Exploring the effects of social networks and remittances on Zimbabweans' immigration into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province, South Africa

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Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my original work, and as such, it has not been submitted anywhere in full or partially to any university for a degree. All contributions and sources that are cited in this study have been duly acknowledged through complete references.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my amazing mother, **Alina Sedinyana Sebolaaneng**, without whom a solid careful foundation wouldn't have been laid. You are deeply missed

ACRONYMS

BASSREC	Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
COMPAS	Centre for Migration and Policy Society
DNSC	Danish National Space Centre
DNB	De Nederlandsche Bank
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
EU	European Union
FMSP	Forced Migration Studies Programme
FDI	foreign direct investment
KNOMAD	Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development
HSSREC	Human Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IHDS	Indian Human Development Survey
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOL	International Organisation for Migration
MLM	Mafikeng Local Municipality
MTOs	Money Transfer Operators
MDC	Movement of Democratic Change
NWU	North West University
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SARB	South African Reserve Bank
UN	United Nations
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence

UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USA	United States of America
WB	World Bank
Zim	Zimbabwe
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front

ABSTRACT

The fundamental aim of this study was to explore the effects of social networks and remittances on Zimbabweans' immigration into the Mafikeng Local Municipality (MLM) of North West Province, South Africa. This is a qualitative research study, because the study required a significant insight and empirical material that is qualitative in nature, as well as a method that offers in-depth explanations, in that case in-depth interviews were utilized in soliciting data that provided in-depth insight on the effects that social networks and remittances produce on immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West in South Africa. Moreover, this study adopted an exploratory research design, due to dearth of literature relating to social networks in facilitating remittances and immigration of Zimbabweans into deep rural localities of South Africa, such as the MLM. In addition, the study also employed developmental psychological and sociological longitudinal analysis research design to analyze changing trends in remittance corridors using both existing scholarly documents and responses from interviews.

The study established that social networks have the capacity to facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into South Africa and again facilitate emigration back to Zimbabwe. As such, social networks can facilitate cyclical migration. Furthermore, the study uncovered that these social networks also facilitate remittances. Through social networks, migrants can send remittances to their country of origin and again use the same networks to remit goods from their country of origin to their destination country and in this regard, there is cyclical remitting. Finally, the study concludes that remittances are some of the major migration push factors, as result of awareness of relative deprivation in country of origin. In this regard, awareness of relative deprivation of remittances pushes families to send some of their members abroad to work and be able to remit. The study then proposes channels which limit informal methods of remitting in order for remittances to contribute to tax revenue in both sending and receiving states.

Key Words: *Emigration, Immigrants, Immigration, Mafikeng local municipality, North-West, Push and pull, Remittances, Social networks, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zimbabwean immigrants,*

Contents

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

There is plethora of globally acknowledged definitions of the concept of migration. Generally, migration is considered to be movement of people from one place to another, such movement can be motivated by wide range of factors such as seeking employment, fleeing from conflict-stricken areas, unfavorable environmental conditions and many more. Jessica (2010:9) defines migration as the movement of people or group of people, be it temporary or permanent from one geographical location to another, and such movement is inspired by variety of reasons that range from moving to seek better employment opportunities to fleeing persecution.

Migration is classified into numerous categories: Firstly, there is internal migration, which is known as rural to urban, rural to rural or urban to urban migration as well as international or cross border migration. Rural to urban migration for instance involves the movement of people from rural to urban areas (Skeldon, 2017:4). On the other hand, international or cross border migration, is regarded as the movement of people across international boundaries or from one country to another country (Popova & Ozel, 2018). The former is more common as opposed to the latter, on the basis that initially migration is characterized by various obstacles ranging from travelling costs, uncertain future at the place of destination, health related issues as well as dynamics in a place of destination such as hatred, possible hostile relations between foreign nationals and locals. Even though internal migration seems to be less costly and risky, the phenomenon of international migration has characterized the world for many centuries to the present modern day. Natal (2009) also concurs that migration is happening due to political, economic, and social issues.

Labour migration, which in this context refers to foreign nationals who cross state boundaries and enter South Africa in search of economic opportunities, such as employment and partaking in the small-scale markets, remains an ongoing phenomenon, either viewed from a historical perspective or cotemporary point of view (Vallentgoed, 2008:1). The discovery of mineral resources in South Africa during the 1800s exacerbated labour migration into the country, wherein South Africa experienced an influx of labour migrants from neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Lesotho who sought for employment opportunities in the mines and industries (Crush *et al.*, 2005), as the country needed more labour. Much as South Africa discovery of minerals is deemed as a pull factor, there are other push factors in those neighbouring states that did not leave potential migrants with any alternative but to migrate to South Africa, and those push factors included factors none other than strained economic growth that caused poverty and high rates of unemployment.

The previous white South African governments, prior to the advent of democracy in 1994, tightened migration legislation on the flow of labour African immigration into South Africa. For instance, the 1913 Immigration Regulation Act and the 1937 Aliens Act were regarded racist legislations that exercised the control and exclusion of African migrant workers in South Africa. The influx of migrants in the new South African dispensation, especially of African migrants has become dimensional, as many migrants flee to South Africa because of conflicts, striving economies and political instabilities happening in their countries (Marc, 2015; Fontana, 1997). South Africa as a regional economic hub and as a migrant receiving country with its enormous economic opportunities remains the main attractive reasons for the perpetual increase in immigration of African migrants from all the corners of the continent. According to Crush (1999) many Africans regard South Africa as a country with abundant economic opportunities and better standard of living as compared to other African states. In addition, Africans in poor countries deem South Africa as “a haven of freedom, peace and prosperity”, meanwhile prospective migrants regard it as “Europe of Africa” Landau and Wa Kabwe-Segatti (2009:17). The propensity of Africans in viewing South Africa as a land of opportunities has led to many Africans migrating to South Africa to source job opportunities, such as jobs and running businesses.

South Africa hosts a significant number of the Zimbabwean population as compared to any other African nation, as such Zimbabweans make up the largest group of African migrants in South Africa. The scholarship of Zimbabwe South Africa migration becomes key in understanding the nature and variables at play with respect to Southern Africa migration. Migration of Zimbabweans into South Africa begun in the precolonial times, where Zimbabweans migrated into South Africa to work in the mines (Crush,2005). The gukurahundi massacres in 1983 and afterwards, led to most Zimbabweans, especially those in Matabeleland to flee to South Africa and other countries (Crush,2005).

Zimbabwe was previously a British colony called Southern Rhodesia. The liberation struggle of black majority in the mid-1960s mounted insurmountable pressure on the white rule (Betts, 2013). However, disregarding liberation movement pressures and fearing to cede power to the black majority rule, the government of white settlers by then proclaimed a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) under the leadership of Ian Smith (Betts, 2013). Leaders of the Patriotic Front, which consisted of both leaders of ZANU and ZAPU met with the Zimbabwean British government in London at the Lancaster House to ratify the agreement on the process of transfer of power to the black majority and upon independence in 1980 RG Mugabe emerged as the prime minister (Salmon, 2019).

The agreement was reached in December of 1979 at the Lancaster House, wherein the British government agreed to the independence of Zimbabwe and further committed to provide financial support in exchange for the new black Zimbabweans leadership to postpone a significant land reform project for a period of 10 years (Gregory,1980). Thus, allowing white settlers to retain their farms for the proposed period. In 1990, the postponement of the land reform project was informally taken out of the initial agreement and had continued until 1997 wherein the new labour assumed power in the United Kingdom and repudiated the land reform agreement and even withdrew the financial support (Betts, 2013).

It is against this backdrop that ZANU's veterans, tribal leaders, and the government began the process of land reform in 2000. In February of that year, the first phase of land reform called Fast Track Land Reform Programme was implemented. According to Hammar *et al.* (2010) and Kinsey (2010) the implementation of land reform program caused chaos and displaced many white commercial farmers and black workers. Scholars that include Betts (2013); Moyo (2000); Alston, *et al.* (1999) argue that the ensuing land reform program led to land invasion and seizing of farms by people with little experience in large scale food production farming. As a result of the premise, the large-scale agricultural production of Zimbabwe collapsed (Southall, 2011), and dire situation was exacerbated by drought (Betts,2013). The study by (Chikuhwa, 2013) contends that the ensuing of land reform demoted Zimbabwe from being Africa's breadbasket into being the basket case of Africa. It is due to the latter mentioned land reform policy that post-independence Zimbabwe experienced the skills flight of white people.

Various factors that include heavy economic sanctions, capital flight, land invasions and drought led to a devastating collapse in agricultural productivity and economic downfall. In addition, hyperinflation struck to an extent that the Zimbabwean dollar was rendered worthless, as such the US dollar and South African rand were the only remaining viable sources of currencies used to purchase food (Betts,2013). Many Zimbabweans lacked access to these foreign currencies, which meant that there were unable to purchase basic needs. Mass livelihood collapsed, and the country encountered shortages of food, and that had left 5 million Zimbabweans dependent on food aid, with widespread diseases, HIV/AIDS also claimed many lives due to the inability of government to provide antiretroviral drugs (Human Rights Watch, 2009a). All factors combined conspired to plunge living standards of ordinary Zimbabweans into a level that ranks the country alongside a fragile and a failed state.

The political instability, decline in agricultural produce and economic shambles, all these factors combined led to a socially deteriorated state of ordinary Zimbabweans, to extent that people could not afford necessities such as food or livelihood opportunities (Betts, 2013). Migrating out of Zimbabwe became a survival strategy to many Zimbabweans (Crush, *et al.*, 2012), many Zimbabweans began to engage in circular migration and others sent some of their family members abroad to make means so that they can remit back to their homeland and their families in the homeland can afford basic subsistence (Crush, *et al.*, 2012). The study by (Betts,2013) support the previous assertion by positing that the political and economic shambles in Zimbabwe had forced almost one-quarter of the Zimbabwe population out of the country to the neighbouring countries. Studies by Crisp and Kiragu (2010) as well as Polzer (2008) estimated that around 1 to 1.5 million Zimbabweans between 2000 and 2012 crossed boundaries into South Africa for various reasons that include residence and sourcing of means to remit back home for family upkeep. (Betts, 2013). These studies revealed that the immigration figure indicates that such an exodus of Zimbabweans into South Africa was the largest influx anywhere in the world since the 21st century.

The above discussions focus on motives of migration in the beginning of the 21st century. Though political persecutions, violence and economic crisis are still relevant and predominantly cited by many scholars as migration push factors in Zimbabwe (Makina, 2007; Ditswanelo, 2007; Bloch,2008), it is equally important to note that there are other migration motives responsible for Zimbabwean immigration into South Africa apart from the popular discourse of political and economic push factors in Zimbabwe. The study by Bracking and Sachikonye (2010) details considerable evidence that remittances are primarily responsible for the provision of basic household expenditures in Zimbabwe, such as food, clothes, health, and education. As such, certain migrations are motivated by remittances.

In the same vein, a study by Dinbabo and Nyasulu (2015) posit that South Africa has a stable economy, attractive investment climate and better state funded social services such as health and education. As such some Zimbabweans migrate into South Africa to pursue education, while others cross the broader to primarily access antenatal and childbirth services (Crush, *et al.*, 2017). Some portions of Zimbabweans migrate to work in the informal economic sector to accumulate cash that will assist them in starting up their own businesses (Crush,*et al.*, 2017). It is also important to note that some Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa came because of the desire to visit their families and friends abroad, though these visits may have economic implications, while others come to trade and to purchase necessities such as groceries, medicines, and clothes (Forced Migration Studies Programme (FMSP), 2009).

South Africa, like many other countries in the world is a diverse nation, composed of people of different cultures, language, and religion, and such diversity is always a bone of contention that breeds racial and ethnic anxieties and sometimes even outright hatred between and amongst different population groups (Crush, 2001). The study by Harris (2002) argues that the increasing diversity worsens the anxiety and outright resentment between different populations. The study by Laher (2008) further holds that immigrants are the most affected because they are specifically groups that experience hatred and discrimination, particularly African immigrants in South Africa without the exception of Zimbabweans, because they account for the highest number of immigrants in South Africa, with probably 1,5 to 3 million Zimbabwean foreign nationals in South Africa (Chiumia, 2021).

According to Tamir and Budiman (2019) most South Africans perceive immigrants as a burden on their society, on the basis that immigrants take their jobs and strain their social services, while many of the immigrants are criminals. On the other hand, South African security agencies have a predetermined perceptions that immigrants are criminals, as much the security agency approach towards migrants is hostile, and sometimes even accuse migrants of crimes by confiscating their belongings (Tamir & Budiman, 2019). All these negative sentiments towards African immigrants have become an outright hatred, which has escalated into physical attacks on immigrants by locals as well as hate speech towards immigrants.

According to Campbell (2003), citizens of receiving countries see large-scale international migration as a threat to their economic well-being, social order, cultural and religious values, and political stability. Which may be the case with negative sentiments and hatred of South Africans towards foreign nationals, especially Zimbabweans in South Africa, hence the 2008 attacks on foreign nationals and current prevalent attacks on African immigrants by South Africans.

Remittances, which is understood by IMF (2009:272) as either money or goods sent back home to migrant's families or friends at the place of origin for the purpose of development at the migrant's original home, has come to characterise recent migration in striving economies and conflict-stricken countries. This does not give an exception to African migrants and those in the SADC region, especially many Zimbabwean migrants who have made South Africa a destination. According to Tavera and Chikanda (2009) Zimbabwe is geographically adjacent to South Africa, so due to the close proximity, Zimbabweans exploit that by migrating to South Africa to seek job opportunities so that they can remit back home to support and sustain their families who are affected by economic turmoil. The above assertion implies that many Zimbabwean migrations have come to be influenced and characterized by remittances. Hence, there is a need for a further deep probe with an intention of documenting the outmost importance of remittances in the migration trends of Zimbabwe to South Africa. Johnston *et al*. (2008:5) estimated that the number of Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa, both documented and undocumented ranges from 2 to more than 3 million, even though there are available authoritative figures. The estimated figure is exclusive of all Zimbabwean foreign nationals in South Africa who immigrated into South Africa because of economic collapse, deteriorated socio-political situation as a direct consequences of land reform policy (Polzer, 2010). Their large numbers that cut across the country has assisted them in creating networks, that are of utmost importance to low earning migrants and undocumented migrants who are unable to remit through the official channels due to costs of remittances and the official sites' demand for migrants' legal documentations (Nzima, 2017; Orozco, 2012). Much as this study focuses on legal migrants due to financial constraints and unavailability of official sites in some parts of local communities, it is also important to emphasize that both documented and undocumented migrants are equally affected by variety of factors that stymie them from conveniently accessing official remittance market. The undocumented migrants face more impediments with regards to accessing official remittance channels not only because of lack of proper documentation that deny them access, but their illegal status expose them to the risk of being arrested and deported. Thus, they are left with no choice, but to utilise informal channels of remittances. Studies by Maphosa (2007), Chimhandamba (2009), SPT (2009), Ncube (2010), and Nzima (2017) have shown that the informal channel of remittances is mostly used by undocumented Zimbabwean migrants and has proven to be very convenient for the millions of them.

Formal channels of remittances can be understood as the transfer of cash and goods through registered conduits of remittances. It is common that, predominant users of formal remittance channels are documented migrants and short-term workers (Nzabamwita (2015). The transfer of goods and cash in this regard take places in the banks, post offices and Money Transfer Operators (MTOs), such as Mama Money, Hello- Paisa, Mukuru, and Money-Gram (Willis,2016).

In the context of South Africa, it is a prerequisite that MTOs are registered with the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) as non-bank financial institutions (Bester, *et al.*, 2010), however certain countries allow MTOs to operate outside the financial sector. The MTOs are extensive and not severely strict with identification requirements, it often focuses on low value and high frequency transactions (Orozco, 2006). World-Remit and mobile money transfers such as mukhuru are online money transfer services, which permit migrants in the host to transfer money to the recipient in the country of origin by the use a cell phone. M-payment is the South African local mobile money transfer service, which operate like M-Pesa, which is an Eastern African mobile model of money transfer (Willis,2016). Customers, in this regard, migrants in South Africa can use their mobile phones in sending money to the recipient in the country of origin. Willis (2016) holds that mobile money transfer operate in low transfer fees, low exchange rate charges and are convenient. Mobile money transfers can be done on the phone, and without having to go the bank.

According to Burgsdorff (2010) an amount of 1 to 4 million rands is remitted annually through formal remittance markets from South Africa to Zimbabwe. However, this figure is not precise, because other outflow transactions take place in the informal corridors. The World Bank (2009) argued that the remittance flows taking place in the informal corridors are 50% higher than the officially recorded flows. While Freund and Spatafora (2005) emphasise that in the Sub-Saharan Africa it is 75% higher, because the formal sector in the region is far less developed than anywhere in the world. Maphosa (2007) further stresses that various studies have shown that 90% of remittance flow takes place in the informal sector.

The Zimbabwean remittance market has the tendency of becoming unreliable at the peak of economic crisis, as was the case in 2008 and 2009. As such, Zimbabwean branches of commercial agencies were closed, meaning that if people remitted formally from South Africa, there was no guarantee that the remittance receiver actually received the money (Nyamunda,2014). Ensuing from the latter statement, the formal remittance market cease to retain credibility and as such people turn to find safe remittance pipelines in the informal corridors. Contrary to the latter, despite the peak of economic crisis in Zimbabwe, MTOs like Western Union and MoneyGram are available as safe channels to remit (IMF,2010). Though MTOs appears to be reliable in the remittance flow despite the peak of economic crisis in Zimbabwe, a survey conducted by Send Money Africa discovered that the remittance cost fees in South Africa was double the usual charge fee with an average of close to 20,7%, even more than the average remittance costs fee in the continent, which by then was close to 12,4% (Peacock, 2013). Thus, making South Africa the most expensive country from which to send money.

Informal remittance system commonly known to African migrants as ‘omalayisha’, is a remittance channel founded on community and social relations friendship, kinship, neighbourhood, and referrals (Thebe & Mutyatyu, 2017:1). This system is prominent in rural societies and villages, due to various reasons that include lack of formal financial institutions in rural societies (Nagarajan & Meyer, 2006), the exorbitant costs of remittances potential remitters incur in the official remittance systems (Ahmed *et al.*,2021), substantial level of illiteracy which may pose language barrier between officials and immigrants (Cooper, 2018) and the red tape in the official remittance channel, especially requisition of various documents that immigrants may have misplaced or lost as well as the long queues at banks and other official remittance markets.

The initial phase of sending goods and money back home through omalayisha and through the network of friends and relatives began in the 1980s (Thebe & Mutyatyu, 2017). The services were exclusive to immigrants who had close associations with vehicle owners because they were able to send money and packages back home through the vehicle owners whenever they were travelling back home. Migrants' vehicle owners were relatives, friends and neighbours who resided in the same destination community with the remitting migrants. Thebe and Mutyatyu (2017) further observed that the initial stage was not characterized with many vehicles for cross-broader transportation, in the process the demand for transportation grew, and that motivated owners to tow trailers to ferry more goods.

The practice of sending remittances through networks was not new, it was a common popular behavior amongst labor migrants who resided in the same society, and that practice was founded on the African principle of "ukuphathisa", which means sending goods home through other people (Thebe & Mutyatyu,2017). Sending through network was prominent amongst men who were unable to pay visit back home for various reasons, such as insufficient money for travelling and irregular work schedule. The principle of "ukuphathisa" resulted into the development of a reciprocal relations, wherein amongst migrants, whoever was travelling back home had to take along with them, goods, letters, or money for other migrants.

Omalayisha in its nature is a flexible migration and remittance corridor that can ship everything and anything across the broader. For instance, Think Africa Press (2013:16) reported an illegal repatriation of infants from their mothers in South Africa to their grandparents in Zimbabwe, facilitated by omalayisha operators. Thebe and Mutyatyu (2017:12) contend that omalayisha operators were able to succeed with their illegal deals, because of social ties they had developed with officials in South Africa and Zimbabwe. In the inception of omalayisha concept, prior to the genesis of regulations and attainment of rights to operate, there were no regulatory framework, and in such a laissez- faire environment any interested person could operate and that led to a lot of illegal dealings to thrive. Thebe and Mutyatyu (2017) conducted a study on social embedment character of informal channels of remittances. These scholars had unveiled conspicuous services of unroadworthy fleet and overloading in the informal remittance corridors of South Africa and Zimbabwe. The premise shows how unregulated informal corridors in both the countries violate road transport regulations. Peyper (2020) supports Thebe and Mutyatyu (2017) argument on officials conspiring with operators in perpetuating illicit smuggling of goods and people. These scholars are of the view that operators developed network ties and in certain cases bribed traffic officials as well as other law enforcement officers in order for their operations to thrive. It is clear from this passage that South African security agencies, in this instance paying specific respect to traffic and other law enforcers that there are halfhearted, in a sense they can negotiate barriers. Henceforth, remittance channels are to some extent corridors that parade illegal migrants and smuggle illicit goods.

The study by Chauke (2019), Ndebele (2019), and Thebe and Mutyatyu (2017) on the informal channels of remittances from South Africa to Zimbabwe and vice versa have discovered that omalayisha system is made popular amongst Zimbabwean immigrants by its personalized services. For instance, Thebe and Mutyatyu (2017) drew the attention to the nature of the relationship that developed over time between operators and clients, that it is subtle, in such a way that sometimes operators offer services on a friendly and humanitarian basis. The standard (2014) agrees with the former's submission, by highlighting an interview response where a guardian gave a positive experience, she had with omalayisha operator in terms of their friendly and humanitarian services. The respondent explained how the children were transported into South Africa by an operator, whom the respondent paid in instalments, due to financial constraints at the time. The attitude and patron client relation deduced from the previous assertion is the one that solidifies and strengthens the informal remittance markets, on the basis that there is no official remittance system that can offer services of such nature on credit, in this manner informal remittance market is flexible and resilient.

There is an existence of a symbiotic relationship between omalayisha operators and clients. The study conducted by Thebe (2011) asserted that symbiotic relationship is evident in cases where omalayisha obtain more new clients through referrals from their previous clients. Whereas, in turn, omalayisha operators bring along with them news, letters, money, goods and sometimes relative for their ordinary clients. Thebe and Mutyatyu (2017) agree with the former, by positing that there are several legal immigrants who prefer to use omalayisha system to be in contact with their families back home.

Thebe and Mutyatyu (2017) contend that lack of alternative means of transportation that transport people and goods directly from South Africa to rural areas in Zimbabwe, is an integral part that contribute to the popularization of the omalayisha operators. However, other scholars such as Chikanda and Tawodzera (2017) and Chiliya, Masocha & Zindiye (2012) have asserted that there are cross-broader buses and other transport forms, but they only reach cities and not rural localities. On that note, informal omalayisha operators are then convenient transport means, because they can collect immigrants travelling back and forth directly from their rented places in South Africa across the broader to the door footsteps of their rural localities in Zimbabwe and vice versa.

The informal remittance corridor is highly criticised for being a possible corridor for illicit deals, such as trafficking of humans and goods, it is also vilified for a complete absence of regulatory oversights (Todoroki *et al.*, 2009; Endo, *et al*., 2011). According to Truen and Chisadza (2012) there is no accurate figure on the precise number of remittances that exit through the informal channels, because goods and money exiting informally are not recorded. According to Makina (2007) 90% of remittances flow informally from South Africa to Zimbabwe. While World Bank (2009) asserted that the flow of remittances in the informal corridor is 50% higher than the official amount of remittance flows. According to Burgsdorff (2010) close 770 million worth of remittances exit South Africa annually through informal corridors to Zimbabwe. Remittances through the informal corridors are not captured by the Central bank or included in the balance of payments, thus not included in the economic mainstream. Hence recent studies on migration and remittance predominantly attempts to advocate for the formalization of informal corridors to mitigate the risks associated with this corridor and attempting to merge it with the mainstream economy so that the country can generate more funds out of official transactions through taxation.

However, it is clear from the scholarly work on social networks and remittances cited in this section, that social networks as a source of migration counter risks and costs. However, these studies fall short of directly documenting remittances as the predominant migration pull factor, especially in countries facing economic deterioration and downfall. Moreover, the other shortfall in the literature presented by studies cited in this section is that studies on migration and remittances are predominantly concentrated in metropolitan areas. Which, therefore, suggest that very little is known about social networks, remittances and migration from a rural locality perceptive. Hence, this study seeks to shed light on the effects of social networks and remittances on Zimbabweans immigration into the Mafikeng Local Municipality (MLM) of North West Province, South Africa.

1.2 Problem Statement

Globally, scholarly writings on the nexus of migration and remittances have become increasingly prominent. Most existing studies, focus on remittances as source of development and means of family survival at the places of migrant’s origin. In addition, some of the existing studies on migration and social networks provide insights on social networks as conduits for information about the places of destination. In other words, social networks are social networks as motives of migration.

Be that as it may, it appears that there is a dearth of studies that attempt to elucidate ways in which social networks facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into rural areas. Most studies on Zimbabwean migrant networks in South Africa, have been conducted in Metropolitan areas such as Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg. In this regard, the role of social networks in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans in rural and small cities such as Mafikeng is unknown. At another level, it is well known in both popular and scholarly discourse that most migrants utilise their networks to remit to their place of origin. Nonetheless, scholars are yet to study ways in which remittances facilitate immigration. Thus, the possible effects of remittances as a migration push factor have not been investigated by migration scholars. Furthermore, there is sufficient scholarly contributions on informal systems of remittances as alternatives for migrants who cannot afford remittance costs or do not have official remittance institutions in their destination. However, little is known on how social networks amongst Zimbabweans facilitate remittances from Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province of South Africa to Zimbabwe.

There is therefore a need for scientific enquiry on how social networks facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa. In addition, there is a need for studies that seek to illuminate how remittances can facilitate immigration, specifically in the study area. Finally, studies on the ways in which social networks amongst Zimbabweans facilitate remittances from Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province of South Africa to Zimbabwe is also an area which necessitates systematic and scientific analysis. Hence this current study explores the effects of social networks and remittances on Zimbabweans' immigration into the Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province, South Africa.

1.3 Research questions

This study seeks to elicit answers to the following questions:

- In what ways do social networks facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa?
- How do remittances facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa?
- How do social networks amongst Zimbabweans facilitate remittances from Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province of South Africa to Zimbabwe?

