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SURVIVAL STRATEGIES OF ZIMBABWEAN MIGRANTS IN JOHANNESBURG

Chipo HUNGWE[1]

Abstract: *The study analyses Zimbabwean migrants' strategies of survival in a largely xenophobic environment. The paper argues that exclusion of Zimbabweans in the labour market and other spheres of South Africa is largely a product of attempts by South African institutions and officials to draw boundaries separating insiders from outsiders. This inevitably limits the opportunity structure of most Zimbabwean migrants, pushing them from the formal to informal sector and further underground. Zimbabwean migrants survive by mainly concealing their identity. They adopt South African languages, ways of dressing, bribe the police and some engage in friendships, relationships and marriages with locals. Migrants also engage in self-employment, crime and church activities. The study however reveals that migrants mainly use their ethnic and religious networks, which largely promotes bonding rather than bridging social capital. Such social capital may not really help them to be integrated into the local South African community. This study is based on qualitative research conducted among Zimbabweans in the Kempton and Tembisa areas of Johannesburg, South Africa in 2012.*

Keywords: *Social networks; South Africa; Survival strategies; Xenophobia; Zimbabweans.*

1. Introduction

This study was carried out at a time when the South African economy and society and indeed the global economy was going through a lot of challenges (increase in unemployment, poverty, deindustrialisation, increase in the number of undocumented foreign migrants, demand for skilled labour and the increasing participation of South African leaders in Zimbabwean politics). This research analyses the survival tactics of Zimbabweans in the South African labour market and society in light of the following facts:

- The potentially changing official policy towards Zimbabweans (Polzer, 2009). This is evidenced by the agreements that happened between the Zimbabwean and South African governments leading to the Zimbabwe Documentation Project (ZDP)

[1] Senior lecturer and Chairperson in the Department of Human Resource Management at the Midlands State University, Gweru, Zimbabwe. Tel: 263-54-260404/260409 ext 239. Fax: 263-54-260233. Email: hungwec@msu.ac.zw /blessedhungwe@yahoo.com

carried out by the Department of Home Affairs in 2010. The project was meant to enumerate Zimbabweans in South Africa while providing those that qualified with the opportunity to apply for general work and business permits. This study analyses the situation of Zimbabwean migrants after the Zimbabwean Documentation Project.

- The high rate of poverty and unemployment among South Africans themselves (Adepoju 2008, South Africa, Department of Labour 2011).
- The tendency of locals to blame foreigners for 'job-snatching' (Danso and McDonald, 2000; Harris, 2001; Posel, 2003; Mosala, 2008; Kalitanyi and Visser, 2010).
- The high level of crime and violence in South Africa (Harris, 2001).
- The high level of xenophobia and general frustration among most South Africans in South Africa (Human Rights Watch 1998; Mattes, Taylor, McDonald, Poore and Richmond 1999; McDonald, Mashike & Golden 1999; Danso and McDonald 2000; Harris, 2001; Crush, Williams & Perberdy 2005; Adepoju, 2006; Crush and Tawodzera 2011). This xenophobia is expressed to all migrants regardless of whether they are documented/regular/legal or undocumented/irregular/illegal. Up to now, Zimbabweans still face xenophobia on a daily basis (Harris, 2002; Dumba and Chirisa 2010; Crush and Tawodzera 2011). Zimbabweans have also had problems accessing accommodation, health and educational facilities.
- That Zimbabweans are estimated to be the largest group of foreigners in South Africa (Harris, 2001; Muzondidya, 2008; Polzer, 2009).
- The active participation of certain government departments and local government authorities in deciding who gets excluded from or included into the South African community. This is supported by the reluctance to assist migrants by certain government personnel (Harris, 2001; Palmary, 2002; Solidarity Peace Trust, 2004; Human Rights Watch (HRW) 2006; De Guchteneire, Pecoud and Cholewinski 2009; Vigneswaran, Araia, Hoag and Tshabalala 2010).
- Migrants are exposed to potential human rights violations. They generally exist in a 'fragile situation' and migration is associated with the violations of migrants' physical integrity and dignity (HRW, 1998; HRW, 2006; Betts and Kaytaz 2009; De Guchteneire, Pecoud and Cholewinski 2009:3; Vigneswaran et al., 2010).

The research involved fifty eight (58) migrants; both documented and undocumented, who had been in South Africa for more than six months on a continuous basis. Research methods used were mainly semi-structured and in-depth life history interviews based on a sample size of 58 that was purposively selected. These were supplemented by moments of participant observation by the researcher as I stayed with the participants for the duration of the study. The research is mainly based on life history interviews/narratives and participant observation. Life history interviews are geared towards understanding the migrants' whole life course (Van Nieuwenhuyze, 2009). The use of the word narratives here is to emphasise the focus on how migrants create 'their stories' in explaining their life courses.

Participant observation is mainly associated with ethnographic research. In this particular study participant observation was used to gain a deeper understanding of migrants as groups with a culture that was different from the rest of the South African society. This strategy was used but only to a lesser extent. The researcher observed and participated in those communal activities such as church gatherings on weekends. The researcher attended one session of the book club frequented by middle class migrants. The researcher also visited some migrants at their workplaces observing their work environments. The researcher also shared meals with some migrants who invited her for dinner. Here the researcher observed their homes (mainly one room accommodation) and saw the kind of property, furniture and material possessions they had. According to Polkinghorne (2005) researchers can observe participants' behaviours, facial expressions, clothing and other nonverbal indications. They can also observe the environments such as homes, offices and furniture.

