

# *AFRICAN HUMAN MOBILITY REVIEW*

Volume 4 Number 2 May – August 2018

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## ***Policy Shifts in the Asylum Process in South Africa Resulting in Hidden Refugees and Asylum Seekers***

***Fatima Khan\* and Megan Lee\*\****

### ***Abstract***

*Over the past few years, the protection space for asylum seekers in South Africa has steadily shrunk. The South African government has shifted its policies and attitude to exclude rather than accept refugees, and there is a clear move towards confining refugees to the borders of the country. These policy shifts have resulted in an expansive population of hidden and undocumented refugees and asylum seekers in South Africa. This article will analyse recent South African court cases, concerning access to the asylum process, in order to identify and understand the policy shifts adopted by the Department of Home Affairs, as well as the consequences that these policy shifts have had for the undocumented refugees and asylum seekers themselves. This article posits that the South African government, through its restrictive and exclusionary policies, has contributed to the creation of a mass population of hidden or undocumented refugees and asylum seekers, forcing many with prima facie refugee claims to remain in the country unprotected. Through a set of interviews with refugees and asylum seekers in Cape Town, this article presents a first-hand account of the obstacles faced by refugees and asylum seekers in South Africa, including those that force them to remain undocumented in the country.*

***Keywords*** Refugee, policy shifts, documentation, irregular migration.

### ***Introduction***

In 1991, South Africa signed a basic mandate with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which permitted the presence of UNHCR field officers in the country to assist with the repatriation of South African exiles who wished to return home following the negotiations to dismantle apartheid. However, it was only in 1993 that the South African government and the UNHCR reached an agreement allowing UNHCR presence for the Mozambican refugees, who had been flowing into South Africa since the outbreak of the civil war in the 1970s (Zieck, 1997). In December 1995, South Africa proceeded to ratify the 1969 Organisation of African Unity

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Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (1969 OAU Convention), and in January 1996, South Africa became a signatory state to the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951 UN Convention) and its 1967 Protocol. Following the ratification of the international conventions, the South African government embarked on a legislative drafting process that culminated in the passing of the Refugees Act 130 of 1998 (the Refugees Act), which gave effect to South Africa's international obligations and came into force in April 2000, along with the Refugee Regulations (Forms and Procedure) of 2000 (Regulations).

Taking guidance from the international conventions and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (the Constitution), the South African Refugees Act is based fundamentally on human rights principles and has been described by the UNHCR (2007) as "one of the most advanced and progressive systems of protection in the world today". However, over the past decade, noticeable shifts by the South African government, in both attitude and policy, have resulted in a severe restriction of access to the asylum process, giving rise to a large population of hidden and undocumented refugees and asylum seekers who have consequently become increasingly vulnerable. An examination of these policy shifts illuminates that the Department of Home Affairs (the Department), as the department charged with controlling and managing migration, vehemently believes that the asylum system is being used in bad faith by economic migrants and therefore appears to be deliberately ensuring that all migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, remain undocumented in an attempt to facilitate their classification as illegal immigrants and subsequent removal from South Africa.

When examining migration policies in general, it is undeniable that states, in the course of exercising sovereignty over their territory, determine what does and does not constitute regular migration. Subsequently, politics and law set the conditions under which people migrate, and it is only once states issue legislation declaring certain categories of people to be illegal immigrants, and introduce technologies, administrations and enforcement procedures to support this legislation, that previously regular migration becomes irregular. Thus, irregular migration is not an independent social phenomenon, but exists in relation to state policies and is a social, political and legal construct. As a form of migration, persons seeking asylum in a country are affected by such migration policies and, when refugees and asylum seekers are undocumented, this places them within the framework of irregular migration. There are two approaches to understanding irregular migration or the reasons behind

migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, remaining undocumented within a country. First, agency is ascribed to the individual migrant and imputes blame on the individual for violating the law and purposefully remaining undocumented. Second, is the approach adopted in this article, which views governments as the blameworthy party, despite conceding that migrants have various levels of agency and can decide, within reasonable limits, when and where to move.

This article will assess and evaluate the policy shifts in the asylum process introduced by the South African government, and how these shifts have led to an increasingly diminished protection space for refugees and asylum seekers. It will then analyse the case law that has developed as a reaction to these policy shifts, as well as the personal experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in their struggle to access the asylum process in South Africa. The article will focus on four major decisions made by the Department over the years, which clearly reflect this changing policy, namely 1) the denial of access to Refugee Reception Offices (RROs); 2) the closure of certain RROs; 3) the refusal to process asylum applications at a different RRO from the one at which the application was first made; and 4) the refusal to recognise the right to family unity of refugees and asylum seekers.

### ***Research Methodology***

This article opted to use a combination of literature and policy analysis, engagement with the South African jurisprudence surrounding refugee law and insight gained through semi-structured interviews with both refugees and asylum seekers, as well as with service providers who assist refugees and asylum seekers within the Western Cape.

The sample of persons selected for the interviews was divided into three different groups, including 1) a group comprised of undocumented refugees and asylum seekers; 2) a group comprised of refugees and asylum seekers who had initially applied for asylum at an RRO outside of Cape Town, and thus whose permits had been issued by an RRO other than the Cape Town RRO; and 3) a group comprised of members of service providers assisting refugees and asylum seekers in the Western Cape. In total, the first two groups had a combined total of forty-four participants and the third group comprised of four different service providers. Refugees and asylum seekers were invited to participate in the research by attending either the UCT Refugee Rights Clinic (the Clinic) or the offices of the service providers participating in the research. The Clinic was easily able to identify appropriate participants for the research,

as they assist and provide legal services to refugees and asylum seekers experiencing these barriers to the asylum system on a daily basis. During the interviews, the asylum seekers and refugees were asked about their experiences and the prejudices that they have suffered as a result of the Department's policy shifts.

### ***Policy Shifts in the South African Asylum Process***

Upon implementing the international conventions relating to refugee protection, the South African government opted for a non-encampment policy, which allows asylum seekers to search for employment while they await the adjudication of their asylum application. To facilitate this policy, the Refugees Act made provision for the establishment of as many RROs across the country as is deemed necessary by the Director-General, in order to give effect to the Refugees Act. In essence, this guaranteed refugees and asylum seekers the right to freedom of movement which, along with the non-penalisation of illegal entry, succeeded in creating a liberal and progressive refugee protection mechanism.

However, throughout the past decade there has been increasing discord between the rights legally granted to refugees and asylum seekers in South Africa and the practical implementation and realisation of such rights. According to Landau and Amit (2014), the asylum process appears to be plagued by a "bureaucratic autonomy in which certain departments are actively working to shape the implementation and understanding of policies in ways that are not formally recorded and may violate both domestic and international legislation". The 2012 African National Congress's (ANC) Peace and Stability: Policy Discussion Document (ANC policy document) alarmingly declares that over 95% of asylum applicants are not genuine asylum seekers but rather, economic migrants that have come to South Africa in search of employment and better business opportunities. Such a statement provides overwhelming evidence that the attitudes of those involved in policy and legal development have shifted from a place of inclusion and protection to a desire for mass exclusion. The ANC policy document specifically proposes that, while maintaining the overall policy of non-encampment, high-risk asylum seekers should be "accommodated" (in other words, detained) in secure facilities and that the Department's suggestion to relocate all RROs closer to the borders should be supported.

Following the establishment of an ad hoc Joint Committee on Probing Violence Against Foreign Nationals (Joint Committee) in 2015, whose findings

appeared to reflect the rhetoric that most asylum seekers are in South Africa for economic reasons, the Department undertook to develop the policy on international migration. According to the Department this policy required development in order to reflect the changes within South Africa, the region and the world. As a result, within the subsequent two years, the Department drafted a Green Paper and a White Paper on International Migration (the Green and White Papers), published in 2016 and 2017, respectively. The Green and White Papers both continue to espouse the belief that the majority of applicants within the asylum system are economic migrants, resulting in over 90 percent of all applications being rejected. This is despite the Department's assurance that the principle of "inclusion over exclusion" is applied to the adjudication of asylum applications. The Green and White Papers also focused on the advantages of moving the RROs, or Asylum Seeker Processing Centres (Processing Centres), closer to the borders, with the first of these being envisaged in Lebombo, a town near the border of South Africa and Mozambique.

In the last few years, South Africa has also witnessed the proposal and initial drafting of the Refugees Amendment Act 11 of 2017 (the Refugees Amendment Act), which was signed by the President in December 2017, but at the time of writing had not yet come into force. The draft Refugees Regulations of 2018 (the draft Regulations) have been proposed concurrently with the Refugees Amendment Act, but these too have yet to come into force. A reading of both the Refugees Amendment Act and the draft Regulations make it clear that the Department, together with the South African government, are taking major steps to restrict the protection space for refugees and asylum seekers.

### ***Litigation Surrounding Policy Shifts in the South African Asylum Process***

Despite the fact that the law and policy surrounding refugee protection in South Africa has undergone many attempts at amendment, the original Refugees Act and its regulations adopted in 1998 continue to remain in effect. However, the Department continues to implement practices that show an increasingly narrow reading of the Refugees Act, or that indicate an implementation of the amended, more restrictive policies that have yet to be signed into law. In addition, severe maladministration, poor infrastructure, inadequate resource allocation and corruption have caused the South African refugee system to become utterly unequipped to assist the applicants that it was designed to protect, resulting in an increased need to resort to litigation



to ensure the effective protection of refugees and asylum seekers. While the litigation in this sector has been characterised by a case-by-case, reactive response to the challenges faced by asylum seekers and refugees, there is a clear common denominator between the cases, in that the Department deliberately implements practices that limit access to the asylum system. The litigation surrounding access to the asylum process can be categorised as those cases relating first, to the denial of access to RROs; secondly, to the closure of RROs; thirdly, to the refusal to process asylum applications at a RRO that is different from the RRO where the application was first made; and lastly, to the refusal to recognise the right to family unity of refugees and asylum seekers.

### ***Denial of Access to the Refugee Reception Offices***

In terms of the Refugees Act, all processes required to be performed during an application for asylum, including permit renewal and refugee status determinations (RSD), are carried out at an RRO by the various functionaries designed to adjudicate such applications. As such, RROs are the primary entry point to the refugee system and are essential to the functioning of the system and for accessing the protection it affords. Thus, any restriction of access to the RROs ultimately leads to a restriction of access to the entire asylum process. Roughly a decade after the South African government ratified both the 1951 UN Convention and the 1969 OAU Convention, access to the RROs had reached such an untenable position that it became necessary to institute legal proceedings against the Department, both to prevent unlawful practices and to mandate the Department to take further steps to improve the asylum process.

In *Kiliko and Others v The Minister of Home Affairs and Others* (2739/05) [2008] ZAWCHC 124 (4 March 2008), the applicants chronicled their numerous unsuccessful attempts at gaining access to the Cape Town RRO in order to apply for asylum. Their attempts were futile, despite a number of them sleeping outside the RRO on multiple occasions or arriving there in the early hours of the morning. The applicants observed that only a limited number of individuals could enter the building of the Cape Town RRO per day. Those who were unsuccessful in their efforts to gain access remained undocumented. The applicants asserted that the Department, by restricting access to the RRO, had unreasonably and unlawfully failed to provide them with the necessary facilities and proper opportunities to submit applications to obtain refugee status in South Africa. It was argued that this was a breach of

the duties imposed by the Refugees Act and, furthermore, was in conflict with the Constitution and the canons of international law. Judge Dennis Van Reenen very appropriately stated that:

*[...] until an asylum seeker obtains an asylum-seeker permit in terms of [...] the Refugees Act, he or she remains an illegal foreigner and, as such [this] impact[s] upon [...] his or her human dignity and the freedom and security of his or her person.*

Documentation of asylum seekers is a critical element of the refugee system, as the documents are the vehicle by which the individual is able to access all other rights that flow from that status. For this reason, the UNHCR has acknowledged that in almost all countries, foreigners are required to prove their lawful presence in the country, failing which, the individual may be subject to detention and sometimes even to summary expulsion. The UNHCR notes that this situation is particularly serious for a refugee, who could be at risk of being returned to his or her country of origin.

In that context, Judge Van Reenen held that the availability of adequate facilities to receive asylum seekers, expeditiously consider applications and issue asylum seeker permits was mandated by South Africa's international obligations, the Refugees Act and the Constitution. As a result, the Department's failure to introduce adequate and effective measures to address the gradually worsening situation of lack of access to RROs, despite the Refugees Act having been enacted six years prior to the case, resulted in the violation of the fundamental rights of the applicants. The court ordered the Department to put measures into place to ensure access to the Cape Town RRO and to report to the court on the progress thereof.

Furthermore, the case of *Tafira and Others v Ngozwane and Others* (12960/06) [2006] ZAGPHC 136 (12 December 2006) also exposed and criticised policy shifts and new processes implemented by the Department. Faced with high numbers of applications for asylum, both the RROs in Pretoria and Johannesburg devised two new procedures that they believed would regulate the process and prevent long queues from forming and, ultimately, reduce the number of asylum seekers. The first procedure was an appointment system, whereby an asylum seeker approaching the RRO for the first time was not seen by an official, but rather given an appointment slip and allocated a date on which he or she had to return to the office for a consultation. The evidence before the court suggested that such appointments, allocated to asylum seekers, could be anywhere from six months to a year away. The second

procedure introduced was the so-called “pre-screening process”, in terms of which the Department sought to filter applicants before the individual even had an opportunity to apply for asylum.

Judge Rabie found that the appointment slips did not provide sufficient legal protection to asylum seekers and therefore determined this procedure to be unlawful and unconstitutional. In reaching this conclusion, Judge Rabie was unconvinced by the Department’s argument that staff shortages justified the use of the restrictive policies and accordingly agreed with the finding in *Kiliko*, that the South African government has an obligation to provide proper facilities for applications for asylum. Turning to the ‘pre-screening’ procedure, Judge Rabie found that, in principle, pre-screening was not unlawful if the aim was to genuinely assist asylum seekers with making their asylum applications, but that the Department could not use it as a means to decide whether it would be better for a person to seek another type of permit. Therefore, in light of all the evidence, the ‘pre-screening’ procedure was found to impede the asylum application process and was held to constitute a violation of the constitutional rights of the applicants.

The common thread that emerged from these access cases was that any barrier to accessing the RROs, which effectively impedes applications for asylum, constitutes an unlawful measure and cannot be justified by the argument that the administrative burden placed on the Department in catering for asylum seekers requires restrictive procedures. Denying asylum seekers entry into the RROs, and consequently barring access to the asylum process, pushes people to enter and remain in the country without documentation, which falls afoul of the duty of the South African government to provide adequate facilities to receive asylum seekers and process their claims for asylum.

### ***Closure of Refugee Reception Offices***

After the Refugees Act came into force in 2000, RROs were established in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth. Furthermore, after witnessing an increase in applications, the Department opened an additional RRO in Musina in 2009 and an interim office in Tshwane in 2010 (Ngwato, 2013). However, between 2011 and 2012, the Department implemented decisions to close the RRO in Johannesburg and re-categorise the RROs in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth as “wind-down” facilities, meaning that they would continue to process existing cases but would not accept any new applications for asylum. Subsequently, the Department also made the decision to close the interim RRO in Tshwane, which left, to date, only three fully-

functional RROs in South Africa. This conduct by the Department marked the dramatic shift in policy regarding the administration of the asylum regime in South Africa. The closure of three RROs across the country indicated the wish by the Department to reduce the overall asylum population in South Africa and to move all refugee services to the borders, an approach which was later confirmed and supported by the 2012 ANC policy document. However, it is a point of concern that the “closure of urban RROs constitutes the implementation of policy before the completion of policy formulation” (Ngwato, 2013).

Given the centrality of the RROs to the asylum process, the decision to close three RROs has significant consequences for refugees and asylum seekers, such as increased difficulty in travelling to an open RRO and limited access to open RROs that become overburdened as a result of the closures. Legal challenges were brought against all the Department’s decisions to close the RROs and, in all three cases, the Department lost due to their failure to substantively consult with the Standing Committee for Refugee Affairs (Standing Committee), as required by the Refugees Act, as well as on the grounds of procedural unfairness. In all three of these cases, the various High Courts ordered the Department to reopen the RROs. While further engagement surrounding the Johannesburg RRO took place out of court, the closure of the RROs in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth remained subject to legal challenge for the next few years.

In the case of *Minister of Home Affairs and Others v Somali Association of South Africa Eastern Cape (SASA EC) and Another* (831/2013) [2015] ZASCA 35; 2015 (3) SA 545 (SCA); [2015] 2 All SA 294 (SCA) (25 March 2015), the Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA) ordered that the RRO in Port Elizabeth be restored by 1 July 2015, including the processing of new application for asylum, on the grounds that the Department’s failure to consult with the relevant stakeholders on the decision to close the RRO was arbitrary and unlawful. Despite the order by the SCA, the Department has only recently made strides in this regard and has, at the time of writing, stated that the RRO in Port Elizabeth shall be reopened on 22 October 2018. In the case of *Scalabrini Centre, Cape Town and Others v Minister of Home Affairs and Others* (1107/2016) [2017] ZASCA 126; [2017] 4 All SA 686 (SCA); [2018] 4 SA 125 (SCA) (29 September 2017), the SCA once again ordered the Department to reopen the RRO in Cape Town on the grounds that the decision by the Department was unreasonable and unlawful. However, at the time of writing, the RRO in Cape Town still had not been reopened for processing of new

applications for asylum. Additionally, the Department has indicated that it is unlikely that the office will be opened in 2018 and that progress may only be made by April 2019.

### ***'Other Offices'***

Closely linked to the closure of various RROs was the decision taken by the Department requiring asylum applicants to complete their entire application process at the RRO at which they first applied for asylum. This practice has surfaced on numerous occasions over the years and, in each instance, has attracted legal challenge. In essence, this policy shift results in a refusal to assist asylum applicants at an RRO other than the RRO of first application. With reference to the Cape Town RRO, where this practice has been particularly prevalent, the Department argued that this approach would assist the office in becoming a "wind-down" facility, in that any backlogs could be addressed and the RRO would not be burdened by either new or secondary applications. In addition to restricting the right to freedom of movement, this practice also placed an enormous financial, economic and social burden on refugees and asylum seekers who were now expected to travel for thousands of kilometres to continue to access their asylum application, including renewing their permits.

Over the years, a number of court applications have been launched in the Western Cape High Court to enforce the rights of asylum seekers to freedom of movement as well as the right to an asylum seeker permit in terms of section 22 of the Refugees Act. Colloquially referred to as 'other offices' cases, the first of these was *Aden and Others v The Minister of Home Affairs and Another* (2000), in which the Department was ordered to renew all permits at any RRO, depending on where the refugees or asylum seekers were living. In 2008, when the practice resurfaced, the matter of *Hirsi and Others v The Minister of Home Affairs and Others* (2008) was launched to enforce compliance with the *Aden* order. In this matter, an agreement between the applicants and the Department was reached and it was declared that the refusal to renew asylum seeker permits granted at other offices was an unlawful practice. As in *Aden*, the Department was required to immediately renew all asylum seeker permits, irrespective of the RRO by which they were first issued. In 2009, it was once again necessary to approach the court in the matter of *Thomasso v The Minister of Home Affairs* (2009), which also resulted in a settlement agreement to resume services for all asylum seekers in accordance with the *Hirsi* order. When the policy again reared its head in 2012, the matter of

*Zihahirwa and Others v The Minister of Home Affairs and Others* (2012) was launched, seeking an order declaring the Department to be in contempt of the *Hirsi* order. This time, however, the Department amended its practice slightly by renewing the permits of applicants who were initially documented at other offices but with the proviso that the applicant returned to the office of original application. The Department argued that this practice was not in contravention of the *Hirsi*, *Aden* or *Thomasso* orders. The court, constrained by the rule to accept the Respondent's version when disputes of fact arise in motion proceedings, as set out by the case of *Plascon-Evans Paints Ltd. v Van Riebeeck Paints (Pty) Ltd.* 1984 (3) SA 623 (A), dismissed the application.

Following on very quickly from the *Zihahirwa* case was the launching of *Abdulaahi and 205 Others v The Director General of Home Affairs and Others* 7705/2013. What started out as 206 applicants grew into 1232 by the time judgement was handed down in February 2015. The relief in this instance was an urgent interim interdict directing the Department to extend the permits of the listed applicants and not to deny extending the permits at the Cape Town RRO until such time as the legal dispute challenging the closure of the Cape Town RRO had finally been resolved. The applicants submitted that if the interdict was not granted, they would suffer irreparable harm as they would need to abandon their lives in Cape Town and relocate to places closer to the operational RROs. The Department opposed the relief sought by the applicants by focusing on the administrative burden that would result if an applicant did not visit the RRO at which their file was kept. The Department vigorously argued that, by moving to Cape Town, the applicants were attempting to abuse the refugee system in that they were trying to evade the processing of their asylum applications, an argument that clearly indicates an attitude and mind-set of the Department at this point in time.

Judge Steyn noted that it would be more convenient, cost effective and practical for the files to be transferred to the place where the asylum seeker resides rather than for the asylum seeker to travel repeatedly to the original RRO where his or her file is kept. The Department, however, indicated that the Cape Town RRO would only consider application for the transfer of a file in exceptional circumstances and on a case-by-case basis. The Department argued that the court could not competently order the transfer of all files, as this would have an impact on the allocation of public funds, thereby infringing the doctrine of the separation of powers. Ultimately, Judge Steyn found that:

*[...] the effect of the closure decision of the Cape Town refugee reception office is that the applicants/asylum seekers will be compelled to leave the Cape Town area where they have established their homes. This result impacts on their right to dignity and to property and to just administrative action, in terms of the provisions of the Constitution. It is irrational, unjustifiable and inequitable that the Department grant [asylum seeker] permits to [Cape Town] asylum seekers but not to non-[Cape Town] asylum seekers. It would be inhumane to force them to leave Cape Town, prior to finality being reached on the closure decision.*

Ultimately, the court held that the applicants must be able to access services at the Cape Town RRO but limited the right of access to services only to the applicants listed in the case. Therefore, this necessitated the launching of *Nbaya and Others v Director General of Home Affairs and Others* 6534/15 in the Western Cape High Court, which dealt with the same legal challenge as the *Abdulaahi* matter but extended the relief to the entire class of persons in this situation.

### ***Infringement of the Right to Family Unity and Reunification***

South African law recognises the right to family unity and allows those who are married to, or dependent on, refugees to remain in the country by obtaining derivative refugee status in terms of section 3(c) of the Refugees Act. In the past, the Department has given effect to this law by employing a policy referred to as “family joining”. Recognised refugees were able to “join” their dependents and/or spouses to their files, and the dependents or spouses would acquire derivative refugee status by virtue of that relationship. The spouse or dependent was required only to prove that he or she was a dependant or spouse of a recognised refugee and once this was established the person would be granted derivative refugee status. However, in 2014, officials in the Department indicated informally that a new policy concerning family joining had been adopted and that, as a result, derivative refugee status would only be granted to spouses if they were married to the refugee before either of them arrived in South Africa, and provided that the refugee declared the marriage at the first stage of the asylum application. This policy is based on a fundamental misconception of the law, particularly section 3(c) of the Refugees Act, and its application to refugee families. The Department interprets section 3(c) of the Refugees Act to apply only to families that pre-existed the refugee-producing event. This policy represents a narrow interpretation of refugee law and the right to family unity and succeeds in

excluding undeclared families formed before refuge was sought in South Africa, families formed in South Africa and families formed remotely, or by 'proxy', in terms of customary or traditional law.

Families formed before seeking refuge in South Africa should have the full benefit of the 1983 UNHCR Guidelines on the Reunification of Refugee Families (the Reunification Guidelines), which support the reunification of "nuclear" families, including husbands, wives, dependent unmarried children and other dependent family members including parents and/or relatives who were living within the family unit in the country of origin. The Reunification Guidelines also provide that the absence of documentary evidence, for example marriage and/or birth certificates, "should not *per se* be considered as an impediment". Furthermore, within its definition of a 'dependent', the Refugees Act does not require that the dependency existed before a refugee sought asylum in South Africa and, therefore, there appears to be no proper legal foundation for the Department's interpretation. While in South Africa, some refugees prefer to enter into marriages remotely, or 'by proxy', in terms of their customary or traditional laws. These marriages take place after the refugee has been granted refugee status in South Africa and, negotiations are conducted between the families in the country of origin, after which the 'proxy spouse' travels to South Africa to join the refugee. The Reunification Guidelines expressly recognise customary marriages and even polygamous marriages "validly contracted in the country of origin". South African law emphasises respect for customary and traditional law and, as such, such marriages must accordingly be recognised. If the proxy spouse is dependent on the refugee, they fulfil the section 3(c) refugee definition, and policies refusing to recognise their status as a refugee are in conflict with the clear provisions of the Refugees Act.

