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# Social Embeddedness of Human Smuggling in East Africa: Brokering Ethiopian Migration to Sudan

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## Abstract

*This article discusses the migration processes and brokering practices that link Ethiopia and Sudan by taking into account the social, economic, political and cultural underpinnings of human smuggling in the region. The analysis is based on three months of fieldwork using a conventional qualitative research methodology. Respondents were selected from actors such as smugglers, migrants and government personnel involved in the migration process, facilitation and control activities. Since the 1990s, significant irregular overland labour migration has emerged from Ethiopian towns and villages to Khartoum, Sudan via the border towns of Metema on the Ethiopian side and Galabat on the Sudanese side. However, how various actors engage in shaping this migration process and how human smuggling sustains despite increasing control efforts by the state is less understood. This paper demonstrates that this mobility is facilitated mainly by smugglers who are involved in transnational social relations, material practice and migration knowledge production, including informal money transfer practices, transport and communication infrastructures. This challenges the view reflected in popular discourses that such smuggling is organised by independent criminal organisations. Smugglers and their connectors in Metema facilitate Ethiopian migrants' clandestine border crossings via the town of Metema by mobilising support and resources from local communities along the border, bribing border guards and capitalising on their ethnic, religious and economic connections along Ethiopian-Sudanese borderlands. The study concludes that human smuggling and brokering migration partly thrives in the border areas since the actors extend benefits of smuggling to the economically disadvantaged local community and in return generate social and community support for smuggling activities.*

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### Introduction

In recent decades, Ethiopia has simultaneously become one of the major sending and transit countries of migrants and asylum seekers in the Horn of Africa (Ayalew, 2017; Zewdu, 2018). In the face of challenging socioeconomic and political conditions in the country, which are compounded by very limited options for legal international migration, a large number of Ethiopian young men and women undertake long and dangerous overland journeys across deserts and seas to reach destination countries in Europe, the Middle East and southern parts of Africa. The mobility of migrants is organised by the engagement and interactions of multiple actors and the entanglement of social and smuggling networks that link migration origin, transit and destination places (ILO, 2011; Ayalew, 2017; Fernandez, 2017). The focus of this paper is socio-political and cultural dimensions of smuggling of Ethiopian migrants to Sudan along the north-western route, which links villages and towns in Ethiopia to Khartoum, via the town of Metema, which is located along the Ethiopian-Sudanese border. This route leads to Europe via the eastern Sahara Desert, Libya and the Mediterranean Sea.

Migration through this route to Sudan and further north is not a recent phenomenon. The mass flow of people through the town of Metema was observed during the Dergue regime due to famine, civil war and the repressive political rule in Ethiopia (Terrazas, 2007; Faiz, 2013; Hailemichael, 2014; Grabska, 2016). However, since the 1990s, after the current Ethiopian regime took power and the emergence of a booming oil economy in Sudan, Ethiopian labour migration to Sudan has shown a marked increase. Most of these border crossings are clandestine and thousands of young men and women cross the Ethiopian-Sudanese border every month (Triulzi & Mckenzie, 2013; Zeyneba, 2017; Ayalew, 2017). In Khartoum, women migrants face sexual, physical and labour abuses by employers and significant other actors. Many new arrivals often use Khartoum as a steppingstone and proceed towards European countries that are assumed to be welcoming of refugees and migrants (Triulzi, 2013).

After the Ethiopian government recently intensified control infrastructures and introduced tough anti-human smuggling regulations to control clandestine migration, the actors and practices of facilitating overland migration and clandestine crossing of international borders have become

more complex than before. In this paper, we will trace the role of state, private and community actors in facilitating the smuggling of Ethiopian migrants to Sudan. The existing studies focus on how criminal organisations, such as human traffickers and armed gangs, stationed along this migration route deceive migrants and how professional smugglers independently organise clandestine migratory journeys and border crossings (Abebaw, 2013; Triulzi & Mckenzie, 2013; Treiber, 2013b; Hailemichael, 2014; Habte, 2015; Collyer, 2015). Migrants, mainly women, are also portrayed as silent victims of various types of sexual, labour and physical abuses by trafficking rings and smuggling operations (Fernandez, 2010; Guday & Kiya, 2013; Asnake & Zerihun, 2015; Grabska, 2016; Zeyneba, 2017).

Of course, there are interesting emerging studies on the conditions of migration in Sub-Saharan Africa. For instance, Dinbabo and Nyasulu (2015) explored macroeconomic determinants of pull factors of international migration to South Africa and Dinbabo and Carciotto (2015) dealt with the necessity of a rights-based approach in international migration studies. However, less understood is the manner in which smuggling becomes a community enterprise – as it involves ordinary individuals, state actors and business people – and is embedded in cross-border informal trade and social relations in borderland areas. Furthermore, little is known about how migration facilitation actors sustain clandestine migration by dynamically and creatively responding and adapting to the intensification of irregular migration control and states' regulatory structures. Thus, this paper tries to fill this knowledge gap by exploring the intersection of social and smuggling networks in organising clandestine migratory exits and journeys; socio-cultural dimensions of brokerage and smuggling organisations.

This study was conducted mainly in the transit town of Metema, which is about 196 kilometres away from Gonder and 975 kilometres from the capital, Addis Ababa. This town is a major node of smuggling and social networks that connect villages and towns in Ethiopia to Khartoum, Sudan. A major source of livelihoods is cross-border trade with the town of Galabat on the Sudanese side of the border. The town's economy is predominantly based on trade and service, which is related to the large numbers of migrants. The rural parts of the districts on both sides of the border have agricultural investments. Especially on the Sudanese side, there are large-scale plantations that play a major role in attracting labour migrants from Ethiopia. The study was also conducted in three major migrant sending locations in Ethiopia: Addis Ababa, Hadiya Zone in Southern Ethiopia and South Wallo Zone in Northern Ethiopia.

## Background/Contextualisation

Ethiopian migration to Sudan is not a new phenomenon. There was significant refugee flow from Ethiopia to Sudan during the Ethiopian military regime (1974–1991) due to military dictatorship, civil wars, poverty and environmental disasters, such as droughts (Terrazas, 2007; Faiz, 2013; Hailemichael, 2014; Grabska, 2016). According to Bariagaber (2006), political conflict and war with Eritrea led to the displacement of thousands who migrated to the Sudan. According to Grabska (2016), these migrants of the 1980s and 1990s were labelled as refugees, unlike the present cohort who are predominantly economic migrants. Faiz (2013) also states that the existence of petroleum since the 1990s and the economic boom afterwards attracted many economic migrants to the country, including Ethiopians. With the downfall of the military regime, the former refugees were repatriated to Ethiopia, and resettled in the border town of Metema. Many of those who remained in Sudan settled in Khartoum and continued to supply information to prospective migrants about ways of clandestine border crossings, meeting the brokers, as well as financial and psychological support for new arrivals via transnational and translocal social and family networks that connect the origin, transit and destination locations in this migration corridor (Treiber, 2013a; Ayalew, 2017).

In addition, the longstanding migration history between the two countries, the cultural similarity and the loose and vast common border encouraged migrants to use the north-west route to the Sudan. However, recently, migration patterns have become complex in terms of who is migrating, how and why. There are different estimations but no exact data on the number of migrants crossing the border clandestinely. For instance, in 2011, the ILO reported that the number of Ethiopian migrants travelling to Libya through Sudan was around 75,000–100,000 per year (Anteneh, 2011). In 2014, the number of migrants using the north-west route was reported to be 18,000–37,000 per year (Frouws, 2014). Based on her source from the Ethiopian Immigration Office in Metema, Zeyneba (2017) puts the annual estimate at 30,000–32,400 migrants. Despite such statistics and the significant flow of Ethiopian, Eritrean and Somali migrants, little is known about migration patterns and process along this route (RMMS, 2014; Ayalew, 2017). Extreme mobility of migrants in the Sudan, Egypt, Libya and further in Europe make it difficult to track the migration flow, processes and map out the routes that take migrants outside of Ethiopia. Destinations are also varied as some stay in

Sudan, Libya and Egypt while others continue their journey to Europe (Ayalew, 2017).

Despite reports of abuse and harassment in Sudan, the majority of migrants taking the north-west route are women. According to Zeyneba (2017), between September 2014 and August 2015, 193 migrants were caught trying to cross into the Sudan. Of this, 123 (63.73%) were female migrants. Faiz (2013) further claimed that the number of illegal female migrants to Sudan has increased after the 2013 ban on labour migration to the Middle East by the Ethiopian government. Studies show that Ethiopian women leave the country in search of better livelihoods (Shewit, 2013; Hailemichael, 2014). The Metema route, according to Anteneh (2011) and Jamie (2013), thus mainly served as a route for women migrants to Sudan for the purpose of domestic work. In Sudan, Ethiopian women are engaged in selling tea and coffee on the streets and sometimes in commercial sex work (Anteneh, 2011; Shewit, 2013; Zeyneba, 2017). Female Ethiopian migrants face several problems, including physical and sexual abuse (Faiz, 2013; Shewit, 2013; Addis, 2014; Frouws, 2014; Hailemichael, 2014; Grabska, 2016; Tsega, 2016; Zeyneba, 2017). In many cases, according to Shewit (2013) and Faiz (2013), the women are faced with long working hours, restricted mobility and verbal abuse. They are also stereotyped and wrongly perceived as thieves and prostitutes in Sudan (Shewit, 2013; Ayalew, 2017).

Looking further into the demography of migrants taking the north-west route, it is reported that many of the migrants are young Ethiopians and many male migrants look forward to reaching Europe through Libya and Egypt (Kuschminder & Siegel, 2012; Frouws, 2014; Strachan, 2016). In terms of ethnicity, they are mainly from Oromiya and Southern Nations Nationalities and People Regional States (Faiz, 2013; Zeyneba, 2017). This might be due to geographic proximity and the history of migration to Sudan from these regions.

High-risk border crossings and long journeys of migrants and refugees from Ethiopia must be understood in the local and global context of a socio-political economy. On the sending side, young people in Ethiopia are dissatisfied with the growing economic inequalities, prolonged conflicts and repressive political conditions (Ayalew, 2017). At the same time, they are lured by remittances and returnees' prosperity and driven by social and familial expectations. Undoubtedly, there is evidence of state persecutions and human right violations, particularly in the last two decades in Ethiopia, that drive an

increasing number of refugee flights, mainly from Oromyia National and Regional State of Ethiopia. Many of the migrants use Khartoum as a steppingstone to move to Europe, where they can seek asylum in refugee welcoming countries such as Germany and Sweden (Triulzi, 2013; Campbell, 2014; Ayalew, 2017). However, there are also several other personal factors that drive migrants, such as adventure-seeking dreams, escape from forced marriages in the case of women and failures at school. Moreover, there are intermediaries and smugglers, commonly referred to as delaloch in Ethiopia, and several other actors who engage in organising departure and mobility. The delaloch also arrange debts for poor migrants so that they can travel now but pay later after they get jobs in Sudan. Thus, the combination of complex and dynamic macro (structural), meso (social and smuggling networks) and micro (individual) factors (Faist, 2000) shape the migratory experience in Ethiopia.

## *Conceptual Frameworks*

### *Migration Industry*

There is growing literature that makes use of term 'migration industry' to describe the globalised phenomena of migration and the various actors that make it possible. Since the late 1990s, the concept was introduced to explain "how migration flows sustained themselves in the face of intensified efforts of states to control movement across territorial boundaries" (Spener, 2009). Following the pioneering work of Salt and Stein (1997), migration scholars have broadened the concept of the 'migration industry' to explain actors and processes involved in border controls and those facilitating contemporary irregular and regular labour and refugee mobility, particularly from the Global South to the Global North (Sørensen & Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2013; Andersson, 2014).

The migration industry comprises of actors, technologies and enterprises that encourage, facilitate, mediate, condition, and control migration, cutting across both the social relations and material economy. These include recruitment and travel agencies, money lenders, formal and informal remittance and courier services, transport companies and operators, legal and advisory firms, visa facilitation agencies, lawyers, security contractors, smugglers, NGOs and others (Spener, 2009; Hernández-León, 2008; Sørensen & Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2013; Xiang & Lindquist, 2014). According to Sørensen and Gammeltoft-Hansen (2013), the migration industry further encompasses human smuggling and trafficking networks, transnational criminal organisations, trafficking rings, and 'control providers', such as private

contractors performing immigration checks, operating detention centers and/or carrying out forced returns. According to Sørensen and Gammeltoft-Hansen's (2013) study, the involvement of these different institutions, individuals, and agents in the migration industry is believed to be driven by financial gain, emphasising the "commercialization of migration". This study noted that these various actors maximise and accumulate huge economic gains by capitalising on migrants' desire to move and the states' increasing efforts to manage migratory mobility. In fact, for Sørensen and Gammeltoft-Hansen (2013), it is the state that "actively sustains and funds large parts of the migration industry", which indicates the involvement of not only market actors in the migration industry but also the intersection of market and state.

However, due to the pronounced "business" domain in the concept of the migration industry, scholars centred their points of discussion on the "illegal" end of it, and argue that "human smuggling and trafficking" are salient elements of the migration industry (Salt & Stein, 1997; Castel & Miller, 2003). Later encompassing the social relation in migration networks, the concept of the migration industry was further developed into a business that can also "emerge from mutually-supportive networks of social relations within a migrant community" (Spener, 2009: 26).

### From Migration Industry to Migration Infrastructure

Over time, literature on the migration industry has moved away from Salt and Stein's (1997) notion of "migration businesses" towards considering migration infrastructure (Hernández-León, 2008; Sørensen & Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2013; Xiang & Lindquist, 2014). These infrastructures, according to Xiang and Lindquist (2014: 124), can be divided into five dimensions evident in every step of the migration process. These are (1) the commercial (recruitment intermediaries), (2) the regulatory (state apparatus and procedures for documentation, licensing, training and other purposes), (3) the technological (communication and transport), (4) the humanitarian (NGOs and international organisations) and (5) the social (migrant networks). These dimensions entail that the concept of the migration industry not only deals with micro and macro structures but rather offers a meso-structure approach to migration.

However, as Hernández-León (2008) argues, the migrant has long been left out of this concept of the migration industry, which pays little attention to migrants' active and passive agency in mobilising migration resources and the diverse and dynamic relationships that emerge between migrants and brokers

(Herman, 2006; Sanchez, 2015; Ayalew, 2018). It also lacks the existential and emotional dimensions of migration. To address this shortcoming, Schapendonk (2018: 665) adds to the definition of the migration industry by incorporating relationalities and social negotiation with a focus on how migrants navigate the industry and how their practices "relate to, and are entangled with, a wider web of relations." This emphasises the multi-scalar, relational nature of migration and its embeddedness in the social context.

The literature on the migration industry also fails to incorporate the fundamental gender relations that shape and are reshaped by migration. Ethnic background and age group also determine the migration experience and process. Moreover, how migrants and brokers create and use networks by capitalising on shared nationality, ethnicity, religion and hometowns during organising fragmented and stepwise migratory journeys is overlooked (Ayalew, 2018). It is these missing elements in the migration industry literature that the present paper takes into account.

According to Spener (2009), it has proven difficult to define the scope of the industry, a complex landscape with diverse actors and shifting roles. This point is reiterated by Schapendonk (2018). Furthermore, according to Spener (2009:18), there is a "problem of how we establish the conceptual boundaries of the migration industry" either as an analytical concept or a metaphorical representation. Nevertheless, the concept of the migration industry has proven to be an approach that enhances our understanding of migration as a multi-level process that involves different actors.

Taking this into consideration, this paper is situated partly in line with Sørensen and Gammeltoft-Hansen's (2013) concept of the "migration facilitation industry", focusing on brokerage and the material and social infrastructure that shape migratory mobility, but also recognising that the profits and social trust cannot always be separated (Xiang & Lindquist, 2014). Brokerage is the process of connecting actors in systems of social, economic or political relations in order to facilitate access to valued resources (Stovel & Shaw, 2012; Lindquist et al., 2012). Brokers often occupy the 'middle space' between migrants, states and employers. They can act as extensions of the state, seeking to outsource border controls and colluding with employers to cheapen and commodify migrant labour (McCollum & Findlay, 2018). Brokers can also work on migrants' behalf, finding ways of circumventing restrictive border control policies and practices.

With the topic of brokering migratory exits and sustaining cross-border mobility, the present paper looks into the brokering practice that involves the interplay between different private actors, formal and informal brokers, humanitarian and state actors and institutions, including social networks and technologies that inform, facilitate and condition the migration process, making it self-perpetuating and self-serving (Lin et al. 2017). It also looks into how brokering and smuggling practices thrive from and are sustained by a continuous process of learning about changing conditions along migration routes, including intensification of control and regulatory structures in border areas as well as negotiating power relations between migrants and smugglers at the three stages of migration process. These three states are: (1) recruitment and/or departure; (2) mobility/*en route* and border crossings and (3) settlement at a particular destination (Faist, 2014).

## Methodology of the Study

The empirical data was collected through three months of fieldwork in 2016 and 2018 using a conventional qualitative research methodology including in-depth and informal interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), observations, collection of life histories, photographs, extended case studies tracing migratory departures, journey and settlement in destination or return and circulation. Respondents were selected from workers and actors involved in the migration industry. These include five brokers, government officials (two border guards and 16 officials/personnel working in migration related government offices) and six non-government and international organisations, including the IOM and local NGOs engaged in migration management. In addition, 25 aspiring migrants, 30 families/households of migrants, 20 returnees in origin locations (Addis Ababa, Wallo and Hadiya) and 5 migrants *en route* in Metema were interviewed.

Potential migrants, migrants in transit locations, failed migrants as well as returnees were the main targets of this study. This approach helped us to deeply explore the roles of migration facilitation actors at the different stages of the migration process. Some returnees are aiming to migrate again (either to the same destination or to try new destinations), others want to resettle and still others have managed to become successful business persons. Some were expelled from Sudan while others returned to Ethiopia voluntarily. Both types of returnees were interviewed in Metema and Addis Ababa in order to collect information about their engagements with the migration facilitation industry actors. In addition, stories of migrants' lived experiences helped us to trace the

actual process of migratory journeys, border crossings and their experiences in destination locations. As migration decision making (including selection of brokers) engages families/households, the study also targeted households of migrants.

Research in archives or policy document analysis was also conducted to capture socio-political and legal contexts of migration decisions using the services of brokers as well as regulatory infrastructures that shape smuggling organisations. Besides the in-depth interviews, five FGD were held with aspiring migrants and returnees in the study sites. In the following sections, we will explore this further and empirically explain the smuggling operations, process of clandestine migratory departures and journey towards the Sudan.

## Results and findings

### Smuggling Organisations and Clandestine Journeys

As stated earlier, there is a well-established overland migration route that links Ethiopia and Sudan (Triulzi, 2013: 235). The route begins in Addis Ababa and passes through the towns of Bahir Dar and Gondar and the other major transition towns of Metema and Humera (Himora) at the Ethiopian–Sudanese border, and leads to Khartoum via the towns of Galabat and Gedaref in Sudan. Some people from the Tigray Region and Gondar exit via Humera in the northern part of the Ethiopian–Sudanese border. These migration routes and delaloch networks link villages and towns in Ethiopia with Khartoum.

There are generally two ways of facilitating an overland journey: delaloch gather migrants in Addis Ababa or other bigger cities, such as Jima, Adama and Addis Ababa, for a few days and then arrange transport to Khartoum. The precise number of delaloch engaged in this migratory process is largely unknown. Some sources estimate that more than a thousand migration delaloch live in Addis Ababa alone and hundreds live in transition towns and villages (Abebaw, 2013; IGAD, 2013; Ayalew, 2017). The individuals working with these delaloch, whom migrants call 'the bosses' (that is, lead brokers), sit in Khartoum, from where they access leqamiwoch (recruiters or collectors), ashagariwoch (transporters), kezaignoch (those who keep migrants in hidden places/houses en route) and teqebayoch (receivers in destination) along the stated routes.

These bosses are former Eritrean and Ethiopian migrants who occasionally work with Sudanese and Libyan smugglers, known as semsari, and have agents in Europe and Saudi Arabia as well. Migrants' testimonies indicate that

the bosses sometimes organise overland journeys via Libya to Italy and then Scandinavia or by air directly from Sudan or via Saudi Arabia to Europe with help from Sudanese semsari. The 'bigger bosses' in Khartoum have several nicknames and many of them are from the Eritrean and Ethiopian Tigray ethnic group. Some names frequently mentioned by interlocutors are Kibrom, Ephrem, Wedi German (son of Germany), Wedi Asab (son of Asab) and Yishaq, indicating Tigrigna origin. This is due to the long and established history of clandestine migration facilitations from Eritrea, which the smugglers from these ethnic groups have capitalised on for a long time (Ayalew, 2017).