The sampling methods were purposive in that attempts were made to approach knowledgeable individuals such as those who had been in Tembisa for a long period of time (for example, more than 10 years) or those with special circumstances such as being entrepreneurs, or those who had successfully changed their identities and citizenship to South African through naturalisation and other methods. This was a deliberate strategy to involve 'information rich' individuals. The other deliberate purpose was including as many different men and women as possible to achieve heterogeneity. The gender ratio was maintained such that eventually there were 33 males and 25 females that participated in the study. This roughly corresponds to the male - female ratio of migrants in Johannesburg.

2. Literature review

The current era is deemed to be the 'age of migration', while the modern state is viewed as a migration state (Massey, 1999; Castles and Miller, 2009; Skeldon, 2010). Castles and Miller (2009) further maintain that the migration state is characterised by the following general tendencies: (a) the globalisation of migration where immigrant countries are receiving migrants from many source countries, (b) the growing volumes of migration, (c) different groups of migrants - for example, refugees, labour migrants, students and trafficked individuals, (d) the growing feminisation of migration, (e) the politicisation of migration issues and (f) the growing number of receiving countries that now serve as both immigrant and transit countries, for example, Spain, Italy and Greece.

In his argument concerning the 'postmodern paradox', Massey (1999:310) argues:

> While the global economy unleashes powerful forces that produce larger and more diverse flows of migrants from the developing to developed countries, it simultaneously creates conditions within developed countries that promote the implementation of restrictive immigration policies. These countervailing forces intersect at a time when artificial constraints to emigration from several populous regions have been eliminated... and when developing countries increasingly find it in their interests to promote international labour migration.

This condition is also referred to by Hollifield (2004) as the "liberal paradox thesis". Hollifield (2004: 2010) posits that migration is both a cause and consequence of political and economic change. Whereas the 20th century was dominated by what Hollifield (2004) refers to as the garrison state, contemporary migration movements are threatening the security of this state through the opening of national borders. Thus, the modern state has now increasingly become a migration state. Hollifield (2004:901) asserts that migration, particularly irregular migration, poses a security and sovereignty challenge. He further argues that "states are trapped in a liberal paradox" - where in order to maintain competitive advantage, governments must keep their economies and societies open to trade, investment and migration. However, unlike goods, capital and services, the movement of people can violate the principle of sovereignty which requires a degree of territorial closure. Thus, the modern developed state, finds itself in a very uncomfortable situation where it must regulate migration while allowing for some degree of 'openness'. Moreover, Beck (2000) argues that the world has entered a 'second age of modernity', where human rights precede international law and where the power of the nation-state is increasingly being curtailed by supra-national bodies. This is increasingly making it difficult for the nation state to regulate migration, resulting in contestations regarding migration management policies.

In some cases, these contestations have resulted in the crafting of restrictive migration policies, which involve increasing deportations, surveillance and the harassment of migrants. This has, however, not lessened the migration flows, especially those of irregular migrants who have also crafted more and more dangerous and costly strategies of migration (Lyberaki, Triandafyllindou, Petronoti and Gropas 2000; Donato, Wagner & Patterson 2008; Broeders, 2009; McDowell and Wonders 2010; Lefko-Everett, 2010; McGregor, 2010; Bloch, Sigona and Zetter 2011). While these repressive immigration laws may not be effective in the long run, they serve the political purpose of ensuring the 'visibility' of the state through law enforcement state agents. They also represent technologies of control by the state. Such a move is popular with citizens and ensures their vote. These citizens' voices have with time become louder and louder as most citizens in Canada, Germany, France, Italy, Greece, Russia, Botswana and South Africa are generally hostile to immigration and mildly xenophobic (Massey 1999; Massey, 2003; McDowell and Wonders 2010). However, it is not easy to deal with migrants.

Migration and migration management issues have taken centre stage in this new migration state such that migration has become big business. The World Bank (2011:ix) estimates that there are more than 215 million international migrants in the world, while south- south migration is higher than the migration from south to developed countries. This means that most migrants tend to stay within the region rather than travel across regional boundaries.

Castles (2002) posits that migration is a booming industry that is self-perpetuating. This migration industry is facilitated by migrant networks (Massey, 1990; 1999). Castles and Miller (2009: 201) argue that the migration industry "embraces a broad spectrum of people who earn their livelihood by organising migratory movements". The migration industry incorporates agencies in the place of origin that assist with job search, travel offers by both legal and illegal transporters, as well as businesses and services at the destination country (for example businesses selling goods such as clothing and food

'from home') (Elrick, 2008:2; McGregor, 2010). Bankers, lawyers, labour recruiters, interpreters, housing agents and brokers are among the many agents that have a direct stake in the industry and they would like it to continue despite state efforts to restrict migration. Therefore, migration (especially undocumented migration), may ensure continuation of the services of some of these agents as it has become a lucrative business and also because the migration process becomes one of cumulative causation (Donato, Wagner and Patterson 2008).

The theory of cumulative causation by Massey (1990) states that as more and more individuals migrate and create network connections in the destination country, this lowers the costs (psychic and monetary) and risks of migration, which induce additional migration and ultimately create more networks connections. These networks create social structures that maintain and sustain migration. Massey (1990:17) argues: "networks bring about cumulative causation of migration because every new migrant reduces the costs of migration for a set of non- migrants, thereby inducing some of them to migrate, creating new network ties to the destination area for another set of people, some of whom also are induced to migrate, creating more network ties and so on".