1.4 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to explore the effects of social networks and remittances on Zimbabweans' immigration into the Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province, South Africa. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- explore the ways in which social networks facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa.
- Explore how remittances facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa.
- Explore how social networks amongst Zimbabweans facilitate remittances from Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province of South Africa to Zimbabwe.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the body of knowledge by furthering scholarly understanding on the nexus of migration and remittances. While most existing studies focus on remittances as source of development and means of family survival at the places of migrant's origin as well as motives for migration decisions; this current study attempted to shed insights on ways in which social networks facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa. Furthermore, this study also attempted to contribute to the body of knowledge through illuminating empirical insights on the role of social networks in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans in rural and small cities such as Mafikeng.

This study serves as a piece of systematic and scientific work shedding knowledge on the possible effects of remittances as a migration push factor rather than the common understanding of remittances as a source household survival. Furthermore, this study will inform migration scholars and policy makers on how social networks amongst Zimbabweans facilitate remittances from Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province of South Africa to Zimbabwe. The study is therefore helpful in providing empirical evidence and insights on the following thematic areas:

- Social networks and facilitation of immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa.
- Remittances and facilitation of immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa.

- Social networks and facilitation of remittances by Zimbabweans from Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province of South Africa to Zimbabwe.

This research certainly provides added understanding on the effects of social networks and remittances on immigration into host states, specifically in small and rural cities since most studies have placed emphasis on immigrants-social network nexus in metropolitan areas.

1.6 Organisation of the study

Chapter One-Introduction

This chapter consists of the background of the study which presents a discussion on social networks and remittances in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans in South Africa. This chapter also presents the research problem, the research questions and objectives, as well as aim of the study and lastly the significance of the study.

Chapter Two-Theorizing and Reviewing Literature on Social Networks, Remittances, and Immigration

This chapter encompasses the theoretical framework and existing literature on the area under study. It begins by presenting the theories that are adopted and applied in this study, as well as the justification for the specific usage of those theories.

Chapter Three-Research Design and Methodological Approaches

This chapter presents the research method, design and techniques employed to source data in this study. Thus, this chapter comprises of the essentials on how material related to this study was collected, organized, and interpreted. Lastly, the chapter outlines the limitations and delimitations of the study.

Chapter Four-Presentation of Findings

This chapter provides a sequential presentation of data collected through telephonic interviews on the effects of social networks and remittances on Zimbabwean Immigration into the Mafikeng Local Municipality of the North West province in South Africa.

Chapter Five-Discussion and analysis of Findings

Chapter five consists of a discussion and analysis of data collected through in-depth interviews on the effects of social networks and remittances on Zimbabwean Immigration into the Mafikeng Local Municipality of the North West province in South Africa.

Chapter Six-Major findings, recommendations and conclusions

This chapter presents major findings, recommendations, and conclusions.

1.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the background to the study and the problem statement. The chapter further entails, research questions which were followed by the objectives of the study. It also presented the layout of the study from the first chapter, until the last chapter. The following chapter has its focus on the theoretical framework and the literature review.

CHAPTER TWO
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of the theoretical framework and the review of literature on social networks, cross-border migration, and remittances. The study employed three theoretical perspectives, namely Neo-classical theory, network theory and pull and push factor theory of migration. Neo-classical theory provides explanation on individuals' decision to migrate, while network theory provides exposition on the role of network in facilitating remittances and migration, pull and push theory provides reasons for migrating from Zimbabwe to South Africa. These theories are further elucidated in this chapter and will be further discussed against the findings in the discussion of findings chapter.

The literature reviewed in this chapter covers six themes in migrant remittance literature and on social networks. The themes are namely, conceptualizing channels of remittances, transferring Ideals, values and foreign knowledge as remittances, remittances from economic migrants, migration-remittances nexus, social networks, migration, and security, and lastly remittances costs and social networks. The chapter exposes the literature gaps in the end of every thematic area in respect of the questions posed in this study. The literature reviewed in this chapter will be further discussed against the findings in the discussion of findings chapter.

This chapter therefore has two sections; the first section focuses on theoretical framework and second section pays attention into reviewing existing literature on the subject under enquiry in this current study.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This first section of the chapter is segmented into three sub-sections that provide theoretical frameworks which the researcher deemed appropriate as guiding frameworks for this study.

2.2.1 Neo-classical theory versus migration and remittances

Neoclassical migration theory to this date, remains one of the oldest and to recent, is still the most used theory in explaining migration. One of the most key famous assumptions of the Neo-classical theory that the study adopted, states that migration is primarily caused by human's rational consideration of economic costs and benefits (Todaro & Smith, 2006:342). This assumption basically posits that people move across the border to countries that have access to job opportunities and better renumerations (King,2013). According to Kenton (2021) this Neoclassical migration approach was developed in the late 19th century, based upon literature on migration by William Stanley Jevons, Carl Menger, and Léon Walras. Those scholars rooted the theory on the early literature attempts to explain labour migration in relation to economic development.

Various studies that include scholarly work by Maseng (2020), De Haas (2010) and Kurekova (2011) have applied Neoclassical migration theory in their studies as attempts is seeking to provide explanations to various international migrations in relation to economic development. Similarly, this study considers Neoclassical theory of migration as helpful in attempting to explain the reasons for Zimbabweans' immigration into South Africa due in a sense that migration comes with costs of travelling and settling in a new destination, while remittances might be considered migration benefits. In other words, this theory is helpful in providing theoretical analysis of Zimbabweans' immigration into South Africa, due to possible economic benefits in South Africa that may later be transformed into remittances.

2.2.2 Social Network theory versus migration and remittances

Social Network theory is a sociological perspective that focuses on the structural analysis of social links between community members in facilitation cross-border migration (Wellman, 1988) as well as internal migration. It must be noted that in the context of this study social network theory is applicable on in the practice of cross-border migration. Social Network theory of migration is rooted on the early 1930s literature attempts by Jacob Moreno and Georg Simmel who attempted to explain the role of interpersonal links amongst community members in facilitating migration. Migrant networks entail various circles of personal relationships that ties former migrants, migrants, and non-migrants in places of origin and destination, through ties of friendships, kinships, and shared community origin (Massey *et al.*, 1993).

The study by Muzondidya (2010:13) highlighted that community networks provides potential migrants with important information about the host country, such as information on job opportunities. Thus, network theory is applicable in this study because it provides an exposition on the role of networks in facilitating migration. Network members are privy to the information about the receiving country, such as prospects on job opportunities, economic opportunities, and the possible risks as well as the possibilities of being integrated in the host communities. In that sense, networks induce more migration, because potential migrants gain access to information about opportunities in the host, and again networks reduce the risks and costs of cross-border migration. Thus, networks offer a sense of security, reduced costs of migration and information on opportunities in the host, which may be the prominent pull factor of migration.

Moreover, network theory is also able to provide an exposition on the role of social networks in facilitating remittances. In a sense that social networks provide relatives, friends, and members of the network to send back home through each other or by hand- to-hand delivery (Cronje, 2017). This is because network members can remit home through back-and-forth transit amidst borders of the host and countries of origin.

2.2.3 Pull and push theory

Pull and push theory of migration was first coined by Ravenstein in the 19th century. He attempted to explain the movement of people resulting from desire to live better than they live in their current location. The general assumption of the theory is that people migrate because of existing factors that push them out their country of origin and factors that pull them into a new destination (Ramos, 2017). This theory posits that push factors are aspects that drive people away from their original places of residence to new destinations. Ordinarily, push factors are coercive in a sense that they pose security threats, either violence or loss of financial security, which pushes people away from their original places of origin to a new destination. While on the other hand, this theory Rosenberg (2020) asserts that pull factors are positive aspects in a different country that encourage people to immigrate to seek a better life. Much as it appears that these factors are diametrically opposed, they both come into play whenever there is consideration to migrate into a new destination.

Scholarly work by Duan (2012) and Grace (2022) have used the theory of pull and push in their studies to provide explanations on motives behind cross border migration. In similar fashion, this study regard pull and push theory of migration as helpful in trying to explain motives behind the increasing influx of Zimbabwean immigration into South Africa, due in sense that there are factors that pull Zimbabweans into South Africa and those that push Zimbabweans into South Africa. In a nutshell, this theory is helpful in providing theoretical analysis of Zimbabweans immigration into South Africa as result of factors that push them out of Zimbabwe into South Africa and factors that pull Zimbabweans into South Africa.

2.3 Literature Review

This section present a review of the literature based on the following themes

- Conceptualizing Channels of Remittances
- Transferring Ideals, Values and Foreign Knowledge as Remittances
- Remittances from Economic Migrants
- Migration-Remittances Nexus
- Social Networks, Migration, and Security
- Remittances Costs and Social Networks

2.3.1 Conceptualizing Channels of Remittances

The transfer of money, goods, a set of cultural norms and values (social remittances) from the migrant host country to the migrant country of origin is remitting, as such those things are being remitted are regarded as remittances. In addition, such transfer process occurs through two different channels: formal or informal method (Levitt, 1998). Scholars have presented contesting views on a preferred and most used channel over another. For instance, Orozco (2006) and Chene (2008) argued that informal methods of remittances are the most preferred due to their speed, cost, discretion, convenience, and reliability. However, Kosse and Vermeulen (2014) disagree with the views of Orozco (2006) and Chene (2008) by insisting that one's choice of remittance channel over the other varies across migrants and is influenced by a combination of factors that include, personal characteristics, transactional, economical, and institutional factors.

Globally, various studies have been conducted on migrants' choice of remittance channels (Orozco, 2002; Freund & Spatafora, 2008; Kosse & Vermeulen, 2014; Abdul & Wei, 2009). The study by Centre for Migration and Policy Society (COMPAS, 2005) found that the choice of informal remittance system is linked to migrants' background and the frequency with which remittances are sent. Wherein educated and skilled migrants often send through informal channels, such as through courier services and cash hand transfers during home visits, while on the other hand low-skilled migrants tend to remit more often through formal channels. In contrast,, a survey conducted by the DMA (2011) on behalf of the World Bank on the providers of remittance services in the UK to the Sub- Saharan market discovered that market characteristics such as regulations of the market and costs to be the reasons for migrants' preference of the informal remittance system.

Another study on migrants' choice of remittance channel was conducted by Orozco (2006) and found that professionals, high paid immigrants, and skilled migrants prefer to use informal remittance channels. This view is supported by Kosse and Vermeulen (2014), who claim that educated migrants are more likely to use formal channels and prefer not to bring cash to the recipients themselves. These scholars further hold that unlike immigrants who reside in rural localities, immigrants who reside in suburbs and urban localities send remittances through the formal channels, such as MTOs,. COMPAS (2005) contests the assertions of the previous scholars by postulating that educated and skilled migrants often send remittances through informal channels such as courier services and cash-in-hand transfers during home visits.

In the context of Africa, there seems to be a preference to remit through informal channels. For instance, the study by De Vletter (2007) argues that African immigrants prefer to take money and goods to their families in the country of origin personally or by sending a friend. Remittances carried through unregistered channels such as by the sender personally or by another unregistered operator are considered informal remittance flow (Kosse & Vermeulen, 2014). The International Migration Outlook (2006) agrees with the views of De Vletter (2007) when positing that money remitted back home by migrant workers flows through informal systems. These scholars are, however, challenged by the views of Mukusa (2012) who sustained that much as African immigrants remit through informal channels, a relative number prefer formal remittance channels to reduce the risk of non-delivery which is common in the informal market.

The studies conducted by Mohapatra and Ratha (2011); as well as Sander and Maimbo (2003) found that remittances sent by migrants in Sub-Saharan Africa flows through the informal channels. The strong preference of the informal systems of remittances in Sub-Saharan Africa is due to insufficient formal financial institutions as well as a variety of factors related to migrants' profile, such as literacy levels and illegal status (Mohapatra & Ratha (2011). In a sense, migrants with limited education may have language barrier issues with the formal financial institutions and illegal migrants may not have necessary documentation to access formal channels. Nzabamwita (2018) agrees with Mohapatra and Ratha (2011) by submitting that a correlation exists between the choice of remittance channel, income, education, and immigration status. In a sense that legal and educated migrants who are also high-income earners remit formally, while illegal, less skilled, and low income earning migrants remit informally.

Mbiti and Weil (2015) conducted a descriptive analysis of a survey in Kenya after the launch of M-Pesa, a mobile transfer money channel. These scholars established that the mobile money channel was becoming a dominant money transfer channel. The patten of the very same nature was also identified in Mozambique by (Batista and Vicente (2013), following the launch of M-kesh. Ngaba (2021) supports the previous scholars by highlighting those immigrants with mobile money accounts send domestic remittances through formal channels, unlike migrants who do not have mobile money accounts. In support of the previous findings, the World Bank (2014, 2017) conducted two surveys in Sub-Saharan Africa, which revealed that the launching of mobile money transfer channels has gradual effects in toppling the informal remittance systems. However, the study by Ngaba (2021) acknowledges that much as informal remittance systems seem to be collapsing due to mobile money channels, informal channels have attractive features such as anonymity, flexibility, proximity, and convenience for senders.

In the context of South Africa, scholars (Chisasa, 2014; Maphosa, 2007; 2005; Metzger, *et al.*, 2019; Nzima, 2017; Carstens, 1969; Papademetriou, 1991; Erdal, 2022)have contributed a variety of insights into migrants' choice of remittance channels. For instance, a study by Chisasa (2014) argues that migrants prefer to send goods and cash via public transport such as buses and taxies because of the speed, cost, and convenience therof. Similarly, Chisasa (2014) and Von Burgsdorff (2012) hold that most migrants use courier services, and those are regular transport operators who transport people, cash, and goods. Maphosa (2007) also adds that most migrants prefer to deliver cash and goods personally to their country of origin or sometimes send them through a friend. In a slightly opposing view, Scalabrini Centre Report (2017) highlighted that since the introduction of new legislation in 2014 which opened formal remittance markets to MTOs, such as Mukuru and Momma Money, the flow of cash in the formal remittance systems has since increased. This can be attributed to low remittance costs charged by MTOs. Thus, it can be argued that the launching of MTOs has gained the trust of migrants on the formal remittance markets.

Akinboade (2017) conducted a study on the influence of regulation on the choice of migrants' remittance channels in South Africa and discovered that documentation requirement in the formal market causes migrants to be ineligible to access formal channels of remittances. Von Burgsdorrf (2012) and Pieke, *et al.* (2005) maintained that language, cultural and institutional barriers deter migrants from accessing formal financial channels. Mukasa (2012) discovered migrants' networks such as family members, diaspora groups, ethnic groups, and hometown associations to be factors that stimulate one's choice in the use of informal remittance channels. While Nzima (2017) argued that exorbitant remittance costs lead migrants to use informal channels of sending remittances. Contrary to these studies, Mukasa (2012) discovered that Ugandan immigrants prefer to use both formal and informal remittance channels so as to reduce the risk of non-delivery of remittance, which is common in the informal remittance market. Scalabrini Centre Report (2017) backed Mukasa's view by positing that remitting through formal financial systems is the most reliable and safest means of remitting.

This empirical material provides some explanations on the use and choice of remittance channels between formal and informal remittance methods. It appears that immigrants prefer the use of informal remittance channels primarily because of the exorbitant remittance charges associated with formal platforms. However, there is a gap in the literature about channels of remittances in relation to the use of social networks as an alternative informal remittance system. Studies in this area only provide a brief explanation that immigrants sometimes remit back home using their friends and relatives, and not much effort is invested in providing detailed empirical evidence on how social networks operate from the host and migrants' homeland, especially from rural cites in South Africa to Zimbabwe.

2.3.2 Transferring Ideals, Values and Foreign Knowledge as Remittances

Studies by Levitt (1998); Lacroix, *et al.* (2016); Kapur (2014); Boccagni and Decimo (2013); Chauvet and Mercier (2014) have transcended financial and commodity remittances on the extent of transfer of ideals, values and foreign knowledges between sending and receiving countries. The financial and commodity remittances receive a considerable amount of scholarly attention, however, the insufficient scholarly attention paid to the circulation of ideals, values and skills within the transnational social field signifies that the analysis of nexus between migration and development is incomplete.

The study by Levitt and Merry (2009) has shed light on how global cultural circulation influences and shapes local developmental processes. Immigrants across different geographic places translate and diffuse foreign ideas and perceptions from one context to the. Immigrants can reframe and vernacularise global norms such as transparency and human rights into locally applicable concepts to empower local activists. Thus, immigrants make contributions to empowering activists ad in turn reform the status quo in accordance with global norms, ideas, and practices.

Various micro-level studies that interrogate whether different host society contexts have effects on emigrants' political behaviour in relation to their home countries, have been conducted . For instance, studies by Escobar, Arana, and McCann (2014) and Escobar, *et al.* (2015) shed light on the effects of Colombian immigrants in the diaspora on political landscape back home. Those studies found that the Colombian immigrants residing in Miami, New York, London, Paris, and Madrid shaped and influenced candidate preference in Colombia through political engagements with their relatives and friends in the homeland.

Similarly, a multi layered study conducted by Ahmadov and Sasse (2016) using both data from the surveys at the polling stations and data from interviews with Polish migrants in the United Kingdom (UK) together with their relatives in Poland, same conclusions were reached. This study shed light on the influence of multicultural Britain in transforming immigrants' political perceptions about Poland. These scholars further revealed that Polish migrants who used to be inactive in politics have after immigration into Britain became interested political activities in Poland (Ahmadov & Sasse, 2016). The political awareness of Polish immigrants in Britain led to transnational political engagements with the country of origin.

Brinks and Coppedge (2006) conducted a nationwide poll of interviews with 650 Mexican citizens who are eligible to vote and reside in either the United States of America (USA) or Canada. This study discovered that migration led to policy reform and activism by Mexican citizens. Additionally, studies by Kapur and McHale (2005) as well as Tarrow (2005) support the views of Brinks and Coppedge (2006), in arguing that educated migrants as well as skilled migrants devised and joined transnational epistemic communities such as diaspora organisations and associations. Consequently, the ideas of those migrants are found to have had effects on public opinion, reformed cross-border transfer, and most importantly influenced the adoption of democracy, new culture, and beliefs in their countries of origin.

Contrary to the previous views, Chauvet and Mercier (2014) argued that it is not all immigrants who may contribute towards reforming state institutions in their country of origin. These scholars, nonetheless, believe that the ability to engage in such a course is dependent on individual migrant's level of social inclusion with the host community. This is because social inclusion with the host have the propensity of reshaping migrants' political orientations. Therefore, migrants' level of social interaction with the host community correlate with greater distrust and critical stance towards political institutions in migrants' homeland.

In the African context, a study on the effects of Return of Qualified African Nationals in circular migration in Ghana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe by Oucho (2008), found that new wave of African diaspora members consists of transnational migrants who use the culture, skills, technology, and education acquired in the destination to reform their countries of origin. In the same vein, the study by DNSC (2006) highlighted that Africans in the diaspora contribute new knowledge on peace-making practices and offer the expertise needed to solve crisis in their countries of origin. Contrary to the previous studies, Mohamoud and Frechaut (2006) observed that African migrants hosted by democratic countries and First World countries do not transfer social remittances more often. This can be attributed to the belief that African dictatorial regimes do not compliment liberal ideas that may possibly be transferred into Africa (Gamlen, 2008).

The study by Jaulin (2015) shed light on the dynamics pervading political Islamism in French cities as a form of remittance of ideals, values, and practices. The study shows that the voting attitude of immigrants residing in Paris neighbourhoods' contrast with the liberal voting attitudes predominant in the inner city. The voting attitudes of immigrants signifies the way the external Islamic behaviour has pervaded Northern working-class suburbs. Therefore, circulation of Islamic ideals, values and knowledge that has pervaded Parisian neighbourhood has challenged the socio- economic conditions within which Islamic immigrants reside or are hosted.

Several studies have shed light on the interconnectedness between economic remittances and social remittances. For instance, a study by Vari-Lavoisier (2016) perceived economic remittances as crucial to the circulation of ideals, values, and foreign knowledge because they are an important key driver of the transnational ties maintained between Senegalese immigrants and those left behind at home. This study found that the extent to which Senegalese immigrants in USA and France engage in homeland politics is strongly influenced by the depth of their ties to the homeland economic. This then implies that migrants who do not remit finances or commodities are equally less likely to remit ideas, values, and foreign knowledge to their homeland. As such economic remittances is a crucial determining factor of social remittances. Vickstrom and Beauchemin (2014) support the views of Vari-Lavoisier, by arguing that circulation of economic remittances relates to and is influenced by transference of ideals, values, and practices. Therefore, there is a deep interconnection between economic remittances and political remittances.

South African scholars of migration and remittances seem to neglect the importance of literature on social remittances from South Africa to nearby countries such as Zimbabwe and Lesotho and to the rest of the continent.

Studies on this section provided insights on the ways in which remittance of ideas, values and foreign knowledge is circulated from one context to another. These scholars shed light on circulation of social remittances by immigrants in the hosts through interactions with the non-emigrants as well as the influence that the circulation of ideals, values, and foreign knowledge has on transnational political processes. However, the literature on social remittances is inadequate with respect to providing empirical evidence on remittances of ideals, values and knowledge between South Africa and Zimbabwe. While studies in this section have shed sufficient insights into social remittances in migration between South Africa and Zimbabwe, little is known about transfer of social remittances between Mafikeng Local Municipality to Zimbabwe and vice versa.

2.3.3 Remittances from Economic Migrants

There is plethora of literature on remittances from economic migrants which covers a broad range of subthemes relating to remittances by economic migrants (Chisasa, 2014; Makina, 2012; Ratha, *et al.*, 2009; Oucho, 2008; Rapoport & Docquier, 2005). Various scholars hold that the characteristics of migrants determine their remittance behaviour (Makina & Masenge, 2014; De Haas & Plague, 2006; Kerzner, 2006; Lindley, 2008; Von Burgsdorff, 2012; Ratha, *et al.*, 2009). However, certain characteristics of migrants are more significant in determining the remittance behaviour as compared to others.

In a global context, De Nederlandsche Bank (DNB) conducted a study on the determinants of remittance behavior using samples of immigrants from North America, Asia, and Europe (cited in Kosse & Vermeulen, 2014) . The inquiry discovered that remittances are more and frequent amongst young migrants, especially those with strong ties with the families left behind, however, when families leave country of origin to join migrants in the hosts, the ties with country of origin declines until they cease to exist. Contrary to the findings of De Nederlandsche Bank, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID, 2005) undertook a qualitative study on the determinants of remittance behaviour using immigrants from US, UK, and Germany, who remitted to Ghana. The study found that less educated older migrants who earn high remit more than the average, and those migrants keep frequent constant contact with the families left behind.

The assertions of USAID study are opposed by Ghosh (2006) and Mahuteau, *et al.* (2010), who posit that educated migrants remit less. Evtimova and Koekoek (2010) surveyed Indian fixed-term contract workers in the Gulf States, UK, and Australia agrees with the views of Ghosh (2006) and Mahuteau, *et al.* (2010) in maintaining that both educated and high-income earning migrants prefer to save most of their money and invest in the host, as opposed to remitting cash back home. However, Carling (2008) opposes the previous contention by arguing that education level does not determine migrants' remittance sending behaviour. Instead, Carling (2008) asserts that migrants' legal status and their restricted residential rights act as stumbling block towards their sending behaviour. While Konica and Filer (2005) cite migrants' legal status and the intention to return as most relevant determinants of migrants' remittance sending behaviour.

The nature of migrants' employment determines their remittance-sending behaviour as well. For instance, the study by Kosse and Vermeulen (2014) argued that migrants on fixed-term contracts remit a high proportion of their income back home in preparation or anticipation of future return on investment. In a similar perspective, Lindley (2008) agrees with Kosse and Vermeulen (2014), by suggesting that migrants who plan to return to their homelands remit more cash and goods in a form of investment. In a contrary view to migrants who plans on returning to their homelands and those in fixed-term contracts, Grossman (2016) postulated that migrants who plan to stay permanently in the hosts remit less and invest high proportion of their income in the hosts rather than sending it back home.

On the issue of gender differences with respect to remittance behaviour, the study by IOM (2015) contends that globally, males send the same number of remittances as females. However, studies by Craciun (2006) and UN-INSTRAW (2007) emphasise that women tend to remit a higher proportion of their income as opposed to men, even though women earn less than men. IOM (2015) holds that men only remit to their wives left behind. While on the other hand, women assume greater responsibility for money transfers, such as remitting to their children left behind with caregiver or relatives (UN- INSTRAW, 2007) and to the extended family members (Orozco *et al*., 2006). For instance, in patriarchal societies married women send money to their relatives as well as their husband's family (Piper,2005).

Contrary to the global consensus on gender differences in remittance behaviour, the study conducted by Dodson (2008) used immigrants from Mozambique, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe as respondents investigated the on differences in remittance behaviour based on gender proved that males remit more than their female counterparts. Dodson (2008) discovered that females remitted more goods than males. Parallel with the former assertions, Souza (2021) conducted a study on the role of gender dynamics in different patriarchal societies in shaping remitting behaviour in sub-Saharan Africa using surveys conducted in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Uganda, and Senegal. The study discovered that males remit more than their female counterparts, especially married males. Thus, conjugal family responsibility is an important factor in remittance behaviour (Souza, 2021).

Studies by Makina (2010); Makina and Massenge (2014) assessed the difference in the levels of remittances on the account of time immigrants had lived in the SADC region. Those scholars found that level of remittances first increases with the time spent in the host country and later starts to decline. This remittance behaviour of African immigrants is in line with the hypothesis of remittance decay which states that levels of remittances decline as the migrant length of residence increases (Agunias, 2006; Holts & Schrooten, 2006; Vargas-silva, 2006; Amuedo- Dorantes & Pozo, 2006; Echazarram, 2011). However, De Haas and Plugue (2006) disagreed with the previous scholars by positing that levels of remittances may increase as the income increases, despite the increase in length of time migrants spends in the host.

In the South African context, Chisasa (2014) and Makina (2010) conducted inquires on the influence of distance on remittance behaviour. These scholars discovered that remittances increase when the destination is in the proximity of the country of origin. However, the study by Carling (2008) rejects the views of Chisasa (2014) and Makina (2010), by maintaining that migrants remit irrespective of the distance between the country of origin and the destination.

Makina (2013) conducted a study on migration and characteristics of remittance senders in South Africa and found that legal status and the length of stay does not affect the remittance behaviour. Thus, independence regarding the length of stay invalidates the hypothesis of remittance decay that remittances decline as the migrant length of residence increases (Agunias, 2006; Holts & Schrooten, 2006; Vargas-silva, 2006; Amuedo- Dorantes & Pozo, 2006; Echazarram, 2011). Carling (2008) agrees with Makina (2010)'s view by positing that migrants remit despite the circumstances and the length of distance. However, studies by Makina (2013) and Carling (2008) are inconsistent with the views of Makina (2010); Makina and Massenge (2014) that the levels of remittances in the SADC region first increases with the time spent in the host country and later starts to decline.

