**Interviewer**: Okay, thank you for joining us for this interview, sir.

**Participant 10**: Yes, you are welcome, sir.

**Interviewer**: After getting your consent to record, I’m going to start the interview now. So, the interview, we have 6 sections. We start with the first one, which is demographic information.

So here I have about 5 questions, so I will start with the first one.

Can you please tell us your age, gender and country of origin?

**Participant 10:** I'm 53 years. The country of my origin is Nigeria.

**Interviewer:** Okay. And gender?

**Participant 10:**  I'm a male.

**Interviewer**: Okay, thank you, sir. What is your highest level of education? And what country did you obtain your qualification from?

**Participant 10:** I have my first and second degree in the University in … [muffled sound].

**Interviewer**: In Nigeria?

**Participant 10:** Yeah.

**Interviewer**: Did you say your first and second degree are from Nigeria?

**Participant 10:** From Nigeria, from Nigeria University.

**Interviewer**: Okay.

**Participant 10**: And a professional certificate in accounting from Nigeria also.

**Interviewer**: Okay. Thank you, sir.

**Participant 10:** Yes, sir.

**Interviewer**: Question 3. How long have you lived in the, US Maryland Specifically?

**Participant 10:**  By April 16th I would be 5, exactly 5 years.

**Interviewer:** In the US? okay.

**Participant 10**: Yes.

**Interviewer**: Thank you. And you've only lived in Maryland since you got to the US?

. **Participant 10:** Yes, exactly yes.

**Interviewe**r: Okay. Question 4 - Can you tell us your current profession or job title?

**Participant 10:** Yeah, currently, I’m Health care giver.

**Interviewer**: Okay. Last question under this section- What was your profession in Nigeria before you migrated?

**Participant 10:** Like, I said earlier. I'm an accountant.

I**nterviewer**: Okay.

**Participant 10:** In Nigeria before coming down to the US.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you, sir. We'll go to section 2.

**Participant 10:** Yes sir

**Interviewer**: The questions are about push and pull factors. Push and pull factors are factors that are responsible for why people migrate; the reasons why people migrate and so, I will ask about 4 questions under this section. The first question here is, what motivated your decision to migrate to the United States? Were there specific factors in Nigeria that pushed you to leave, for example, economic, social, or political challenges.

**Participant 10:** Yeah, political challenges.

**Interviewer**: Okay, can you explain?

**Participant 10:** Okay let me explain. My last working place in Nigeria was Ondo state House of Assembly and, I was then the deputy director accounts and they were trying to marginalize by putting assistant director accounts over me to become a director account and [erm] getting to the clerk of the house, then trying to explain things to him, he told me that the lady in question need an assistant, and that is why they want to promote; give her double promotion above me and you know being an environment where politics…it is house of politics, that's is assembly, then they are trying to play some games, trying to make my way among the honorables but all are there then ,based on that I cannot bear it for my junior to become my boss. I have to call it quit.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you for sharing that.

**Participant 10:** Yeah.

Interviewer: Question 3, what attracted you to Maryland in particular and what attracted you to the United States?

**Participant 10:** Yeah, what really attracted me to the United States, I came into the United States in the year 2017, just for vacation. Then I was in Texas, I was in Minnesota but coming to Maryland, I just love the word, Maryland. You know, back there in Nigeria there is a place in Lagos State we call Maryland.

So, by the time I decided to come, I say, I'm going to Maryland, in America and that's how I found myself in Maryland.

**Interviewer**: Okay, thank you. The last question under this section,

hat challenges have you encountered during the migration process?

**Participant 10:** [uh**]**You mean for me to get here?

**Interviewer**: [uh] It could be what you encountered before you came, when you came, and since you came.

**Participant 10:** Yeah, by the time I came in, I have a very nasty experience. I was asked to work in a factory [laughs] you know, It looked somehow on that very day because I was thinking maybe I'm going to get an office job or something else.

So, they asked me if I will be washing the bottle, putting it on the machine to roll in. So, I find it so difficult but I had to talk to myself at the same time that I have no option then by and large, I was able to adjust and get myself fixed into the system, so that was the situation.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you. So, you feel like, the job you started with didn't really match your level of academic and professional…

**Participant 10:** Yeah.

**Interviewer**: …experience and qualifications.

**Participant 10:** Exactly.

**Interviewer**: Okay. We will go into a little more about that. In the next section we're going to be talking about professional experiences in section 3.

**Participant 10**: Okay

**Interviewer**: Erm, please give me a second.

**Participant 10:** Yeah.

**Interviewer**: So, like I said, we continue with Section 3, professional experiences. We have 5 questions under this section, too.