Literature tends to differentiate between 'forced'/ political migration of refugees and asylum seekers and 'voluntary migration' or economic migration caused by people's quest for better economic opportunities. However, this discussion of voluntary and forced migration is quite problematic in relation to Zimbabwean migration, especially from the late 1990s onwards. While many could argue that 'there is no war' in Zimbabwe (as were the arguments of many South African officials) to warrant Zimbabweans being regarded as refugees, the economic reality was such that for most people, failure to migrate would certainly have resulted in death, thus their movement became 'forced'; this was variously referred to as survival migration (Betts and Kaytaz, 2009), crisis migration (Crush and Tevera, 2010) and humanitarian migration (Kiwanuka and Monson, 2009). Van Nieuwenhuyze (2009) further argues that the attempt to distinguish political from economic migrants is wrong because for most developing countries, the economic challenges faced are always a direct result of certain political decisions. Therefore, the distinction only serves to label some migrants as 'bad' and undeserving (economic migrants) while others are viewed as 'good' and deserving assistance (political and 'forced' migrants).

Migrants generally argued that "things were bad" referring to the harsh economic situation that prevailed in Zimbabwe from the late 1990s onwards. For those that came after 2007 migration tended to be the last resort after all other avenues failed to deliver. The Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) country report of 2010 reveals that in 2003, 72% of the Zimbabwean population were living below the total consumption line. This percentage increased with the deepening of the economic crisis between 2007 and 2008. At the height of the economic crisis in Zimbabwe the inflation rate reached an official level of 230 million percent (Raftopolous, 2009:220). The formal sector employment shrunk from 1,4 million in 1998 to 998000 in 2004. In 2006, 85% of the population was below the poverty datum line (Raftopolous, 2009:220). The situation of Zimbabweans was desperate and some responded by migrating. Therefore the reasons for migration were largely economic.

Research reveals that South Africans are generally xenophobic, preferring white migrants who are regarded as tourists (and thus impermanent), to black migrants from other parts of Africa. These blacks are negatively evaluated as the [1]*makwerekwere* who come to steal women, jobs and other economic opportunities from local South Africans, and on top of that congest hospitals by having many babies (Danso & McDonald, 2000; Harris, 2001, Harris 2002; Zinyama, 2002; Landau and Wa Kabwe-Segatti, 2009; Neocosmos, 2008; Matshaka, 2010; Crush and Tawodzera, 2011). Foreigners that have borne the brunt of the xenophobia of South Africans include the Congolese, Ethiopians, Mozambicans, Nigerians, Senegalese, Somalis and Zimbabweans. Members of these groups have occasionally been beaten, abused and sometimes killed by local South Africans. In 2008 these xenophobic attitudes led to mass attacks and killings of foreigners resulting in 62 deaths and the displacement of between 80 000 and 200 000 people (Landau and Wa Kabwe-Segatti, 2009; Bloch, 2010).

3. The various survival strategies

Zimbabwean migrants use tactics such as changing their style of dressing and walking as well as collusion with local South Africans to fake identities and get jobs. Migrants also use church and family networks and connections with former classmates and schoolmates to get jobs, accommodation and marriage partners in Johannesburg. Some migrants have also tried marrying South Africans as a way of blending in and gaining acceptance among the locals.

3.1. Friendships and marriages with local South Africans

While friendships and marriages with locals are some of the best ways of creating bridging social ties for individual migrants, very few Zimbabwean use this strategy. Relationships with locals increase the level of acceptability into the local community even at work. Brian uses friendships with locals and this has gained him acceptability at work. He says:

> "In 2010 when I applied for my leave I invited one South African colleague of mine to go with me to Zimbabwe. He was surprised to see that we are organised, we have good homes even in rural areas. He appreciated our lifestyle. In town he saw how my brothers lived. He saw that Zimbabwean police assist foreigners and do not ask for IDs. They don't terrorise foreigners. He was told how South African leaders were helped during the apartheid...I have two South African colleagues whom I trust. These can even visit my house in Zimbabwe even when I am not there".

Some migrants have tried having relationships and even marriages with South Africans. Migrants may use marriage to gain citizenship and accommodation (Van Nieuwenhuyze,

[1] A derogatory name used to refer to foreigners whose language is un-understandable to the locals.

2009; Lancee, 2012). Among the research participants are two men who once married South African women, but the marriages soon ended in divorce. Those that said they could consider marrying South Africans (8,6%) were either already having relationships or had had relationships with South African women. South African women are generally perceived as sexually appealing to Zimbabwean male migrants. However, Zimbabwean female migrants do not consider South African males as prospective partners. Barbara had this to say about South African men:

> "I have dated South Africans. They don't know love. South Africans are hard hearted. I will get married to a Zimbabwean man".

The majority of Zimbabwean migrants (87,9%) say they would not consider getting married to South Africans. This is because Zimbabweans have negative stereotypes about South Africans, especially local men. Therefore, while male Zimbabweans could have fleeting relations with South Africa women, they mostly have no considerations for serious relationships leading to marriage.

Migrants argued that South African women were very attractive and could divert the attention of migrant men. According to Maureen:

> "Marriages are under attack, the divorce rate is too high. It's like Zimbabweans have never seen mini skirts, fat and light skinned women before. They are so shocked. They run away from their wives".

Pastor Lloyd believes that:

> "Marriages of Zimbabweans and locals are about convenience...it's about this person helping me to cross a bridge or reach a certain stage and that's it...it's because of different cultures. At first there may be genuine love, but as time goes on, it changes. South African women love a good life, they are not taught about responsibility; whereas Zimbabwean women know their duties".