The study by Dodson, *et al.* (2008) on gender dynamics in relation to remittances from South Africa is in parallel with the global view of gender dynamics on remittances that female migrants remit the same number of remittances as male migrants (IOM, 2015). However, the difference lies on the extent of income proportion that males and females remit. Dodson, *et al.* (2008) further alluded that, male migrants in South Africa remit a high proportion of their income as compared to female migrants. Thus, the amount of money remitted by female migrants is significantly lower than that of male migrants. Makina (2013) supports this view by highlighting males and married Zimbabwean nationals in South Africa make up a larger proportion of the remitters than females and single persons.

The study by Evtimova and Koekoek (2010) on the relationship between levels of education and remittance behaviour using immigrants in South Africa discovered that educated migrants remit less and invest in the host countries. Makina (2013) agrees with the findings of Evtimova and Koekoek by positing that migrants with basic education remit more than those with tertiary education. Contrary to previous scholars, Nzabamwita's (2018) argument that highly educated migrants and high-income African migrants remit more in terms of money and valuable goods in formal channels.

Concerning variables of kinship, a study by Burgsdorff (2012) and Chisasa (2014) contend that migrants remit more frequent when they left their families behind. Conversely, begin to remit small amounts and seldom when their close families such as, spouses, children, and parents join them in the hosts to live together. This view is similar to that of Puppa and Ambrosini (2021) on Blangladeshi immigrants in Italy, that remittances decline following the reunification of family in the host country.

The literature presented in this section provides adequate empirical evidence on various remittance behaviours as well as gender dynamics amongst economic migrants. However, these studies are yet to sufficiently elucidate how social networks facilitate economic remittances, specifically from the rural cities in South Africa to Zimbabwe and vice versa. Considering that there are Zimbabwean migrants in Mafikeng Local Municipality, it appears that scholars often shy away from the modus operandi and dynamics of remittances by these immigrants in this small and rural city.

2.3.4 The Dynamics and Patterns of Remittances

Various studies have been conducted on the contemporary trends and patterns of migration (Würnschimmel, *et al.*, 2021; De Haas, *et al.*, 2019; Halfacree and Robinson, 2014; Domina, 2006). For instance, a study conducted by International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2015) on the changing patterns and trends of migration has discovered that migration in the contemporary world has come to be adopted as a survival means to cater for families in various developing countries. Moreover, a study by UN (2021) maintained that during an economic plummet, natural disasters, and political crisis back home, migrants increase the amount that they usually remit to assist their families. This suggest that remittances can also act as insurance against unexpected events in migrants' country of origin.

Similarly, studies conducted by Markova and Reilly (2007), Nzima *et al.* (2016) and Ajefu (2018) concurred with the findings of the IOM (2015). These studies discovered the same trends and patterns of migration in the contemporary world; that migrants from developing countries have come to utilize remittances as an important source of finance and livelihood income in their countries of their origin. Crush *et al.* (2005) and Makina (2014) agreed by positing that migrants abroad send money back home to support the families they left behind. Therefore, the major component of migration in the contemporary world is remittances on the basis that they reduce poverty and improve the socio-economic conditions of the migrants' families back home (Lu, 2013; Alatinga, 2019; Tiemoko, 2004). However, not all migrants remit back home, and this is due to various reasons such as exorbitant costs of remittances (Retha, 2021) and illegal status (Migration Policy Institute, 2005). Mukwembi and Maharaj (2018:1417) highlighted that the flow of remittances is influenced by strong social ties between migrants and their families back home. Thus, weak social ties with the country of origin forms part of factors that deter migrants from remitting back home (De Haas, 2010).

The study conducted by Liang (2007) on the relationship between the decision to migrate and remittances in relation to relative deprivation found that remittances increase relative deprivation for household members with a sending community. In that regard, members of the same community as remittance receiving families can observe improved quality of life of remittance receiving families and realise their deprivation in comparison to such households. Kendie (2011) further argued that the awareness of relative deprivation forces family members to send some of their members abroad to sustain their earlier socio-economic status in the community.

Globally, the volume of remittances to developing countries has seen a significant growth Retha (2013). Studies by Gammeltoft (2002), McKinley (2003), Ratha (2003), Makina (2013), Inter Censal Demographic Survey (2017) recorded that the total flow of remittances through official conduits seen growth with the amount doubling since 1998. A study conducted by Barne and Pirlea (2019) conceded that the cash sent by migrants to their families abroad has become a critical source of income to many third world countries. This popular discourse is supported by the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD, 2021) which maintained that remittances are the largest source of foreign exchange earnings in low- and middle-income countries. Similarly, Retha (2021) agreed that remittances provide reliability as a lifeline for migrants' families left behind, especially in times of need. However, the cost of sending money across international borders remains a significant impediment (De Haas, 2010), especially to migrants remitting to Sub-Saharan Africa. Retha (2021) reveals that costs of sending remittances are higher when using banks than through mobile money transfers and money remitters who offer cash-to-cash services.

Comparably to the global literature, various scholarly works have been carried out on migration and remittances on development in the context of Africa. Scholars, such as Maphosa (2007); Tevera & Chikanda (2008); Mzumara (2012); Ajefu (2018); Mayambo & Ranga (2019) conducted studies on recent trends and patterns of migration in the African context. These studies yielded finding that point out that patterns and trends at the global level bear resemblance to those in the African context. This is in a sense that African literature on migration and remittances highlights that migration has come to be adopted as means to support families left behind by sending remittances back home. Migrations in Africa are vastly influenced by remittances (Rath, 2011), in a sense that people migrate to countries with better employment opportunities, so that through their income, they can remit back home (Menjivar,1998; Taylor, 2006; Tiemoko, 2004).

Contrary to these arguments, there are various obstacles that hinder the potential of remittances from certain immigrants in the hosts. For instance, the study by Ozaki (2012) highlighted that due to their limited education or illiteracy, some migrants encounter language barriers with the official remittance institutions,. While others are hosted by rural localities with unavailable financial institutions to remit (Nzabamwita,2018 and IFAD,2008). Thebeth, *et al.*, (2018) asserted that remittances are usually low or cease to exist when social ties between migrants and their families back home are weak. Exorbitant costs of remittances deter most migrants from remitting (Ratha, 2021), however others consider using informal channels such as utilizing social networks or transport agencies (Nzabamwita,2018). Similarly, most migrants, especially those working in the informal sector, residing in the informal settlement and the undocumented prefer to remit through informal means due to the inability to produce documents such as a proof of payment and address (Bester *et al.*, 2010).

African states without an exception to Zimbabwe have come to realize that after foreign direct investment, remittances are a second largest external source of funding (Maphosa, 2007). This view is supported by Gammeltoft (2002), who maintained that many of developing African states depend mainly on remittances than they do on official aid. Thus, indeed remittances are a largest foreign income to many developing African states.

Remittances are a largest source of foreign income to many African states (Anyanwu & Erhijakpor, 2010; Gupta, *et al.* (2007); Rempel & Lobdell, 1978), unlike foreign aid, remittances do not come with any form of preconditions, obligations or constrains. Thus, Stein (2003) maintains that with the absence of government interference, remittances seem more effective in helping poor households, because remittances go straight to the intended beneficiaries, who are in most cases low-income families. This suggests that remittances have the potential to directly elevate and develop low-income households of migrant source area. This is because remittances are not tied to any source, which means the remitter and the receiving family have the power to decide what to do with remittances, unlike aid that is regulated and supposed to be refunded with interests.

Both the global and African body of literature on migration and remittances, studies conducted by Crush and Tevera (2010), Sigamoney (2020), Nwonwu (2010) using a sample of Zimbabwean migrants residing in South Africa revealed the same trends and patterns that remittances sent by Zimbabwean migrants are meant to upheave the socio-economic lives of many Zimbabwean households in Zimbabwe. For instance, studies by Tevera and Chikanda (2009) and Maphosa (2007) compared the chances of survival in Zimbabwean households that received regular remittance and those that received remittances sporadically or not at all, revealed that the latter are not at most affected by Zimbabwean economic pressures as opposed to the latter.. The latter is the mostly affected, in a sense that without consistent external income (remittances) they struggle to cope with Zimbabwean economic constrains. This suggests that families that do not consistently receive remittances are vulnerable and most prone to poverty unlike those that receive regular remittances.

2.3.5 Migration-Remittances Nexus

There are existing scholarly writings which attribute the characterization of Zimbabwean migration to economic turmoil that the country experienced (Besada & Moyo, 2008; Crush, *et al.*, 2017; McConnell, 2009; Crush & Tevera, 2010). Studies by Mukwembi and Maharaj (2018:1419), Makina (2013), Northcote and Dodson (2015) support the popular view that mass exodus from Zimbabwe is associated with economic turmoil. It is the assertion of these studies that after the economic plummet, many Zimbabweans were left without employment and a large number migrated into South Africa in search of employment opportunities so that they can support family members left behind by sending money and goods back to them.

The migration of Zimbabweans into neighbouring countries, especially South Africa has complexities and different dimensions considering that political, economic, and social factors played a key role in the process. Much as this study focuses on migration influenced by remittances, thus economic migration, it is equally important to consider political and social conditions that also influenced these migrations. The study by Betts (2013) shed light on Zimbabwean land reform program as a key event in the Zimbabwean history that led to economic shambles as a result of USA, EU, and Commonwealth sanctions that destabilized the Zimbabwean economy. Ensuing from the latter, many Zimbabweans begun entered South Africa in search for economic opportunities and with the aim of remitting back home to support and sustain their families as life was difficult to afford due to increasing food and commodity prices.

The study by Human Rights Watch (2009a) conceded with Betts (2013) by positing that stemming from the economic collapse as result of sanctions, the collapse in agricultural production, hyperinflation and Zimbabwean dollar rendered worthless. As such, only USA dollar and South African rand were the only remaining viable sources of currencies used to purchase food. Many Zimbabweans lacked access to these foreign currencies, which meant that there were unable to purchase basic needs. Mass livelihood collapsed, and the country encountered shortages of food that had left approximately five million Zimbabweans dependent on food aid. The widespread diseases, HIV/AIDS also claimed many lives due to the inability of government to provide antiretroviral drugs (Human Rights Watch, 2009a). All these factors conspired to plunge living standards of ordinary Zimbabweans into a level that ranks the country alongside a fragile and failed state.

In the same vein, political instability, the decline in agricultural produce and the poor economic state resulted in a socially deteriorated state where ordinary Zimbabweans could not afford necessities such as food or livelihood opportunities (Betts, 2013). Migrating out of Zimbabwe became a survival strategy to many (Crush, *et al.*, 2012), as they began to engage in circular migration and others send some of their family members abroad to make means so that they can remit for the sustenance of their family members back in their homeland (Crush, *et al.*, 2012). The study by (Betts, 2013) supported the previous assertion by positing that the political and economic conditions in Zimbabwe had forced almost one-quarter of the Zimbabwe population out of the country to the neighbouring countries. A study by Crisp and Kiragu (2010) and Polzer (2008) alluded to the fact that around 1 to 1.5 million Zimbabweans crossed their boundaries into South Africa between 2000 and 2012 for various reasons that include residence and sourcing of means in order to remit back home for family upkeep.

The arguments presented above focus on motives behind emigration of Zimbabweans in the beginning of the 21st century. The studies by Makina (2007); Distwanelo (2007); Bloch (2008) argued that political persecution, violence, and the economic crisis are cotemporary key push factors of emigration from Zimbabwe. However, contrary to the latter, Bracking and Sachikonye (2010) maintained that apart from political instability and the economic crisis as the most cited migration push factors in Zimbabwe, there is considerable evidence that remittances are primarily responsible for the provision of basic household expenditure such as food, clothes, health, and education. As such, contemporary migration in Zimbabwe is primarily motivated by remittances.

Contrary to the above assertions, Dinbabo and Nyasulu (2015) have posited that South Africa has a stable economy, attractive investment climate and better state funded social services such as health and education. Subsequently, some Zimbabweans migrate into South Africa because of the educational facilities to pursue education, while others cross the broader to primarily access antenatal and childbirth services (Crush, *et al.*, 2017). Some portions of Zimbabweans migrate to work in the informal economic sector to accumulate money that will assist them in starting up their own businesses (Crush,*et al.*, 2017). It is also important to note that some Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa came because of the desire to visit their families and friends, though these visits may have economic implications, while others came to trade and to purchase basic necessities such as groceries, medicines and clothes (Forced Migration Studies Programme (FMSP), 2009). The former and latter assertions indicate that it is not all Zimbabwean immigrants who migrate into South Africa because of remittances, but there are other factors that influence their migration.

According to IMF (2009) remittances influence migration in a sense that immigrants that have emigrated from developing countries have adopted remittances as a source of development. In other words money that they send home is used to develop and revive their economies and their lives. Equally, remittances have come to influence migrations of people in many collapsed economies and conflict-stricken countries. Tavera and Chikanda (2009) supported the views of IMF by postulating that Zimbabwe is close to SADC's economic hub, South Africa and most Zimbabweans have exploited proximity and economic muscle of South Africa by migrating to this country to assume opportunities and remit home to support and sustain their families who are affected by the economic turmoil. The above assertion implies that many Zimbabwean's migration has come to be influenced and characterized by remittances.

It is notable from the scholarly discourse in this section regarding the migration and remittances nexus that remittances have come to be regarded an integral part of recent migration. Migration and remittance scholars have adequately studied remittances as sources of economic revival, household upkeep and a means of survival in migrants' homeland. It is for these reasons that this study specifically unravels remittances as a migration pull factor of Zimbabweans into the Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West South Africa, other than only recognizing remittances as sources of socio-economic revival in collapsed and deteriorating states such Zimbabwe.

2.3.6 Social networks, Migration and Security

There are various scholarly works that investigated the role of social networks in influencing a person's decision to migrate. The literature highlights two distinct mechanism in which social networks provide utility to migrants. The first utility mechanism of social network is access to information (Munshi, 2003; Conley & Topa, 2001; Borjas, 1992). For instance, the study conducted by Munshi (2003) in USA using a sample of Mexican migrants in the labour market found that migrants with exogenous large networks have access to information on better paying jobs. Similarly, Conley and Topa (2003) conducted a study on the influence of social networks on migrants and discovered that range of heterogeneity is of greater importance in structuring social networks. Thus, studies by Munshi (2003) and Conley & Topa (2001) highlighted the first social network utility that networks have the potential to provide migrants with access to information, particularly information on employment opportunities and the environment in the destination country.

The second social network utility to migrants is that they act as a safety net to new migrants by offering them material and social support (Munshi, 2014). Studies indicate that as much as individuals join social networks, it is almost obvious that people who reside in the same community are more likely to belong to same pool of network members (Munshi, 2014). However, Wang (2013) contended that in China, social networks that exist in the urban areas seem to be restricted to friends and relatives. While Munshi (2003) revealed that in Mexico and USA social networks are formed and organized around village and neighbourhood members. Luke and Munshi (2006) insisted that in Sub-Saharan Africa and China, social networks are organized at the level of clan and caste members respectively.

In India, networks are organized at the level of social class, which according to Munshi (2014) is a Hindu system with a distinctive feature that insist that individuals are supposed to marry within their own caste (Munshi, 2014). However, some scientists claim that this system was introduced as recently as colonial period to instill divisions within the native Indian population (De Zwart, 2000). Caste network is distinctive from the others, based on its scope, which extends over villages and size, which is almost thousands of members. Caste networks provide mutual insurance to its members, for instance Munshi and Rosenzweig (2014) argue that participation in caste-based insurance was high in 1999 almost 20% of caste members received loans, while others gave gits. Each network member gave 20 to 40 % of their annual income, which was a substantial amount that households in need were given, basically caste loans were informal credit (Munshi, 2014). Study by Indian Human Development Survey (IHDS, 2005) highlighted that caste loans are a dominant source of finance, due to its easy terms as compared to other sources of credit. In the same vein, Munshi and Rosenzweig (2014) reported that caste loans are also preferred because the value of more than 20% requires no additional interest and no collateral.

The wave of urbanization in India did not eliminate the caste system, it turned into a form of migrant workers, wherein resident migrants support social network members in their caste to find employment (Rudner, 1994). The caste-based networks have been intact since a time before the Indian dispensation in 1947 and recent studies which were conducted decades post-independence insist on the existence of the same patters. For instance, Patel (1963) conducted a study in 1961-62 on migrant' workers in Mumbai and found that more than 80% of employees in textile industry were relatives and members of the caste networks. Patel further discovered that 50% of the employees got their jobs through the influence of their family members, and 16% through the influence of friends who possibly all belonged to the caste network. The study by Munshi and Rosenzweig (2014) surveyed the male parents of school pupils that resided in the same city and discovered that 68% of the male working-class occupations got their jobs through the help of relatives and friends, and members of the caste network, while 44% of male white- collar fathers got their jobs through caste networks. The study by Chavez (1992) reported a similar trend in other regions, for instance 70% of Mexican immigrants and a great proportion of Central Americans got their jobs through referrals from relatives and friends.

The argument made in this section is centred around the influence of social networks on migration. There are two distinctive mechanisms in which social networks make provision of utility to migrants. Firstly, it is through provision of access to information concerning job opportunities at the destination. Then secondly, social networks act as a security feature or a safety net by providing material or social support.

It is difficult to distinguish which mechanism is more important than the other; either the social or material support or information transmission mechanism. Nonetheless, a recent study by Blumenstock, *et al.* (2018) conducted in Rwanda using massive digital trace dataset to connect many people to the topological structure of their social networks found that most migrants derive utility from social network mechanisms that provide social or material support, over social networks that transmit information to potential migrants. On the other hand, studies such as Ruyssen (2018) insist that people migrate to destination where they have large social networks. On the contrary, various studies that include Beaman (2012) argued that larger networks have the propensity to discourage migration, especially when migrants will have to compete over available job opportunities and resources. Similarly, Morten (2015) highlighted that robust risk sharing networks can facilitate migration through provision of the informal insurance to counter negative outcomes and deter migration if migrants fear the possibility of punishment of their families that will be left home after departure (Munshi & Rosenzweig, 2016).

The chances of one migrating to another country are mostly dependent on their social networks in the country they want to migrate to. For example, Munshi (2014) discovered that social networks in the place of destination significantly account for the flow of international migration from migrant's places of origin. In addition, the previous discoveries by Munshi (2014) are in line with the views of Boyd (1989), who also found that broad social networks outside the place of origin stimulates migration since there are various channels such as sharing of information and assisting those in the place of origin to find employment upon arrival in host countries. There are various strands of related literature on the effects of social networks abroad in stimulating migration at a reduced costs. For instance, study by Massey *et al.* (1993), submitted that having social networks abroad reduces the costs of migration, and in that vein migration flows increase.

There are various studies that focus on the importance and the advantage of membership in a social network. This is because such membership provides access to improved labour market outcomes and that larger social networks provide access to a large pool of employment opportunities with better labour market returns, which is most unlikely to be the case in small networks. For instance, a study by Fredriksson and Aslund (2003) has discovered the existence of a positive relationship between the number of network members and better labour market returns in both Sweden and USA respectively.

However, a study by Beaman (2012) contested the above assertions by arguing that sometimes extensive networks dissuade migration because when the network expands, too many migrants become concentrated in a place and start competing for the resources and opportunities that are available. This view i clearly at variance with those of Munshi (2003); Fredriksson and Aslund (2003); Munshi (2014), who argued that large networks increase security in terms of material resources and job opportunities at the destination country through referrals within the large networks. Various studies stated that immigrant networks tend to affect the choice of place of residence by immigrants. Thus, immigrants from the same place of origin are likely to reside in the same geographical area. For instance, Fenoll and Kuehn (2018: 225) stated that “immigrants from the same country of origin tend to reside geographically close to each other”. In the same vein, Patel and Vella (2013) discovered that immigrants from the same place of origin prefer residing in one geographic area and take similar decisions such as choice of occupation.

Recent studies have focused their attention on the network change of migration while the literature on network change by migrants present contradictory results. The study conducted by Nisic and Petermann (2013) on network change by migrants discovered that usually migrants build new social connections in the destination place and lose old social connections in the country of origin.

Chi (2020) conducted a study on migrants’ social network evolution in USA, prior and post migration. The study focused on the settlement process in the first weeks of pre and post migration when migrants certainly need help that includes accommodation, credits, and employment. This is basically the time where migrants need to rely on their social networks (Dolfin & Genicot, 2010). Chi discovered that indeed networks change in the settlement process, from a perspective of personal level and to a tie level. With respect to change in the level of personal networks, Chi also established that after migration, the number or the percentage of social networks with friends in the country of origin declines by half, while at the destination place, the number of social connections with new friends increases by double the percentage. Thus, after migration, clustering coefficient decreased at the destination place, which suggests that migrants would rather have a diverse pool of friends in the destination country than having to strengthen their existing social networks. With respect to tie level, Chi found that strong ties and closely connected networks are hard to dissolve, which means they have the propensity to persist.

These studies provide adequate insight into the role of networks in facilitating migration, as well as how networks act as safety nets and sources of economic maximation. The literature on networks and cross-broader migration is inadequate with regards to the ways in which these networks can further be used to remit. Thus, there is a need for a study that explores the connection between networks, migration and remittances.

2.3.8 Remittances Costs and Social Networks

Various strands of literature indicate that exorbitant remittance costs deter most migrants from remitting and alternatively opting to informal systems of remittances. For instance, the study by Ahmed and Martínez-Zarzoso (2016) used bilateral data from 23 countries sending remittances to Pakistan. It was discovered that the remittance transaction cost has a significant negative impact on the remittance inflows. This view is supported by Kakhkharov *et al.*. (2017) who conducted a study in the Soviet Union countries and found that remittance transaction costs and the value of the currency in the sending country appear to be the important factors that influence inflow and growth of remittances.

In the same breath, Ratha *et at.* (2011) contended that exorbitant transaction charges associated with the formal remittance systems such as banks, money transfer operators, and other financial institutions are the most significant barriers that deter migrants from utilizing formal remittance sites. However, Nzima (2017) insisted that financial institutions require documentations, amongst others is the proof of residence and payment that migrants residing in rural settlements and work in the informal sector cannot produce. Thebe and Mutyatyu (2017) reported the unavailability of financial institutions, especially in the rural localities as motives behind reluctant remittance flow in the formal sector, which results in concentration of remitters in the informal channels.

The literature reveals that the transfer costs of cash remittances from the USA to Africa are generally among the lowest (UN, 2018), followed by transfer costs from Europe (IMF, 2009). The study by IFAD,(2009) supported the previous studies by positing that sending 200 US dollars from the USA to Nigeria cost an average of 5% of the transfer value. While in the UK it is slightly higher, in a sense that it costs almost 6.5 % of the transfer value (IFAD, 2009). The comparative studies on costs of remittances within the continent shows that remittance costs are by far higher as compared to when remitted from abroad. For instance, the study by Ratha (2021) on remittances from South Africa to other African countries argued that remittance costs are generally higher when remitting internally within the continent than when sending money to Africa from abroad. Furthermore, Cooper and Esser (2019) supported the previous studies by highlighting that the value of remittance costs is more expensive within Africa. For instance, remittance costs from Cameroon to Nigeria costs an average of over 11% of the transfer value, thus, higher than when remitting from abroad.

The above studies provide general impediments in the official remittance systems. The exorbitant remittance costs appear to be the main hindering factor in the official remittance systems. However, there are other factors that include the inability to produce required documentations such as proof of payment and address. Unavailability of the financial remittance systems also deters the flow of remittances. It is due to these reasons that most immigrants perceive informal systems of remittances, especially social networks as an alternative system of remittance flow. IFAD (2009) released a remittance flow report and held that approximately 40% of the remittances flow into rural localities. IFAD further sustained that recipients of remittances often pick them up far from their places of residence, which compels the sender to add or subtract the substantial travel costs from the initial cash intended to be remitted. This suggests that besides substantial travel costs for migrants who reside in the rural localities, migrants still pay for the remittance cost fees. Thus, migrants remitting to rural localities are the most financially affected, hence some prefer to utilize networks or informal means to remit. Despite costs as the utmost remittance flow dissuading factor, there are remittance regulations that impose a limit on the amount of money and goods that is permitted to cross-broader (World Bank, 2008a). For instance, countries such as Botswana, Burundi, Morocco, and Tunisia imposed a limit on the income transfers by requiring amounts under 10 000 US dollars to be reported to government authorities through customs or banking channels (World Bank, 2008b).

The study by IFAD (2009) argued that amongst the popular remittance flow method in the UK diaspora, sending cash to Africa through relatives and friends travelling back home is prominent. Similarly, the study conducted in Southern Europe on social networks and remittance by Poros (2008) revealed that migrants have a tendency of maintaining their interpersonal networks, due to its important role as a mechanism of remittance flow from hosts to homeland. Poros mentions that when one migrant visits the homeland, members of the network can send remittances through that member. Copper and Esser (2019) support Poros by positing that sending money through family and friends from abroad to Nigeria is the most popular transfer method, beside remitting through banks. Copper and Esser sustain that 36% of the remittance received in Nigeria is through cash-in-person.

Thebe and Mutyatyu (2017) conducted a study in South Africa on economic African migrants, social networks, and remittances. These scholars contend that utilization of networks as a remittance conduit became prominent in the 1980s amongst labour migrants who shared community of origin. The practice of remitting through networks was founded on the African principle of "*ukuphathisa*", in the context of this study it refers to sending goods home through other people. Remitting through friends, relatives and network members was prevalent amongst men who were unable to visit family back home for various reasons such as insufficient money for travelling and an irregular work schedule (Thebe & Mutyatu, 2017). This practice led to the development of reciprocal relations amongst migrants, the arrangement was that whoever was travelling back home had to take along goods, letters, or money for other migrants for delivery to the respective families. Thebe and Mutyatu further asserted that in the earlier stages, services of remitting through networks was exclusive to migrants who had close association with vehicle owners either as relatives, friends, or neighbours. In the initial stage of remitting through networks, there were only few transportations, and along the process the demand for transportation grew and networks expanded to other places and other migrants joint as transport operators.

The studies under this theme provided insight on different factors that deter the flow of remittances, particularly in the official remittance systems. Moreover, Thebe and Mutyatu made an invaluable contribution to the body of literature on the role of social networks as a remittance channel. Be that as it may, the study does not provide in detail for instance, the nature of social network as remittance channel and the frequency in which social networks are preferably used over formal conduits and other informal remittance channel alternatives. Existing remittance and social network studies are mostly inscribed based on samples from urban areas and metropolitan areas. Thus, little is known about the nature of social networks and remittances from a perspective of economic migrants hosted in rural localities. Hence this study seeks to solicit narratives of Zimbabwean immigrants residing in Mafikeng on the role social networks play in facilitating remittances from Mafikeng to Zimbabwe and vice versa.