So, the first one is - Please tell us about your career trajectory in Nigeria before relocating to the United States?

**Participant 10:** Yes, I started working in the year 1991 as a clerk in the secondary school where I rose to the position of a bursar of a school .Presently, now we see the bursar as an accountant of a school.

**Interviewer**: Yes.

**Participant 10:** Yeah, I later transferred to Teaching Service Commission as an account officer to be charge of salaries, wages, and salaries of teachers across the State. I was there for 7 years and later I was transferred to another secondary school between 2000 and 2004. I worked in two different secondary schools.

From there, I was transferred to Accountant General office in Nigeria. Then I was there; I was there for a year then I was transferred to hospital management boards then from hospital management boards to House of Assembly where I worked to the last day I put up my paper, voluntary retirement.

**Interviewer**: Okay, thank you. Looks like you have moved from school to teaching service commission to hospital then to government establishment which is the state house of assembly like you said.

**Participant 10:** Assembly.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So, how many years in total did you work in Nigeria before you moved to the US?

**Participant 10:** We call it paymaster in Nigeria.

**Interviewer**: Oh, sorry! I think I lost

**Participant 10**: Okay.

**Interviewer**: I lost you for a few seconds. I was asking…

**Participant 10**: Okay.

**Interviewer**: I was asking that how many years of experience did you have before you moved to the US?

**Participant 10**: Yeah, I have about 29 years and some months, 29 years, I think and 4 months.

**Interviewer**: Okay. Then when we connected back, I heard you mention Paymaster, I didn't hear what you were saying before about paymaster, can you repeat it?

**Participant 10:** I said, I was transferred to the hospital management board to function as the paymaster.

I**nterviewe**r: Okay.

**Participant 10:** The paymaster is in charge of cash that comes into the organization, and the expenses.

**Interviewer**: Okay. That was before your last…

**Participant 10**: Yeah, before I was transferred to house of assembly. In the house of assembly I was given the same responsibility and from there I rose to the post of accountant to deputy director accounts before I voluntarily send out my letter of resignation where I put up 29 years and 4 months in the system.

Interviewer: Thank you. You retired as a deputy director?

**Participant 10:** Yes, sir.

**Interviewer**: Thank you so much for explaining that. The next question. I wanted you to describe your current career path since you moved to the United States.

**Participant 10:** Yeah, my current career now like, I said earlier, I'm an health care giver My responsibility is to take care of people with disability.

And then currently, I'm a house manager with the organization where I work with and I find it so easy and joyful to work is in this new area of specialization because caring happens to be part of me, and to the glory of God with the people I'm working with I could understand how to redirect them when the needs arise.

**Interviewer**: Okay. Oh, thank you yes, thank you for that.

The next question is [uhm] I’m happy that you mentioned that this new type of job, which is different from what you are doing in Nigeria before you moved over. You're happy with it because it's a new experience, new environment for you and it's something that aligns with your own personal values or what you like doing, caring for people.

The next question I want to ask is - How well do you feel your skills and qualifications are being fully utilized in your current role right now?

**Participant 10:** Yeah, I’m still trying to learn more on this current skill because I want to grow like the way I was able to rise from the scratch to the top in the accounting system back there in Nigeria. I still want to learn more in this field of healthcare and I'm looking forward to an opportunity to study, so that I can be a figure in the system too.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you. So, let me let me ask in a more specific way.

Do you feel like some of the skills that you had prior to coming to the US are applicable in these current responsibilities, this current position, you are?

**Participant 10:** You mean my responsibility.

**Interviewer:** I mean the skills you had before you know, accounting skills are mostly about numbers, figures, calculations.

**Participant 10:** Figures, yes!

**Interviewer:** Are you able to transfer some of those skills to what you do in the current job?

**Participant 10:** Yeah, you know in the current job you need somebody to be painstaking and the same thing goes with accounting. You need to know the type of medication you want to give to your clients, time to give. So, timing, painstaking, all these are applicable in both fields and then understanding what you are doing is the root, I understand I was able to give myself motivation to understand what I want to come into and what I'm doing and this has helped me a lot to impart my old skill to the present skill, and I was able to triumph.

**Interviewer**: Okay, thank you for sharing that, sir. I’ll go to the last question under this section. What barriers have you faced in the professional landscape, such as licensing requirements, recognition of foreign qualifications or workplace discrimination? What strategies have you used to overcome these challenges?

