

The root causes for the migration of unskilled migrant farm labour: A study of Zimbabwean migrant workers in the citrus industry of the Sunday River Valley, Eastern Cape, South Africa.

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Abstract

The migration of Zimbabweans into South Africa is shaped by a combination of several push and pull factors. The agriculture sector in South Africa absorbs a bulk of unskilled Zimbabwean farm workers. This paper examines Zimbabwean unskilled farm workers' migration into the Sunday River Valley's citrus farms in South Africa, as found in a recent case study. The results of the study were realised through exploring the push and pull factors of Zimbabwean migrants coupled with empirical research. This study employed a qualitative research design using semi structured interviews. The sample consisted of 11 unskilled Zimbabwean farm workers employed on the citrus farms of the Sunday River Valley. The outcome of this study generally mirrored the findings of other similar researches conducted along the border areas. However, this paper's contribution lies within the pull factors of migrant workers into the deepest part of South Africa, within the Eastern Cape.

Keywords: Migration, Emigration, Zimbabwean unskilled farmworkers, Push and Pull theory of migration

This conference paper addresses the theme titled, 'the root causes of labour migration within and from Africa.' The contents of this paper have been extracted from a larger Master's dissertation study carried out at Rhodes University titled, "willing victims': A study of Zimbabwean migrant workers in the citrus industry of the Sundays River Valley, Eastern Cape."

Introduction

Zimbabweans emigrating into South Africa has been an escalating practice of our times. The term migration refers to individuals who relocate to distant geographical areas permanently or temporary for at least six months (King, 2012). Migrants emigrate due to an amalgamation of reasons, such as political instability, high unemployment, lack of social security and a search for better economic opportunities abroad (Dinbabo & Nyasulu, 2015). It is against this background that there are many Zimbabweans who reside in the Sundays River Valley (SRV) in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Mejia et al., (1979); Dinbabo & Nyasulu (2015) and Kurunova (2013) use 'push' and 'pull' factors to understand the motivations for Zimbabwean workers migration decisions. The aim of this study is to provide an empirical investigation into the push and pull determinates of migration of Zimbabwean unskilled farmworkers into the Sunday River Valley (SRV), Eastern Cape, South Africa. According to the findings of the study, this paper argues for the case that the primary push factor for immigrant farm workers is the lack of economic stability within Zimbabwe, and the primary pull factor are the job opportunities within South Africa. First the paper will provide a brief background of Zimbabwe to South Africa migration trends relevant to this paper, then briefly give an overview of push and pull factors that drive Zimbabwe to South Africa migration. The section that follows the above will describe the framework that guided this study. Lastly, the last section of the paper shows and discusses the empirical results while illustrating why Eastern Cape is a haven for Zimbabwean migrants.

Zimbabwe-to-South Africa Migration Trends within the Agriculture sector

The increase in migration within Africa stems from (among others) the process of globalization. Broad migration trends into South Africa can be traced back to the permanent European settlement in 1652 at the Cape of Good Hope. Over time, more Europeans migrated into South Africa, strengthening the agricultural and mining sector (Umezurike, 2008). These two sectors triggered an influx of international migration to work in these industries, especially from neighbouring countries. This is because these industries benefited from cheap migrant labour (Umezurike, 2008). The discovery of diamonds in 1871 in South Africa, coupled with discovering the largest gold

source globally, made South Africa a country of economic opportunities for migrants. The agricultural sector transcended into commercial farming with advanced productivity methods ushering South Africa to industrialize relatively faster than other African countries (Umezurike, 2008). Migrant labour played an irreplaceable role in the development of these industries and the creation of South Africa's modern industrial economy (Crush & Williams, 2005; Umezurike, 2008). This is reflected in contemporary South Africa, where mining and agriculture still attract a large immigrant workforce (Bloch, 2008). Migration has continued to increase, as of mid-2020 South Africa has been estimated to host 2.9 million international migrants, making it the highest host of international migrants within Southern Africa (MDP, 2021). The agricultural sector hosts the bulk of immigrant labour, especially in geographic areas where South Africa and Zimbabwe share borders such as Mpumalanga and Northern Province (Bloch, 2008).

Crush and Williams (2005) have categorized the migrant movement within the agriculture sector into four big categories in these areas. The first is village residing immigrants near the border areas that tend to be employed during harvest times on farms (Crush & Williams, 2005). Secondly, immigrant workers who reside on farms tend to work on them throughout the year. Thirdly immigrant workers who do temporary work on farms to gather some money before they move to their intended bigger cities to search for employment. Lastly, Mozambican labour, who previously had refugee status living near farming areas, tend to migrate (Crush & Williams, 2005).