The bosses' agents, known as leqamiwoch, move inside villages and neighbourhoods in towns and convince young men and women to take the journey before finally sending them to the ashagari in Addis Ababa. From Addis Ababa, another ashagari collects the migrants and sends them to the border towns, such as Metema or Humera, where the next ashagari assists them to cross the border before he hands them over to a Sudanese transporter, who then takes them to Khartoum. However, not only cross-border delaloch networks but also cross-border kinship obligations and other significant actors located in relevant spaces organise the irregular overland exits and journey towards Sudan. In most cases, potential migrants collect the names and addresses of reliable delala or recruiters in origin locations and border areas from friends and family members in Sudan who might have used the same routes or delala. The recruiter or local delala first collects the lists of potential migrants and then contacts his immediate and 'smaller boss' in Addis Ababa or Metema and Humera. The smaller bosses contact their 'mastermind' in Khartoum, who arranges for agents who can bribe the border guards at various checkpoints and others who can transport people across borders and take them to Khartoum. The 'bosses' also decide the appropriate time, condition and means of transport. According to the accounts of delaloch and migrants collected during our fieldwork, transporters flexibly use a combination of public and private transport services.

Marishet was a 23-year-old woman from Ethiopia. The researcher met her in Khartoum in May 2016 while she was in transit to Sudan. She described her journey from Addis Ababa to Khartoum and the many people involved in getting them from one point to the next. She travelled with her sister after both of them had decided to migrate to Sudan. They consulted their brother-in-law who put them in touch with a delala named Getachew. Getachew promised to get them to Khartoum for 7,500 birr each (about 300 euros), to which they agreed. They planned to use her sister's savings from an earlier stint in Dubai.

She promised to repay her sister after she found a job. They then met Getachew at the bus station and he accompanied them to Metema where he handed them over to two Habeshas [Ethiopians] waiting for them on the outskirts of Metema. From this point onwards, the journey became more clandestine and dangerous. Marishet stated:

> *We passed the checkpoints on two motorcycles, which they rode on the side of the roads. From there, we were handed over to a Sudanese man who collected us from Habeshas and drove us to his place in a Toyota pickup car. He offered us one night of accommodation. For the next two days, he drove us through bushes, dust and dirt roads. Finally, he took us deep into the bushes near Khartoum, where we joined about 120 Ethiopian migrants, who were hiding in the bushes and waiting to be transported to Khartoum [...]. The next day, at midnight, the Sudanese came with three minibuses and loaded about 50 people in the cars. After long hours of nonstop driving, we entered Khartoum at midnight.*

After arriving in Khartoum, those who had friends and relatives were dropped at their houses and others waiting for money to be transferred via hawala by their relatives would be held in accommodation arranged by the Sudanese delaloch until the money was received. Those who wanted to continue their trip to Libya could stay with the delaloch until the next leg of the trip was arranged. But those who did not have money to pay for their journey from Ethiopia to Sudan entered into a debt agreement with the delaloch and were informally introduced to employers in Khartoum or other places in Sudan. They would remain under the surveillance of delaloch until they repaid their entire debt.

The above account exemplifies that irregular migratory exits result from actions and interactions of various actors and entities. On the one hand, feelings of immobility in life, mainly among the young people in current day Ethiopia, have partly motivated overland escape, which is facilitated by diverse actors, including migrants and non-migrants located in several local and transnational spaces. The facilitating agents of migrants' journeys towards Sudan are smugglers that include delaloch and their connectors; technologies such as mobile phones and the Internet; family and friendship networks; and public transport and road networks that link Sudan and Ethiopia. These have become infrastructural moorings of clandestine migratory exits and journeys. The interactions of these actors, institutions, networks and objects, which condition and facilitate overland exits, reflect the entanglement of complex

economic and social forms, material and technological practices and smuggling networks. Some of the actors engage for money and others (former migrants en route and in diaspora) do so because of cross-border social obligations and reciprocal relations. However, recently, the Ethiopian government has intensified border controls by introducing strict regulations regarding human smuggling practices. Following this, smuggling operations become more complex as smugglers dynamically adapt new strategies to overcome control structures. The following sections explore this in detail.

## Intensification of Government Controls and Smugglers' Reactions

Recently, the Ethiopian government intensified migration control infrastructures and regulations following the increased media coverage of the suffering of Ethiopian migrants en route and deportations of thousands of migrants from various destination locations, mainly Saudi Arabia, which also intensified the ongoing anti-government protests in the country (De Regt & Tafesse, 2015; Ayalew, 2017). This increased regulation is also backed by the EU externalisation of border controls. Via externalisation practices, the EU has begun to persuade African states including Ethiopia to "introduce pre-emptive measures to deter or prevent their citizens from irregularly migrating to Europe, and/or other nationals from doing so by transiting through their countries". In exchange, the EU extends various promises including development aid, trade facilitation, foreign investment, and other advantages (Gaibazzi et al., 2017: 5–10). The government of Ethiopia has intensely engaged in criminalising brokers and portraying migrants as victims of the smuggling practices. To that end, proclamations are adopted swiftly and "anti-human trafficking taskforces" have been established at different layers of the bureaucracy targeting the irregular migration facilitators and brokers.

The Ethiopian government introduced different anti-human smuggling legislations. Some of these include the 11th Criminal Bench within the Federal High Court (2007), Human Trafficking and Narcotics section in Organized Crime Investigation Unit of the Federal Police (2009) and Anti-Trafficking Task Force (2011), which were established to curb human trafficking and smuggling and combat illegal migration. The anti-human trafficking taskforce has been set up at all levels of the administrative tier. Officials from the deputy Prime Minister to the district administrators are members of the taskforce. To broaden migration control activities, law enforcement, religious leaders and traditional leaders have formed an anti-human trafficking committee. Checkpoints have been set up in the main migration routes. Brokers have been

criminalised and subjected to organised campaign. In the last five years, in two districts in Wallo and Hadya provinces, 50 and 62 brokers, respectively, were convicted and are serving long prison sentences.

The Private Employment Agency Proclamation 104/1998 was later amended to the 2009 Employment Exchange Service Proclamation 632/2009, which holds Private Employment Agencies (PEAs) and employers liable for the welfare of employees and states higher bond requirements for licensing. Further, the proclamation amendment was argued to have caused a decline in licensed PEAs (from 110 in 2009 to 54 in 2010) and pushed some PEAs into the business of illegal brokerage (Fernandez, 2017). The new anti-human smuggling proclamation (proclamation 909/2015) even introduced tougher regulations and punishments on those engaged in human smuggling and trafficking in person. In 2013, the Ethiopian government banned any labour migration to Middle Eastern countries until agreements were reached with respective countries on the protection of migrant workers (De Regt & Taafesse, 2015; Zewdu, 2018). Following this, the north-western route towards Europe via Sudan became popular. Smugglers diversified their migration facilitation strategies and new actors joined the facilitation industry. In other words, as it is elaborated below, intensification of control infrastructures have not stemmed clandestine migratory exits; rather, they have increased costs, risks and the number of migration facilitation actors, as smugglers dynamically and creatively design new routes and strategies to overcome barriers.

### *Diversification of Exit Routes and Strategies*

The Metema-Galabat border has been the main exit route for migrants along the Ethiopian-Sudanese border. However, after the recent intensification of border controls in the area, migrants cross the border and enter into Sudan by using remote desert routes. According to information from government officials and residents of Metema town, there are different desert routes in Metema, woreda, that have emerged to serve as major gateways to Sudan. Some of the desert routes found in Metema are Doleo, Meka, Shinfa, Korjamos, Workamba, Chilga, Dambia, Ganda and Arbajira. Migrants pay high costs to brokers to enter into Sudan using these desert routes: from 7,000 to 12,000 Ethiopian birr (Zeyneba, 2017). Previously, it cost approximately 2,000 Ethiopian birr (Ayalew, 2017).

Those migrants who are coming from Eritrea and Somaliland often use the Doleo Desert route, which is found to be one of the most dangerous desert

routes in the woreda. In this regard, Zeyneba (2017) stated that in 2016, a car holding 24 migrants from Somaliland (18 male and 6 females) were caught while they were trying to cross the border to enter into Sudan through the Doleo Desert. Moreover, in addition to the above stated desert routes, where the government intensified controls, numerous other unknown desert routes are found by smugglers in order to facilitate migrants' clandestine entry into Sudan. In addition, since the Ethiopian government recently tightened border controls in Metema, the route passing through Humera has become a key outlet. The Humera border is used mainly by Eritreans and Ethiopians from the northern parts of Ethiopia (Ayalew, 2017). There is also another route via Damazin along the Ethiopian-Sudanese border. This route is mainly used by Ethiopians from Benishangul-Gumuz and Oromiya national and regional states to enter Sudan. During our recent fieldwork, we were told that migrants were found dead along this route just two months prior due to dehydration in the dessert.

Until 2013, in many migrants sending areas of Ethiopia, brokers openly collected money, recruited, transported and hosted migrants in their own safe houses. Even the security in certain areas considered them to be creators of opportunity. For instance, in one case in Hadiya, a police commissioner assigned a guard for a broker. However, now brokers have moved from the public scene to underground operations in many parts of Ethiopia. They undertake their services via telephone and local representatives. Most of the negotiations between brokers and potential migrants are made telephonically. Systems of transport have also changed; except in the case of the route from Wallo to the Djibouti border where there is no public transportation, transporting migrants en masse to the border in a rented car has been abandoned. Rather, migrants are told to take public transport by themselves until they reach border towns such as Metema. Systems of sheltering have also changed. Instead of keeping migrants together, brokers let migrants rent rooms by themselves in hotels around the border during journeys.

The above discussion indicates that intercepting migration routes simply increases the costs and risks of migration instead of preventing it. This is mainly because, besides other factors, more officials and law enforcement joined in the facilitation industry. For instance, during long journeys across the desert, migrants (especially female migrants) experience environmental hazards, gang rape, shortage of food and water, theft and robbery by criminals (Ayalew, 2017; Zeyneba, 2017). In addition, as is elaborated below, tightening

border controls partly increased actors engaged in the facilitation of migration.

### Smuggling Becomes Community Enterprise in Border Areas

According to the informants and researchers' observations, the social and economic lives of Metema town thrives because of migration and contraband trade. The town is predominantly populated by returnees, newly arrived potential migrants and seasonal labour migrants coming to the large-scale commercial sesame farms in the area. Urban dwellers and organisations – such as shop owners, hawala agents, tea and coffee vendors, hotels, shoeshines, youth economic associations such as shanta mahber (luggage association) and private transport services (buses, Bajaj, tractors and minibuses) – benefit from and support brokering practices and clandestine migration. This is because all of these social groups generate financial gains by hosting, feeding, guiding and transporting migrants, as well as brokering border crossings.

Abdalla was a sheqaba (local broker) in the town of Metema. During the time of interview, in May 2018, he was 35 years old. He had served as a Federal Police officer, but later he quit the position and became a sheqaba in Metema for five years. He narrated the following:

> *Metema town is built by the money from the migrants. Everybody participates. Migrants come with money, people in Metema waits for that money. Thus, nobody resists. You know why the government cannot stop migration? The migrants want to migrate, the people here eagerly wait to support them and obtain money. Everybody waits for that money. This lady [pointing at a lady cooking food] while cooking food in front of her house she may see a strange person walking in the street. Then, she calls someone she knows working as a broker, probably her husband, and tells him about the strange person. He immediately comes and approaches the stranger. He takes him/her to a place of accommodation. There are many houses in the town mainly built to host migrants. This person gets money at least by taking the migrant to that accommodation place. He puts the migrant in contact with a broker, and gets money again.*

Abdalla also added that a shoeshine does the same. A new arrival sits at a shoeshine or coffee house and tries to observe the environment. The shoeshines and the women who sell coffee report the newcomer to brokers or to a sheqaba. A shop keeper does the same. Abdalla stated, "Have not you seen

shopkeepers sitting in empty shops, and barber shops? Their incomes from the formal businesses would not pay the rent. They just sit there and wait for other opportunities". The "other opportunities" Abdalla refers to include migrant smuggling and contraband trade.

Shop owners might deal with more complex issues. Most of them are in the money exchange business. They exchange Ethiopian birr for Sudanese pound, or vice versa. The shop owners also engage in informal money transfers (hawala). According to informants, many of the shop owners in Metema lived in Khartoum. They returned from there. Thus, they know boutique owners in Khartoum and work with them in money transfer. In Khartoum, there are shops named after the hometown of migrants, such as Jimma Boutique, Wallaga Boutique, Gondar Boutique, etc. From Addis Ababa or Jimma, families or brokers send money through Ethiopian banks to Metema. The shop owners in Metema withdraw the money, change it to Sudanese pound and send it from Galabat to Khartoum. There are money transfer shops there. They also use mobile banking; the most well-known being ZEIN banking. Migrants also send money from Khartoum for their families or payment for a broker through these money transfers and brokers use these shop keepers.

Security and police officers make the importance of their tasks visible by intercepting migrants when they are crossing the border clandestinely, detaining and deporting them back to their countries of origin. However, some officers also trade migrants with brokers and open up checkpoints in exchange for bribes. Villagers and peasants also work with brokers and sheqaba. For instance, village militias and farmers protect migrants from security and host, feed and guide them through safe routes via bushes and forests during clandestine crossings. For these services, they demand money from brokers and/or smugglers as well as migrants.

One informant stated: "here we usually say, 'There is no sheikh and kes [priest] in Metema.' Nobody is holy here. This is not a place anybody prefers to inhabit. The weather is harsh… Metema is very hot." Informants claimed that some police spend only nine months in Metema and will be transferred due to the difficulty of the weather. As such, they want to get their share before they are transferred to another place. Smuggling migrants and contraband are the main opportunity for police officers to earn money before leaving.

Abdalla spoke about the engagement of local militias as follows:

> *There is local militia. The militia is armed. People in this lowland border area are armed and are very good in shooting targets. The militia members are recruited from the local people. The militia has no salary. Some of the militia members are former members of the police or army. Some of them live in rented houses. So, what is their source of income? They are the brokers. For the lead brokers also, it is much better to connect to the militia than to the police. The militia members are local people. They know the route much better than the police. Especially recently, when the migrants are coming in a big group, we are using the militia and it has become common. They fight with the police. The police usually run away.*

## The Engagement of Unemployed Youth – The Sheqaba

The key actors that facilitate border crossings in the town of Metema are sheqaba. Literally, sheqaba denotes unemployed young men and women. Sheqaba play multiple roles as local brokers in facilitating clandestine migration. Abdalla stated the following:

> *When busses arrive, the sheqaba populate the bus station. Some are sent by lead brokers. The main broker do not come out and make himself visible. He hides in somewhere and work by phone calls or send his agents to collect migrants from bus station. Some other sheqabas are hunting for migrants who have not found broker yet, or whose broker is late to arrive. The sheqaba approach those who have no broker and connect them with a lead broker they know. Then they get share in the income based on their negotiation. In case, the migrants already have a broker, who is late to receive them, either the sheqaba snatch [migrant theft is common] them and pass them to another broker whom they favor or call the original broker and negotiate a term of sharing as they are the rescuers, and of course they can also threaten him as he is illegal broker…We [sheqabas] also monitor the presence of police; the presence of security guys. We monitor the border and provide information to the lead brokers. We also monitor the smuggling routes. We look for migrants who are crossing to the Sudan. We know the routes.*

Some sheqabas are formally organised by the government. For instance, the luggage association, which is locally referred in Amharic as shanta mahber, also work as brokers. They are formally registered with the government. The

luggage association has 108 members. Their main task is facilitating legal migrants to transit the town. They are organised to support the migrants who come with visas. They pick up migrants who have visas from the bus station, transport them by bajaji with protection from abuse by illegal brokers, guide them to shelters, facilitate currency exchange in the black market, photocopy travel documents for them and take their passports to the immigration office. In a way, their task is to relieve some of the burden from the immigration office. However, some individual members are also main players in migrant smuggling. Most of them compete with sheqabas and work as intermediaries for lead brokers that facilitate clandestine crossings. Hence, the sheqabas call the luggage association the government sheqaba. The luggage association also have a bad public reputation, as they exploit migrants by demanding extra payments.

### Smuggling is Embedded in Cross-Border Trade

Smuggling operations are embedded within and rely on cross-border informal trade and mobility. For instance, there is a main road that passes through the town of Metema and extends to Khartoum via Galabat on the Sudanese side. Here, there is formal and informal cross-border trade of people and goods. Lorries, buses and minibuses transport goods and people between Ethiopia and Sudan via the town of Metema using this road. This back and forth flow of contraband goods and people is accompanied by a flow information and knowledge about clandestine migratory mobility and transitions. Brokers on both sides of the border use kinship, friendship and religious, ethnic and business ties to facilitate informal money transfers for hosting and transporting migrants as well as for bribing officers to open up check points. Brokers simultaneously use both formal and informal currency exchange and money transfer systems. For instance, hawala agents use formal banks and mobile banking by means of Ethiopian and Sudanese telephone lines and SIM cards.

For instance, at the Ethiopian-Sudanese border, there is a bridge that separates two border towns (Metema on the Ethiopian side and Galabat on the Sudanese side) that has been serving as a gateway for migrants to enter into Sudan. It is also one of the major routes for Ethiopian migrants who legally enter into Sudan using a short-term visiting visa or the Sudanese ID known as the Tasrih. This route is also open for the residents of Metema and Galabat towns who visit the market centers during the day to exchange goods and services.

Though the Tasrih is used primarily by the residents of both border towns, it is also used by migrants who disguise themselves as residents of either Metema or Galabat to cross the border and enter Sudan. Brokers arrange the Tasrih for Ethiopian migrants from Galabat. With these Sudanese IDs, migrants can meet Sudanese employers at Galabat who help them to move to Khartoum (Zeyneba, 2017).

Some migrants try to cross the main gate and bridge by disguising themselves as residents of Metema, while others wait for a suitable time to cross the bridge, such as at night or during market days in Galabat or in Metema when the guards are not around. These migrants then hide themselves in the huts found in Suk El-Galabat (the market place at Galabat) and travel further into Sudanese territory through the desert on foot or on lorries or other means of transportation. Many female migrants pass the main gate by wearing a tob (veil) commonly worn by Sudanese women. Once they cross the border, they contact the Sudanese broker and travel to Khartoum by car through the forest. Since the border area is covered with dense but uninhabited bushes, it is conducive for the brokers and smugglers to transport migrants into Sudan via these bushes and easily bypass checkpoints (Zeyneba, 2017).

The above discussion exemplifies that in order to continue with clandestine crossings in the face of increasing border controls, the generation and sharing of knowledge about particular transition nodes is necessary. Migrants and smugglers collectively produce information about how to use visibility and invisibility strategies in order to circumvent immobility regimes in the border areas. This indicates that the border areas are not merely sites where the state exercises its sovereign power by way of implementing border control regulations, but it is also a site where translocal and transnational social and economic relations thrive. This is mainly due to the continuous back and forth flow – both legally and illegally – of people, information and goods across international borders. Consequently, facilitating clandestine migration across the border sustains – despite intensifications of regulations and control structures – since it is embedded within and operates in relation to the stated cross-border mobilities and relations.

## *Conclusions*

The preceding discussions and analysis have demonstrated that human smuggling and brokering of clandestine migratory exits is embedded in and functions within broader translocal and transnational social, cultural and economic relations. This challenges the view reflected in popular discourses

that such smuggling is organised by independent criminal organisations. Smugglers and their intermediaries facilitate Ethiopian migrants' clandestine border crossings via the town of Metema by mobilising support and resources from local communities along the border, bribing border guards and capitalising on their ethnic, religious and economic connections in the Ethiopian-Sudanese borderlands. Thus, human smuggling has become a community enterprise. It is deeply integrated into the economic lives of the lowland poverty-stricken border areas. Brokers have made the migration industry accessible to the local people. The control structure does not carry the same economic incentives. Thus, brokering thrives – amidst the intensification of regulatory and control infrastructures – as it enjoys community approval and support. Migration facilitation actors navigate expectations of the community by creating opportunities for transnational mobility for migrants and by sharing the benefits of smuggling with various sections of the society, mainly in border areas. They also simultaneously navigate regulatory and control structures by designing various strategies to circumvent border controls. Thus, the system of control structures reproduces a dynamic system of migration facilitation infrastructures.

