

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
SCHOOL OF ANTHROPOLOGY, GENDER,
TOURISM CULTURAL HERITAGE AND
HISTORICAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY**

**AN EXPLORATION OF THE LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS OF
AFRICAN PROFESSIONAL MIGRANTS IN INSTITUTIONS OF
HIGHER LEARNING: THE CASE OF UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL**

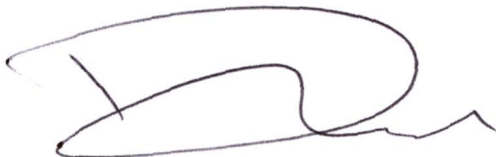
**BY
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Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master's in
Anthropology.

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. I confirm that an external editor was not used and that my supervisor was informed of the identity and details of my editor. It is being submitted for the degree of Master's in Anthropology in the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Science, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any University.

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To God be the glory. Amen

Dedication

To my parents Papa Otu-Meriki Bernard and Mama Otu Ebune Theresa for their love

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACNOWKEDGEMENTS -----	i
DEDICATION -----	ii
ABSTRACT -----	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS -----	V
CHAPTER ONE: Introduction -----	1
1.1 Migration and Anthropology-----	1
1.2 African professional migration to South Africa and background of study-----	3
1.3 Motivation for study-----	6
1.4 Significance of study-----	7
1.5 Research problem and key questions-----	8
1.6 Research objectives-----	9
1.7 Methodology-----	10
1.7.1 Population of study and sample size-----	11
1.7.2 Sampling techniques-----	13
1.7.3 Method of data collection-----	14
1.8 Structure of thesis-----	18
CHAPTER TWO: African professional migrancy and the new transnational space of South Africa -----	20
2.1 Causes of African professional migrancy-----	20
2.2 Brain Drain-----	27
2.3 South-bound migration within the African continent-----	30
2.4 African professional migrancy in South Africa-----	32
2.4.1 Migration challenges in post-apartheid South Africa-----	34
2.4.2 Contemporary categories of professional migrants in South Africa-----	38
2.5 Conclusion-----	40
CHAPTER THREE: African professional migrancy to South African institutes of higher learning -----	42
3.1 General reasons for professional migration-----	43
3.2 Structural reasons for the migration of African academics-----	46
3.3 Personal reasons for migration-----	50

3.3.1 Moving under family influence-----	51
3.3.2 Migrating for social and geographical change-----	53
3.4 Professional migration into South Africa and the South-bound migration paradigm-	56
3.4.1 Proximity-----	57
3.4.2 Income differentials-----	61
3.4.3 Social networks-----	64
3.4.4 Cultural affinity-----	66
3.5 Conclusion-----	70

CHAPTER FOUR: Negotiated gender and household dynamics within transnational migration of African professionals-----72

4.1 Career and gender-----	73
4.1.1 The professional married African woman-----	76
4.1.2 Singlehood gendered -----	81
4.2 (Re)construction of household roles within transnational contexts-----	84
4. 2.1 Migrants remittances-----	85
4.2.2 A reconstituted African household-----	88
4.2.3 Gendered responsibilities within transnational households-----	91
4.3 Conclusion-----	95

CHAPTER FIVE: Foreign African professional migrants’ participation and adjustment patterns-----96

5.1 Contributions of foreign African professional migrants to the University of KwaZulu-Natal --	96
5.2 Migrants’ integration and adjustment patterns-----	105
5.3 Conclusion-----	112

CHAPTER SIX: The commitment of foreign African academics towards a regeneration of African scholarship-----114

6.1 African scholarship explored-----	114
6.2 South African institutions at the centre of African scholarship-----	118
6.3 African scholarship at the interface of global knowledge production-----	122
6.4 The brain drain controversy in Africa-----	129
6.5 Skilled migrant networks and brain gain/brain circulation-----	133
6.6 Conclusion-----	137

CHAPTER SEVEN: Conclusion-----139

References-----139

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the lives and livelihoods of foreign African academics at UKZN. The study attempts to unpack the driving forces behind their decision to migrate and why South Africa has become a preferred destination for these migrants. It explores the kind of networks that inform them of employment opportunities that are available in institutions of higher learning in South Africa. It also sets out to explore the kind of skills possessed by these migrants that are needed for the development of skills in the institution.

Research findings reveal a combination of micro and macro factors as reasons surrounding foreign African professional migrancy in South Africa. Macro factors are subsumed under general and structural reasons which include high unemployment rates, corruption, nepotism, and other forms of political oppressions and infrastructural problems. Over and above the relative viability of South African institutions with modern technological facilities and well organised curricular and material structures serve as major attractions to foreign African professional migrancy into the country. The factors of cultural affinity and geographical proximity are also among the reasons that foreign African academics at UKZN cited for their migration into South Africa. The individual in this study constitutes the basic unit in providing a more nuanced understanding of why this group of foreigners migrated to South Africa. In this regard personal reasons such as family pressure and change of geographical space form an integral part of reasons surrounding their migrancy in South Africa.