Migration specifically from Zimbabwe into South Africa has been prevalent since the 19th century (Madambi, 2020). Crush et., (2017) estimates more than half a million Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa. It is worth emphasizing that the agriculture sector absorbs majority of the immigrant inflow within South Africa (MDP, 2021). However, it is difficult to accurately measure how many migrants are in South Africa yet alone the agriculture sector, as a portion of the agricultural immigrant workforce has been reported to be undocumented. Unskilled agricultural immigrants are undocumented mainly because to get a permit the Alien's Control Act of 1991 prohibits permits to be given out in jobs where local labour can fill the position (Crush and Williams, 2005). The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) may facilitate negotiations for the use of immigrant labour. An example of this is the existence of a "special zone" near the border areas where Zimbabweans can be recruited and registered by companies, while providing them with an identity card and a letter of employment which is valid for up to six months (Crush & Williams, 2005). The above

procedure provides immigrant workers a permit under "section 41" from the DHA to be lawfully employed (Crush & Williams, 2005). However, the provisions provided for immigrant workers on paper as stated above is not what translates on the ground, as immigrant workers still find it difficult and costly to obtain lawful permits. The inflow of undocumented immigrant labour is impossible to measure and has been exaggerated by the media (Crush & Williams, 2005). According to Crush and Williams (2005:16), "circumstantial evidence seems to support 'the flood' of popular mythology." An example of this mythology is the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) claiming they catch one in four border-jumpers with no quantifiable method to measure that or know that. The agriculture sector continues to be a sector that attracts Zimbabwean immigrant farm workers. The following section shall unpack the push and pull factors of Zimbabwean Migrant labour.

Push and Pull Factors of Zimbabwean Migrant Labour

This conference paper adopts the push and pull theory in order to understand the causes of emigration of Zimbabweans into Eastern Cape, South Africa. For migration to take place, they are factors from the sending and receiving countries that facilitate reasons for migration. These factors are economic, social, political, legal, educational, cultural, and historical. These factors push immigrants out of the country or pull immigrants towards the receiving country simultaneously for migration to take place (Mejia et al., 1979). Immigrants weigh out the potential benefits and risks associated with geographic relocation. Immigrant workers will only change occupation if they perceive it to be worthwhile and can stand to gain economically with their current limited resources (Kruss et al., 2016). The following section unpacks the push and pull factors that facilitate migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa.

Push Factors

The major push factors for immigrant workers to relocate into South Africa can be crudely boxed in economic and political reasons. Zimbabwean emigration is commonly characterised as a 'crisis-driven' migration. This came as a surprise considering the economic and social advancements the country achieved after its independence. However, the cost of poor leadership created vital push factors such as unemployment, economic sabotage, and political oppression (Dinbabo & Nyasulu, 2015).

The first push factor the researcher discusses is political oppression expressed as human rights violations. Due to the authoritarian nature of the Zimbabwean government, reports of freedom of speech violations; government kidnapping and torture against all who may not share the government's ideology, results in citizens emigrating to South Africa (Bloch, 2008; Ranga, 2013). A recent example of repression of freedom of speech is the arrest of Hopewell Chin'ono in 2020, an independent journalist who got arrested for exposing government corruption. The research of Padarath et al. (2003) echoes the above statements and discovered that the fear of human rights violation played a crucial role in the emigration of teachers from Zimbabwe to South Africa, especially during the Zimbabwean 2002 elections. A Zanu-PF used violent means to gain votes for the elections. This is mirrored by the Refugee Board of Canada (2011), who illustrated the Zimbabwean government using political youth activists to carry out its violence in exchange for jobs in the 2008 elections (cited in Ranga, 2013). Ranga's (2013) research shows that teachers were violently targeted due to their association with the opposition party MDC. This resulted in teachers fleeing to South Africa to avoid political abduction. The fear of political violence serves as a push factor for emigration (Raftopoulou, 2009; Ranga, 2013; Kiwanuka & Monson, 2009).

A push factor for professionals to seek employment elsewhere is what Ranga (2013) coins the 'misplacement of talent.' This occurs mainly in Zimbabwe, where individuals fill skilled job vacancies with political ties and political patronage. This does not happen only at an individual level but also within the private sector where businesses gain government assistance orders not due to performance but political patronage (Ranga, 2013). Individuals occupy skilled job vacancies with little to no qualifications for the job at all! Job opportunities handed out under the umbrella of "corruption, nepotism, tribalism, and other similar forms of behaviour have permeated every level of organisational life" (Ranga, 2013:4). Crudely put, political patronage as a pre-request to employment motivates skilled labour to emigrate due to the unemployment caused by 'misplacement of talent'.