More specifically, brokering migratory exits thrives despite intensifications of control infrastructures because of the production and reproduction of knowledge within the smugglers and migrants' transnational networks. They continuously generate new knowledge and information about ways of recruiting migrants and transporting them via safe routes as well as ways of money transfer and payment strategies. This knowledge is shared with relevant facilitation actors and migrants using mobile phones and online communications. In other words, the entanglement of social and smuggling networks, communication technology and the production and reproduction of knowledge constitute the backbone of the migration facilitation industry in general and the infrastructure of contemporary clandestine migratory mobility in particular. The production and sharing of this migration knowledge also entail unequal power relations between migrants and smugglers. Those who have knowledge and the means of mobility – the smugglers and local community along the border areas – have more power than migrants. Thus, capitalising on this knowledge, some of them perpetrate violence toward and exploitation of migrants on the move. Therefore, intensifications of border controls do not stop clandestine migration; rather they increase risks, costs and vulnerabilities of migration as more actors join to organise migration and migrants are forced to take longer unsafe routes.

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# Refugee Integration between a Rock and a Hard Place: Challenges and Possibilities of Local Integration as a Durable Solution for Eritrean and Somali Refugees in Ethiopia

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## Abstract

*This study examines the challenges and possibilities of local integration for urban refugees by comparing two refugee groups (Eritreans and Somalis) in Addis Ababa. A qualitative research methodology was employed and semi-structured interviews with refugees and host communities as well as key informant interviews with the Administration of Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA) and local authorities were conducted. In addition, focus group discussions (FGDs) with refugees and host communities of the study areas were held. The respondents for both interviews and FGDs were purposively selected. The historical and ongoing relations between Ethiopia and the refugee producing countries, a structural factor, impacted not only the country's policy direction towards the refugees' but also the refugees' and hosts' perceptions of local integration. The study revealed that Somali refugees are more integrated in the host communities than Eritrean refugees in the respective areas despite the cultural compatibility of the latter because of the interplay of structural, refugee and host community related factors. The prolonged settlement and engagement of Somali refugees in both the formal and informal economy in the area reduced prior mutual mistrust and misperceptions and resulted in the refugees' progressive integration in the host communities. However, the securitisation of Somali refugees in the area by interlinking them with the insecurity and terrorism in their country obstructs the intensive integration by creating fear among both refugees and host communities. On the other hand, the Eritrean refugees perceive the special treatment provided to them as politically motivated and temporary. Low levels of migrant integration are caused by the perception of Ethiopia as country of transit and a lack of motivation on the side of host communities to facilitate integration.*

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## *Introduction*

Africa has been unrelenting in producing refugees since the 1960s. The Horn of Africa, one of the most conflict-ridden regions in the world, is known for its mass exodus of refugees. Currently, the region is the biggest source of refugees worldwide next to the Middle East. According to a 2017 United Nations Higher Commission for Refugee (UNHCR) report, three of the top ten refugee-producing countries in the world are from the Horn of Africa (Somalia, South Sudan and Eritrea). On the other hand, Ethiopia and Kenya are among the biggest refugee hosting countries in the region (Global Trends Forced Displacement, 2017)). As a result of producing and hosting refugees simultaneously, the sub-region has been referred to as the 'belt of refugee-producing and receiving'. For the last two and half decades, Ethiopia has been hosting refugees from the neighbouring countries of South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, Yemen and other countries from the Great Lake Region. The absence of a central government in Somalia since 1991, ongoing civil war in the youngest state of South Sudan and political oppression and human rights violations in Eritrea are the major push factors for refugees' flight to Ethiopia (Assefaw, 2006; International Crisis Group, 2014).

The UNHCR identified three durable solutions for the problem of refugees: voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement. With protracted conflict and political repressions in the refugee-producing countries, voluntary repatriation is a distant possibility. Similarly, because of perceived and real conditions of identifying refugees as a security threat and economic burden in developed countries (third countries of resettlement), the opportunity for resettlement is far from positive. In addition, immigration is becoming the major cause of rising populism in Western countries. Washington Post columnist and host of CNN's GPS, Fareed Zakaria (2018), identified immigration as the central issue feeding populism around the globe. Given the dwindling prospect of security in their homelands in the near future and the unlikelihood of smooth resettlement or secondary movement across the Mediterranean Sea, the remaining solution is the local integration of refugees in the host communities. However, local integration is a two-way process impacted by both the refugees' and the host communities' perceptions towards local integration, in addition to the state's policy praxis.

Like other African countries, the structure of refugee settlement in Ethiopia is mainly confined to camps located in isolated rural areas due to the perceived economic burden and security concern of the state. Although camps are considered to be impermanent settlement for refugees in a temporary state of emergency, most of the refugees in the country have been in camps for prolonged periods of time. Few exceptions are made for refugees who desire urban settlement. However, self-settlement (significantly) and assisted settlement (insignificantly) of refugees in urban areas are increasing due to different pull and push factors. Hence, refugees are found in different urban areas of the country, such as Addis Ababa, Adama, Jijiga, Gambella, Shire, Mekelle, Assosa and Samara, among others. Somali and Eritrean refugees have settled in Addis Ababa for a long time (UNHCR Ethiopia, 2017). As per the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (EOC-DICAC) report of March 2017, the numbers of assisted refugees from Eritrea and Somalia who have settled in Addis Ababa for the purpose of specialised protection or medical care are 594 and 853, respectively. However, the number of self-settled refugees in both countries is far greater than the number of officially recognised and assisted refugees in Addis Ababa. Jacobsen (2006) notes that "the government is incapable or chooses to turn a blind eye to the situation." According to the joint report of the ARRA and the EOC-DICAC, as of March 2017, approximately 192,000 refugees are settled in Addis Ababa on unpermitted and permitted grounds, as assisted urban refugees, Out-of-Camp Policy beneficiaries and unregistered asylum seekers. Despite this significant presence of urban refugees, few studies have been carried out on the issue of urban refugees in general and on the issue of local integration in particular. Therefore, this study compares the local integration of Eritrean and Somali refugees in Addis Ababa from the perspectives of both refugees and host communities, in order to analyse the challenges and possibilities for local integration.

## *Methodology*

A qualitative research methodology was employed and data for the study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with refugees and host communities (twenty semi-structured interviews), and eight key informant interviews with ARRA and local authorities were conducted. Additionally, four FGDs with refugees and host communities of the study areas were held. The respondents for both interviews and FGDs were purposively selected. To substantiate the data incurred from primary sources and to develop a conceptual framework,

secondary sources of data were consulted, such as books, journal articles, published and unpublished thesis, newspapers, governmental and non-governmental organisations' reports, newspapers and study reports. The data obtained from both primary and secondary sources were analysed using a qualitative method. Among many refugee groups settled in Addis Ababa, the Somali and Eritrean refugees were selected based on their large presence for a relatively prolonged period of time. Additionally, the historic attachment of Somalis and Eritreans with the host state and host community makes them comparable cases. Major differences between the two groups include the variation in the level of integration with the host community in respective areas and impacting factors from refugees, the host community and policy-related issues regarding local integration. The areas in Addis Ababa selected for study were Gofa Mebrat Hail for Eritrean refugees and Bole Michael for Somali refugees. The benchmarks for sampling the areas were the number of the refugees in the area and their settlement in the area for a relatively long period of time.

## Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

### Understanding the Concept of Local Integration

Local integration is one of three durable solutions for the refugee problem (repatriation and resettlement are the other two). Local integration is a multidimensional process that consists of economic, social, legal and political aspects. In the countries of resettlement, the level of refugee integration with the hosts is determined by the following variables: employment, education, health service and naturalisation (Ager & Strang, 2004). However, in developing countries in general, and Africa in particular, host governments' policy directions and practices discourage integration and prefer encampment and segregated rural settlements, with the exception of the Republic of South Africa and Egypt (Kibreab, 1989; Malkki, 1995; Karadawi, 1999).

The concept of integration is chaotic and understood differently by different scholars. However, it has basic indicators for assessing the local integration of refugees in their host communities. According to Crisp (2004), local integration is a process that consists of interrelated legal, economic and social dimensions. Legally speaking, "refugees are granted a progressively wider range of rights and entitlements by host states." These rights and entitlements include the right to "seek employment, to engage in other income-generating activities, to own and dispose of property, to enjoy freedom of movement and to have access to public services such as education" (Crisp, 2004). The

progressive realisation of these rights may lead to migrants being granted citizenship, but this does not guarantee local integration. Beyond this, refugees in the Global South receive the legal recognition of citizenship and its related benefits in the host states not only through formal state institutions and policy directions but also through different informal manners that resist state control. The major pull factor for refugees' migration to urban areas is the potential for invisibility that the environment provides. Refugees' invisibility and the fluidity of their status can prevent them from being captured by the state as illegal but also prevents them from participating in activities to which they are not legally entitled (Polzer, 2009; Landau, 2010; Frischkorn, 2013). The fluidity of refugee status in African countries is largely influenced by a situation of people with common history, culture, ethnic group, religion and way of life that are artificially separated by colonial boundaries (Mengisteab & Bereketeab, 2012). This enables refugees to defy state control by being invisible and changing their identity as citizens of the host country. This level of fluidity is amplified by the limitation of state capacity. This creates alternative means for integration in an informal manner, despite the obstructing policy environment. Negotiating with local authorities is another means by which urban refugees acquire the legal rights and entitlements to settle in urban areas and engage in different economic activities. Unlike in Western countries, refugees in African countries rarely have formal means to influence and negotiate state policy that negates their interests (Polzer, 2007; Polzer, 2009; Frischkorn, 2013). By using corruption as a negotiating mechanism, refugees defy their status and acquire legal status, though the process is not trouble-free. This trend has been seen with Mozambican refugees in South Africa (Polzer, 2007; Polzer, 2009) and different refugee groups in Lusaka (Frischkorn, 2013) and Kenya (Campbell, 2005; Campbell, 2006), among others.

Secondly, integration is a social and cultural process that enables "refugees to live among or alongside the host population, without fear of systematic discrimination, intimidation or exploitation by the authorities and peoples of the host population" (Crisp, 2004: 1). Jacobsen (2001) further defines socio-cultural integration the process by which refugees develop social networks in the host community with little distinction between the standard of living of refugees and that of the host community, and when refugees feel at home in the host country. Finally, local integration as an economic process is mainly defined and measured in terms of achieving self-sufficiency and a standard of living for refugees that is comparable to the host community. In addition, the

intensive economic engagement of refugees' results in meaningful interaction that primarily contributes toward sociocultural integration by lessening various barriers (Mekuria, 1998; Jacobsen, 2001). Refugees' ability to pursue improved livelihoods has impacted the status of refugees in the host country in general and in urban areas in particular (Jacobsen, 2001; Crisp, 2004). Thus, local integration is a multi-dimensional (legal, economic and socio-cultural) process that is fundamentally driven and impacted by both refugees and host communities, rather than stand-alone policy response.

### Factors Impacting Refugee-Host Community Integration

Local integration is a complex and multi-dimensional process impacted by refugees, host communities and policy-related factors. However, these factors are not mutually exclusive. Rather, one factor can be an effect of or cause for another. Hence, incorporating and understanding the impacting factors from refugees' and host communities' perspectives provides a comprehensive view of the issue.

Refugees are active and primary decision makers in establishing their home within their host community (Jacobsen, 2001; Griffiths, 2003; Korac, 2009 as cited by Frischkorn, 2013). Firstly, the refugees' plan to stay in the host country affects their level of integration with the host community. When refugees consider their first country of asylum as a transit country to resettle in developed countries (legally or illegally-by using smugglers), or to go to their homeland, they see no reason to invest in their lives in the host country (Grabska, 2006). Hence, the refugees' intentions and aspirations for resettlement in the third country of asylum or repatriation impact their perceptions of local integration (Ager & Strang, 2010).

Secondly, the psychological compatibility or the social connections of refugees with the local community impact the refugees' integration with locals. The social connection can be reflected in terms of language, culture, ethnic background and/or historical ties (Fielden, 2008). Ager and Strang (2008) dubbed these elements as "facilitators" for integration. Thus, the existing similarities of language, culture and social values between the host communities and the refugees on the one hand, and the refugees' interest in knowing and understanding the hosts on the other, are significant factors for local integration. The level of trust in the host state and its people based on past experience also impacts refugees' perceptions of local integration. For example, based on their past experience in Sudan with perceived and real Arab domination, the South Sudan refugees in Cairo were mistrusting and

suspicious of host communities with Arab cultural roots (Grabska, 2006). Therefore, the plan of their stay, the level of shared identity and the trust towards local communities are refugee-related factors that impact local integration.

In addition to socio-cultural (in)compatibility (Campbell, 2006; Grabska, 2006; Fielden, 2008), the expectations of the host communities regarding the duration of migrants' settlement and the desirability of repatriation or resettlement have an impact on their perceptions towards integration. During the initial phase of refugees' arrival, host communities view refugees as guests and hosts' actions are mainly welcoming and assistance-based (Kibreab, 1989). However, this perception of temporariness obstructs hosts' interests in integrating with refugees. On the contrary, the protracted situation may facilitate local integration as the long history of refugee movement develops the hosts' perception of refugees as part of their community (Jacobsen, 2001). Similarly, extended stay has contribution for de facto integration by enabling linguistic and cultural adaptation (Fielden, 2008). This is reflected in the case of Angolan 'refugees' in Zambia who were highly integrated and difficult to differentiate from locals (Bakewell, 2000).

The host communities' perceptions of the economic implications of refugee settlement is another major factor that impacts local integration. Integration is hindered when host communities perceive refugees as a burden on social goods and services (health, education and housing) and as competitors in the labour market (especially the unskilled labour market). In addition, when host communities perceive refugees as more economically privileged than them, discrimination and resentment become common (Campbell, 2005; Betts, 2008). On the other hand, when the host communities view refugees as sources of labour, consumers of goods and services and creators of new business opportunities and cross-border trade, integration is bolstered (Campbell, 2006; Grabska, 2006; Codjoe et al. 2013). Thus, buy-in from host communities has a significant impact on local integration.

Policy related issues also impact the local integration of refugees in host communities. In most African states, as the first country of asylum, urban refugees technically do not or should not exist, as their existence is unrecognised or their settlement is illegal. The perception of refugees as security threats or economic burdens is a commonly propagated justification for opposing the presence of refugees in urban areas in developing countries. As result, these states have never developed clearly defined policies towards

urban refugees, which places refugees in a state of legal limbo (Campbell, 2006; Fábos & Kibreab, 2007). In addition to their liminal and marginalised position, the securitisation of refugee issues develops a sense of an "outsider" status among refugees and sense of "cultural othering" within the host communities (Kibreab, 2000). Securitisation also creates an unfavourable environment for the refugees by fostering xenophobia within the host communities (Fábos & Kibreab, 2007). Even for those assisted refugees that are legally settled in urban areas, states reservations to provide for some rights granted under the international refugee regimes limit refugees' access to education, employment and legal protection. Limits on these rights negatively impact refugees' perceptions towards local integration by making their livelihoods unstable (Grabska, 2006). Thus, policy inclusion or exclusion has a direct impact on the integration process as it creates the sense of marginalisation for refugees.

## *Literature Review*

Local integration is one of the UNHCR's three stated durable solutions for the problem of refugees (Kobia & Cranfield, 2009). It is common to find differences in the literature about urban refugees and the issue of integration in urban areas of the West (Dryden-Peterson, 2006; Rai, 2015). In Africa, extensive research has been done on refugees in camps and rural settlements. Nevertheless, in developing countries in general, and in Africa in particular, the study of urban refugees received attention in the late 1980s. Thereafter, Kibreab (1996) identified the issue of urban refugees as "what the eye refuses to see". Most of the scholarly works on this topic focus on refugees in cities such as Cairo, Johannesburg, Nairobi, Kampala, and Khartoum (Dryden-Peterson, 2006).

In the case of Ethiopia, the issue of urban refugees in general, and their local integration with the hosts in particular, has received little scholarly attention. Webster (2011) assessed the protection challenges that Eritrean refugees encountered in Ethiopia and only considered the issue of refugees in Addis Ababa from the refugees' perspective. According to the researcher, the source of protection challenges emanates from Eritrean state officials and Ethiopian administrators who act in pursuit of their political interests. Thus, the analysis ignores the multidimensional sources of protection challenges as well as the perception of the host communities towards the Eritrean refugees. Conversely, Kibrom (2016) assessed the socioeconomic impact of Somali refugees on the host community in Addis Ababa from host communities'

perspective and recommended repatriation of refugees to their host country as a solution to minimise the burden on the host community, even though the Somali refugees would be returning to a difficult situation in Somalia.

On the other hand, Ali (2014) analysed the challenges of social integration for the refugee women of the Great Lake Region (Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo) in Addis Ababa through the refugees' lens. In his work, Ali problematically referred to the refugees from those four countries as a homogenous group by understating their heterogeneity of language, culture and national identity. However, as a strength of the study, the researcher acknowledged refugees as active decision-makers and primary social actors in integrating with the host community. However, the study failed to include the perception of host communities of the refugees' integration, though the researcher recognised integration as an interactive, two-way process in his conceptual framing of the study. Therefore, the aforementioned studies about urban refugee integration with the host communities approach the issue of local integration as one-directional (only from refugees' or hosts' perspective). In reality, integration is multidirectional. Thus, it is fair to identify the issue of local integration of urban refugees with the host community in Addis Ababa as an under-researched subject. Moreover, the local integration of Eritrean and Somali refugees as the largest refugee groups in the city, has been neglected. This study examines the local integration of Eritrean and Somali refugees with local communities in Addis Ababa and compares the impacting factors from both refugees' and host communities' perspectives.

## Research Findings and Presentations

### The Fluidity of Refugees' Status

The Ethiopian Refuge Proclamation No. 409/2004 defines refugee in an inclusive manner by incorporating both the United Nations Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Organization for African Unity Convention of 1969 (the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problem in Africa) under Article 4. According to the ARRA Legal Protection Department, refugees and asylum seekers can be categorised into four major groups: Assisted Urban Refugees, Unassisted Urban Refugees (Eritrean refugees who are beneficiaries of the Out-of-Camp Policy), Non-permit Holders (refugees from camps without permission to settle in urban areas), and Unregistered Asylum Seekers (mainly Somali refugees). The UNHCR report of March 2017 indicates that 594 Eritrean and 853 Somali Assisted Urban Refugees are

settled in Addis Ababa to receive either special medical care or special security. These groups hold a legally authorised document from the ARRA that enables them to receive a monthly allowance from the DICAC. In addition, the Out-of-Camp Policy has provided the Eritrean refugees who are self-sufficient to live with relatives outside the camp in their area of choice since 2010. These groups of refugees have special identity cards (IDs) that identify them as Out-of-Camp beneficiaries.

Refugees of all nationalities outside of these four categories (both non-permit holders and unregistered asylum seekers) are considered illegal but are not subjected to arbitrary detention. Ethiopia has been praised for granting freedom from arbitrary detention for illegal entry or presence under Article 13(6) of the Refugee Proclamation (Webster, 2011). This legal and institutional commitment of the Ethiopian government cannot be underestimated. However, most states in Africa, and the Horn states in particular, share not only borders but people with a common history, culture, ethnic group, religion and way of life. This enables refugees to defy state control and limits the states' capacity to control their borders. The existence of this shared identity and limit in the state capacity paves the way for invisible and de jure integration of people across the border without regard for state policy directions (Mengisteab & Bereketeab, 2012: 102).

The status of both Eritrean and Somali refugees in Addis Ababa is highly fluid. Each refugee groups has strong commonalities with an ethnic group in Ethiopia (i.e., the Ethiopian Somali ethnic group for Somali refugees and the Tigrean ethnic group that exists in both Eritrea and Ethiopia). This enables refugees to have Ethiopian passports like Ethiopian citizens regardless of the restrictive government policy. One of the Somali refugee respondents revealed that he has three passports for three countries (Ethiopia, Somaliland, and Djibouti) while he is considered to have refugee status by the Ethiopian government. As means of resisting state authority, refugees negotiate the enforcement efforts through various mechanisms, including corruption. In explaining how the refugees get ID cards in Addis Ababa or in the Somali Regional State, one respondent said, "money can ease the challenge." On the other hand, Eritrean refugees informally obtain Ethiopian ID cards to have access to work that refugees do not have, rather than to obtain access to legal residence like Somali refugees. In spite of Ethiopia's prohibition of refugees, by engaging in income generating activities and settling in urban areas with a few exceptions, the Ethiopian refugees have subverted the legal constraints of the state through local informality (i.e., by negotiating with corrupt local

officials) and through their co-ethnic groups in Ethiopia. Similarly, Mozambican refugees in South Africa (Polzer, 2007; Polzer, 2009), various refugee groups in Lusaka (Frischkorn, 2013) and Somali refugees in Kenya (Campbell, 2005; Campbell, 2006), among others, defied state control by hiding themselves within the co-ethnic groups in the hosting countries. Thus, shared identity, lack of state capacity to control its border and right of residence with negotiating capacity of the refugees have facilitated the invisible integration of refugees in the host community and indicate the blurred boundary between refugees and citizens.