**Participant 10:** Yeah, you know, when I first got in, they said, we are going to do some certification courses in the CMT, the disability training and the other courses. So, you know initially, the area of my centralization is totally different from health care. I have to study in order to put myself into the system, and with a little time I was able to get myself rooted. Like I said, interest is the root and is the key to anything that anybody wants to embark on. If you're not having an interest, probably somebody is pushing you towards it, the level of success when you come out of it will not be the same as somebody who has an interest or passion for it.

**Interviewer**: Okay, that's true. Yeah, thank you.

**Participant 10:** Yes sir.

**Interviewer:** Did you? So, I want to be sure I didn't miss this, or maybe if you had anything to say about workplace discrimination. Some people have never experienced anything like work-based discrimination. Some people talk about how they felt, maybe at one point in time they experienced workplace discrimination. [uh]

**Participant 10:** Well, at present I've never experienced such.

**Interviewer**: Okay.

**Participant 10:** And I pray that such will not happen [coughs].

**Interviewer**: Okay, thank you for clarifying that, sir.

**Participant 10:** You welcome.

**Interviewer:** We move to the next section. And the next section is about cultural assimilation and social integration. That's section 4, under this section we also have 5 questions. So, I'll go ahead with the questions on that section.

How would you describe your experience of cultural assimilation in Maryland? Have you experienced any cultural or social challenges since you migrated?

**Participant 10:** Yeah, you know, the way we communicate back there in Nigeria is not the same tone they communicate here so that gives me a little challenges [uh] but with interest I was able to a acclimatize, be able to pronounce, or assimilate their tone of speaking and you know, this time, with a short…a short little time, I was able to blend into the because, you know, like in the area of food, I'm not used to most of these western world food.

**Interviewer**: American Food.

**Participant 10**: American food yeah. I'm used to my local food back in Nigeria, but when I got here I know that if I don't eat, I’m going to be starving myself, so I have to blend.

Interviewer: [laughs] Yes.

**Participant 10:** So, these are the first challenges I first encountered and

with no disturbance like I said earlier, I was able to overcome it like I don't eat pizza before, but when I got here now, am now a pizza friendly person. [Laughs]

**Interviewer**: [Laughs] Okay.

**Participant 10:** So, these are thechallenges. Yes, this type of social and cultural, and I so much happy to say most of these Americans want to have the taste of your food in as much you want to have the taste to know how it is they want to have a taste too because all the friends of mine being American want to take egusi soup, and all those stuffs.

**Interviewer:** That's interesting. [uhm] Okay, I'll go to the next question.

How have you navigated cultural differences in your personal and professional life? [uhm] Let me clarify that a little. You've mentioned a little about your personal life. You talk about food, and how you found it strange when you came initially? And now you've adapted and you love it so much.

How about your professional life specifically? Are there cultural differences…

**Participant 10:** Professional like?...

**Interviewer:** …you feel is challenging, having worked in Nigeria and in the work environment in Nigeria compared to the work environment in America, please if you can shed a little light on this.

**Participant 10:** Like in Nigeria I only work most of the time, even I don't go to office I can from a tool just dish out an instruction the junior staffs and they embark on it. But here, you have to be present, working at home in Nigeria is not the same way as working at home in America. You know somebody might not even be willing to come to work, just call your staff, tell them “Oh, tell them I'm outside, I’m going somewhere” I see it as sort of a lie.

But in America you have to be at your working place because you clock in, in Nigeria you don't clock in and if you get to work at 12 o'clock it will be recorded that you got to work by 7 o’clock, so these are the changes that it really jeered me up and let me realize that these are the things that boost the economy of America; Timing and dedication to work.

Back then in Nigeria, it's not that we are not timely but very few of us are timely, very few of us are dedicated, but in America here I could see that they are serious minded set of people going about their daily and lawful business.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you for clarifying that, sir.

**Participant 10:** Uhm

**Interviewer:** One more question under this section and the question is about community networks or organizations that people rely on when they move to a new country.So, the question is - Are there specific community networks or organizations that have supported your integration since you came to the US? How well have this organization supported your career advancement.?

**Participant 10:** Yeah, like, I said earlier, I just made up my mind to come in. I don't have any backup from any organization, or society.

To the glory of God. I've been managing myself and there's no backup from any quarters till today.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you. We go to question 5. Question 5, we look at cultural and economic challenges. There are 3 questions here.

The first question is- Do you feel torn between the cultural expectations of Nigeria and the United States? How do you navigate this?