Even if the Refugees Act were to be interpreted so as to restrict the definition of 'dependant' to persons dependent on the refugee before he or she sought asylum, deporting a failed asylum seeker who is married to a refugee breaks up the family, thus infringing its members' constitutional right to dignity, which encompass the right to form a family and to cohabit with one's spouse, as enshrined in the case of *Dawood and Another v Minister of Home Affairs* 2000 (3) SA 936 (CC). The Department's new policy on refugee families has resulted in thousands of refugee families remaining undocumented. Many family members now live in the country without proper documentation, fearing arrest, detention and possible deportation. These are individuals with a *prima facie* refugee claim who ought to be documented in terms of the Refugees Act.



In *Scalabrini v Minister of Home Affairs and Others* 2016 (WCD) unreported case no. 5242/16, the court held that families should be joined irrespective of whether the recognised refugee declared their existence when making the application for refugee status and regardless of when they were married. The court further ordered the Department to draft a standard operating procedure that can facilitate the ‘family joining’ process. The Department adopted a standard operating procedure that includes, amongst others, the requirement that all applicants for family joining must undergo DNA-testing, which essentially excludes those who cannot afford this expensive procedure. The standard operating procedure also failed to create a procedure for providing dependants with interim protection while applications for family joining are being processed, thereby making it wholly inadequate. Due to the Department’s failure to implement a satisfactory standard operating procedure, the applicants have been forced to approach the court for further relief. This matter has been set down for December 2018.

### ***Research Findings and Analysis***

Through a set of interviews with refugees and asylum seekers, as well as various human rights service providers, we determined that the South African government’s refugee policy shifts are contributing to the large number of undocumented and unprotected refugees and asylum seekers in South Africa. By restricting access to the asylum process and placing undue obstacles before individuals wishing to apply for asylum, or even regularise their existing permits, the Department is attempting to deter applicants from the asylum system and often leaves them with no choice but to ‘go underground’ and remain in South Africa undocumented and hidden from authorities.

The first policy shift detailed how physically inaccessible the asylum process in South Africa can be for both new applicants and existing asylum seekers and refugees. Despite the fact that human rights lawyers have successfully litigated in this matter, there has been little to no real change in practice. Asylum seekers still detail stories about being turned away from the RROs without assistance. The participants in this article revealed that these access problems are a nationwide problem. Some of the participants stated that they are currently undocumented because, after having tried to extend their expired permits on numerous occasions but being turned away without being assisted, they were left with no choice but to give up and return home without a valid permit. New asylum seekers explained that they had attempted to obtain asylum seeker permits from RROs in Musina or Durban but that they could not

gain entry to the building; participants stated that they slept outside the office on numerous occasions in order to be the first clients serviced at the RRO. They stated that, after sleeping outside the RRO and waiting in the queue for hours, the security guard at the entrance of the building refused to allow them to enter the building. Some stated that they waited more than a week before finally giving up. New applicants stated that they waited days and sometimes months before receiving their asylum seeker permits.

The lack of access to RROs for asylum seekers and new applicants means that people are forced to live for protracted periods of time without valid asylum permits. The access cases demonstrate that the Department has failed in providing adequate facilities, systems and processes to receive and issue asylum seeker permits. This failure is compounded by poor queue management, corruption and general maladministration. The closure of the Cape Town RRO and the refusal to assist new arrivals or persons who obtained their asylum documents from offices outside of Cape Town resulted in a number of our participants being undocumented or in possession of expired permits. This is because up until the 2012 closure of the Cape Town RRO, asylum seekers who applied at offices other than the Cape Town RRO were able to extend, process and have their files transferred to Cape Town. Similarly, new applications for asylum were also received in Cape Town prior to the closure. Even after the closure of the Cape Town RRO, there were periods of time when asylum seekers who obtained their permits at offices other than the Cape Town RRO were able to obtain extensions, due to the numerous legal challenges that were brought against the Department. This created a legitimate expectation for newcomers applying for asylum and asylum seekers who applied at offices other than the Cape Town RRO that they could obtain and extend their permits in Cape Town. Furthermore, South Africa has a non-encampment policy, which allows for the freedom of movement. As such, asylum seekers and newcomers seeking asylum are permitted to reside anywhere in South Africa, including in Cape Town.

Asylum seekers in South Africa are issued with an asylum seeker permit on arrival. The permits can be valid for a period of anywhere between one and six months, depending on what stage of the application the asylum seeker is in. These timeframes were created when the drafters of the legislature envisioned that the application process would finally be adjudicated within 180 days of the application being made. However, in reality, the finalisation of asylum applications often takes more than ten years, during which period the applicant is expected to renew their permit every one to six months. For

applicants who initially obtained their asylum seeker permits outside of Cape Town, this means that they are expected to travel at least twice a year to an RRO that is over 1400 kilometres away from Cape Town. Applicants often spend over R 1,500 on transportation and, due to corruption and maladministration, are often not assisted or are unable to gain access to the RRO on the date of arrival. When access is eventually granted, there is no guarantee that an asylum seeker will be assisted on the same day and they are often informed to return on another day or given an appointment for a date that is weeks after the expiration date of the permit. This results in the need to acquire accommodation and thereby incurs more financial costs.

The need to travel also has harsh implications on an asylum seeker's employment prospects and opportunities. Most asylum seekers are either unemployed or precariously employed in the informal sector. Thus, they are subjected to various exploitative labour practices and experience a lack of job security. Some of our participants indicated that they could not travel to their office of application because the journey is too long and would result in them being absent from work for an extended period of time, which will likely lead to a dismissal. Other participants stated that even if they are not dismissed, missing a day of work means that they will not be paid their entire salary and will not be able to fund the trip to the office of application. Therefore, some asylum seekers are confronted with the difficult obstacle of having to choose between their livelihoods and regularising their stay in South Africa. Those who are self-employed as vendors or small-scale entrepreneurs also experience financial difficulties in that they are forced to close their businesses while travelling. Other applicants reported that they lost their employment once their permit expired and were unable to travel over 1400 kilometres to their office of application. Furthermore, once an asylum seeker's permit has expired, their bank accounts are closed, preventing them from accessing what little funds they may have had.

Families face even greater obstacles as all family members have to travel to the office of application in order to renew their permits. Children and scholars lose out on schooling time during this period and families who are unable to afford the travel and accommodation costs face the possibility of having their children ejected from school due to lack of documentation. Female-headed households experience even greater financial and other burdens, as the single parent has to find financial means to travel with her children to the office of application. Female applicants reported having slept outside the RRO with their children for days, waiting to be assisted as they could not afford private

accommodation. Furthermore, most of these women work as entrepreneurs, selling fruits and vegetables in stalls or hairdressing near taxi ranks, and they only earn money if they are at work. This means that they lose their income for all of the days that they are not working. Female-headed households also voiced concerns about safety and, in particular, xenophobic related attacks.

Other participants voiced that, even if they finally raise the money to travel to their office of application to renew their permit, often by the time they reach the RRO their permit has lapsed. In terms of section 37 of Refugees Act, allowing your permit to lapse without just cause is a punishable offence and asylum seekers are first referred to a police station where a charge is laid against them. An asylum seeker is then required to appear in the Magistrates Court to provide evidence and justification for why their asylum seeker permit has expired and often face being found guilty of an offence and being sentenced to a fine of between R500 and R5000, ultimately resulting in a criminal record. Participants cited this as an additional issue that prevented them from attempting to regularise their stay even after they had collected the means to travel to their office of application.

The requirement to travel over 1400 kilometres to their office of application, often with an already expired permit, compounded the fear that refugees and asylum seekers had of being arrested and, possibly, deported back to a country where they faced potential persecution. This fear results in thousands of asylum seekers remaining in Cape Town without valid asylum permits. In the *Abdulaahi* case alone, over 1000 applicants came forward indicating that they were unable to extend their permits as they could not travel to their office of application. Cases such as this depict a situation in which asylum seekers are seeking to regularise their stay in South Africa but are prevented from doing so by government policies that place extraneous socio-economic hurdles on them. By making it difficult for asylum seekers to access the asylum process and by placing so many procedural and bureaucratic hurdles on them, the Department creates a situation in which a number of asylum seekers are forced to remain undocumented.

New asylum seekers entering South Africa travel to Cape Town for various reasons and do so without knowing that they cannot make new applications at the Cape Town RRO. Often these individuals do not have the financial means or knowledge of how to travel to other provinces. One of the service providers interviewed stated that the number of undocumented persons seeking their services grew from 2% in 2012 to 17% in 2013 and 19% in 2014. In May 2015,

the Scalabrini Centre, a human rights organisation, conducted an advocacy programme in which it contacted 857 newcomers by short message service (SMS) to come to the Scalabrini Centre for an update on the court case. In total, 223 new asylum seekers reported to the Scalabrini Centre and were given updates on the court case as well as information on the open RROs around the country.

During the sessions, 156 individuals completed questionnaires regarding their experiences in Cape Town as undocumented asylum seekers and future plans regarding their asylum applications. The results indicated that financial problems are the main obstacles to applying for asylum at other RROs and that roughly only 29% are planning to apply for asylum at an RRO outside of Cape Town. When asked why they have not applied for asylum at another RRO, 84 participants stated financial constraints as the reason for remaining undocumented and 50 individuals, out of the 156, stated that they would rather wait for the Cape Town RRO to be opened. Another 2 stated travel issues as the main obstacle and a further 2 stated that health issues hindered them from travelling. When asked if they planned on travelling to other RROs in order to apply for asylum, 109 participants stated they did not, while only 44 of the 156 were willing to travel. The service providers interviewed expressed that they are frequently approached by rejected asylum-seekers whose family lives are threatened by their imminent deportation. In such cases they have written to the Department, asking that families not be separated, and pointing out that South African and international law recognises the family as “the fundamental unit of society”, that the UNHCR policy promotes the reunification of refugee families and that South Africa’s Refugees Act includes the recognition of a dependent of a recognised refugee. The result of this policy shift in ‘family joining’ cases is that large numbers of refugee spouses or dependent children remain undocumented. Rather than return to their countries of origin, most of these applicants opt to join the cohort of undocumented migrants, rather than abandon their families. They, therefore, live in South Africa as undocumented migrants. The Department also refuses to document children born from these parents. Many participants stated that their spouses’ asylum applications were rejected despite being married to recognised refugees. After attempting to correct this error, the families simply gave up and continued to live without documentation. Additionally, if the undocumented spouses, who are women, give birth to children in South Africa, the Department refuses to document these children

because one of the parents is undocumented. This is despite the fact that the child is born in South Africa to a refugee parent.

Therefore, it is clear to see how the Department's policy shifts create the preconditions for refugees and asylum seekers to become undocumented and fall into a state of irregular migration. In all of the cases discussed above, the South African government promulgated policies designed to restrict certain kinds of migration and to confine asylum seekers to the borders of the country. In attempting to achieve these goals it has made access to the asylum process almost impossible for those living in Cape Town, forcing them to remain undocumented. All of the applicants attempted to regularise their stay in South Africa, but it was the policies and practices of the Department, making it impossible for both new and existing refugees and asylum seekers to access the RROs, which drove them to become undocumented.

### ***Conclusion***

South Africa has undertaken to receive refugees and to act as a host state, obligations that stem from the 1951 UN Convention and the 1969 AOU Convention. However, the narrow reading of the Refugees Act, which is designed to give effect to refugee protection, and the various policy shifts that we have witnessed over the last few years, shows an aversion to the obligations that the government undertook to honour. The cases outlined above clearly show the successive policy shifts the Department has undertaken in relation to the implementation of their international obligations. The Department has implemented policies and practices at RROs throughout South Africa that have been aimed at limiting access to the asylum regime. Despite the courts finding, on numerous occasions, that the Department has a duty to provide an effective asylum system for the processing of applications, the Department has continued to make decisions that refuse to uphold these duties. The Cape Town RRO has been closed for new applications for asylum since 30 June 2012 and, despite successful litigation that continued for over five years, the office remains wilfully closed. Simultaneously the drive by the Department to force applicants to return to "their office of application" and to re-characterise existing RROs as "wind-down" temporary facilities, has further decreased the protection space for refugees and asylum seekers in South Africa.

By restricting access to the asylum process and placing greater obstacles on refugees and asylum seekers, the South African government has driven refugees and asylum seekers to remain undocumented. Furthermore, the

restrictive policy shifts have had the consequences of forcing individuals who ought to be documented as refugees to remain undocumented. It is clear, however, that this type of irregular migration could be avoided through the implementation of laws and policies that protect refugees and uphold international human rights. Therefore, we call on the South African government to improve its political discourse, laws and the implementation thereof, so that at least the irregularity of asylum seekers and refugees can be avoided by addressing the shortcomings, inefficiencies and irrationalities in the asylum seeker process.

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# ***African Migrants' Characteristics and Remittance Behaviour: Empirical Evidence from Cape Town in South Africa***

***Jonas Nzabamwita \****

## ***Abstract***

*South Africa experienced an increase in the number of mixed categories of migrants from the African continent. Central to these migrants is the issue of their remittances. Using remittance motives in a prospect theoretical framing, this paper presents the findings of a study that explored remittance patterns and behaviour along a range of migrants' characteristics. The data are premised on questionnaires, interviews and focus groups with migrants from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Somalia and Zimbabwe who live in Cape Town, South Africa. The results show that economic migrants remit cash and goods more frequently, while forced migrants remit more both socially and in terms of the value of cash and goods. In addition, income, education and family size are significantly associated with remittance behaviour in respect to the amount of cash remitted as well as value of goods. Furthermore, there is a strong correlation between the type of remittance channels and income, education and immigration status.*

***Keywords*** African migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, migration, remittances, South Africa.

## ***Introduction***

South Africa has witnessed the greatest recorded rate of increase in various categories of migrants from the African continent. The flow of these migrants into South Africa has always been intrinsically linked to several distinct periods. For instance, in the pre-colonial period, the discovery of diamonds in 1867 and gold in 1886 by the Apartheid regime lured low wage and low skilled labour migrants from Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Tanzania into South Africa's rich mining centres (Tsietzi, 1998; Adepoju, 2003b; Makhema, 2009; Dinbabo & Nyasulu, 2015). In addition to the use of inexpensive migrant labour in the mining industry, the South African government recruited African migrants for domestic service, work on

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commercial farms and factories and the transportation and construction sectors (Crush et al., 2006; Kok et al., 2006). Towards the colonial period, foreign labour migration became not only keystone for government policies, but also pivotal for upholding South Africa's industrial revolution, which bolstered the economy and development, thereby attracting a massive influx of white migrants escaping political uncertainty and hostility in newly-independent African countries (Breyetenbach, 1979; Adepoju, 2000b; Peberdy, 2009).

For much of the colonial period, the Apartheid regime adopted protectionist and nationalistic migration policies with a particular emphasis on tight border control and restrictions on Africans who were considered undesirable (Segatti & Landau, 2011). When Apartheid was officially abolished in 1994, South Africa re-entered a global economic and political sphere, and the new government led by the African National Congress (ANC) felt obliged to repay a political debt to other countries for their role in the liberation struggle (Anderson, 2006; Crush et al., 2006). Subsequently, South Africa opened up its borders, which sparked a large-scale flow of refugees and asylum seekers running away from the deepening political crisis in countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Angola, Nigeria, the Central African Republic (CAR), Ethiopia and others further afield (Adepoju, 2000b; Adepoju 2003b; Dinbabo & Carciotto, 2015). Likewise, the fall of Apartheid encouraged increased clandestine cross-border movement of economic migrants from as far as Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Cameroon, Uganda, Ghana, Senegal, Mali, Kenya, Algeria, Morocco and elsewhere in search of a better life and opportunities in South Africa (Mukasa, 2012).

By the end of the 20th century, restrictive immigration policies were still in place; however, the post-Apartheid government slowly dismantled border control policies (Kok et al., 2006; Segatti & Landau, 2011). The number of migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa in South Africa dramatically surged as a result of a booming economy coupled with amnesties to political refugees and asylum seekers (Crush, 2000; Crush et al., 2005). Along with the influx of short-term contract miners, long-term white migrants and migrants forced to flee persecution in their home countries, in 2000, South Africa recorded other categories of voluntary migrants that included skilled migrants (i.e. professionals, semi-professional, managerial and technical migrants), documented migrants (i.e. temporary residents in possession of tourism, study or medicine or those holding work permits) and undocumented or clandestine migrants (Wentzel et al., 2006; Wentzel & Tlabela, 2006).

While South Africa has a range of migrant categories, determining a precise figure of African migrants has proven to be extremely difficult. In addition, a number of sources have challenged the accuracy of data provided by the South African government (Stupart, 2016; Africa Check, 2017). Nonetheless, using the stream of contract and voluntary economic migrants, as well as forced refugees and asylum seekers, the 2011 Census placed the total number of international migrants in South Africa at 2,173,409. This was approximately 4.2% of the country's total population at that time, and 73.5% of these migrants originated from African countries (World Bank, 2018: 3). This figure is unlikely to include all illegal migrants, however, the projections from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2016) and International Labour Organization (ILO) (2017) show that the stock of migrants, particularly those from African countries, will continue to steadily and considerably rise, largely due to on-going protracted political instability and persistent economic collapse and deprivation.

The rising population of African migrants in South Africa brings to the fore the issue of remittances. In practice, remittances are a proportion of a migrant's income in his or her domiciled country that is sent to the country of origin (Van Doorn, 2002; Ratha et al., 2009). In the past, global financial institutions often confined remittances to financial transfers. However, this restriction underestimates and ignores the main essence of remittances, as the World Bank (2014) and Suliman, et al. (2014) estimate that a substantial share of overall remittance outflows to developing countries is in fact in-kind transfers. In a broader sense, beyond economic transfers of cash, migrants also buy consumable commodities that they send to their dependents in their home countries (Tavera & Chikanda, 2009; Chisasa, 2014). By the same token, international migrants establish social and political networks in their countries of residence through which they acquire a wealth of information, values, technology, intellectual capacity and social capital (knowledge, experience and expertise) as well as other tools that are transmitted to their respective countries in the form of social remittances (Levit, 1988; Goldring 2002; Goldring, 2004; Mohamoud & Fréchaut, 2006; Levitt & Lamba-Nieves, 2011). From this vantage point, migrants' remittances can potentially be defined as one part of a system of strong transnational connections that link people across distances and diverse cultural practices (Cohen & Rodriguez, 2005; Paerregaard, 2008). For that reason, cash, goods and social remittances are an essential and enduring linkage between migrant and home country at

family and community levels, as well as local government and national levels (Taylor, 2000; Styan, 2007).

In relation to migrants' resource flows, remittances can further be classified either as formal or informal. The transfer of remittances is formal when sent using registered channels. Informal remittances, on the other hand, as the name suggests, are remittances sent through informal channels and, by definition, this type of remittance is not registered (Buencamino & Gurbonov, 2002; World Bank, 2012). In remittance markets, the transfers of cash primarily take place formally in the commercial banks, post offices, Money Transfer Operators (such as Western Union and MoneyGram), telecommunication companies, retail outlets and authorised dealers with limited authority (Orozco, 2006; Bester et al., 2010). They may also be transferred informally by the migrants when they visit the home country, or by family, friends, networks of transfer agencies, unregistered travel agencies, taxis, buses, call shops and ethnic stores (Truen et al., 2005; Truen & Chisadza, 2012; World Bank, 2014).

Remittances in the form of money or goods may be sent by migrants using a broad array of informal and formal channels, ranging from hand deliveries by migrants themselves or third parties to less regulated conduits of delivering goods (Truen et al., 2005; Truen & Chisadza, 2012; Chisasa, 2014). Social remittances, on the other hand, are intangible assets. As such, the potential pathways along which they are transmitted are cross-linking modalities such as letters, telephone calls, emails, online chats, videos, face-to-face conversations and meetings with key political figures from migrants' homelands (Levitt, 1998; Levitt & Joworsky, 2007).

Different types of remittances and varieties of channels have made it extremely difficult to establish the total size of the remittance market. Similarly, ensuring that all remittance outflows are accurately and consistently reported has always been challenging in South Africa. Given this complexity, being the largest economy of the region and the only middle-income country in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa is among the continent's largest remittance markets (Bakewell, 2011: 35). The remittance outflows account for about 0.4% of South Africa's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and the approximate size of the total remittance market from South Africa to other African countries is \$2 billion per annum (Technoserve, 2015: 4).

While migrant remittances from South Africa to other African countries continue to grow, and despite a plethora of literature, there has been a

knowledge gap as to how and in what respect remittances might differ among migrants. The continued deficiency in the understanding of the fundamental aspects of remittances requires answering questions such as: Who remits? What is remitted? How much is remitted? Why and how? As a contribution to these academic debates, this paper sets out to explore the link between African migrants' characteristics and remittance behaviour. The next section of this paper presents the theoretical literature. Section 3 presents the methodology and a summary of the main variables used in the analysis. Section 4 presents and discusses empirical findings and the last section presents a conclusion.

### ***Theoretical and Conceptual Framework***

A substantial number of theories have been advanced to analyse what motivates a rational migrant to send remittances (e.g. Lucas & Stark, 1985; Stark & Lucas, 1988; Poirine, 1997). Since the decision to remit funds and other resources is underpinned in the behavioural approach, a combination of remittance motives and prospect theory would provide better insights into remittance behaviours. The original prospect theory was developed by Kahneman and Tversky (1979) and was later revised and improved by other authors (i.e., Kahneman & Tversky, 1991; Tversky & Kahneman, 1992; Wakker & Tversky, 1993; Kahneman & Tversky, 2000; Wakker & Zank, 2002) to explain the decision-making process. This descriptive theory departs from the normal utility approach to include the psychological and economic principle of decision making under conditions of risk, uncertainty and ambiguity (Wakker & Zank, 2002). Using the utility approach, Opong (2012) and Barberis (2013) argue that when faced with decisions, the behavioural patterns of all decision makers will seek to maximize their utility, by first weighing each possible outcome with the probability of occurrence and summing this up over all possible outcomes, and then selecting the strategy that guarantees the highest possible returns or payoffs.

In a prospect theoretical perspective, individual decisions are anchored around a reference point and a decision maker evaluates the outcomes in terms of loss and gains relative to the selection of choices. What influence a decision maker the most and thereby act as carriers of value or utility are circumstances, rather than the final asset position that includes current wealth (Kahneman & Tversky, 1991; Carmerer, 2005). In a similar view, Opong (2012) reasons that, much like all theoretic prospect decision makers, the frame of reference of most migrants guides their decision making, and their reference points are deep seated in the prevailing conditions in their home

countries. This reference point is affected by and interlinked with the migrants' social-economic conditions in the country of destination, which in turn shapes migrants' perceptions of the current situation in their home countries. According to Stark and Lucas (1988) and Rapoport and Docquier (2006), the reality of conditions in migrants' home countries influence their behavioural patterns and judgment, and in the long run determine how money is sent home, how often, how much is sent and to whom.

Prospect theory contains many remarkable insights that link with the social and economic milieu of migrants, and in incorporating remittance motives Opong (2012) maintains that remittance behaviour depends on both migrants' abilities (i.e. their income and savings) and their motives to remit. From this perspective, remittance decision making and behaviour is a function of a migrant's characteristics, willingness and ability to remit (Lucas & Stark 1985, Rapoport & Docquier, 2006). Based on this notion, the willingness and motivation of the prospective remitter has been hypothesized as related to altruism and self-interest (Lucas & Stark, 1985; Taylor, 1999) as well as tempered or enlightened motives (Poirine, 1997; Lillard & Willis, 1997). The self-enlightened motive of remittances was expanded by Hagen-Zanker and Siegel (2007) to include contractual arrangements, such as co-insurance, loan repayment and exchange between migrant and household members in the country of origin.

Under an altruistic model, the intuitive motive to remit is the migrants' concern about relatives left behind in the home country. In a nutshell, a migrant may derive satisfaction from ensuring the welfare of his or her relatives (Lucas & Stark, 1988; Stark, 1991; Solimano, 2003). In a behavioural sense, altruism implies a utility function in which the migrant cares about the consumption needs of the family members left behind (Banerjee, 1984; Lillard & Willis, 1997; Agarwal & Horowitz, 2002). Further to altruistic assumptions, migrants with higher earning potential tend to remit more money and goods, and remittances tend to increase if the migrant is married and the spouse and/or children are in the country of origin (Frankhouser, 1995; Von Burgsdorff, 2010; Von Burgsdorff, 2012; Chisasa, 2014). However, in a post-hoc strategy that follows migration, when the families join migrants, the ties and links with the home country become weaker and the amount of remittances decrease and are sent less frequently (Sana & Massey, 2005; Kosse & Vermeulen, 2014).