2.4 Chapter Summary

The existing literature on formal and informal remittance systems shed light on different factors that deter migrants from utilizing official remittance systems and consequently opting for informal remittance methods. The choice of the informal remittance systems is primarily influenced by exorbitant remittance costs. However, the literature on channels of remittances is inadequate with regards to providing in detail the use of social networks as an alternative informal remittance system. These studies only provide a brief explanation that immigrants sometimes remit back home through their friends and relatives, not much effort is invested in providing detailed empirical evidence on how social networks operate from the host and migrants' homeland, especially from rural cites in South Africa to Zimbabwe.

The second section of literature review provided insights on circulation of ideals, values, and foreign knowledge from one context to another. The existing social remittance literature shed light on how immigrants circulate ideas, values, and practices from the host to their homeland through interactions with non-emigrants at home with the purpose of shaping and influencing transnational political processes. However, the literature on social remittances is inadequate with respect to providing clear empirical evidence on economic remittances. Therefore, only little is known about economic remittances, especially remittances facilitated by social networks. Hence this study seeks to solicit narratives of Zimbabwean immigrants residing in Mafikeng on the role social networks play in facilitating remittances from Mafikeng to Zimbabwe and vice versa.

Furthermore, the literature on the nexus of migration and remittances has shed light on how remittances have come integral part of contemporary migrations. Migration and remittance scholars have adequately studied remittances as sources of economic revival, household upkeep, and a means of survival in migrants' homeland. However, these studies are limited in terms of specifically documenting remittances as a migration pull factor, other than only recognizing remittances as sources of socio-economic survival and revival of households in economically collapsed and deteriorating states.

The existing literature on networks and migration provides adequate insight on the role of networks in facilitating migration, as well as how networks act as safety nets and sources of economic maximation. However, the literature on networks and cross-broader migration is inadequate with regards to revealing how these networks can further be used to remit. Thus, there is a need for a study that explores the connection between networks, migration, and remittances.

Existing studies on remittances costs and social networks provide insights on different factors that deter the flow of remittances, particularly in the official remittance systems. These studies make a contribution to the body of literature on the role of social networks as a remittance channel. However, these studies do not provide details on the nature of social network as remittance channel and the frequency in which social networks are preferably used over formal conduits and other informal remittance channel alternatives. Existing remittance and social network studies are mostly written using samples from urban areas and metropolitans. Thus, little is known about the nature of social networks and remittances from a perspective of economic migrants hosted in rural localities. This is mainly the reason that this study seeks to solicit narratives of Zimbabwean immigrants residing in Mafikeng on the role social networks play in facilitating remittances from Mafikeng to Zimbabwe and vice versa.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGNS AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

3.1 Introduction

As already specified in the first chapter of the study, the aim of this dissertation is to explore the effects of social networks and remittances on Zimbabweans' immigration into the Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province, South Africa. The study explored the effects of respondents' narratives with the intention to close the existing literature gap on the subject. This chapter begins with an explanation on the research methods employed by the study to achieve the research objectives. The study was guided by the following questions:

- In what ways do social networks facilitates immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa?
- How do remittances facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa?
- How do social networks amongst Zimbabweans facilitate remittances from Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province of South Africa to Zimbabwe?

The first question sought to explore the respondents' experiences of their social networks in influencing and facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng. The second question inquired about views of respondents on the role of remittances in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng. Finally, the third question derived from the first and second questions with the intention to establish the nexus of the two by examining narratives of respondents on their role social networks in facilitating remittances from Mafikeng to Zimbabwe and vice versa.

The above research questions guided the study in soliciting in-depth qualitative data. This chapter is therefore divided into various sections that altogether provides clarity on where and how data was sourced for the study. This chapter is divided into the following sections: research design, research methodology, research site, a section that contains subsections on data collection techniques, a section that provides subsections on sampling procedure and sample, data presentation procedure, data analysis procedure, a section that includes subsections on inclusion and exclusion criteria, limitations and delimitations, informed consent, gatekeepers and their duties, duties of respondents, emotional distress and dissemination of findings. All the above are presented and explicated in this chapter.

3.2 Research Designs

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:74) research design entails an overall strategy employed by the researcher in combining various components of the study in a manner that is logical and coherent. Mouton (2001) contended that research design is a blueprint that exhibits the intentions of a researcher on how the study is to be conducted. There are various research designs and that include action research, ethnographical, experimental, sequential, case study and so on. The researcher employed exploratory, developmental psychological and sociological longitudinal analysis research designs; these are elucidated sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 below.

3.2.1 Exploratory Research Design

According to George (2021) an exploratory research design is a design that is usually used when there is only limited literature on the subject of study, therefore it used to investigate research areas that have previously not been thoroughly studied. In other words, this design relevant when the study area is new because there is limited research material to rely on. As such, the researcher has realized that there is scarcity of literature on social networks and remittances in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM. As a result of literature scarcity on this subject area, an exploratory research design was deemed fit to systematically explore narratives of respondents on social networks and remittances in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM since very little known if none existed in this specific research site at the time of conducting this study.

3.2.2 Development Psychological and Sociological Longitudinal Analysis

The development psychological longitudinal analysis as one of the research designs employed by the study which focuses on how and why changes take place with respect to the human behaviour throughout their lifespans (Thomas, 2020; Maseng, 2022). While sociological longitudinal analysis pays particular attention to the patterns of social relations and interaction of people in their everyday lives (Thomas, 2020; Maseng, 2022).

Therefore, both development psychological and sociological longitudinal analysis research designs were employed to explore the changing patterns of social relations and interactions with respect to migrants' social networks and remittance conduits behaviour; from remitting with any omalayisha and random immigrant to remitting with trusted socially contracted network members, and also from remitting using different informal remittance systems to remitting through the use of electronic money transfer mechanisms.

In other words, both these research designs helped the researcher to investigate rapid fluctuations in remittance channel change and the change in migrant network sending behaviour and patterns of sending remittances through their initial trusted sources and changing from informal to a formal electronic mobile remittance method. Development psychological and sociological longitudinal analysis were useful in exploring developmental trends across the life span of informal remittance channel and migrants' networks and how they either positively or negatively affect remittances that are sent through informal methods by Zimbabwean immigrants in MLM to Zimbabwe. It is these two designs that allowed the researcher to study the changing patterns on the migration- remittance nexus in accordance with the narratives of respondents and from existing materials published over time.

3.3 Research Methodology

The researcher employed qualitative research method as way of soliciting empirical qualitative material to provide an exploration into the effects of social networks and remittances on Zimbabweans' immigration into the MLM of North West Province, South Africa. Qualitative research method is regarded as a research method can be used to probe in-depth data and provide sufficient insights into various phenomenon and human behaviour as well as interaction (Creswell, 2009; Walliman, 2011). The purpose of adopting qualitative method is on the basis that it is descriptive in nature, unlike quantitative method which only reports numerical data (Creswell, 2009; Walliman, 2011). Therefore, these methods were helpful in providing descriptive insights and narratives on the effects of social networks and remittances on Zimbabweans' immigration into the MLM of North West Province, South Africa. In other words, the nature of this research required empirical material that is qualitative in nature which would offer in-depth explanations on the effects that social networks and remittances have on immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM of North West in South Africa.

3.4 Research site (s)

The research site of this study was MLM, North West Province in South Africa. The field work for the study was conducted in three villages that fall under the MLM, North West Province in South Africa. The three specific areas of focus were Setlopo, Lonely Park and

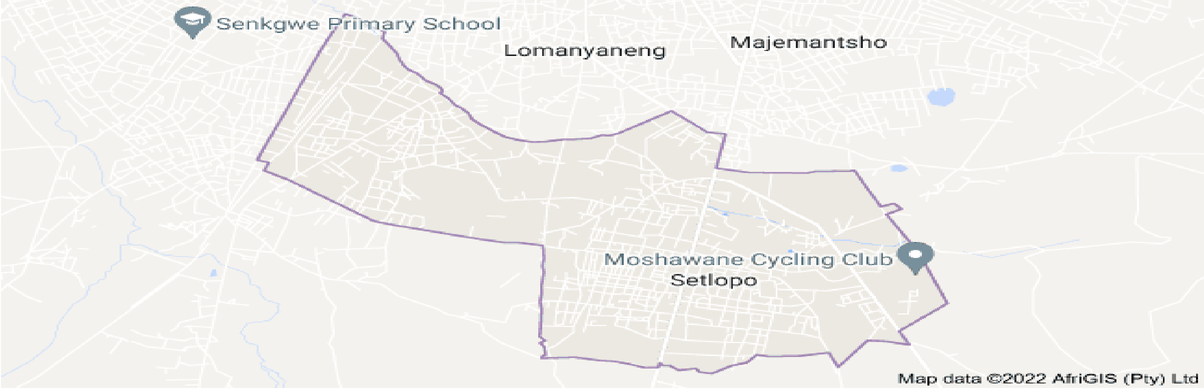
Motlhabeng villages. The MLM, North West Province in South Africa as a research site was chosen primarily because little scholarly attention has been paid to the subject matter of this current study. In addition, a report by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) indicates that between 2016 and 2021, the North West province received 318 604 immigrants. Zimbabweans were assumed to also form part of these immigrants. Hence, upon conducting a pilot study, it was preliminarily discovered by the researcher that the three villages selected host some of the Zimbabwean immigrants that form part of the official statistics of immigrants in the province.

Therefore, the research site was helpful in attempting to sufficiently explore the nature of migration and remittances facilitated by networks from a rural cities' perspective, in particular the MLM of North West Province, South Africa. Much as the selected areas hosts Zimbabwean immigrants, it is important to note that the empirical results yielded should not be generalized to other areas where Zimbabwean immigrants reside. The findings presented from the sample of this study do not necessarily provide the overall perspectives of Zimbabwean immigrants on the effects of social networks in facilitating remittances and immigration of Zimbabweans.

The following figures show the maps of the villages chosen as research sites for this study as well as the routes to the nearest border posts in the MLM:

- Figure 1 is a map of Setlopo village
- Figure 2 shows a map of Lonely Park village
- Figure 3 displays a map of Motlhabeng village
- Figure 4 is Map of Mafikeng and routes to the nearest border posts, namely Ramatlabama and Makgobistad border posts

Figure 1: Map of Setlopo, Mafikeng



Source:(Google Maps)

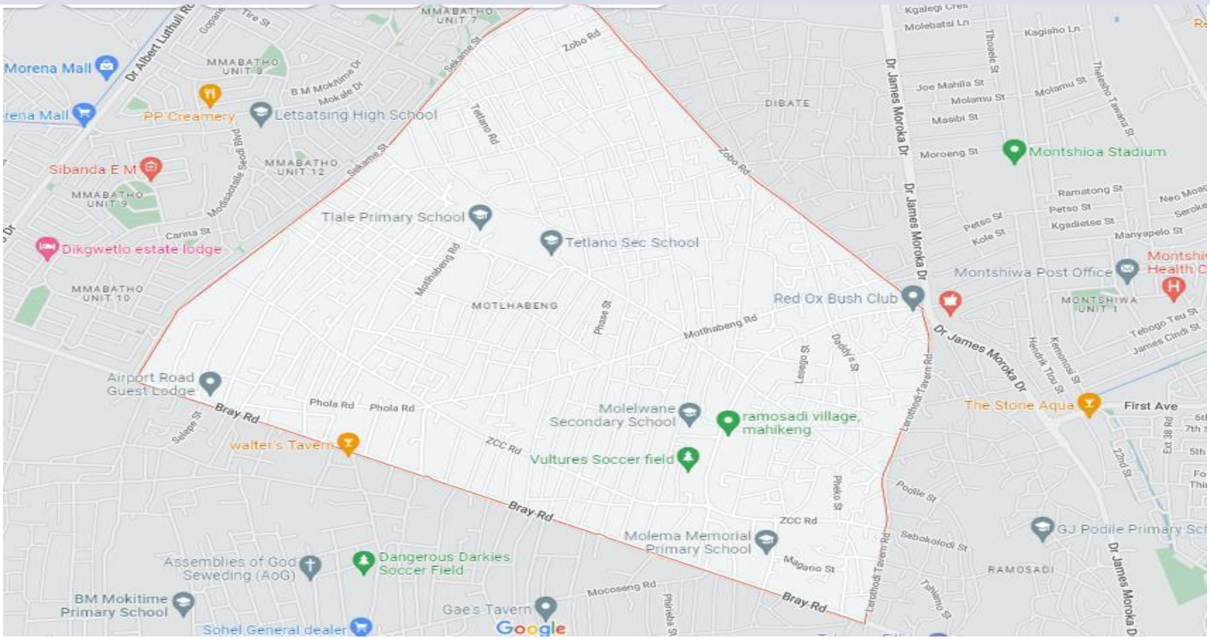
Setlopo is one of the villages in Mafikeng where Zimbabwean immigrants reside. It consists of Zimbabwean immigrants who have been residents for a long time and some have houses, while others dwell in places known as hostels that accommodate Zimbabwean immigrants. Some of the respondents were sourced from this village.

Figure 2: Map of Lonely Park, Mafikeng

Source:(Google Maps)

Lonely Park is one of the villages in Mafikeng where Zimbabwean immigrants reside. It has dwelling places known as hostels that accommodate Zimbabwean immigrants. Some of the respondents were sourced from this village.

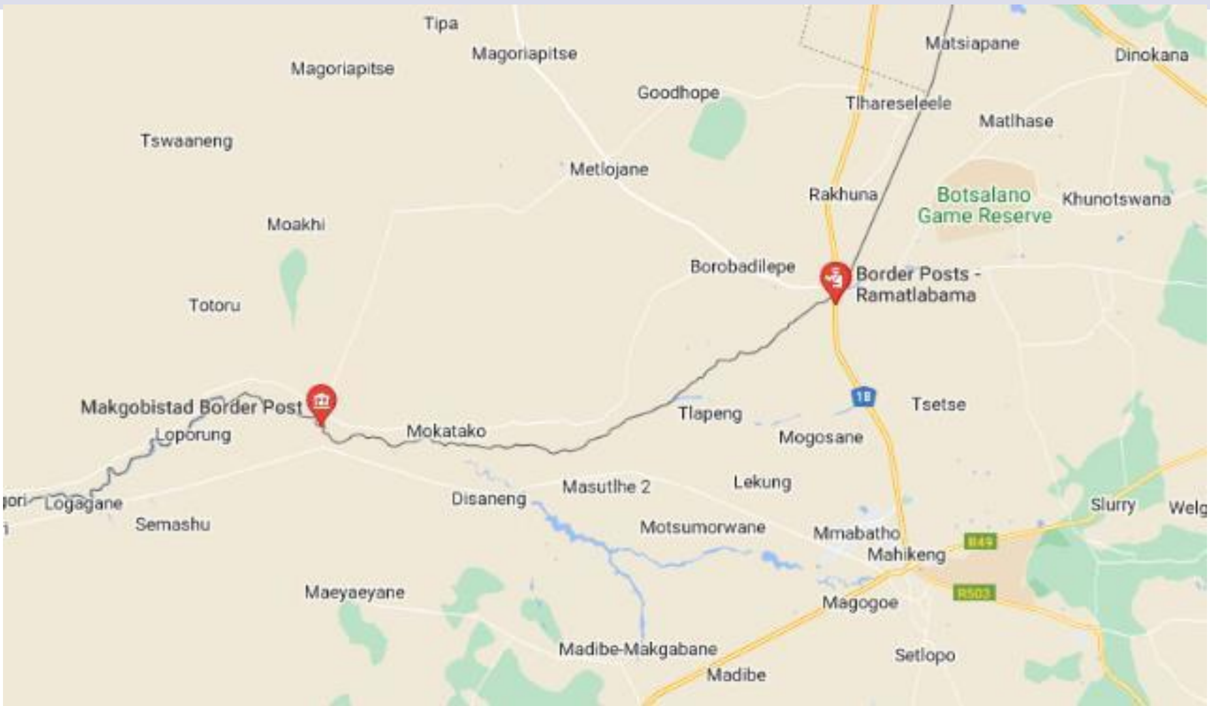
Figure 3: Map of Motlhabeng, Mafikeng



Source:(Google Maps)

Motlhabeng is also one of the villages in Mafikeng where Zimbabwean immigrants reside. It has dwelling places known as hostels that accommodate Zimbabwean immigrants. Some of the respondents were sourced from this village.

Figure 4: Map of Mafikeng and routes to the two nearest border posts, namely Ramatlabama and Makgobistad border posts.



Source:(Google Maps)

The latter map shows the two border posts of Mafikeng which is one way to display the possible routes of migration and remittance flows between Mafikeng and Zimbabwe via Botswana.

3.5 Data collection techniques

3.5.1 Pilot-testing

The researcher had undertaken a pre-test set of interviews with four respondents during the proposal stage of the study. The purpose of pilot was to ascertain the feasibility of undertaking the study and of also acquiring possible and future respondents. The premise was due to the fact that the researcher was aware of xenophobic threats and possibility of some immigrants who may have thought they were being investigated through this process, which could have possibly dissuaded them from participating in the soliciting of data from them as potential respondents. Thus, the researcher relied on piloted respondents in identifying a pool of documented respondents from which to solicit data. The piloted respondents, the selected leaders of immigrants and WhatsApp group administrator assisted in identifying other respondents and in eliminating fear of xenophobic threats considering the current climate of the relationship between African immigrants and South Africans. In addition, the piloted respondents, the selected leaders of immigrants and WhatsApp group administrator initiated an element of trust by respondents towards the researcher.

3.4.2 In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews were employed by this study as data collection techniques. This is a qualitative data collection technique that is open ended, wherein an interviewer poses questions to the interviewee to obtain detailed experiences and perspectives of the respondents (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Interviews can be conducted either through physical contact or can be telephonic. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, government had instituted regulations that limit physical contact amongst citizens. Therefore, in adherence with Covid-19 regulations, the researcher opted for telephonic interviews in order to source data from the respondents. As such, the researcher sourced contacts of respondents from three mentioned gatekeepers. Those gatekeepers consisted of selected or nominated leaders of immigrants in three chosen localities. In addition, the researcher also sourced contacts of respondents from an administrator of the Zimbabwean migrants' WhatsApp group. Moreover, this WhatsApp group composed of Zimbabwean migrants residing in Mafikeng, specifically immigrants residing in three chosen population and sample.

The interviews assisted in providing insights on the effects of social networks and remittances on Zimbabweans' immigration into the Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province, South Africa. Thus, in-depth interviews allowed the researcher to gain more detailed experiences and narratives on the following thematic areas:

- Social networks and facilitation of immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa.
- Remittances and facilitation of immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa.
- The use of social networks amongst Zimbabweans in facilitating remittances from Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province of South Africa to Zimbabwe.

3.4.3 Telephonic interviews

As previously indicated, the researcher used telephonic interviews to source data from the respondents. Such interviews entailed that the researcher makes a telephonic contact with the interviewee and pose questions which the respondents also respond to telephonically, instead of face-to-face interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. The researcher opted for telephonic interviews to avoid exposing both the researcher and the respondents from any possibility of risks of contracting Covid-19. The researcher also did not have financial means to purchase Covid-19 personal protective equipment (PPE) for respondents, or refreshments that could be provided to respondents during face- to- face interviews. The researcher used work telephone for conducting interviews to minimize costs in collecting data, because there were no financial costs in using work telephone.

3.4.4 Document analysis

Besides telephonic interviews, document analysis was also used to source data for this study. Document analysis is a qualitative research technique in which systematic procedures are employed to analyse existing documentary evidence with the aim of answering specific research questions. In the context of this study, document analysis was used to compliment interviews in responding to the following questions as stated in chapter one:

- In what ways do social networks facilitates immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa?
- How do remittances facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa?
- How do social networks amongst Zimbabweans facilitate remittances from Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province of South Africa to Zimbabwe?

As such the researcher employed this technique to access data from existing literature, books and reports on remittances and migration from the global, African context and

South Africa-Zimbabwe contexts. Thus, the researcher utilized Google scholar as a search engine and tool to access data from various published material relating on the subject under inquiry. Key words used when sourcing data from Google scholar included but were not limited to social networks, remittances, emigration, immigration, immigrants, Mafikeng local municipality, Push and pull, South Africa, Zimbabwean immigrants, Zimbabwe.

3.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample

3.5.1 Sampling Procedure

The most critical stage prior to collecting of data, is the identification of a sample. According to Walliman (2011:93) sampling is a process of selecting a small group of cases or subset of a population of interest for the purpose of conducting a study and making inferences about that population. Babbie and Mouton (2001) stated that the use of subset of the population accurately describes and portrays the constraints of the total population, from which the subset was extracted.

This research adopted snowballing which is a recruitment technique wherein the study participants assist the researcher in identifying and recruiting more potential participants. This sample technique assisted in a sense that the researcher relied on a piloted respondents to identify more and other potential respondents. The snowball sample technique is usually applicable in instances where the population size is too small, which was the case with documented immigrants in Mafikeng Local Municipality. The researcher solicited data using in-depth interviews from 30 documented Zimbabwean immigrants in three villages, namely Motlhabeng, Lonely Park and Setlopo villages that fall under the Mafikeng Local Municipality.

However, the researcher acknowledges the reality of the non-probability sample, which stresses that the way samples are gathered does not give all members within that population an equal chance of being selected (Daniel, 2011). In this instance, the researcher relied on the referral of initially piloted respondents and the gatekeepers through the recruitment advertisement to identify other potential respondents who met the research criteria.

However, the major drawback of snowballing that cannot be overlooked is the insufficiency in representing the entire population. Much as the researcher relied on piloted respondents and gatekeepers through the recruitment advertisement, the researcher made considerable effort to ensure that the sample varied in terms of age, gender, and occupation. The premise was to mitigate the risk of bias and errors associated with the non-probability sampling method

The nature of this research is one that examines the effects of social networks and remittances on the immigration of Zimbabweans in a small rural city of North West, in South Africa. Bearing in mind that Mafikeng is small rural city, which does not have enormous economic opportunities like big cities such as Cape Town and Johannesburg would have; the sample size of the researcher was thus affected. Therefore, the researcher depended on selected leaders of immigrants, WhatsApp group administrator and piloted respondents in soliciting data through interviews on the effects of social networks and remittances on Zimbabweans' immigration into the MLM of North West Province, South Africa.

3.6 Sample Size

The researcher collected data through in-depth interviews from thirty documented Zimbabwean immigrants in the three villages that fall under the MLM, namely Motlhabeng, Lonely Park and Setlopo villages. The researcher collected data from fifteen female Zimbabwean immigrants and fifteen male Zimbabwean immigrants residing in those specified localities. A the total of 30 documented Zimbabwean immigrants between the age 20 and 65, including street vendors, housekeepers, utility stuff members, teachers, truck drivers, car wash owners and construction company owners and workers were interviewed.

As Mnwana (2011) stated, deciding on a qualitative sample size is often a daunting exercise. Hence, a reasonable size of thirty respondents and selecting ten from each village was purposefully decided upon by the researcher with the intention of archiving empirical accuracy (Mnwana, 2011). Interviewing ten respondents from each village was deemed fit for producing sufficient data and rigorous empirical knowledge under the subject under inquiry (Thomson, 2004; Marshall, 1996). The sample size was selected with expectations based on the pilot study that majority of respondents utilise their social networks to send remittances to Zimbabwe, and those networks are also responsible for further immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM. The sample size of thirty and interviewing ten per village was based on the reasons of avoiding data saturation and costs minimization. Therefore, this sample size was used as a criterion or framework for judging when to stop sampling. As Glaser and Strauss (1967) state, data saturation refers to the criterion used by the researcher for judging when to stop sampling the different groups, hence the researcher decided to stop at the sample size of thirty.

3.6 Data Presentation and Analysis

3.6.1 Data Presentation Procedure

The data was presented through terms in the text based on the narratives provided by respondents during field work interview. The qualitative data that was collected in a form of telephonic interviews and was presented in a form of main themes drawn from research questions and objectives. According to Maguire and Delahunt (2017:3352) thematic data presentation is a process of data presentation, in which themes or patterns of similar ideas and values are identified, normally within qualitative data. In a thematic presentation, data is sorted into themes and presented in thematic structures. Therefore, in this research data was arranged according to the way in which it shares same features. For instance, themes were organized in accordance with the objectives and research questions, while sub-themes were drawn from research instruments or questions that solicited in-depth interviews. In other words, each of the responses were categorised in accordance with the main themes as well as sub-themes.

3.6.2 Data Analysis Procedure

The data amassed through in-depth interviews was analysed thematically, therefore, data was sorted into themes and analysed in thematic structures (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). In other words, the researcher analysed data in accordance with themes that were derived from the research questions. An analysis of data through themes required that the researcher organise data by questions looking across all narratives of respondents to identify consistencies and differences (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003). The entire data from each of the research questions were gathered for the following themes to guide the analysis:

- Social networks in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM
- Remittances in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM.

- The usage of social networks amongst Zimbabweans in facilitating remittances from MLM to Zimbabwe.

The research applied Terr Blanche *et al.* (2006) proposed five steps of data analysis and generation of findings. However, the researcher applied only four of those steps as indicated below:

- Transcribed data - data reduction – by coding, attach meaning to data - themes identified from codes – presented as findings - Interpretation - placed findings in larger context.

Firstly, the researcher familiarised themselves with raw data during the field work and even after completion of the field work to have thorough understanding data. As stated below in section 3.8 on validity and reliability, the researcher recorded interviews and jotted accurate detailed field notes to be immersed in the data along processes of data collection, processing and evaluation (Mnwana,2011). Once data was sufficient for generation of reliable and valid findings, and no longer possible to generate new data, the researcher read field notes and data transcripts (Mnwana,2011:107). Ensuing the premise, a discussion with the supervisor regarding peer validation of data followed. All the previously mentioned processes were salient and helpful in respect to thoroughly understanding overall raw data and other interpretations that were generated from data (Mnwana, 2011:108)

Secondly, themes were differentiated through the application of top-down traditional approach using a set of pre-coded themes and researching for matching categories. The coherence of themes was informed by research questions, while coherence of subthemes was informed by research instruments that were used to source data from the respondents. For the purposes of providing focused analysis, each of the research instruments was used to source data from the respondents and was also used to provide sub-themes for data analysis. The pre-coded themes were helpful in yielding focused and detailed understanding of the acquired data.