### The Livelihood and Economic Integration of Eritrean and Somali Refugees in Addis Ababa

Like urban refugees in other countries, several strategies of livelihood are evident for Eritrean refugees in Gofa Mebrat Hail. These include: receiving income from remittances, financial assistance from the UNHCR, working as hired labour in informal and formal sectors and running small businesses. Refugees' participation in the local economy is the major indicator of local integration. Those Eritrean refugees that successfully negotiated and have Ethiopian ID cards or passports work in the formal economy as Ethiopian citizens without losing their refugee status. The major business areas in which they work include shops, barber shops, beauty salons, wood and metal work centres, coffee houses, cafés, grocers, restaurants and pool houses. Another means by which Eritrean refugees engage in the formal economy is through business partnerships with Ethiopians.

However, the vast majority of Eritrean refugees in Gofa Mebrat Hail heavily rely on remittances, as their engagement in income-generating business activities is limited. With regard to access to social utilities, they have access to public education, health services and basic consumable goods such as food, oil, sugar and bread flour. This access is granted from local authorities through the refugees' status card or OCP beneficiary special card. In terms of achieving self-sufficiency in comparison to their local counterparts, it is fair to say that Eritrean refugees in Gofa-Mebrta Hail are not a burden to the local economy and are pursuing living standards that are equivalent to or better than locals. However, since active involvement in business (both formal and informal) is the major indicator of the integration of refugees in the host communities, it is fair to note that their economic integration as limited.

On the other hand, Somali refugees, like Eritreans and other urban refugees, have both productive and reproductive livelihood strategies. Productive

livelihood strategies include using natural resources and financial and human capital to maintain and improve livelihoods. Reproductive livelihood strategies mainly involve using social capital to improve livelihoods. Somalis are among the most dispersed people in the world with 1–2 million people settled in more than 60 countries, comprising the diaspora (Knerr, 2012; Fagioli-Ndlovu, 2015). This enables the vast majority of Somali refugees in Bole Michael to pursue their livelihoods through overseas remittances as their major source of income. These remittances are transferred by an informal banking system called hawala or hawalaad. In addition to remittances, in Bole Michael, it is common to witness Somali refugees running different businesses in both the informal and formal economies.

Currently, guesthouses, cloth shops, cafés and restaurants, chat (it's a leaf that is a mild narcotic and its leaves are chewed for a stimulating effect), internet cafés, shops and mini-supermarkets are the major businesses in which Somali refugees are engaged. Most of the guesthouses in Bole Michael are owned by Somali refugees. They rent the whole compound from the local people and then sublet it as guesthouses for those refugees that come to Addis Ababa from refugee camps in the Somali regional state for medical reasons, to visit their family in the city or for business-related purposes. Somali refugees have a strong transnational trade network with co-ethnic ties in their country of origin, the host country (Ethiopia) and some countries in the Middle East, such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE). This can be seen from the type of materials that are sold in Bole Michael, such as Somali clothes, other cloth items, mobile telephones, tablet computers, laptops and packed foods and beverages from Dubai and the Gulf states. Most of this items are imported from those Middle East countries via the Ethiopia Somali Regional State. With frequent smuggling of goods from Somalia to Ethiopian Somali Regional State, Ethiopian Revenue and Customs Authority dubbed eastern part of the country particularly Ethiopia-Somalia border areas as a major contraband corridor that stretches to Addis Ababa with a significant damping-out share (Habtamu and Wubeshet, 2016). This transnational linkage as part of reproductive and productive livelihood strategy in combination facilitated Somali refugees' economic integration in Bole Michael. In addition, this study has revealed, in opposite to the official position and the popular local perception, that urban refugees are not an economic burden to the state or its citizens. On the contrary, Somali refugees' presence in Bole Michael positively contributes to the economy by creating job opportunities and new business prospects.

Thus, from the parameters of self-sufficiency, the majority of Somali refugees in Bole Michael are self-reliant, using remittances, clan-based social networks and informal and formal business activities to pursue equivalent or higher living standards compared to the host community. In addition, the Somali refugees' active engagement in income generating activities in the host area paved the way for their de facto integration in the host community.

### Refugees' Socio-Cultural Integration with the Host Communities

Socio-cultural integration, as a process, mainly starts with the establishment of contact between refugees and host communities. This interaction begins with interpersonal communication or 'friendliness' between the refugees and the host communities that extends to intensive social interaction. This interaction gradually eases barriers to integration and enables the refugees to live alongside the host community. This further develops to forming social networks through marriage and participation in different social institutions (Mekuria, 1988; Jacobsen, 2001; Crisp, 2004). This aspect of integration as a process is impacted by different factors. Among them are communication (language), cultural (in-) compatibility, the settlement pattern of refugees, mutual perceptions of one another and the level of economic interaction between refugees and host communities (Mekuria, 1988; Jacobsen, 2001; Crisp, 2004). These factors are used as a prism to assess the socio-cultural integration of Eritrean and Somali refugees in their respective settlement areas. Historically, Ethiopians and Eritreans used to have a common culture and people, but also a common country – Ethiopia. Italian colonial control in 1890 created the state of Eritrea. After half a century under Italian colonial rule and a decade-old British Military Administration, Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia in 1952. For around four decades, until Eritrea got de facto statehood in 1991 and de jure in 1993, Ethiopia and Eritrea were the same country (Pool, 1980; Markakis, 1988; Woldemikael, 2013). This historical unity enabled people of the two states to share many traits, including culture and religion.

Ager and Strang (2008) identified language and cultural knowledge as facilitators of integration. In this regard, Eritrean refugees' knowledge of affinity with Ethiopian culture can be considered an essential factor in minimising barriers to integration. One of the respondents in an FGD noted the following:

> *It's not as such difficult for us (Eritrean refugees) to communicate with the host community; because we share a lot of cultural elements in*

> *common… the way we dress, the food we eat, the manner we celebrate different social events and other issues. All in all, the cultural similarity between Ethiopia and Eritrea made our stay in Addis Ababa easy.*

Interpersonal communication is a basis for integration. Eritrean refugees, mainly those who had been in Ethiopia before and deported to Eritrea during the Ethiopian-Eritrean war of 1998–2000, speak Amharic well with no discernible accent. This facilitated their probability of integration. Other refugees also speak Amharic, the main language of the host community, though they do so with an accent. However, understanding the host culture and language can facilitate the socio-cultural integration of refugees in the host community rather than spontaneously leading to it. Refugees' engagement in different economic activities, their settlement patterns and their interest in integration can impact to what extent their shared culture and language assists in socio-cultural integration.

Social integration starts with the establishment of contacts between refugees and their hosts. According to Mekuria (1988: 174), "it is through social interaction that barriers are removed and attitudes change […] [C]ommon interests are recognised and accommodations made only if interactions take place." Economic integration is considered to be the first and the most important step toward this type of interaction between refugees and host communities (Mekuria, 1988; Ager & Strang, 2008). As assessed in the preceding section, Eritrean refugees' engagement in different economic activities in Gofa Mebrat Hail is limited, which has resulted in minimal social integration of Eritrean refugees in the host community. This low interaction is further limited by their settlement pattern, which is confined only to their fellow refugees and co-ethnic groups in the area. This, in turn, results in limited interaction with the host communities.

However, this does not refute the positive, supportive role of ethnic enclaves in preserving refugees' identities and social capital at the initial stage of settlement. Heavy dependence on these enclaves, however, results in a fragile social bridge between the refugees and the host community that becomes a barrier for socio-cultural integration (Hale, 2000 as cited in Ager & Strang, 2008). Almost all of the interviews with both refugees and host communities reinforce that the refugees' interaction is largely limited to themselves and the co-ethnic Ethiopian Tigreans' in the area. This results in a weak social interaction between Eritrean refugees and the host communities except for those host people from the Tigrean ethnic group. In addition, some of the host

community respondents have bad feelings toward the Eritreans due to their overwhelming vote for the cessation of Eritrea from Ethiopia through referendum in 1993 and the bloody Ethiopia-Eritrea war that followed from 1998–2000.

Eritrean refugees have a kind of social contact with their host community that can be understood as a lack of conflict and sense of acceptance, or what Ager and Strang (2008: 180) refer to as a "sense of safety and security." During a FGD, refugees expressed that the local people, including authorities, accepted them without systematic discrimination, with the exception of a few refugees who perceived of an unreasonably high house rental price.  The refugees' involvement with local people is occasional. Thus, regardless of cultural compatibility and shared history between Eritrean refugees and the host community, the refugees' limited engagement in the local economy (formal or informal) and lack of interest in integration (refugee-related and policy-related factors that will be discussed later) resulted in weak socio-cultural integration.

On the other hand, the impact of the aforementioned factors works differently for Somali refugees in the study area. Historically, successive Ethiopian regimes (Imperial, Derg and the Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front) considered the irredentist claim of Somalian governments (since Somalia became a state in 1960) as a threat to the territorial integrity of the country. While from Adeb Adde (Aden Abdulle Osman Daar, the First President of the Somali Republic in 1960) to Siyad Barrre, the Somali government has considered Ethiopia to be a 'colonizer' of their 'lost territories', without any significant departure from the irredentist policy of 'Greater Somalia'. These contentious relations between the two countries resulted in two major wars in 1964 and 1977/78 (the Ogaaden War), with several skirmishes between their borderlands (Gebru, 2000; Lewis, 2002; Assefaw, 2006).

These disharmonious inter-state relations have impacted the people of the two respective countries. Assefaw (2006) described the Somali refugees' decision to settle in Ethiopia since 1988 (as a result of the acute condition in the country) as "unconsidered" because of the majority of Somali refugees' perception towards Ethiopia as an enemy state.  Respondents expressed that their prior perception towards Ethiopia was that the country was an enemy state. This perception has also been reflected among the host communities as a threat to the state. The respondents from the host communities reflected on the historical wounds of Somalia's conflict-based relations with Ethiopia and

on the Ogaaden war in particular, as factors that contributed to their initial lack of interest in interacting with the refugees. One of the respondents that has been settled in Bole Michael since 1996 explained the challenges that Somali refugees' encountered from the local people as follows:

> *In the first decade of our settlement, we (he and his family) faced a lot of challenges. The local people considered the Somali refugees as historical enemies, aggressors, and those who do not pause from destructing the country. As result, it had been very difficult to interact with the host communities that [was] further worsened by our inability to speak Amharic.*

This historical mistrust/misperception between refugees and host communities as a barrier to interaction has been widened by the language and cultural difference between the two. Culture as a set of typical spiritual and material features of a social group and consists of the way of living, values and beliefs (UNESCO, 2002). Irrespective of clan difference, culturally, Somalis are relatively homogenous, with the vast majority following Islam as their religion. As result, when Somali refugees came to Addis Ababa, they were exposed to a different way of living (the way they dress, the food they consume, social networks) and different values, beliefs and religious practices. They faced great challenges in interpersonal interactions with Ethiopians. In addition, they explained that interactions with the host communities had been discriminatory. In a FGD, one respondent noted that 'even in business interaction, the host communities that increase the price of any goods and services, has a double standard (high price for Somali refugees and normal price for Habesha)'. On the other hand, the host communities' respondents also confirmed the discrimination. One host community respondent stated that "when the business persons told us an exaggerated price for a given good, we used to say them, 'I am not Somali; tell the price in Amharic', and they told us the revised price. But that trend has been changed."

As a coping mechanism for these challenges, Somali refugees preferred to restrict their interaction to co-ethnic Ethiopian Somalis in Bole Michael. The initial plan of many refugees was to resettle in Western countries or to repatriate to their homeland of Somalia. However, when the prospects for both solutions became far from reach in the near future, the refugees started to engage in different business activities, mainly in the informal economy and later in the formal economy, by using their fluid status. Jaji's (2009) found that the residential settlement of Somali refugees in Eastleigh has reduced the

refugees' interaction with the host community. This is again reflected in this study of Eritrean refugees.

Nevertheless, with protracted settlement in the area and refugees' active involvement in different economic activities, the interaction between host people and Somali refugees in Bole Michael has become intensive. Many scholars in the area agree that economic interactions provide refugees and the host communities with the opportunity to build cultural understanding and develop language skills, thereby building trust through intensive social interaction (Mekuria, 1988; Jacobsen, 2001; Ager & Strang, 2008).

Somali refugees in Bole Michael explained the progressive betterment of their social interaction with the host communities. According to one of the respondents, "continuous interaction in business issues enabled us to understand the way of living, values, and beliefs of the host community and also to share our own. That is why many of us now can communicate in Amharic with some discernible accent." This sentiment was echoed by the majority of the respondents. Some of the host community members, especially those who work with the refugees in a different area, have developed their Somali language skills. Some even work as translators (locally called toorjuman) from the Somali language to Amharic for refugees who have recently come to the area. In this regard, Campbell's (2006) finding shows that prior tenuous relations between Somali refugees and host communities in Eastleigh (Nairobi) have become better in broader areas because of their constant economic exchange, though they are not perfect.

This progressive and strong economic interaction between Somali refugees and the host communities in Bole Michael resulted in what Bress (2009: 164) dubbed "meaningful contact and intensive social interaction." Social interactions have also spurred the development of social networks, such as through marriage between refugees and the host communities. During FGDs, the respondents expressed that marriage between Ethiopians and refugees is becoming common and is no longer an exception. One of the respondents has an Ethiopian wife who follows Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity while he is Muslim.

However, these progressive conditions about the interaction of refugees and host communities are not undisputable, and misperceptions and mistrust between the two groups are still evident. Some refugees complain about the lingering host community's misperception and 'othering' of Somali refugees and culture. Host community respondents complained about the "diluting

effect" of Somalis in Bole Michael because of their numerical advantage, communal lifestyle and capital to do business. These respondents expressed distaste for the demographic domination of Somalis and their flourishing cafés, restaurants, mills and cloth shops. Corresponding to this argument, Bress (2009) found that some of Thai hosts have feelings of being overwhelmed by the Burmese refugee culture. This is significant because, as discussed in chapter two, integration is a two-way process and does not entail "inserting of one group amidst another" (Ager & Strang, 2008: 177). Rather, it is the process of mutual accommodation.

Another issue in the process of socio-cultural integration is the treatment of refugees by the local authorities. In comparison to the host people, refugees complain about discriminatory treatment, especially by local authorities that request bribes. Considering all of these challenges, both refugees and the host communities underlined the progressive change in their socio-cultural integration as a result of constant economic interaction and long-term settlement in the area.

### Structural Factors: Politicisation of Eritrean Refugee Protection vs. Securitisation of Somali Refugees

The policy response of the host state towards refugees can be positive, negative or non-existent (due to lack of capacity or willingness or the opinion that the issue of refugees is insignificant). According to Jacobsen (1996), the policy choice among the above three depends on different factors. Among them are interstate relations between the refugee-host state and refugee-sending state, political motivation and national security considerations. Policy response also varies for different refugee groups (Jacobsen, 1996). Local integration is a multidimensional and mutually inclusive process and these policy structures have an impact on the perceptions of both refugees and host communities. To this end, it is important to analyse the structural factors that have impacted perceptions toward local integration in the respective areas.

Eritrean refugees are the only refugee group in Ethiopia who have the right to choose their place of settlement, in either an urban or rural area, by proving self-sufficiency or by relying on other sources of support in Ethiopia through the Out-of-Camp Policy (UN News Centre, 2010). They also get special treatment from local authorities, which refugees interviewed in this study confirmed. Furthermore, Abebe (2016) identified the Ethiopian government effort of treating Eritrean refugee as part of building amicable relations between the people of Eritrea and Ethiopia. In spite of these favourable

structural grounds for integration, Eritrean refugees' aspirations to integrate with the host community in Gofa Mebrat Hail are low. This is mainly because the refugees' consider the treatment they receive from Ethiopia's government as politically driven and subject to change rather than mere humanitarian protection. The first rationale that they provide for their mistrust of Ethiopian protection commitment towards Eritrean refugees is the interstate relations between the two countries. Since the secession of the 1998–2000 war through the Algiers Agreement, the relations between the states have been defined by a 'no peace no war' stalemate.

International and regional refugee legal instruments, such as the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to Status of Refugees and the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problem in Africa, consider hosting refugees to be humanitarian and apolitical. But, when a country hosts refugees, tacitly or openly, it recognises and publicises the refugee-producing countries' inability or lack of willingness to protect its people. According to Alexander Betts and Gil Loescher (2011), the issue of refugees, from the cause of flight to policy response, is an integral part of international politics and international relations. And when the relationship between the refugee-sending and receiving state is contentious, the host state treats the refugees generously, mainly to delegitimise the sending state as a foreign policy tool. This trend was mainly reflected during the Cold-War period. In the USA, until the late 1980s, refugees from communist countries and the Middle East received special treatment as part of the state's foreign policy direction to delegitimise communist states as countries where people live in fear of persecution (Teitelbaum, 1984; Hathaway, 1990).

In line with this, the source of the Ethiopian government's generosity and commitment towards Eritrean refugees in a specific manner cannot simply emanate from the country's culture of hospitality. Rather, it is part of Ethiopian policy to delegitimise the government in Asmara to gain reputation from the international community. The Eritrean refugees' responses in Gofa Mebrat Hail show a similar perception. One respondent said, "we are grateful for a good treatment that we receive from the Ethiopian government, but I am not sure whether it's apolitical." Another respondent considers such treatment as more politically driven than merely humanitarian, though it does temporarily contribute to refugees' protection.

The prior experience of deportation from Ethiopia is another source of fear and mistrust towards the current policy. After the 1998–2000 Ethiopian-

Eritrean war, both countries deported citizens of the other state from their territory as they were perceived as security threats. Since the start of the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea in May 1998, nationals of both countries had to return to their places of origin. Based on this experience and some of the Eritrean refugees in Gofa Mebrat Hail having living experience of deportation, they argue that there is no guarantee against this history repeating itself. It is the same government with similar officials to those who identified people of Eritrean origin in Ethiopia as aliens and a threat to national security during the war.

The cloud of uncertainty is not only because of the poor relations that the two states have since the outbreak of the war of 1998–2000. The change of relations for good might also have contributed to the uncertainty. Refugees may be treated poorly in order to maintain the positive relations with the refugee-producing country (Sexton, 1985: 804). In this regard, the Eritrean refugees' sense of insecurity is not only related to the inharmonious relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea for the last fifteen years; but, the ongoing amicable relations also hold an uncertain future for them. Their fear is based on prior occasions of Eritrean refugees' forceful return from friendly countries like Sudan, Gaddafi's Libya and Egypt (Human Rights Watch, 2006). Therefore, regardless of special treatment provided for Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia, the structure has failed to positively affect the perception of the agents (refugees) towards local integration because of their prior experience and mistrust of the Ethiopian government's treatment as politically driven, temporary and uncertain.

On the other hand, securitisation of Somali refugees in Bole Michael by associating them with national insecurity and terrorism in their homeland has negatively impacted the integration process. In relation to the securitisation measure, the Somali refugees complain about the disappearance and forceful detention of their fellow refugees in the area by government forces. The securitisation also created fear among the host community towards the refugees as a potential source of the threat. The local officials also confirmed that the security issue in their Woreda has taken special attention and they have been working on the issue with the Addis Ababa City Administration, Federal Government, and the refugees in collaboration that associated mainly with the presence of Somali refugees in their district at large. The Woreda's security officer specified the October 13, 2013 bomb blast in the district, that the Ethiopian government alleged al-Shabab for the action (al-Shabab also claimed responsibility on its Twitter account), as justification for high-security

alertness. This created fear and mistrust on the side refugees that discouraged the refugees from building sustainable livelihoods in the area. Although the refugees have been engaged in different business activities in the area, they refrain from investing in big businesses like hotels and big market centers, like Eastleigh in Nairobi, and other immovable properties (Campbell, 2006). The securitisation also creates fear among the host community towards the refugees as a potential source of the threat. Thus, the securitisation of Somali refugees by the government is a structural factor among others that negatively affect both the Somali refugees' and the hosts' perceptions of local integration in the area.