The Zimbabwean economy has been in free fall for just over two decades. "Zimbabwe has been described as one of the world's most unequal societies with less than 5 per cent of the population (including black and white families and businesses) owning almost 70 per cent of the country's income" (Ranga, 2013:63). The standard of living in Zimbabwe can be described as unbearable, with 70 per cent of the population reported to be living in poverty in 2002, while hyperinflation

results in basic needs being inaccessible. Oxfam International (2009) (cited in Ranga, 2013) reported "that 80 per cent of Zimbabwe's population lived on less than one dollar a day, without access to basic commodities such as food and water. Almost 5.1 million people, half of the nation, struggled to eat one meal a day" (Ranga, 2013:71).

The debates around the causes of Zimbabwe's economic decline are important, but they are beyond the scope of this paper. However, the economic situation in Zimbabwe makes families livelihood unbearable, creating a push factor to obtain a source of income in South Africa through remittances to the migrant's home country (Bloch, 2008). This push factor of not having a stable source of income for households results in immigrants emigrating to remit funds. Zimbabwean migrant labour, on average, it has been argued, support five individuals on average back home (Dinbabo & Nyasulu, 2015). An estimated 75 per cent of migrant families depend on remittances as a source of income to sustain livelihood in Zimbabwe due to economic distress (Dinbabo & Nyasulu, 2015). However, remittances serve as a poor strategy to elevate individuals from economic strife (Dinbabo & Nyasulu, 2015). However, the emphasis at this point is that the Zimbabwean economy collapse has threatened migrant's livelihood, placing them in a position where emigration is the only option for survival.

Zimbabwe's weak social welfare and public service programs serve as a push factor. This is due to negligent leadership coupled with Sub-Saharan African countries (SSAC) implementing Structural adjustment programmes (Ranga, 2013). The Structural adjustment programmes placed SSAC in debt, restricting funds for social welfare programs. A reduction in spending in social sectors made some employees experience job loss (Ranga, 2013). Despite Governments attempts to increase tax rates, the economic constraints result in its inability to provide essential goods and services. This low standard of living 'pushes' Zimbabweans to emigrate (Ranga, 2013). Social programmes were further starved out from western donor support due to political sanctions. Western donors who previously donated began to take their funds outside the country. This resulted in lack of funding in social welfare sections, such as the health sector with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reporting US\$43 million in foreign aid being extracted in 1994 and 2003 for the Zimbabwean health sector. The economic blow around the same time also resulted in fewer people being able to afford health care (Ranga, 2013). The decline in health care revenue significantly hurt its ability to carry out its services.

Today, the ripple effects can be seen with the multiple health care protests in Zimbabwe during the years 2019/2020 for shortage's medical supplies, stuff, and unliveable wages. Poor welfare and public services create push factors for emigration.

The economic collapse touches all spaces of the Zimbabwean economy, creating a ripple effect of emigration to the agriculture sector. The education system continues to collapse, with teachers unable to sustain hyperinflation and a weak currency. As a result, women are encouraged to work on farms to play the traditional village wife (Bolt, 2013). This entails cooking, cleaning and sex. In some cases, parents who cannot pay school fees for their children due to the dire economic situation send their daughters to get jobs that resemble a domestic helper for a secure permeant worker on the South African farms who will pay the helper. The helper has been reported to save up enough money after some years to eventually pay for their school fees and complete studies (Bolt, 2013).

Pull Factors

As stated above the presence of pull factors are required to facilitate migration. The primary pull factor for immigrants are the source of income from job opportunities (Umezurike, 2008). This is supported in a study done by Wentzel & Bosman (2001) that determined macroeconomic variables are the main reason why Mozambican and Zimbabwe emigrate into South Africa. Macroeconomic factors such as a more stable currency, job opportunities, higher salaries provide pull factors for emigration.

The first pull factor the research discusses is the availability of jobs for migrant labour. The migrant agriculture literature illustrates two main reasons why employers hire migrant labour creating a pull factor. The first being to fill labour shortages and the second is employer's preferences due to stereotypes surrounding migrant labour (Kruss et al., 2016). Stereotypes help fuel immigrants' job opportunities by framing the farm owner's perspective of migrant workers in a positive light. Stereotypes are that migrant labour is more disciplined, is easy to control, cheap and loyal with a strong work ethic (Addison, 2014; Kruss et al., 2016; Crush & Williams, 2005). Migrant labour is deemed loyal because a portion of them are 'unfree' labour, as they cannot easily move around within the labour market, especially undocumented immigrant labour (Kruss et al., 2016). This is due to the legal barriers prohibiting migrant labour in some sections of the labour market.