In addition, intentions to return are positively correlated with the tendency to remit more (Konica & Filer, 2005; Lindley, 2007; Lindley, 2008), and the amount that a migrant sends to relatives in the home country is negatively correlated with the number of migrants from the same household. Furthermore, the time profile of remittances as propounded in the remittance decay hypothesis (that remittances decline as the length of residence increases) depends on the profile of migrants, i.e. migrants who stay longer abroad tend to remit at a decreasing rate (Stark, 1978; Agunias, 2006; Amuedo-Dorantes & Pozo, 2006; Vargas-Silva, 2006; Makina & Massenge, 2014; Echazarram, 2011). Likewise, remittances are positively correlated with income, while the number of dependents in the host country affects remittances adversely (Frankhouser, 1995; Holst & Schrooten, 2006).

In a similar view to the above, migrants who perceive the business environment in their countries of origin to be favorable will remit more money and goods in the form of investments (Lucas & Stark, 1985), and migrants who regularly visit their home countries are more likely to send remittances (Lindley, 2007; Lindley, 2009; Lindley, 2010). Much like the altruistic hypothesis, in the self-interest motive, migrants who maintain links with home countries are more likely to remit, especially when they are willing to return to their countries of origin (Hoddinott, 1994; Cox et al., 1998; De la Briere et al., 2002; Agunias, 2006).

In a pure self-interest motive, migrants driven by the prospect of inheritance send remittances to maintain family income and financial stability. Under this hypothesis, remitters are expected to have a higher chance to inherit assets, whereas the higher the value of assets to be inherited is likely to be associated with the higher remittances. For example, Osili (2007 and Hoddinott (1994) found that migrants remit more in wealthier areas. Likewise, Schrieder and Knerr (2000), Garip (2006) and Holst and Schrooten (2006) affirmed that with an inheritance seeking motive, male emigrants remit significantly more compared to female emigrants. However, according to Cracium (2006), the exceptions are that women remit a substantially larger proportion of their wages than men.

In reaction to pure altruism and pure self-interest motives, Stark and Lucas (1988) used an eclectic model termed “tempered altruism” and “enlightened self-interest” to explain contractual arrangements of co-insurance, exchange motives and loan repayment in driving remittances. A number of sources stress that in the eclectic model, remittances are utilized as a familial strategy

to maximize an income and to insure against future shocks (Stark, 1991; Poirine, 1997; Brown & Ahlburh, 1999; Solimano, 2003). The family enters into an implicit pre-determined agreement in which they either invest in the education of the remitter or finance the cost of migration, while the remittances they receive are used to repay the loan that financed the cost of migration and education. Under this assumption, scholars report that educated migrants are likely to remit more (Hoddinott, 1994; Ilahi & Jffarey, 1999).

From the behaviour and motivation theoretical synthetic models, it is evident that the complex mixture of altruism, self-interest and self-enlightenment best describes the theoretical aspect of remittances. However, when combined with micro-variables representing migrants' characteristics, remittance behaviours are difficult to predict. Therefore, to ascertain whether there is a link between migrants' characteristics and remittance behaviour, the researcher developed the function consisting of principal independent variables. These variables have been prominently linked to remittances in the literature.

Remittance behaviour (RB) = N + A + Ge + MS + EL + IRSA + DTISA + RI + DSSA + IL + ABSA + FHV + A

Variable description:

- Nationality = N
- Age = A
- Gender = Ge
- Marital status = MS
- Educational level = EL
- Immigration reasons to South Africa = IRSA
- Document types in South Africa = DTSA
- Return intentions = RI
- Duration of stay in South Africa = DSSA
- Income level = IL
- Access to banks in South Africa = ABSA
- Frequency of home visits = FHV



- Associations = A

### ***Methodology***

The study used both quantitative and qualitative methods. The information was collected using structured survey questionnaires administered to 83 migrants. Additionally, interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with 12 migrants from the DRC, Rwanda, Somalia and Zimbabwe who live in Cape Town, South Africa. Cape Town is of interest as it is a cosmopolitan city that receives migrants from the African continent and has a history of migrant settlement (Lefko-Everett, 2008). Similarly, from the researcher's observations, Cape Town's largest inner-city sections account for a high number of migrants from the case study. The sample was selected by means of non-probabilistic method, where the researcher applied the purposive approach to select the sample of migrants as an entry point based on his knowledge and the nature of the research aims. The sample was then extended by means of snowballing to reach more participants by referral.

To mitigate the risks of bias and errors associated with the non-probability sampling method, a considerable effort was made to include migrants of varied demographics in terms of age, gender, occupation, nationality and legal status. In addition, the non-probability sampling approach enabled the researcher to overcome the difficulty of locating undocumented migrants. In a similar view, combining purposive and snowballing sampling methods enabled the researcher to choose the respondents included in the study and increase subjects' variability, thus minimizing the challenges of finding the representative sample (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Mertens & Gisenberg, 2009).

On the one hand, variables representing characteristics of migrants were categorised according to demographic information, such as nationality, age, gender, education, marital status, duration of stay in South Africa, income level, migration history, family context (i.e., migration status, reason for immigration and return intention), family size in both South Africa and the home country, level of social capital and access to financial institutions and banking facilities. On the other hand, remittance patterns and behaviour-specific variables were disaggregated to include remittance type (i.e., cash, goods and social remittances) propensity to remit, value and amount of remittances, frequency of remittances, as well as channels used to send remittances.

The data analysis was based on a combination of both primary and secondary data, and the goal was to link remittance behaviour with migrants' characteristics. To do so, a statistical analysis was performed on the data collected from the survey questionnaires using STATA software. In order to describe, explain, interpret and summarise the characteristics of the migrants and their remittances, descriptive statistics in the form of mathematical quantities were used, while inferential statistics were employed to ascertain whether remittance behaviour differs depending upon migration characteristics. The qualitative data were analysed using thematic content analysis. This involved breaking data from the interviews into more manageable themes, triangulating them with those from the focus group and comparing the findings with information from the literature review.

Disaggregating remittances into many types posed a challenge and incorporating and analysing the aspects of social remittances created incoherence in this paper. This was due to the fact that these kinds of remittances are intangible in nature and difficult to measure compared to financial transfers (Mohamoud & Fréchaut, 2006: 34). Similarly, the quantitative approach did not provide detailed or nuanced narratives from migrants' responses. Nonetheless, these methodological shortcomings were offset by the qualitative method employed. A quantitative method provides data that may be effectively used to predict and measure relationships and phenomena (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Mertens & Gisenberg, 2009). As such, the quantitative method was selected for this research as it proved to be more affordable and faster than the qualitative method, especially when testing hypotheses.

## ***Results and Discussions***

### ***Demographic Characteristics***

Out of a sample of 83 respondents, 20 participants (24%) are from Zimbabwe, 20 (24%) are from Rwanda, 20 (24%) are from Somalia, and the remaining 23 (28%) are from the DRC. There is no considerable difference in terms of educational background across nationalities, apart from the Rwandese, of whom half attained university degrees. Otherwise, many of the pooled sample (31%) indicated they had completed secondary school, 17% had attained primary school, 23% had achieved a college qualification, 28% had completed tertiary education and 1% had obtained another type of education. The average monthly income of 34% of respondents falls between R4000–8000,

22% receive R1500–4000, 26% receive R8000–15000 and 18% receive R15000 or more.

Relating to migration context and family history of migrants, 63% of the respondents belong to an association or diaspora organisation, compared to the remaining 37% who do not. A relatively high number of migrants have access to banking institutions in both South Africa and their countries of origin, and 64% of the respondents indicated they have bank accounts in South Africa, compared to 36% who do not. 58% of the respondents indicated that their relatives have access to financial and banking institutions in their home countries. With regard to returning home, in this study, 61% of participants reported that they intended to return home permanently at some point in time, while 39% said that they did not have such intentions. Out of those who intend to return to and settle permanently in their countries of origin, the majority (65%) are planning to do so in a period of four years or more.

Concerning a visit to their home countries, more than half of the pooled sample (51%) stated they had not visited their home country, 18% indicated that they have travelled home once, 12% indicated that they visit every few years, 11% visit once a year, 6% twice a year and the remaining 2% visit their home country every three months. In addition, the majority of the respondents (not including Zimbabweans) are holders of refugee status (33%) and asylum seeker permits (17%). Other types of documents held are as follows: work permit (12%), partnership permits (4%), permanent residence permit (14%), study permit (6%), business permit (2%), other permits (1%). The remaining 11% are undocumented.

Zimbabweans' frequency of home visits is high and the intention to return permanently is common, while on average the majority of respondents from Rwanda, Somalia and the DRC do not visit their respective countries very often. The low incidence of return intentions among migrants from these countries could be linked to the fact that their countries experienced insecurity and civil wars in the past. According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2010), Somalia is still characterised by insurgency. Similarly, their low frequency of home visits is linked to the type of documents the migrants hold and their motives of migration. According to Lawyers for Human Rights Watch (LHRW) (2009) and the UNHCR (2010), the South African Department of Home Affairs revokes the residence permits of asylum seekers and refugees who travel to their native countries.

In terms of their motivation for coming to South Africa, 51% of the surveyed respondents cited political instability in their respective countries, 7% cited study reasons, 18% cited economic reasons, 13% cited family reunification, 10% cited business opportunity and 1% cited other reasons. When disaggregated across nationality, many respondents from Zimbabwe cited perceived economic and business opportunities as the motive for coming to South Africa, as opposed to those from the DRC, Rwanda and Somalia, who indicated political instability.

To sum up, the majority of the Zimbabwean participants' movement to South Africa was voluntary. According to the LHRW (2009) and UNHCR (2010), a person who leaves his or her home country for fear of persecution can apply for asylum and, if accepted, will be called a 'refugee'. Using a combination of the reason for migration, type of documentation, frequency of home visits and return intentions, one can conclude that the majority of Zimbabweans are economic migrants (voluntary), as opposed to Rwandese, Congolese and Somalis, whose movement to South Africa is forced and who thus qualify as 'refugees' or 'forced migrants'.

#### ***Remittance Patterns and Behaviour of African Immigrants***

All respondents agreed that they send some kind of remittances home. The types of remittances identified were cash, goods or commodities and social remittances. 80% of the respondents transmit social remittances, 53% remit cash and goods simultaneously, 41% remit cash only and 6% remit goods only. When disaggregated according to nationality, the remittance patterns do not vary considerably. However, Somalis remit slightly more socially. This finding was reinforced by the information gleaned from qualitative data, as explained by a participant from Somalia:

South Africa is technologically advanced with modernized learning and strong democratic institutions that can help our countries to develop. We have learnt a lot in terms of skills and democratic practices, next time when we go home, we will ensure accountability and transparency in the public sector.

The study also revealed that Zimbabweans tend to remit more than any other nationality in terms of cash and goods, while goods only predominate among those from the DRC and Somalia. The high transfers among Zimbabweans corresponds with other studies (e.g. Makina, 2007; Maphosa, 2007; Von Burgsdorff, 2010), which found that remittances to Zimbabwe have increased

because of its rapidly declining economic conditions that have been accentuated by severe drought.

The prominence of social remittances among migrants from Somalia is undoubtedly associated with the fact that they belong to the Somali Association of South Africa (SASA), with one of its missions being to facilitate Somali migrants' learning and integration in South Africa. Nevertheless, for the study cohort as a whole, further investigations divulged that apart from skills, technology and democratic values, some social and cultural practices that are perceived to be negative (participants referred to these aspects as negative social remittances) are also transmitted to the countries of origin, as highlighted by a female Rwandan participant from the focus group:

South Africa is a country where everything is tolerated and accepted. In our countries, homosexuality and lesbianism are taboo, this Western like culture has been adopted and promoted by the South African constitution and passed to us and our children and when they go back home, they take it with.

In terms of remittances in the form of goods, a relatively high level of transfers of goods among Congolese (the majority of whom are refugees) is likely linked to the availability of channels. This is described by a male Congolese participant in the excerpt below:

*[...] Nowadays, we don't struggle to send something home; it is just the matter of waiting for the bus to arrive from Lubumbashi, and then send something home through the passengers.*

These findings on the sending of remittances by Congolese refugees give testament to other studies (e.g. Akuei, 2005; Jacobsen, 2005; Loschmann & Siegel, 2014), which found that temporary forced migrants hoping to return home in non-distant future are likely to remit. This is not surprising, as under an altruistic motive, refugee remittances constitute an important mechanism that provides support to family members through periods of famine, conflict and war (Lindley, 2007; Lindley, 2008; Lindley, 2009). They also provide real and substantial bulwarks to protect family members' human rights (Cockayne & Shetret, 2012).

This study found that 30% of the respondents remit to support their families. The remaining 20% of the respondents remit to repay their families, 13% remit to save and invest in their countries, 11% remit to inject cash in their businesses, 23% remit to respect their families and the remaining 2% remit for other reasons. These findings again substantiate all aspects of the prospect

hypotheses that remittances are determined by altruism (Lucas & Stark, 1988; Stark, 1991; Solimano, 2003), self-interest (Hoddinott, 1994; Cox, et al., 1998; De la Briere, et al., 2002; Agunias, 2006), enlightened self-interests, which include familial arrangements of co-insurance, loan repayment and inheritance motives (Lucas & Stark, 1985; Stark, 1991; Hoddinott, 1994; Poirine, 1997; Brown & Ahlburh, 1999; Taylor, 1999; Osili, 2004).

A deeper analysis of Table 1 reveals that many Zimbabweans remit to invest and save in their home countries, while Somalis and Rwandese remit for family-related reasons. Again, this is not surprising as the study found the majority of Zimbabweans to be economic migrants, and Rwandese, Congolese and Somalis to be refugees. According to Phyllis and Kathrin (2008), refugees mainly remit to help family members left behind escape human rights violations. The implication of this is that economic migrants' remittances are driven by pure self-interest, while forced migrants' remittances are based on altruistic motives. This is in line with Cockyane and Shetret's (2012) report that refugees mainly remit to help family members left behind.

**Table 1: Remittance Motives**

<b>Motive</b>	Support the family	Repay the family	Invest and save	Run business	Respect the family	Other motives	Total
<b>Nationality</b>							
Zimbabwe	20%	5%	35%	20%	15%	5%	100%
DRC	17%	22%	13%	18%	26%	4%	100%
Rwanda	45%	30%	5%	20%	0%	0%	100%
Somalia	40%	25%	5%	30%	0%	0%	100%

**Source:** Nzabamwita (2015)

With regards to the values of remittances, out of 78 respondents who indicated that they send cash, the majority (39%) noted that they send R1000–R2500, and the rest of the remittance transactions vary as follows: 9% remit R500–R1000, 32% remit R2500–R5000, and the remaining 19% remit R5000 and above. As indicated in Table 2, the amount of cash remitted does not follow a specific pattern based on nationality, however, Zimbabweans tend to remit the highest amounts, followed by Congolese. This confirms other studies that found that economic migrants remit more than refugees (Phyllis & Kathrin, 2008). A possible explanation is that conflict-induced migration happens to save migrants’ lives rather than diversifying income (Lindley, 2008; Lindley, 2009) and forced migrants are not likely to have enough resources in the initial period of their arrival compared to voluntary migrants, so they only tend to remit long after full integration into the host country (Ghosh, 2006).

**Table 2: Amount of Money Remitted Each Time**

<b>Amount</b>	< R500	R500– R1000	R1000– R1500	R1500– R2500	R2500 – R5000	> R5000	Total
<b>Nationality</b>							
Zimbabwe	10%	10%	15%	25%	5%	35%	100%
DRC	0%	9%	27%	46%	0%	18%	100%
Rwanda	0%	15%	55%	5%	15%	10%	100%
Somalia	0%	0%	6%	12%	69%	13%	100%

**Source:** Nzabamwita (2015)

Regarding the value of goods, the majority of the respondents (66%) indicated that they send goods worth R500–R3000 each time goods are sent, 12% remit goods to the value of less than R500, 8% remit goods worth R5000–R8000 and the remaining 8% remit goods worth R5000 or more. Table 3 indicates that the Congolese and Zimbabweans remit relatively high values of goods compared to the rest of the group. Goods remittances to Zimbabwe are perhaps related to production that dwindled after the implementation of land

reform policies (see Kerzner, 2006; Kerzner, 2009; Polzer, 2010). Another potential explanation is the close proximity between South Africa and Zimbabwe (Makina, 2007; Makina, 2010; Chisasa, 2014) coupled with a shortage of currency as acknowledged by two Zimbabwean participants during an interview:

*Let me tell you something, every time I sent money to my son for school fees, he travels from the village to town to get it, he is always told to come back the following day, because the bank does not have money (P1: Participant from Zimbabwe).*

*With the lack of American Dollars in the Zimbabwean banks, I prefer to buy stuff in South Africa, so that I can get cash when I re-sell them in Harare (P2: Participant from Zimbabwe).*

**Table 3: Value of Goods Remitted Each Time**

<b>Amount</b>	<R500	R500– R1500	R1500– R3000	R3000– R5000	R5000– R8000	<R8000	Total
<b>Nationality</b>							
Zimbabwe	15%	31%	23%	0%	15%	16%	100%
DRC	0%	6%	46%	26%	7%	15%	100%
Rwanda	34%	9%	33%	16%	8%	0%	100%
Somalia	0%	12%	55%	33%	0%	0%	100%

**Source:** Nzabamwita (2015)

When asked about the kinds of goods that are most commonly remitted, electronics are the most preferred goods at 43%, cosmetic products at 18%, clothing items at 4%, furniture at 16% and other items such as motor spare parts, medicine and stationery at 18%. This is a true reflection of the assumptions of prospect theory that remittances are anchored in the needs and conditions arising in the migrants' countries of origin. The Rwandese have the highest percentage in sending electronics (67%), while the Zimbabweans lead in furniture. This is not a coincidence. The geographical proximity of Zimbabwe and South Africa facilitates the remittance of non-durable goods (Von Burgsdorff, 2012; Chisasa, 2014; Makina & Masenge, 2014), while tax



exemption concessions on Information Computer Technology (ICT) items provided by the Rwandan Revenue Services (Harrison, 2005) could encourage Rwandese migrants to remit electronic goods. Furthermore, migrants tend to remit irregularly; 12% do so every three months, 10% twice a year, 8% once a year, 17% every few years, 17% remitted only once, and the remaining 36% remit whenever it is possible. Table 4 notes that Zimbabweans tend to remit more frequently and Somalis less frequently; this is consistent with the view that economic migrants remit more often than forced migrants (Briant, 2005).

**Table 4: Frequency of Remittance**

<b>Frequency</b>	After 3 months	Twice a year	Yearly	Only once	Whenever possible	After a few years	Total
<b>Nationality</b>							
Zimbabwe	35%	10%	5%	10%	40%	0%	100%
DRC	8%	16%	4%	17%	38%	17%	100%
Rwanda	5%	10%	0%	20%	45%	20%	100%
Somalia	0%	0%	25%	20%	20%	35%	100%

**Source:** Nzabamwita (2015)

***Relationships between the Characteristics of African Migrants and Remittance Patterns/Behaviour***

To ascertain whether a relationship exists between migrants’ characteristics and remittance behaviour, inferential statistics were used along with a non-parametric technique and the Pearson’s Chi-square test. The non-parametric technique involved cross-tabulation of remittance behaviour and patterns with the characteristics of migrants.

In carrying out the test, a significant level of 0.05 (5%) was used for the test of 1 degree of freedom. The decision rule is that the significance level of 0.05 is allowed, and a Pearson chi-square value or p-value higher than the significance level indicates that the difference between the groups is not significant (Pallant, 2005: 286).

The chi-square test provided mixed results. This section only reports on the variables representing migrants' characteristics that are statistically associated with remittance behaviour. The full chi-square test results are indicated in Appendix 1. The test revealed that there is a significant relationship between nationality and type of remittances ( $\chi^2=14.31$ ,  $P=0.026$ ), amount of cash remitted ( $\chi^2=46.83$ ,  $P=0.000$ ), type of goods remitted ( $\chi^2=23.33$ ,  $P=0.025$ ), remittance frequency ( $\chi^2=34.88$ ,  $P=0.003$ ), goods remittance channels ( $\chi^2=47.74$ ,  $P=0.000$ ), and cash remittances channels ( $\chi^2=62.896$ ,  $P=0.000$ ). Remittance patterns by nationality show that Zimbabweans more frequently remit goods of high value using informal channels, compared to immigrants from other countries in this study. This is not surprising as Zimbabweans are mainly economic migrants and Phyllis and Kathrin (2008) note that economic migrants remit more than refugees.

With regard to education, the test results show a significant relationship between education and the amount of cash remitted ( $\chi^2=33.14$ ,  $P=0.032$ ), channels for cash remittances ( $\chi^2=36.17$ ,  $P=0.050$ ) and channels for social remittances ( $\chi^2=40.73$ ,  $P=0.004$ ). In this study, the finding indicates that more educated migrants are likely to send more in terms of goods and cash through formal channels. In a similar view, highly educated African migrants are more likely to remit socially upon their return home. This finding on social remittances corresponds with Perez-Armendariz and Crow's (2009) idea that education influences social remittance. The results on material remittances contradict the original claim of Evtimova and Koekoek (2010) that educated migrants remit less and invest more in host countries. This, however, substantiates and supports the view of Orozco (2006) that educated migrants remit more formally.

In addition, the income level is significantly related to social remittances ( $\chi^2=7.42$ ,  $P=0.060$ ), amount of cash remitted ( $\chi^2=76.31$ ,  $P=0.000$ ) and the value of goods remitted ( $\chi^2=52.35$ ,  $P=0.000$ ). The current study revealed that migrants earning a high income remit more in the form of cash and goods and are also more likely to remit socially. These results are not surprising, as they corroborate the findings of other authors who have suggested that there is a positive relationship between income and remittance (De Haas & Plague, 2006; DMA, 2011).

For other variables, the reason for coming to South Africa is significantly related to the cash remittance channels ( $\chi^2=58.77$ ,  $P=0.001$ ), as well as goods remittance channels ( $\chi^2=48.57$ ,  $P=0.003$ ). In a similar view to the above, there

is a significant relationship between immigration status and cash remittance channels ( $\chi^2=67.95$ ,  $P=0.030$ ). Additionally, the intention to return home is significantly related to the frequency of remittances ( $\chi^2=32.69$ ,  $P=0.005$ ), as well as the cash remittance channels ( $\chi^2=25.13$ ,  $P=0.048$ ). Access to banks or financial institutions in South Africa is significantly related to cash remittance channels ( $\chi^2=17.84$ ,  $P=0.007$ ). Furthermore, the frequency of visits to the home country is significantly related to the value of goods remitted ( $\chi^2=41.63$ ,  $P=0.020$ ), cash remittance channels ( $\chi^2=46.33$ ,  $P=0.029$ ) and goods remittance channels ( $\chi^2=38.67$ ,  $P=0.040$ ). Lastly, the level of association in South Africa is significantly related to social remittances. For details, please see Appendix 1.

Although, variables of age, gender, marital status and duration of stay in South Africa are not factors influencing remittance behaviour among African migrants in South Africa, a thorough examination of the chi-square test results in Appendix 1 demonstrates that more than half of variables representing migrants' characteristics (10 variables out of 15) are significantly associated with remittance behaviour. Therefore, one can conclude that, overall, the characteristics of migrants are linked to remittance patterns and behaviour.

### **Conclusion**

The aim of the study reported in this paper was to link the characteristics of African migrants with their remittance behaviour. This paper has shown that the decisions to migrate and remit are inherently interlinked. The fact that migrants from Somalia, Rwanda and the DRC hold refugee status and asylum seeker permits and migrated because of political insecurity make them forced migrants. Zimbabweans, on the other hand, are voluntary migrants whose motive for immigration to South Africa is economic. With regards to remittance behaviour, this study found that African migrants send all types of remittances (i.e., cash, goods and social remittances) to their respective countries, and their nature and characteristics have a significant impact on what types of remittances are sent, how they sent, how often they are sent and to whom. In this regard, economic migrants remit to invest and save in their home countries, while refugees remit to support their family members.

Regarding migrants' characteristics, this study further revealed that the nationality of migrants determines type of remittances, the amount of cash remitted, the type of goods remitted, the frequency of remittances, the channels used to remit cash, as well as the channels used to remit goods. Education and income determine the value of remittances as well as the channels used to remit. Among migrants who remit, Zimbabweans tend to

remit cash and goods more frequently. Somalis, on the other hand, take advantage of their associations to send social remittances. Rwandese remit the highest amounts of electronic goods and they tend to use formal channels. Highly educated and high-income African migrants remit more in terms of both amount of cash and value of goods, and they also tend to use formal channels.