## *Conclusion*

Like other African countries, the Ethiopian government ruled-out local integration as a durable solution to the refugee issue. However, the refugees have a different level of interaction and integration. Local integration as a multidimensional process is impacted by different factors related to refugees, the host community and the policy direction of Ethiopia as the host state. Among other factors, the refugees' settlement time span, their plan to stay in Ethiopia and their engagement in either formal or informal economic sectors significantly impacts refugee-host community integration. Having a shared culture and history, the Eritrean refugees have the advantage of psychological compatibility, which facilitates socio-cultural integration. However, the similarity in sociocultural elements have not automatically and spontaneously resulted in social integration. The findings of this study indicate that Eritrean refugees' social interaction is very limited. The major cause of this is that Eritrean refugees considered their stay in Ethiopia, in general, and in Addis Ababa, in particular, as a temporary place of transit. They see no reason to invest socially or economically in Gofa Mebrat Hail. Similarly, the host communities also consider the Eritrean refugees as guests in transit, which has contributed for their low level of interaction with refugees. Hence, the Eritrean refugees' engagement in different economic activities, either formally or informally, is minimal or resulted in limited interaction with the host communities. Furthermore, the Eritrean refugees perceive the special treatment provided for them as politically motivated and temporary, which has obstructed integration by making their futures uncertain.

On the other hand, variation in culture and historical accounts between Somali refugees and the host communities in Bole Michael have negatively affected the process of socio-cultural integration. In addition, the securitisation of

Somali refugees that associates them with insecurity and terrorism in Somalia has obstructed substantial integration by creating fear among refugees and host communities. However, the active engagement of Somali refugees in different economic activities in Bole Michael resulted in intensive interaction with the host communities. This has progressively lessened barriers of mutual misperception and cultural disparity. Therefore, regardless of the refugees' fear to engage in economic activities intensively because of the securitization of their issue, it would be pedantic to suggest that Somali refugees are not integrated with the host communities in Bole Michael.

Thus, the findings of the study indicate that, among other impacting factors, the refugees' economic engagement formal and informal sectors has a tremendous impact on the integration process. The refugees' economic engagements have been affected by the host state policy directives, refugees' interests in integration and hosts' perceptions of local integrations.

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# Evaluating System Efficiencies and Service Delivery of Immigrant Population in South Africa and United States

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## Abstract

*Recently, global issues on the migration and development discourse have re-emerged and the literature has been expanding rapidly. However, most of the research has not taken into account the connection between the migration-development nexus in the context of social service delivery. In general, discussions and systematic reflections on the international comparison between South Africa and United States is completely absent or rarely found in the academic debates. Both countries were selected as sites for this study given the high migrant populations. Using a quantitative research methodology this study assessed and evaluated the system efficiencies and service delivery of immigrant population in South Africa and United States of America. Structured questionnaires were administered to selected African immigrants in the two case study areas (Cape Town, South Africa and Columbia, Missouri). The surveys provided data for a range of indicators that helped in evaluating the system efficiencies and service delivery of immigrant population. The result of this empirical study clearly indicates that non-inclusiveness and anti-immigrant feelings continue to militate against the well-being, emancipation, human rights and resilience of immigrant populations. This research recommends that avenues for intervention and investigation of service deliveries to the immigrant population should be designed to address current irregularities that range from the role institutionalized discrimination play in systems to actual and perceived service disparities.*

**Keywords** Development, evaluation, international, legislation, migration, rights, social service and welfare

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## *Introduction*

In recent times, migration issues have become a very sensitive debate in national and international developmental discourse (Dinbabo & Carciotto, 2015; Dinbabo, 2017). The substance of this global phenomenon is often politicised to a very large extent (Herbst, 1990). South Africa and the United States (U.S.) are not immune to this global trend. The movement of people has taken various shapes and has been characterised in different ways. Irrespective of the motivation, South-North migration (SNM) poses great pressure on the already scarce resources in the destination countries due to the global financial crisis of the past decade. Despite the fact that some countries have signed international treaties to support migrant communities, this rhetoric is often unsupported by action. The majority of governments have failed or are not able to provide support to migrant communities in terms of funds and social services, although they are legally responsible for such assistance. As such, in most instances, international relief agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) provide support in this respect.

It has been estimated that between the years 1980 and 2010, the movement of people across international boundaries increased more than 100%, from 103 million to 220 million. In 2013, the figure stood at 232 million and has currently been projected to hit over 400 million by 2050 (Martin, 2013). The literature tends to focus on SNM; however, it has been estimated that the number of migrants that traversed between the boundaries of developing countries is equally as large as the number of migrants moving from southern to northern countries (Ratha & Shaw, 2007). South Africa is a destination country for such cross-border migration in Africa. For example, in 2017, African countries as a whole hosted 24.7 million immigrants, which was a 28% increase from 19.3 million in 1990. Almost all of these immigrants were born in Africa (OECD, 2018).

The global economic challenge, and its debilitating effect on the majority of people in both the global south and north, has led to mass movement of people across international boundaries in search of greener pastures and economic stability. In sub-Saharan Africa, women are increasingly entering the workforce in a context in which urbanisation is forecasted to increase from the current rate of 40% to 58% by 2050 and the current population of 1.05 billion is expected to double to 2.2 billion by 2050 (Gagnon, 2018). In this context, South-South Migration (SSM) is likely to continue to rise. These changing demographics have and will continue to worsen the challenges of migrants

across the globe. This mass movement of migrants across international borders poses great pressure on the resources of destination countries.

## Background/Contextualization

Issues of immigration in both South Africa and U.S. have been debated since time immemorial. While there were deliberate immigration policies in both countries to regulate access to government welfare programmes or services over the years, in the past three decades, the context, as well as the content, of these policies has been significantly altered. Generally, migrants are faced with a number of political, social and economic challenges, and there are numerous opinions regarding how to approach and manage SSM and (South North Migration) SNM dilemmas (Samet, 2013; Mphambukeli & Nel, 2018). A key component of these challenges is migrants' access to social services in the destination countries. Principally, the provision of social services by either the government or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) is to protect the interest of the recipients. This provision remains one of the primary responsibilities of all governments to their residents. Social services include but are not limited to healthcare, housing, social security, education and social work (Spicker, 2013: 1). The exclusion of some individuals' from the enjoying the benefits of these services due to their citizenry status may greatly impact their socio-economic welfare (Ile & Boadu, 2018). According to Townsend (1976: 28), "social services are those means developed and institutionalized by society to promote ends which are wholly or primarily social."

## Migrant Community Access to Social Services in South Africa

The challenges involved in managing migrant communities are not specific to South Africa. Given the socio-economic implications of migration for destination countries, much like other advanced countries, such as the U.S., Germany, the U.K. and France, the South African state regulates the movement of migrants and their access to government social services. However, very little is known about how these government social services are provided, evaluated and monitored for the benefits of the migrant communities. The lack of proper monitoring and evaluation systems has hampered the existing government's social intervention services (Boadu & Ile, 2018). The narrative is that destination countries have difficulties providing adequate resources to meet the demands of their citizenry (Ranchod, 2005) and South Africa is no exception. Thus, there is a need for all-encompassing monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure that both nationals and migrants maximise the benefits of these services (Boadu & Ile, 2017). In recent years, South Africa has

witnessed unimaginable xenophobic violence against migrants from neighbouring economically-deprived countries (Crush, 2001), such as Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Nigeria and Zambia. This pattern of violence has traumatised most migrant communities and has compounded the daily challenges they face in their attempt to accessing social services (Araoye, 2015).

The United Nations (U.N.) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) assured adequate housing as a fundamental human right to all persons living in any state party to the treaty. Moreover, Chapter 2 of the South African Constitution reaffirmed this right, stating that, "Everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing" (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). The country's Refugee Act (130 of 1998) and the amended Act also provide this right to refugees and asylum seekers as stated in Chapter 2 of the Constitution. In practice, migrants encounter many difficulties in their attempts to pursue this right (Greenburg & Polzer, 2008). The South African national and provincial government provide housing subsidies to South African nationals; however, the National Housing Code does not allow migrants to access housing subsidies (Greenburg & Polzer, 2008).

### Migrant Access to Social Services: The U.S. Perspective

In economically advanced nations such as the U.S., migrants are still faced with significant challenges in their quest to access social services such as healthcare, education, social security and housing. Migrants in the U.S. confront daily discrimination with regards to some basic civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, as is noted in the Immigration Working Group Human Rights Network Report (2007). The report further argued that the U.S. has implicitly or explicitly failed to know the various international conventions regarding the rights of migrants or immigrants from being discriminated against on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender and national origin. The report concludes that migrant women have suffered restrictions to access to basic healthcare by citing the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, which has imposed stringent citizenship requirements for migrants to benefit from Medicaid coverage (Kaiser Commission on Medicaid, 2007).

Prior to this Act, the existing eligibility requirements for a migrant to access healthcare for their children were even stricter; however, most federal law over the years has allowed for automatic Medicaid coverage for all children born in the U.S. (Kaiser Commission on Medicaid, 2007). The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996

unfortunately put a timeframe on migrants' eligibility for social services, such as Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), stating that one may be eligible five years after his/her entry into the country (Immigration Working Group Human Rights Network Report, 2007). California Immigrant Policy Centre (2006) stressed that the new regulations of the Centres for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) regarding access to medical aid by migrant women for their newborn babies was illegitimate in the sense that it requires the citizenship status of the baby before the mother can access even emergency medicaid services. In contrast, Article 5(e)(iv) of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) convention that the U.S. is a party to, promises all persons "without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin," the right to "public health, medical care, social security and social services" (CERD, 1969: 4). Nonetheless, a migrant in the U.S. suffers from eligibility requirements and therefore struggles to access basic healthcare, unlike their non-immigrant counterparts (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2005).

Migrants in the U.S. are more likely to live in deprived housing facilities due to their low earning powers; thus, they are susceptible to receiving government welfare services (Hanson, 2005). The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are government social service programmes that provides migrants with food stamps, healthcare, housing and energy subsidies as well as cash benefits (Borjas, 1999). In addition, persons born to immigrant parents in U.S. tend to have low levels of education and approximately 1.8 million children suffer from the decision their parents took years ago without their knowledge, as is argued by Gonzales (2011). The author further argued that although these children recognise the U.S. as their home country, they are faced with many eligibility obstacles in their attempts to access college funding for their education and in seeking a decent job. Moreover, the discourse on immigration issues in the U.S. tends to ignore the challenges of undocumented migrants and their inability to access financial aid and decent employable work, which has prohibited over 90% of such children from attaining a college degree (Gonzales, 2011). Migrants' access to national or state welfare services has always generated political tension (Facchini & Steinhardt, 2011; Kerwin, 2017). While some argue that migrants contribute positively to the national economy, which tends to improve the national income for native workers, others opined that such contributions are not equally distributed, in that the inflow of migrants

tends to decrease income for native workers because of high labour supply (Hanson, 2005).

In summary, acknowledging these complexities within and among migrant communities may be the first step to unravelling the copious challenges that confront migrants in South Africa and the U.S. What are their experiences and to what extent are they able to access the varying national or provincial government welfare services? To what extent can domestic/national governments or the international community shape immigration policies in order to favour migrant communities in their quest to access social services, such as healthcare, education, housing and jobs?

### *Legislative Frameworks/Policies*

Movement of people from one region to the other is common in the global political, economic and social system. The world has witnessed a remarkable growth in international migration since the 2008 global economic meltdown (United Nations, 2013). The number of international migrants has increased from 154 million in 1990 to 244 million in 2015, an increase of nearly 100 million people (United Nations, 2013). In addition to international migration policies and frameworks, country-specific policies and frameworks abound in both South Africa and the U.S. Both origin and destination countries have migration policies. Domestic governments are noted for focusing on different types of migrants and services they intend to provide for such individuals. The general assumption is that effective policies and a proper regulatory framework in both countries of origin and destination ensure that the movement of people from one region to the other occurs in a well-organised manner and prevents the abuse of migrants' rights.

The U.N. supports the making of policies and legislative frameworks for regulating people's movement from their home country (origin) to destination regions. In 2006, the organisation affirmed that "international migration could be a positive force for development in both countries of origin and countries of destination, provided that it was supported by the right set of policies" (United Nations General Assembly, 2006). In 2013, the organisation reiterated that the Member States should continue to "promote and protect the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their migration status" (United Nations General Assembly, 2013).

In line with the U.N. approach to migration policies, South Africa and the U.S. have promulgated extensive legislation and a number of immigration policies.

The pre-apartheid migration policies discriminated against certain individuals and groups on the basis of race, colour and language, and are prevented them from accessing basic social services. The U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) (1965) greatly frowned upon this policy. Immediately after independence, the post-apartheid government amended some of these policies in the Legislations-Aliens Control Act No. 96 of 1991, and in their place a number of legislative instruments were promulgated: Aliens Control Amendment Act (1995), Green Paper on International Migration (1997), White Paper on International Migration-Immigration Act No. 13 of 2002, Refugee White Paper, of 1998, Immigration Act of 2002, Immigration Amendment Act of 2004, Refugees Amendment Bill of 2008 and Refugees Amendment Bill of 2015 (Siddique, 2004; Madue, 2015; Mphambukeli & Nel, 2018). The continuous amendment of some of the immigration and refugee bills attest to the complicated nature of immigration issues in South Africa.

Immigration has been one of the key subjects for policymakers since the birth of the U.S. However, in the past three decades, the country has implemented various immigration policies to curb the inflow of persons from other nations. These legislations include but are not limited to the Immigration Reform and Control Act (1986), the Immigration Act (1990), the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRaIRA). After the 9/11 terrorist attack in 2001, stricter immigration measures were put in place through the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act (2002), the REAL ID Act (2005) and the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Dream Act of (2012) (Hanson, 2005; Scaperlanda, 2009; Facchini, Mayda & Mishra, 2011; Facchini & Steinhardt, 2011; Kerwin, 2017). These pieces of legislation have various mandates, yet they are wholly premised on regulating the activities of individuals from different nations in the world.

### *Implementation of Legislation*

Important legislation regarding immigration issues in both South Africa and the U.S. have been implemented in recent years. Additionally, both countries have signed many U.N. conventions and declarations that guide immigration policies and legislative frameworks. In keeping with the U.N. conventions on human rights and discrimination acts, both South Africa and the U.S. have sought to align their immigration policies with these international conventions. Crush, Williams and Peberdy (2005) argue that the post-apartheid government passed over 200 new pieces of legislation with little

attention on immigration legislation up until 1998, when the Refugee Act of 1998 and subsequently the Immigration Act of 2002 were implemented. The implementation of the Refugee Act of 1998 and subsequent amendment acts have received mixed responses from both migrant communities and native residents. While some consider the legislation progressive because it allows any person who wishes to apply for asylum status the opportunity to do so without discrimination whatsoever, others argue that it increased the number of xenophobic attacks on migrants and asylum seekers (Palmery, 2004). Xenophobic attacks took place the same year the act was promulgated (Palmery, 2004).

Implementation of immigration policies in the U.S. has also received stringent opposition in some instances. The recent attempt by the Trump government to abolish the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Dream Act of (2012) was met with some misgivings. As a result of the human rights approach towards the immigration issues at the international and domestic level, implementation of immigration policies that seek to protect destination origins to the detriment of migrants has also come under some severe criticism (Araoye, 2015).

### Challenges in the Implementation of Legislation

Immigration is one of the many contested issues in both South Africa and the U.S. Citizens in both countries are divided; some argue in favour of migrants' contribution to the socio-economic development of the host countries, while others recognise the dents migrants produce in the already scarce resources in these countries. In recent time, migrants' accessibility to social services in South Africa and the U.S. has become a source of contention. South Africa has seen rampant xenophobic attacks on migrants who are nationals of other African nations, and the assumptions underlying these attacks are that migrants have deprived the South African nationals of their rightful jobs and other social services (Crush, 2001; McConnell, 2009).

Both South Africa and the U.S. have numerous immigration policies. Inferences from these policies reveal some of the loopholes inherent within them. Juxtaposing domestic immigration policies to those of the U.N. conventions has always been a challenge that tends to restrict both countries from stricter implementation of their immigration policies. However, failure to implement these policies may also have some social, political, economic and security implications. This necessitated the regular amendments, restructuring, and promulgation of new legislation in both countries, because ignoring

immigration issues can be deadly in nature and in character. In the U.S., there is a significant gap between U.S. citizens and immigrants in term of educational attainment, due to the countries immigration policies that prevent migrants from accessing school funds. This lack of legal status and no or low-level schooling has a ripple effect on accessing some social services, such as healthcare and decent jobs.

South Africa grants migrants access to primary healthcare, jobs, education and, in some provinces, government subsidised housing. However, the unfortunate situation is that the majority of the migrants in South Africa are undocumented, which makes it difficult for them to access these social services. To curb this situation, in 2010, the South African authorities started issuing special permits to some undocumented migrants from neighbouring countries (Bimha, 2017). The illegal status of most migrants in South Africa and the U.S. has contributed to their inability to obtain a good paying job. For instance, in South Africa, the majority of migrants are found in the informal sector of the economy running small-scale businesses in townships (Crush & McCordic, 2017).

The court systems in both countries have also provided challenges regarding immigration policies. Although these immigration policies tend to exclude migrants from accessing government welfare programmes, some courts in the U.S., for instance, have ruled in favour of migrants' access to government social services meant for citizens, such as emergency medical care (Hanson, 2005). Court rulings with such implications have rendered state government welfare systems inefficient due to the high patronage of migrants. Over the years, states such as California and Texas have opted to provide migrant communities with preventive healthcare services that are less costly than emergency medical care (Robison, 2003).

### *Literature Review*

While they embrace the doctrines of human rights in principle, South Africa and the U.S. encounter inadequacies in service deliveries, welfare and protection to immigrant populations – including migrant workers, asylum seekers, refugees and their children. Migration policies, security, social protection and the human rights of immigrant populations are major issues that constantly dominate immigration discourse. As migration and the rights of immigrant populations are protected under international humanitarian law, the call for improving the systems and service deliveries to migrant populations has also gained wider attention. Thus, major threats to the well-

being and rights of immigrant populations as global citizens include challenges to their treatment abroad, especially in terms of documentation, security, human rights, housing, education, exclusion from national development policies and priorities, segregation and poor services rendered to them by state institutions in their recipient countries. Against this backdrop, some extant literature on system efficiencies and service delivery to the immigrant populations in South Africa and the U.S. are hereby reviewed.

Open migration policy and enhancing immigrants' capabilities forms part of the new thinking for Africa's development (Gatune, 2010; Bernstein, 2014; Dinbabo & Carciotto, 2015; Dinbabo & Nyasulu, 2015), especially as growing intolerance of migrants and refugees, who are often confused for economic migrants, continue to inhibit their welfare and rights to quality services abroad (McGranahan et al., 2009). The adoption of open migration policy for skilled migrants and provision of essential services, such as low-fee schools, tertiary education, friendly labour laws and creation of special economic zones, are conceived in Bernstein (2014) as necessary conditions for economic inclusion and social stability for both citizens and migrant populations in South Africa. This cogitates Gatune's (2010) demand for a justice system based on inclusiveness, diaspora participation and immigrant entrepreneurship as veritable tools for springing larger social capital and success in international trade for Africa. McGranahan, et al. (2009) analysed the efficacies of well-thought-out national and regional policies to harness the potentials of migration for economic transformation. The authors identified local government capacities and the provision of basic infrastructure mediated between national and regional institutions as sustainable solutions and efficient services for the welfare of immigrants.

Secondly, achieving universal access to healthcare as a basis for addressing current problems of inequality, including non-inclusion of immigrant populations, requires fundamental improvements in the healthcare system in South Africa (Ataguba & McIntyre, 2013; Reynolds, 2017). The South African healthcare system performance in relation to its benefit incidence and health service distribution among socio-economic groups reveals a high-level disparity between the poor and the rich. As this exists, poorer socio-economic groups, including immigrants, benefit less in comparison with wealthier socio-economic groups from both private and public-sector health services (Ataguba & McIntyre, 2013). Consequently, Reynolds (2017) argues for the imperative of a multi-stakeholder involvement in South Africa's National Health Insurance process towards achieving universal access to healthcare for

everyone. Three fundamental principles of the National Health Insurance (NHI) are central to this goal: a Constitutional right to access to affordable and acceptable quality health services, the state's responsibility for the progressive implementation of the right to health for all based on the objective of universal coverage, and equitable funding of health services to promote social solidarity. These goals require innovations in the healthcare system and the elimination of underlying socio-economic inequality and inefficiencies of primary health care (Ataguba & McIntyre, 2013; Reynolds, 2017).