However, on the ground, this is not always the case as migrant labour can be mobile depending on their visa situation and region (Bolt, 2013). Some workers work on farms with the intention of relocating to the main cities full of economic opportunities such as Johannesburg, however, due to accommodation issues and finances to fund their journey they temporarily work on farms (Bolt, 2013).

Nonetheless, stereotypes of the migrant workforce result in employers creating 'targeted' job posts for immigrant labour, creating a massive inflow of immigrant workers looking for a job (Bolt, 2013). This pull factor is strengthened due to the negative perspective employers have of local labour. Local workers are described as alcoholics, lazy, disobedient by employers (Kruss et al., 2016). This perspective is consistent with segmented labour theory, which breaks the labour market into 'goods job' and 'bad jobs.' This theory's focus point for this paper is the 'bad jobs', which consist of the absence of union presence, low pay, and precarious conditions as described in the agriculture sector (Kruss et al., 2016). However, the theory illustrates that workers employed in such positions tend to be unreliable, lack punctuality, and regular absenteeism as the "bad jobs" reinforce this behaviour. This is consistent with how farm owners view South African farmworkers (Kruss et al., 2016). This research argues that the reason why immigrant workers do not portray these characteristics as much as local labour, is because of their extreme vulnerability and fear of deportation forcing them to work diligently on these farms (Uys & Blaauw, 2006). The perception employers have of foreign and local workers creates job opportunities for migrant workers resulting in a pull factor for emigration.

The agriculture sector also facilitates job creation as it is well known for low wages, poor working conditions, casualisation of labour and no unionisation. Department of Labour research illustrates the dire effect of job shortages in the agriculture sector, as local unemployed work-seekers reject jobs in agriculture more than the security and hospitality industry due to the poor conditions of employment (Kruss et al., 2016). As a result, under the Immigration Act of 2012, farm owners have the right to fill in vacant labour shortages with immigrant labour if their operational needs require it (Kruss et al., 2016). On the other hand, scholars such as Bosok (2002) argue that migrant labour is dressed to be structurally necessary and this claim has some truth to it. However, it is also used for farm owners convenience as it aligns with their goal of profit maximisation. Immigrant farm labour is generally perceived as cheap and docile labour (Kruss et al., 2016). This

paragraph's relevance lies in labour shortages being present in the agriculture sector ensures economic job opportunities for immigrant workers to be pulled towards South Africa.

There are other pull factors outside job security, such as business development in South Africa which has proven to be a pull factor. Zimbabwean migrants also involve shoppers who buy goods in South Africa to take back home due to food shortages, coupled with informal cross border traders (Ranga, 2013). Other non-economic reasons include a family reunion, better education, and better public service that facilitates higher living standards.

South African farmers adopt 'the intensification of fragmented labour (Bernstein, 2007:45). This is the use of immigrant labour in the border areas to obtain 'cheap and manageable labour' (Bolt, 2013:7). The operational activities for many farms in the border depend on immigrant labour where a large portion of them went through the fence between the two countries in search for economic opportunities due to the continuously declining Zimbabwe economic post 2000s and political instability (Bolt, 2013). The pull factors of immigrant workers may benefit immigrants in many ways. However, within the agricultural sector, many immigrant workers abuses' experienced on the farms, poor working conditions keep immigrants in vulnerable positions and not necessarily make drastic changes in bettering their lives.

Methodology

This article draws on a case study conducted during the year 2020. This study employs a qualitative research method to analyse the root cause of Zimbabwean farmworkers emigration to the Sunday River Valley, Eastern Cape, South Africa. For the purpose of this study, 11 Zimbabwean immigrant farmworkers in the SRV citrus industry were interviewed and recruited using convenience and snowball sampling techniques. Convenience sampling was useful in making the initial contacts with prospective interviewees in the sample frame. Likewise, snowball sampling proved to be particularly useful given the difficulties in contacting immigrant workers on farms during a nationwide lockdown. The sample size was a consequence of the time constraints placed on completing a Master's dissertation.

