch passport? In some areas if there are certain rights am supposed to be enjoying I see myself as Dutch so I will fight for that because am Dutch yeah, I mean am always gonna be legally Dutch (Samilia, Politician).

According to Samilia a politician, using the theory of acculturation, integration has become a worldwide process, where the Dutch integration system offers a conducive environment for citizens to integrate. Though respondent see herself as Ghanaian, citizenship has influenced her integration process in the Dutch society. Respondent acknowledged the fact she can leave and enter the country due to her rights and responsibilities she enjoys as being a Dutch citizen. This supports Alba (2005) view that citizenship is where one can leave and enter a country free from deportation. From the conversation, it confirms Eliassi (2013) argument that citizenship serves as a means of political development that adjust the relationship between individuals and the state and social collectivises.

Likewise, Godwin a professional kickboxer, acknowledged the benefit of having a Dutch citizenship.

I know that to have a Dutch nationality is seen as a privilege. Because here you know they work with the system. Here everything is in order.... And I think even me as a Ghanaian can learn a lot from the western world... But being a Dutch citizen doesn't mean that I don't feel Ghanaian or whatsoever (Godwin, Professional Kickboxer).

From both (Samilia and Godwin) respondent's, they identify themselves as belonging to Ghanaian ethnic identity. To them, they cannot identify to Dutch ethnic group even though they have Dutch passport and citizenship. However, they recognize the importance of their citizenship. This means having Dutch citizenship does not necessarily imply they belong 'here'. This statement supports Eliassi (2013: 45) argument that even if immigrants have citizenship they do not really belong to 'us'.

In contrast, some respondents describe having Dutch passport and citizenship have an influence on how they construct their identity. Respondents acknowledged they enjoy their rights and responsibilities as citizens of the Netherlands. Somers (2008: 25) argue citizenship is "having the rights to have rights" as a member of a civil and political society. Respondents further acknowledged they obey laws and communicate effectively in the Dutch native language. This can be supported by Tariq Ramadan, a Swiss Muslim scholar, on his definition of citizenship, where he describes citizenship as individual status they receive where they enjoy their rights and responsibilities and who respects laws and understands the language.

When asked about citizenship, respondent gave the following response:

Citizenship is part of how I see myself. I am using a Dutch passport and because I have a Dutch passport it makes me to see myself as a Dutch person (Deborah, Student).

I have the rights I enjoy as a citizen. I speak the language...I obey laws here...So I see myself as a Dutch person...When people get to know I am born here they include me as part of them (Francisca, student).

This view of Francisca and Deborah is supported by Alba (2005) study in USA that 2G Mexicans in USA have USA citizenship who see themselves as the natives.

Using IPT theory, though some respondents do not construct their identity from citizenship, responses shows respondent have motivated themselves in a positive way (self-esteem motive) since they feel part of the Dutch society and enjoy privileges, rights, and responsibilities others without citizenship do not enjoy because they are in possession of Dutch passport. However, some respondents acknowledge citizenship forms part of their identity construction because they experience the need for inclusion and acceptance in the social context of their environment (belonging motive) where respondents have accommodated new information in their identity structure by attributing their identity to Dutch passports and Dutch language as a way of fitting into the destination country.

## 5.6 Levels of Adaptation

Second generation have shown that they have different levels of adaptations or outcomes in the process of acculturation both psychologically and socioculturally due to experiences of family life, school, work, and their personal sense of well-being. Using the theory of acculturation, Berry (2005) classifies acculturation into four different strategies in constructing immigrant's identity; Assimilation, Integration, Marginalisation, and Separation (AIMS)<sup>7</sup>.

Concerning assimilation, my findings show that none of the respondents have been assimilated into the dominant society (Netherlands), where 2G abandon their origin culture (Ghana) and stick to new culture (Netherlands). Respondents show great desire and interest in country of origin, or both cultures through dance, music, language, food, cultural practices and they never spoke of forced assimilation by family. Gordon (1964) argument on 'structural' assimilation that ethnic majority group members stick to the majority group members culture. He argues once immigrants assimilate structurally, all other forms of assimilation will occur, that is, discrimination will decline, ethnic trait and native language will disappear, and immigrant's origin

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<sup>7</sup> I adopt Berrys' model of acculturation in analyzing my levels of adaptation

identity will fade. Gordons argument supports Berry and Sabatier (2010) study in Paris, France that the 2G youth are less diverse and has an assimilation policy. Also, Schwartz and Zamboanga (2008) sample of Hispanic young adults in Miami, some considered themselves as assimilated (American, not Hispanic).