Regarding the security and human rights protection of immigrants, the 'state of exception' of immigrants was grounds for inclusion and exclusion in post-apartheid South Africa, and is illustrated in the violent exclusion of foreigners as one of the key designs of the new South African political community. Meanwhile, uneven service delivery to immigrants is reflected in the state's entrenchment of extra-legal and open illegal treatment of foreign nationals (Dodson, 2010; Mosselson, 2010). The May 2008 xenophobic violence in South Africa is symptomatic of politics of belonging and citizenship contestation in post-apartheid South Africa and has made immigrants the targets on whom some members of the citizenry assert their own political rights to belong (Mosselson, 2010). Experiences of African immigrants in Cape Town as expressed in Dodson (2010), further testify that anti-immigrant dispositions and actions from "ordinary South Africans" toward African immigrants are entrenched and systemic. Police brutality, indiscriminate arrests of suspected black immigrants, and the Lindela Deportation Centre's numerous rights abuses against foreign nationals have all revealed inadequacies in security and human rights protection of immigrant populations, especially African immigrants. Again, the extreme vulnerability of immigrants to exploitation from the institution of the state and civilian population is rife, especially by employers of unskilled labour. Hence, addressing injustices against immigrants and improving their socio-economic, security and legal services as ought to be enjoyed by citizens have been identified as rightful steps against the exclusionary treatment mandated by post-apartheid immigration policy's "alien-control" in South Africa (Dodson, 2010; Mosselson, 2010).

In a similar vein, the dearth of research on the settlement of immigrants in the U.S. informed Pendall and Hoyem's (2009) investigation of the growing residential patterns of foreign-born immigrants within the framework of local government jurisdictions. Analysis of the three metropolitan conurbations referred to as "polycentric regions" – San Francisco Bay Area in the U.S., Emilia-Romagna in Italy, and Randstad in the Netherlands – illustrates the

complexities of the regions in respect to their different immigrant and ethnic compositions, housing, market structures and histories of social welfare policies. The authors adduced cases of multifamily and rental housing patterns that influence the livelihood and mobility of immigrant populations. This comparative framework gave preliminary indications of future challenges and opportunities in housing strategies in polycentric regions toward an efficient service delivery as a way of making immigrants' opinions count. The municipal administration's policy settings to improve housing services and welfare of immigrants illustrated priorities for land use planning, subsidised housing policy and urban renewal. As the authors revealed, the municipal or local administrations are an important arena for efficient service delivery, political incorporation and socio-economic integration of immigrants.

Moreover, access to healthcare, health insurance policy and Medicaid in the U.S. are crystalised by disparities in service delivery to the poor, vulnerable persons and immigrant populations, and are a defining factor of social injustice and growing inequalities, as policies of exclusion continue to determine immigrants' health vulnerabilities and access to of health services in the U.S. (Ku & Matani, 2001; Horton, 2006; Owen, 2009; Sargent & Larchanché, 2011; de Bocanegra et al., 2012). Immigration status is an essential determinant of racial and ethnic disparities in access to healthcare and insurance coverage in the U.S. Even when insured, it is acknowledged that non-American citizens (foreigners, undocumented immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers) and their children (even U.S. born) among other underserved groups in the U.S. have more limited access to healthcare than insured American citizens (Ku & Matani, 2001; de Bocanegra et al., 2012). Hence, policy changes, mostly in recent time, have limited immigrants' access to insurance and healthcare even while insured, including ambulatory and emergency care. Few immigrant populations and their families, mostly Latino and black immigrants, have Medicaid or job-based insurance, while the majority remain uninsured in comparison with American citizens and their children. Thus, de Bocanegra et al.'s (2012) analysis of the factors of Title-X and other Family Pact providers in quality medical services for the underserved population in California also indicates disparate services, including in family planning for low income people in the U.S.

Furthermore, disparities in the U.S. healthcare services delivery to the immigrant population can be examined against the backdrop of the tension between an agitation for strengthening market reforms to preserve a commercial health insurance industry and a strong state involvement in a

universal health insurance plan. This tension forces the private sector to drift on fiscal austerity and enhancing workforce productivity in health service delivery (Horton, 2006; Owen, 2009). A review of past works on human service bureaucracies presages that a rise in demands for worker efficiency and system accountability often leads to shortcuts where individuals are treated as mass categories. Horton's (2006) ethnographic study of a Latino mental health hospital in the northwestern U.S. illustrates that the private-sector drive for productivity negatively impacts Latina clinicians whose invisible work subsidises the system against the groups of uninsured and immigrant patients experiencing acute psychosocial difficulties. In effect, clinicians' neglect for uninsured patients and dismissal of irregular ones was widespread as a ploy to cushion the effects of the reforms on patients. The consequences of abandoning the entrenched practices of risk pooling healthcare expenses in most U.S. communities in favor of consumer-driven health care practices yield major accessibility and affordability challenges (Owen, 2009).

More importantly, owing to their engagement in temporary and low-skill jobs involving dangerous environmental conditions and the use of hazardous equipment and machinery, migrant workers are often vulnerable to work-related injuries or accidents. Exploitation and poor labour conditions also impact the wellbeing and health of their households (Holden, 2002; Benavides et al., 2006). Low-quality housing, a direct outcome of migrant workers' low-wages, combined with dangerous and exploitative working environments, constitute grave health risk factors, particularly among migrant workers and seasonal farm workers (Holden, 2002). Similarly, extensive working hours required of migrants to meet their daily responsibilities and utilities constitute major threats to consistent child care. Hence, children of migrant workers are often prone to domestic and traffic mishaps, injuries, accidents and, in some cases, deaths (Benavides et al., 2006).

Globalisation and global movement of people are significant contributors to the transmission of diseases and the vulnerability of immigrants to health risks. This further reveals why it is in a host country's best interests to promote inclusive healthcare to impoverished populations, including both citizens and immigrants. Meanwhile, health challenges and services to immigrants are a product of local, national and global dynamics (Sargent & Larchanché, 2011). A constructive analysis of mental and reproductive health, labor and health risks, and chronic and infectious diseases shows that underlying political and socio-economic structures promote particular forms

of health and disease. The above elucidate the existence of policies of exclusion as a determinant of immigrants' vulnerabilities to disparate access to healthcare, labour, housing and education. Meanwhile, inhuman treatments, limited opportunities and inefficient services further affirm the prevalent inequality and social injustice against immigrants in most parts of the world. The specific cases of the U.S. and South Africa as major global immigrant-receiving countries, leave much to be desired.

## *Data Analysis and Findings*

This analysis considers the system efficiency of migrants in the U.S. and South Africa. In the analysis, we used empirical data from the two countries in a bid to understand the structural challenges faced by migrants living in both countries and to identify lessons that can be learned. The results are presented and discussed below. Using a structured survey questionnaire, a sample of 132 respondents, representing 19 countries, were successfully interviewed. The countries represented were Burundi, Cameroon, Congo Kinshasa, the DRC, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Vietnam and Zimbabwe. Four countries – Somalia, Nigeria, Eritrea and Nigeria – make up over 50% of the sample. Eritrea was the country most represented in the U.S. with 26%, while Zimbabwe was the country most represented in South Africa, with 23%. The results show that men continue to dominate in the flow of migrants. Males were comprised 75% of the sample, while females comprised 25%. However, male migrants in the U.S. constituted 34% compared to 41% in South Africa. The majority of these migrants (76%) were age 26 to 45 years. In addition, refugee status was by far the dominant documentation possessed by the migrants.

Access to documentation for most migrants remains a major challenge worldwide. Table 1 below illustrates that the proportion of refugee status was 38% for the U.S. and 14% for South Africa. People with refugee status constituted 52% of the sample. The proportion of other documentation in South Africa is very high (21%) compared to other documentation in the U.S. sample. Undocumentation of migrants is one of the major issues in international migration. Though this paper does not seem to show strong evidence in the existence undocumentation, from observation in the field, the research found that migrants who are undocumented generally used the term 'other documents' rather than 'undocumented'. The term 'undocumented' carries a certain level of stigma and non-acceptance, with which migrants do

not wish to associate themselves. South Africa, in particular, showed clear evidence of stigmatisation of undocumented migrants; thus, providing rationale for the high percentage of participants who selected 'other documents'.

Besides the issues of documentation, the results show that 60% of the sample have lived in the destination country for 1–5 years. While for the U.S. sample the majority of migrants have lived there for between 1–5 years, the duration of stay in South Africa was rather evenly spread between 1–15 years.

| Table 1: Demographic Structure of Migrants | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | US | | SA | | Total | |
| | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* |
| **Gender** | | | | | | |
| Male | 43 | 34% | 53 | 41% | 96 | 75% |
| Female | 19 | 15% | 13 | 10% | 32 | 25% |
| Total | 62 | 48% | 66 | 52% | 128 | 100% |
| **Age groups** | | | | | | |
| **15-25** | 12 | 9% | 6 | 5% | 18 | 14% |
| **26-35** | 21 | 17% | 31 | 24% | 52 | 41% |
| **36-45** | 24 | 19% | 21 | 17% | 45 | 35% |
| **46-55** | 4 | 3% | 6 | 5% | 10 | 8% |
| **55+** | 1 | 1% | 1 | 1% | 2 | 2% |
| | 62 | 49% | 65 | 51% | 127 | 100% |
| **Duration of stay** | | | | | | |
| 1-5 | 52 | 42% | 23 | 18% | 75 | 60% |
| 6-10 | 5 | 4% | 21 | 17% | 26 | 21% |
| 11-15 | 2 | 2% | 16 | 13% | 18 | 14% |
| 16-20 | 1 | 1% | 4 | 3% | 5 | 4% |

| 21+ | 1 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 61 | 49% | 64 | 51% | 125 | 100% |
| **Legal status** | | | | | | |
| Refugee Status | 49 | 38% | 18 | 14% | 67 | 52% |
| Asylum seeker | 1 | 1% | 11 | 9% | 12 | 9% |
| Work/business visa | 0 | 0% | 9 | 7% | 9 | 7% |
| Undocumented | 12 | 9% | 1 | 1% | 13 | 10% |
| Other | 0 | 0% | 27 | 21% | 27 | 21% |
| Total | 62 | 48% | 66 | 52% | 128 | 100% |

Source: authors' analysis field survey (2018).

***Migrant Access to Social Services***

In this section, we evaluate the perception of migrants vis-à-vis their access to basic services, such as the healthcare, education and transport. The purpose was to identify key service areas where migrants face challenges due to system inefficiencies. Thus, we explored the frequency with which migrants access basic services, system information awareness, documentation needed to access information, the ease of access to services and migrants' level of satisfaction with the services rendered.

The results indicate that more migrants in South Africa (54%) have access to basic services compared to migrants in the U.S. (46%). The proportion of frequency of access to these services, however, varies with the countries. In the U.S., the majority of migrants (31%) accessed services once every two weeks compared to the majority of South African migrants (34%) who accessed services less than once every six months. Considering the economic and social circumstances of both countries, it is not surprising to see U.S. migrants accessing services more frequently.

Migrants were also asked to state the channel through which they receive healthcare information. The results indicate that migrants in the U.S. rely on NGOs for information regarding access to basic services, whereas migrants in South Africa, rely on family members, friends and sometimes government offices. For the sample as a whole, NGOs constitute 41% of the source of information while family members and friends together form 40%.

| Table 2: Perception and Access to Service Delivery | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **US** | | **SA** | | **Pooled** | |
| | **N** | **%** | | **N** | **N** | **%** |
| **Frequency of Accessing services** | | | | | | |
| Less than once every six months | 8 | 7% | 37 | 34% | 45 | 41% |
| Quarterly (once every three months) | 1 | 1% | 8 | 7% | 9 | 8% |
| Once a month | 7 | 6% | 7 | 6% | 14 | 13% |
| Once every two weeks | 34 | 31% | 3 | 3% | 37 | 34% |
| Once a week | 0 | 0% | 4 | 4% | 4 | 4% |
| Total | 50 | 46% | 59 | 54% | 109 | 100% |
| **Knowledge of services** | | | | | | |
| Government office | 2 | 2% | 12 | 11% | 14 | 13% |
| NGOs | 42 | 38% | 3 | 3% | 45 | 41% |
| Friends | 0 | 0% | 16 | 14% | 16 | 14% |
| Family members | 10 | 9% | 19 | 17% | 29 | 26% |
| church members | 1 | 1% | 6 | 5% | 7 | 6% |
| Total | 55 | 50% | 56 | 50% | 111 | 100% |
| **Documents needed to access service** | | | | | | |
| Refugee Status | 44 | 37% | 20 | 17% | 64 | 54% |
| Asylum seeker | 2 | 2% | 10 | 8% | 12 | 10% |
| Work/business visa | 1 | 1% | 13 | 11% | 14 | 12% |
| Undocumented | 7 | 6% | 22 | 18% | 29 | 24% |
| Total | 54 | 45% | 65 | 55% | 119 | 100% |

| Ease of obtaining relevant documents | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Yes** | 48 | 41% | 37 | 32% | 85 | 73% |
| **No** | 5 | 4% | 27 | 23% | 32 | 27% |
| **Total** | 53 | 45% | 64 | 55% | 117 | 100% |
| **Satisfaction with service** | | | | | | |
| **Very Dissatisfied** | 0 | 0% | 10 | 9% | 10 | 9% |
| **Dissatisfied** | 8 | 7% | 13 | 12% | 21 | 19% |
| **Neither** | 17 | 15% | 7 | 6% | 24 | 22% |
| **Satisfied** | 20 | 18% | 20 | 18% | 40 | 36% |
| **Very Satisfied** | 6 | 5% | 9 | 8% | 15 | 14% |
| **Total** | 51 | 46% | 59 | 54% | 110 | 100% |
| | | | | | | |

Source: authors' analysis field survey (2018).

### *System Efficiency and Inefficiency*

System efficiency was measured in terms of the level of satisfaction of migrants with services offered and accounted for the challenges migrants face with respect obtaining the documentation required to access basic social services such as healthcare services. An efficient system is revealed in the satisfaction of migrants when accessing services through governments and NGOs. The results in Table 3 show that about 49% were satisfied with services received while 46% were dissatisfied. The majority of U.S. migrants (36%) were either satisfied or very satisfied with services compared to the majority of South African migrants (36%) who were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. It should be noted, however, that such satisfaction was mostly related to healthcare services. On the other hand, dissatisfaction was generally associated with access to documentation, such as delays in issuing asylum seeker permits, work permits or refugee status. Many migrants face challenges with documentation and this research corroborates such shreds of evidence. From Table 3 below, it can be seen that migrants continue to face challenges in accessing proper documentation that could help them improve their livelihoods.

Migrants' perceptions of destination countries have always been rooted in hope for improved livelihoods. Most African migrants tend to move with a firm conviction that life will be better in the destination country. In this regard, we investigate the opinion of migrants to better understand how they perceive their destination country after migration with respect to its available resources. For migrants in both South Africa and the U.S., the results show that there was no difference in opinion on whether the host country has the resources necessary to deal with migrant's problems.

| Table 3: Evaluating System Efficiency and Inefficiency | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | US | | SA | | Pooled | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| **Satisfaction with service** | | | | | | |
| **Very Dissatisfied** | 1 | 1% | 24 | 22% | 25 | 23% |
| **Dissatisfied** | 10 | 9% | 15 | 14% | 25 | 23% |
| **Neither** | 0 | 0% | 6 | 6% | 6 | 6% |
| **Satisfied** | 34 | 31% | 12 | 11% | 46 | 43% |
| **Very Satisfied** | 5 | 5% | 1 | 1% | 6 | 6% |
| **Total** | 50 | 46% | 58 | 54% | 108 | 100% |
| **Areas of Challenges** | | | | | | |
| **Documentation** | 3 | 3% | 47 | 43% | 50 | 45% |
| **Employment** | 30 | 27% | 6 | 5% | 36 | 33% |
| **Education** | 13 | 12% | 1 | 1% | 14 | 13% |
| **Medical services** | 6 | 5% | 0 | 0% | 6 | 5% |
| **Safety and security** | 0 | 0% | 2 | 2% | 2 | 2% |
| **Others** | 0 | 0% | 2 | 2% | 2 | 2% |
| **Total** | 52 | 47% | 58 | 53% | 110 | 100% |

Source: authors' analysis field survey (2018).

### Comparative Assessment of U.S. and South African Migrants

Table 4 shows an association of system efficiencies and inefficiencies using the derived variables of the U.S. and South Africa. It shows the areas of common characteristics or similarities in terms of access to services and system inefficiencies. We applied the Pearson Chi Square statistical technique, which measures the level of association between two categorical variables. The Pearson Chi-Square, measured at less than 0.05, shows that there was a strong association of these variables for both countries. For age, gender and education, there was no significant difference, which generally corresponds to the literature on the age and level of education for most migrants (Dinbabo, et al., 2017). Based on this, our hypothesis was that there is no difference in system efficiency and migrant access to basic services.

From a nationality perspective, there was clear evidence that some countries were more represented than others in the survey. Somalians constituted 61% of the sample of migrants in the U.S. compared to 39% in South Africa. In the sample, 70% of Nigerians were living in South Africa compared to 30% living in U.S. Eritreans were 93% in the U.S. compared to 7% living in the South Africa. According to the South African Department of Home Affairs (2015), the exact number of African migrants in South Africa is not known. However, the Department ranked the top 15 migrant-sending countries as follows: Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Nigeria, the DRC, Malawi, Somalia, Ghana, Burundi, Mozambique, Uganda, Congo-Brazzaville, Cameroon, Tanzania, Lesotho and Senegal.

The duration of stay was also significant. We found that migrants who have stayed in the host country for less than 6 years were more in the U.S. (69%) than the South African sample (31%). Whereas, those who have stayed for 6–10 years were more in the South African sample (80%) than in the U.S. sample (20%). These results may support the findings of many studies that show that South Africa is a transit country for many Eritrean and Somali migrants (Settler & Mpofu, 2017)

System efficiency, as previously mentioned, was measured in terms of access to documentation, legal status and access to basic services, such as housing, education and healthcare. We found that obtaining refugee status was easier for migrants in the U.S. than those in South Africa. The South African Department of Home Affairs has taken tougher stands in its recent White Paper on refugee and asylum seeker permits. Our results show that 73% of migrants in the U.S. sample had successfully obtained refugee status, while

only 27% of migrants in the South African sample had done so. In addition, besides obtaining refugee status, more South African participants (84%) stated that access to documentation was generally difficult. This calls for policy improvement and monitoring and evaluation of the documentation process in South Africa.

As illustrated in Table 4, measuring system efficiency in the form of ease of obtaining documents, satisfaction with services, challenges in accessing services, documentation challenges and community engagement contributes to our knowledge of how migrants in both countries see their host countries' immigration systems and challenges thereof. The significance of these measurements corroborates other studies that have shown that migrants face significant challenges in terms of acceptability and recognition. In the U.S., being a citizen does not automatically exonerate children of migrants born in the U.S. from the invisible hand of U.S. migration policies. Persons born to immigrant parents have the lowest level of education and often suffer from the decision their parents took years ago without their knowledge (Gonzales, 2011).

| Table 4: Comparative Analyses of U.S. and S.A. Migrants | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **N** | **Coef** | **P-value** |
| **Gender** | 128 | 2.0437 | 0.153 |
| **Age** | 127 | 4.4547 | **0.348** |
| **Nationality** | 117 | 58.2810 | 0.000 |
| **Duration in the host country** | 125 | 34.6964 | 0.000 |
| **Legal status** | 128 | 67.9256 | 0.000 |
| **Educational level** | 128 | 3.0274 | **0.387** |
| **Access to services** | 109 | 53.7295 | 0.000 |
| **Knowledge of services** | 111 | 63.3035 | 0.000 |
| **Documents needed to access services** | 119 | 31.6311 | 0.000 |
| **Ease of obtaining documentation** | 117 | 15.6527 | 0.000 |
| **Satisfaction with services** | 110 | 15.4571 | 0.004 |
| **Challenges in accessing services** | 108 | 40.9807 | 0.000 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Documentation challenges** | 110 | 74.9013 | 0.000 |
| **Community engagement** | 113 | 12.6598 | 0.000 |

Source: authors' analysis field survey (2018).