The interviewees who partook in this study within the SRV were coincidentally undocumented migrant workers. The participants, who all worked on citrus farms and packhouses in the SRV, consisted of nine men and two women. This gender ratio was a consequence of the fact that

immigrant women appeared to be more fearful of participating in a study than the men. This fear may be because women have been reported to be the most vulnerable group on the farms and may face severe ramifications if thought to be a ‘troublemaker’ on the farm (Devereux, 2019). Not surprisingly, women tended to refuse to partake in the study. Of the eleven interviewees, three were permanently employed while the remainder were seasonal/casual workers. The immigrant workers whom I interviewed ranged from 22 to 40 years of age and had an average range in education levels of Form Four (Zimbabwean educational standard two years earlier than the period required to finish high school in Zimbabwe but, equivalent to the South African NQF level 4). The participants’ age range is not representative of the migrant workforce in the SRV but rather a consequence of snowball sampling.

The primary data collection method the researcher used is semi-structured telephonic interviews, due to the health risks associated with travel and direct physical contact during the Covid-19 pandemic. The researcher recorded the interviews conducted during the fieldwork stage of the study. After transcribing the recordings, the interviews were thematically coded by grouping them into categories that allowed the researcher to identify the similarities, differences, and patterns of specific social phenomena (Tracey, 2013). This paper employs pseudonyms to protect the identity of the participants where necessary.

The Research Findings

South Africa's citrus fruit industry competes globally and is firmly intergraded into the citrus global value chain. The SRV in the Eastern Cape is a powerhouse citrus producer in South Africa (ECSECC, 2017). The citrus industry is labour intensive and employs a large number of immigrant workers working in packing houses and orchards (Chirara, 2013). The SRV is located in the Sarah Baartman District, Eastern Cape Province. The area is known for high-intensity agricultural activities within the citrus fruit industry, with a Gross Domestic Product value of R 2.5 billion in 2016 (ECSECC, 2017). The SRV agriculture sector employed 33.9 per cent of the total employment population of the SRV. The agriculture sector is the largest employer in the area in 2016 (ECSECC, 2017). However, Nieuwenhuizen (2013, cited in Chirara, 2013) reports an undersupply of labour within the agriculture sector in the SRV, despite being situated in an area where there is a considerable amount of unemployment.

Interviewees of the study originate from the Harare province in Zimbabwe, some 2165 kilometres away from the SRV; some of them were from Gweru Province in Zimbabwe, about 1900 kilometres from the SRV. These immigrants entered South Africa through the Beit Bridge Border Post, and generally migrated into other provinces in South Africa for long periods of time first before settling into Eastern Cape.

Push and Pull factors of Zimbabwean immigrant workers within the Sunday River Valley

Push factors that result in emigration as noted above, boil down to economic and political factors. Crudely put, the collapse of the Zimbabwean economy serves as a strong push factor for emigration (Maisiri, 2019). An estimated 90 per cent of the Zimbabwean population is unemployed. Zimbabweans' manufacturing industry is on 'life support,' and massive black markets support millions of Zimbabweans' livelihoods (Maisiri, 2019:10). The standard of living in Zimbabwe is generally expensive. On the 13th of January 2019 the Zimbabwean fuel price inflated to the point it had the most expensive fuel price in the world (Maisiri, 2019:11). In addition to the above, the political climate in Zimbabwe is violent, an example of this is 600 Zimbabweans were arrested and 15 killed for having a peaceful protest their living conditions in 2019 (Maisiri, 2019). Consequently, immigrants within the study generally reported to emigrate from Zimbabwe due to the poor living conditions.

Several participants described their living conditions in Zimbabwe without basic utilities such as water and electricity – which are needed to experience a decent standard of living according to International Labour Organisation (2016:12). As one of the interviewees noted:

It's a normal house we have back home in the location with tap water and electricity. It is not the cleanest areas, but its ok. Although we cook over firewood most of the time because electricity is too expensive, we could not afford to use the geyser or stove every day, only on some days. So, we would alternate by using firewood. Sometimes there won't be any water for three days – you know how Zimbabwe is (Kudzai, 27/11/2020).

The unbearable living conditions as described above encourage immigrants to emigrate into South Africa in search for a higher standard of living. This data coincides with Ranga (2013:168) study

findings consisting of 200 Zimbabweans, who described the lack of access to basic utilities as a strong push factor. Ranga's (2013:168) participants reported food shortages; rise of food prices; erratic wage pay outs, inconsistent water, and electricity supply resulted in their decision to emigrate.

The interviewees were asked their preference between current living conditions in South Africa or living conditions back home. All unanimously agreed that living conditions in South Africa surpasses those back home. Nkosi said:

It's definitely better in South Africa. In Zimbabwe, you may stay in the house, but you sit and starve. There is no work, nothing works back home. At least here there is a functioning economy.