Though assimilation theorists posit “assimilation occurred as a by-product of upward mobility” (Hiller and Chow 2005: 76), in contrast, my findings shows that this has never been the case in the Netherlands and that 2G do not abandon country of origin for country of destination. This is supported by some respondent’s statements below:

I speak good Dutch. I speak English. I speak 70% Twi. Maybe 60.... I've been able to find a balance between the two, so yeah.....I'm like stuck between...I do feel like more Ghanaian but I can easily also switch and be more Dutch (Louisa Owusu, Entrepreneur).

When it comes to food mostly Ghanaian food that I eat. I sometimes eat Dutch foods. When It comes to music it's all Ghanaian. In general, it's African music. I watch Dutch TV programmes sometimes it depends on what it does interest me I watch (Abena, Entrepreneur).

Some respondents have shown they are very proud of the origin culture. They pick up cultural activities like the food, dance, clothing, and symbols from country of origin even though they live in a destination country.

On integration, the Dutch integration system have provided good policies for immigrants to be oriented into the Dutch system. Berry (1991) posit that integration is pursued when the dominant group is open and inclusive towards cultural diversity. Parents from the 1G have been integrated into the Dutch system where they could transfer it to the 2G children. Koopmans et al. (2005) contend that immigration from Ghana to the Netherlands has become a major influence of immigration trends in the past 15-20 years. Some respondents could maintain heritage culture of parents country of origin and destination culture through choices of friendship, media preferences, festivals, social activities, and use of language and maintenance of cultural values of ‘here and there’. Benet-Martinez et al. (2002) state that true biculturalism is synthesizing heritage culture and destination culture into unique blend. These findings confirms Portes and Schauffler (1994) study of 2G Spanish speaking in South Florida where they assimilated into the English Language because of their American identity, and at the same time maintain their ethnic origin. This supports my findings in the context of integration since 2G engage in cultural practices of ‘here and there’ (Ghana-Netherlands).

These are some responses concerning 'integration' of respondents:

I am used to both Dutch and Ghana social activities. I am not limited to only Dutch activities or Ghanaian activities. I eat both foods, dress as both, celebrate both cultural activities. I have both cultural trait in me (Deborah, Student).

It's funny in my house 99% listen to Afro beat.... But in in terms of Television, where I live I watch more Dutch and watch more American TV. When I was in the Netherlands my parents used to watch a lot of African drama... In the gym, I listen to a lot of Ghanaian songs... I listen to a lot of African music (Akwasi, Olympic Sprinter).

Concerning Separation, this explains how immigrants maintain their origin culture and abandon destination culture. Though all respondents acknowledged integration as a major factor of their multiculturalism, some respondents further maintained ties to origin culture as a result of family life, geographic concentrations, socioeconomic circumstances, social relations, and racial discrimination at school or workplace. Some respondents maintain ties to origin culture because of racial discrimination, which impacts respondents negatively on both psychological and sociocultural (Berry et al. 2006). For instance, in Portes and Rumbaut (2001) study of CILS, respondents of Mexico and black-Caribbean origin, over 60 percent have reported of discrimination. Also, in a study conducted by Modood et al. (1997) discrimination and racism formed part of BSAs' narratives in life.

Below are some responses with regards to the question on immigrant's separation or segregation:

I feel discriminated sometimes. I know that some eye brows are raised when I do something.... I however like not to focus on it, the more you focus on it the more energy you spend ...As a politician not yet I haven't experienced any discrimination so far (Samilia, Politician).

Here is an area where a lot of Ghanaians are so when you identify within your culture you can associate with people based on language, based on music, based on heritage, and the village you are from, so you are often reminded as to who we are, kind of (Anna Anna, Musician).

Racial discrimination affects 2G adaptation process because of being in a social environment with different values, and because most immigrant don't experience discrimination in their native lands they draw closer to country of origin. This shows that when 2G feel segregated they tend to draw closer to origin culture. From data gathered from my findings, it show that some respondents feel separated from the dominant culture and practice origin culture. This confirms Massey and Denton (1993) findings that children of black parents feel disadvantaged as a result of the character of American racial hierarchy. Also, Zhou (1997a) study shows some immigrant children in linguistically neighbourhood position where the native tongue is used often by people around them. In Matute-Bianchi (1986) ethnographic study of Mexican-American children, advanced bilingual skills

related to strong Mexican identity language. My findings contrast with Waters (1990) study of Caucasian immigrants in USA that assimilation was linear, and that all drops of ethnic origin would be lost. Therefore, I argue that 2G also feel segregated because of their colour, geographic location, language, and their modes of incorporation in the Dutch society.