Thirdly, the researcher initiated steps of coding, it is important to note that the second step inducing data was informed by pre-coded themes. According to Terre Blanch, Durrheim and Kelly (2006) codes are sentences, concepts and phrases which are found to be relevant in supporting different pre-coded themes. The codes were fixed and structured in line with the study research questions and research instruments that were used in collecting data.

Lastly, the research instituted the interpretation and checking stage, which is a stage in which the researcher starts to write a detailed account on the findings of the study (Mnwana, 2011:108). The detailed account presented a summary on the perspectives from Zimbabwean immigrants in Mafikeng about the effects of social networks in facilitating remittances from Mafikeng to Zimbabwe as well as immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM. At this stage pre-coded themes were used as topics with evidence as the researcher carried out literature and theory-based discussion to justify as well as refute some aspects of the existing literature and theory.

Much as pre-coded themes were used to analyse data throughout the process of data collection and analysis, these themes did not influence or compromise the anticipated level of qualitative research objectivity. The pre-coded themes were merely adopted to serve as instruments that guided data collection and assisted in providing focused and coherent analysis.

3.8 Validity and Reliability of data

The researcher has ensured validity and reliability of data by taking notes, keeping records, and had the supervisor validate notes.

(a) Taking field notes

The researcher wrote notes during the field work process, and in ensuring the validity and reliability of the study. The researcher attempted to be as accurate as possible in noting conservations with the respondents. According to (Schwandt, 2015), writing down the notes during telephonic conservations with the respondents required compliance with some characteristics that includes accuracy, organization, and descriptiveness and focusing on the research problem. The fieldwork questions were designed and configured sequentially to capture the research problem.

(b) Keeping of record

The researcher was able to make a phone record while in telephonic conservation with the respondents to validate the notes that the researcher had written down during the interviews. That was done to further safekeep collected data. This assisted the researcher to verify data by revisiting telephonic recorded data against field notes that were captured during the interviews. In adhering and upholding ethical principles, the researcher had also acceded to requests of some respondents who did not want to be recorded.

(c) Supervisor validation of field notes

Supervisor validation of data involves the supervisor's independent role in reviewing data collected and exploring interview transcripts and emerging themes from the data. Supervisor validation of data is important in preventing the chances of researcher's lone bias. The researcher relied on the supervisor of this dissertation to validate field notes from the interviews. This process involved discussions between the supervisor and researcher in respect of the interviews conducted for this dissertation. This process hopefully contributed to data trustworthy and assisted the researcher with additional insights into themes.

3.9 Ethical consideration

The researcher conformed to the ethical codes that guide every human social science research in North West University. The research further complied with the ethics of informed consent, whereby the respondents had participated voluntarily. The anonymity of respondents was guaranteed. Their freedom to withdraw from the study at any given moment when they felt uncomfortable with participating in the study was also ascertained. Therefore, the study had prioritised emotional welfare of the participants through the process of data collection. The researcher had followed all the application requirements for ethics clearance of the North West University.

3.10 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

3.10.1 Inclusion

The following factors determined inclusion of participants in the study:

1. Legal/ documented Zimbabwean foreign nationals residing in Motlhabeng, Setlopo and Lonely Park.
2. Zimbabwean foreign nationals aged between 20 and 65 years.
3. Fifteen (15) Zimbabwean females and fifteen (15) Zimbabwean males residing in the above-mentioned villages.

3.10.2 Exclusion

The following factors determined exclusion of participants in the study:

1. Illegal immigrants were not included in this study due to the institutional and individual statutory obligations to report such individuals to the South African government official. Care was taken through the use of gatekeepers to ensure recruitment of legal immigrants as participants.

2. Immigrants below the age of 18 and those above 65, did not form a segment of the study. Immigrants below 18 cannot independently consent their participation. Moreover, immigrants above the age of 65 are less interested in migration and were proven too difficult to spot in the study area.

3.11 Limitations and Delimitation

The main limitation that this study encountered was that four of the potential participants withdrew from participating in the study due to some respondents who faced stigmatization by others that they could be illegal because they were interviewed. However, this stigmatising was allayed before spreading to other potential participants by gatekeepers and piloted respondents who explained the purpose of the research to potential participants prior to first contact and interview with the researcher. In addition to the challenges faced when conducting interviews, xenophobic occurrences, utterances, and realities in South Africa was a stumbling block in acquiring access to potential respondents, due to fears of xenophobic attacks. However, even in this regard, gatekeepers and piloted respondents assisted in explaining and proving to potential respondents that the research was mainly for academic purpose and their names and identity remained anonymous even to the researcher.

The Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BASSREC) and Human Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) after reviewing a proposal made a decision that was informed by high risk of the study due to the inclusion of undocumented immigrants, the decision was that the researcher had to either remove an aspect of undocumented immigrants or submit the research proposal to the NWU research legal committee. Having contemplated the tedious processes the researcher had to undergo and by that extending research time waiting for the verdict from the legal committee; the researcher opted to exclude an aspect of interviewing undocumented immigrants. Hence under inclusion and exclusion criteria the researcher has explained the reasons for exclusion of undocumented immigrants as respondents.

The researcher was aware of the possible language barrier between the interviewer and interviewee. To counter such a possible challenge, the researcher had used interpretation services from the sampled population, who assisted with translation. The researcher made the translator aware in advance that the research is for academic purpose and there is no reimbursement or any form of financial offering to the willing translator, other than the researcher conveying verbal gratitude to the translator. The gatekeepers were mainly used as translators whenever need arose for interpretation services.

3.11 Informed consent

An informed consent obliges the researcher to divulge important information of the study to the participants, such as the intentions of the study, as a way of making participants aware and giving them an opportunity to consent, if they agreed with the study and its intentions (Burns & Grove, 1999). The researcher had made potential participants aware through a recruitment advertisement that entailed the title and intentions of the study. Furthermore, once the potential participants had shown interest to participate on the study by sending a message of interest to the researcher, the researcher then again stressed the importance of consent in participating. The researcher also made them aware of their right to withdraw from the study whenever they felt violated and less interested on the study. Interested participants consented to participation in the study.

(a) Right to self-determination

The researcher has the responsibility to respect and protect the respondents. The respondents were treated as independent individuals, who made decisions in the way they deemed fit for themselves. Prior to the process of the interview, the respondents were made aware that the research is voluntary. Thus, the participants had the right and liberty to respond to questions in their own manner of preference.

(b) Confidentiality and anonymity

These are important ethical standards that are executed to protect the privacy of the respondents. This principle of ethical standard is aimed at guaranteeing confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents. In this regard, the researcher had safeguarded the anonymity of the respondents by making sure that their names are not disclosed and does not appear anywhere in the study. In this case, the researcher has utilised pseudonym instead of the respondent's name. The researcher has not divulged the responses of the respondents to any third party, and the respondents' responses was used for the purposes of this study only.

(c) Right to privacy

This concerns the participants' will in providing access to their details. The researcher understood that the participants had a right to grant or refuse access to their information. Thus, the researcher or any party wishing to access the participants' information for other purposes must seek authorization of access. Hence, the researcher had issued consent forms to the participants to authorize this by signing a consent letter prepared by the researcher regarding the intentions with the data that had been extracted from them.

(d) Respect

The researcher approached and treated every respondent with due delicacy and respect. Much attention was paid to acceptable use of language, respect to the participants' culture. The researcher posed fair questions, at the same time not judging and censoring respondents' answers.

3.12 Gatekeepers and their duties

The researcher liaised with three selected or nominated leaders of immigrants who were the gatekeepers. Recruitment advertisements were shared with the selected or nominated leaders of immigrants for them to share with documented Zimbabwean migrants. As such, interested respondents were able to send a message of interest to the researcher. In addition, the researcher had also identified WhatsApp group of Zimbabwean migrants residing in Mafikeng, and the administrator of the WhatsApp group was identified as a gatekeeper as well. The WhatsApp administrator shared the recruitment advertisements with documented Zimbabwean migrants in the group, and through the WhatsApp group administrator, the researcher was able to communicate with documented Zimbabwean migrants who were interested in participating in the study.

3.13 Duties of respondents

Gatekeepers assisted with sharing the recruitment advertisements with documented Zimbabwean migrants. Those who were allowed to participate in the study, were Zimbabwean immigrants residing in three selected localities. After the potential respondents had indicated their interest to participate in the study through sending a message on WhatsApp, the researcher contacted them to illustrate conditions of the study. Such conditions include ascertaining if an interested potential respondent meets the criteria, which was followed by the provision of further terms, such as explaining to respondents that there is no reimbursement, hence the researcher was the one making a phone contact with potential respondents. Furthermore, the researcher gave more explanations and clarity on what was expected from the respondents during the interview, such as their rights, confidentiality, and liberty to withdraw from the interview whenever they were uncomfortable or did not feel free to continue with the interview.

3.14 Management of Possible Emotional Distress

The researcher was aware of the possibility of the emotional distress that the interview may have caused to the respondents. As such, the researcher consulted with NWU Counselling Centre and attained permission for psychologists and counsellors, who consented and assisted in cases of emotional distress. In such cases the emotionally burdened respondents were referred to the NWU counsellors after the data gathering processes were concluded. . The researcher had also ensured that in each interview, respondents were made aware of the university psychologists that offered their services freely to them.

3.15 Dissemination of findings

In collaboration with the supervisor, the researcher will disseminate findings and certain chapters of the study through publications in accredited Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) journals, seminars, and conferences.

3.16 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented and presented the research designs, data collection methods and techniques employed in the three selected areas to explore their experiences and perspectives Zimbabwean immigrants on the role of social networks in facilitating remittances and migration. The chapter provided an elucidation and justification of the research site as well. The researcher noted some challenges relating to qualitative research, particularly issues regarding trustworthy and valid empirical evidence. Moreover, this chapter discussed procedures and steps that the researcher undertook in presenting and analyzing data. In addition, the chapter dissected issues around ethical challenges that accompanied the process of data collection. The following chapter entails presentation of respondents' narratives in accordance with pre-coded themes drawn from the objectives and research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in the first chapter, this study is directed by the following three research questions:

- In what ways do social networks facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa?
- How do remittances facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa?
- How do social networks amongst Zimbabweans facilitate remittances from Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province of South Africa to Zimbabwe?

As such, each of the research question informed the main themes of parts one, two, and three of this particular chapter. The subthemes were developed through a coding system informed by the interviews questions that were posed to the respondents to source primary data. The sections are titled as the following:

- Part One: Ways in which social networks facilitates immigration of Zimbabweans.
- Part Two: The role of remittances in facilitating immigration.
- Part Three: Ways in which social networks amongst Zimbabweans facilitate remittances.

The findings of the study as indicated by the above themes are elucidated in the following sections divided into three parts.

PART ONE:
The role of Social Networks in facilitating Immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM

4.2.1 Views of Respondents on Social Networks and Immigration

Prior to soliciting data from the respondents about social networks and immigration, it was important to ensure that respondents understood these concepts in the context of this study.

The term 'social networks' was explained to respondents as social ties amongst immigrants who have emigrated from the same country, especially those who emigrated from the same community of origin into one destination country. However, the relationship also extends to potential immigrants who are in the country of origin. Migrants in the destination country as well as those in the country of origin form large social groups, which normally communicate through phone calls and social media platforms such as WhatsApp. It is popularly known that social networks serve two distinct roles, firstly, as mechanism of information sharing between migrants in the hosts and those back home, usually about job opportunities and other economic prospects in the hosts. And lastly, social networks also serve as security nets, in a sense that they offer new migrants social security in the destination country.

Upon engaging respondents about social networks, it appeared that some respondents clearly understood the concept and even made additional comments in supporting the existing distinctive roles of social networks. One female respondent aged 45 and above providing housekeeping duties to few South Africa households in Mmabatho stated that;

> *Some of the Zimbabwean migrants, including myself came to South Africa with the help of their close relatives and friends. I remember when I first came to Mafikeng, I didn't know where I am going, but my cousin had arranged transport for me, from one of the popular malayitsha transport operators, straight from my local village in Zim to her door footsteps in Mafikeng. I didn't have any money with me, but I stayed at my cousin's house until she found out from their WhatsApp group with other Zimbabwean nationals that one of the supermarkets at town needs a cleaner. I joined the group, and through information sharing on the group, I was able to get better paying jobs as the housekeeper in of the two houses, one in Unit 14 and the other one in Unit 2 [21/05/2022].*

In line with the above observation, a young male respondent around the age of 23 commented that:

> *I came to Mafikeng through my uncle's connection. One of his friends who is a popularly known taxi mechanic around Mafikeng wanted three young mechanic assistants. So, my uncle referred me and my two other cousins to him. He'd organized transport for us from Zimbabwe from one of his trusted transport agent, whom my boss always send stuff back home with. The driver fetched each of us at our houses in Zimbabwe and delivered us to our boss's place in South Africa, here in Motlhabeng [12/04/2022].*

What can be deduced from these narratives is that beyond the role of network as mechanisms of information sharing and safety net. Networks also increase the chances of jobs with better remuneration for ordinary immigrants who are active on migrants' social network WhatsApp groups and other forms of network communications. It can also be inferred from the above narratives that there is passing of information from network members to their relatives and friends who are not part of migrants' social network groups. Therefore, social networks benefits are not only limited to affiliated members, but also reaches those immigrants who are even part of any social network. This suggests that all Zimbabwean migrants are connected to social network benefits through their relatives and friends who are network members. Nonetheless, some respondents highlighted that networks do not play a role on migration, for instance a male respondent in his earlier 30s stated the following:

> *I fled from Zimbabwe on the 3rd of September in 2008 after my house was burnt by a group of men who accused me of being an active member of MDC. I only managed to escape with the clothes I was wearing. I had no chance to call any of my people for help [28/04/2022].*

A respondent who is a street vendor commented that:

> *I didn't know anyone when I moved to South Africa in 2002, my father who provided for the family had just passed away so I came because it was hard to find a job in Zimbabwe and my mother was sick, so I had to jump the borders and look for greener pastures so that I can send medication to my mother and money for food [01/06/2022].*

Deducing from these narratives, not every migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa is facilitated by social networks, thus certain migrations of Zimbabweans into South Africa are motivated by lack of political freedom and the state of the economy in Zimbabwe.

Migration in the context of this study was explained to respondents as cross boarder movement of persons into another country. Upon engagements with respondents, it appeared that most respondents were conversant with the concept of migration. Respondents cited various motives of migration, for instance a young male respondent of around the age 35, working as a long-distance taxi driver in the N18 route stated that:

> *Migration does not only involve the cross-border movement of people but can also be internal. Which is when people move from one area to the other, which is more popular in South African, because people migrate from rural provinces like Northwest to metropolitan provinces like Gauteng and Western Cape. There are scarce employment chances in rural provinces, hence, most people migrate to metropolitan provinces, because of increased chances of employment and improved livelihood [23/05/2022].*

A similar view was drawn from a respondent of around the age of 45 years, who stated that:

> *Most African migrants, especially Zimbabweans migrate into South Africa, because the rest of the continent perceives South Africa as a land of opportunities. And it is easy for us Zimbabweans to access this land of cream because South Africa is close or near Zimbabwe [20/04/2022].*

In addition, migration was understood by a respondent who is a university female student in her early 20s as:

> *In most of African states, such as Zimbabwe the social, political, and economic climate is volatile. Due to instabilities, middle class families prefer to send out their children to South Africa, while others send them overseas to the best universities [04/04/2022].*

The essence behind these narratives is that most Zimbabweans migrate into South Africa in search of better livelihoods through job opportunities. Others perceive the proximity of South Africa and Zimbabwe as a direct consequence of increased immigration of

Zimbabweans into South Africa. While social, political and economic instability play a role in pushing Zimbabweans out of Zimbabwe into South Africa, other respondents believe that Zimbabwe has economic opportunities, but are centered along ethnic lines. For instance, a 36-year-old male respondent stated that:

> *It is within the nature of local Zimbabwean politicians to give available jobs to their families and close comrades. Nepotism and corruption are at the center of Zimbabwean government. So, the only way for many of us without families in high political positions is to migrate out of Zimbabwe and try to make living elsewhere [17/04/2022].*

Besides perceiving Zimbabwe as a country that serves its citizens along ethnic lines, others perceived it as a country that underpays its servants and corporations on the other hand offer services at expensive prices. For instance, a female responded aged 29 commented that:

> *There is a huge income difference between employees in Zimbabwe and in South Africa. Take for example, teachers neh, look at the living standard, a teacher in South Africa lives way much better than a teacher in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe underpays9809 its employees; hence you see many teachers leave Zimbabwe and come to work in South African schools [06/04/2022].*

In addition, a male respondent who is a bus driver of age 56 and owner of a car wash stated that:

> *It is difficult especially for unemployed people to survive in Zimbabwe. This is because, economic plummet has led to increased commodity prices, which makes it difficult for ordinary people to afford basic needs such as food and clothes. So, most Zimbabweans illegally crosses the Limpopo border into South Africa to search for a better live [15/04/2022].*

In accordance with the above narratives, immigration of Zimbabweans into South Africa is predominantly influenced by unfavorable economic climate in Zimbabwe. Factors that include, inability to afford life due to exorbitant commodity prices and political environment that allocate resources and economic opportunities along ethnic lines have pushed away many Zimbabwean nationals into South Africa.

From the narratives presented in this section, it is clear to the researcher that most respondents understood what the concepts, social networks and migration entailed. Respondents are for a general view that social networks are an integral part of recent migrations of Zimbabweans into South Africa. Though, there was a small number of respondents who pointed that networks do not play a role in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans into South Africa. South Africa is a migration destination to many Zimbabweans due to its closeness with Zimbabwe, liberal political and economic posture, a regional economic hub with many job opportunities and other economic opportunities.

4.2.2. Existence /and Non-existence of Social ties between Immigrants in MLM and Zimbabweans in Country of Origin

A female respondent street vendor at around the age of 45 stated that:

> *I and my family are in constant communication. I usually call to speak with my little ones that I left with my mother back home. I came to South Africa with my husband to sell and earn income so that we can pay for our kids' school fees and put something on the table [16/04/2022].*

Another respondent, a male truck driver residing in Setlopo Village stated that:

> *I have four children that reside with my wife back home, so my entire family is that side, I check on them every day and I travel to Zim every after two months [02/06/2022].*

A male builder residing in Motlhabeng responded as such;

> *My parents are old and susceptible to illness, so I usually visit Zimbabwe at least once a month to deliver medication to them and also make sure that there is older and their livestock and crops are managed properly, because I am the only boy amongst 3 ladies [11/05/2022].*

In addition, another respondent, a young female NWU student around the age of 26 stated that:

> *To this day, I' am still in close contact with my friends that are grew up with in Zimbabwe. Though it has really been years since I was in Zimbabwe, I still communicate with them on WhatsApp and Facebook [17/04/2022].*

The above narratives signify that there is an existence of social networks amongst Zimbabwean immigrants that reside in South Africa and those that are at the homeland. It appears that most immigrants from Zimbabwe migrated into South Africa to search for jobs and other economic opportunities so that they can remit back home as a way of supporting and sustaining their households in the country of origin. Nonetheless, others have migrated into South Africa to pursue tertiary education. Though considerable narrations pointed to the existence of ties between migrants and their relatives back home, some few narratives highlighted weak social ties between migrants and their families. For instance, a respondent who is a farm worker in his 40s stated the following:

> *I escaped Zimbabwe in 2001, due to political unrests. Just weeks after my arrival I was recruited to work in a farm in Coligny. I've worked in that farm ever since. I even met the mother of my five kids in the very same farm and decided to marry and built a house here in Setlopo. My kids and their mother are the only family I have. I'm legally in South Africa and I have no intensions of returning back to Zimbabwe, because my family, which is my kids, and their mother are here with me [13/04/2022].*

A similar view is shared by a respondent who said to be vendor selling clothes on the side of the road (pavement) in Mafikeng central business district (CBD), he stated that:

> *Our parents had been in Mafikeng for the past 30 years, after our grandmother's passing in 2003, they took all the three us with them to South Africa, wherein we joined the family business of selling blankets and making steel bathtubs and big steel and wood serving spoons. We only visit home when there is an important event like a funeral or wedding of a person close to us. Other than that, we do not go to Zimbabwe or send anything. Because there is literally no one to send to, because my grandparents' house had eroded [28/05/2022].*

On the same note, a female respondent who owned an internet café stated that:

> *I used to send food parcels and medication to my mother back home, since after her passing in 2010, I'd completely lost touch with Zimbabwe because my mother was the reason I had to visit and send stuff back home [08/05/2022].*

Deducing from the narratives of these respondents, the migrants' immediate family members left in the country of origin appear to be the only integral part that sustains ties between migrants and their homeland. It is only at a later stage after the immediate family joins migrants in the destination country that the ties with the country of origin cease to exist.

The majority of the respondents who are Zimbabwean immigrants residing in Mafikeng alluded to strong social ties with their relatives and friends back home. Nonetheless, only six respondents indicated firstly, non-existent ties with their homeland as a result of immediate family members who joined them in the destination country and secondly, ties that ceased to exist as result of deceased family members who were an integral part of social ties between migrants and the country of origin.

4.2.3 Remittance sending behavior amongst Zimbabweans in MLM

As already indicated in the preceding section, the respondents had indicated the existence of network ties with their families and relatives back home. As a result, Zimbabwean immigrants send different kinds of remittances back to their homeland. For instance, a male respondent who works as a teacher residing in the village of Motlhabeng stated that:

> *Commodity prices in South Africa are much reasonable and cheaper than those in Zimbabwe. I started a building project back home in Zimbabwe in 2012, and I'd purchased almost every major building item in South Africa, such as door frames, tiles, ceiling and so forth. I had saved a huge sum of money even despite the transportation costs from South Africa to Zimbabwe [21/04/2022].*

In similar a vein, a female respondent who works as a housekeeper aged 32 stated that:

> *Considering high food prices in Zimbabwe, i purchase groceries and other households' necessities in South Africa and send them along with omalayisha and sometimes with my trusted relatives and friends to Zimbabwe [05/06/2022].*

A male respondent who works as a builder residing in Setlopo indicated that:

Chinese fake brands have flooded Zimbabwean markets, and those brands do not last as much longer than brands one can find in South Africa. As such, most people which I've seen because we use same transport agents in Mafikeng, prefer to buy appliances in South Africa and send them through these transport operators, you'll see their bakkies when travelling people and goods to Zim with trailers full of appliances and goods *purchased here South Africa [12/05/2022].*

The above narrations provide an indication that Zimbabwean immigrants residing in Mafikeng remit different types of goods to Zimbabwe, and their sending behavior is influenced by high commodity and food prices in Zimbabwe. In addition, the quality of goods in Zimbabwean markets further dissuades Zimbabweans in the hosts from supporting their local brands. Be that as it may, from the narratives of respondents there are varying views with respect to financial remittances sent by Zimbabweans residing in MLM to their families and friends in Zimbabwe. A male respondent who is around the age of 45indicated that he works as a groundskeeper stated that:

> *Sending money electronically is expensive, so I normally save up to two months and on the third month when I get my pay, I deliver the money myself to my family in Zimbabwe [25/04/2022].*

Similar to the previous narration, a female full-time housekeeper who resides in Motlhabeng stated that:

> *It is too much costly when you send a small amount of money, so I prefer to save for some couple of months and send the money with omalayisha operator to give to my family in Zimbabwe. I usually give him a little gift for carrying the money to my family and I sometimes also send clothes for my kids through him [19/05/2022].*

Meanwhile, a female respondent who works as a shopkeeper residing in Lonely Park stated that:

> *Sending money to Zimbabwe electronically is more expensive than hand to hand delivery. For example, mukhuru charges more than 10% of the total amount to be remitted. It is frankly cheaper when you send money with a bus driver, malayisha transport operators or any trusted member who is travelling back home. You simply give them a hand envelope with money to give to their family back home, and in return for that you offer the person carrying your envelope a gift [06/04/2022].*

Contrary to the previous narration, a young male respondent who works as a security guard in one of the famous guesthouses in Lonely Park indicated that:

> *I send money back home every month, in my journey of sending money through people travelling back-and-forth to and from Zimbabwe, I've been scammed to a*

point where I don't trust anyone anymore. So, we decided to open a social club of consistent remitters, where we've developed a rotational roster of who is supposed to travel back home and then we give our packages to the person travelling home to give to our families. what we do is that we share the travelling costs by giving a standard incentive to a person travelling with our packages [22/05/2022].

In support of the above narration, a female vendor who has a stall at a mall and resides in Lonely Park stated that:

There is no trust and guarantee in looking for someone who is travelling to Zimbabwe and giving them your money to give to your family. There are a lot of opportunists and scammers. it is therefore safe to remit through networks of trusted friends and relatives or a trusted malayisha. We do not like to send through banks or electronically, because charges are too high, the whole money will end up paying for remittance charges and my family will just receive the little remaining amount after the banks have chewed a huge chunk of it [26/04/2022].

What can be deduced from the narratives of respondents is that remitting through official channels as well as electronically is expensive. Ensuing from the latter, immigrants opt to remit through *omalayisha* transport operators, and direct hand-to-hand delivery by remitters themselves as well as through their networks. Concerns around trust emanated, wherein migrants travelling back home take advantage of expatriates who send goods and money with them by embezzling and disappearing with the money and goods that they are supposed to deliver to the remittance recipient in the homeland. Due to the latter, migrants have developed their own close-knit networks that consist of trusted relatives and friends who reside in the same destination. Members of these networks remit through each other and incentivize a network member travelling to the homeland by sharing cross-border transport charges and border levies.

While the responses highlighted above point out that the exorbitant remittance charges in the official remittance systems as a stumbling block to most remitting immigrants from using the official remittance channels, there is a considerable number of remitting respondents who spoke about the usage of mobile electronic remittance method. The usage of electronic remittance method could be because of reasons preventing the use of banks and issues around trust in the informal remittance channels. For instance, a female respondent who highlighted that she is a lecturer in at the NWU Mafikeng campus stated that:

> *I only came to South Africa with my two children, I left my mother, my elder sister, and my younger brother in Zimbabwe. As such, I send them money on a monthly basis, I prefer to send it through mama money and mukhuru. These electronic mobile money transfers are safe, easier, and convenient other than when you send through banks or hand to hand delivery. I don't queue or travel to bus stations to hand over the money, I just reach to my phone at home and in a space of minutes I'm done with transacting [09/05/2022].*

Parallel to the previous narration, a male truck driver around the age 50 stated that:

> *I'm married with five children, with my wife and my kids in Zimbabwe, I send money home every month end. My friends have introduced me to a mukhuru mobile money app, which has since made it easier for me to send money to my family soon after I receive the salary. So, what I do is that I send money using the app to my wife, she then proceeds to Pep store or Shoprite to buy grocery and withdraw the remaining to pay her small debts and all other sorts of her stuff [13/04/2022].*

In addition to the above assertions, a female teacher in Setlopo indicated that:

> *Mobile money app like mama money and mukhuru have penetrated the remittance market, because of their reasonable secured services. I remit on a monthly basis to my mother who stays with my three children. Sending money this electronic way is fast, safe, and easy [17/05/2022].*

Another female Zimbabwean migrant, an owner of a salon who is in her mid-40s made the researcher aware of the following:

> *You see my brother, my house is in the far deep end of the village, it is amongst houses that separate two villages in the far end, so we use two taxies to reach to the town, meaning I pay twice every time I must access either a bank or post office to send money to the family in Zimbabwe. Imagen again I have to queue during month end when everybody is using banks and post offices, its tedious and draining. But the mobile electronic money transfer had cut out on the long costly process and is even cheaper and convenient as compared to going to a bank or post office. The digital transaction method is very helpfully, especially to foreign nationals in rural areas like this one, because we save time and transport money*

to access banks and post offices [21/05/2022].