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# ***Age Selectivity among Labour Migrants (Majoni Joni) From South-Eastern Zimbabwe to South Africa during a Prolonged Crisis***

**Dick Ranga\***

## **Abstract**

*Focusing on unskilled Zimbabweans, this paper assesses the influence of the prolonged Zimbabwean crisis (2000–2016) on age differences in migration to South Africa. It is based on a questionnaire survey conducted among 166 households in 4 south-eastern districts in 2016/2017. Three-fifths of the households had migrant members in South Africa driven by the lack of jobs, poverty or food shortages at home. Labour migration to South Africa was male-dominated and involved younger people (below 30) than older people. Most of the migrants aged 30 or older moved during the peak of the crisis (2006–2010), most likely under the pressure of finding a means of survival for their families left behind. Young men who have a pre-crisis history in this migration predominated again after the crisis peak (after 2010). Most of this labour migration was clandestine and involved people with low levels of education. Hence, most of these migrants worked as ‘general hands’ earning ZAR 1,500 or less per month in South Africa. In this paper, it is argued that the Zimbabwean government should control such risky youth migration by creating jobs or income-generating projects in Zimbabwe and educating youth about unsafe migration.*

**Keywords** Selectivity, migration, youth, majoni-joni, Zimbabwean crisis.

## **Introduction**

Recently, there has been a renewed interest in migration selectivity, that is, the tendency among migrants to “self-select according to specific characteristics” (Kanbur & Rapoport, 2003: 4). This is due to increased international migration resulting from globalisation. Some scholars have argued that in Africa women are increasingly involved in economic migration rather than merely accompanying their male partners (Adepoju, 2005). However, this paper argues that this change may not have dawned everywhere in Africa, even in West Africa, the region about which the author writes. For instance, the British Broadcasting Corporation News (BBC) (2015) documented the case of a small town in Burkina Faso where women formed the majority of the population

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because most men migrated to Italy for waged labour. Although the BBC News highlighted some economic benefits associated with this migration, it also noted that these unaware young girls are trapped into celibacy as their newly wedded husbands stay for prolonged periods in the diaspora and only visit home for short periods. This is because with the meagre salaries they earn on Italian farms they cannot afford airfares to frequently travel between Italy and Burkina Faso.

The plight of these young women is similar to that of their counterparts in southern Zimbabwe, where most young men migrate to South Africa in search of better wages or employment opportunities, leaving their wives in the 'custody' of their parents or other relatives (Manamere, 2014). Muzondidya (2008: 6) reported that it was in the late 1980s and 1990s that young single men from drought-prone southern Zimbabwe (Masvingo, Midlands and Matebeleland provinces) started migrating in search of "better-paying jobs in South Africa, Botswana and Namibia [...]". Known as *injiva* in the Matebeleland region and *majoni joni* in south-eastern Zimbabwe, these young men usually visit home during the Christmas holidays and are popular among young girls who regard them as better suitors than local men (Manamere, 2014). After marrying these girls and leaving them with their parents, these young men return to South Africa for prolonged periods.

Manamere (2014) cited other scholars who observe the tendency among young men from Chiredzi district in south-eastern Zimbabwe and neighbouring Mozambique to migrate in search of jobs in South Africa. For these young men, labour migration has become a 'rite of passage' into adulthood since it is often meant to raise money for *lobola* (payment made to one's in-laws), as best described by Manamere (2014: 92):

From the late nineteenth century, many young rural men in Southern Mozambique and Zimbabwe came to see their movement across the border as a necessary 'rite of passage', and step to marriage and social adulthood (Harries 1994; van Onselen 1980). As Native Commissioners observed in relation to Chiredzi's Shangaan labour migrants, for a male Shangaan youth to become a 'man' he must have "rubbed shoulders with workers in South Africa", braving the dangers of the journey and the hardships of migrant life in the township compounds.

The study informing this paper assessed whether the prolonged Zimbabwean crisis (2000–2016) led to any changes in labour migration from south-eastern Zimbabwe to South Africa, especially in terms of selectivity by age and other

characteristics such as gender and marital status. Politically, the Zimbabwean crisis was characterised by corruption involving some members of the ruling party (ZANU-PF), unilateral decisions meant to strengthen the ruling party or benefit a few within the party, the use of violence during the 'fast track' land reform programme and towards elections and disputed election results. This led to hyperinflation of the local currency, a shortage of basic commodities, closure and relocation of many companies and increasing unemployment and poverty. All this led to a mass exodus of Zimbabweans by those from all walks of life in search of employment, particularly in neighbouring countries such as South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia. South Africa was the major host of these migrants with an estimated 3–4 million Zimbabweans having relocated there.

According to Muzondidya (2008), the migration of Zimbabweans to South Africa that took place during the peak of the crisis in the 2000s was less selective as it involved both the young and old, married and single, southerners and northerners, skilled and unskilled. A combination of both the young and old could be discerned in some of the studies conducted among Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa during the peak of the crisis in the 2000s. For instance, Mosala (2008) found that most of the Zimbabwean migrants were between 21 and 40 years of age (Mosala, 2008). Studies conducted by Rutherford (2010) among Zimbabweans who worked on South African farms close to the Zimbabwe border found that most of them were married men who migrated because they were heads of their households and were responsible for caring for their families in Zimbabwe. These studies suggested the increased migration of Zimbabwean men who were older, married and motivated by the need to provide for their families affected by the crisis at home.

Studies conducted in the early 2010s, especially from traditional migrant sending districts in south-eastern Zimbabwe, are silent about the potential impact of the crisis in terms of increasing the migration of both the old and young. Instead, they continued to emphasize the migration of young men, which was also associated with challenges. For instance, the Zimbabwe Youth Council (ZYC) (2014: XI) reported that the migration of young men was associated with illegal migration to South Africa "upon completing grade seven (7) [...] in search of jobs in South Africa". This organisation reported that young women were also increasingly involved in illegal migration, with some of them being subjected to rape on transit to South Africa (ZYC, 2014). These young men and women would do jobs considered unappealing by many South Africans, such as domestic and farm work.



Elsewhere, Kanbur and Rapoport (2003) argue that on average immigrants are less skilled than natives of the United States (US). Nevertheless, these scholars refer to US statistics, which show that few immigrants migrated with no more than primary education. They found that migrants to the US tended to have better education than average persons in their home countries. This is relevant for Zimbabweans who have migrated to South Africa, since most of them have secondary education (Mosala, 2008).

Ray, Marlar and Esipova (2010) argue that everywhere in the world, young people are more likely than older people to express the intention to relocate to another country, irrespective of their current occupation. This suggests that older people are likely to migrate only when the pressure to do so is strong, such as in the case of an economic crisis. Even under such circumstances, migrants are unlikely to be older than non-migrants. In the case of Zimbabwe, studies have found that most of the Zimbabwean immigrants in South Africa were below 40 years of age (Tevera & Chikanda, 2009) or between 21 and 40 years (Mosala, 2008: 11), which are the peak years of work and family life.

Classical micro-economic theory of migration explains why both younger and older people migrate. It propounds that migration is performed by rational actors who, after a cost-benefit analysis, decide to migrate in expectation of a positive net return, which is usually monetary (Massey et al., 1993). Young men who migrate from Zimbabwe to South Africa often believe that there are better opportunities for employment or earning higher wages than those paid in Zimbabwe. This argument has become more relevant recently given the early deindustrialisation, which increased unemployment in Zimbabwe. In keeping with this argument, a village head interviewed by Manamere (2014) in rural Chiredzi suggested that young *majoni-joni* were 'forced' to migrate to South Africa by the economic situation in Zimbabwe.

In other cases, the migrant does not come up with this decision alone but a larger unit, such as the household, may be involved in making the decision to migrate, as argued in the household decision-making model or new economics of migration by Lucas and Stark (1985). This is usually meant to minimize risks to the household, such as imperfect markets, crop failures and unemployment. This is also a relevant explanation for the migration of young single men and adult married men from south-eastern Zimbabwe, a region that is largely drought prone. Furthermore, the lack of jobs due to early deindustrialisation in Zimbabwe was likely to make survival increasingly uncertain for households in this region.

The possibility of networking cannot be ruled out in this migration since some migrants were likely to connect with migrants who migrated earlier, including kin, friends and those with shared community origins (Massey et al., 1993). Having a family member abroad increases the chances that information might flow to those who had stayed behind, lessening the costs of migrating for other family members (Fischer et al., 1997). Achievements made by those who migrated earlier such as higher incomes, improved quality of life, ability to purchase land or improved agricultural productivity may also lure others into migration, as they may experience feelings deprivation relative to those who migrated.

The migration of young men from the sending communities in south-eastern Zimbabwe has been associated with several challenges. For instance, some of these young men are undocumented immigrants in South Africa, as they migrate clandestinely through informal routes. A headman interviewed by Manamere (2014: 96) in rural Chiredzi suggested that this was “[...] because they do not have the necessary travel documents so they ‘jump’ the border with the help of their friends”. Although the ZYC (2014) suggested that young women are increasingly involved in clandestine migration, probably due to the crisis, the risks involved are likely to explain why more young men than women migrate to South Africa. In addition, young women risk being raped by their male accomplices along these informal routes to South Africa. Clandestine migration is also likely to account for age differences in migration to South Africa, since some older men are unlikely to take the risks involved or have worked and raised money to obtain the necessary travel documents.

Perhaps a challenge that is more related to age is that youth migration occurs “upon completing grade seven (7)” (ZYC, 2014: XI). Manamere (2014) argues that young men prefer crossing the border over completing their schooling. At the same time, their education helps shape “the type of work they have been able to secure in South Africa” (Manamere, 2014: 93). While young *majoni joni* drop out of school in search of jobs in South Africa, young girls also have high drop-out rates in these communities as they “enter into early marriages with these men whom they believe to be better off than unemployed young men at home” (Manamere, 2014: 94). Manamere (2014) discusses some of the challenges facing the young girls who get married to *majoni joni* in detail.

As previously mentioned, in many instances, *majoni-joni* enter into relationships with young girls and leave their new wives under the care of their parents, often returning home at very infrequent intervals. A range of problems

have ensued from the subsequent misunderstandings and infidelity, including escalating divorce rates, an apparent rise in wife-battering as well as the spread of HIV/AIDS. Rural elders see young male border crossers as violent immoral criminals, people who break marriages, spread HIV/AIDS (returning having contracted the disease) and abandon their wives and children, creating diaspora orphans.

The fact that some young men enter South Africa clandestinely may exacerbate these challenges. Having 'jumped' the border, these young migrants are unlikely to visit home more frequently. South Africa has tried to reduce clandestine migration by formalising immigration through the issuing of work permits in the 2011 dispensation for Zimbabweans. Furthermore, most of these young men migrate at ages during which they are sexually active, which increases their risk of being trapped in the pleasures of the host country. According to Muzondidya (2008: 15), young migrants are less likely to remit home due to "the excitement of being away from home and the excitement of the 'bright lights' of *egoli*".

The objectives of this study are to (1) determine the ages at which the labour migrants left south-eastern Zimbabwe for South Africa during the crisis; (2) analyse age differences in the period during which the labour migrants left for South Africa during the crisis; (3) assess for association between age at migration and migrating clandestinely; (4) explore the contribution of other personal characteristics of the migrants to age differences in labour migration to South Africa and (5) investigate the role played by household and district-level factors in age differences in labour migration to South Africa.

### ***Methodology***

The study mainly adopted the quantitative research approach, whereby household heads, with assistance from other household members to cross-check the accuracy of the information, responded to a household questionnaire. The sampling strategy involved the purposive selection of four districts in south-eastern Zimbabwe including Zaka, Bikita, Chipinge and Chimanimani districts. These districts have a tradition of labour migration to South Africa and, therefore, would best show any changes that occurred in age selectivity as a result of the crisis. Parts of them are also drought prone such that livelihoods based on rain-fed peasant agriculture cannot be sustained.

In each of the four selected districts, two Wards were purposively selected. This was meant to reduce travelling costs as those Wards in close proximity to

each other were selected. Efforts were also made to include Wards in urban and rural areas. This is because the crisis was likely to influence labour migration to South Africa from both urban and rural setups.

Snowball sampling (also known as referral sampling) was used to select both households with labour migrants in South Africa and those without, for the sake of comparison. The researcher or assistant first identified an initial household with a migrant who once moved to South Africa for labour reasons. He or she was then referred to other households with similar migrant members. Although it is a non-probability sampling technique, snowball sampling allows the researcher to reach populations that are difficult to sample when using other sampling methods (Creswell, 2011). More so, the process is cheap, simple and cost-efficient.

While the desired number of households was 200, 50 from each of the 4 districts, the actual number enumerated was 166 households, indicating a response rate of 83%. This included 49 households from Bikita, 48 Zaka, 39 Chipinge and 30 from Chimanimani district. In one of the districts with the lowest response rates (Chipinge), some migrant households were reluctant to participate in the study, fearing that their members who were clandestine migrants in South Africa would be deported. Others mistook the research assistants for donors and were afraid they would not get aid if it was known that they had members in the diaspora.

## ***Results and findings***

### ***Level of Labour Migration from South-Eastern Zimbabwe to South Africa***

100 out of 166 (approximately 60%) of the studied households had at least one migrant member (result not shown). Among the migrant households, 87 out of 100 (87%) had international migrants. 85 of the international migrants were in South Africa, one was in another African country and yet another was overseas (Table 1). The remainder (13%) of the migrant households had internal migrants, most of whom migrated to cities or towns in Zimbabwe. Most of the labour migrants from south-eastern Zimbabwe migrated to South Africa. This can be explained by the fact that this region is located close to the South African border and parts of this region are arid such that their rural economies “[...] cannot provide stable livelihoods based on small-scale rain-fed agriculture” (Manamere, 2014: 91). The prolonged crisis is likely to have worsened migrants’ prospects of ever finding wage employment at home.

Consistently, half (42 out of 84) of the household heads confirmed that their members migrated to South Africa because of the lack of jobs in Zimbabwe (Table 1). Other reasons mentioned by relatively large proportions of the heads included poverty or need to escape poverty (15.5%), better wages in South Africa (11.9%), perennial food shortages (10.7%) and following other young men (9.5%) (Table 1). In other words, most of the members of these households were ‘pushed’ into migrating to South Africa by the lack of jobs in Zimbabwe and poverty, which was related to perennial food shortages given that some parts of this region are arid and cannot support livelihoods based on rain-fed agriculture. Those attracted to South Africa by better wages were fewer than those ‘pushed’ by the challenges at home. Only one was ‘pushed’ into migrating to South Africa by political violence and another by the need to conduct further education, which confirmed the predominance of economic over political reasons for migration.

**Table 1:** Aspects of Labour Migration From South-Eastern Zimbabwe to South Africa

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Destination of migrant</i>		
Town in Zimbabwe	13	13.0
South Africa	85	85.0
Other country	2	2.0
<i>Reasons for migrating to South Africa</i>		
Lack of jobs in Zimbabwe	42	50.0
Poverty/escape poverty	13	15.5
Better wages in South Africa	10	11.9
Perennial food shortages	9	10.7

Follow other young men	8	9.5
Escape political violence	1	1.2
Education	1	1.2
<i>Occupation on arrival</i>		
Unemployed/student	10	12.0
Vendor/run tuckshop/illegal miner	21	25.3
General hand	33	39.8
Domestic worker	12	14.5
Skilled/professional	7	8.4
<i>Wage earned on arrival</i>		
\$1–200	48	60.0
\$201–400	20	25.0
More than \$400	12	15.0

**Source:** Survey results

Upon arrival in South Africa, nearly two-fifths of the migrant members were employed as general hands (Table 1). Some of these immigrants were employed on a temporary basis to do odd jobs, such as assistant mechanics, farm-workers, etc. Other studies have confirmed the presence of many unskilled and semi-skilled Zimbabweans who work on South African farms, especially in Limpopo province (Muzondidya, 2008; Manamere, 2014). In most cases, these immigrants are paid wages that are lower than the minimum wage, less than ZAR885 per month (Muzondidya, 2008).

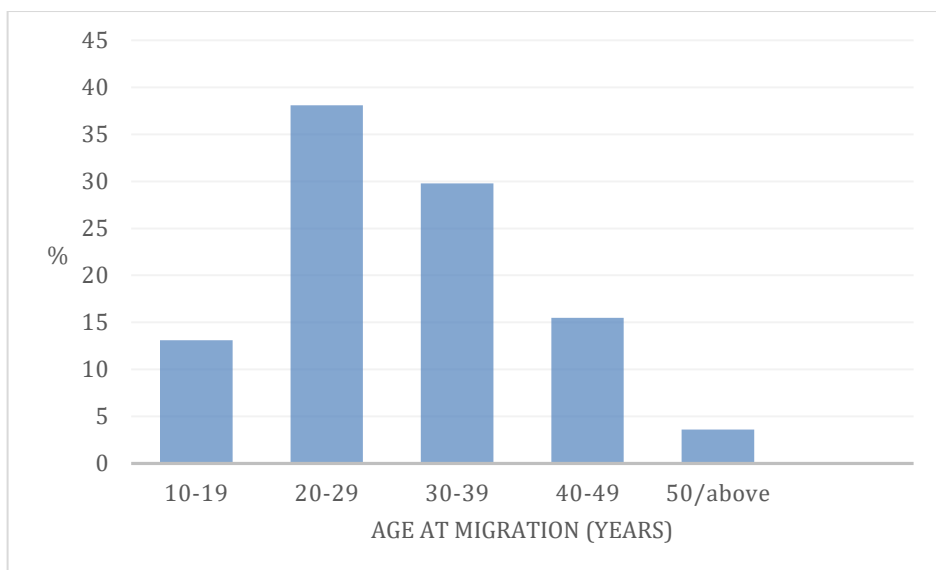
This was followed by enterprising immigrants who operated as vendors, owners of Spaza shops (or tuckshops) and illegal miners, especially in the

abandoned gold mines of the Gauteng province of South Africa. Although these activities helped them earn quick money, some of them were risky. For instance, South African newspapers have often reported stories of Zimbabweans who have lost their lives when the mines collapsed or were mugged by other illegal miners.

Three-fifths of the migrant members in South Africa earned incomes of up to USD200 (ZAR1,500) per month, which were small amounts. Other studies found that Zimbabwean migrant households in selected urban areas of South Africa earned ZAR1,433 per month on average (Crush & Tawodzera, 2016). According to these scholars, about half of them earned up to ZAR1,000, which was insufficient to meet many urban expenses. Nevertheless, this was better than being in Zimbabwe where there were no jobs.

### ***Effects of the Crisis on Age Differences in Labour Migration to South Africa***

The study assessed for association between the ages of migrants and when they migrated to South Africa in order to analyse the effects of the crisis on age differences in labour migration to South Africa. Regarding the ages of the migrants, most of them (34 out of 84, or 38.1%) were young people in their twenties (20–29), followed by those aged 30–39 (29.8%). This indicated that most of the labour migrants from this region to South Africa were aged 20–39, their prime active ages (Figure 1). This confirmed other studies conducted in the host country, which found that most of the Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa were aged 21–40 years old and in the middle of their work and family life (Mosala, 2008). The crisis also contributed to the migration of people aged 40 years or over (15.5%) since they were also under pressure to provide for their families. Under normal circumstances such people are less likely to migrate than their younger counterparts. The remainder (13.1%) constituted members who migrated in their teens. This indicates a serious problem since most of them had barely completed secondary school at the time of migration.



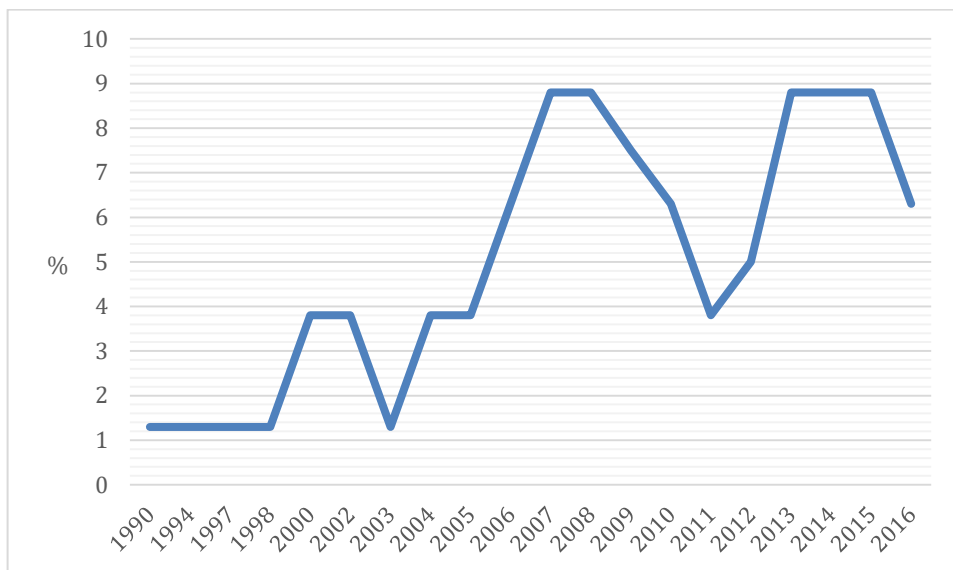
**Figure 1:** Age at Migration to South Africa      **Source:** survey results

The age variable was then reclassified in order to separate young migrants (below 30 years of age) from their older counterparts (aged 30 years or over). The proportions of younger and older migrants were almost equal (50.7% and 49.3%, respectively) (Table 1). Although this suggested that both the young and old were involved in this labour migration, results discussed so far have already indicated that these two age groups predominated in this migration at different stages of the crisis, with older men aged 30 or over more likely to have migrated during the peak of the crisis (2006–2010). Out of the forty-three young migrants, 44% were single and 56% were married (results not shown).

Regarding the period of migration, the study identified three major peaks during which most of the migration occurred (Figure 2). The first peak, though small, occurred at the dawn of the new millennium in 2000 and 2002, which was around the same time the crisis started. The second and more significant peak was associated with the peak of the crisis in 2007–2008. Like for the rest of the country, labour migration from this region to South Africa also reached its highest level during the crisis peak (2007–2008). In other words, most of the migrant members left the country between 2007 and 2008, obviously as a strategy to survive the crisis.



Thereafter, the level of labour migration to South Africa started to decline as a result of the stabilisation brought to the economy by the country's official adoption of multiple currencies dominated by the United States dollar (USD) in 2009. Foodstuffs returned to the shelves of Zimbabwean supermarkets after having been absent during the peak of the crisis. In the social sector, service delivery improved given the availability of foreign currency to import the necessary equipment and machinery. Most workers starting with civil servants were paid their salaries in foreign currencies. This positive change should have discouraged fresh emigrations and encourage return migration.



**Figure 2:** Date of migration to South Africa

**Source:** Survey results

The third peak, which was unexpected and more difficult to explain, occurred between 2013 and 2015. During this period, the companies that had remained operational further retrenched workers in order to remain viable in the shrinking economy (Southern Eye, 2015). This further shattered whatever hopes citizens still had of finding employment locally. At the same time, the country, especially the south-eastern region, was severely affected by consecutive droughts associated with the El Nino effect (World Food Programme, 2016).

When the periods during which migration occurred were categorised according to the decade, the period 2000–2009 and 2010–2016 had the same

proportions of migrants who left for South Africa (47.5% each). In other words, labour migration from this region to South Africa continued unabated from 2010 onwards (Table 2). The migration periods were then categorised based on the crisis peak including the period before the crisis peak (before 2006), the crisis peak (2006–2010) and after the peak (after 2010). Slightly more members migrated to South Africa after 2010 than during the peak of the crisis (41.9% compared with 37.6%) (Table 1). In other words, slightly more members of these households migrated to South Africa after the crisis peak (2006–2010) than during it, probably due to the factors already cited.