Following the professional convenience that UKZN offers, this research showcases the desire expressed by various migrants under this study to pursue and establish a scholarship that would promote and legitimise Africa as an intellectual space of knowledge production. Being a “Premier University of African Scholarship”, professional migrants from the rest of the continent have indicated their willingness to dedicate their services within their different capacities to develop a curriculum that meets the needs of South Africa and Africa. The study shows some contributions that foreign academic are making in the development of the institution.

From a social perspective the study highlights how professional African migrants have reconstructed gender roles and household constitution. Transnational migration as shown by this study reveals changing patterns in gender as African women just like the men are engaged in transnational activities for economic and career advancement. African women with educational skills whether married or unmarried have independently undertaken the decision to migrate for economic and social upliftment.

Chapter one

Introduction

1.1 Migration and Anthropology

Migration is one of the major areas in social sciences which have attracted a multidisciplinary approach. The study of migration had by the 19th century begun to gain currency. It is however a relatively new subject of inquiry in anthropological studies (Eades 1987) that developed in the 1950s and 1960s (Ojong 2005: 1). The phenomenon of migration is wide and complex and scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds are drawn to studies of migration in order to grapple with its dynamics in the ever changing world. Anthropologists, sociologists, geographers, economists, political scientists and historians have developed various approaches towards the study of migration and are closely guided by their epistemologies, theories and methodologies. Even though sometimes the different social scientists may set out to study the same phenomena, their approaches to such phenomena differ in a way the accounts are produced. Anthropologists unlike economists or historians have adopted a holistic approach to migration phenomena which takes into account both the micro as well as the macro units of analysis. In other words studies on migration can be theorised on the most basic unit such as the individual (a micro component) as well as a region (a macro component).

For migration presents a myriad of complexities that cannot simply be understood from a macro angle of scrutiny. Micro units such as the individual and household therefore become crucial in theorising the multi-layered challenges posed by migration. This present research is an in-depth study that intends to look at the lives and livelihoods of foreign African professional migrants at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (henceforth UKZN). In a study of this nature, the role played by the individual is critical in understanding for example the various reasons surrounding foreign African professional migrancy to South Africa. The position of the individual as unit of analysis in anthropological discourses of migration may in turn be informed by the heterogeneous backgrounds of migrants. These heterogeneous backgrounds cut across geographical, social, gender, and class spaces. Migrations studies in Africa have been treated as a homogenous phenomenon- with the usual stereotypes of poverty, war, famine, ecological problems viewed as the main causes of African migration. Adepoju (1995) argues that migration in Africa should not be viewed as a homogenous phenomenon. Although these reasons may tend to overlap, it is important to note that the experiences of the migrants may not be the same even when they may happen to come from the same region.

Migrant communities have developed in migration discourses and anthropologists in particular are keen on mapping out these spaces so as to engage in a more critical analysis of the nature and reasons surrounding the migrancy of a particular migrant community. Kearney (1986) developed what he calls “the articulatory migrant network” (AMN). By this network Kearney attempts to plot the movement of migrants into various kinds of ‘spaces’ which do not only involve geographical spaces, but also “labour markets and other economic and

social niches and corresponding cultural change.” The idea of ‘spaces’ as highlighted by Kearney’s AMN is analogous with the agenda of anthropological migration research. As it is often the case with other anthropological studies, migration studies in anthropology are holistic. Accordingly, there exist different analytical units through which migration studies can be conceptualized. Owing to the heterogeneous background of this present study, categories such as geographical regions, class, and gender form essential variables in analysing the lives and livelihoods of African professional migrants at UKZN. This is because their geographic, academic and gendered backgrounds may represent different reasons and interpretations surrounding their migrancy.

1.2 African professional migration to South Africa and background of study

Post-apartheid South Africa is increasingly witnessing the influx of migrants of different categories: illegal and legal, undocumented and documented, asylum seekers and refugees, skilled as well as unskilled migrants. These migrants, who largely come from different parts of Africa, constitute an increasing area of concern among researchers who are seeking to understand the dynamics of the new migration trends in South Africa. Many studies have shown that the informal sector happens to be the highest recipient of the different categories of people moving into South Africa (Buijs 2006). However, the migration of skilled workers from the different regions of Africa into South Africa is also gaining currency. The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) one of the largest universities in the country has employed a number of foreign professionals of different academic backgrounds from the different African regions.