On marginalisation, this explains immigrants have little interest in destination culture, and little interest in origin culture. This happens as result of forced assimilation and forced segregation when immigrants are forced to accept destination culture and forced to stick to origin culture. This did not come up from my findings, since 2G had their own experiences whether to assimilate, integrate, or feel separated.

In conclusion of my argument, it shows that acculturation occurred because of how 2G adapted into the Dutch society. Respondents formed their levels of adaptation due to their adaptation processes in the home, outside, interaction with others, and their experiences in the dominant society. My findings confirms Berry and Sabatier (2010) study in Paris that, discrimination is very low for those categorized as assimilation and marginalization, and highest for those categorized as separation and integration.

## 6. Conclusion

My research study was to find out how the second-generation Ghanaians perceive themselves and how their identity is constructed and reconstructed when encountered in a dominant society. This paper has shown that their experiences in an environment has played a key role in their identity construction and belonging. Interviews were conducted with 17 respondents (15 second-generation, 2 first-generation) who shared their narratives.

Concerning respondent's identity construction, empirical evidence has shown that respondents do not form a fixed identity. As some classified themselves as 'Ghanaian', others classified as 'Dutch', and some as 'Dutch-Ghanaian. Respondents who perceive themselves as Ghanaian attribute their reasons to family, roots, cultural values, practices, norms and skin colour. For the Dutch-Ghanaian, they have created a multiple space between both cultures because of the encounters and experiences they have between both countries which shows a balance of great importance. I found that for those who classified as Dutch it was mainly because of the environment they grew in.

The feeling of belonging differed from one respondent to the other. Some respondent's showed their sense of belonging through feelings and emotions they have attached to a parent country of origin. They have established bonds which makes them see their belonging to 'there' (Ghana) as important. Others attributed their belonging to their environment, school and work activities. Respondents also associated their belonging to inclusion/exclusion (politics of belonging) from the society. Moreover, some respondents do not attach belonging to a place but create multiple layers of belonging to both countries. I found that though respondents have spent a lot of their time in the Netherlands, those born in Ghana, and those who have been to Ghana often, associate their sense of belonging to Ghana, and vice versa.

Further, all respondents created their own perceptions of how people perceive them. To them they are referred to as 'foreigners'. Respondents have Dutch nationality, live in the Netherlands, speak Dutch language fluently, and attend school and work in the Netherlands. However, they are not fully recognized as Dutch and are always questioned about their origin. So, I found out that most tend to accept their position from ethnic/heritage culture. From the ethnic culture, also, some are still treated as 'foreigners'. Therefore, they are sometimes stuck in-between and don't know where to identify with/belong to.

On the influence of family, respondents acknowledge parental role in their identity construction. Respondents acknowledged parents from ethnic origin and form cultural values due

to the distinctiveness to their ethnic origin. However, some respondents experienced parental clash as they found themselves in both cultures which affected their parent-child relationship. Some respondents attributed their identity construction to parental role, while others could form them using their own agency in making their personal choices by not relating their identity construction to family or parents.

Respondents acceptance of citizenship has shown the privileges they enjoy. They accepted that having a Dutch passport and citizenship has made them to enjoy their rights and responsibilities in the Netherlands and within the European Union. Moreover, respondents appreciated how they can leave and enter the country anytime they want. Some respondent's noted that having Dutch citizenship has played a role in their identity construction because they speak the language fluently and have been accepted in the Netherlands and are in possession of Dutch passport and citizenship. However, for others, it plays no role and they cannot identify as belonging to the Netherlands just because they possess Dutch passport and citizenship.

Respondents have shown their advanced bilingual skills where they spoke and understood the Dutch and English language. Some respondents could speak the different Ghanaian dialects. The parents have shown how they have incorporated the Ghanaian local language by teaching them at home and sending them to mother tongue school to be abreast with the Ghanaian language and history. However, I found that though Dutch is the official language of the Netherlands, those born in the Netherlands and those born in Ghana, most of them are still acquainted with the English language.