Furthermore, we assess system efficiency by looking at the challenges that migrants encounter while in the destination country. It is intriguing to note that 57% of migrants in U.S. reported having challenges with employment, compared to 10% of migrants in South Africa. Whereas, 81% of migrants in South Africa migrants reported challenges in documentation. Thus, in terms of challenges faced by both countries, the result was statistically significant at *P-<0.05.* It seems to us that migrants in South Africa are most likely to be employed if having the right documentation. This is supported by other studies showing that migrants in South Africa who hold refugee or asylum seeker permits are able to access educational institutions and get employed (Marchand et al., 2017). These differences indicate that country-specific migration challenges must be addressed.

We conclude this section by pointing out that there is clear evidence from this study showing that there is a systemic gap in both countries in their approach to migration and migrants' access to basic services. Looking at the Table 4 above, it can be seen that, given a significance level of <0.05, most of the variables were significantly different for both countries. However, education levels and age of migrants were not different for both countries, which is consistent with the literature as discussed in the following section.

### *Discussion*

Recent developments in international migration have again raised worldwide international concerns on the movement of people, especially from the Global South to the Global North. This mass exodus of people is affecting national and international political discussions and influencing policies on the movement of people and their access to basic services. The challenges of international migration have not been sufficiently studied, especially from migrants' perspectives, and even less so in the form of comparative analyses. Given that most destination countries are beginning to raise systemic barriers to migrants, these barriers are translating into physical walls, as in the case of the border between the U.S. and Mexico.

The main objective of this study was to evaluate system efficiency in the form of access to basic services such as healthcare, education and housing. The

management of migrant communities is not peculiar to South Africa. Many developed economies, such as the U.S., Germany, the U.K. and France, are experiencing significant influxes of migrants, which impacts the resources of these countries. While many countries tend to be protective of social services, access to these services by migrants is critical for their health and wellbeing, especially in their newcomer years.

The results of this study indicate that migrants have positive perceptions of the destination countries. About 50% of migrants generally believe that the destination countries have the necessary resources to assist migrants. However, many of these destination countries themselves have difficulties in providing adequate resources to meet the demands of their citizenry (Ranchod, 2005). In the case of South Africa, in recent years, anti-migrant protests have sparked violence, in some cases leading to the death of refugees and asylum seekers, many who were fleeing economic and political persecution in their home countries.

Our findings demonstrate that access to healthcare services was by far the dominant service that migrants access in South Africa. In the U.S., food stamps and education, mostly through the work of NGOs, characterised the services to which migrants have easy access. In addition, the majority of the sampled population was generally satisfied with medical services and access to healthcare services were highly appreciated.

In addition, lack of documentation continues to act as a barrier to these important services. In the U.S., migrant women suffer from a number of restriction in their attempt to access basic healthcare services due to the citizenship requirement imposed by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (Kaiser Commission on Medicaid, 2007).

According to the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA), the Department of Health in South Africa allows asylum seekers and refugees, and other immigrants to have access to public health facilities (CoRMSA, 2008). They further argued that despite the fact that there are good social service systems in South Africa in terms of healthcare, migrants from neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe tend to go to their home countries for medical care (CoRMSA, 2008: 40). However, our study shows that such viewpoints have long changed. Zimbabweans constituted 23% of the South African sample and all used the South African healthcare system.

Furthermore, service delivery may be a function of national policies, political activism and public attitudes toward immigrants. In this context, migration has often elicited discourses of illegitimacy, non-acceptability or paranoia that immigrants are opportunists. They are often blamed by state institutions or the political class for overstretching public utilities or outcompeting citizens in opportunities or benefits, such as jobs, education and marriage. This is a critical challenge to immigrants' welfares, security and inclusiveness in South Africa (Dodson, 2010; Mosselson, 2010). Again, immigrants' with disproportionately low incomes and who are uninsured constitute a large and growing section of the American society and their status has wider implications for the improvement of services, especially healthcare and public utilities, nationally and across the U.S. (Ku & Matani, 2001). For instance, the social construction of diverse immigrant populations by dominant groups in receiving societies impacts the services rendered and opportunities given to them, while their wellbeing, in turn, influences their contribution to national economic transformations. This is exemplified in the culturally conceived notions of state, citizen and 'illegal alien', which engender hierarchies in which Latinos, African Americans and immigrant populations exist at the tail of social stratification in the U.S. (Briggs, 2005: 282 cited in Sargent & Larchanché, 2011).

Meanwhile, a balance between market competition and consumer responsibility, including collaboration of public and private sectors, should be maintained to enhance basic protections for all citizens, in which essential services (such as healthcare, housing, employment and social protection) for immigrants and other underprivileged members of society assume human right status (Owen, 2009). As de Bocanegra et al. (2012) maintain, equal opportunities and adequate funding can improve the welfare of immigrants, and quality safety net provisions can yield valuable knowledge on serving special and marginalised populations. Additionally, municipal administrations or local governments are an important arena of efficient service delivery to immigrant populations (McGranahan et al., 2009; Pendall & Hoyem, 2009). Their political incorporation and socio-economic integration through inclusive policies and welfare services can yield efficient and positive outcomes for municipal or local jurisdictions across a wider range of immigrant receiving communities (Pendall & Hoyem, 2009). Hence, considerable amends at the level of policy formulation, legislation and service management, including international partnerships, can help enhance the welfare, service delivery and opportunities for immigrant populations

(McGranahan et al., 2009). Finally, adoption of open migration policies for skilled migrants, provision of low-fee schools, engagement in critical skills, relaxation of labour laws and creation of special economic zones are necessary conditions for economic inclusion and social stability for both citizens and migrant populations. Taking a cue form Bernstein (2014), the threats of high level unemployment, shortage of skills, degrading education systems and negative effects on the labour market and union regulations would gradually disappear if immigrant populations are fully integrated into national development and efficiently served to realise their potentials.

## *Conclusion and Recommendations*

Migration has long been a crucial factor in cross-cultural relations, national and regional integration and global socio-economic development. However, non-inclusiveness and anti-immigrant feelings continue to militate against the well-being, emancipation, human rights and resilience of immigrant populations, including migrant workers, refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants and their children, in most parts of the world. These challenges are deep-rooted in the national and local policies and attitudes of the receiving societies towards immigrants' access to health, education, labour, decision-making power and housing services, among other essentials. Hence, the treatment of migrant populations as a case of inclusions and exclusions in service deliveries and system efficiencies can also be conceived from the general perception of their acceptability and varying socio-political conditions dominant in different countries in the world. For example, issues ranging from open migration policy and supports for immigrants' wellbeing, healthcare, security and rights protection are captured in extant studies. While inadequacies in housing services, access to healthcare, social injustice and questions of inequality against immigrants (documented and undocumented) and their children deserve to be at the forefront of academic discourse and policy formulation.

Studies have shown that avenues for intervention and investigating service deliveries to the immigrant population can be approached through an analysis of the roles institutionalised discrimination plays in systems and service disparities. While several studies have examined systemic forms of inequality, it is also important to realise that reduced funding for public utilities and social security leads to heightened institutional demands on providers and, in several cases, may lead to aggression against the vulnerable immigrant populations as well as other underprivileged groups in the society. Thus, analysis of disparities should take into account the milieu within which

immigrant minorities disproportionately receive treatments and service inadequacies. In addition, real-time monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems at the national and local levels could be of great help towards the appraisal and delivery of such social services. Further studies could critically explore an electronic based (e-based) M&E system that could capture extensive data over time in order to curb some of the disparities and challenges to ensure efficient service delivery systems.

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# Understanding Relationships and Remittance Flow During the Migration Period: Strength of Social Ties as a Factor Determining Remittance Behaviour

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## Abstract

*Remittances transferred between migrants and non-migrants play a major role in alleviating poverty and improving social and economic well-being in many developing countries. Although remittances are regarded as an outcome of migration with far reaching effects as a livelihood strategy, not all non-migrants with migrant family members are recipients of remittances. Remittances are not transferred to all non-migrant family members in the country of origin. Migrants identify particular individuals as recipients of remittances, which they send to their home countries during the migration period. Therefore, it is important to understand the determinants of remittance flow and remittance behaviour during the migration period. This study explores relationships between migrants and non-migrants and how such relations influence the flow of remittances during the migration period. A qualitative approach was employed in which 60 interviews were conducted (30 with Zimbabwean migrants in Durban and 30 with their respective family members in Zimbabwe). The study found that the strength of social ties between migrants and non-migrants plays a major role in determining remittance flows. Strong social ties allow remittances to be transferred between migrants and non-migrants. In the event that the social ties are weakened or broken, the direction of remittance flows changes as migrants find other individuals to transfer remittances to. Such findings show that the flow of remittances is determined by relationships between migrants and non-migrants. As such, initiatives to strengthen social relations should be established to ensure a continuous transfer of remittances.*

***Keywords*** Remittance flow, migration, relationships, remittance recipients, transnationalism.

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## *Introduction*

The trends and patterns of migration have been changing over the years as migration has been adopted as a source of livelihood in many developing countries (IOM, 2015). Migrants send remittances for the upkeep of their families back home; hence, remittances are a major component of contemporary migration given their contribution to poverty reduction and improving socio-economic statuses in developing countries (Crush et al., 2005; Makina, 2014). This transfer of remittances has reduced poverty levels and vulnerability amongst remittance-receiving individuals and households. Although studies have been conducted on remittances, their effects on development initiatives and improvement on human well-being, little research has been done on the relationships between migrants and non-migrants and on how such relationships influence remittance behaviour. Given the relevance of remittances in poverty alleviation and development initiatives, it is important to explore different factors that determine the transfer of remittances during migration.

However, not every individual or household with a migrant family member receives remittances during the migration period. Therefore, this paper focuses on understanding relationships that exit between migrant and non-migrant family members that determine where remittances are transferred during the migration period. Understanding these relationships is important when analysing the dynamics of remittance behaviour and remittance flows. In this paper, remittance behaviour is understood by evaluating relationships during the migration period and how those relations influence remittance flows.

## *Background*

Migration within Southern Africa is not a new phenomenon but has a long history dating back to the mid-19th century (Crush et al., 2005; Mlambo, 2010). During the colonial period, migration was viewed as the single most important factor tying all colonies and countries together into a single regional labour market (Crush et al., 2005). This migration tended to be circular and male-dominated. Men would migrate to work temporarily in the host community, leaving their families behind, and would return to their areas of origin at the end of their working period. However, the patterns and trends of migration have significantly evolved due to the changing economic and political landscape in the region. As economies crumble, these patterns and trends of movement continue to change with more people engaging in the migrant

labour system as a way of earning a livelihood (Crush et al., 2005; Bakewell et al., 2009; Crush & Tevera, 2010; Makina, 2013). Unlike migration in the colonial period, contemporary migration has become a major means of livelihood for many households in developing countries.

Zimbabwe experienced massive economic and political crises over the past decades, which saw the closure of many companies, retrenchment of several workers, devaluation and collapse of the local currency and increased poverty levels amongst the citizens (Zanamwe & Devillard, 2009; Crush & Tevera, 2010; Mzumara, 2012; Makina, 2013). Such economic challenges forced many Zimbabweans to emigrate and secure livelihoods elsewhere (Crush & Tevera, 2010; Mzumara, 2012; Makina, 2013). The emigration of Zimbabweans during the crisis period is described as catastrophic, as it resulted in massive brain drain and deterioration of service delivery, especially in the public sector (Chikanda & Dodson, 2013). However, this brain drain argument is criticised by other scholars who argue that migrant-sending countries also benefit from remittances sent by migrants. Thus, literature shows that remittances have varying benefits in the home country.

Like other migrant sending countries, literature shows that remittances are a major source of income for many households in Zimbabwe (Maphosa, 2007; Tevera & Chikanda, 2008; Mzumara, 2012). The high unemployment rate and economic situation in Zimbabwe compel households to rely on remittances transferred by migrant family members. Such transfers are used to improve the socio-economic well-being of non-migrant family members. Tevera and Chikanda (2008) and Maphosa (2007) highlight that households that do not receive remittances regularly are struggling to cope with the economic situation in Zimbabwe and, thus, become more vulnerable to poverty than those that regularly receive remittances. Remittances are transferred for various reasons; some are transferred for consumption smoothing (Tevera & Chikanda, 2008), while others are transferred for payment of bills and investment (Maphosa, 2007; Makina, 2013).

Changes in migration patterns have been reported in different countries and regions. Such migration experiences were reported in south-eastern Europe where Bulgarian citizens left their country in the late 1980s (Markova & Reilly, 2007). Nearly a quarter of Bulgarians left their country by 1989 towards European destinations such as the Czech Republic, Austria and Hungary, amongst others. The patterns and trends of migration in Bulgaria have changed over the years towards the tendency of temporary and seasonal

migration rather than permanent migration. Migrant remittances have proven to be a significant form of finance and livelihood income in developing countries (Markova & Reilly, 2007; Nzima et al., 2016). Officially recorded remittance flows to developing countries were estimated to have reached $436 billion in 2014. The Bulgarian National Bank confirmed that the amount sent by migrants has steadily increased (Markova & Reilly, 2007). Literature on remittances shows that a large percentage of remittances transferred to developing countries are used for consumption and other household uses.

Although literature highlights the crucial role of remittances in improving the well-being of individuals and households in the migrant-sending country, research has not been done to evaluate and understand relationships that exist between migrants and non-migrants. Therefore, this paper assesses changes in the relationship between migrants and remittance recipients over the migration period, the causes of these changes and effects of these relationships on remittance flows. The paper extends the discussion beyond the remittance decay hypothesis; it demonstrates that there are determinants of remittance behaviour other than altruism that influence remittance flows during the migration period.

### *Migration, Remittances and Transnationalism*

Migration for the purpose of securing a livelihood has been commonly reported in many developing countries. In the Southern African region, migration is determined by social, economic and political factors that compel people to leave their communities of origin (Maphosa, 2007). Given the economic environment in countries of origin, families spread their labour assets over geographically dispersed and structurally different markets to reduce risk and maximise the chances of securing their livelihood. Migration is adopted as a household decision to secure a better livelihood and improve families' or households' well-being (Posel, 2002; Konseiga, 2006). It is regarded as a risk management strategy or a way to avert liquidity constraints in the absence of insurance (Muzondidya, 2008; Makina, 2014).

A household or family as a unit of analysis reflects the ways in which households act as collective units in which all members are united in maximising household well-being (Posel, 2002). By so doing, the benefits of migration accrue to both migrants and non-migrants (Konseiga, 2006; Chakraborty & Kuri, 2017).Given that members in a household have different responsibilities in the family structures, the decision to migrate should be taken at a household level. Some household members are more likely to

migrate than others. Chakraborty and Kuri (2017) argue that in household migration, the characteristics of the household play a major role in influencing the migration decisions and process. Households are not homogeneous; they differ in structure and size. As such, the number of potential migrants who are able to migrate differs among households.

Regardless of the initial determinants of migration, Sander and Mainbo (2005) state that migrants from developing countries leave their families behind to secure a livelihood in their host countries, and transfer remittances back to the country of origin. According to Tevera and Chikanda (2008), remittances are the transfer of funds and goods from migrants to relatives and friends in the country of origin. These transfers can be in the form of cash, goods and even acquired skills (Maphosa, 2007). Remittances can be formal, those that are transferred through registered means like financial institutions, and they can be informal, those that are transferred through migrants' personal networks that connect them with their home countries.

Although it is difficult to measure the actual amount transferred due to the use of informal channels, the volume of remittance flows to developing countries has grown significantly in recent years (Sander & Mainbo, 2005; Maphosa, 2007; Makina, 2013; Inter Censal Demographic Survey (ICDS), 2017). Sander and Mainbo (2005) state that remittances from migrants to their families, increased from $33.1 billion in 1991 to $80 billion in 2002. Regarding remittance transfers by Zimbabwean migrants, the ICDS (2017) indicates a steady increase in the number of remittances transferred over the years. However, given that a significant portion of remittances go unrecorded, as they are transferred through informal channels, the actual figures could be higher than those reported (ICDS, 2017). Remittances have become the second largest source of external funding in Africa, just behind direct foreign investment (Sander & Mainbo, 2005; Maphosa, 2007). As such, they have become an important source of finance and foreign exchange for many African households and nations. There are fewer bureaucratic procedures for remittance transfer and collection than for other types of aid transfer, and remittances are transferred directly to the end user, which makes them more efficient than other forms of aid given to developing countries.

Tevera and Chikanda (2008) posit that had it not been for remittance transfers, the situation of many Zimbabwean households would have been more dire than it already was due to the economic crisis. Remittances have reduced vulnerability to hunger, ill-health and poverty for both rural and

urban households (Maphosa, 2007). Many children have remained in school due to the remittances sent by migrant family members, while others have received medical care from such remittances. Unlike the recipients of remittances, some non-receiving households rely on borrowing from money launderers whose interest rates are extremely high, making it difficult to repay the loans (Maphosa, 2007; Tevera & Chikanda, 2008; Mzumara, 2012). As a result, non-recipient households remain trapped in a vicious cycle of borrowing, as they continue borrowing to cover the initial loan (Tevera & Chikanda, 2008).

A large percentage of the remittances are used by receiving households for consumption smoothing, highlighting the precarious situation of food insecurity in the region (Maphosa, 2007; Tevera & Chikanda, 2008). However, not all remittances are used for consumption smoothing; some are invested in livestock and agricultural inputs, such as fortified maize seed and fertilizers, as well as establishing small income generating projects (Maphosa, 2007).

As mentioned earlier, in many developing countries, migration is viewed as a household survival strategy where one or more household members leave the country to secure a livelihood elsewhere (Posel, 2002; Sander & Mainbo, 2005; Bakewell et al., 2009). Therefore, non-migrant family members look forward to receiving remittances during the migration period. In some instances, family members left behind borrow money from their neighbours, intending to repay them once their migrant family members remit (Tevera & Chikanda, 2008). Such findings show that the family members left behind expect their migrant relatives to remit during the period of migration. This is supported by Maphosa's (2007) finding that migrants are motivated to remit, sometimes daily, to fulfill an obligation to their households left behind.

Study of the transfer of remittances over years shows that migrants maintain relations with the family members they leave behind. Grieco (2003) highlights that remittances are sustained as a result of migrants' participation in social networks where remittances represent the migrants' efforts to build and maintain social capital. Regardless of the time and distance that separates migrants from their families in the country of origin, there are various means by which they remain connected with their non-migrant networks (Jakubowicz, 2012). While migrants and their non-migrant family members maintain relationships during the migration period, their relationships can change over the period as they are influenced by different factors.

Migration has been identified as a phenomenon that connects areas that are geographically separated (Jakubowicz, 2012). As people continue to move from one country to another, they establish links to all the countries with which they are associated. Individuals migrate leaving their families behinds, hence the need to maintain contact with the country of origin over space and time (Bloch, 2010). Pasura (2008) states that during the period of migration, migrants maintain ties with their home country while integrating into the host country. This simultaneous integration of migrants into more than one society forms the basis of the concept of transnationalism (Pasura, 2008; Bloch, 2010).

Transnationalism entails being connected to several places at once, which, to a large extent, is a defining feature of the migrant experience (Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007; Pasura, 2008). The concept of transnationalism incorporates the kinds of activities in which migrants and non-migrants engage. Analysis of migration, under transnationalism, precedes the mere determinants of the movement of people. It takes into account the activities in which people engage after migration and the connections they establish as a result thereof. Individuals in different parts of the world are connected through transnationalism, and their actions and activities are systematic. Faist (2000) states that transnational communities cause migrants and non-migrants to be connected by strong social and symbolic ties over time and over large geographical areas. Thus, activities in which migrants and their non-migrant family members engage during the period of migration have a bearing on their relationships.

Although remittances are regarded as one of the outcomes of migration with far reaching effects as a livelihood strategy, not all non-migrants with migrant family members are recipients of remittances. Therefore, it is important to understand the determinants of remittance flows during the migration period. Thus, this study sought to explore how relationships between migrants and non-migrants influence the flow of remittances during the migration period.

### Study area

This paper is based on data collected for a PhD thesis examining the familial relationships between migrants and their non-migrant family members. The study was carried out in two places: Durban, South Africa and Harare, Zimbabwe. Initial study interviews were conducted with Zimbabwean migrants living in Durban and the second phase of interviews was performed in Harare with the respective family members of the interviewed migrants in Durban. Durban is the largest city in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal Province

and is one of the country's main seaside resort cities. It is located at the far-east side of the country, about 600 km from Johannesburg. Harare is the capital city of Zimbabwe, situated in the north-east of the country, in Mashonaland Province. As the capital city, it is Zimbabwe's leading financial, commercial and communication centre with residents from diverse cultures and backgrounds.