With the demise of apartheid, democratic South Africa has witnessed shifting paradigms in the

migration phenomenon. Contemporary South Africa is playing host to a groundswell influx of migrants from all over the world; and most especially from the rest of Africa. Historically African migration into South Africa was labour oriented and was characterised by the following:

- Migrants principally came from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region
- They were mainly unskilled migrants who worked in the mining industries of South Africa
- Migrant were mostly independent African men who seldom moved in the company of their spouses
- Their stay in South Africa was most often on a temporary basis (Ojong 2002: 4).

Crush and McDonald (2002: 1) note that the “(re)insertion” of South Africa into the “global world economy” has ushered in new waves of migration phenomena, that continue to draw on different migration related issues. Migration issues in contemporary South Africa are increasingly gaining scholarly attention with the introduction of concepts and agendas that were hitherto alien to the South African migration discourse. Gender, xenophobia, and transnationalism are some of the migration related issues that have been recently incorporated in the studies of migration in South Africa (Dodson 1998, Crush and McDonald 2002). The end of apartheid and the subsequent democratic status of South Africa have brought in remarkable economic, social and political changes that continue to affect the phenomenon of migration in the country.

The unprecedented influx of African migrants in South Africa has exacerbated tensions among South Africans from the different walks of life. Foreign African migrants irrespective of their status

are a target to high degree xenophobia which appears to characterise the South African society. As described by Crush and McDonald (2002: 7). “Most African migrants- from panhandlers to professors- are feeling the verbal, and sometimes physical sting of rampant anti-foreign sentiment.” Such an indiscriminate xenophobic attitude stems from the idea that African foreigners appear to be a threat to the South African economic and social life. Professional migrants on their part, often suffer from xenophobic attacks due to the fact that they often compete with the local South Africans for limited job opportunities available in the job market (Danso and McDonald 2000).

While most South African skilled workers emigrate to countries like New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia and Canada to seek employment and better wages (Maharaj 2004: 14), the paradox is that professionals from other African countries view South Africa as an ‘economic giant’. Its relatively high economic, technological and educational infrastructures continue to pull professionals from all over the continent of Africa. Notwithstanding the high number of African professional migrants in South Africa, Bailey (2003) notes that post-apartheid South Africa has witnessed a downward trend in the number of professionals entering South Africa. This downward trend as he notes only serves to accentuate the brain drain in South Africa; since there is an unequal proportion of skilled migrants coming into the country to replace the much needed skills lost through emigration. The main reason ascribed to the decline of skills in South Africa is the restrictive nature of the new government’s immigration policy.

A cursory look at the literature on South African migration reveals that a qualitative approach to migration discourses remains an under-researched area. It is more so with skilled labour

migration. Most of the literature concerning African migrancy focuses on the informal sector as was mentioned earlier. A study that deals with African academics as a migrant space at UKZN has not been dealt with before. An exploration of the activities and the integration of foreign African academics in South Africa will renegotiate the understanding of issues related to the concept of transnationalism which is very crucial to the development of a nation. The concept of transnationalism as noted by Crush and McDonald (2002) is still at its infancy in South African migration studies. A study of this nature will have the capacity of inducing better approaches to the formulation of immigration laws by the powers that be.

1.3 Motivation for study

With the end of apartheid and the ascendancy of South Africa into a democratic state, migration from all over Africa into South Africa has intensified. The influx of different categories of African migrants into South Africa has ushered in new forms of migration that have become a major concern among researchers and scholars who are interested in understanding the dynamics and complexities of migration in the new state of South Africa. Immigration is one of the major challenges faced by the new post-apartheid government of South Africa.

The present study is motivated by number of factors. Firstly a cursory look at the literature of African migration into South Africa has focused mostly on the informal sector. Secondly, most research dealing with African professional and skilled migration in South Africa is mostly quantitative in approach. Thirdly, existing literature from a qualitative perspective to professional African migrancy has focused on South Africa itself; highlighting the implications of South African professionals moving abroad.

In relation to the above this research undertakes an in-depth study of foreign African professionals in the world of academia. Through their lives and livelihoods, this research intends to illuminate in a more holistic manner the implications of foreign African professional migrancy in South Africa. The general concern of this research is to analyse the lives and activities of the category of foreign African academics in the new transnational space of post-apartheid South Africa.

1.4 Significance of study

This research is an intra-regional study of African skilled migration in the world of academia. The migration of African professionals within the continent has received little scholarly attention. This study is significant in the following ways:

- The research intends to make a contribution to the theoretical and empirical perspective on the migrancy of African academics in the new democratic state of South Africa.
- The study establishes a deeper understanding of the motivations for foreign African academic migrancy in South Africa. A delineation of reasons surrounding African professional migrancy in South Africa epitomised by this sample shows that macro-level explanations fall short of adequately explaining what informs people's decision to migrate. In this light individual motivation for migration may not necessarily emanate from macro factors.
- The research highlights the practical role played by foreign African academics in relation to students' empowerment and also their contributions

to curricular and pedagogic development in UKZN.