Concerning adaptation, the study has shown that some belong to multiple cultures since they closely associate to both the culture of the parents' and dominant culture in the destination society. Nonetheless, some respondent also feel segregated/separated from the dominant culture due to their experiences of racial discrimination, family and socio-economic circumstances thereby forming great affection to country of origin. This adaptation processes has had great effect on acculturation where they have been able to fit/not fit into the Dutch society.

From the empirical evidence presented in my study, it can be argued that identity is not fixed. It is fluid and changes at home, school, and work due to the interactions that second-generation have with people (peers, media, friends, parents, natives) and their experiences (freedoms, values, cultures, practices, norms). This means that identity changes due to different experiences in an environment. It is because second-generation are able to find alternatives (inclusion/exclusion, environment, parental background, upbringing, transnationalism) and engage in coping strategies.

In this study I have also demonstrated that the psychological and sociocultural state of second-generation play a role in their identity construction and belongingness. This includes the identity

motives of ‘self-esteem’, ‘continuity’, ‘meaning’, ‘distinctiveness’, ‘efficacy’, ‘belonging’, and their acculturation (assimilation, integration, marginalization, separation) processes between cultures.

In my discussions, I have attempted to answer the main research question. However, the findings of this study also show that generalization cannot be made about how all second-generation Ghanaians in the Netherlands construct their identity and develop sense of belonging because was based on 17 respondents in The Hague Municipality.

This study was done ‘here’ (Netherlands) which reveals the dynamics around identity construction and sense of belonging in a destination country. However, it is important to look at studies ‘there’ (Ghana) to understand how second-generation who have finally migrated/moved to Ghana use their experiences to construct their identity and belonging after returning to Ghana.

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## APPENDIX 1:

### Profile of Second Generation (2G) Respondents

Respondents	Position	Language of Interview	Date	Age	Place	Gender	Country of Birth	Parent Origin
Abena Konadu Osei	Entrepreneur	English and Ghanaian Language (Twi)	02-09-18	24	The Hague	F	Ghana	Ghana
Akwasi Frimpong	Olympic Sprinter	English and Ghanaian Language (Twi)	12-08-18	32	USA: Whatsapp Call	M	Ghana	Ghana
Angela Anokywaa Danso	Student	English and Ghanaian Language (Twi)	11-07-18	17	The Hague	F	Ghana	Ghana
Anna Anna (Anonymous)	Musician	English	25-07-18	29	The Hague	F	Netherlands	Ghana
Deborah Owusu	Student	English	07-08-18	17	The Hague	F	Netherlands	Ghana
Dennis Fofie	Entrepreneur	English	24-07-18	28	The Hague	M	Ghana	Ghana
Emmanuel Ohene Bamfo	Actor	English	08-08-18	25	Open questionnaire responded via mail	M	Netherlands	Ghana
Francisca Asante	Student	English and Ghanaian Language (Twi)	15-09-18	27	The Hague	F	Netherlands	Ghana
Gladys Akom Ankobrey	Phd Student	English	08-10-18	26	The Hague	F	Netherlands	Father Ghana; Mother Suriname
Godwin Afriyie	Professional Kickboxer	English	16-08-18	30	The Hague	M	Netherlands	Ghana
Joan Joan (Anonymous)	Entrepreneur	English	09-10-18	21	The Hague	F	Netherlands	Ghana
Lady Gifty Kwaissi	Entrepreneur	English & Ghanaian Language (Twi)	01-08-18	32	The Hague	F	Netherlands	Ghana
Louisa Fofie	Entrepreneur	English and Ghanaian Language (Twi)	12-09-18	28	The Hague	F	Netherlands	Ghana
Louisa Osei Owusu	Entrepreneur	English and Ghanaian Language (Twi)	22-08-18	29	The Hague	F	Ghana	Ghana
Samilia Appiah	Politician	English & Ghanaian Language (Twi)	02-08-18	23	The Hague	F	Netherlands	Ghana

Source: (Own source, field data 2018)

## APPENDIX 2:

### Profile of First Generation (1G) Parents'

Respondents	Language of Instruction	Date of Interview	Age	Place of Interview	Gender	Country of Birth	Parent Origin
Esther Appiah	Ghanaian Language (Twi)	10-10-18	55	The Hague	F	Ghana	Ghana
Peter Ocran	English and Ghanaian Language (Twi)	10-10-18	50	The Hague	M	Ghana	Ghana

**Source:** (Own source, field data 2018)

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Interview Guide**

#### **Research Question**

##### **Central Research Question**

###### ***Main research questions:***

How do the second-generation (2G) Ghanaians construct their identity and sense of belonging?