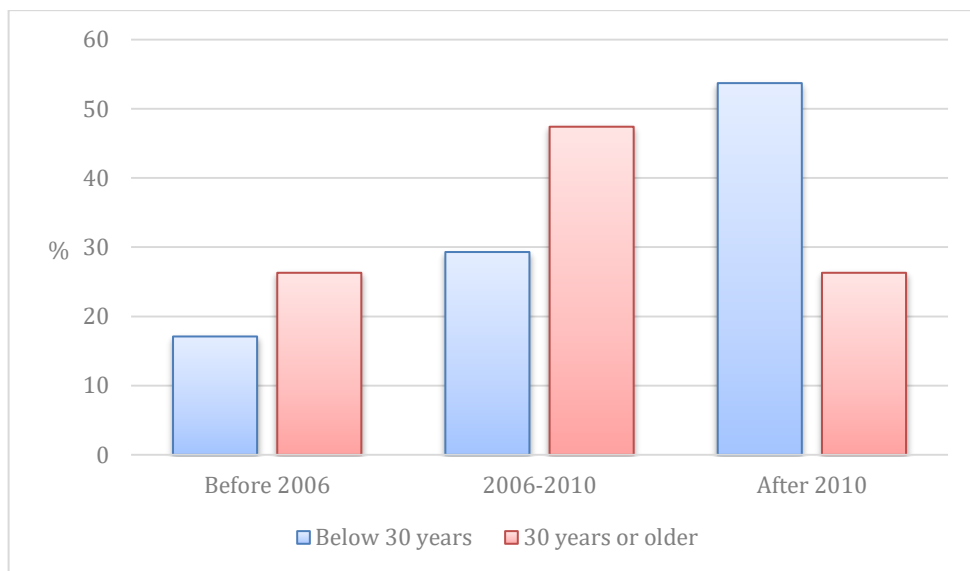
**Table 2:** Ages of migrants and when migration to South Africa occurred

<b>Age / When migrated to South Africa occurred</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Age at migration (years)</i>		
10–29 (youth)	43	51.2
30 or older (adults)	41	48.8
<i>When migration occurred (based on the decade)</i>		
Before 2000	4	5.0
2000–2009	38	47.5
2010 and after	38	47.5
<i>When migration occurred (based on the crisis peak)</i>		
Before the crisis peak (before 2006)	17	21.3
During the crisis peak (2006–2010)	30	37.5

After the crisis peak (after 2010)	33	41.3
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**Source:** Survey results

A test of association between the ages of the migrants and the period migrated revealed a significant result [Pearson Chi-square value 6.124, Asymptotic significance (2-sided) 0.047] (Figure 3). While the majority (53.7%) of young migrants aged below 30 relocated to South Africa after 2010, the largest proportion (47.4%) of older migrants aged 30 years or over migrated during the peak of the crisis (2006–2010). In other words, the crisis peak was more associated with the migration of older migrants aged 30 years or over than younger migrants aged below 30. This suggested that the migration of older married migrants increased during the crisis peak, signifying change from the previous dominance in this migration stream by young single men. This is because they were responsible for taking care of their families whose survival was at stake during the peak of the crisis. After the crisis peak, young men both married and single predominated in labour migration to South Africa. Muzondidya (2008) missed the point that older men were more likely to migrate to South Africa during the crisis peak as it was their responsibility to take care of families left back home.



**Figure 3:** Period migrated by age of the migrant **Source:** Survey results

***Age of the Migrant and Whether They Migrated Clandestinely***

Young men have been associated with illegal migration to South Africa due to their inability to afford official documents such as Zimbabwean passports (Manamere, 2014). The study assessed for association between age at migration and migrating clandestinely. This would show which of the two age groups, younger and older people, was more desperate to leave the country during the crisis. More than half (48 out of 83, or 57.8%) of the migrants relocated to South Africa without passports (result not shown). Although there was no significant association between age at migration and whether migrants migrated without a passport, some patterns could be discerned in the distribution. Two-thirds (67.7%) of young migrants aged below 30 and half of those aged 30 years or older (52.5%) migrated to South Africa without official documents (Table 3). In other words, young migrants were slightly more likely to migrate to South Africa clandestinely than their older counterparts. This was probably because they were less positioned to have raised enough money to secure official travelling documents, especially Zimbabwean passports.

**Table 3:** Age of the migrant by whether they migrated with a passport

Whether migrated with passport	Age (years)	
	Below 30 years	30 years or older
<i>Chi-square=3,076; Asymp. Sig. 0.079</i>		
Yes	33.3	52.5
No	67.7	47.5

**Source:** Survey results \* Significant at 5% level (P<0.05); \*\* Significant at 1% level (P<0.01)

This confirmed other studies that found that young men from this region often migrate clandestinely to South Africa (ZYC, 2014; Manamere, 2014). For instance, Manamere (2014: 96) interviewed a headman in rural Chiredzi who

said young men migrate from this area to South Africa clandestinely “[...] because they do not have the necessary travel documents, so they jump the border with the help of their friends”. Results not displayed here revealed that the majority (29 out 48, or 60.4%) used informal routes through the forest, followed by those who were helped to cross the border by middlemen (35.4%) and those who bribed officials (4.2%). Crossing the border through forests is risky, which explains why it mainly involved men. Furthermore, clandestine migration was associated with the migrants’ level of education; those having tertiary education (certificates, diplomas or degrees) were least likely to have migrated to South Africa without an official passport (Table 4). Although those migrants with primary or no education constituted the second majority among both the illegal and legal migrants, their proportion was higher among the illegal than the legal migrants. This suggested that clandestine migration was associated with low levels of education. This is probably because the educated are more likely to calculate the risks of migrating clandestinely than their uneducated counterparts. Besides increasing one’s level of awareness of the dangers of clandestine migration, education also increases one’s chances of being employed or having accessed enough money to secure the necessary travel documents before. This is different from someone who migrates soon after completing Grade 7. This also explains why clandestine migration involved children of the household head rather than the spouse or the male head of the household. This implies that the parents of some of the young men who migrated clandestinely could not afford or did not prioritise securing travelling documents for them; hence, the young men would connive with others to migrate clandestinely. Migrating clandestinely was also more associated with migrants from Bikita and Chipinge districts than those from Chimanmani and Zaka.

<b>Table 4: Selected factors affecting clandestine migration</b>		
<b>Variable/factor</b>	<b>Whether migrated with passport</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<i>Highest education level at migration (Chi-square=5.081; Asym. Sig. 0.079)</i>		
Not educated/primary education	17.6	36.2
Secondary education	67.6	59.6
Tertiary (certificate/diploma/degree)	14.7	4.3
<i>Marital status at migration</i>		
Single	15.6	33.3
Married	71.9	59.5
Disrupted (widowed/separated/divorced)	12.5	7.1
<i>Relationship of migrant to household head</i>		
Spouse/head	58.1	43.9
Own child	19.4	39.0
Other (sibling, parent, grandchild)	22.6	17.1
<i>District of enumeration (Chi-square=8,434; Asymp. Sig. 0.038)*</i>		
Zaka	8.6	16.7
Bikita	20.0	37.5
Chipinge	34.3	33.3
Chimanimani	37.1	22.9

**Source:** Survey results \* Significant at 5% level (P<0.05); \*\* Significant at 1% level (P<0.01)

Further analysis of the issue of illegal migration revealed that the proportion of the migrant members who were legal immigrants in South Africa was higher at the time of the survey in 2016/2017 (71.8%) than at the time of migration (42.2%). This was probably due to the efforts made by the South African government to legalise this migration by issuing Zimbabweans with work permits during the 2011 Zimbabwean dispensation. However, some labour migrants remained in SA, working illegally, despite these efforts.

***Contribution of Other Personal Characteristics to Age Differences in Labour Migration***

An overwhelming majority (78 out of 85, or 91.8%) of the migrant members was male, which indicates that labour migration from south-eastern Zimbabwe to South Africa remains male dominated (Table 5). This means that there was no change in the gender composition of labour migrants from these districts in south-eastern Zimbabwe to South Africa. This was contrary to the study by the ZYC (2014) and others, which suggested increased feminisation of labour migration in Africa. Instead, the current study confirmed the tradition among males to migrate alone, leaving women and children behind. This confirmed the BBC's (2015) documentary on the 'city of women' in Burkina Faso where most young men migrate to Italy. This is likely to be associated with negative consequences for women who, besides being denied of their conjugal rights for prolonged periods, raise families alone.

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Sex</i>		
Male	78	91.8
Female	7	8.2
<i>Marital status at migration</i>		
Single	20	26.3
Married	49	64.5

Disrupted (widowed/separated/divorced)	7	9.2
<i>Highest education level at migration</i>		
Not educated / Primary education	24	28.9
Secondary education	52	62.7
Tertiary (certificate/diploma/degree)	7	8.4

**Source:** Survey results

The majority (49 out of 76, or 64.5%) of the migrants were married at the time of migration. Those who were single constituted slightly more than a quarter (26.3%) of the migrants. The rest (9.2%) had disrupted marriages (Table 5). This was similar to studies conducted among professionals, such as teachers (Ranga, 2015), where an overwhelming majority of the migrants were married men looking for means to help their families left back home to survive the crisis. The proportion (26.3%) of single men was, however, far higher among the current sample of unskilled Zimbabweans than that of teachers. This is because professionals go through many years of schooling and are required to have enough working experience before being recruited outside the country, unlike unskilled migrants, some of whom migrated after completing Grade 7.

The largest proportion (52 out of 83, or 62.7%) of the migrants had some secondary education (Table 5). This confirmed other studies that found that Zimbabwean immigrants in South Africa were more educated relative to nationals of other African countries (Mosala, 2008). This is because of Zimbabwe's emphasis on secondary education since independence in 1980. This was followed by those with primary or no education, who constituted more than a quarter (28.9%) of the migrants. Lastly, very few (7 out of 83, or 8.4%) had post-secondary or professional qualifications. This confirmed other studies which have argued that labour migrants leave for South Africa with low levels of education, such as after completing Grade 7 (ZYC, 2014). Although this involved only a quarter of the migrants, this explained why most of them worked as general hands earning low wages while in South Africa.



Some of the migrants might not see the importance of completing secondary schooling given the low chances of finding employment at home in Zimbabwe.

**Table 6:** Other Personal Characteristics by Age of the Migrant

<b>Determinant</b>	<b>Age (years)</b>	
	<b>Below 30 years</b>	<b>30 years or older</b>
<i>Sex of migrant</i>		
Male	88.4	95.1
Female	11.6	4.9
Marital status at migration (Chi-square=13.158; Asymp. Sig. 0.001)**		
Single	44.7	8.1
Married	50.0	78.4
Disrupted (widowed/separated/divorced)	5.3	13.1
<i>Highest education level at migration</i>		
Not educated/ Primary education	30.2	25.6
Secondary	62.8	64.1
Tertiary (certificate/diploma/degree)	7.0	10.3

**Source:** Survey results \* Significant at 5% level (P<0.05); \*\* Significant at 1% level (P<0.01)

Age selectivity did not vary together with most of the other personal characteristics except marital status (Table 6). There was a highly significant association between age at migration and marital status. The majorities of

both older migrants aged 30 or over and young migrants below 30 were married. But, the proportion for older migrants was significantly higher than that of their younger counterparts (78.3% and 50.0%, respectively) (Table 6). In other words, older migrants, most of whom migrated to South Africa during the peak of the crisis (2006–2010), were also married. On the other hand, young migrants aged below 30 included both married and single individuals. The peak of the crisis did not only increase the migration of older men, but also those who were married and sought a means of surviving the crisis for their families left back home.

The result for sex of the migrant was insignificant, probably because of the skewed distribution in favour of males. As for the insignificant result for education of the migrant, there was no difference between the ages as both the younger and older migrants were equally likely to migrate with low levels of education.

#### ***Effects of Household and District-Level Characteristics on Age Differences in Migration***

Nearly half (48.6%) of the migrant members, the majority, were husbands of the female heads of households who participated in the study (Table 7). In other words, they were absent household heads. This supported the argument by Yabiku, Agadjanian and Sevoyan (2010) that in several Southern African countries, including Botswana, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, men use labour migration to South Africa as a way of coping with droughts and the cash economy since they cannot earn enough income at home given the lack of jobs. In this case, adult men from south-eastern Zimbabwe also used labour migration to South Africa as a way of coping with the Zimbabwean crisis. The second majority (31.1%) of the migrant members were children of the household head. As already found, this included both young men who were married and those who were single. The rest (20.3%) were siblings, parents or grandchildren of the household head.

Slightly more than half of the migrant members (52.1%) came from large households made up of six or more members. The average household size was six members. This was typical of rural areas in Zimbabwe where the total

fertility rate (TFR) is six children per woman on average. Large households were likely to be poor and experience food shortages, making them likely to send one of their members into migration to South Africa. As found already, poverty and food shortages were the reasons for migration for the second and fourth largest proportions of the migrants in South Africa (Table 1). South-eastern Zimbabwe is vulnerable to droughts since most of it belongs to agro-ecological regions IV and V, which receive low rainfall of below 500mm per annum. This region was not spared during the drought that hit the country during the 2015/2016 farming season. For instance, The Standard (2016) reported that Chipinge district in south-eastern Zimbabwe was one of the most affected areas. Consistent with the effects of this drought, the majority (61.2%) of the households reported that they ate fewer meals than usual in the past year (Table 7). This should have contributed to the large proportions of members of these households that migrated to South Africa during 2013–2015.

**Table 7:** Household and District-Level Characteristics of the Migrants in South Africa

Characteristic	No.	%
<i>Relationship of migrant to household head</i>		
Spouse	36	48.6
Own child	23	31.1
Other (sibling, parent, grandchild)	15	20.3
<i>Household size</i>		
1–5 members	35	47.9
More than 5 members	38	52.1
<i>Mean=6.02, Median=6, Mode=5</i>		

<i>Whether ate less than the normal number of meals per day in past year (2015/2016)</i>		
Yes	52	61.2
No	33	38.8
<i>Materials used to build main house</i>		
Hut: Mud/brick wall and thatch roof	23	27.1
Modern: Brick and iron/asbestos sheets	62	72.9
<i>Whether own cattle or plough</i>		
Own cattle, plough or both	45	54.2
Neither own cattle nor plough	38	45.8
<i>District of enumeration</i>		
Zaka	49	28.9
Bikita	48	29.5
Chipinge	39	23.5
Chimanimani	30	18.1

**Source:** Survey results

Household socio-economic status was further assessed through the materials used to build the main house and ownership of cattle or a plough. The main houses of the majority (72.9%) of the households with migrants to South Africa were 'modern' as they were built of brick walls and iron or asbestos sheets (Table 7). The remainder (27.1%) of the households had a traditional hut as their main house. In other words, slightly more than a quarter of the households with labour migrants in South Africa were poor, as they lived in traditional huts. The proportion living in poverty increased when ownership of cattle or a plough was used as the criterion. 38 out of 83 (45.8%) of the households with labour migrants in South Africa neither possessed cattle nor

a plough. Field notes revealed that for some of these households, especially those in Chipinge District, this was because they had just lost their cattle during the 2015/2016 drought.

A significant result ( $P < 0.05$ ) indicated that the majority (72.1%) of young migrants aged below 30 and about half (51.4%) of older migrants aged 30 or over came from households that ate fewer meals than normal per day in the past year (Table 7). In other words, the households of young migrants were more associated with food insecurity during the 2015/2016 drought than their older counterparts. This probably explained why most of the young migrants migrated after 2010, especially during 2013–2015. This further confirmed the arguments made by The Standard (2016) that households in south-eastern Zimbabwe use the migration of young men to South Africa to cope with droughts.

**Table 8:** Age of the migrant and household and district level characteristics

Determinants	Age (years)	
	Below 30 years (%)	30 years or older (%)
<i>Relationship of migrant to household head</i>		
Head	37.8	61.1
Child	40.5	22.2
Other (sibling, parent, grandchild)	21.6	16.7
<i>Household size</i>		
1–5 members	40.5	57.1
6 or more	59.5	42.9
<i>Whether household had fewer no. of meals than usual in past year (Chi-square=3,878; Asymp. Sig. 0.049)*</i>		
Yes	72.1	51.2
No	27.9	48.8

<i>Materials used to build main house</i>		
Hut: Mud/brick wall and thatch roof	30.2	24.4
Modern: Brick and iron/asbestos sheets	69.8	75.6
<i>Whether own cattle or plough</i>		
Own cattle, plough or both	59.5	50.0
Neither own cattle nor plough	40.5	50.0
<i>District of enumeration (Chi-square=11,753; Asymp. Sig. 0.008)**</i>		
Zaka	23.3	2.4
Bikita	25.6	39.0
Chipinge	37.2	26.8
Chimanimani	14.0	31.7

**Source:** survey results \* Significant at 5% level ( $P < 0.05$ ); \*\* Significant at 1% level ( $P < 0.01$ )

This weekly newspaper reported that in Chipinge, one of the areas hardest hit by successive droughts in recent years, many families resorted to having one meal a day while thousands of livestock, particularly cattle, died due to lack of pastures and water (The Standard, 2016). It went on to argue that households in this district have coped with successive droughts through the migration of young men to South Africa and food relief from non-governmental organisations.

A highly significant result ( $P < 0.01$ ) indicated that the majority (37.2%) of young migrants aged below 30 came from Chipinge district, while the largest proportion (39.0%) of older migrants aged 30 or over came from Bikita district (Table 8). This further confirmed The Standard (2016), which argued that the migration of young men to South Africa, especially in Chipinge district, is a strategy used by their households to cope with successive droughts. On the other hand, Bikita district does not have a history of young men who migrate to South Africa but household heads in this district should have been 'pushed' by the crisis peak into looking for means of survival in South Africa given the lack of employment at home.

Although the result for household size was insignificant, the majority (59.5%) of young migrants aged below 30 came from large households with more than 5 members. In other words, the young migrants did not only come from households that were food insecure during the 2015/2016 drought but also large households, which further increased the risk of food insecurity. On the other hand, the largest proportion (57.1%) of older migrants aged 30 years or over came from smaller households (1–5 members), which suggested that they were the sole breadwinners of their young families. In the other insignificant results for materials used to build the main house and ownership of cattle or a plough, there were no differences among the classes. For instance, both young and older migrants were equally likely to come from households with a modern main house made of brick walls and a roof of iron sheets/asbestos/tiles and households that owned cattle or did not own cattle, a plough or both (Table 8).

### ***Conclusion***

There was a high level of labour migration from these districts in south-eastern Zimbabwe to South Africa since about three-fifths of the households had at least a migrant in South Africa. The main reason for migration was the lack of jobs at home followed by poverty, better wages in South Africa, food shortages and the need to follow other men. Most of the migrants were men, aged 20–39, married and with some secondary education. However, about a quarter had primary or no education at all. This confirmed that labour migration from this region to South Africa remains a men's affair. This is probably because most of it, especially that involving young men, was clandestine. Once in South Africa, most of them worked as 'general hands' earning wages as low as USD200 (ZAR1,500) or less per month. This was mainly because most of them were not professionally qualified and some of them had primary or no education at all. Although generally low, these incomes were 'something' compared to the lack of jobs at home.

Almost equal proportions of the migrants left for South Africa during the crisis peak (2006–2010) and after 2010. Most of those who migrated during the crisis peak were older men aged 30 or over. The year 2010 was included in the crisis peak period since it still witnessed high numbers of fresh emigrations although they had declined after having reached a peak in 2007–2008. Hence, Muzondidya (2008) missed the point when he argued that both the young and old migrated during the crisis in the 2000s. Instead, the current study showed that older men who were also married heads of households were more likely

than younger men to migrate to South Africa during the crisis peak, as it was their responsibility to take care of families left back home. As Muzondidya (2008) indicates, young men tend to easily forget their responsibility of remitting to the household of origin. In other words, the crisis in Zimbabwe 'pushed' adult men with family responsibilities into migrating to South Africa in search of survival for families left behind. This number was more than young single men, who predominated in migration from south-eastern Zimbabwe to South Africa before the crisis.

On the other hand, most of those who migrated after 2010, especially during 2013–2015 when the country was affected by consecutive droughts related to the El Nino effect, were young men below 30 years of age. Most of them came from households in the Chipinge district that ate fewer than their usual number of meals in the previous year (2015/2016). This suggested that the 2015/2016 drought contributed to their migration to South Africa. This further confirmed the arguments made in *The Standard* (2016) that households in Chipinge, an area most affected by the 2015/16 drought, use the migration of young men to South Africa as a way of coping with droughts. Finally, this indicated that labour migration from these districts returned to its pre-crisis trends of predominance by young men (Muzondidya, 2008) after 2010, having been dominated by older men during the crisis peak (2006–2010).

Based on these findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. The government of Zimbabwe and its development partners should create jobs or income-generating projects to benefit the youth in south-east Zimbabwe in order to control their migration to South Africa.
2. The government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local leaders, school teachers, parents and peers should educate the youth against migrating to South Africa before completing secondary or post-secondary education.
3. They should also educate the youth, especially those about to complete Grade 7, regarding the dangers of migrating clandestinely to South Africa, such as being apprehended and deported or being prey to wild animals when crossing the border through forests.
4. They should find diverse ways to help households in south-eastern Zimbabwe to cope with droughts and desist from using the migration of young men to South Africa as the main coping strategy.



5. There is need for further research to verify whether clandestine migration to South Africa is more associated with young migrants than older migrants and to compare traditional migrant sending districts with other Zimbabwean districts on the feminisation of labour migration to South Africa.

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## ***Reciprocity and Migration: The Interface between Religions***

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### ***Abstract***

*Much has been said on migration in current scholarly discourses within and multi-disciplinary debates. But no sufficient input has been generated towards the discourse from a religious perspective, albeit extremely needed insofar as people migrate with their religion. This inquiry examines the interplay between reciprocity and migration from a religious perspective using primary and secondary source analysis. It also suggests that cultivating religions' cultural ideology of positive, responsible and balanced reciprocity in a societal relationship based on mutual benefits mediates a healthy co-existence between the native and the migrants despite their invariably differing and competing religions. Such reciprocity could be spawned through the sacred texts of religions that espouse either general or positive balanced reciprocity. In the course of the analysis, the work brings the Golden Rule into focus as the best candidate for a test case.*

**Keywords:** Migration, reciprocity, ideology, and interface between religions.

### ***Introduction***

Without demur, international migration is a rapid and a non-stop growing phenomenon in our modern world according to international migration report 2015. The number of migrants reached 244 million in 2015 which was 222 million in 2010 and 173 million in 2000 (United Nations 2016). Of which 74 million live in Europe, 75 million in Asia, 54 million in North America, 21 million in Africa, 9 million in the Caribbean and 8 Oceania. The majority of migrants worldwide originate from the middle - income group and it has increased from 2000-2015 and reached 150 million in 2015. Regarding country of origin, 104 million were born in Asia, 62 million in Europe, 37 million in Caribbean and 34 million in Africa (United Nations 2016:1). The reason for such influx of migrants is ascribed to the interconnection of the world through diverse modern technology which has made all communication and transportation very easy.

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Migration, however, entails its own pros and cons. Countries of destination gain economic and knowledge benefits such as labour, an increase in taxes, entrepreneur and scientific inventions are some among the many contributions of the migrants. Likewise, the sending country is receiving its own economic share through remittance. Nonetheless, migrants are the most susceptible of the society to violence, abuse and loss of job. Similarly, receiving countries might as well suffer from violence and terrorism as recently documented heinous and barbarous terrorist incidents in Western countries.

Migration is a normal human phenomenon, and it is not confined only to economic needs, although most of the migrants were pushed out of their countries due to poverty, desire for a better life, conflict and war. Particularly migrants not only come with their interest to sustain a better life, but also with their native values, cultures, religions and worldviews. Such make things harder for peaceful co-existence between the native and the migrants. Nevertheless, keeping the positive reciprocal benefits or advantages and curbing the disadvantages for both the native and the migrants demands an inclusive approach to the problem. Such enterprise to the problem has already been underway for a while.

Consequently, several research projects on migration have been carried out in different disciplines via theories and methods fitting to address specific queries. It is also the interest of the present work to address “what contributes to building a peaceful co-existence between the natives of destination countries and migrants coming from varied religions and nations?”

Our method of inquiry would be analysing selected relevant texts from primary and secondary sources. The study, basing its assumption on Golden Rule, will argue that the ideology of responsible and balanced reciprocity is fundamentally important in constructing migration policy, positive social interaction, and peaceful coexistence at the secular as well as the religious level. Accordingly, multidimensional approach to the problem of migration, differing views on the Golden Rule, the Golden Rule as a reciprocal ideology, and reciprocity and migration in the interface between religions will be discussed respectively.

### ***Multidimensional Approach***

Migration theories are in the making. No single coherent international migration theory has ever been developed to date. Contemporary endeavours

to address current issues of migration from different disciplines evince that it demands a multidimensional approach and state of research questions. Each discipline undertakes a specific question and hypothesis. Brettell & Hollifield (2015:4) have listed eight disciplines' questions; namely: Anthropologists' question, "How does migration effect cultural change and affect cultural identity?" Demographers investigate, "To what extent do immigrant and native populations become more similar over time? It is an attempt to understand assimilation. Economists inquire, "What explains the propensity to migrate and its effect? It is an inquiry into maximizing utility. Geographers seek to understand "What explains the socio- spatial patterns of migration? It is about incorporation, network and location. Historians investigate "How a phenomenon has (e.g. causes, structures, processes, consequences of migration) or a relationship (e.g. gender and migration) changed or persisted over time? It is concerned about period. Lawyers attempt to answer the question: "How does the law influence migration?" It is a concern for human right. Political scientists ferret out the reasons "Why do states have difficulty controlling migration? It is concerned about controlling migration. Sociologist attempts to respond to the question "What explains incorporation and exclusion?" It investigates the issue of integration.