## Research design

This paper entails a qualitative study of Zimbabwean migrant workers in Durban and their respective family members back home in Zimbabwe. Creswell (2009: 4) defines qualitative research as "a means for exploring and understanding the meanings individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem". Qualitative research uses concepts and clarifications to interpret human behaviour and social phenomena from the perspective of the people affected by the phenomena under review (Cohen et al., 2002). Hennink et al. (2010) argue that the main distinctive feature of qualitative research is that it allows the researcher to identify and understand issues from the perspective of the participants. The emphasis is on the verbal description of the phenomena in its natural setting. This study sought to explore relationships during the migration period; thus, a qualitative research design was the most suitable method as it allowed for the interpretations and meanings that people attach to migration to be explored.

## Sampling

The study employed a snowball or chain sampling technique. Hennink et al. (2010) state that snowballing is a recruitment method that is particularly suitable for identifying study participants with specific characteristics or information required in the study. This sampling technique relies on personal contacts to recruit study participants. For the purposes of this research, a total of 60 interviewees were contacted in both Durban and Harare. The researcher identified migrants from Harare who then identified others who had family members in Harare as well. The process was repeated until a total of 30 migrants were interviewed in Durban, 16 males and 14 females. Out of the 16 male migrants interviewed in Durban, 75% were married, 20% were single and 5% were not married but cohabiting. One married male participant was in a polygamous relationship with three wives. Of the total number of female participants, 35.7% were married, 35.7% were widowed, 7.1% were cohabiting and 21.4% were single. Participants in Harare were family members of the migrant participants in Durban. Of the participants in Harare,

40% were parents of the migrants while 33.3% were siblings. Extended family members constituted 20% and 6.7% were hired caregivers.

## *Data Collection Methods*

Data was collected using two types of interviews in qualitative data-eliciting methods: narrative accounts and one-on-one in-depth interviews. These two types of data collection are important when the researcher wants to elicit detailed views from the participants in a short period of time. Participants gave narrative accounts of their lives and experiences of migration that were unguided by research questions. This narration was followed by one-on-one in-depth interviews in which research questions were used to elicit the specific pieces of information required to answer the identified research questions.

Narrative interviews entail the retelling of stories from the informant's point of view (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000). Hence, the stories that are told and the way they are told reflect the understanding of the person telling it, which might be different from the way the next person may relate the same story. This makes the narrative inquiry a suitable methodology since it allows for the participant's actual interpretation of the issue at hand, to be revealed.

After engaging in narrative discussions, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with the participants. Miller and Glassner (1997) highlight that one-on-one in-depth interviews, in a qualitative enquiry, provide the researcher with the opportunity to explore the participants' point of view regarding the issue at hand. As such, people's beliefs, perceptions, feelings and emotions, as well as the meanings they attach to experiences, will be learned in the process. Given that this study sought individual meanings and perceptions, in-depth interviews were a relevant means of collecting data.

Allowing the participants to narrate their stories first then engage in interviews later allowed the researcher to elicit more information from the participants. Issues were raised in the narratives that the researcher followed up on during the in-depth interviews for further clarity, hence, obtaining the relevant information required to answer the research questions. The research design and data-eliciting methods adopted in this study ensured that participants' voices were heard. Hence, conclusions of the study are based on the information provided by the study participants.

## Analysis

Data collected through qualitative methods comprise mainly of words, in contrast to the numeric nature of quantitative data. Data collected in this study were analysed using the thematic analysis method. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data. It involves identifying patterns or themes from the collected data, selecting those of special interest and reporting on them. Themes are formed around the main issues or points raised by study participants as they respond to research questions. By so doing, thematising data brings order to the collected data, and enables a better understanding.

## Research findings

The major result of this study highlights that the strength of social ties between migrants and non-migrants is crucial in determining remittance flows during the migration period. Although literature shows that migrants transfer remittances that are crucial in improving the well-being of their non-migrant counterparts (Bakewell, et al., 2007; Maphosa, 2007; Tevera & Chikanda, 2008), this relationship has not been discussed in the literature. This study explored the relationships that exist between migrants and non-migrants and how these relations influence the flow of remittances during the migration period. In this paper, four sub-themes are identified and used to explain how these relationships determine the flow of remittances.

## Family Tension and Remittance Flows

Family is regarded as a social unit that supports its members (Dintwat, 2010); however, results from this study show that there are inter and intra family conflicts that affect relationships within families. Such conflicts and tension compromise the potential of the family to fully support its family members, as highlighted in other literature. Participants reported different conflicts within their families that negatively affected their relationships. Such conflicts differ depending on the relationships between family members, with the main conflicts that were reported being between women and their mothers-in-law. Both migrants and non-migrant participants reported that daughters-in-law are less likely to be accepted in their husbands' families, which causes significant tension within families:

> *My mother in-law would tell me to my face how she wishes her son got married to someone as educated as he is. She would make me do all the*

> *housework because she said that's all I was good at. (Mrs Chabata, a non-migrant participant)*

Another widow reported that her late husband's family chased her away soon after her husband's burial. In her opinion, her husband's family had never accepted her as part of the family and they could not stay with her and her daughter after her husband's passing:

> *She would tell me there was no need for me to keep hanging onto the family because the one who brought me there was gone. It's like to her I was never part of the family, I was just a constant reminder of a son she once had. (Revai, a 33-year-old migrant widow)*

Participants reported that in many families, the daughter-in-law is regarded as a stumbling block that disturbs the peace and unity that was always in their home. However, instead of the families blaming their sons for bringing a wife into their home, the daughter-in-law becomes the scapegoat and is blamed for disturbing peace in the family. This was highlighted by married female participants when they reported that "blood is thicker than water", as families do not blame their own sons for bringing the 'stranger' into the family. In emphasizing that daughters-in-law are treated differently from other family members, Mrs Chabata said, "Daughters-in-law are like owls, whenever people see them they think they are there to cause trouble". In Shona culture, an owl is associated with witchcraft, and as such, when people see it, they believe it has been sent by witches to do something evil. Participants emphasised that daughters-in-law are the least trusted family members.

Marotz-Baden and Cowan (1987) argue that if a daughter in-law feels accepted in the family, her feeling may contribute to the eventual success of the of family initiatives. Her unhappiness can disrupt the family success as she can connive with her husband to detach from the family. Such was highlighted in this study as female and male participants who reported in-law tensions within their families reported that they do not remit regularly. Although some in-laws try to make amends and restore the broken relationships, women in the study reported that such actions are not sincere but are part of a strategy to access remittances. As a result, some migrants refuse to send remittances home, and others reported that when their husbands ask them to send remittances home they take a portion to spite their in-laws:

> *Sometimes when I am sending money or groceries to my in-laws, I take a portion and give to my mother without my husband's knowledge. (Faith, a married migrant participant)*

In addition to this conflict with in-laws, there are other tensions within families that affect relations between members. The study indicated that, in some instances, the way people grew up impacts how they relate in their adult life. People invest in social relations by interacting and networking with others in order to gain access to resources embedded in the network (Grieco, 2003). Participants in the study indicated that their interactions with different family members before migration determines how they feel about each other and influences their social relations after migration.

One migrant widow, Revai, and her non-grant sister, Mrs Moyo, reported that they experienced rejection from their father after the death of their mother. Their father remarried and his focus shifted to his new wife. That experience brought the sisters closer to each other, as they relied more on each other for moral and social support. Given their mother's sudden death, Revai and her sister needed their father to be with them as they grieved. Unfortunately, their father decided to remarry sooner than they expected, and that affected their relationship with him.

As such, Revai felt compelled to remit to her sister whom she regarded as her only close family member. When she migrated, Revai left her daughter in her sister's custody, and hence she regularly remits to her. Explaining the reasons for leaving her daughter with her sister, Revai indicated that she trusts her sister with her own life and she knew she was the only person she can trust with her child's life. Her relationships with her sister and father influenced her remittance behaviour. Although her father is not employed and could have an improved standard of living if she transferred remittances, Revai prefers sending remittances to her sister with whom she has a strong social bond. Literature shows that individuals who receive remittances from their migrant family members have better chances of improving their living standards (Maphosa, 2007; Tevera & Chikanda, 2008). This study has shown that remittances are transferred to every non-migrant family member. The flow of remittances is influenced by the kinds of social relationships that exist between migrants and non-migrants.

Another migrant participant, Melisa's relationship with her father adds to the argument that life experiences can have an effect on how family members relate to each other and that this relationship effects remittance transfers.

Melisa lost her mother at a young age. Although her father was still alive, he was never there for her, as he supported his new wife and never attended to Melisa's needs as a father should. Melisa stated that she resented him for the way he treated her, and she blamed him for the trauma she went through as a child. As such, she did not want to be associated with her father's house. Responding to the question on her relationship and association with her father's house Melisa said the following:

> *I am not a part of that household; it's for him, his wife and their children. After all, it's not like I grew up there anyway. I seriously have no attachment to that household whatsoever.*

As a result of the kind of relationship she has with her father, Melisa does not remit. She believes that sending remittances indicates a functional relationship. Since she is not willing to establish one with her father, she does not find it necessary to remit.

The experiences of Revai and Melisa show that although people are tied together as a family by birth or marriage, the strength of their social ties can either be strengthened or weakened by their mutual life experiences. May (2011) posits that strong family relations are attained when members have a sense of belonging. Coordination and cooperation can be realised and family members are able to work together and assist one another in times of need. In this study, it was revealed that life experiences have the potential to determine the strength of family ties. Such social ties have a greater effect on remittance behaviour than the biological ties that exist between migrants and non-migrants.

### Choice of Remittance Recipients

As was confirmed by participants, migrants remit to their families in the home country for various reasons (Bakewell et al., 2007; Maphosa, 2007; Tevera & Chikanda, 2008). The purpose for remitting was identified as the major determinant for identifying a certain individual as a recipient.

Remittances transferred for the family upkeep are sent to the person in charge of the household back home. Sibongile, a migrant participant, reported that she always sent remittances to her sister who stays with her son in Zimbabwe. Sibongile, like many other migrant participants, indicated that the people that they left in charge of the household are the current household heads. As such, they are responsible for ensuring the maintenance of the household. Stanly, another migrant participant, said,

> *My sister is now in charge of the household, and we always communicate, as she informs me about the situation back home. I might be the father, but I am not at home; hence, I am not aware of what happens there on a daily basis. As such, I have to rely on what she tells me. If there is a problem with the children, she is the one with first-hand information.*

Such sentiments show that migrants regard the person that they left in charge of the household as the right person to send remittances that are meant for the family upkeep. This highlights the importance of both migrants and non-migrants in transnational activities (Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007; Pasura, 2008). Migrants and non-migrants engage in different transnational activities that either strengthen or weaken their relationships during the migration period and beyond. As the migrant remits and the non-migrant looks after the migrant's investments in the country of origin, their relationships are strengthened.

However, in terms of remitting to assist other extended family members, participants reported that they prefer to send the remittances directly to the actual beneficiary. There were reports that some family members tend to keep remittances that are not meant for them. In the event that remittances are sent to one family member to distribute to the respective beneficiaries, migrants reported that some intended beneficiaries do not receive their full shares:

> *They would keep everything and not pass it onto the right person, even when they are aware that it's not theirs. Some take a portion of the other relatives' remittance and keep it. (Tecla, a female migrant participant).*

As a measure to prevent conflict and unnecessary tension between family members, Tecla and other migrant participants prefer remitting to the actual beneficiary than passing remittances through a third party.

Regarding remitting for investment, participants reported that due care is necessary when selecting recipients of remittances. Reports of misuse of remittances meant for investment were highlighted by most of the migrant participants. Migrants reported remitting for investment in income-generating initiatives and real estate highlighted high levels of disappointment after recipients misappropriated the remittances transferred for a particular purpose. It has been reported that some recipients disregard the wishes and commands of migrants and use remittances for their own benefit.

Given the economic situation in Zimbabwe, other recipients use the money send by their migrant family members hoping that they can replace it before

it is needed. However, they sometimes fail to do so. As a result, misuse of remittances becomes a source of conflict in some families. Constance is a non-migrant who agreed that she sometimes misuses remittances meant for other investment purposes:

> *Sometimes it is difficult because you are given $1000 to buy bricks or other building material yet; you do not have mealie-meal in the house. You will be tempted to take a portion of the money and buy food. (Constance, a non-migrant participant).*

However, she said that since she takes a small percentage of the money, she does not deem it necessary to tell the migrant about it. Instead, she buys the materials with the remaining money and does not tell the migrant.

Misappropriation of remittances meant for investment has far reaching effects on the relationship between migrants and non-migrants. In some instances, relationships completely disintegrated, and in other instances, the levels of trust between family members deteriorated during the period of migration due to misappropriation of remittances. Clever, a migrant participant, reported that he moved to South Africa in 2010 with his wife and their two children. He bought a residential stand in Harare and entrusted his young brother to oversee the project in his absence. However, Clever was disappointed by his brother, who took advantage of the trust he had in him and his absence and had inflated the prices of the building material, which ended up costing him more than necessary. Clever felt betrayed by a family member that he trusted. He reported that he had a good relationship with his brother before migration. As such, he never expected such betrayal.

For such reasons, migrant participants reported that they do not mix family remittances and those that are meant for investment:

> *When sending money home, I prefer sending directly to the person who is supposed to benefit from it. If it is my parents, I sent it to them directly. That's why for the construction of my house, I sent it directly to the building contractor himself. (Solomon, a migrant participant).*

Solomon argued that sending remittances through a third party may delay payments and can also result in the misuse of the remittances.

However, migrant participants reported that regardless of the disappointments they experience, they find other individuals to transfer remittances to so that the projects progress. This is supported by Faist (2000),

who argues that migrants continue to engage with their countries of origin, and hence there is continued contact and interaction during the migration period regardless of the challenges experienced.

### Effective Communication and Remittance Flow

Both migrant and non-migrant participants reported that where remittances are transferred, communication lines are opened between migrants and non-migrants. Results from this study revealed that there is a relationship between transfer of remittances and frequency of communication between migrants and non-migrants during the migration period. When remittances are transferred, migrants and non-migrants keep updating each other on the events that led to or resulted from the transfer of the remittance. The higher the frequency of remittance flows, the better the chances of constant communication during the migration period. Such was reported by both migrants and non-migrant participants in the study. Remitting to the extended family has opened lines of communication for many.

The study revealed that in some instances social relationships between migrants and non-migrants were weak before migration. However, after migration their relationships changed and they attribute the changes to the transfer of remittances during the migration period. Such sentiments were shared mostly by migrant participants who indicated that the levels of communication between them and family members improved after they sent remittances. They admitted that after sending remittances, they continued to talk for a certain period of time. Meaningful communication was guaranteed where remittances were transferred and that communication strengthened their relationships. Such is supported by literature on transnational space, which states that activities in which migrants and their non-migrant family members engage during the period of migration have a bearing on their relationships (Faist, 2000).

### Duration and Frequency of Remitting

Although literature shows that migrants remit to their non-migrants family members during the migration period (Grieco, 2003; Maphosa, 2007; Tevera & Chikanda, 2008), the study revealed that not all migrants remit back home. The strength of social ties between migrants and non-migrants was reported as the major determinant of remittance behaviour. Results from the study did not show any relationship between time spent away from the country of origin and the flow of remittances during the migration period. One quarter of the

study participants reported that they do not regularly remit back home. They indicated that they did not prioritise remitting back home because of the relationships they had with the families. As such, their remittance behaviour was not influenced by time spent in the host country. As highlighted by Grieco (2003), remittances represent efforts by migrants to establish and strengthen relationships with non-migrants. Migrants who did not have intentions of establishing relationships with their non-migrant family members reported that they do not regularly remit. Regardless of the time they spent in the host countries, such migrants do not remit unless their relationships with non-migrant family members have changed.

The study also revealed that remittance transfers are not always consistent. Rather, migrants remit erratically, when remittances are needed. Participants who remit erratically indicated that they are not primary breadwinners to any household in the country of origin. As such, they are not compelled to remit regularly or constantly. Most of these participants either migrated with their nuclear families or were single people with no primary dependents in the home country. It should, however, be noted that there are other single migrants without children in the home country but they remit regularly for specifics causes. Robert is a single male migrant who reported that although he does not have children of his own, he took the responsibility to pay tuition fees for his younger sister who is at a teacher's college:

> *I have been paying for my sister's college tuition for two years now and she is left with one year before she finishes. I will be happy to see her through this final year. (Robert, male migrant participant).*

Such remittances that are meant for a particular cause are likely to cease once their purpose is fulfilled. However, waning of such remittances cannot be attributed to time spent away from home. Rather, the flow of such remittances is determined by the need in the home country. In the event that the purposes the remittances are fulfilled, such remittances may cease to flow.

Simba, a married migrant, reported that he migrated with wife and children to South Africa. As such he does not remit back home frequently. He indicated that although his parents were living in Zimbabwe, they were both employed and they provide for their own need. He reported that two of his siblings were working in Canada and, therefore, they assist in providing for their parents. As such, it is not his sole responsibility to provide for his parents back home.

However, he admitted that he sometimes remits to other extended family members from time to time. He used a Shona proverb which says *'ukama igasva hunozadziswa nekudya'.* The proverb stresses the relevance of food in cementing and strengthening social relationships. In the Shona culture, food is given a great significance in showing how people relate to each other. If someone does not eat another's food, it is interpreted as them being afraid of being bewitched. Therefore, to show that there is trust, people should accept the food that they are given by their relatives or neighbours. As such, Simba indicated that sending groceries and money to family members back home is an indication of his support so that they would know that he is willing to help them if they are in need of assistance. His remittance behaviour signifies his willingness to establish relationships with family members back home (Grieco, 2003).

### Discussion and Conclusion

Transfer of remittances has been identified by many scholars as the major characteristic of migration in developing countries (Maphosa, 2007; Tevera & Chikanda, 2008). Literature has shown that migrants transfer remittances to their families in the countries of origin for various reasons, and that such remittances are significant to their well-being. However, little has been done to explore the kinds of relationships that exist between those migrants and their non-migrant family members and how such relationships impact remittance flow. This study explored these relationships and found that the strength of social ties between migrants and their non-migrant family members is an important determinant of remittance behaviour.

Migration is regarded as a household decision to improve family or household well-being (Konseiga, 2006). The family in the country of origin relies on the migrant family member to send remittances back home. However, as the study indicated, familial experiences sometimes hinder the flow of remittances. Tensions and conflict within families affect relationships between family members. As a result, remittance flow is hampered because migrants tend to remit to individuals with whom they have a strong social relationship. Therefore, the flow of remittances is influenced by the nature of the ties that exist between migrants and non-migrants. Remittance flows signify the existence of a relationship (Grieco, 2003). Therefore, as much as migration is regarded as a household decision meant to benefit the family, if relationships between family members are compromised, the transfer of remittances is not guaranteed. Therefore, when evaluating remittance behaviour, emphasis

should also be placed on the nature of the relationships between migrants and non-migrants.

Migrants' choices of remittance recipients are not random. Before migration, migrants had relationship with other family or household members. After migration, they use such relationships to identify recipients of remittances. As they integrate into their host communities, migrants remain invested in activities in their countries of origin in a number of ways (Pasura, 2008; Jakubowicz, 2012). The nature of the relationships between the migrants and their non-migrant family members before migration influences the selection of the recipients of remittances during the migration period. As the findings of the study have shown, migrants identified family members with whom they had strong relationships before migration as recipients of the remittances. However, when social ties are broken as a result of misuse of remittances by recipients, the direction of remittance flows changes. As a result, some migrants shift the direction of remittances and select another individual as the recipient. Such results show that remittance transfer is guided by the strength of social ties between migrants and non-migrants. When relationships are broken or weakened, remittances do not necessarily cease; rather, they change the direction and are transferred to another recipient.

Such arguments support Grieco (2003; 2004), who notes that the transfer of migrant remittances is not only dependent on altruism. Grieco posits there are other factors that determine the transfer of remittances during the migration period. Grieco (2003: 3) states that:

> *Remittances are not simply sent by the migrant to family members rather they are exchanged for resources accessible through the maintenance of relationships with other members, of a given social network.*

Findings of this study add to such arguments as they indicate that transfer of remittances between migrants and non-migrants is, to a greater extent, influenced by relationships between migrants and non-migrants. Remittances are transferred where there are relationships or where individuals are willing to establish or strengthen relationships. When strong social ties diminish, migrants identify new recipients to whom remittances can be transferred.

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