Nkosi's statement is consistent with Raftopoulos & Mlambo (2010:3) research who argues that the attrition of living standards due to the collapse of the economy and high unemployment is a primary reason for Zimbabweans to emigrate. This is echoed by Ranga (2013: 63) who points out that nearly three quarters of the Zimbabwean population in 2002 were living under the poverty line set by the International Labour Organization. Oxfam International (2009) (cited in Ranga, 2013) reported 80 per cent of the country lives on less than a dollar a day in Zimbabwe.

Opportunities for social mobility among immigrant workers interviewed were severely constrained by a lack of adequate education and job opportunities, which kept their families in a generational loop of structural poverty. The lack of job opportunities within Zimbabwe and the need to work in order for immigrants to support their livelihoods create a strong push factor for immigrant farmworkers within the SRV. None of the respondents finished high school, and the highest achieved qualification from the sample was an ordinary level high school certificate (this is a Zimbabwean educational standard two years earlier than the period required to finish high school in Zimbabwe but, equivalent to the South African NQF level 4). The workers' inability to finish their high school limits their ability to provide for their households, as it places them in the unskilled category on the labour market. Interviewees generally stop pursuing education in search for employment. Rodney said he started looking for employment at a young age and left school because "... my family needed the money at that point in time, and it's obvious we all need to work in order to make a living." Chipu mirrored the same sentiments:

I started working at the age of 16. It's when I started thinking that I am a woman and also because I had a child. So, I had to provide for my child. My family could not afford to raise my child and they needed an extra income. So, I had to go to work. The father of the child disappeared.

According to the literature on migrant labour in the agricultural sector by scholars such as Ranga (2013), Raftopoulos (2009) and Kiwanuka & Monson (2009), a key push factor is the human rights violations carried out by the Zimbabwean ruling party, ZANU-PF. The respondents contradicted these findings and did not reflect this as a key push factor to migrate from Zimbabwe. The participants in my research reported not to have experienced human rights violations in Zimbabwe, nor did they acknowledge it as a reason to emigrate. For them, the lack of economic opportunity was the key driving force for emigration. Seth (13/10/2020) was the only interviewee who mentioned politics and corruption: he emigrated from Zimbabwe "... because of the money, my friend. Because of the money. There are no job opportunities in Zimbabwe. Only ZANU-PF has money in that country".

Job opportunities in South Africa were therefore a strong pull factor for migration from Zimbabwe among the interviewees. Similarly, Bosman & Wentzel (2001) show that macroeconomic variables, such as job opportunities and a stable currency, are the main reasons why Mozambicans and Zimbabweans emigrate to South Africa. Kyle's (14/11/2020) reason for emigrating to South Africa was as follows: "Only one reason, there's no money in Zimbabwe. You will sit and sit and sit. There is no money there. At least here I have job. I came to South Africa to look for work".

Economic opportunities were emphasised by the respondents above political reasons because they (understandably) regarded their family's livelihood as a priority. The ability to send remittances appeared to be a significant pull factor for all research participants. Despite differences in age, sex, and marital status, all the immigrants whom I interviewed supported their family back home in Zimbabwe. Blessing (5/11/2020), for instance, sent as much as a third of his monthly income back home every month: "I have to buy groceries and send money back home to my mom". Likewise, Kyle (14/11/2020) responded: "Sending school fees back home for my son is the main thing, and just supporting him."

These findings correlate with those of the studies done by Bloch's (2008:3) study consisting of 500 Zimbabweans working in South Africa whose main motivation for emigration was largely to send remittances home. McGregor (2007:806) echoes these findings and states "families of all social classes have increasingly been compelled to send members abroad to ensure basic survival, escape brutal attacks or meet aspirations for accumulation and education." Crush & Tevera, (2010, cited in Ranga (2013:78) estimates that three quarters of all migrant families in Zimbabwe receive remittances. This highlights the gravity remittances has as a pull factor into South Africa for immigrants as a way to escape poverty. However, the arguments against remittances being an effective vehicle out of poverty made by Dinbabo & Nyasulu (2015) stood true from the research respondent's answers. Remittances only create a cycle of poverty and hinder any prospects of wealth creation. There has been no real improvement in immigrant workers lives working within these farms, as participants have failed to participate in any asset or wealth building. Migrant workers remain in a perpetual cycle of poverty where their meagre wages can be shared with a family of six individuals. Furthermore, as Dinbabo & Nyasulu (2015) argue, remittances create dependency on the breadwinner. Chipo has been the sole bread winner for her family since the age of 16, she is currently 26 years old and has acquired no wealth and struggles to make 'ends meet'. Ten years later, her family still depended on her as the sole bread winner.