Although anthropologist and sociologist respond to the social and cultural dimension of migration, they do not look at it from a religious perspective. Recently, a right-based approach to migration from a moral perspective related to development is espoused (Dinbabo & Carciotto 2015). Such a valuable attempt with a focus on the leadership level and international law and policymaking needs a complementing theoretical base to achieve a full-fledged and comprehensive approach to address issues at the grassroots level not least the peaceful co-existence of migrants with the natives of the receiving country.

It can be argued that crafting a religious theoretical and conceptual model is mandatory in order to respond to the question what contributes to the peaceful co-existence of the natives of the receiving country and migrants coming from varied religions and nations. The attempt in the present work is not to craft one, but to test a possible working concept that might contribute to the process, namely: general and balanced reciprocity in the formulation of the Golden Rule.

### ***The Golden Rule: Differing Perspectives***

What is the Golden Rule? According to the Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy, the golden rule is defined as:

Any form of the dictum: *do unto others as you would have them do unto you. In some form this is found in almost all religions and ethical system.* [Blackburn, Simon. "Golden Rule."]

Examples of such formulations are "Treat others how you wish to be treated" or "Do not do to others what you do not want others to do to you" (Wattles 1996:56) or "whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them..." (Matt 7:12). However, its meaning, application and usefulness are debated. For our present concern, the Golden Rule, albeit diverse in formulation, is understood as a positive and responsible reciprocal societal relationship.

Notwithstanding its popularity, the Golden rule has been criticised by different fields of scholars. Based on Jeffrey Wattles' (1996:5-7 and 77-86) discussion of criticism against the golden rule, the objections can be subsumed under five reasons. One of the major objections is that it is too general to be a moral guide in the day-to-day relationship and embarrassing at the philosophical discourse and seriousness. Objection exemplified "what if a sadomasochist goes forth to treat others as he wants to be treated?" Second, it is based on the assumption that human beings are the same and does not do justice to the difference. In other words, the rule assumes that what we want is what others want. There is no differentiation of desire. Third, it implies that what is good for ourselves is also good for everyone. If this is the case, the rule only applies to those who have similar beliefs and similar needs. Four, the rule makes ordinary wants and desires as the criterion of morality, therefore it is too low a standard. For instance, a judge would not be in a position to sentence a criminal if the principle of the Golden Rule is enacted in the court. Fifth, the rule also criticised in its artificial and abstractedness. Six, it is connected to religion, but moral intuition and moral reason can operate without reference to any religious foundation.

Despite such serious criticism, the Golden Rule enjoyed a significant attention among scholars and practitioners to address a universal moral principle. Some even claimed that it is sufficient for ethics and all duties may be inferred from it. Others insisted that it is a necessary criterion for right action or an evaluative tool that tests actions (Wattles 1996:5). For instance, its importance is well stated by Marcus G. Singer's comment. It reads:

*The golden rule has been widely accepted, in word if not in deed, by vast numbers of greatly differing peoples; it is a basic device of moral education; and it can be found at the core of innumerable moral, religious, and social codes... The nearly universal acceptance of the*

*golden rule and its promulgation by persons of considerable intelligence, though otherwise of divergent outlooks, would ...seem to provide some evidence for the claim that it is a fundamental ethical truth.”* (Marcus Sing, 1967:365-367).

Deciding its meaning is also another baffling issue for scholars to ascribe to it a universal moral principle. Wattle, however, argued that albeit meaning involves context, it does not negate commonality insofar as conceptual similarity could be experienced beyond cultural boundaries (Wattles 1996:4). For Wattle, concepts are cross-cultural and unbounded. Yet, since the golden rule requires identification of the agent with the other its exercise needs a thoughtful practitioner. In the context of religious discourse, however, the context of Golden Rule is paramount before seeking harmony at the conceptual level. In the ensuing discussion, we will focus on three areas where the concept and text of the Golden Rule as reciprocal relationship have been discussed, namely: Greco-Roman world, Matt 7:12 and Hadith 13. Studying Greco-Roman concept of reciprocity would serve as a conceptual and ideological framework for the discussion of Mat 7:12 and Hadith 13.

### ***The Golden Rule as Reciprocity: Ideology***

Ideology, in the present work, is concerned with “conscious or unconscious enactment of presuppositions, dispositions, and values held in common with other people” (Robbins 1996:98). It is “an integrated system of beliefs, assumptions, and values” reflecting “the needs and interest of a group or a class at a particular time in history” (Davis 1975:14). Our interest in this section is primarily limited to examining reciprocity as an ideology in Greco-Roman world with a brief comparison of modern concept of ideology in light of migration and reciprocity.

### ***Greco-Roman World***

Studying Greco-Roman world’s reciprocal relationship would be an unrealistic ambition in such a brief undertaking; therefore, only selected sources related to the Golden Rule as reciprocity would be treated. But at the outset a semantic problem precludes us from directly delving into the discussion of the text. For one, none of the single Greek or Latin words we can use to express the contemporary concept of reciprocity can express univocally the English term “reciprocity.” Secondly, the earliest closest words of Greek and Latin are used to convey economic exchange not ethical sense (Berchman 2008:40). However, at the later stage, ethical sense of reciprocity began to appear in the



Latin for instance Cicero used *amicitia* (equal return in friendship). Thirdly, there is no direct statement of the Golden Rule in Archaic, classic and Greco-Roman sources. Nevertheless, in *Nicomachean Ethics* (NE, 1166a1-b29) Aristotle introduces the concept of reciprocity in its ethical sense by defining friend as another self (probably “another Heracles.” cf. Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics* (EE, 1245a30).

It should be noted that in ancient Greece the Golden Rule/reciprocal ethics/ could not be found in its salient form instead doing good to friends and harming enemy was prevalent due to frequent war and clashes between cities and among individual. In such environment, doing good to friends and harming enemies was a tool for protecting oneself from danger. Particularly, Isocrates advocates the notion of helping friends and harming enemies in order to unite and stand against city enemies (Wattles 1996:29). Although Homer, Socrates and Plato had discussed reciprocity, our discussion would focus on Aristotle and others who came after him.

But Aristotle’s concept of ethics as a reciprocal obligation to the other is inherited from earlier sources such as Homer, Socrates, and Plato who claimed that reciprocity entails moral, social as well as political obligation (Berchman 2008:41). Bercham adumbrates three natures of reciprocal obligation as an essential feature of the Golden Rule: (1) aims at the ethical and social, (2) independent in desire, aim, without partiality (preference of individuals), and (3) autonomous desire and feeling of the agent. Reciprocity is about specific virtues and rationally taken actions considered to be good and admirable to benefit others not necessarily benefiting the agent. For Aristotle, the beloved one or a friend is another self (NE 1166a1-b29; EE 1245a). The connection between Aristotle loving another self and the Golden Rule is that in both an attitude one has for himself is reciprocally given to the other. Aristotle argues that a human being is a social being and by nature designed to share his life (NE 9.9.1169b18-19). Something is missing in the good of man if all the concern is self-interested (NE 1097a28-b21; Aristotle, *Politics*). This social nature of the human being is the basis of justice, which is good in itself (NE 1129b11-1130a5). Justice embraces all the virtues, because it is practically towards the other. Virtues people value the good of others for the sake of other people, in doing so, they seek virtuous action for their own sake. For Aristotle, there are three kinds of relationship: character friendship (based on virtue/goodness), friendship grounded in pleasure, and friendship grounded in utility (advantage) (NE 8.2.1155b17-8.3.1156b32; EE 7.1.1234b29-7.2.1237a36). The latter two kinds of relationship are based on self-advancement, but the

first one is concerned for the other just because of herself/himself and for her/his own sake. One has to love oneself before loving the self in another (politics 1106b36-1107a2; 1105b25-28). He argues that for the good of oneself requires concern for the good of another. But such relationship does not exist in the absence of reciprocation (NE 8.2.1155b17-1156a5). Although Aristotle does not speak of returning evil for harm, he argues restoring proper proportion of property wrongly taken or unjust distribution. And punishment should be administered because not one is an enemy, but because of violating proper action (Wattles 1996:37).

Imperial Rome's social and political relationship is also an essentially reciprocal relationship. Studying the relevant literatures of the time, Saller (1982:37) argued that reciprocal relationship "permeated the Roman society and there appears to be little justification for the hypothesis that the language can be dismissed as a "jargon of bureaucrats." In the Roman republic, reciprocity was enforced by the Law and religious mores (Saller 1982:5).

Whether such relationship was changed during the imperial Rome is debated. Scholars such as Blok (Blok 1969) argued for its discontinuity particularly because the increase of bureaucracy eliminated the exercise of patronage. However, a number of scholars have convincingly argued for its continuity. For example, Badian (1958), Gelzer (1968), Wallace-Hadrill (1989), Saller (1982) and Kalinowski (1996) insisted that patronage /reciprocal relationship was not just a central cultural experience and a vital conscious Roman ideology but it continued until the late antiquity of the Roman empire (Wallace-Hadrill 1989:65).

Granting such relationship in the imperial Rome would raise the question of whether it was ideological (in the sense of an integrated system of beliefs, assumptions, and values) or political (in the sense of power, status, system of cohesion). A detailed discussion of the issue is beyond the purview of this work, but for our purpose, suffices it to discuss representative texts focusing on Cicero, Dionysius and Seneca. According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus (4nt.Rom. 1.4.2), Rome dominated the world because of its institutions, established by Romulus, of which patronage was par excellence. Borrowing from stoic's universal friendship, Cicero also contended that the key to maintain civilization is mutual support among humans (Cicero- de officiis 1.7.22). Reciprocity is epitomized by nature as giving to and receiving (skills, labour, and talent) from one another to unite the human society closer. Likewise, Seneca maintains the same stance, arguing that the benefits are the

chief means of bonding human society (Seneca. *De beneficiis* 1-4.2). Such instances adduce the fact that reciprocal social relationship is of ideological in imperial Rome, i.e., it is concerned with moral duty, honour and identity than material things.

Cicero, for instance, views that the goal of generosity is to earn goodwill in return through gifts of service rather than money (Cicero. *de officiis* 1.15.47-48). Seneca unequivocally expressed the same view writing, "a benefit cannot possibly be touched by the hand; its province is the mind... and so it is neither gold nor silver or any of the gifts which are held to be most valuable that constitutes a benefit, but merely the goodwill of him who bestows it (Seneca-*De beneficiis*. 1.5.2). For Seneca, therefore, bestowing benefit is not so much about reaping a return as it is public display of virtue. However, he contends that the receiver of the benefit is obligated to return gratitude in the form of publishing the virtue of the benefactor everywhere (Seneca- *De Beneficiis*, 2.22.1).

However, reciprocity entails material and political benefits. Cicero is unequivocal in stating the relationship of reciprocity on political arena such as providing games, banquet and doles to groups would place an obligation upon the receiver groups to vote for the benefactor to civic office, although he defended that men of true talent like himself did not need to spend money for such purpose (Cicero. *De officiis* 2.16.57-2.17, 58.). Material benefit surrenders the receivers' heart to the benefactor's service (Cicero. *De officiis*, 2.6.21) such as political loyalty (Seneca. *De beneficiis*. 6.9. 1-2). Seneca and Dionysius (Seneca, *De beneficiis*, 1.4.3 Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Ant. Rom.* 2.10.4) also attest competition among the patrons for winning client for political purpose.

In post-Augustinian proses, the terms patrons and client are infrequently used as they connote inferiority and degradation (Saller 1982:9). Unlike the patron and client, *amicus* does not convey the concept of differential social status because *amicus* is an ambiguous concept that can accommodate a social relationship between equal and unequal. The relationship, particularly *amicitia*/friendship/ is based on virtues. According to Seneca, *amicus* based on utility is temporal and falls in the time of hardship (Ep. ad Luc. 9.8 f.; 48.2-4; Pliny, Ep. 9.30.1). However, such a philosophical idea speaks of an ideal relationship that is based on common interest and selfless services. But in practical terms, *amicitia* carries a reciprocal relationship, particularly of *officium* (Saller 1982:15). Saller understands *officium* in terms of "favour" but

it can also be understood in the sense of utility as satisfaction from good and services in its current economic sense. Cicero exhorts patrons “to become good calculators of duty, able by adding and subtracting to strike a balance correctly and find out just how much is due to each individual” (De Off. 1.59 and also 1.47). Such notion of calculating benefits has an economic sense, although one embraces the caveat of Saller not to read it in an absolute literal sense. In fact, it is hard to calculate satisfaction, but in order that the reciprocal relationship to be maintained both parties must get satisfaction for the service they rendered. However, such calculation leaves the reciprocal benefits ambiguous in the sense that both parties feel under obligation to satisfy the other despite the imbalance return one gets from the other (Saller 1982:17). Whether the relationship is a binding moral obligation or not, it is based on benefit or utility from the relationship. Reciprocity, therefore, is a foundational element in their societal relationship in the form of obligation or rules, although it was not exercised in a simple one to one exchange (Saller 1982:15).

The language of exchange permeated in major aspect of the social life to conceptualize the relationship of man to god, family and friendship (Pliny, N.H. 12.1; Quint., Decl. 268; Seneca, Ep. ad Luc. 8.3). Particularly, reciprocal ideology was exercised between migrants and the natives. For instance, citizenship can be gained because of reciprocal obligation as in the case of Pliny, who requested Trajan to grant citizenship to his friend, Arpocras, an Egyptian migrant, who attended him while he was sick (Ep.10.5). Arpocras attainment of citizenship is not because of fulfilling some kind of legal requirements, but because of the service, he rendered to Pliny.

At the time, migrants flowed from different countries and occupations to the city of Rome. For example, from Asia minor slaves, professional and traders of various kind, from Syria war-captives who were players of harp, and flute, actors, jester from the mimes, jugglers, differing law-class performer; and from Egypt philosophers, astrologers, experts in divination, soothsayers, physicians, teachers, artists, actors, priest of Isis, merchants, occults, mathematician and physicians (Piana 1927:193). Noy, based on Seneca’s categories of motivation of migrants into Rome, discusses four motivations: education, government and politics, and provision of good and services, family and religion (Noy 2000:90–127). However, Rome values morality, food security, peace and political stability. Any foreign religious group or individual philosopher must comply with the imperial values for reciprocal benefit and if such values are threatened expulsion would be the ultimate measure.

Hence, the attitude towards the migrants differs: positive, neutral, and negative (Noy 2000:31–34). Cicero and Seneca, who were themselves migrants, expressed a neutral position i.e. migration is neither bad nor good. Juvenal and Lucan (who was also an immigrant from Spain) hold a negative attitude to immigrants. The accusation against the migrants was that they brought corruptions, vices and ill practices with them, which lowered the standard of the Roman life by infiltrating all activities and offices and classes and in the end the state would be taken over by such people who were one's slaves. In fact, after a few years the next generation of slaves and freedmen began to play a major role in the court of the emperor and in the government being given the right to vote.

The despise came because the foreigners did not comply with the traditions of the Roman "mores maiorum." Their lack of 'gravitas' as the obvious mark of congenital inferiority and the 'decorum' of the lofty Roman race (Piana 1927:228–230). However, Noy (2000:37–45) argues that despite such negative attitude there were not that many expulsions from imperial Rome except the very few that happened due to ideologically suspect group, immorality and scarcity of food. The expulsion related to religion is limited to certain religious categories such as astrologers, Jews, worshipers of Asian gods Sabazus, and Christians. Expulsion took place because of allegedly immoral relationship with the elite, breach of security and political involvement. Therefore, migrants in Rome allowed to stay as long as they reciprocate by sharing and holding the values of Rome.

Hence, one can safely conclude that reciprocal relationship in early imperial Rome had both ideological and political nature that governs both the native and the migrants. Such social and political interaction reciprocates the benefits. While the receiver enjoys favour, protection, and material benefits, the giver benefits increase status, goodwill of the receiver, acknowledge of public gratitude, loyalty, attracting the attention of the emperor, lasting memory in the society (Kalinowski 1996:33–35). Migrants serve as labour resource, entrepreneur, increase revenue and social capital while they benefit from the Roman's treasure such as education, peace, wealth and status. Therefore, such an exchange involves both material and non-material benefit between unequal social status as well as equal status. It is a relationship based on utility/being useful/ within society.

But the problem of imprecision of the term "reciprocity" must be sorted out, not least because the ethical sense of the word is associated with friendship,

at other with neighbourliness, and sometimes with imperial trade relationship. Furthermore, Geoffrey MacCormack (as cited in Kirk 2003:674) rightly signalled that generalized application of the term “reciprocity” obscures the differences. As a solution to the conundrum, Marshal Sahlins (1965:147) in his study of primitive exchange offers three genres of reciprocity: general, balanced and negative. General reciprocity is putatively altruistic and an intimate relationship, open-ended, generous sharing and obligation in the form of gratitude. It is not time bounded. But the material flow is maintained through social relationship. Such reciprocity is found within a patron - client relationship (unequal relationship). Balanced reciprocity is an equivalent exchange (model of market exchange) with a defined obligation with a set of time, hence it is a distance relationship where self-interest and material concern take priority. Social relationship is maintained through material flow. Negative reciprocity is maximizing one’s benefit at the expense of the other. Its most extreme mode is exploitation and retaliation (Kirk 2003). Such scheme of reciprocity offers theoretical and conceptual framework for understanding the interface between the native’s and migrant’s religion in a given country. But before moving to examining religious texts, it is necessary to examine whether there is connection between ideology and migration not least in our modern world.

### ***Ideology and Migration***

Tuen A. Van Dijk (2000:93) employs a multidisciplinary approach analysis of ideology and defines ideology as “fairly general and abstract mental representations which govern the shared mental representations (knowledge and attitudes) of social groups.” Van Dijk lists thirteen criterion of ideology and contends that although ideology is belief systems, it is not any socially shared belief system because it must be found at the basic level. It is formed by the basic proposition of cultural values that represent what is bad and what is good. Ideology controls perception (as a mental model), interaction and intragroup actions. It polarizes groups in terms of **Us** and **Them**. It presupposes competition, conflict, struggle, or differences of opinion and knowledge between groups (Van Dijk 2000:94–95).

Ideology, therefore, has direct bearings on the interplay between the natives and the migrants as a social group, especially at the leadership level. In our modern world, it plays important roles in creating migration policies. For instance, in 1975, Sweden constructed a migration policy based on multicultural ideology. The policy was based on three values: equality,

freedom of choice and partnership (Akeson 2011:218). Although practically such policy did produce unsatisfactory result, the same ideology was used to create the 1997 integration policy which involves everyone in Sweden for the success of integration. Accordingly, multicultural ideology in integrating migrants was promoted among the citizen and therefore it assumed a prominent place at official debate as well as at the grass-root level (Akeson 2011:220).

Van Dijk presents two deferring positions in British parliament discourse held on March 5, 1997, as an example of how ideology controls discourses on the crafting of policies of asylum seekers. His analysis of the discourse evinces that those who rejected granting asylum-to-asylum seekers (from outside of Europe) is based on a negative mental model that pictures asylum seekers as bogus and criminals therefore they cause problem and difficulties costing lots of money which could be spent on British elderly citizens. On the other hand, an opposing view in the same parliamentary discourse propagated a positive perspective based on humanitarian ideology. In such representation the plights of the migrant and the value of democracy, international law, and solidarity with the oppressed were highlighted (Van Dijk 2000:101–113). Obviously, the conversation did not confine within the parliamentary discourse. It would disseminate through different media shaping the mode of populace at the grass-root level which would influence the manner of coexistence between the natives and the migrants.

The above examples might indicate that ideology not only influences how and what kind of decision should be made and policies should be crafted but also its ramification affects the social relationship between migrants of different kinds and the natives within a given country. Either it promotes conflict, polarization (Us and Them), and antagonism or it promotes shared value and peaceful coexistence among the migrants and the natives. Religious ideologies are not different in their contribution towards the relationship between the migrants and the natives insofar as they are important aspect of cultural values of a society. Religions exist as organized institutions to maintain and disseminate their values (in the form of ideology) with an engraved (either negative or positive attitude) model of the Other.

Therefore, the underlining question with regard to migration (as epitomized by the above examples) would be “what does the receiving country benefit from migrants?” The answer to this question constructs either a negative or a positive ideological stance. But ultimately, since migration is unavoidable

phenomenon, the favourable underpinning ideology would be negotiation i.e. reciprocity. Migrants are both threat and at the same time potential resource of various kind to the receiving country and are objects of exercising democratic values such as international human right. Similarly, for the migrants the destination country is uncertainty, bewilderment, loneliness, misunderstanding, cultural shock and fear, but hope for safety, employment, and a better life. An intersection between the needs of the migrants and the natives can only be achieved through an ideology that promotes a responsible reciprocity of benefits that either of the parties offer.

If this conceptual frame is granted, in the ensuing sections, I will examine two texts: one from the New Testament (NT) and the other from the Hadith in light of the ideology of reciprocity with respect to migration in order to examine reciprocity from a religious perspective. The texts represent the two largest world religions which affinity might be demonstrated.

### ***NT (Matt 7:12) and Bukahri Book 1-Volume 2: Hadith 12***

Mathew 7:12 and Hadith 12 are normally taken as the Golden Rule in the traditions of both religions. Therefore, our discussion is limited to the concept of reciprocity and migration. First, Matt 7:12 will be analysed within the context migration and then Hadith 12.

#### ***Matt 7:12***

The Gospel was preached and practiced in the world of Roman Empire and, as it went away from Jerusalem, it became a migrant religion. Such imperial milieu ought to be taken into consideration while reading the gospels.

Matthew in particular introduces his gospel with a number of characters who had been migrants, albeit his intention is Christological. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Ruth were migrants in the genealogy (Matt 1:1-6). This connects Jesus as a descendent of strangers (Campese 2012:22). Especially, the story of Jesus family and the infant Jesus are the salient examples of forced migrants or refugees in Egypt to save their lives (Matt 2:13-23). God is involved as the initiator as well as guider of the migration. In fact, the story evokes Israel's migration to Egypt (Matt. 2:15).

Evoking the story of Israel in Matthew 2:15 reminds the story of liberation from slavery in a foreign country and the awful life of migration. As a result of their experience in a foreign country, God reminds them to treat strangers or migrants as a neighbour not as an enemy who came to compete resources with



them (Lev. 18:10; Deut 26:1, 12-13)(Garcia 2007:5). The story of Matthew begins with listing the lineage of Jesus and his migration to Egypt with his family and ends with Jesus commanding his disciples to go to the whole world (Matt 28:16-20).

In light of such a broader context, the discussion of Matt 7:12, which is normally called the Golden Rule in the synoptic Gospel, is limited to searching the reciprocal nature of the text with a special reference to migration or stranger. Therefore, it would neither be a detail exegesis nor source and redaction criticism. The text reads: “so whatever you wish that men would do to you, do to them; for this is the law and the prophet” (Matt 7:12) and in Luke 6:31 it reads “And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them.” The sayings are placed in a different context: while Matthew places it within the larger context of the Sermon on the Mount and a closer context of prayer, Luke inserted it within the context of teaching of love.

Matthew’s context is intriguing because Jesus used human father son relationship in order to describe disciples -God relationship in prayer. The father is a giver, while the son is the receiver, such context of receiving good from the father for Matthew is an appropriate place to compose the Golden Rule. In such context, the golden rule would be the Law and the prophet.

Perfect human relationship, however, is modelled after God’s relationship with human beings - loving enemies. Love among the same group (5:46) and love among same family (5:47) are not the standard, but God-like love makes one true son of God. Father-son relationship is an implicit reciprocal relationship as the son is the receiver and returns with honour and obedience (Mat.7:21-23) which could be categorized as a general reciprocity. For Jesus, a balanced reciprocal relationship is not the standard: “if you love those who love you” or “if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others?” And he also dismissed negative reciprocal relationship such as retaliation (Mat 5:38-39). The concept of general reciprocity immediately follows Jesus’ love teaching in Mt 6:1-2. But Jesus rejects the act of piety intended return in the form of honour from the community of faith. Piety is understood in terms of Father-son relationship. The father rewards his children because of doing good to someone else. Such is the general reciprocal relationship between the disciples and God.