Pastor Lloyd gave several reasons for the failure of Zimbabwean - South African marriages: (a) instrumental calculations where a relationship is forged by someone who wants to get ahead using a relationship with a local woman (b) differences in culture (c) the possible inability of local women to remain in the marriage when the husband gets unemployed or has financial problems. Male migrants argued that being married to a South African woman was demeaning because South African women have no respect. They will resist going to Zimbabwe, have problems conversing (language barriers) with the migrants' family members in Zimbabwe and would discourage investment in Zimbabwe. They argued that marrying a local woman meant that 'one becomes the wife'. The two migrants that tried marrying South African women were disappointed when these women showed lack of respect and an interest in money. Bernard argued that:

> "I found a lady who came from Natal and stayed with her for four years. When she discovered that I am a foreigner she looked down upon and despised me. I then met a Zimbabwean woman whom I married. I compared the level of respect that was shown by the two ladies and discovered that I was respected more by the Zimbabwean. I paid bride-wealth for her while staying with the South African whom I eventually left".

Bernard had not paid any bride-wealth for the Zulu woman. What he did not realise was that the Zimbabwean woman was in a desperate situation concerning accommodation and life in general and therefore could be expected to be more respectful (deference) and understanding compared to the local woman who had no such pressures. Thabani is another migrant who stayed with a Zulu woman for eight years. He said he left her because; "she prevented pregnancy without my knowledge. I wanted a child and she undermined me". Generally, migrants prefer 'shacking up' or 'just living together' arrangements with local women. Sometimes such arrangements become permanent and produce children (Maphosa, 2011).

3.2. Use of fake South African identity books

Among the popular strategies used to find jobs in South Africa is the use of South African identity books. Most of these are falsified, having been stolen from or lost by South African citizens. A key informant, Tatenda, revealed that she did not steal but 'picked up' someone's lost identity book, removed the photo and replaced it with hers. What this means is that the details of the person whose identity book is missing will be used by Tatenda, including the name. This strategy of using another person's identity book is called "*khupha faka"*- literally meaning remove and replace. In some cases, there is genuine consent from the owner of the identity book where the agreement is that the migrant uses the identity book to get a job but pays a small fee to the local South African. They also agree that there will not be any debts or police fines acquired for the period that the migrant uses the identity book. This is what Eric did to get a job as a security guard. However, this mechanism is no longer popular as there is a nationwide campaign against it and arrests are being made for people caught using others' identity books. A month after an interview with Eric, he lost his job when it was discovered that he used another person's identity book. He opted to move out of the employment situation when one day he was called to the manager's office and, without notice, was subjected to a lie detector test. They asked him a battery of questions about his name, age and area of origin. He stopped going to work after that day. Some of his colleagues who remained were arrested for fraud and fined R3000 or imprisoned. Eric regards himself as having been lucky to escape by absconding from work after that exercise.

Another male migrant (Tendai), revealed that his employer had a large batch of identity books that he gave to foreign migrants to use at his workplace, such that whenever there was a new recruit, he automatically got an identity book from the employer. The migrant himself was a recipient of such an identity book as he was still waiting for the adjudication of his application for a worker's permit. However, one of the conditions of using the identity book was that the migrant agrees to remain on probation until he got a permit.

More commonly, migrants made use of connections with officials in the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) to actually produce these documents. There was a whole chain of corrupt officials who participated in the production. Therefore the process was costly with migrants paying between R4 000 and R 10000 (approx US$400-1000 using an exchange rate of 1US$=10 ZAR) for a South African Identity document where one would be given a South African name. Women get Zulu names such as Siphokazi or Nozipho while Pedi names for women would include Lerato, Karabo or Lesedi. There is also a tendency to alter the year and place of birth. Most Zimbabwean migrants who

use this route claim to come from Mpumalanga or Natal (Zulu dominated areas of South Africa). These documents may sometimes not prevent arrests by the police. Therefore holders of such documents may not be safe. In some cases, the migrants may not even be keen to show the police when they are arrested. For example, in 2009 Theresa was arrested for loitering in Hillbrow. She claimed that she was visiting relatives. When the police demanded identification she was afraid to show her South African identity book although she had it with her. She preferred to phone her husband who came and paid a fine of R200 for her release.

Nowadays there are Zimbabwe-South Africa identity books that can be produced via the same networks. These documents will identify the person clearly as Zimbabwean but as having permanent residence. One can get them for roughly the same price as the South African ones.

While some migrants out-rightly agreed that they use fake identity books, others were not so overt. All the participants that said they use South African identity books got them through unorthodox means. However, those that have permanent residence either got it through naturalisation or again faking identity. There was one migrant (William) who got permanent residence through the amnesty for SADC citizens in 1996. The following table shows the current legal status of migrants.

Table 1: Is the current stay legal?

Is the current stay legal?	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	22	37.9	37.9	37.9
No	3	5.2	5.2	43.1
I have a passport but no permit	12	20.7	20.7	63.8
I have asylum papers	2	3.4	3.4	67.2
Yes I have South African documents	11	19.0	19.0	86.2
I have permanent residence	8	13.8	13.8	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Source: author's fieldwork

Those that said their current stay is legal are using passports with permits. The permits were acquired either directly by personally going to the DHA offices in Pretoria or indirectly by use of agents. Those who accessed them directly sometimes had to endure long hours of waiting in the queue for application forms. Middle class migrants like Vongai, Miriam and Trish used agents to access permits. These agents are expensive. Vongai says:

> "When you use an agent you pay more, R15000 for the whole process. If you go directly you pay R1500 so the R13500 is for the agent. But you see the agent involves a whole chain of other people, it's him, somebody in the department (DHA), and maybe five more people. They share the money".

In the sample, there are only two participants that still use asylum papers. Most migrants surrendered the asylum papers during the Zimbabwe Documentation Project of 2010. There are a number of migrants (20%) that have passports without permits.