Meanwhile, a male respondent street vendor his early 30s stated that:

> *Sending money through omalayisha and fellow countryman travelling back home is not safe at all, because many people got scammed by strangers and some of these omalayisha transporters. Yes, it's not a lie that banks and mobile money transfer charges more than 10% of the money you're sending, but I rather pay that than to throw away my money by giving it to my peers to run away with it. I use mukhuru and it chargers me almost 10% of the money I'm sending, but it doesn't worry me because the money is going to arrive safe to the recipient in Zimbabwe [27/04/2022].*

The above narratives provide insight into the choice and preference of electronic remittance method as a remittance avenue that is safe and cost effective. The fact that respondents had succinctly pointed out issues around mistrust in the informal remittance system suggests that many remitting migrants may have lost confidence in the informal remittance systems and had probably resorted to electronic remittance methods primarily because of convenience, security, and that the methods are cost effectiveness.

Out of 30 Zimbabwean immigrants interviewed, 13 of them indicated that they remit cash through social networks. However, the researcher established that this number is negatively affected by issues around distrust in the informal remittance systems. Such is based on past experiences with being defrauded when sending money or goods back home.. Ensuing from the latter, three respondents indicated that they opted for hand-to-hand delivery, wherein they deliver cash and goods to their country of origin themselves, while eight respondents indicated that they prefer to remit electronically because it is cheap, safe, and convenient and finally, six respondents indicated that they remit through banks and post offices.

4.2.7 Social network and Facilitation of Immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM

As already indicated in the first section, the researcher had already clarified the concepts of social network in the context of the study as well as immigration. Therefore, upon asking respondents about the role of social networks in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng, the respondents already understood the question as they had already been made aware of the concepts in the context of this study. Nonetheless, the following are perceptions of Zimbabwean immigrants on the role of social networks on immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM.

One respondent stated that:

> *It is obvious that if you'd ask around my brother, most Zimbabwean nationals before immigrating into South Africa were given the information by migrants who migrated before them about the greener pastures in South Africa. The information of such nature is either delivered back home by migrants who visit their families, or through phone calls and social media platforms like WhatsApp. And it's not a secret that even today, we still share information about opportunities in South Africa with our families and friends who possibly have wishes to also come and make a living here in South Africa. It is easy even for illegal people to cross to South Africa because South African border security officers accept bribes and again the security at the boarder lines are very weak. To be frank my brother, getting to South Africa is easy the only challenge immigrants face is xenophobia, especially our brothers in big cities like Joburg and Cape Town, but us in small cities like Mafikeng are safe [12/04/2022].*

Echoing similar sentiments was a Zimbabwean farm worker around his early 50s, who stated that:

> *You get to hear a lot of information about how rich South Africa is on opportunities, especially in the informal sector, because most South Africans doesn't appreciate manual work and less payment. With this information a lot of Zimbabweans just want to cross the border either legal or illegal because they want to make a living and break out of suffering and poverty in Zimbabwe [01/04/2022].*

From the narratives of respondents, it is clear that networks of friends and relatives play an important role of an informal conduit that transmits information about employment and other economic opportunities from South Africa to potential migrants in Zimbabwe. For the fact that most Zimbabweans engage in migration after accessing information about opportunities in South Africa suggests that it is possible that channels of information trigger a decision to migrate, thus are migration pull factors. Furthermore, from the narratives of respondents, it appears that the South African border security is penetrable and prone to bribery, hence increased influx of illegal migrants and illegal crossing of stolen goods back and forth via the border posts. Narratives of respondents also suggest that the increased influx of illegal migrants may be the cause of xenophobic sentiments and attacks because of growing illegal population of migrants in South Africa.

The latter narrative somehow placed cheap labour and low renumeration as motives behind the recruitment of immigrants. A 36-year-old Zimbabwean male shared the same view with the latter by commenting that:

> *I was recruited with my other three cousins from Bulawayo in Zimbabwe by my uncle who's married to a South African in Motlhabeng to work for him as assistantsin his mechanical workshop. Apparently, he doesn't like working with South Africans because they're not satisfied with the money he pays them and are also not willing to put extra effort by working until late and on weekends. You see, South African laws are flexible and not discriminative, because I've looked around and there are a lot of shops and mechanical workshops that are owned by foreign nationals and people from outside North West, it is rare my brother to find a welcoming community like this because in other African countries foreign nationals and people outside your area doesn't dominate economy with this rate I see in North West and Mafikeng [10/04/2022].*

Similarly, a male respondent who works in the construction industry, in his late 30s stated that following:

> *The first time I came to South Africa was with my friend who had been in Mafikeng for the past 5 years. I remember I came just as a visitor; he had paid for my transport fee and I stayed at his place for a period of two months without contributing any cent. He took me with him when he goes out, one other time we went to one tavern in Setumo Park, is like a tavern reserved only for Zimbabweans in Mafikeng, I met with a lot of his friends from different work specialization. He introduced me to his friend who is in the construction industry. After some few days his friend recruited me to work for his construction team. I have construction certificates but is not easy to secure a job in Zimbabwe like one can in South Africa. I worked for him for a year and after buying building tools and a bakkie, I broke away from his team and recruited three young boys from Zimbabwe to work under me in building houses for people around Mafikeng and other neighboring communities. To be honest, labor of most Zimbabweans is cheaper hence people prefer Zimbabweans to build for them because they're cheaper as compared to*

> *South Africans. Again, getting your own labor from Zimbabwe as the employer is also cheaper than working with South Africans, because they complain with payment and doesn't want to work over time. On weekends when you tell most South Africans about work, they'll tell you that they're drinking and working start on Monday until Friday, so South African are not hungry like us, and they want to be paid more [18/05/2022].*

Deducing from the narratives of respondents, the South African full scale free market system and its flexible immigration laws present a smooth environment for migrants to easily open and run businesses. Foreign nationals who are owners of small-scale businesses have a tendency of recruiting labour from Zimbabwe due to expensive South African labour as well as unwillingness of most South Africans to dedicate extra attention to their work, such as working for extra hours and over the weekends. Thus, foreign small scale business owners are responsible for increased immigration of Zimbabweans into South Africa, through recruitment. The propensity of foreign national small scale business owners could be a possible cause to xenophobia, because most of their business operate in the informal sector, thus do not comply to the rules of taxation, employment of locals, and social corporate responsibility.

The latter narrative indicated how a network of friends and relatives provides information to potential migrants, financial, and material support to new migrants, throughout the entire process of migration. In support of this view, a 27-year-old Zimbabwean street vendor stated that:

> *The time I crossed the border to South Africa I' wasn't familiar with the route and nothing whatsoever, however by then my boyfriend had paid omalayisha to collect me in Masvingo, that is village we come from in Zimbabwe and omalayisha delivered me directly to my boyfriend's place here in Mafikeng. I joint my boyfriend to sell clothes and fred maize corn in the side pavement of Mafikeng town. After two years he went to Zimbabwe and came with our two boys, who are now helping us in growing the business [05/04/2022].*

On the other hand, a female Zimbabwean housekeeper who is around age of 28 years commented that:

I got a housekeeping job through a family friend who worked in one of the supermarkets *at the Mafikeng mall. She introduced me to a poll of friends who are also of Zimbabwean origin. I managed to secure a better paying job in the sale industry through referral by one of her friends she introduced me to. As I also became friends with them, I realized that most of them met and became friends the same way I also did with them. The circle is getting big by time, but others pull away after securing better jobs through these social relationships [12/05/2022].*

Besides a social network's role of transmitting information and being a safety net, the latter narrative points out that networks have the potential to secure employment for its members and new migrants. Furthermore, the latter narrative also indicated that network members have increased chances of finding employment with better renumeration through referral by others within the networks.

Much as the narratives in this section shed light on the vast role of social networks on migration, interestingly some respondents hold a contrary view that not all migrations of Zimbabweans into South Africa are facilitated by social networks. For instance, a male Zimbabwean teacher around the age of 50 stated the following:

> *I was targeted by the police for being a political agent for the opposition Movement for Democratic Change. I did not feel safe, so needed to get out of that country, because it was just a matter of time for me to be detained or killed [03/06/2022].*

Similarly, a Zimbabwean woman around the age of 45 stated the following:

> *It was in 2008 when some people ambushed our house at night accusing my family for being MDC supporters and burned our house. We managed to escape in direction directions, and I slept in the bush with a two-year-old daughter, until we found a way to South Africa, because we feared for our live and our house had been burnt down. I lost everything and up to now I don't know where my husband is [13/05/2022].*

Deducing from the narration of the respondents, political violence and displacement had forced some Zimbabweans to escape and flee into South Africa fearing for their lives. Nonetheless, another considerable number of Zimbabwean migrants had migrated into South Africa as result of economic hardships that has deteriorated their social lives. For instance, a Zimbabwean migrant teacher in Lonely Park around the age of 50 commented that:

Persistent Zimbabwean economic crisis has made life difficult irrespective of one's profession, that's the reason I migrated into South Africa. It is difficult to afford life in Zimbabwe, because of skyrocketing food and commodity prices. As a professional you can't live decently like professionals in other countries, because Zimbabwean government doesn't pay us well, yet politicians live luxurious lives [14/04/2022].

A similar view was echoed by a female respondent who works as a shop staff member stated that:

Poverty forced me to leave, because with limited resources you only care for your immediate family, there are only few corporations to employ a population that is as big as Zimbabwe. The economy is mess and opportunities are very rare, so most of us migrate to country that are near like South Africa [09/04/2022].

Resonating with the former and latter, a respondent who does garden maintenance in Unit 1, in Mafikeng stated that:

Most of us come to South Africa, because there are no job opportunities in Zimbabwe, so we choose South Africa because of lot of job opportunities and is very close to Zimbabwe [17/05/2022].

The narratives of respondents pointed to the poor economic conditions in Zimbabwe, the vast economic opportunities in South Africa, and the close proximity of South Africa to Zimbabwe as motives behind immigration.

From the narratives of respondents in this section, out of thirty respondents interviewed, twenty-one had indicated that they relied on social networks to migrate. Some of them had also indicated that they initially had no intentions of migrating, but the information they received through networks sparked an interest to migrate to South Africa. Only nine respondents indicated that they did not rely on social networks, and those were Zimbabwean immigrants who fled Zimbabwe fearing to be persecuted because of being accused of supporting the opposing movement for Democratic Change. Included in the nine are respondents who indicated socio-economic disasters that pushed them to urgently find jobs and support families back home.

4.2.8 The role social networks on social cohesion and unity

Prior to engaging experiences of respondents on the possible role of social networks in promoting social cohesion amongst Zimbabweans, the researcher ensured that respondents understand the concept of social cohesion in the context of the study. Social cohesion was explained to respondents as the mutual interdependence and cooperation amongst different Zimbabwean foreign nationals. Some accounts provided insights that for the fact that there has been information sharing and material assistance to new migrants, it shows that generally there is social cohesion amongst Zimbabweans. For instance, a Zimbabwean workshop owner, who resides in Motlhabeng stated that:

> *I've recruited three gentlemen from Zimbabwe to assist with their mechanical expertise in my workshop, I've given them accommodation for the first three months and from there they went and found themselves an RDP house that they're sharing at this moment, these guys never separate, they work together and you'll always find them together, my brother you won't even believe if I'd say they come from different ethnic groups in Zimbabwe [03/06/2022].*

This narrative sheds light on the element of reliance on one another and cooperation amongst Zimbabwean foreign nationals. The strong bond amongst foreign nationals could be a result of fear to blend with South Africans by having insecurity issues by the virtue of coming from different countries. On the other hand, some accounts provided that having a common language promotes social cohesion amongst people that share almost the same identity. For instance, a Zimbabwean truck driver, who indicated that he resides in Setlopo state that:

> *One element I've realized about us Zimbabweans which make us very close with one another other than with South Africans is that the only common language we can speak and understand each other is English, so for those that can't express themselves in English won't become friends or associate with South Africans [17/05/2022].*

This narrative shed insight on the role of language in promoting social cohesion amongst Zimbabweans who share the same language. On the basis that, because there cannot be a comprehensive conservation between a South African and a Zimbabwean due to not having a common language to conversate, a Zimbabwean will prefer to be around other Zimbabweans that can speak the same language and equally a South African will do that same. However, the latter creates a great barrier and disparity on social cohesion between Zimbabweans and South Africans. It is failure of immigrants to blend with locals that causes negative sentiments and hatred between South Africans and foreign nationals, which has the potential to escalate into physical attacks.

On the other hand, some accounts have provided insights on how social network groups have forged cooperation and unity amongst Zimbabwean foreign nationals residing in Mafikeng. For instance, a Zimbabwean male, who indicated that he owns a salon and carwash commented that:

> *We have a social club in Lonely Park, and it's mostly Zimbabweans who come, it is like our social club per say, we get to meet a lot of new Zimbabwean guys and introduce each other and take it from there, I've met the circle I'm close with at that club and I've partnered with one my friends that i met at the club to open I carwash that we co-own [23/05/2022].*

The narrative provides insight on how networking with other immigrants in a social gathering forges social cohesion amongst Zimbabwean nationals of different ethnic groups. Immigrants, through social networks establish serious relations that are based on cooperation and working together in growing one another financially and in other important areas. There is an element of unity forged by social networks amongst Zimbabwean foreign nationals from different ethnic groups. In this sense, cultural incongruity between Zimbabwean from different ethnic groups may cease to exist.

The narratives in this section have shed insight on how social networks forge social cohesion amongst Zimbabwean foreign nationals residing in Mafikeng irrespective of the difference in cultural and ethnic belonging. The accounts provide that social network have the propensity to provide security and close bonds amongst Zimbabweans, thus contributing to social cohesion and unity amongst Zimbabweans from different cultural and ethnic identity.

PART TWO:

Remittances in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM

4.3.1 Migrants' Perspectives on Remittances

The earlier approach of dissecting concepts prior to engaging respondents to ensure common understanding of concepts at least in the context of the study was equally applied in this section. Prior to engaging respondents, the researcher explained remittances as migrants sending back home part of their earnings in form of either cash or goods to support their families left behind.

Upon engaging respondents about their perceptions on remittances, it appeared that some already had the insight of the positive role that remittances play with respect to the development of many developing countries. Zimbabwean immigrants maintained that money and goods remitted to Zimbabwe by migrants in South Africa assisted in supporting Zimbabwean households, ushered the survival mode during the economic crash, and revived many collapsed households, especially during periods of economic and political turmoil. A young respondent aged 32, working as a teacher at Sol Plaatjie School stated that:

> *Zimbabwe's period of economic crisis amongst other factors was characterized by high food prices and high levels of unemployment. Bear in mind that more than half of the country's population lives under poverty line, and their situation becomes more dire during economic shocks, where mortality rate increases because of inequality to afford basics like food. The cash and foodstuff we remit to our families are very important especially during economic uncertainties* [11/04/2022].

Similarly, another respondent, a female in her 30s, working as a guard at Food Lovers Market in Megacity Mall stated that:

> *At times of economic hit all prices rise very high, so instead of sending cash because it also becomes expensive and uncertain to send cash, I buy grocery in South Africa and send it with omalayishas to my family back home. Sending grocery to my family back home helps a lot because they don't feel the serious impact that economic hit has on food price and other goods [07/04/2022].*

A street vendor in his mid-40s responded by saying:

> *The cash I send to my family back home in Bembezi village in Zimbabwe every month is the only source of household income my family receives since my father retired from the mine. At least what I send them monthly can maintain them until my next pay [24/05/2022].*

On the other hand, a respondent who is an owner of a construction company stated the following:

> *Our family business collapsed during 2008 economic crush, the only way to revive the business was to migrate abroad, work hard and send money back home to revive the business. It wasn't difficult to get a job in the biggest construction company in Limpopo with a civil engineering certificate. i saved every penny I got from my job and in a space of three years I'd restored our family business to its glory. After having noticed the uncertainty of the Zimbabwean economy, I decided to stay up here in South Africa and continue to save and invest incase the economy shambles again I'll be able to send of my investments to revive and restore the business [11/04/2022].*

Similarly, a female respondent who works in a carwash in Lonely Park commented that:

> *My house got burned the night I escaped from Zimbabwe after being accused of being MDC supporter, in 2010 I started buying building material from South Africa and transporting it to my wife's relative in Zimbabwe, so that we can rebuild our house [02/06/2022].*

The above narratives of respondents indicate that remittances are a positive means of support that immigrants send to their families back home. Remittances are a source of income to many households in Zimbabwe. As such, remittances played an integral role during the economic crash by sustaining lives, and after economic shocks by restoring and reviving a collapsed economy, lives and households. Nonetheless, certain perceptions of migrants interestingly indicated that remittances negatively affect markets, and economy in the receiving country.

A respondent who owns a carwash in Setlopo Village stated the following:

A lot of foodstuffs, electronic gadgets, building material and other goods crosses the border daily in bulks from South Africa to Zimbabwe, it is even worse because some Zimbabwean residents cross the border to buy groceries and other items in South Africa and transport them to Zimbabwe, this practice undermines the growth of Zimbabwean markets and economy, because Zimbabwean people are not buying their produce and commodities. Hence, the economy of Zimbabwe is not growing, because it does not receive support from its own people [15/04/2022].

On the other hand, another respondent, a businesswoman in her early 50s stated commented that:

Remittances, especially those remitted informally benefit illegal dealers instead of the economy of both sending and receiving, because South Africa and Zimbabwean government is unable to impose a levy on hand delivery cash, as well as other items remitted informally so [28/04/2022].

These narrations indicate that remittances to some extent stifle the potential growth of the receiving country, due to lack of support to the local economy. The informal flow of money and goods also suffocates the profiting of sending and receiving countries through rates imposed on remittances.

From the narratives of respondents in this section, it is clear that immigrants understand the vast role that remittances play in developing countries. Generally, respondents are of the view that remittances play a positive role in developing and sustaining countries that are still developing and recovering from political and economic shocks.

4.3.3 Immigrants in MLM and Remittances to Zimbabwe

The narratives of respondents have already highlighted the existence of remitting behavior of Zimbabweans residing in Mafikeng. In other words, Zimbabwean immigrants residing in Mafikeng do remit cash and goods to Zimbabwe through various remitting channels. As already indicated in the previous section, immigrants remit cash and goods to support and sustain their families in the homeland. As cited earlier in the study, a female respondent who resides in Motlhabeng stated that:

Due to high prices in Zimbabwe, I prefer to buy groceries and electronic appliances in South Africa and send them to Zimbabwe with omalayisha transporters, I don't *even mind paying for transport that carries them to Zimbabwe because it is a practice I developed during 2008 economic collapse, besides, gadgets I buy in South Africa are of good quality and last more than fake brands I used to buy in Zimbabwe, and some of the items are cheap this side, while expensive back home, so I've decided that buy I'll everything here and send to Zim [05/05/2022].*

Another respondent, a tuck-shop owner in Lonely Park commented that:

I send foodstuff more often and cash when there is need, for example when my mother has to pay for my kids' school and clothes. I've adopted the style of remitting food parcel since after the 2008 economic hit in Zimbabwe, because prices haven't really gone down to the way there were before 2008 economic crisis [17/04/2022].

The narratives of respondents highlight a strong sending behaviour of goods and cash by Zimbabweans residing in South Africa to Zimbabwe. It can be noted that high food prices as result of recurring economic shocks and the quality of commodities as well as their prices are the motives behind the strong sending culture of Zimbabwean immigrants in Mafikeng. Nonetheless, there are some views that oppose the logic behind remittances of foodstuff and shed light on the exchange of currency in the black market. A male respondent in his late 40s stated that:

I haven't considered purchasing food and any items in South African and then send them to Zimbabwe, because I think it will be expensive considering tariff chargers and transport costs, so what I do is that I deliver cash myself to my family in Zimbabwe in rands currency. I then exchange it into Zimbabwean dollars in the black market, because it that way I get more because black market unlike banks and post office doesn't charger standard exchange currency [12/04/2022].

Resonating with the previous view, a another respondent who works as a teacher at Mmabatho High School and resides in Motlhabeng village commented that:

I've been remitting cash since 2001 on a monthly basis and due to increasing sending fee and currency convention fee, i got tips from my fellows and immediately after I started sending cash in rands with omalayisha transport agents, and a give them a little incentive as a token of appreciation. When this cash gets to my wife in Zimbabwe, she takes it to guys in black suits in Harare in the black *market and make currency convention into rands, and it's better with them because you get a little bit more [20/04/2022].*

The narratives of respondents highlight the negative impact of levy imposition on remittances, it signifies that exorbitant remittance chargers have instigated the usage of informal flow of cash and instigated the choice of currency conversion in the black market. In this regard, the researcher concedes and is emphatic that both sending and receiving countries do not generate any revenue either from remittance chargers or currency convention chargers. In respect to the premise, informal money flow can be of no positive impact to both sending and receiving countries, but only directly elevates individuals' life.

A respondent who works as a teacher in Rekopane Primary School stated that:

It's difficult to trust that the financial institutions of Zimbabwe can keep your money safe and grow it as per the investment expectations, the economy is prone to crush, so stead of sending money to Zimbabwe to invest it, I'd rather invest it here in South Africa and cash it out when I retire to buy land in Zimbabwe and kick start farming. You know my friend, land is very affordable in Zimbabwe, but here in South Africa is extremely expensive. We can't say there is economic freedom in South Africa, when black people can't access and own the key to economic freedom which is land [19/05/2022].

A similar view is echoed by another respondent who is an owner of a construction company commented that:

I send money to my family in Zimbabwe sometimes when they need my financial help. I invest my money here in South Africa because of the strong currency and good investment rates. The economy of Zimbabwe is unpredictable, you can't invest in it knowing that it is possible to wake up in the morning and all your money is gone because the economy collapsed. i'm saving and investing because when I return to Zimbabwe I want to open a motor spares shop together with a workshop, I came to South Africa to hustle and save money so that I can go back and start what I've always wanted to start, but couldn't because of money [26/04/2022].

These narratives indicate a lack of investor confidence in Zimbabwe due to the country's susceptibility to economic decline. Ensuing from the premise, some Zimbabwean immigrants therefore opt to invest in South Africa due to high level of investor' confidence.

These narratives also highlight that most Zimbabwean economic migrants in South Africa remit to their homeland to revive and elevate their communities through investing in shops, farming, and other business opportunities in their communities of origin.

As already indicated in the first section of this chapter that it is not all immigrants who send remittances back to their homeland. Some immigrants, especially those that had later joined their immediate families, others who had lost their immediate families, as well as those that separated with their families due to political instabilities do not remit or have social links with their homeland. For instance, a respondent who works in the construction industry stated:

> *I didn't see any growth or change in my life, apart from supporting my family by sending them money once I get paid, just after I'd went to fetch them from Zimbabwe to stay with me here in South Africa, I'm now seeing changings and growth. For example, I was able to safe and build a house for us and our kids are enrolled in one of the schools in the village, so South Africa is now my home [13/04/2022].*

A female respondent who works as a housekeeper commented that:

> *I came fleeing to South Africa after my husband was captured and arrested for being an MDC member and our house and livestock were burnt down, I don't know what happened to him till today, but I and my daughter are fine here in South Africa, because I have a job so I can provide for her and she's in school, we've nobody else but just ourselves and the lady I work for, she takes good of us and I hope if something happens to me she'll take care of my daughter [10/05/2022].*

Out of thirty respondents interviewed, twenty-four indicated that they do send cash and commodities back home, while six made up of males and females who escaped from Zimbabwe due to political repression, and other factors as such as unemployment and poverty had indicated that they do not send remittances back home. Immigrants remit cash for various purposes such as family maintenance, purposes of investment in markets and farming, while those that send goods also remit various commodities such as foodstuff and building material to revive and develop their households. Immigrants who do not remit back home indicated that it is due to nonexistence of social relations between themselves and their homeland.

4.3.3 Remittances as a possible migration pull factor

Much as the above sections have presented narratives relating to migrants' perspectives on remittances and the existence of sending behaviour amongst Zimbabwean foreign nationals residing in Mafikeng, it was also significant to enquire on the role of remittances in instigating and influencing immigration of Zimbabweans into South Africa. Many of the respondents indicated that remittances are used to cater for the primary needs of migrants' families in the country of origin. In other words, how remittances cause the migration of most Zimbabweans into South Africa. For instance, a male respondent who indicated that he provides garden maintenance to a few households during a day and is a security guard at a nightclub stated that:

> *I migrated from one of the very poor villages in Zimbabwe, where mortality is without any doubt caused by hunger, diseases, and drought. To be able to afford medication, clothes and proper food for our families is when we migrate to the cities and abroad, so I'm simply saying i came to South Africa to look for any job so that I can service the needs of my struggling family in Zimbabwe [07/04/2022].*

A female respondent in her early 40s stated that:

> *I migrated to search for job in South Africa so that i can send some of the money I earn to my family, because there is no other way to provide for the basic needs of your family other than leaving to the city or outside Zimbabwe to countries with opportunities like South Africa. People are hungry and dying from diseases and hunger, while government is not doing anything, so the only way to support your family is when you migrate, look for a job and send food, medication, and money to your family [03/05/2022].*

Another female respondent who indicated that she sews couch covers and clothes commented that:

> *The levels of poverty and unemployment are high in Zimbabwe, it is difficult for the small local businesses to generate the money used to buy services let al.one the profit. Obviously, people can't afford when they're unemployed. I got heavily indebted because I kept on borrowing thinking the local economy will get better, eventually I couldn't afford toiletries and even a mere bread. My kids were taken out of school, things got terribly bad, until I migrated into South Africa and started*

by business, it is after then that I was able to send money to settle my debts and for my kids' school fees, food, and other basic needs. Things really got better for my family in Zimbabwe since I started sending them money [09/04/2022].