Although the Golden Rule is an expression of the Law and the prophets, its formulation in the positive, instead of prohibiting from doing evil, demands proactively doing good. The good is assumed from the context because the

context of prayer is to receive good things from the father. But the return is not clearly stated as it does not say “whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them so that you may gain a positive return.” But the absence of a lucid reciprocal goal does not mean that Jesus is not teaching a reciprocal relationship. The command “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Mt. 6:44) in itself is a reciprocal language not least because it is a response of the disciples to persecution and hatred coming from other fellow persons. The reciprocal is materially different from what they are receiving from their persecutors i.e. reciprocal of dispensing positive benefit for a negative benefit as an imitation of God’s model. Such reciprocity agrees with Sahlin’s (1965:147) general reciprocity that states “Failure to reciprocate does not cause the giver of the stuff to stop giving: the good move one way... for a long time.” Such reciprocity differs from “principle of reciprocity and equivalence” which is important to justice (Kirk 2003:669).

The Golden Rule in light of general reciprocity unpacks the reciprocal nature of Jesus’s Golden Rule “whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them.” The disciples do not want to be persecuted or treated badly by their fellow persons (the first sentence). Therefore, they should not repeat the wrong act of their persecutors instead they should do good to their persecutors (the second sentence) the good things they wish their persecutors could have done to them, however no explicit expectation of return is stated in Jesus’s Golden Rule.

Whether the principle of reciprocity applies to God’s generosity towards the evil ones is debated because God gives disinterestedly. However, Kirk (2003:638) argues that applying the cultural ideology of Greco-Roman reciprocity for the purpose of initiating gratitude and creating social bond applies to God as a supreme benefactor of human beings. For instance, in Seneca the benefactor likens his action of generosity to the benevolence of gods in nature (Ben. 1.1.9-13; 4.25.2). Using the divine paradigm, ingratitude on the side of the receiver does not deter patrons from being generous. But Seneca criticises those who fail to reciprocate to the benefactors (Ben. 1.1.3-13). Although God’s generosity is freely bestowed in Matthew, the response to his will is desired and encouraged. In fact, disobedience will result in rejecting from entering into his kingdom.

“*Whatever* you wish that men would do to you, do to them; for this is the law and the prophet” (Matt 7:12) addresses a plural subject “you” referring to the Jesus followers as a community who might be expecting persecution from

unspecified outsiders to proactively and positively reciprocate in the situation. Such injunction, although distinct in its formulation, attitude, and context, fairly fits into its cultural ideology of reciprocity in societal relationships of the Imperial world of Rome. But the reciprocity here is a general reciprocity expecting return from God as a father, if not from the social relations.

Such reciprocity of doing good without considering either the disposition or action of a person but on the bases of self as a standard for a positive action toward the other demands a mental representation of the Other as another "I" (NE 1166a1-b29; EE 1245a). One's own self is reciprocally given to the Other. It is identifying oneself with the other. Reciprocity in such sense is vicarious. It is considering the other neither as an enemy nor a threat but as a replica of oneself who has a similar need. Even enemies should be treated not with retaliation but with actions that reverses the chain of evil. Such ideology of reciprocity of self creates a new paradigm of treating strangers in the Gospel of Matthew. Jesus heals the daughter of the stranger- a Canaanite woman and praised her faith (Matt 15:22). For example, according to Matthew 25:35-46, Jesus identifies himself with the Other: the poor, the stranger, the sick and the prisoners. The stranger /ξένος/ is a migrant who is a replica of oneself and should be treated as another self. Matthew's vicarious reciprocal ideology perceive migrants as fully human and neighbour who should be welcomed and treated as oneself or equal. The disciples of Jesus were sent to take the Gospel to the whole nation and make them disciples of Jesus (Matt 28:18-20) and Jesus promised them to be with them. In so doing, Jesus created a mental model of humanity as one community to be disciple in his teaching. Such assignment requires a life of migrant or going out beyond the boundary of ones own nation and embracing the Other as a neighbour and equal. The resurrected Jesus also now crosses the boarder of the nation of Israel once again to create a community of different nations. In such context, the Golden rule as reciprocity functions as means of building social bonding between the migrant with a new religion and the native as a potential disciple. Above all, the Golden rule communicate an ideological of a responsible vicarious reciprocity with a high valuation of the other which obligates to treat the migrant as another self.

***Bukhari Book 1-Volum 2: Hadith 12<sup>1</sup>***

Islam came as religion in the six and seven century C.E in Arabia. Pre-Islamic state, hospitality and generosity was highly regarded as an important value of the community. But the Golden Rule did not exist because in those days protecting tribe was one of the prominent things to do through retaliation and vengeance (Homerin 2008:99). The motto was "In evil is salvation when goodness cannot save you." Revenge protected the clan. Although after the coming of prophet Mohammed a new ideology of religious worldview was introduced, the *lex talioni* was still practiced for redressing murder and physical injuries inflicted upon a victim (Q. 2.178; 4.92). However, the contexts of these texts show a concern for the believing community and exclude the unbeliever.

Quran emphasizes on individual responsibility for whatever deeds, bad or good, one does on earth will be judged on the Day of Judgment (Q. 2.261-62; 273-74; Q. 83.1-6).

On that Day, people will come forward separately to be shown their deeds, and, so, whoever did an atom's weight of good will see it, and he who did anatom's weight of evil will see it (Q. 99.6-7).

The concept of positive and negative reciprocity is reflected on divine-man relationship. Correct doctrine and correct deeds bring a positive reward or reciprocal benefit from the divine. But the Quran does not have an explicit Golden Rule statement as the Gospels have it. Some argue that Qur'a'n 83.1-6 is an implicit Golden Rule but a closer expression is found in Hadith, which is second only to the Quran. A most often cited Hadith for Golden Rule reads:

*None of you believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself* (Bukhari Book 1-Volume 2: Hadith 12)

The religion of Islam differentiates a Muslim (one who submits to Allah) from a believer (*mu'min*). The former refers to someone who profess to be a believer whereas the latter refers to one who believes in God and his revelation deep in the heart (Homerin 2008:103). The text quoted above, therefore, might be referring to the latter. However, the text explicitly sets goals for exercising positive reciprocity. It is a way of stepping on the ladder of faith from submission to a believer or growth in the faith of Islam. Reciprocity is not an

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<sup>1</sup> All the texts discussed under this submission are taken electronic source : namely, Ebook-University of California MSA site.

expectation of return from a fellow brother, although such reciprocity might be associated with that of general reciprocity. However, as the text interpreted by Muslim scholars it does not aim at reciprocity so much as humility. Therefore, the text is about becoming or progression in the faith. But a contrasting statement of Jesus to the Haddith 12 is that it is not just enough loving a fellow brother who has possibly been among the same community, but one will be called sons of God by loving one's enemy. Quran, on the other hand, denies its adherents closer relationship with Christians and Jews or others who may wish to harm them (Quran 2. 120, 5.51, 5.82). Nonetheless, the basic general reciprocal concept and ideology cannot be avoided in both statements.

The word "brother" is primarily understood not as referring to an outsider or as the whole humanity, albeit the universal intention is claimed by some Muslim scholars (Homerin 2008:106). In the Sufi tradition, elimination of selfish desire by putting the needs of others before one's own without expecting a return is encouraged (Homerin 2008:106). After examining Quran, Hadith and Muslim tradition, Homerin (2008:113–114) concluded that this text "may be understood to apply all humanity, not only selected group" but his final conclusion states "Muslims have interpreted and applied the Golden Rule in several contrasting ways." Multiple interpretation traditions of the Golden Rule based on theological stance evinces that it is understood in diverse manner including the current *lex talionis* of Osama Bin Laden negative reciprocal ideology (Bin Laden 2005).

With regard to migration, however, Quran assumes many religious figures who are also found in the Bible as migrants, namely: Adam, Abraham, Noah, Jonah, Jacob and Moses (Saritoprak 2008). Islamic tradition speaks of different migration due to religious persecutions. But our discussion will be limited to the first hijra- migration of approximately 82 Muslims converts into Abyssinia (current-Ethiopia) around 617CE (Hussain 2014:173–175). According to the tradition, Prophet Mohammad commanded his persecuted followers to migrate to the land of a Christian king whom he described as just and kind hearted. In accordance with the words of the prophet migrant went to Ethiopia and enjoyed peace and security. Having heard of a peaceful existence of the migrant in Abyssinia, the Qurayshites sent their emissaries with present to the Negus to instigate him against the migrant for extradition. However, having questioning the migrant about their religion and evaluating the difference between his Christian faith on his terms and Islam, he found that the difference

was minor and therefore he vowed to protect the migrant granting them freedom to exercise their religion.

As a result, in the Hadith (37 Battles (Kitab Al-Malahim, Hadith no 4288), Prophet Mohammed reciprocates by banning Jihad against Abyssinia. It reads "Let the Abyssinians alone as long as they let you alone..." The positive reciprocation is conditional as it says "as long as they let you alone." But such a favour towards the Abyssinians stemmed out of reciprocal ideology. But for Islam reciprocation is not a flat positive one as it could either be positive or negative depending on the reaction and action of the Other. However, the model of the Abyssinian Christian king is taken as a good example of just treatment of migrants which might serve in the Muslim tradition as the Golden Rule in action and the interface between religions.

The two traditions Matt 7:12 and Hadith 12 (plus Hadith no 4288) convey that migrants should be treated as oneself with just and kindness. However, while for Matthew it is a vicarious reciprocity, for the Hadith it is conditional and evaluative, therefore, it could result in either in positive or negative relationship. Hence, reciprocity is an ideology that creates responsible bonding between the migrant and the natives for a peaceful co-existence despite their differing religious commitment.

Having said this, however, in the next section we need to analyse how such ideology of reciprocity contributes to a peaceful coexistence of the migrants and the native who have differing religions, values and mental models of each other.

### ***Reciprocity, Migration and the Interface between Religions***

Religion serves as a point of positive interface between the migrant and the natives of the same religion in the destination countries, although language and race might be a bit of a challenge. The newly arrived migrant would be another 'I' of receiving community of the same religion. It serves as a home, especially if the community of the same religion is from country of the same origin. In such milieu, a general reciprocity is a religious normal practice.

Particularly the Golden rule obligates such reciprocal relationship towards a community member despite country of origin. In addition to Christianity and Islam discussed above, other religions have their own formulation of reciprocal propositions:

**Hinduism:** Mahabaratha ch.5 – “This is the sum of duty; do not do unto others what you would not have them done unto you”

**Judaism:** Hillel, Talmud, Shabbat 31a - "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour. This is the whole Torah; all the rest is commentary."

**Buddhism:** The Buddha-Udara-Varga-5:18 - "Treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful."

**Confucianism:** Confucius Analects 15:23 - "One word which sums up the basis of all good conduct... Loving-kindness. Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself."

**Taoism:** Lao Tzu, T'ai Shang Kan Ying, P'len, 213-218. - "Regard your neighbour's gain as your own gain and your neighbour's loss as your own loss."

**Baha'i Faith:** bahauallah. Gleanings - "Lay not on any soul a load that you would not wish to be laid upon you, and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself."

But as regards the interface between religions, conjoining seemingly conceptually similar texts of religious literature does not necessarily bring a positive result, particularly in the context of migration due to the complex nature of religion itself and migration. First, religions by nature bear distinctive traits (Neusner 2008:55–56). According to Neusner, “a proposition that is shared among several religious systems will not play a major role in the construction of any particular religious system.” In other words, common propositions among several different religious tradition does not fit with the particulars of any one of them (Neusner 2008:56). Second, in reciprocity, invariably, two incommensurable notions of value are at play: strict calculation and elusive moral value (right, fair, play and justice). These are both in tensions. Reciprocity is strictly calculative (balanced reciprocity) and as the same time elusive moral values (general reciprocity). Therefore, reciprocity involves a continuing struggle. Third, the way we measure or perceive the world and the way we experience it in many ways are different. All these variables deter us from being optimistic about proposition as a bridge for the interface between religions in some form of human existence.

Nonetheless, reciprocal relationship is fundamental to human nature and the basis for social life and language because human nature is fundamentally interpersonal and relational. Such notion of reciprocity is well attested by its ubiquity across different religions, albeit application is different. However, the categories of reciprocity must be noted. General reciprocity serves as the bonding within the cultural homogeneous community as it functions without

expectation of return. The difference between self and the other is blurred. There is a dependency, empathy and physical intimacy.

An example would be the relationship between mother and child, a patriot and the motherland, and believer and his/or their religion. Such reciprocity is not prevalent among the heterogeneous community. But balanced reciprocity is an interplay between intentions and actions in which a sense of justice as fairness is at work. In such relationship each party deems necessary for its very existence. Balanced reciprocity might serve bridging across the social network of culturally distinct and differentiated migrant religion. The repercussion of not exercising either general or balanced reciprocity leads to the negative reciprocity where self and other are asunder, and polarized, i.e. the existence of one is the annihilation of the other where absolute antipathy and violence is a norm.

Assuming interdisciplinary theoretical endeavour, social exchange theory bases its assumption on economic theory arguing that human behaviour is an exchange of rewards between actors. Their social interaction is characterized by reciprocal stimuli and an exchange of activity: tangible and intangible (Zafirovski 2005:1-3). The theory also claims that individuals establish and maintain social relationship on the expectation of such relationship is mutually advantageous and benefits. In the course of reciprocal interaction, as an outcome, actors attempt to satisfy their needs by attending to the needs of the other (Zafirovski 2005:3, 11). Neurologist Donald W. Paff also perceived that human beings have the capacity for fair play and they are “wired for reciprocity” (as cited in Green 2008:171).

Therefore, reciprocity is not just an ideology but it is the human behaviour. In the context of migration, the natives and migrants’ peaceful interaction and co-existence in the destination country cannot be achieved without it. Reciprocity of benefits is fundamentally important for the peaceful co-existence of migrants with the natives of the country of destination for several reasons.

Among the many, suffice it to mention some here. First, reciprocity creates bond and trust among actors (Zafirovski 2005:4). Because of shared value and a two directional flow of benefits and advantages, the native and the migrants meet each other’s needs (tangible and intangible needs). Second reciprocity creates confidence, belonging, participation and sense of value. In the reciprocity, the natives value migrants because they would be perceived as contributors not as parasites or threats. Such valuation also creates confidence in the migrant to see themselves not just as receivers, or strangers, but as



positive contributors towards the advantage of the receiving country. Third, reciprocity allows migrants and the natives to exercise control over each other's actions and resources (Zafirovski 2005:7). Reciprocity is not without power but it is not domination. The power would be functional in a sense of one controlling the resource that the other needs. In such interaction, the resources can be reciprocated among themselves creating the power of negotiation. Therefore, the migrant whether they are labour migrants or asylum seekers can be perceived as potential resources, of course, without denying they could be potential threat. However, social exchange theory argues that exchange relationship would be positive if they mutually reinforcing, and negative if they preclude one another (Zafirovski 2005:9). Fourth, reciprocity imposes responsibility based on obligation on the part of migrants and the natives in order to maintain conscience reciprocal relationship that produces a long-term benefit for both actors.

Likewise, the interface between religions reciprocity plays a major role in creating a peaceful co-existence. However, reciprocity that bridges the interface between religions of migrants and the natives in the country of arrival is the combination of general reciprocity (within the religious community) and balanced reciprocity (an interaction with the Other). Particularly the latter is mandatory for the peaceful co-existence of different religions at any place because religions, according to their ideology of reciprocity, assume a conscious responsibility for fostering a positive social relationship among human beings in general and between migrants and the native in particular.

### ***Conclusion***

Greco-Roman world informed us that reciprocity is a natural phenomenon as a human being is a social being designed to reciprocate life. Social exchange theory and neurologist has confirmed this. Such reciprocity is also part of major world religion succinctly formulated in such a way that it can be memorized easily. Concern for the good of oneself demands concern for the good of the Others. Hence, relationship does not exist in the absence of reciprocity. Reciprocity is ideological. It is a system of exchange of both tangible and intangible benefit based on mutual honour, mutual moral duty, and shared values. Ideology as a mental model influences migration policy makers at the leadership level, the interaction of the native and migrant at the grassroots level. The ideology of reciprocity manifests itself in different categories: general, balanced or negative which also exists in the major

religions of today's world. Such kind of reciprocity produces social bonding, trust, confidence, self-esteem, participation, positive obligation and power of negotiation between the native and the migrants both at the religious and secular level.

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## ***Eritrea's Youth Migration Challenge: The Role of Aspirations and Opportunity***

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### ***Abstract***

*Over the last decade, Eritrea has received significant analyses from the mainstream media and some scholars, due to the mass international migration of its citizens, estimated at 5,000 individuals monthly, especially youth. The aim of this paper is to explore factors that explain the mass migration of Eritrean youth, with a focus on the potential roles of aspirations and opportunities. Much of the literature suggests that young Eritreans are emigrating due to their country's national service program. We analyse the literature on the factors driving Eritrean youth migration vis-à-vis push factors for migration from sub-Saharan Africa. Based on our analysis of various bodies of work related to Eritrean migration and aspirations, we conclude that three main factors explain youth migration from Eritrea: 1) tensions between individual and national aspirations; 2) limited opportunities for transition from education to employment; and 3) limited rights and freedoms.*

***Keywords*** Capability, national service, national aspirations, transitions.

### ***Introduction***

Eritrea is a small sovereign state in the Horn of Africa comprised of an estimated five million citizens (Tessema & Ng'oma, 2009). Despite its small population, in recent years, Eritrea has gained wide global attention for being one of the largest sources of international migrants to countries in Europe through Mediterranean routes (Rosberg & Tronvoll, 2017). Most of these migrants are youth, particularly young men (Rosberg & Tronvoll, 2017). Many studies suggest that Eritrea's compulsory national service is the main driver of mass migration from the country (Hirt & Mohammad, 2018; International Crisis Group, 2014; Kibreab, 2014, 2017). Yet, others argue that the absence of a general sense of religious, economic and political freedom, the lack of

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economic opportunities and a sense of hopelessness are drivers of mass migration (Rosberg & Tronvoll, 2017; Tessema & Ng'oma, 2009).

Some context is relevant here. Eritrea became an independent country in 1991 following a protracted three-decade period of conflict with Ethiopia (International Crisis Group, 2010). During its early post-independence years, the country seemed to be moving along an economically strong developmental trajectory, particularly with its post-war reconstruction and development program that partly focused on self-sufficiency (Tefagiorgis, 1993). In the referendum that resulted in the country's separation from Ethiopia, citizens voted overwhelmingly in favour of independence, and the outcome inspired an era of hope (International Crisis Group, 2010). This hope also defined the citizens' aspirations for themselves and their country. The hope was expressed by the Eritrean diaspora, some of whom returned, while others invested in the country with the intention of contributing to its advancement (Hirt, 2014, 2015). This hope, which was translated into solidarity and support, continued even in the years following the suspension of the constitutional process, the renewed war with Ethiopia and the post-war era, through the diaspora tax system instituted by the state (Hirt, 2014). Perhaps due to these factors, Eritrea's economy boomed in the first decade following independence with an average annual economic growth rate of 4.5%. However, the renewed conflict with Ethiopia and the state's response to it, contributed to a period of destabilisation with negative consequences for the economy (Lopez & Venkataraman, 2006).

Following the conflict, Eritrea's economy experienced a short period of decline after the mid-2000s, and then improved, with an increase in GDP growth from 2.2% in 2010 to 8.2% in 2011. In the following years, the economy was in decline for a sustained period, with a reported GDP growth of 0.3% in 2015 (Rosberg & Tronvoll, 2017). The most recent GDP growth, in 2017, was 3.4% and is projected to be 3.7% in 2018 (African Development Bank, 2018). While the government has prioritised investments in infrastructure, such as communication facilities, water supply, energy and agriculture, the impact of these have been severely dwarfed by higher investments in security (AfDB Group, OECD & UNDP, 2016). Eritrea's economic prospects have also been negatively affected by UN sanctions and an unstable macroeconomic environment. The World Bank (2017) speculates that poverty in Eritrea may be as high as 65% to 80% in rural areas. A significant portion of employment opportunity in Eritrea is in 'rain-fed' agriculture, which contributes only a small portion of the GDP (African Development Bank, 2018). Although the

youth unemployment rate is relatively low at 13%, when compared to other African countries, such as South Africa (over 50%), this is masked by the large number of people who are working poor, earning less than US\$2 a day (Research and Evidence Facility, 2017). Youth constitute around 30% of the overall Eritrean population and they are relatively well educated, with an overall literacy rate of 90%, which makes them an important group to study.

The last two decades have witnessed a mass exodus of Eritreans migrating to neighbouring countries, mainly Sudan and Ethiopia, as well as far-off countries in Europe. By some estimates (Horwood & Hopper, 2017; International Crisis Group, 2014), at least 5,000 Eritreans leave the country monthly, and they constitute the second largest number of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa in Europe. More than 500,000 people were estimated to have left the country as of 2013, and around a 250,000 refugees from Eritrea are scattered globally (Connell, 2013). There were 48,400 asylum applications from Eritreans in Europe in 2014, more than doubling the 22,300 recorded in 2013. This made Eritrea the fifth largest producer of asylum seekers (UN OHCHR, 2015). In the UK alone, there were over 3,700 Eritrean asylum seekers in 2013. Although the Eritrean situation has recently gained attention in the context of the current migration crisis in Europe, one question that requires more exploration is why young people are emigrating *en-masse* from the country. The aim of this paper is to explore the factors that drive youth migration from Eritrea. Different push and pull factors explain migration. Some of the factors identified in the literature include: economic migration, migration for family reasons and environmental conditions, including policies and conflict (Cummings et al., 2015; European Communities, 2000; Flahaux & de Haas, 2016). Much of the literature suggests that young Eritreans are migrating due to the country's national service program (Rosberg & Tronvoll, 2017). In this paper, we analyse the literature on the factors driving Eritrean youth migration using a lens of opportunities and aspirations. We review bodies of work related to aspirations, economic opportunity and factors that drive migration, both specifically related to Eritrea and beyond. Using combinations of search terms – such as 'youth AND migration AND Eritrea OR Africa', 'youth AND migration AND Eritrea AND push factors' and 'youth AND migration AND Eritrea AND push forced migration', among others – we searched major databases, such as EBSCOHOST and Google Scholar, and identified various studies that have analysed the challenge of migration from Eritrea. In this paper, we critically review these studies, and discuss their conclusions for why youth migrate. While not a systematic review, we apply the critical angle

offered by the systematic review methodology by attempting to answer the research question: why do youth migrate or seek to migrate from Eritrea? Like most studies of Eritrean migration, our paper faces limitations of internal validity due to the lack of primary data and a review of studies that are mainly based on data collected from outside of Eritrea (Rosberg & Tronvoll, 2017).

This paper is divided into five sections. Following this brief introduction, we elaborate on a conceptual framework that draws on the concepts of aspirations and opportunity. In this section, we discuss Amartya Sen's (1993, 1999) capability approach as an underlying framework to explain the push factors that drive youth migration from Eritrea. In the third section, we discuss the distinction between national aspirations and individual aspirations. We opine that national aspirations are often couched in terms of state aspirations, and that these can be inconsistent with the aspirations of citizens. In the fourth section, we discuss the main findings of the review, outlining three key factors that explain youth migration from Eritrea: tension between individual and national aspirations, limited opportunities to transition from education to employment and limited rights and freedoms of citizens. In the fifth section, we discuss these factors and their relationship with the wider literature on migration from sub-Saharan African contexts. Furthermore, we consider the policy relevance of the main conclusions drawn for Eritrea.

### ***Conceptual Framework: Capability, Aspirations and Opportunity***

Push and pull factors that drive African migration are often linked to economic and environmental factors (Cummings et al., 2015; European Communities, 2000). Although the literature has focused more extensively on international migration, the bulk of African migration occurs within the region (Adepoju, 2000; Flahaux & de Haas, 2016). However, whether movement occurs within the region or internationally, economic factors are central drivers of voluntary and involuntary or forced migration (Awumbila, 2017). The factors that drive forced migration and increasing rates of displacement in Africa have been the subject of several studies (Dejesus, 2018; Erdal & Oeppen, 2018; Rwamatwara, 2005). However, an aspect of migration in the region that requires further exploration, and which this paper aims to address, is the intersection of factors that drive forced migration and those that drive voluntary migration. Scholars have noted this as an important area of study that does not entirely fit the binaries of forced versus voluntary migration, and the nuances of its dimensions require closer consideration (Erdal & Oeppen, 2018). By 'looking deeper', the contribution of aspirations and opportunity, whether in the



context of forced or voluntary migration, become clearer (Carling & Collins, 2018). We attempt to develop a conceptual framework that analyses the factors that drive Eritrean youth migration using the capability approach, and the concepts of aspirations and opportunity, to develop a deeper understanding of mass youth migration from post-independence Eritrea.