These are currently illegal and survive by concealing their identities through adopting local languages, dressing styles and other South African mannerisms. However, even some of the documented migrants disguise their identity.

Zimbabweans feel motivated to conceal their identities through the following methods: some walk alone, dress and talk like South Africans, while others pray for protection every day. Some wear long sleeved shirts in-order to hide vaccination marks on shoulders. Police usually identify Zimbabweans by looking at the vaccination mark that appears on the left shoulder of every Zimbabwean. Migrants with permanent residence are not motivated to engage in any ways of concealing themselves since they already feel accepted into the South African society. They are not afraid of the police. The same can almost be said for the majority of migrants with permits. This is because most migrants that participated in the study (74,1%) are legally living and working in South Africa. That is why 60,3% of the migrants stated that they would not deliberately and intentionally do anything to conceal who they are. While this is what they said in the interviews, in reality most of these same migrants were not really willing to be known as Zimbabwean.

3.3. Church membership

Zimbabwean migrants are very religious. The church was believed to be the moral compass guiding migrants, and going to church was also perceived as one of the ways of surviving loneliness and getting access to information, jobs and comfort from others. Going to church was viewed as important for the following reasons: spiritual guidance and protection from God, access to information on accommodation and jobs, and also acquisition of friends. Church members tend to be from the same network that provides work and accommodation. It is in these churches that migrants form revolving social and grocery clubs. They also marry within the same cliques.

89,7% regularly go to church while only 10,3% do not go to church. Migrants mostly attend Pentecostal churches which originate from Zimbabwe. They have not been integrated into South African churches. In these Zimbabwean originated churches they preach in Ndebele and Shona and sometimes reminisce on the days in Zimbabwe. There are fewer attempts made to convert their South African neighbours to join them.

Table 2: Which church do you go to?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Seventh Day Adventist	18	31.0	31.0	31.0
ZAOGA forward in faith	4	6.9	6.9	37.9
JPM Pentecostal	5	8.6	8.6	46.6
AFM	3	5.2	5.2	51.7
Other Pentecostal	14	24.1	24.1	75.9
Catholic	1	1.7	1.7	77.6
None	6	10.3	10.3	87.9
Vapostori/ Masowe	7	12.1	12.1	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Source: author's fieldwork

Research revealed that 31% of the migrants are members of the Seventh Day Adventist church, 4% belong to ZAOGA, 5% go to JPM, 5,2% are members of the AFM. There were migrants who belonged to various inter-ethnic Pentecostal churches that largely included other migrants like Ghanaians, Nigerians and Congolese. These constituted 24,1% of the sample. There was one migrant (1,7%) who claimed to be Catholic while 12,1% belonged to the Apostolic church sects such as *Johane Masowe* or *Johane Wechishanu* or *Mugodhi*. These are strictly Zimbabwean indigenous Protestant sects. Members of these churches wear white or other colourful garments on Saturdays when they go to church. They are also visible because male members attend church services carrying staffs/rods and their services are conducted in open spaces (usually in the bush) outside buildings.

Migrants who attend Apostolic/*vapostori* church services benefit from prophetic messages and visions that are relayed to them. This is where their future is foretold, identifying future troubles and fortunes. Strategies to deal with future problems are mapped out. The uncertain future can somehow be controlled/ influenced through prayer and petitions. Prophetic messages provide explanations to situations that trouble migrants. That way, migrants can cope with these situations better. Daniel stated clearly that:

> "I used to go to Baptist church but then decided to go to the apostolic sect. I had family problems. A friend of mine invited me to apostolic sect. They prophesy here. I was told things by prophets, for example how I lost my job. I was told people hate me".

Sheunesu is another migrant who goes to *Johane Masowe* church. He says "problems don't choose individuals. We go to church because of problems, difficult situations and circumstances". Maphosa (2011) concurs that the challenges of migrant life are usually dealt with via churches that prophesy and foretell the future. Some prophecies are about impending return journeys and the dangers associated with them. Prayers accompanied by fasting are usually recommended to deal with the challenges of migrant life.

The church is critical in that God is viewed as the protector against police, especially for those without proper documentation. They pray so that the police cannot arrest an undocumented migrant. One forty six year old male migrant (Tapera) revealed that: "If I get deported it doesn't matter. God knows my situation. I know I am being unfair to God because I am breaking the law by being illegal". Another male migrant (Farai) argued that locals have no need to pray. He stated that:

> "As a foreigner you know your problems, when the going gets tough you have to focus on God. You are desperate...Locals are at home and relaxed, they have no need to go to church. They have relatives all over".

Farai's argument points to the belief that God is very important to people without relatives and friends. He also gives a better identity (being called a child of God) to those whose identity is devalued. He is the relative and friend to the lonely, desperate and needy. This perception was clearly portrayed in one of Pastor Lloyd's sermons, where he admonished people to continue seeking God even after getting jobs. He said

there was a tendency of people to relax after getting jobs, only to seek God again when they became unemployed and desperate.

There was a small number of migrants (10,3%) who stated that they are Christians but they do not go to church. They sometimes spend free time drinking beer.

3.4. Crime and deviance

Migrants believe that some Zimbabweans engage in criminal activities. These activities range from petty thievery, prostitution, to serious crimes like embezzlement of funds or robbing at gunpoint. They argue that these people are desperate and have no other acceptable channels of making money. The majority of migrants under study (84,5%) know of Zimbabweans involved in crime. In some cases, migrants witnessed crimes committed by Zimbabweans. Alex witnessed a crime in a retail shop where people were ordered to lie down while the robbers spoke to each other in Shona. He also argued that he knew Zimbabweans who made a living out of cloning other people's credit cards and withdrawing their money. These criminals had posh lifestyles and drove the latest car models. However, there were also arguments by the same migrants that those criminals who moved around in gangs tended to be a mixture of Zimbabweans and South Africa locals, so it becomes difficult and stereotypical to say that Zimbabweans are 'the' criminals in South Africa. Migrants were quick to say that the majority of criminals reside in Hillbrow.