The above narratives show how remittances influence many migrations. This is mainly because remittances in migrants' country of origin are primarily used to cater for the basic needs -such as food, clothes, medication and other basic needs such paying for school fees- of these migrants' family members. The latter narrative further indicates that struggling small business owners opt to migrate and start their businesses abroad because they need to generate money and send it to their families in the homeland to cater for the primary needs of their family members and settle debts incurred prior to migration.

Much as the above narrations shed light on how immigrants use remittances as an import source of funds, food stuff, and other much needed basic commodities to migrants' country of origin. The views of some respondents indicated that Zimbabwean households who send some of their family members abroad to work and remit back home can experience a better living standard as well as an elevated socio-economic status as opposed to households without members abroad to remit. For instance, a female respondent in her early 30s commented that:

In the village where I come from in Zimbabwe, you can see the inequality difference between families that have some of their people working abroad and families without their people working abroad. Those without families working outside Zimbabwe mostly live in poverty, because they only depend on crops they grow in their backyard and small pieces of land, while those with their families in other countries receive money, food packages and live better than those without families abroad [06/04/2022].

*A similar view was echoed by a*nother respondent who works as a teacher and resides in Motlhabeng, who stated that:

I've worked for almost 8 years in Zimbabwe, thou I was a teacher, a middle-class life to me was a dream. Migrating into South Africa never became a second thought, after the borders were opened to scarce skills professionals. It is only then when I started working in South Africa that I afforded my family in Zimbabwe a *proper spacious house, and I'm now also able to send them enough money to meet their monthly expenses and put some into savings [28/05/2022].*

From the former narrative, it is clear that some immigrants migrate into South Africa as a result of envy and desire prompted by witnessing the improved socio-economic standards of Zimbabwean households who have sent some of their family members to work abroad and remit back home. Thus, certain migrations are influenced and caused by remittances. Much as both the former and latter narration indicate that remittances play an elevation role with respect to the living standards of Zimbabwean households with remitting immigrants abroad, some respondents posited that even though remittances may be a cause of migration, but limited job opportunities and poverty are the main motives behind immigration of Zimbabweans into South Africa. For instance, a male respondent who works in a workshop in Setlopo indicated that:

Many families survive with money and food their family members abroad send to them, equally some of us migrate because we also wish to send money to our struggling families in Zimbabwe. But I want to tell you it is not only that, my reality is that I'd stayed unemployed for more than 7 years since I completed my N6 mechanical engineering course in 2010, and just a few months in South Africa after my arrival, I landed a job in one of the workshops in Joburg, thou I didn't stay with the company for too long, but my brother my point is yes unemployment is a crisis in South Africa, but Zimbabwe is worse. South Africa has many opportunities when you're not selective, there are lot of opportunities in the informal sector, unlike in Zimbabwe, there is no hope. So, for most of us it is better here in South Africa because you can't sleep hungry there're many things one can do to make a living [01/06/2022].

A similar view was echoed by another male respondent who is a businessman in his late 50s, by stating that:

Of course, some people are motivated by better living standards immigrants afford their families back in Zimbabwe, but most importantly poverty and struggle over few available opportunities is the reason why most of us decides to leave Zimbabwe and search for greener pastures in neighboring countries like South Africa. South Africa is a good place of business unlike Zimbabwe, and the market policies even allow us foreign nationals to freely run our businesses. What I'm *saying is that poverty and lack of opportunities is the reason we leave Zimbabwe, and South Africa attract us because of its vast economic opportunities [29/05/2022].*

These narratives indicate that beyond envy and desire prompted by remittance-receiving households as a possible migration cause factor, the respondents indicated that poverty and competition over limited resources are underlying migration causal factors. The narratives further place South Africa as a migration attraction point due to its liberal economic policies, specifically speaking to unrestrictive policies in the business environment that do not prevent immigrants from opening and running their own businesses. Respondents further allude to vast job and fertile economic opportunities that South Africa has as migration pull factor.

Much as the narratives had indicated earlier and in almost all sections that South Africa has many job and economic opportunities unlike Zimbabwe, there are three respondents out of the thirty interviewed who brought to light a posture that not all immigrants who migrate into South Africa become successful in finding employment or exploring other economic avenues to generate an income so as to remit back to the homeland. For instance, a male respondent who specializes in plumbing and tiling commented that:

My younger who studied electrical engineering stayed with me for more than 3 years in South Africa searching for a job without any luck, he only depended on few piece jobs of electrical wiring that came after a very long time, until he decided to return to Zim in 2020. He has started his business in Zimbabwe, he's earning money that he wasn't able to earn here in South Africa [26/04/2022].

This narrative indicates that though some immigrants hold important skills, there are not enough jobs in the formal sector to accommodate all professionals in the country, hence the level of unemployment is high even amongst skilled people. On the other hand, a certain perception of a respondent shows the possible implications of having an increased influx of young unskilled Zimbabweans in Mafikeng. A young female respondent around her 20s, indicated that she's a student at NWU commented that:

We've had many Zimbabweans who're roaming the streets of Setlopo, and most of them had left school to look for jobs in South Africa. It is a mistake that is equally shared by their parents that is going to affect all foreign nationals because *population of Zimbabweans is growing too much in Mafikeng, and once many of the young foreign nationals go hungry, they'll begin to get involve in shady deals that will cause xenophobia between South Africans and Zimbabweans [13/05/2022].*

A similar view was echoed by a male respondent who works as a street vendor, when stating that:

Young Zimbabweans drop out of schools to search for jobs in South Africa, and it is difficult for them to find jobs because they don't have necessary skills for the available jobs [03/06/2022].

The narratives of respondents indicate that there is a growing population of unemployed young Zimbabwean immigrants in Mafikeng. The former narrative brings to light the potential risks of xenophobic attacks between locals and Zimbabweans due to the growing population of Zimbabwean immigrants in a small town that does not have enough employment opportunities.

The narratives in this section have shown how remittance receiving families in the homeland has influence on migration because potential migrants' envy and longing for the elevated socio-economic statuses of remittance receiving households. As such they also migrate to search for employment and other economic opportunities abroad so that they can generate an income and equally remit back to their families. In this regard, migration is prompted by remittances.

PART THREE:

Social networks in facilitating remittances to Zimbabwe

4.4.1 Efficacy of social networks on remittances

As already indicated in the introductory sections of both first and second parts of this chapter, prior to interrogating in-depth experiences of respondents on social networks and remittances the researcher had familiarized respondents with the concepts in a manner that these concepts are applied and used in the study. For instance, the term social networks was explained as social ties that immigrants have, especially those that migrated from the same community, and these relationships also extend to non-emigrants in the homeland. While remittances were explained to the respondents as the act of sending part of their earnings back, in form of either cash or goods by migrants to give support to their family members who are left in the country of origin.

Upon engaging respondents on the capacity of social networks as a possible remittance conduit that immigrants can utilize to remit money and commodities to their country of origin, it became clear that some Zimbabwean migrants in Mafikeng have established various social ties and groups within which they share information and equally use to send remittances to their country of origin. For instance, a female respondent in her mid-30s stated that:

> *It was in 2019 when I joined our WhatsApp group, which is made of some Zimbabweans residing in Mafikeng, in the group we actually help each other find jobs, like when you hear that there is job opportunity somewhere you post about it and share information with people interested. Again, when one of us need to travel to Zim, you ask in the group and they'll give you full information about the malayisha that will be transporting people and stuff to Zimbabwe [12/04/2022].*

A similar view was echoed by another respondent who is a retail store cashier in her early 30s, commented that:

> *I come from the same village with six friends of mine that also works here in Mafikeng, so when one of us go home we give the person going home our packages and envelopes to give to our family at home [10/05/2022].*

These narratives indicate how social relations and associations amongst Zimbabweans are used to secure courier services for migrants' money and commodities to their families in Zimbabwe. What can also be deduced from the former narration is that network ties are information conduits in a sense that they have the capacity to inform network members about available employment around them. Moving further, immigrants are of the view that remitting through networks is more convenient than using other avenues. For instance, a n female respondent in her 40s stated that:

> *Before, I used to travel to Joburg to fetch a bus that drives to Zimbabwe and find someone in the bus to send my stuff with them then my family will have to locate and wait for the person I've sent the stuff with, but ever since I've joined the group, I can access phone numbers of the omalayisha going to Zimbabwe and book a space, they come to my house to fetch my stuff and deliver them directly at my house in Zimbabwe [01/06/2022].*

Similarly, a male respondent who operates as a transport agent (omalayisha) commented that:

> *I feel pity for our people who don't belong to our groups, because there's too much comfort in them, our regular clients can ask for favors when they're broke, so we pin a verbal agreement that we offer them our services and then they pay us later on the agreed date when they get paid. Sometimes others complain about the money we charge, so they're able to negotiate the price down and you can't leave them because you'll be losing people that bring you money [08/05/2022].*

These narratives indicate the convenience that social ties or groups afford to their clients. For instance, the former narrative shows how clients no longer travel to access services, instead, transport operators reach out to clients to collect their packages and still deliver them to migrants' doorsteps in the country of origin. The latter narrative also indicates the benefits of social ties or groups that immigrants who are regular clients of transport operators have the liberty to access services on credit and that operators are flexible in a sense that clients can negotiate for a discount, unlike in the official channels where charges are rigid. Eighteen out of thirty respondents interviewed indicated that they rely on social ties groups to remit cash and commodities to Zimbabwe. The social ties groups that immigrants depend on to remit cash and packages to and from Zimbabwe include *omalayisha* transport operators as well as affiliated network members. Transport operators are network members by virtue of their relationship with other members, though operators provide their services with costs. While affiliated network members in their kinship and courteous manner can also bring along their friends' parcels whenever travelling to or from Zimbabwe.

4.4.2 Deterrence in accessing official remittance systems

The existence and usage of social networks as migrants' remittance channels from South Africa to Zimbabwe and vice versa clearly signifies that there are factors preventing immigrants from using formal remittance channels. One common global factor that is also listed by respondents in this instance as a stumbling block to accessing official remittance channels is the high costs of remittances. A female respondent in her mid-50s shared the same view by stating that:

> *It is more expensive when you send money through the banks and post offices than when you send it with a bo malayisha or people travelling to Zimbabwe* [11/05/2022].

A similar view was echoed by another female respondent in her 30s, by commenting that:

> *The costs of sending cash increases every year and around 2015 FNB MoneyGram for 500 rands charged almost 150 rands, and this excludes chargers that were incurred in the receiving country, so banks are worse hence we opt for hand delivery or electronic money transfers like mama money and mukuru [01/05/2022].*

These narratives show how exorbitant remittance charges in the financial remittance markets prevent Zimbabwean immigrants from using formal remittance systems. Instead, these immigrants opt for hand delivery and mobile money transfer systems due to the low remitting rates as compared to formal channels. On the other hand, respondents allude to the long distance between their places of residences and the location of financial institutions as another factor that deters access to the financial remittance systems. For instance, a male respondent who transports school children commented that:

> *There are no banks and post offices close to our places of residence, which means that for us to access banks or markets like PEP Store and Shoprite to send money, we've to use transport which are other costs to travel to town and our families on the other side as well have to use transport to go to town to access markets and*

banks. S, its transport costs for both me and my family that side and remittance fees as well as [19/04/2022].

This narrative indicates that the unavailability of financial institutions in the rural localities where immigrants dwell has negative financial implications on remitting. This is in a sense that immigrants and remittance recipients accumulate transportation costs. Thus, transportation costs to access financial institutions and markets as well as high remittance charges are a stumbling block to remittance receivers and senders equally, hence others opt to remit informally.

On the other hand, a female respondent who works as a housekeeper commented that:

Long queues are tiring, and the queues in banks and stores become too long especially towards end of the month and the begging of the month during grants payments. Sometimes we just make peace with standing in queues for too long, because our families back home will be in serious need of money [20/05/2022].

A male respondent in his mid-20s stated that:

Most of our people especially those without education avoid going to banks because they're subjected to complicated processes such as filling of forms and verification processes and all these processes are carried out in English which most of us don't speak and understand, so using services of the banks becomes a problem unless you go with someone that will help in translating [18/05/2022].

The former narrative indicates that queuing, especially during peak moments becomes discouraging, which may cause a loss of interest in using financial institutions to remit. The latter narrative shows how the usage of English as language of interaction between clients and service providers in the financial institutions serve as a stumbling block to immigrants who do not comprehend English. In addition to factors that deter immigrants from using official remittance channels, a male respondent working as a security guard stated that:

My brother what discourages most of us from sending the money using banks is that banks want a lot of documents from us, and sometimes we don't have all those documents, I mean for example some of us who reside in the informal settlements can't provide proof of address, because we don't have it [12/05/2022].

In supplementing the above view that banks prevent immigrants from accessing their services due to rigorous requirements of documentations, another female respondent who sells fruit and vegetables in Mafikeng taxi rank was of the view that:

> *I don't know exactly where do banks expect us to get pays lips from, because most of us work in the informal sectors so there are no pays slips involved [11/05/2022].*

These accounts provided insights on the role that financial institutions play in creating a barrier between immigrants and banks. Financial institutions' rigorous requirements of documentation such as proof of address and payments deter immigrants who may not have these documents from accessing and utilizing formal systems. As such, banks inadvertently promote the usage of informal remittance systems, especially amongst immigrants that work in the informal sector.

Beyond the latter accounts that rigorous requirement of documentation by banks dissuade immigrants from accessing financial institutions, other respondents are of the view that informal remittance channels contribute to illicit dealings and tax evasion. This observation was buttressed by a male respondent who works in a car wash in Motlhabeng, when he stated that:

> *You'd be surprised that cross-border operators cross at night and not in the border posts, my brother this should tell you that these guys are into some discreet shady dealings [16/04/2022].*

Similarly, a female respondent in her 40s commented that:

> *Some of the operators don't want us to go back of the car where our loads are stored and even near the trailer, they insist on unpacking your loads without you near or helping, you'd swear some illegal stuffs are being hidden [19/05/2022].*

These accounts shed light on the suspicious conduct of cross-border operators, as respondents suspect that some operators are involved in serious criminal activities. The behavior displayed by these operators may pose a threat to clients and this may lead to loss of clientele due to fears and suspicions of being criminal accomplices.

Other than the latter account that informal remittance systems are avenues of criminal dealings, some accounts specifically presented tax evasion as another criminal activity that informal remittance channels promote. For instance, a male respondent who is a truck driver commented that:

> *When we send cash and goods in the informal routes, we're avoiding to pay tax, and unfortunately that's the cheaper route because sending money formally is expensive [03/06/2022].*

A similar view was echoed by a female respondent in her mid-20s, when stating that:

> *Cross-border operators don't pay goods tariffs, they use illegal entry points to avoid paying [12/05/2022].*

These accounts provide insights on how informal cross-border operators evade tax. The former narrative indicates that immigrants who utilize informal channels do not contribute to the revenue of states on the basis that their remittances cannot be taxed neither by sending county nor receiving country. Thus, the clientele of informal remittance systems does not contribute to the state development of both sending and receiving countries.

The narratives of respondents in this section have shed light on various factors that deter immigrants from accessing the official remittance systems. It appears that exorbitant remittance charges and rigorous requirements of documents by financial institutions are the main stumbling block to many immigrants from accessing official remittance systems.

4.4.3 Social networks on remittances, trust issues and other concerns

The first section of this part, presented experiences of immigrants on the usefulness of social networks as migrants' remittance courier. However, much as immigrants rely on social networks to send remittance to their country of origin, certain accounts provide insights on issues around the discomfort and mistrust as being prevalent in this remittance system. For instance, a male respondent who works in the construction industry stated that:

> *Sometimes I feel cheated by cross-border operators because I can be charged a lot just to send some few and small amount of items [01/06/2022].*

In supplementing the above view, a female respondent who indicated that she is a utility staff member at NWU stated that:

> *I remember one time I was sending only medication and few electrical appliances, and I was charged the same amount as the person that was sending three times*

the package I was sending. Obviously, I felt like I was paying for people who sent more stuff than I did [29/05/2022].

The narratives of respondents indicate a lack of consideration by cross-border operators when imposing and determining charges on different items that are remitted. It is therefore evident that some clients are overcharged while others are undercharged. Hence the expression of the account that in extension some immigrants pay tariffs for those that are undercharged. On the other hand, a cross-border transport operator commented that:

Certain clients insist on discount, while others complain about over charges, so our people will always complain, especially when money is involved, they don't want to pay, my brother look at how petrol price is shooting high, and the tariffs charges at borders are also high [05/04/2022].

This account provides justification on high costs of remittances because of increasing petrol price and tariff charges. However, it still does not provide an answer to an equal amount that is imposed on every immigrant remitting despite the volume of commodities that they are sending.

Other than the latter accounts that narrated how cross-border operators fail to determine remittance charges based on the volume of commodities that are remitted, some of the accounts presented defrauding as a prevalent criminal activity that is difficult to combat due to the illegal nature of this remittance system. For instance, a respondent street vendor commented that:

I used to travel to Johannesburg to reach to a bus that travels to Zimbabwe to give someone cash and some package so that they can give that to my family in Zimbabwe, I always gave them a little incentive to encourage them and eliminate thoughts of vanishing with the money and package. It was just this other day my brother when I gave a hard cash of about R5 000 to a 50-year-old woman who gave me her number and after the bus left she blocked me and disappeared with my money. I've looked for her in the bus station since then I've never seen her to this day [02/06/2022].

Holding a similar experience was a male respondent in his mid-40s, who commented that:

I've sent packages twice with this other cross-border operator, of clothes and food *in different plastics, I was surprised when my mother phoned me to inform me that she did not receive some of the things I told her I brought, when I called this operator guy he said someone may have taken them by mistake and I suspect he took them because it is not only me who complained about missing items to him [17/04/2022].*

Similarly, a respondent who is a housekeeper and in her early 30s also commented that:

I had an agreement with six of my home girls that whoever goes to Zimbabwe we give them our stuff to give to our families, now this other particular day we gave our cash and few items to one of our home girls, she only gave my family R1 500 when I gave her R3 500, she refused and insisted that I only gave her that amount, my brother that broke my heart because beside that I trusted her, she knows how much my family struggles and how hard I worked for that money [16/05/2022].

These narrations provide insight on issues around distrust in social ties remittance corridors. The narratives indicate how immigrants are defrauded by members of their own networks, by cross-border operators, or other immigrants. The fraudulent activities may be happening openly because contracts between the sender and the person who is supposed to deliver are merely verbal and some take advantage because victims cannot provide tangible evidence of the transaction. Remitting in the unregulated channels is risky because cases of fraud cannot be taken to the authorities as remitting via unofficial channels is illegal, as such victims can also be perpetrators.

Ensuing from the latter, some immigrants who have experiences of being defrauded opted to rely on a few typical cross-border operators and close trusted networks of family and friends. A male respondent in his mid-30s commented that:

After being scammed few times, I've decided to depend on two operators and I know where they live here in Mafikeng, in case they decide to apply the same old trick of vanishing with my money I know where to find them [02/06/2022].

A similar view is echoed by a respondent who is a street vendor and resides in Motlhabeng, stated that:

I've suffered the consequences of trusting people that I don't know with my money and parcels that were supposed to be delivered to my family, I've been scammed and it's enough. I either deliver my things myself or I send them with my brother or *with a close friend of mine that I come from the same village with [04/05/2022].*

Holding a view similar with the latter is a respondent who is a teacher stated that:

> *I no longer trust anyone with my money, so I use mukuru and mama money always, and when I know that I'll soon be going home I deliver it hand to hand myself [31/04/2022].*

The above narratives show how immigrants have lost confidence and trust in the informal remittance systems, though others continued using informal channels, they have resorted to smaller networks that consist of trusted friends and relatives as well as loyal cross-border operators. The latter narrative indicates that those that have lost confidence completely in the informal remittance systems have opted to using mobile money transfer systems and hand-to-hand deliveries are done personally. Nonetheless, the informal remittance system will remain prevalent because South Africa has a high percentage of undocumented immigrants who work in the informal sector. As such, rigorous bank requirements alienate almost more than half of Zimbabweans from accessing official remittance systems.

The narratives in this section addressed the concerns of immigrants with respect to challenges that they experienced when the informal remittance systems. Due to lack of security and concerns around remittance overcharges in the informal remittance flow, the confidence in this remittance system is slowly fading. However, much as that is the case, financial institutions are inadvertently alienating potential clients from accessing banks with the rigorous documentation requirement policy. Revision of the this red tape has the potential of attracting a plethora of immigrants to the official channels.

4.4.4 Statistics on the flow of remittances

This study relied on two official documents to source statistics on the flow of remittances from South Africa to SADC and eventually narrowed it down to Zimbabwe. It depended on fact sheets and reports by Statistics South Africa.

Fact sheets are documents containing most relevant information about a particular subject. It provides facts and key points about the topic in the most clear, concise, and comprehensive manner. In this regard, the study relied on fact sheets about the flow of remittances from South Africa to SADC region. The researcher also relied on documents from Statistics South Africa to source accurate and official statistics on the flow of remittances from South Africa to Zimbabwe.

Figure 1: Fact Sheet on remittances from South Africa to SADC region

■The total remittances from South Africa into SADC are around R11.2 billion per annum (with an estimate range of between R9.3bn and R13.0bn). Of these remittances, approximately 68% are estimated to be remitted through informal channels. ■ There are approximately 3.3 million SADC migrants living in South Africa (with an estimated range of 2.8 million to 3.7 million). Of these 68% are undocumented migrants. ■ The main source country for SADC migrants is Zimbabwe, accounting for 1.9 million migrants or 59% of the total. Most of the Zimbabwean migrants are however not documented, with only 35% having formal legal migration status.

(Fact Sheet, 2022)

Figure 2: Statistics on the population of SADC immigrants in South Africa

It is estimated that South Africa contains approximately 3.3 million individuals of SADC origin, of which almost two-thirds are Zimbabweans.

(Stats SA, 2021).

Due to the insufficient documentation and clear straight forward statistics on the flow of remittances from North West province to Zimbabwe, the researcher relied on available documents that provide estimated statistics on the flow of remittances from South Africa to SADC region. The above texts enclosed in the boxes are directly lifted from fact sheets and Statistics South Africa, respectively.

Facts sheet on the flow of remittances from South Africa to Zimbabwe clearly state that:

> *The total remittances from South Africa into SADC are around R11.2 billion per annum. Of these remittances, approximately 68% are estimated to be remitted through informal channels. The main source country for SADC migrants is Zimbabwe, accounting for 1.9 million migrants or 59% of the total. Most of the Zimbabwean migrants are however not documented, with only 35% having formal legal migration status [Facts Sheet, 2022].*

The Statistics South Africa on the estimates of SADC and Zimbabwean population in

South Africa clearly state that:

It is estimated that South Africa contains approximately 3.3 million individuals of SADC origin, of which almost two-thirds are Zimbabweans [Stats SA, 2021].

In this regard, by the virtue of North West province being part of South Africa, it therefore suggests that the province holds a portion out of 11.2 billion remittances. In addition, and from the above statistics, possibilities of remittance flow from South Africa to Zimbabwe through social networks are inevitable considering the number of Zimbabweans residing in South Africa.

4.5 Chapter Summary

Zimbabwean immigrants in the study area expressed their views on the prominent role played by social networks on migration. It can be deduced from the narratives that social networks do facilitate migration from Zimbabwe into the study area. For instance, there were prominent expressions from respondents that social networks play a valuable role on immigration of Zimbabweans into South Africa. This was based on migrants' experiences that social networks serve as channels for information sharing and provide security in terms of social or material support to new immigrants. In addition, existing social relations between Zimbabwean small business owners that operate in South Africa and their home country have the propensity to increase migration. This is on the basis that foreign national business owners prefer to recruit Zimbabweans from Zimbabwe over South Africans, because foreign nationals from Zimbabwe are desperate for work. From the narratives of respondents, fellow immigrants that are recruited from Zimbabwe are able to work extra hours and even on weekends for meagre remuneration in as opposed to many South Africans. In extension to their ability of facilitating and continuation of migration, social networks also have the propensity to forge social cohesion and unity amongst migrants.

This section presents the contribution of remittances in facilitating immigrations of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa. Judging from narratives of respondents, remittances play a role in the development of Zimbabwe as a developing nation. Zimbabwean immigrants expressed their views on ways in which remittances serve as an important source of household funds in countries of origin. Due to the economic challenges faced in countries of origin, remittances have become an essential external source of household survival and revival of many Zimbabwean households. As such, there were prominent narratives from experiences of migrants that, remittances prompt emigration from Zimbabwe to South Africa. The immigrants presented several cases of immigration of Zimbabweans into South Africa that were instigated by the desire to reside in a country that has a economic opportunities like South Africa. . This is mainly because this would provide opportunities of income for new immigrants to also remit capital and other essential goods to their country of origin. In this regard, remittances are considered to be one of the largest sources of immigration of Zimbabweans into South Africa and the MLM. Remittances should, therefore, be considered as amongst the most important factors that cause migration instead of being seen as an important source of income for survival and better livelihood to households in immigrants' countries of origin.

While migrants acknowledge that social networks are information-sharing channels and safety nets for potential and eventual new immigrants. It was also apparent from most of the respondents that there is a usage of social networks as remittance channels. This is in a sense that social networks are couriers of migrants' money and commodities from South Africa to Zimbabwe and vice versa. This remittance method falls under the informal remittance systems on the basis that it takes place through unregulated and unregistered channels. The narratives of migrants provide insights on the flow of remittances from MLM of North West, South Africa to Zimbabwe as predominantly taking place through informal remittance corridors. Amongst other factors the latter is attributed to exorbitant remittance charges and rigorous requirements of documents by financial institutions that most migrants cannot produce because they work in the informal sector and dwell in rural settlements. Thus, formal channels present barriers for remittances, as such there is a promotion of the use of informal corridors as an alternative remittance method. What was generally underscored by most respondents was that social networks amongst Zimbabweans facilitate remittances from MLM of North West Province of South Africa to Zimbabwe through informal channels.