It was apparent amongst immigrant farmworkers within the SRV that the lack of economic opportunities serves as strong push factor out of Zimbabwe, while the presence of economic opportunities in South Africa serves as a strong pull factor. The following section explores why the Eastern Cape served as a strong pull factor for immigrant farm workers.

THE EASTERN CAPE AS A 'HAVEN'

Migrant farmworkers are prevalent in areas where South Africa and Zimbabwe share borders in the Limpopo province. Agriculture migrant literature conducted in Limpopo by researchers, such as Umezurike (2008), Crush & Williams (2005), Rutherford & Addison (2007) and Bolt (2013), show that immigrant farmworkers experience poor living and working conditions. Immigrant workers work along the border due to the convenience of working so close to home (Bolt, 2013:8).

Immigrant workers tend to lack the financial resources needed to travel deeper into South Africa and settle for finding farm jobs near the border areas. Undocumented immigrant labourers tend to be hesitant to travel further south without the appropriate visa documentation in fear of being arrested. The lack of work visas also limits what economic activities immigrants can participate in within the host country (Umezurike, 2008). Lastly, the fear of the unknown results in Zimbabwean immigrant labourers settling for jobs in the northern areas of South Africa, which are mostly in the agricultural sector, renowned for its poor working conditions.

The above findings beg the question why immigrant workers would go through the trouble of using the little resources they have to travel to the southern parts of South Africa far from the border. When asked the question ‘Why did you seek work on farms in the Eastern Cape rather than on those closer to the Zimbabwean border?’, the respondents painted a picture of the Eastern Cape as a ‘safe haven’ when compared to the farms close to the South African border with Zimbabwe. This perception was based mainly on the fact that the Eastern Cape has less military and police presence to look for undocumented migrant labourers. The fear of deportation along the border is really due to the extensive police presence (Bolt, 2013). Unlike the studies done on farms near the Zimbabwe-South African border, such as Umezurike (2008), none of the respondents in my study experienced any military patrols in Eastern Cape. In short, as a place of employment, the Eastern Cape posed less risk of deportation for undocumented migrant labourers.

According to Umezurike (2008: 616), human rights violations are often experienced by migrant labourers during military border patrols. The rural areas of the Eastern Cape provided an environment for immigrant farmworkers to work with a significantly reduced feeling fear of deportation. As Blessing (5/11/2020) put it: “No one bothers you; no police person will ask for your documents.” Methembe (16/11/2020) shared the same sentiment: “My friend, at least here you can relax. There’s no pressure. No one will come after you about your visa.”

The pull factors that encouraged Zimbabwean immigrants to seek employment in the Eastern Cape were identified as the increased safety and better job opportunities compared to the border region. The importance of safety from military border patrols as a pull factor to the Eastern Cape is underscored by the fact that only two immigrants from my sample possessed a valid work permit. The remainder were undocumented immigrant farmworkers. When asked why they did not have a work permit, the respondents indicated that they not only lacked information on how to acquire

work visas, but they also believed that Zimbabweans were not welcome in South Africa. Participants experienced a strong xenophobic sentiment as they felt 'othered'.

As a result, many of them did not bother to apply for a work permit, leaving them in a vulnerable position. As Kyle (14/11/2020) stated: "No, I don't (have a permit) – those people [locals] don't want us here". This is resounded by Kudzai (27/11/2020) when asked Why did you not apply for refugee status? Her response was: "I don't know you can do that but that's a waste of time they won't give it to you." Methembe (16/11/2020) opined: "They will ask you to pay, pay and pay to apply, 'cos they want your money, but they will never give it to you. They don't like Zimbabweans." There is some truth to the claims above, this is because in order to acquire a work visa in South Africa, migrants generally need to possess a rare skill to be awarded a critical skills visa. Immigrant unskilled farm labour do not fall into the 'critical skills' category, therefore they are discouraged from even attempting to apply for a work visa.