3.4.1. The concept of ukuzama *(trying)*

A common concept among migrants was that of '*ukuzama'* - literally meaning 'trying', which it entailed elements of being clever or being smart in a mischievous way. Those engaged in criminal activities were seen as 'trying', although they were mostly not emulated. Maphosa (2011) noted a similar concept of '*ukutshaya iscore'* - literally meaning 'to score' as referring to success in criminal activities where an individual engages in a big criminal activity that gives him (mostly male) lots of money so that they can go back to Zimbabwe and establish businesses. That is how most *malayitsha* were believed to have acquired start - up capital to buy cars and buses that they used in their cross-border transport businesses (ibid: 2011). This is what Edgar, one of my research participants, hoped to gain when he robbed his nephew's employer. He was unsuccessful. His narrative is as follows:

> "A nephew of mine who worked as a gardener had called us to come and steal from his employer's safe. I went there with my friend during the night. We did not find any money. We only found his employer's gun. We got arrested after my nephew confessed everything to his employer. The employer had threatened my nephew with being arrested and possible deportation".

This man was a driver during the day and a thief during the night. He had also stolen motor spares from his employer in Zimbabwe in order to get transport money for migration. He seemed to have continued his criminal activities in Johannesburg. He was a habitual criminal who sometimes stayed in jail. In another case, Pastor Lloyd revealed

how uncomfortable he was in Hillbrow, when he discovered that his brother, whom he stayed with, was a criminal. He prayed to God for a job so that he would move out and leave his criminal brother. When he eventually got the job, he moved out and went to stay in Tembisa.

There was a tendency by migrants to show elements of tribalism and regionalism in identifying Zimbabwean criminals. Ndebele speakers tended to think that Shona people were criminals while Shona speakers said the Ndebele were the criminals. One Shona speaking man, Norbert, argued that prostitutes in Kempton Park spoke Ndebele and Shona. Kevin, who comes from Mashonaland East province in Zimbabwe, vehemently argued that criminals are from Masvingo province. He said:

> "It might be true that some criminals are Zimbabweans. They are from Masvingo. I saw it when I went to apply for asylum documents in Pretoria. They would hit us and take things from us. I could tell from the dialect that they were Karanga, from Masvingo. They told us that they are taking money from us because they have no jobs...But gangs tend to be a mixture of Zimbabweans and South Africans".

Participants revealed that between 2010 and 2011 (during the ZDP period), they were generally more afraid of the Shona, than anyone else, when they went to secure legal documents in DHA offices in Pretoria.

3.4.2. **Bhudi handei** *(my brother let's go): prostitution in Kempton Park?*

Female migrants were generally believed to resort to prostitution when faced with hard times of unemployment. However, among the migrant interviewees, none admitted that they were in prostitution although they knew Zimbabwean prostitutes. Daniel knew of Zimbabwean prostitutes in Kempton Park. He said, "it's painful to see Zimbabwean prostitutes, you feel ashamed to be Zimbabwean in such situations". Norbert also said:

> "I know of Shona prostitutes in Kempton Park. They speak Shona on the streets, they can see you wearing Zimbabwean takkies and other identity markers and they tell you point blank '*bhudi handei*- my brother lets go'. They originally did not mean to prostitute. Women must be educated when they come here looking for jobs".

Karen reiterated the same point by arguing:

> "Some people are not used to working hard. I know women who prostitute in Kempton Park. They can even beat you for walking with a man because they want clients. They openly tell you they want a man. You can tell they are Zimbabweans".

Analysis of the above quotes shows that migrants generally believe that 'hunger forces people to do bad things'. They are therefore not quick to judge their fellow migrants who engage in deviant behaviour, although Karen thinks that those who engage in prostitution take the easier way out- they are generally lazy. The quotes also reveal the level of desperation of these prostitutes who brazenly approach their potential clients

and sometimes beat up female counterparts of the male Zimbabwean migrants. Worby (2010) also noted how female Zimbabwean migrants in Hillbrow engaged in prostitution out of desperation.

3.5. Languages, dressing and style of walking as disguise tactics

Migrants agreed that the ability to speak at least one local language was an added advantage that helped escape stigmatisation and arrests. They emphasised the importance of learning local languages for new migrants. The first weeks after arrival were usually used to learn the local languages and dressing before venturing to look for employment. The speed at which they learn is tremendous. One Shona male migrant, Scott, who came to South Africa in January 2012, was already fluent in Zulu by the time he participated in this research in July of the same year. Before coming to Johannesburg, he could not speak Ndebele, which Zimbabweans believe to be linguistically closer to Zulu.

There were only 8 people (13,8%) that stated that they could not speak any local language. Of these eight, the majority could speak Ndebele, while a few were Shona speakers who could not even speak Ndebele. Vongai was one of them. She highlighted that: "local South Africans don't understand why I talk to them in English when I am black. It irritates them". The popular language that migrants learnt easily was Zulu though they still argued that their Zulu was not as good as that of local South Africans. Some migrants spoke more than one local language to the extent that they had even learnt Afrikaans, Pedi, Sotho, Tswana and Venda. Speaking local languages was an advantage which gained migrants a bit of tolerance among locals. Some locals would then start evaluating migrants positively saying that they 'do not really look like Zimbabweans'.