**Participant 10:** The question again, sir?

**Interviewer:** So, the question is: if you sometimes feel there is conflict between the cultural expectations of Nigeria and the cultural expectations of the United States.? How do you navigate this?

And I can give an example for you to understand what I mean by cultural expectations of Nigerian and cultural expectations of United States.

**Participant 10**: Okay.

**Interviewer:** [Uh] So cultural expectation would be something like it could be mode of dressing, it could be food like you mentioned before, it could also be like values in a society, for example.

**Participant 10:** or social engagement?

**Interviewer**: Yes, social engagement, how people interact like [erm] I was talking to someone[uh], this person is in the academic field. As a student, she told me that the way student and lecturers or professors relate in Nigeria is different from the way they relate in the United States.

So, in Nigeria the professor is seen like maybe, like a lord or somebody so powerful[laughs]

**Participant 10:** Exactly

**Interviewer:** …that you can’t just interact with him anyhow, or her or with him, anyhow.

**Participant 10:** you bounce into the office[laughs]

**Interviewer:** [Laughs] Yes. So, when you come over, you realize that the relationship is more relaxed. It's more engaging. It's both ways. It's not like

**Participant 10:** Hmm.

**Interviewer:** One person having so much power and influence over the other person. So, when this person came over, she found it strange, and it took her time to adapt, to be able to warm up to, you know, to warm up to that kind of a very, more like, a balanced and relaxed relationship[laughs] between students and professors. So, it could be like that in the workplace, too. So, I just want to see if you have any experience that is similar, or something like that.

**Participant 10:** yeah, I have a similar experience. I could recollect when I first started working in the accountant general's office back there in the year 2004 precisely. I wanted to share my experience or an idea with the then accountant general, Then I met the secretary, I was calling the secretary that I want to see the AG, we call the woman then AG and the secretary was telling me that I cannot because accountant general is an acronym for AG.

So, the secretary was not telling me that you can't see the AG. She's busy the first day, the second day, the third day. So I now decided that I'm going to be on the seat here if the woman is coming or going out, I'll be able to see and a share my own experience or my observation in the unit or the department I was to function there.

So here, if you have anything, you walk straight to the office and they welcome you. They allow you to express your mind or your feelings, or what you have in mind or your view but in Nigeria there is a , do I call it bureaucratic system? But here is flexible that leave room for everybody to have an access to whoever you want to have an access to.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Yes, thank you for…thank you for explaining that.

[Erm]We'll go to the next question- Have you experienced economic challenges related to remittances or supporting family members in Nigeria?

**Participant 10:** Yes, I, in fact back to back ,time to time they call for a backup from Nigeria, and you know the economic situation presently in the country, even without anybody calling you, you just have to pity them and try to be a lifeline to some of them even to my colleagues that I left in the service ,they do call, not talk of families; friends do call from time to time, want to pay their children school fees , health challenges. These are the areas that so many of them have challenges that so many of them are facing today.

**Interviewer:** Hmm! So, how do you? How do you manage these responsibilities?

**Participant 10:** Well, I do my little because you cannot 100%, please them but the little, like I said earlier in the area of health and academics for the children.

I disengage myself from the social activities and maybe somebody want to embark on few activities or thereabout, I disengage myself but when it comes to the area of health like I said earlier, or education, then I show an interest of assisting them in that area in the little way I think I have the strength. Not that I'm going to shoulder the total responsibility.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you, sir. So, we are coming to the end of the interview. So, we're on the last section now, Section 6, which is recommendations.

Here, I have 4 questions, so I will go to the questions right away.

The 1st question says- Do you think there are policies or programs that make life easy for highly educated Nigerian and African immigrants in Maryland and the US?

Do you also feel there are policies and programs that also, hinder more like creates barriers for them to do well in the US and Maryland specifically?

**Participant 10:** {uh] If the issue of races generally is out of it, I think.

And you know, coming from Africa, Nigeria to come and study here, they expect you to pay your fees, and you know the amount is huge if there a way, maybe there should be some waiver in the school fees, like the Americans do benefit from. Then I think it will make it easier and accessible to many of Nigerians to study in America.

Interviewer: Okay. thank you. I think I just want to clarify what I think I heard from that, that you feel like [uh] for example, specifically about going to school, tuition fees.

**Participant 10:** Yeah

**Interviewer:** If there are no two different sets of let me say, different set of rules for citizens and immigrants.

**Participant 10:** Yes.

**Interviewer**: In terms of what to pay, the amount to pay for school, for tuition, for education.

**Participant 10:** Exactly, yes.

I**nterviewer**: It can help people to be able to aspire to go to school when they come here.