###### ***Specific questions:***

1. How do second-generation position themselves as 'Dutch' or 'Ghanaian' or 'both' (destination country? origin country? destination-origin country?)
2. What are the factors influencing their identity construction and belonging?
3. To what extent does the concept of adaptation shape/determine second generation experiences in the Netherlands?

#### **Details of Respondents**

Name:

Gender:

Age:

Country of Birth:

If born in/outside Ghana, what age did you move to the Netherlands:

Number of years in the Netherlands:

Parent Origin Country;

Mother:

Father:

Town Grown Up in Netherlands:

Current Place of Residence:

Level of Education:

Years being active in school:

Date of Interview:

Time of Interview;

Start Time:

End Time:

Place of Interview:

Language of Interview:

Language(s) Spoken by Respondent:

**A. How do second generation place themselves as being ‘Dutch’ or ‘Ghanaian’ or ‘both’ (destination country? origin country? destination-origin country?).**

**Identity and Belonging**

1. How do you identify yourself and what are the factors that influence you to decide on your identity?
2. Where do you call ‘home’ and what informs your affinity to the place?
3. Describe how others see you in the Netherlands? Do you see it as the same way you see yourself or it is different?

**B. What are the factors influencing your identity construction and belonging?**

**Family and Ties**

4. To what extent do you see your identity formation as different or the same as your parents’ country of origin or birthplace or as a personal choice?

**Cultural Activities**

5. What social activities are you engaged in? Which ones are focused on Dutch society or Ghanaian community or both or none? For instance, what games do you play, what festivals do you attend, what TV and radio programmes are you interested in, what is your fashion style, what food do you eat, what dance do you practice, where are your friends from are they natives or immigrants, religious practices, etc.

**Citizenship**

6. How does being a citizen of the Netherlands influence how you see yourself and where you actually belong?

**Experiences**

7. What kind of people do you engage with in terms of activities? Are you more likely to engage with people from the same ethnic group or Ghanaian community or natives in Dutch community? How do you describe a few experiences you have had as a student of black/mixed race in the Netherlands?

**Language**

8. What language(s) do you feel most connected to, and how does the language you speak have an influence on how you see your identity and your sense of belonging?

**C. To what extent does the concept of adaptation shape/determine second generation experiences?**

**Adaptation**

9. How does the location of your stay in the Netherlands and your level of adaptation have a role to play in how you identify yourself and where you belong?

**Other**

10. Is there any information you consider relevant to your experience? Have we missed something you would like to add?

***Thank you.***

## Appendix 4:

### Introductory Letter from ISS

International  
Institute of  
Social Studies

Date  
28 June 2018

Subject  
Field work

**Page**

1/3

**Department**

Teaching and Learning Support  
Team (TLST)  
T +31 70 4260 658

**Visiting address**

International Institute of Social  
Studies  
Kortenbosstraat 12  
2518 AW The Hague

**Postal address**

P.O. Box 29776  
2502 LT The Hague  
The Netherlands

T +31 70 4260 460  
E [tlst@iss.nl](mailto:tlst@iss.nl)  
W [www.iss.nl](http://www.iss.nl)

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

This is to certify that Mr Asadu, Patrick Asamoah from Ghana is enrolled at this Institute's Master of Arts Programme in Development Studies 2017/2018, which is being held from the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2017 until the 17<sup>th</sup> of December 2018.

The Institute of Social Studies offers a full time M.A. Programme. Mr. Asadu, Patrick Asamoah is officially registered as a full-time participant in the ISS M.A. Programme in Development Studies with the Major Human Rights, Gender and Conflict Studies: Social Justice Perspectives (SJIP).

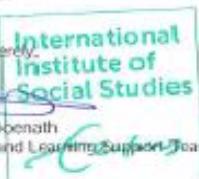
Mr Asadu, Patrick Asamoah is conducting Field work in the Netherlands from July to August 2018 in order to collect data for the Research Paper, which he has to hand in by 14 November 2018 and which is part of his M.A. study programme.

The topic of his research is: "Identity Formation and Belonging: Experiences of Second generation Ghanaian migrants in the Netherlands".

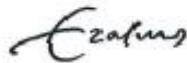
All assistance you may give Mr Asadu, Patrick Asamoah will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

  
Blanca Jadownick  
Teaching and Learning Support Team (TLST)



Erasmus University Rotterdam



## APPENDIX 5:

### Mind Map of Second-Generation Ghanaians Identity Construction and Belonging