Table 3: Do you speak any local languages?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Zulu	32	55.2	55.2	55.2
Zulu and another local language	11	19.0	19.0	74.1
More than two local languages	7	12.1	12.1	86.2
None	8	13.8	13.8	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Source: author's fieldwork

The motivation to quickly learn new languages hinged on acquisition of proper documentation; the undocumented were more motivated to learn than the documented migrants.

3.5.1. Dressing

> "I now wear jean trousers. I realised that if I wear skirts and dresses I can be easily identified as Zimbabwean. I decided to imitate South Africans" (Lydia).

Migrants were self conscious in terms of determining how they appear to others. There was a tendency to shy away from 'Zimbabwean forms of dressing'. The Zimbabwean style was described as wearing loose fitting, formal, cheap and long clothes, whereas the South African one involved wearing tight fitting, smart, casual expensive clothes. There was a clear preference for the South African style, which was also viewed as smarter. While there were migrants who argued that they did not consciously choose their clothes the researcher still noticed how they preferred wearing tight fitting jeans (more than loose dresses for women). The connection between loose fitting clothes and arrests by police was made by Scott who came to Johannesburg in January 2012. He maintained that:

> "When I came here I used to wear oversize T-shirts and clothes from Zimbabwe. I had brought three T-shirts, two formal shirts and two pairs of trousers. My brother advised me never to wear them because I would be deported very fast as everyone could see that I was foreign. He said South Africans wear tight fitting clothes and not loose ones. I had difficulties adjusting but now I am ok".

Migrants did not only talk about the length and tightness of clothes, they also agreed that the quality of clothes worn by South Africans was better than that of Zimbabweans. They stated that South Africans wear clothes with labels such as *Jeep, Puma, La Coste, Reebock, Adidas*, *Quicksilver, Roxy, Levi, Umbro, Nike* and *Billabong*. These were said to be expensive and most Zimbabweans could not afford them as they preferred cheap clothes sold in Chinese and Indian shops. However, they said if one wanted to blend in and avoid being caught by the police and even being suspected by locals they had to buy expensive clothes. They looked down upon Zimbabweans who bought from Chinese shops and described them as dirty. Migrants use dressing to disguise their identity (Muzondidya, 2008; Broerders, 2009). Kevin commented that:

> "...sometimes I don't carry my passport especially here in Kempton Park. I don't carry it because I dress properly. Zimbabweans can be noticed by bad dressing, some are dirty, especially those from Masvingo and Mberengwa rural areas. Rural people are a problem".

Pauline also said: "I no longer buy clothes from Chinese shops. I now buy expensive clothes. You can be seen on the streets (if you are wearing cheap clothes). They call you *makwerekwere* or Shangaan".

However, there were migrants who were members of the SDA and Apostolic churches whose church doctrine did not allow the wearing of trousers by women. Such women continued to wear skirts but they made sure that these were not very long. In any case, they argued that dressing was not a full-proof strategy to evade the police and avoid discrimination, since inability to speak local languages could sell out a migrant. They spent their energies improving their local language proficiency.

3.5.2. Style of walking

In terms of style of walking there was no consensus on whether the way Zimbabweans walk was different from that of black South Africans. Those that said there was a

difference still could not agree on their descriptions of how black Zimbabweans and black South Africans walked. Some said Zimbabweans walked faster than South Africans while others said the opposite is true. Farai said that: 'Zimbabweans show fear when they walk. Their bodies are stiff'.

Although there was no consensus on the actual descriptions of styles of walking, it is important to note that, depending on their definition of the Zimbabwean and South African style of walking, some migrants were using the style of walking to blend in and disguise their Zimbabwean identity. It is also necessary to pinpoint that the issue of style of walking tended to be confined to migrants in Tembisa rather than those in Kempton Park.

3.6. Bribing the police

Among the research participants, in all the cases involving bribing the police, it is the police that initiated the bribes. One woman (Karen) was approached by the police officers in Johannesburg central who demanded a bribe saying "*Ingwenya ihlala emanzini,"* literally meaning "a crocodile lives in water". This was their language for asking for a bribe. She could not understand their language at first until they told her that she was under arrest for loitering. Karen had gone shopping in one of the Chinese shops in Johannesburg Central. She thought she was easily spotted by the police because she wore a long dress. She also carried a child on her back wrapped in a distinctively Zimbabwean cloth. The police first asked for her identity book and when she stammered, they told her she was under arrest for loitering and in the process solicited the bribe.

Most arrests made on migrants pertain to issues of illegality in the country where the individual either has an expired passport/ asylum document or does not have any of these documents at all. This is understandable given the fact that half of the participants entered South Africa illegally the first time. What is disturbing is that the crime and the charge did not tally. All the cases to do with lack of documents were charged with loitering, which is a term that means something different. Both male and female migrants were charged with this crime of loitering.

The arrests were mainly done in Hillbrow, Yeoville and other central parts of Johannesburg, while 13,8% were arrested at the border or along the way to Johannesburg. This was true for migrants who were deported as they tried to get to Johannesburg. Some migrants were arrested in Tembisa and Kempton Park, though in these cases a few arrests did not concern documentation but were about other issues such as public fighting, theft and crossing a freeway. Kevin was arrested for crossing a freeway although he pleaded with the police that he did not know that it was a crime since Zimbabwe does not have freeways. Paradzayi was arrested in Kempton Park in 2007, before he had a passport. He argued:

> "When I disembarked the train, the police asked for my identity book. I lied and said my passport had expired but they insisted on seeing the expired passport. As they searched me they saw R200 and took it. I pleaded with them and they took R100 and released me".