Lastly, from the statistics provided in section 4.4.4 of this chapter on Zimbabwean immigrants residing in South Africa. By virtue of North West province being part of South Africa; it therefore suggests it contributes a portion to the 11.2 billion remittances flowing to Zimbabwe. Thus, there are possibilities of remittance flow from South Africa to Zimbabwe through social networks considering the number of Zimbabweans residing in South Africa.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion of Findings

5.1 Introduction

The central aim of this study was to source, explore, and engage the experiences of Zimbabwean immigrants on the effects of social networks and remittances on immigration of Zimbabweans into the Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West province in South Africa. The latter was achieved through a detailed empirical presentation of narratives from Zimbabwean immigrants residing in the study area. Essentially the study attempted to unearth the role that social networks play in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM; to explore how do remittances facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM; and lastly to uncover how social networks amongst Zimbabweans facilitate remittances from MLM of North West province in South Africa to Zimbabwe.

Against this framework, this chapter discusses the findings from the field that were presented in the previous chapter against existing literature review in this study.

5.2 Discussion of findings

Discussion of findings is premised on themes informed by research questions and research objectives as well as the theoretical framework as already stated in chapter three, namely:

- The role of social networks in facilitating migration
- Remittances in facilitation of migration
- The use of social networks amongst immigrants in facilitating remittances from South Africa to Zimbabwe.
- Appraisal of the applicability of theories used in the study
- Applicability of research methodologies and contributions to the study

The following sections pays attention into discussion of findings in accordance with the above mentioned themes.

5.3 A discussion on the role of social networks in facilitating migration

The influx of Zimbabwean foreign nationals into the South African rural cities, particularly into the MLM amongst other factors has been facilitated by social networks. The study found that there is an existence of social networks amongst Zimbabwean immigrants residing in Mafikeng and this extends to those remaining in country of origin. This means there is a tri-social network (social network between immigrants in the study area; networks between immigrants in the study area; and both potential and non-potential immigrants in Zimbabwe). This is more so because through these networks, immigrants pass information about job opportunities and other economic prospects from the hosts to those back home. In addition, these networks also serve as security nets in a sense that they reduce migration costs by offering new arriving migrants social or material support in the country of destination.

Besides the latter observations, this study registers that social networks amongst immigrants in the host countries have a potential to increase migrants' chances of getting employment with better remuneration. This is achieve by getting network members to refer other affiliates who earn less to available employment opportunities that offer better security and renumeration packages as compared to their current jobs.

Although it may seem as if the assistance provided by social networks on migration is confined to network affiliates, the perceptions of Zimbabwean respondents have expressed that network benefits are not constrained to only affiliated network members, but also benefit every Zimbabwean who has close social ties with a network affiliate. Interestingly, the information that is shared amongst network affiliates tends to be shared with the family and friends who are not part of social network groups. In this sense, the benefits of social networks, particularly on information sharing are not only limited to affiliated network members; but to almost all Zimbabweans who have close social relations either as family or friends of network affiliates. Thus, Zimbabweans who are not network affiliates by virtue of closely relation to network members reap network benefits.

Literature on social networks and migration provided scholarly contribution on the role of networks in transmitting information from the hosts to migrants' country of origin. This study underscores and resonates with previous studies that Zimbabweans who were reluctant to migrate may be inspired to migrate after accessing information about employment opportunities and other economic prospects in the host country as well as awareness of their relative deprivation of remittances. As such, social networks as channels of information have the capacity to induce the decision to engage in migration. In this regard, this study also points out that, beyond the existing scholarly contribution that underscores social networks as channels of information, social networks are information channels that induce migration.

Furthermore, the existence of social networks between owners of small business who are foreign nationals, and their home country contributes to further immigration in the hosts. Zimbabweans who run small businesses in Mafikeng and the surrounding villages have the tendency to recruit labour from Zimbabwe through networks that exist between them and their relatives and friends in Zimbabwe. As indicated in the findings chapter, new labour from Zimbabwe is cheap as opposed to South African labour, and Zimbabweans can display an unmatched work ethnic in sense that they are willing to work until late hours and even on weekends unlike most South Africans. Ensuing the latter, recruitment of labour force from Zimbabwe is cost effective, as opposed to employing South Africans who are said to be unwilling to work extra hours and demand to be paid more. As such, it is expensive and time consuming for foreign national small business owners to employ South Africans. As a result, potential of being employed by fellow countrymen in South Africa known through social networks also facilitates immigration into the study area. In other words, Zimbabwean small scale business owners account for the increasing immigration of Zimbabweans into South Africa, through recruitment by the use social networks.

While previous studies have only focused on the existence of social networks in facilitating migration, this study provides insights on how social networks drive social cohesion amongst Zimbabwean immigrants in the hosts irrespective of their different cultural and ethnic identity. The mutual interdependence experienced through information sharing on social network groups is a clear indication that there is social cohesion amongst Zimbabweans. As indicated in the findings chapter, Zimbabweans share a closer bond, as compared with South Africans or any other group. This is visible through their daily living in a sense that they are always with each other, and they also prefer to share places of residence. The latter signifies strong social cohesion and unity amongst Zimbabweans. The decisions to reside as a group is not only based on social networks, but it is also a security measure due to lack of trust towards South Africans. This is based on the reality of xenophobic attacks that occur in South Africa despite not having lived such experiences.

It is significant to note that blending of immigrants amongst themselves to the exclusion of South Africans creates social cleavages and mistrust between South Africans and Zimbabwean foreign nationals. Amongst other issues such as increasing immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng that may cause insecurity issues to locals, there are many other underlying insecurities and social cleavages that pose a threat to social cohesion between South Africans and Zimbabweans. This study underscores social networks as both immigration catalyst to South Africa in particular the study area; and also, as the anchor of social cohesiveness amongst Zimbabweans (both immigrants, potential immigrants and non-migrating individuals in country of origin).

5.4 A Discussion on Remittances in facilitation of migration

In most of the responses, Zimbabwean immigrants indicated that remittances play an essential role in the supplementing livelihood of households in Zimbabwe. This is because, migrants working in South Africa remit a portion of their income, while others remit commodities on regular basis to support and maintain their families and friends in Zimbabwe. Immigrants indicated that remittances are an integral external source of income to many Zimbabwean households. In a sense that remittance recipients use them to cater for the basic needs of households, such as purchasing of food and clothes, paying for children school fees and pay for medical bills and medical supplies. These findings supplement previous studies which have suggested that remittances play a fundamental role in supporting and sustaining migrants' families in the country of origin.

Beyond the latter observation that remittances are integral external source of income to various Zimbabwean households, migrants also indicated that remittances serve as shock absorbers and contingency plan during economic and political uncertainties to facilitate the survival and revival of Zimbabwean households. During economic crisis, migrants send commodities and cash to their families in Zimbabwe to reduce the impact of economic crisis on increasing prices and shortfalls in production. Additionally, post economic crisis and political turmoil, migrants equally send remittances for their families to recover and revive their households. These findings resonate with the previous scholarly contribution on the role of remittances in providing reliability as lifeline for migrants' families in the homeland, particularly in times of need.

The narratives of immigrants have revealed that to some extent immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng is prompted by the desire and envy of socio-economic statuses of remittance receiving households in Zimbabwe. Amongst the profound finding that the current study registers, is the fact that remittances are amongst fundamental factors causing migration. As indicated in the findings chapter, this is more so because families without members abroad to remit back home, through observation of remittance receiving households, can realize how they deprive themselves of remittances that have the potential to elevate their socio-economic statuses. As such, envy of remittance receiving households and realization of remittance deprivation, certain families opt to send some of their members abroad to work and send remittance back home.

While existing studies underscore remittance as a source of income, livelihood, and survival in the country of origin; this study provides new empirical insights that to some extent immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng is prompted by the desire and envy of socio-economic statuses of remittance receiving households in Zimbabwe. As such, this study provides new knowledge in that remittances are amongst fundamental factors causing immigration of Zimbabweans into the study area. In essence that migration is induced by positive impact that remittances make in remittance receiving households, which is what this study significantly underscores.

5.5 A Discussion on Social networks amongst immigrants in facilitating remittances from South Africa to Zimbabwe

The literature that exists on social networks and remittances have established that social networks amongst immigrants play an integral role in facilitating remittances. The study also makes similar findings that immigrants use social networks as informal couriers of migrants' cash and commodities from South Africa to Zimbabwe and vice versa. Besides the primary purpose of networks being sources of information as recounted in the literature, Zimbabwean immigrants in Mafikeng have established various social network groups within which they use to send remittances to Zimbabwe. As indicated in the findings chapter, when network members engage in a journey to Zimbabwe, other affiliates give them their parcels to give to their family members in Zimbabwe on their behalf. As such social networks serve as informal remittance conduits to network members.

Zimbabwean immigrants are of the perception that it is more convenient to remit through social network affiliates and cross border transport operators. Remitting through these informal methods does not require travelling to access services, for instance, as indicated in the findings chapter, cross-border operators reach out to clients to collect cash and commodities and deliver it directly to migrants' places of residence in Zimbabwe. In addition, cross-border transport services are more flexible than formal remittance channels, in a sense that regular remitters can access remitting services on credit and clients can negotiate for discount whenever there is a feeling that prices are too high. This is contrary to the official channels where remittance charges are rigid. The latter resonates with existing scholarly work on networks and migration which alludes that sometimes informal remittance operators offer their services on credit to regular clients.

The use of social networks and other informal remittance methods is a clear indication that to some extent there are factors that intercept immigrants from using official remittance systems. Amongst many other factors, migrants listed high costs of remittances as a fundamental factor that avert immigrants from using official remittance channels. The latter finding supports previous and existing literature on factors dissuading migrants from the use of formal remittance channels. Due to exorbitant remittance charges in the financial institutions, migrants opt to use social networks, hand delivery, and mobile money transfer systems to send remittances as result of low remittance costs in those remittance channels.

Apart from remittance costs in the official institutions as the fundamental factor intercepting the use of formal remittance systems, unavailability of the financial institutions in the rural localities where migrants dwell causes further accumulation of remittance costs. Migrants sending remittances and remittance recipients who are residing in villages incur more costs because they have to pay transport fees to access remittance markets in the nearest malls and towns. Furthermore, more than half of Zimbabwean population in Mafikeng consist of low skilled informal sector workers, who do not comprehend English as result of a lack of basic education. As such, language becomes a barrier between those immigrants and bank officials, this in turn discourages those immigrants from using official institutions. The latter relates to what is presented in the literature that language is a barrier to accessing financial institutions to send remittances.

Financial institutions seem to be a major barrier for sending remittances. This is because of the rigorous requirements of documentation such as proof of address that deter immigrants from accessing official remittance sites, especially those that work in the informal sector. For instance, most immigrants residing in informal settlements cannot provide proof of address in order to utilize official financial institutions to remit. These narratives resonate with what the literature speaks of in relation to the role that financial institutions play as gatekeepers for immigrants to utilize official remittance channels.

Thus, immigrants working in the informal sector and those that reside in the informal settlements do not use formal financial institutions to remit due to lack of either proof of remuneration or proof of address, as such they are isolated by rigorous documentation requirements set out by these institutions from accessing official remittance systems. In this vein, financial institutions inadvertently promote the usage of informal remittance systems, especially amongst immigrants who are working in the informal sector and residing in the informal settlements.

Other accounts of Zimbabwean immigrants indicated that informal cross-border operators provide channels to evade taxation on financial remittances. From the narratives of respondents, it appeared that; Zimbabwean immigrants who utilize informal channels do not contribute to the tax revenue of both the sending and the receiving countries on the basis that tax cannot be imposed on cash remitted through informal corridors. As such, the clientele of informal remittance systems does not contribute to the development of states through tax contributions. This study has also revealed that tax is evaded to a greater degree in the receiving county because receiving households make currency conversions in the black market. Conversion of currency in the black market is motivated by the perception that currency exchange rates in the black market are better than bank rates. In addition, migrants indicated that the black market is flexible in a sense that remittance recipients can negotiate for slightly better rates, unlike in the banks where rates are rigid and cannot be negotiated.

Besides the above observations, immigrants have pointed out to mistrust issues in social network remittance corridors. As indicated in the presenting of findings chapter, immigrants are defrauded by members of their own networks and cross-border operators as well as other immigrants. The fraudulent activities are prevailing openly because contracts between the sender and the person given remittances to deliver at migrants' country of origin are merely based on verbal agreements. Against this backdrop, remitting agents sometimes take advantage by either disappearing with remittances or embezzling a portion of remittances because victims cannot provide tangible evidence to the authorities. Additionally, remitting through unregulated channels is risky because cases of fraud cannot be reported to the authorities since remitting in unofficial channels is illegal and victims can also be perpetrators. As a result of having been defrauded before, immigrants opted to rely on a few loyal cross border operators they regularly use as well as small networks of trusted family members and friends.

In this vein, immigrants have lost confidence in the informal remittance systems due to compromised trust by cross-border operators and network members. This has led to the reduction of large social networks to smaller networks that consist of trusted friends and relatives as well as loyal cross-border operators. In addition, migrants who have completely lost confidence in the informal remittance methods have opted to using mobile money transfer systems as well as hand-to-hand delivery by themselves. Nonetheless, the informal remittance system will remain prevalent because South Africa has a high percentage of undocumented immigrants who work in the informal sector and dwell in the informal settlement, as such rigorous bank requirements alienate them from accessing official remittance systems.

5.6 Appraisal and Applicability of Network Theory

Social network theory attempts to explain the role of interpersonal links amongst community members in facilitating migration. Migrant networks involve various circles of personal relationships that tie former migrants, migrants, and non-migrants in places of origin and destination, through friendships, kinships, and shared community of origin. These networks provide potential migrants with important information about the host country, as this study provided evidence of applicability of social network theory. This is because from the narratives of respondents, social networks were found to be gateways in facilitating migration. Thus, network members are privy to the information about the receiving country, such as prospects employment and economic opportunities, as well as the benefits and risks of being integrated in the host communities.

In this vein, networks can induce further immigration into the MLM. This is because potential migrants from Zimbabwe, through networks in MLM gain access to information about opportunities in the study area. In this regard, networks between Zimbabweans residing in the study area and those in Zimbabwe reduce the risks and costs of cross-border migration between the country of origin and the destination.

As indicated in section 5.6.1, networks of friends, family and kingship facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into South Africa through information sharing and material support to arriving and potential immigrants coming from migrants’ country of origin. Network theory only provides an exposition of immigration into South Africa and fails to account for the emigration to the country of origin. The study has discovered that beyond the ties of friends, family, and kingship as source of immigration into the hosts, such networks also have the capacity to facilitate emigration of Zimbabweans back to Zimbabwe, which network theory fails to capture.

In this vein, networks can facilitate cyclical migration, in a sense that social networks facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into South Africa and facilitate emigration of Zimbabweans from South Africa to Zimbabwe. Through networks of *malayisha* transport operators, migrants can request *malayisha* to transport their family members and friends from Zimbabwe into South Africa and transport them back to Zimbabwe. As such, there is cyclical migration of Zimbabweans facilitated by networks.

The findings of the study suggest that beyond network theory's preposition on migration facilitation, social networks have the capacity to facilitate cyclical remittances. Immigrants in the host country use networks of *malayisha*, friends, family, and kinship as couriers of cash and commodities from South Africa to Zimbabwe. In extension, immigrants also utilize these networks to remit some goods from Zimbabwe to South Africa. In that sense, there is cyclical remitting using social networks.

5.7 Appraisal and Applicability of Neoclassical migration theory

Neoclassical theory which is rooted in early scholarly attempts to explain labour migration in relation to economic development. One of the key famous Neo-classical theory's prepositions that the study adopted states that migration is primarily caused by human's rational consideration of economic costs and benefits. As such, the theory provides an exposition on Zimbabweans in using networks as counter migration risks and costs to migrate into South Africa, as a regional economic hub with plethora of job and economic opportunities that migrants exploit to their financial gain. Through those financial benefits, migrants can remit their financial earnings from the hosts to their country of origin to develop their nations.

Neo-classical theory of migration provides a sufficient explanation that prior to migrating, migrants engage in a costs and benefit analysis of migration by gauging migration costs and migration returns. Much as costs and benefit analysis is a relevant determining factor of migration, generally the findings of the study indicate that relative deprivation of remittances is sacrosanct in influencing migration of Zimbabweans into South Africa. The essence of neo-classical migration theory is that people migrate because migration costs are less than migration returns. However, much as certain narrations of respondents resonate with neo-classical assumption of costs and benefits analysis, the general finding of the study is that most Zimbabweans live in poor hopeless environments and a realisation of relative deprivation of remittances through remittance receiving households becomes a determining factor of migration. Thus, remittances through awareness of relative deprivation of remittances become a migration push factor.

5.8 Appraisal and Applicability of Pull and Push Theory of Migration

Pull and push theory of migration asserts that people migrate because of existing factors that push them out their country of origin and factors that pull them into a new destination. This theory posits that push factors are aspects that drive people away from their original places of residence to new destinations. Ordinarily, push factors are coercive in a sense that they pose security threats, either violence or loss of financial security push people away from their places of origin to a new destination. On the other hand, this theory asserts that pull factors are positive aspects in a different country that encourage people to immigrate to seek a better life. Much as it appears that these factors are diametrically opposed, they both come into play whenever there is consideration to migrate into a new destination.

The pull and push migration theory resonates with the findings of the study in that it provides expositions on pull and push factors of Zimbabwean migration into South Africa. In line with the theory, this study found that push factors that posed political security threats, such as political persecution, political violence, nepotism, and unfair distribution of resources as factors that coerced most Zimbabweans during political turmoil out of Zimbabwe into South Africa. Additionally, the study also found economic insecurities such as perpetual economic recessions which caused increasing inflation of commodity prices and high levels of unemployment as economic factors that pushed most Zimbabweans out of Zimbabwe into South Africa. Other social factors that are responsible for pushing most Zimbabweans out of Zimbabwe into South Africa include poverty, poor health infrastructure, and inadequate facilities in learning institutions, and low renumeration which has resulted in many teachers in Zimbabwe migrating to offer their services in neighboring countries that offer better renumeration.

In line with pull and push migration theory, the study found that there are pull factors that attract Zimbabwean immigrants into South Africa. The study established that most Zimbabweans migrate into South Africa because of its regional economic hegemony in

SADC, as such proximity and plethora of job and other economic opportunities act as migration pull factors to many Zimbabweans. Beyond economic pull factors, the study also found that South Africa has receptive migration policy unlike other states. Teacher who originate from Zimbabwe indicated that South Africa offers better salaries, hence most of them migrate to work in South African learning institutions.

Much as pull and push theory of migration can provide sufficient exposition of factors that pull Zimbabweans into South Africa and factors that push Zimbabweans away from Zimbabwe, the theory falls short of capturing how awareness of relative deprivation of remittances can be migration push factors. This is because, families send some of their members abroad to work and send remittances back home after being aware of relative deprivation of remittances through remittance receiving households. In this regard, migration is induced by positive implications that remittances have on Zimbabwean households that receive remittances.

5.9 Chapter Summary

The scholarly discourse on social networks and migration scholarship states that networks afford potential migrants information and material assistance through migration process. Beyond the fact that networks induce migration through information access and material support that minimizes migration costs, the study also discovered that foreign national who own small scale businesses are responsible for increased influx of other foreign nationals into the country. This is through the recruitment of cheap labour from outside South Africa, thus circumventing social corporate responsibility. Besides the latter finding, this study discovered that social networks are capable of forging social cohesion between ordinary immigrants and new entrant migrants. New migrants prefer proximity with ordinary migrants who share same country of origin and that is a security measure following realities in South Africa pertaining to hostile relations between locals and foreign nationals.

The popular discourse and assumption on remittances and migration scholarship is that as the external source of income that contributes to development, remittances play an integral role in the development of the developing nations. This study found that remittances are migration push factors, in a sense that awareness of relative deprivation of remittances push family members to send some of their members abroad to work and remit. Thus, remittances induce migration with the intention to remit.

This study concludes that the subject of migration and networks is understudied in a sense that beyond scholarly contribution that networks facilitate migration through information sharing and material assistance, networks are remittance corridors. This is in a sense that networks of *omalayisha*, family, friends and kinship serve as remittance couriers of cash and goods from South Africa to Zimbabwe and vice versa. Networks of o*malayisha* operators provide their services in exchange of cash, while networks of friends, family and kinship is based on reciprocal relations.

CHAPTER SIX

Major Findings, Recommendations and Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

The fundamental aim of this study was to explore the effects of social networks and remittances on Zimbabwean immigration into Mafikeng. The latter was achieved through an empirical analysis of narratives of Zimbabwean immigrants. The previous chapter significantly discussed and analyzed the role of social networks in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM; remittances in facilitating immigration of Zimbabweans into MLM; and lastly social networks amongst Zimbabweans in facilitating remittances from MLM of North West province in South Africa to Zimbabwe and vice versa.

Against this backdrop, this chapter presents major findings and concludes by proposing alternative and new theories for further research and testing of applicability on the subject area under inquiry. Finally, this chapter proposes some policy recommendations.

6.2 Summary of key findings

The findings to the three research questions are summarized below:

Research Question 1: In what ways do social networks facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa?

- Social networks induce migration, more so because accessibility of information about job opportunities, economic prospects in the hosts, as well as security through material assistance which minimizes migration costs have the capacity to induce migration.

- While many respondents have expressed the advantages of belonging to network groups, the benefits of social networks are not limited to network affiliates only, but also benefit nonaffiliated immigrants who have ties to network members, through information sharing taking place between a network member and a none network affiliate. Thus, social networks have the potential to facilitate migration of none-network members.

- Networks between owners of small scale foreign businesses have the propensity to induce further immigration into the hosts, through recruitment of external labour from business owners' country of origin.

- Social networks forge social cohesion amongst Zimbabwean immigrants in the hosts and these networks can also forge social cohesion between ordinary Zimbabwean migrants and new arriving Zimbabwean migrants in the hosts.

Research Question 2: How do remittances facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into Mafikeng Local Municipality of North West Province in South Africa?

- Remittances are migration push factors in a sense that awareness of relative deprivation of remittances induce decision to migrate with the intention to remit.

Research Question 3: How do social networks amongst Zimbabweans facilitate remittances from Mafikeng Local Municipality of North-West Province of South Africa to Zimbabwe?

- Respondents expressed that the existence of social networks amongst immigrants is not only limited to facilitating migration through information sharing and material support, but networks have the potential to serve as remittance channels.
- Networks of *omalayisha*, family, friends and kinship serve as informal couriers of migrants' cash and commodities from South Africa to Zimbabwe and vice versa.
- While networks of omalayisha provide remittance services in exchange of monetary transaction, networks of friends, family and kingship are based on reciprocal relations and sometimes little financial incentives.

6.3 Original contribution to knowledge

The fundamental contribution that this study makes to the social scientific knowledge is the light it sheds on the conventional and scholarly understanding of social networks and remittances on migration. While existing scholarly discourse presents social networks as information sharing channels and security nets for new migrants, this study presents evidence that shows that social networks serve as remittance channels. In a sense that networks of *omalayisha*, family, friends, and kinship serve as couriers of migrants' cash and goods from destination country to migrants' country of origin and vice versa.

Furthermore, while the literature presents that remittances are external sources of income in migrants' country of origin and that such remittances contribute to the development of remittance receiving nations, this study provides scholarly evidence that remittances are migration push factors. More so that awareness of relative deprivation of remittances through remittance receiving households push other families to send some of their members abroad to work and remit. In that regard, remittances induce migration.

To a substantial degree this study has debunked how social networks facilitate migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa and verse visa. The study has also unpacked the way that these networks facilitate remittances from South Africa to Zimbabwe and verse visa. Finally, this study has revealed how remittances cause migration as a result of awareness of relative deprivation of remittances.

6.4 Theoretical propositions and ideas for further research

6.4.1 Theoretical propositions

From the findings and discussion of such findings against existing literature and theories, the researcher proposes the following elucidated theoretical propositions:

(a) Cyclical migration network theory

The study argues that social networks have the capacity to facilitate immigration of Zimbabweans into South Africa and again facilitate emigration back to Zimbabwe. In this regard, social networks can facilitate cyclical migration. Hence the study proposes cyclical migration network theory, which provides a theoretical exposition that social networks can facilitate movement of people into a destination country and again facilitate movement of people from a destination country to the country of origin.

(b) Cyclical network remitting theory

Besides the latter proposition, the study further discovered that social networks facilitate remittances. Through social networks, migrants can send remittances to their country of origin and again use these networks to remit goods from their country of origin to their destination country. In this regard, there is cyclical remitting, hence the study proposes cyclical network remitting theory. Which makes theoretical preposition that immigrants can remit to their country of origin and from their country of origin to their destinations through the use of social networks.

(c) Relative deprivation push factor theory

Finally, the study argues that remittances are migration push factors, as result of awareness of relative deprivation of remittances. In this regard, awareness of relative deprivation of remittances pushes families to send some of their members abroad to work and remit. As such, relative deprivation of remittances induce migration, hence the study proposes relative deprivation push factor theory which gives theoretical exposition that awareness of relative deprivation of remittances is a migration push factor.

6.4.2 Ideas for further research

There is therefore a need for researchers to test applicability of (a) cyclical migration and (b) cyclical remitting and (c) relative deprivation push factor as proposed above in various study areas and different contexts for validity, refutable, support and/or extension at both theoretical and literature levels.

Furthermore, and seen in the literature chapter; there is insufficient scholarly contribution on the transfer of ideals, values, and foreign knowledge from one county or one continent to the other. As such, the next research agenda must attempt to illuminate remittances of ideals, values, and foreign knowledge from one country to the other.

6.5 Conclusion

The dominant discourse and assumption in social networks, remittances and migration scholarship is that social networks facilitate migration through information channels and social support to arriving migrants. However, this study found, amongst other things, that social networks serve as remittance channels. Immigrants use networks of *malayisha,* family, friends, and kinship as couriers of cash and goods from South Africa to Zimbabwe and vice versa.

The literature on migration and remittances provides that remittances are an integral external source of income in migrants' country of origin that contribute to the development to those nations. However, this study found that remittances are migration push factors, due in a sense that awareness of relative deprivation of remittances push family members to send some of their members abroad to work with the purpose of remitting.

This study concludes that social networks are channels of remittances from migrants' destinations to migrants' country of origin, and from migrants' country of origin to destinations. Moreover, the study also concludes that remittances are migration pull factors, ensuing awareness of relative deprivation of remittances.

6.7 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are provided:

- Since many immigrants utilize social networks due to high remittance costs, unavailability of formal remittance systems in villages where migrants dwell, and failure to meet documentation requirements; it is significant to create awareness on the use and requirements of mobile money transfer services.
- It is significant for financial institutional policy makers to revisit the rigorous requirements which inadvertently deter access of many immigrants from using financial institutions to remit.
- Immigration officials must consider tightening the security of borders and giving formal recognition to omalayisha operators to operate legally and with licenses so that they contribute to tax of both sending and receiving states.

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