**Participant 10:** Yes.

**Interviewer**: Yeah, because the truth is, [uh] if you're a citizen, you pay less.

**Participant 10**: Yes

**Interviewer:** than you are not yet a US Citizen.

**Participant 10:** Yes.

I**nterviewer**: Okay, thank you. The other two questions I wanted to ask, I think you may have touched on them, but I'll still go ahead and ask in case you have anything to add to it.

**Participant 10:** Okay

**Interviewer**: What changes or support systems would you suggest to help highly educated Nigerian immigrants succeed in their careers in the US?

I know you talk about if they have reduced tuition fee, just like US citizens that will people to come back to school and do well.

**Participant 10:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Is there another thing that you feel if they are available, they can also help people?

**Participant 10:**  Yes, some wanted to embark on school but they don't know how to go about it, so I believe that if there should be what we call sensitization with most of our people, so that they'll be able to know what it entails to go back to school because like me in question, I wanted to go back to school. I wanted to study, but I initially, when I first got in, nobody to put me through, tutor me on what and what to do. So, in view of that, many are in the same state of mind, so that I believe, if there is a way we can tutor them, educate them, and expose them to the system. I believe so many would love to go back and study.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you. So, what you're basically talking about is access to information and resources.

**Participant 10:** Yes, exactly.

**Interviewer**: And this information has to be accurate and authentic information.

**Participant 10:** Yes.

**Interviewer**: Yeah, because I've talked to other people and people have told me that, you know, when I came just like you said ‘I didn't know anything. I didn't know where to go to, to ask for help. I didn't know where to go to, to ask for direction. I didn't know where to go to ask for the right and authentic information. I meet six people, and six people are telling me different things’. So, it can be very confusing.

**Participant 10:** Yes, exactly.

**Interviewer**: Okay.

**Participant 10:** Let me share an experience of that area when I first came in, and my tailor, because I’m used to African wear, Nigerian outfits. So, I want to get some from my tailor over there in Nigeria.

He made it but where in stayed they said they cannot mail in any letter to me, because I’m not a resident. I didn't have a resident permit or thereabouts and I cannot receive any letter.

So, I lost that load because I've already given the address and every information to the tailor that want to send the clothes to me. So, the clothes till today, I did not get it back, because maybe it was being sent back to Nigeria or thereabouts. I don't know, because the person I was staying with them scared me off because by the time I told him that oh I sent for some clothes back there in Nigeria, it will be coming, He said, “oh no, are you a resident?” Do you have an (inaudible)? Is my name in the list, all this stuff?

**Interviewer:** [Laughs**]**

**Participant 10:** So, he scared me off, or (inaudible) in getting more until I was able to get more information, accurate information on mailing system. I'm referring to mailing now

**Interviewer:** Right! (inaudible) In some other areas what information we even got from the friends that we mingle with you know, the person you encountered, that is tutoring you, it depends on how far he too has the knowledge that you too will be able to go.

**Interviewer:** Hmm.

**Participant 10:** So that was the situation then. You know till today, that clothe in question, whether it's being returned back to Nigeria, maybe it’s returned back to the tailor or not, I don't know till today.

**Interviewer:** Hmm. Thank you for sharing that, sir. (Participant 10 speaks inaudibly) Yes, we have just one more question.

**Participant 10:**  Okay, sir.

**Interviewer**: And it's just a general question. If you have any additional comment or insight that you would like to share.

Yes, you can just say it, maybe something that escaped your mind, or something that you just remembered…

**Participant 10**: Yeah, nothing much but what I just want to say is, in the area of information system. I want to encourage the fellow ones that God has given the privilege to be a leader in the area of information, to create a channel, where Nigerians, Africans can be going into to get information on how to go on their day-to-day activities. I mean, maybe it's going to be sort of website where we can log on, probably you put in your question, and we can get the feedback so that one will be an eye opener to that fall into that category to be able to ask a question and get a solution. So that is my suggestion. Thank you.

**Interviewer:** Thank you for that suggestion. Thank you for your time.

**Participant 10**: Yes, sir.

**Interviewer:** And all the valuable input you have shared during this interview.

And please let me know if you want to receive a summary of the research findings after the research is completed, I will send you a copy via your email address.

**Participant 10:** Yes, sir, I would love to.

**Interviewer**: Thank you so much. I will stop recording now.

**Participant 10:** You welcome sir!

**Interviewer**: Thank you**.**

**Participant 10:** Welcome sir, yes sir.

**Interviewer**: Bye!