Most arrests took places in public areas such as business centres, taxis, trains and buses. The table below shows that in total, 38% of the respondents have been arrested while 62% said they had never been arrested.

Table 4: Have you ever been arrested?

Have you ever been arrested	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes in Joburg central	7	12.1	12.1	12.1
Yes in Tembisa/Kempton Park or other areas	7	12.1	12.1	24.1
No	36	62.1	62.1	86.2
Arrested in other parts of South Africa	8	13.8	13.8	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Source: author's fieldwork

Migrants believed that police arrested and demanded a bribe even when the migrant's identity papers were in order. They also believed that the police usually spotted migrants when they carried their luggage to Park Station where they went to seek buses to ferry their remittances back to Zimbabwe, or when they went shopping in Johannesburg central. One male migrant (Edwin) narrated how he was arrested in Johannesburg central:

> "I was arrested for public loitering. I had gone shopping in China shops in Johannesburg central. These shops sell goods without giving receipts. The police demanded proof of purchase of the goods I had. I told them we could go back together to the shops where I bought the goods so that they could verify whether I was telling the truth. They refused and started asking for a bribe. I said I did not have any money. They said I should accompany them to the police station. They asked for a bribe the second time after I had shown them my asylum papers. I paid R150 and they let me go".

This migrant ended up paying a bribe even though he had relevant asylum papers. Another female migrant (Tatenda) who is Edwin's cousin was arrested while walking with her aunt towards Park Station. She was carrying some of her aunt's luggage. The aunt was en route to Zimbabwe. Tatenda had left her passport and a work permit at home because she thought no one would notice her. When they caught her, the police asked for a bribe and openly told her they did not want 'small money' like R20 and R50. Her aunt ended up paying R100. The police had threatened to hold the migrant in police cells over the weekend since it was a Friday.

3.7. Self employment

Seventeen migrants (20% of the sample) engage in self-employment. Zimbabwean self-employed migrants own businesses which range from professional information

technology services, Human Resources training, and day care centres, to mechanical engineering, welding, hair dressing salons, security services and petty trading (spaza shops and hawking). The self-employed migrant Zimbabweans engage in businesses that are not very different from the jobs they have had in South Africa. For example, if one was employed as a teacher at a crèche she then starts a day care centre or if one was employed as a security guard they eventually start a security company, and if one was employed in human sources they start a business in training and human resource development. Literature reveals that there is a higher rate of self-employment among immigrants than local native-born individuals (Brettell and Alstaff, 2007). However, Zimbabweans are recent entrants into self employment compared to other foreigners such as the Somalis, Nigerians, Pakistanis, Congolese, Bangladeshis, Indians and Tanzanians.

4. Conclusions

This paper discusses the various survival strategies invoked by Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa. These range from changing one's identity to engaging in quasi-legal activities. Some of the strategies involve the collusion and co-operation of local South Africans. Selection of particular survival strategies depends on socio-economic class, gender, migrant's history and on whether one is documented or not. These migrants use their agency and social capital (in the form of social networks) to survive in a largely xenophobic and exclusionary socio-economic environment. Therefore the various mechanisms they use to survive must be understood from the perspective of a narrow opportunity structure and a less than welcoming context.

The research results reveal that Zimbabwean migrants mostly survive by concealing their Zimbabwean identity. The findings also support the prevailing notion that migrants are resourceful; they engage in a variety of survival strategies such as: reliance on kin and ethnic members networks, creating friendships and fictive kin relations and fake identities/identity books, denying their place of origin, marriages of convenience, applying for political asylum permits, theft, prostitution and informal employment, using social networks to access accommodation and employment, learning local languages, culture (including dressing and mannerisms) and having cosmopolitan identities (Muzvidziwa, 2001, 2010; Mai, 2005; Muzondidya, 2008; Fangen, 2010; Lefko- Everett, 2010; McGregor, 2010; Worby, 2010). Selection of any of these survival mechanisms is dependent on the migrant's history, social status and settlement patterns (Muzondidya, 2008: 5).

However, the findings also show that some Zimbabwean migrants are engaging in self-employment rather than participating in disadvantaged terms in the labour market where there are unattractive jobs. Most decisions about self-employment are results of the inability to access good jobs on the labour market.

The research also shows that migrants use friendships, marriage and church networks to cope with the hostile environment in South Africa. However, relationships which are limited to the ethnic group only increase bonding rather than bridging social capital. Migrants who succeed in being integrated into the local communities are those that use relationships with locals in order to create bridging social capital. Since very few Zimbabwean migrants studied are not willing to marry and be friends with local South Africans, then their capacity to build bridging social capital is also limited.

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Glossary and List of Acronyms

AFM- Apostolic Faith Mission

DHA – Department of Home affairs

JPM – Jesus promotion Ministries

SADC - Southern African development Community

SDA- Seventh Day Adventist

ZAOGA – Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa

ZDP - Zimbabwe Documentation Project

Asylum seeker's permit - it is given temporarily to foreigners who have applied for asylum on the basis of political persecution. This is provided for in the Refugees Act number 130 of 1998.

Malayitsha- cross border taxi driver

Makwerekwere- derogatory label for foreigners in South Africa

Ndebele- Zimbabwean ethnic group/language

Naturalisation - a process of acquiring citizenship in South Africa by virtue of having parents or relatives that are citizens in South Africa.

Shona- Zimbabwean ethnic group/language

Sotho/Pedi/Zulu- South African ethnic groups.

Spaza - a small usually unlicensed shop that sells food and other small household items in townships/ high density areas

Vapostori – members of the Independent African Apostolic Church