Immigrant labour perceptions of the visa allocation processes conducted by the Department of Home Affairs being biased against them may not be misplaced. Bloch (2008) found cases of structural, institutional bias against immigrant labour. Bloch (2008) argues negative institutional bias can be spotted from officials working within the visa allocation institutions having their own subjective biases and prejudice. An example in South Africa is migrant workers who attempt to apply for visas under the asylums status, have been reported to be unfairly brushed as 'economic migrants' due to workers within the visa allocation institutions prejudice against migrants and therefore negatively hindering immigrant workers odds of receiving their asylum status. Workers within Home Affairs have reported to have negative prejudice against migrants, which reduced the probability of a migrant worker receiving a positive outcome on his or her visa application. In 2006, out of 2000 asylum requests just under 1900 were declined (Bloch, 2008:5). Migrant workers tend to leave their countries with little to no resources to survive in South Africa and deem using the little resources to apply for a visa as an inefficient survival strategy. As a result, migrant workers remain undocumented (Bloch, 2008). Undocumented migrant labourers have been reported to experience human rights abuses and exploitation, especially within the border region, where they live in constant fear of both losing their source of income and deportation (Crush & Tshitereke, 2001; HRW, 2006; Umezurike, 2008).

Another reason (but secondary to the fear of police presence by the border area) why the Eastern Cape served as a strong pull factor for Zimbabwean immigrants as a favoured destination for employment was the perception that more job vacancies were present within Eastern Cape relative to the border region. Due to the high levels of competition for jobs in the border region, some immigrant farmworkers failed to find employment. The vast unemployment of immigrant workers by the border areas makes workers easily replaceable. As a result, immigrants accept lower wages in fear of being easily replaced by another immigrant who is willing to accept the poor working conditions on the farm (Umezurike, 2008).

The competition for employment in the border areas allows farm owners to intensify exploitation, as workers compete for jobs by accepting lower wages - reducing the farm owners input labour cost. However, farm owners finished product price continues to increase in products such as oranges. The reduction of labour production costs and the increase of the finished product prices over time results in profit maximization for farm owners at the expense of workers (Crush & Williams, 2005). Added to this, the competition for jobs gives farm owners an increase in their negotiation power, because any immigrant who attempts to negotiate their wages does not get hired for the job (Crush & Williams, 2005). Farm owners would not bother with negotiating with workers and just opt to find someone else who is willing to accept low wages, adversely affecting immigrants' workers bargaining power (Crush & Williams, 2005). My interviewees claimed that Eastern Cape was attractive to emigrate to, as competition for employment is not as fierce relative to the Limpopo areas. There were apparently always jobs available in the Eastern Cape province, which have better employment conditions than those in the northern border region.

Kyle (14/11/2020) stated his reason for relocating to Eastern Cape as follows:

I actually tried working on the farms at the border, but I got scared because there's too much police that side, and also there's small money that side. At least here they are always looking for people and it is better.

Similarly, Kudzai (27/11/2020) noted: "I was looking for the greener pasture. The money that side [border areas] is so little compared to here [Eastern Cape] and there is always police there. There's just too much problems there." Chipo (20/10/2020) shared the same sentiments: "You will struggle to find jobs that side; there's no opportunities there. In Eastern Cape. there is plenty. It's safe ..."

Amongst the respondents, there was a conscious awareness that they are vulnerable because they did not have a work permit. As a result, they relocated to the most southerly parts of South Africa, such as the Eastern Cape, as a survival strategy. This observation illustrates that Zimbabwean farmworkers are adaptive to the poor working and living conditions by the border areas. Eastern Cape differs from other immigrant studies within areas close to the border such as Rutherford & Addison, (2007:1308) who reports heavy police presence by the border areas leading to a mass deportation. Umezurike (2008:616) reports persistent police harassment of undocumented immigrants. Bolt (2013:13) echoes these sentiments by stating, “the farm’s border location leads to it being treated by the South African army and police as part of the ‘border situation.... Police vehicles, often with army escort, move through the compound at unpredictable times, rounding people up.” However, working on Eastern Cape farms does not guarantee good working conditions, this observation is only relative to the border areas as studies. Visser & Ferrer (2015:207) indicate that the working conditions in Eastern Cape have historically been weak in general.

Conclusion

This paper examined the push and pull factors of international migration into South Africa, Eastern Cape citrus farms. The South African agriculture sector receives a large influx of migration flow, the majority of whom have positively contributed towards the growth of the citrus agricultural sector within the SRV. This paper indicated that generally the migration literature places the political and economic collapse of Zimbabwe as the driving force for immigrant workers to emigrate from Zimbabwe to South Africa. However, for Zimbabwean immigrant farmworkers within the SRV economic opportunity are the strongest determinants for their emigration into South Africa. Other pull factors associated with economic opportunities for immigrant workers consist of a stable economy, stable currency, and South Africa’s higher standard of living. Guided by applying a qualitative case study, this paper found that the Eastern Cape lack of military patrols for cross border management and the availability of jobs on citrus farms to be a strong pull factor for Zimbabwean immigrant workers within the SRV.

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