### ***The Capability Approach***

The capability approach (CA) is a framework for analysis that elucidates understandings of individual potential for achievement, social arrangements and their contributions and effects on people's lives (Robeyns, 2005). This framework is valuable to the design of effective policies that could promote and enhance social change in society (Robeyns, 2005). At the core of the CA is the view that analyses of policies and people's lives should focus on both the possibilities that they have (the things that they have the potential to be and do) and those that they are actually able to achieve (Sen, 1993). Sen describes the CA in terms of human freedoms, the possibility to be and do the things that contribute to the achievement of a good life (Sen, 1999). Central to the CA are agency and freedom, both of which advance the notion that a person's ability to pursue the life that he or she desires unhindered by institutional structures and social arrangements is crucial for human development and the advancement of a society (Sen, 1993).

Scholars have argued that commodities and material possessions are means to a good life (Clark, 2005). People's ability to achieve the ends they desire, and ultimately live a good life, is dependent on the kinds of societies in which they live, their personal situations and the resources that are available to enable them to achieve their desired ends. Scholars have long debated the role of social and cultural environments on people's ability to aspire to certain achievements (Appadurai, 2004; Bourdieu, 1986). Sen's conception of the CA has given rise to several analyses of both human development and wellbeing, and it has been instrumental to providing a social justice frame when exploring aspects of human rights and justice in several development topics, such as education (Tikly, 2013). In taking the approach forward, Nussbaum (2005) argues for a set of central capabilities that should form the basis of national constitutions and statutes. Nussbaum's (2005) list of central capabilities is comprised of ten areas of human life, namely: life, health, bodily integrity, sense, imagination and thought, emotions, practical reasons, affiliations, relationship to the world of nature and control over environment. The list

illustrates many aspects that people consider to constitute a good life, and which are central to their aspirations.

In a study using a CA framework in South Africa, Clark (2003) found issues such as jobs, happiness, a good family, living a Christian (religious) life, among others, to be central to how participants defined the good life. Sen (1985) also gives examples of capabilities, such as the ability to be well nourished, to appear in public without shame and to live a long and healthy life. Underlying the CA is the understanding of human dignity and a life that is free to flourish. The United Nations Development Program has produced a human development report since 1990 as a major indicator of human progress, in which it presents a composite measure comprised of life expectancy, income and literacy, based in part on the capability approach. If capabilities are by any means universal, as Nussbaum (2005) seems to suggest, then it could be argued that the failure to achieve the things that matter the most to people, or their inability to achieve these due to structural constraints, could have an impact on their perception of life in that society and affect their decision to migrate.

### ***Aspirations and Opportunity***

As explained earlier, the potential of Eritrean youth, like those in other sub-Saharan African countries, to achieve their aspirations, and the sense of hope derived from the freedom to both aspire and pursue their aspirations, could be important elements for an understanding of youth migration (Mains, 2013). Aspirations provide an interesting lens for understanding the link between migration and young people's sense of the possibilities they have for their lives (Kleist, 2017). As Mains (2013) suggests in his analysis of Ethiopian youth aspirations, when "hope is cut" international migration tends to be one of the options that young men choose, given their perception of the possibilities that they could have abroad, which is largely fed by the media and the version of a better life portrayed by returnees. The possibilities that young people aspire to range from acquiring commodities such as money and other material possessions, to the desire for higher education or long-term personal relationships, such as being happily married (Clark, 2003). An aspiration is defined as "the perceived importance or necessity of goals" (Copestake & Camfield, 2010: 618). It is a set of desired end-states that an individual seeks to achieve (Kruglanski & Kopetz, 2009). Aspirations are cognitive and do not always match a person's realities. This dissonance often contributes to

individuals acting in different ways to enhance the potential of achieving their aspirations.

The desired states that youth work towards achieving are important determinants of the ways in which they plan and live their lives. In Eritrea, studies and project reports have shown that young people aim to attain the good life through quality education, vocational training and entrepreneurship (Müller, 2004; Riggan, 2016). However, their abilities to achieve these goals are often impeded by the lack of proper institutional arrangements to advance or enable the attainment of these aspirations and limited opportunities for employment. The lack of such institutional arrangements and structures constitute both a disincentive to their aspirations and a major impediment to their capacity to pursue a better life. As such, many youth are compelled to either align with the limited opportunities that exist or seek other opportunities abroad by emigrating (Riggan, 2016). As a case in point, the Eritrean education system is highly restrictive in terms of the options that youth seeking to enter higher education, particularly universities, are able to pursue, as these are determined by the states' pre-determined human capacity needs rather than by the interests of the youth themselves (Müller, 2004, 2015). An area of interest is the effect that restricted opportunities for Eritrean youth to choose what they value could have on their decision to migrate internationally.

Riggan's (2016) research based on classroom debates on migration highlights the effects of limited opportunities on aspirations in Eritrea. While some students participating in the debate highlight the need to stay to rebuild their country, others note that, given the structural weaknesses, the lack of opportunities to receive good quality education and the desire to have a livelihood, emigration was a more viable option. Not all of Riggan's participants were in favour of emigrating. Some of the participants highlighted the value of patriotism and national development as important reasons to stay in the country (Riggan, 2016). The above is consistent with an analysis by Rosberg and Tronovoll (2017) in which 88% of the respondents strongly or somewhat agreed that improving their standard of living was an important driver of their decision to migrate. The same study cites the economy of Eritrea as one of the external factors that drive migration from the country. Cummings et al. (2015) highlight that the absence of economic opportunities in a country and perception of opportunities in other countries are important determinants of the decision to emigrate.

In analysing the mass migration of youth from Eritrea, it is crucial to understand what youth have reason to value, the impact of social arrangements on the things that they can aspire to and achieve, how policies affect their potential for achieving the things that they value and what types of changes in Eritrean society and political life are necessary (Carling & Collins, 2018). An important factor that implicitly informs analyses on the quality of people's lives in Eritrea is the extent to which citizens have the freedom to pursue the things that they value (Kibreab, 2014). This informs extensive critiques of the national service program, given that it is perceived as an infringement on people's ability to pursue the kind of life they value (Kibreab, 2017). The notions of freedom and agency as advanced by CA are not only useful for understanding what other possibilities or opportunities youth have within Eritrea itself, but also how the perception of local opportunities compared to those outside drive mass youth movement. We are interested in potential explanations offered by perceived opportunities or the lack thereof for the mass migration of Eritrean youth. An important aspect of this relates to the ways in which the aspirations of Eritrean youth interact with those of the state. Thus, the question of national versus individual aspirations is briefly discussed in the following section.

### ***Individual versus National Aspirations***

National aspirations reflect the vision of the state, as represented by its political leadership, for a country's future. The perception of the future could be in terms of human development (education and health), security, welfare, infrastructure or other such areas that are of interest to a given country as perceived by the leadership. In the case of Eritrea, these priorities were set at the post-independence conference (Tesfagiorgis, 1993). National aspirations are sometimes driven by the ideological leaning of a country's political leadership, as well as other factors, such as the culture of a country and the extent to which citizens' perspectives are integrated into policies. National aspirations are often reflected in national constitutions, legislations, policies, development plans and programmes instituted by the government of a country. For instance, in the case of access to education and courses, the system in Eritrea is designed to train manpower for the country's workforce under its self-reliance programme and based on what the state prioritises (Ministry of Education, 2008; Müller, 2015). National aspirations are useful for countries as they are important determinants of growth, development and prosperity. Yet, they could either enhance the attainment of personal aspirations or hinder them. Although there are instances in which they are

aligned, in many cases national aspirations may differ from those of the generality of citizens, which can establish a clear distinction between state aspirations and collective or group aspirations (Shapiro, 1999).

Often national aspirations are cast in the form of acts of patriotism on the part of citizens, or simply developed as requirements for transition from one phase of life to another. For example, following Nigeria's protracted civil war of the 1960s–70, a new national youth service program was established that required all young citizens to undertake a year-long engagement on national duty, in a state other than their own and in a different part of Nigeria to that in which they studied (Obadare, 2005, 2011). While the service is designed as a reflection of the state to achieve cohesion, and prevent future conflict, this may not reflect the aspirations of young graduates, some of whom may prefer to directly transition into full-time waged work or self-employment.

In the context of Eritrea, the national aspiration of producing manpower for the state-sanctioned sectors may constitute a similar challenge (Kibreab, 2014, 2017). School to work transition in Eritrea is an important aspect of the intersection between aspirations and opportunity because for most young people who attain higher education, they will be one of a handful of people who make it to that educational level (Müller, 2004). This is because there are limited opportunities for entry into higher education in Eritrea, and the system is largely controlled by the state. Despite the tight control of the higher education system, at least 13% of the youth remain unemployed. Given the weak economy, the prospects of graduates to enter decent waged employment is highly limited, despite this being a stated objective of the government's higher education policy (Ministry of Education, 2008). School to work transition studies underscore the need to remove barriers to young people's access to post-study opportunities for personal development and livelihood (Fares et al., 2005). Often, young people's development, aspirations and attainment are affected by false starts and limited opportunities for achievement of their goals (Locke & TeLintelo, 2012). While individual achievement is a critical aspect of development, the role of structural factors in shaping people's life outcomes cannot be overstated. In analysing Eritrea's higher education system, Müller (2015) highlights what was pointed out earlier in this article: that institutional arrangements hinder students' higher education aspirations.

Another representation of national aspiration in Eritrea is the country's national service program. The Eritrean national service programme was first

proclaimed by the Provisional Government of Eritrea in 1991 following the eviction of Ethiopian forces by the EPLF (Kibreab, 2017). The program was envisaged as part of efforts to enhance national unity, cohesion and enhancement of Eritrea's self-reliance policy (Kibreab, 2017). Beyond that, the program could be viewed as a strategy to enhance youth employability and, thus, the productivity of the Eritrean economy. Under the programme, young Eritreans completing high school were required to complete one year of paramilitary training, and were posted to government ministries and businesses to undertake internship-like assignments (Kibreab, 2017). Although the national service was originally designed to last a period of eighteen months, following which individuals could pursue their preferred life trajectories, it is now claimed by various sources that this has been extended and could last for up to ten years or indefinitely (Kibreab, 2014, 2017). National service conscripts are assigned to fulfil a broad set of tasks, going beyond core military functions to include work in the development, construction and maintenance of public infrastructure, agriculture and in the fledgling industrial and mining sectors (UN OHCHR, 2015).

From the perspective of the State, the national service program is designed to help meet certain national aspirations: to protect state sovereignty, facilitate cohesion and prepare youth for future employment. However, given the resistance to the program as seen in the number of deserters and those seeking to emigrate to escape participation (Hirt, 2010), it appears that the state's objective or aspiration and those of the young people, at best, are misaligned and, at worst, are clashing.

### ***Why are Young Eritreans Migrating?***

In this section, we discuss our findings on the factors that influence youth migration from Eritrea, based on our review of the literature. We opine that youth migration from Eritrea is intricately linked to young Eritreans' aspirations and factors that enable or impede them. Contrary to the dominant narrative presented in the literature that youth migration is primarily a result of the national service (Connell, 2012; Kibreab, 2013), we suggest that a complex mix of factors encapsulated by the absence of opportunities contribute to migration.

### ***Tensions between National (State) and Individual Aspirations***

*It is sad, but true, to say that Eritrea has no economy today, devastated as it is by the thirty years of war and deliberate scorched-earth policy.*

*In addition to the war, the manpower and economic resources of the country have been depleted by recurrent drought and other natural calamities. As there is virtually nothing, the first priority of the task is to formulate and lay the foundations for an initial economic framework (Isaias Afewerki quoted in Tesfagiorgis, 1993: xxii).*

Immediately after the *de facto* independence of Eritrea, a development conference was held in Asmara, the capital city, in June 1991. The aim of the conference was to begin a dialogue to draw out national goals towards the development of the economy (Tefagiorgis, 1993). As mentioned in the quote above by Eritrea's President Issaias Afewerki, the country's economy was weak in the aftermath of the war and this made the conference imperative. The conference focused on several themes perceived to hold the potential to galvanise the ailing economy, including agriculture, health, human resource development and gender, and covered seven sectors including economic development, the macroeconomic framework, human resource development, agriculture and environment, finance and banking, trade and industry, natural resource development and construction (Tefagiorgis, 1993). A popular recommendation from the conference, due to its significance during wartime, was the need to utilise a self-reliance strategy in pursuit of national development goals. A self-reliance strategy is one that is introspective, depending on local human and material resources for economic, social and political advancement (Tefagiorgis, 1993). This implied the possibility for Eritrea to grow its own food and provide education and healthcare systems without external aid (Habtom, 2016). In the context of international aid, and given that much of the developing world was still grappling with the aftermath of the World Bank/IMF structural adjustment programs at the time, the self-reliance stance was understandable. However, although noble in its objective, this strategy is not without criticism. For example, it has been suggested that the strategy has contributed to the isolation of Eritrea from the rest of the world due to the country's rejection of most international aid (International Crisis Group, 2014).

Overall, the economic and social goals that were defined for the young country during the 1991 conference included developing the education system and health infrastructure, building a strong army, humane treatment of prisoners, maintaining an independent self-reliant and planned national economy, ensuring equality among nationalities and establishing a democratic state (Tefagiorgis, 1993). There appeared to be a sense of urgency for development and an interest in empowering citizens. The initial national aspirations and

strategy stressed the importance of the human capital in Eritrea. Investing in human capital, particularly in education, would have elevated not only the status of individuals but that of the state. However, these aspirations were truncated by the border war with Ethiopia, resulting in a halt in implementation and, in some instances, a discontinuation or regression.

As pointed out earlier, the national service program was an important component of Eritrea's post-independence national aspirations. The national service appears to be a key apparatus for the advancement of its self-reliance strategy and is a key piece of its effort towards human development as outlined in the President's remarks cited earlier. The service is conceived as a way of preserving war-time values, safeguarding the territorial integrity of Eritrea, and developing man-power for the state's prioritised sectors (Kibreab, 2013). While the national service is the prerogative of the state, as similar programs have been established in Africa and elsewhere, the main critique has been the approach to the program which, as some authors suggest, has now become indefinite (Kibreab, 2014). As pointed out earlier, young citizens are said to resist the programs, applying various forms of agency. Male and female youth devise various strategies to avoid the program, including deserting, emigrating or, on the part of females, getting pregnant as a means to secure exclusion (Amnesty International, 2015; Hirt, 2010).

We deduce from our review that there exists a tension between Eritrea's national development aspirations and the aspirations of its individual citizens both in relation to its post-war development strategy as it relates to its operationalisation of the self-reliance strategy, and the national service program (Rosberg & Tronvoll, 2017). Although Eritrea had grand national aspirations, which are hinged on a vision of self-sufficiency, these national aspirations were not always consistent with those of citizens. For example, while Eritrea sees its national service program as part of a wider process of achieving self-sufficiency, this appears not to be in sync with young people's aspirations. This misalignment is also illustrated by the high number of conscripts who desert and has resulted in migration in some instances to escape the service (Kibreab, 2017). Based on her research on women in university education, Müller (2004) suggests that the country's aspirations in the area of human development appears to have mainly focused on the needs of the state and not the individuals, suggesting that this led to people resisting the country's national aspirations by leaving the country. We suggest that the inadequate focus on individual aspirations is a major contributor to



individuals leaving the country, as they do not see their futures reflected in the state's aspirations and therefore do not align with them.

### ***Limited Opportunities for Transition from Education to Employment***

As highlighted above, a human capital development strategy was put in place to build human capital and the most fundamental approach to this was education. The human capital strategy did not permit enough room for young people to develop themselves in the ways that they considered important for their lives, as opportunities for study, particularly at higher education level, and work were controlled to a large extent by the state (Dorman. 2005; Müller, 2004). While access to higher education improved overall over the years, there remained fewer options for study in higher education institutions. Education was mentioned as the most important ingredient for economic development in both the initial post-independence development strategy mentioned earlier and subsequent national development policies (Ministry of Education, 2008; Tesfagiorgis, 1993). However, due to constraints, which include a lack of resources, Eritrea has been unable to develop an inclusive higher education system (Müller, 2004; Rena, 2006). Moreover, the agency and voices of students have been proscribed through a policy that essentially restricts student activism within campuses, which led to the closure of the University of Asmara (Hirt, 2017). The goal of Eritrea's national strategies is to provide accessible and free quality education to prepare its youth to contribute to national development, and while overall literacy levels are high, skill levels are substantially lower (Ministry of Education, 2008; Research and Evidence Facility, 2017).

In the immediate post-independence era, there was a sense of satisfaction among the general public about the state's prioritisation of education (Tessema & Ng'oma, 2009). However, as the approach to education and human development in general began to be perceived as impeding individual rights and focusing more on the needs the government, this strategy began to receive less and less support. In addition to concerns over the erosion of human rights was a concern that the education provided, despite being positioned as addressing the employment demand in the country, did not adequately prepare youth for these opportunities (Research and Evidence Facility, 2017). In a study on education in Eritrea, Müller (2004) found that some of the participants felt that their education and training did not match their future goals, because after the year 2000, employment opportunities became fewer and they were expected to work mainly in construction. One participant

expressed how service to the country could have been “better” utilised instead of doing construction work. The Eritrean government expresses the value of the nation’s human resource, more specifically the young people and that it is highly important that all Eritrean people are equipped with necessary skills and knowledge to protect and develop the nation (Riggan, 2016). Despite the focus on developing manpower, the absorptive capacity of the Ethiopian economy and labour market remains limited.

As mentioned earlier, the Eritrean economy has experienced serious ebbs and flows, peaking at 8.2% GDP growth in 2011, a steep decline to 0.3% in 2015, and a projected incline to 3.7% in 2018 (African Development Bank, 2018; Rosberg & Tronvoll, 2017). The main economic activities in Eritrea are centred around agriculture, construction and mining (African Development Bank, 2018). However, the market has limited absorptive capacity. Hence, the majority of the national service participants serve in government departments and government businesses. In specific reference to women’s employment, scholars have raised concerns regarding access to employment opportunities as well as the relatively low incomes on average (Rena, 2007). The lack of a clear pathway to employment, limited incomes and an overall suppressed economy affects the hope that young people have for the future and forces young people to make decisions to migrate, which they perceive as having the potential to provide better opportunities in the future (Hirt, 2010).

We suggest that a major factor influencing mass migration from Eritrea since 2000 is the lack of opportunities for skilled labour to match individual aspirations (Horwood & Hopper, 2017; Rosberg & Tronvoll, 2017). In their analysis, Horwood and Hopper (2017: 4) conclude that “the main drivers [of migration from Eritrea] are endemic poverty, lack of livelihoods and limited political freedoms.” Eritrea’s national education strategy appears not to prepare youth for the labour market. However, when they are trained, there is often limited opportunity for transition as the market has relatively weak absorptive capacity, leaving many of the youth unemployed.

### ***Human Rights and Individual Freedom***

One of the most recurrent challenges highlighted in the studies we reviewed was the issue of human rights, and in this regard, reference is often made to the national service program (Amnesty International, 2015; Connell, 2012). Generally, while the national service, has the intention of infusing national consciousness and preparing youth for employment, the unintended consequence of the program appears to be that it has developed into a major

impediment to the freedom of young Eritreans to choose the life they want, or at least has raised young people's perception of uncertainty (Kibreab, 2017). This is particularly the case as far as conscription is concerned. As much of the analyses suggest, many youth are compelled to participate in the service and when in the service, it is suggested that there are no guarantees as to when they will leave the program (Kibreab, 2017). This creates a disincentive for youth who may ordinarily be willing to participate in the program. Further to this, there is a general sense of Eritrea being a police state (International Crisis Group, 2014). In part, this was triggered by the 1998 border war, which ended with the famous no war no peace proclamation, and the state of alertness on the part of Eritrean authorities. There is also the challenge associated with the suspension of the constitution, which disenfranchises and excludes most Eritreans from being a part of decision-making on issues affecting their lives (Rosberg & Tronvoll, 2017).

Many of the studies reviewed concluded that the national service program was the main cause of migration from Eritrea (Research and Evidence Facility, 2017; Rosberg and Tronvoll, 2017). As mentioned earlier, the program was instituted in 1991 with the goal of nation building and post-conflict economic development, as well as fostering and transferring Eritrea's national values to the younger generation (Kibreab, 2009). The national service was designed as one of the strategies through which the government of Eritrea was to pursue its self-reliance approach to development through the participation of youth in state-sanctioned work. However, the approach has proved to be controversial as both local and international scholars have described it as a form of forced labour and, consequently, contested its legitimacy (Kibreab, 2009). This has resulted in the depletion of the country's human capital, comparable in ways to the immediate post-war levels.

Some scholars suggest that the national service has remained an open-ended program since the renewed Eritrean-Ethiopian border conflict (Kibreab, 2017). While the youth participate in the service, there seems to be a lack of consideration for their aspirations, and most youth who participate in the program do so because they have no choice (Kibreab, 2014). According to Kibreab (2014), if a young person does not have academic, professional or vocational qualifications, they are expected to serve in the army. If the conscription is open-ended as claimed, this means those young people assigned to the military could become soldiers for the rest of their lives and against their deliberate choice. Another issue is that many youth resisted the notion of becoming teachers but, nevertheless, were assigned to teaching

positions (Müller, 2004). Müller (2004: 225) summarises the effects of state policies in Eritrea on personal freedoms as follows:

*Personal freedom is the main issue in these minority statements and resistance to restrictions of that freedom might become more important in the future, if the Eritrean government fails to offer to its people the opportunities they desire. The ultimate resistance for a university student to the government's plan, and with it, a rejection of showing social solidarity, is exercised in leaving the country and depriving it from the benefits the investment in a student's education should have brought.*

We conclude from the literature that a restrictive environment that infringes on people's rights and freedoms to make important life choices is an important contribution to mass migration of youth from Eritrea. The extension of the national service infringes on the rights of young people to choose the lives that they value, as outlined in the capability approach (Sen, 1993). As was noted earlier, it is important for people to have the ability to choose the life they value. Where this is absent, even well intended national development policies and programs could become major barriers to people's lives and wellbeing, leading to choices that negatively affect the country.

### ***Discussions and Policy Recommendations***

When we started this article, our interest was to explore the factors that contribute to large scale Eritrean youth migration. Our analysis suggests that, rather than being attributed solely to the national service, Eritrean youth migration can also be attributed to the absence of opportunities for transition from education to employment, the tension between individual and national aspirations and limited freedoms. Therefore, we conclude that a complex mix of factors, including the national service, contribute to mass youth migration. Our conclusions are supported by the studies, reviews and reports cited throughout the paper.

With reference to tensions between Eritrea's national aspirations and those of its citizens, this is supported by many of the analyses on Eritrea, particularly those focused on education and the national service program (Kibreab, 2017; Müller, 2004; Rena, 2006). Essentially, the authors of these studies suggest that the state's attempts to control access to courses in higher education and mandate youth to undertake the national service are not aligned with the expectations of the youth for their lives (Dorman, 2005). Furthermore, Eritrea's economy has faced many challenges over the last three decades.

Overall, the economy has been unable to develop the necessary absorptive capacity for new entrants into the market. While overall unemployment and youth unemployment rates are relatively low, compared to other African countries, these may be a function of the unreliable statistics emanating from the country and may be further masked by the high proportion of youth who are underemployed (African Development Bank, 2018). As pointed out above, the highly controlled state of affairs in Eritrea, reflected in many facets of national life, including the institution of the national service, is a major contributor to mass youth migration.

Drawing on the above, we deduce key policy recommendations that we believe could inform a more nuanced discourse and contribute to changes in Eritrea. Firstly, we recommend a more robust education strategy that offers young people a wide-range of options. This may require considering both their aspirations and the demands of the labour market and not necessarily the priorities of the state. Such a strategy will be effective if it accounts for not only skills that are necessary for work within Eritrea itself but also those necessary for opportunities elsewhere in the Horn of Africa. Secondly, we recommend a review of the national service program to include a fixed duration after which all participants could exit (Kibreab, 2017). In other countries, such as Nigeria, this is an option that has been built into the national youth service (Obadare, 2011) and could be a useful model for Eritrea. Thirdly, to create more economic opportunities, the Eritrean government needs to open-up the economy and create a more conducive environment for investments. This will, in turn, create more opportunities for youth, provide incentives for the youth to remain in the country, and offer development in a wider range of sectors in which youth can aspire to pursue studies, gain future employment and make their own contribution to the development of the country.

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