- It illuminates the commitments of foreign African migrants towards a pan-African intellectual growth that seeks to articulate the development needs of the entire African continent. The research unpacks the ready commitment of foreign African scholars at UKZN towards developing a model for African scholarship.
- Finally it is envisaged that a study of this nature would contribute to a dialogue and ultimate policy review(s) pertaining to immigration and the integration of foreign African professionals into the South African society.

1.5 Research problem and key questions

Skilled labour migration from Africa has been an ongoing phenomenon since the days of colonialism. The migration of professionals from the rest of Africa to South Africa is a growing trend in the migration history of the country. The following questions reflect the main concerns of the study:

- What are the reasons surrounding African professional migrancy?
- Why is South Africa a preferred destination for these migrants?
- What academic background do they come from?

- How do they come to know about job opportunities in South African institutions of higher learning?
- What was their employment status before being employed at UKZN? Do they have previous employment experiences?
- How do they draw on their past experiences to contribute to the general restructuring that is taking place in the university?
- What are the challenges faced by these migrants at the workplace and how do they cope with these challenges?
- How do they integrate into the South African society?
- How have transnational experiences impacted on the lives and livelihoods of foreign African professional men and women?

1.6 Research objectives

- This study aimed at gaining greater insights into professional migrancy as a growing trend in South Africa.
- It sought to problematise why South Africa is a preferred destination over and above other places within the African continent.
- The research set out to investigate the kind of skills that foreign African professionals at UKZN possess and how they utilise their skills for service delivery in the institution

- It set out to understand whether migrants had worked in other universities in their home countries, and to find out whether they maintain professional links with their former universities.
- It set out to understand how transnational experiences have impacted on their professional and social lives.

1.7 Methodology

Methodology refers to the practical ways through which inquiries are made, and analysed. Henning (2004: 15) explains that [m]ethodology is concerned with the specific ways, the methods we can use to try to and understand our world better.” No act of writing is conducted in a vacuum; methodologies are ways through which writers investigate phenomena in order to produce their accounts. Methodologies are carefully planned out techniques and procedures that are employed in the process of implementing a research plan (Babbie 2007).

Scientific methodology is based on standardised and systematic methods upon which data are generated, collated and analysed so that information collected from the inquiries could be validated or rejected. Methodologies are standardised and systematised in a way that scientific knowledge can be verified. No form of methodology gathers information in a haphazard way. Methodologies are philosophically grounded and are meant to guide the researcher’s collection, analysis and description of data. The research methodology used in this study for the collection and analysis of data is based on qualitative approach. A

qualitative approach is more suitable for a study of this nature which seeks to describe and analyse the lives of individuals. Qualitative research approach as *explained* by Babbie (2007: 270) seeks to describe and understand rather than explain human behaviour.

In qualitative research greater insights are gained through examining the qualities characteristics or properties of a phenomenon (Henning 2004). It is a kind of research that does not rely on numerical strength for arriving at results but rather interprets meaning through a simple representative sample. A qualitative research has the potential of eliciting information that might not be gained by means of quantitative methods (Strauss and Corbin 1990). Qualitative research seeks to study social phenomena in their natural settings by presenting an understanding of social actions in terms of specific contexts. This is because in human life different individuals or groups have different perspectives and contexts from which they may live in similar situations.

The focus of qualitative research is on the interpretation of meaning and it emphasises the process rather than the outcome. The qualitative research can be seen as the main instrument of the research process itself. It doubles as ‘a means to an end and also an end in itself’ as it seeks to bring out the richness, texture and depth in understanding the complexities of human phenomena. Qualitative research processes are often inductive in approach and may generate new hypotheses and theories in the analysis of data (Babbie 2007).

1.7.1 Population of study and sample size

The study set out to investigate the lives and livelihoods of African professional migrants at

UKZN. A professional is a person with specialised knowledge derived from extensive academic study with almost always a formalised form of training (www.answer.com/library/wikipedia-cid-65058). The sample for this research is made up of foreign African lecturers and postgraduate students at the level of doctorate. Out of a total sample of twenty-five informants, ten are qualified staff working on contract or permanent basis at UKZN and fifteen are doctoral students. Out of the student sample, eight of them constitute full-time employees back in their home universities and seven are students without prior employment experiences.

Those on full-time employment back home are planning on returning to their respective universities upon completion of their programmes. Besides the core sample of twenty-five informants I conducted informal interviews with some other postgraduate students (both local and international) from across disciplines to validate some of the information that I got through interviews with my core research participants. These informal interviews provided me with information that underpin the kind of contributions made by foreign African migrants in the development of skills at UKZN.

Gender differentiation came in by means of the snowball referral method which made it possible for me to have access to both genders. This is a sub category that emerged out of the core sample. Eleven male as opposed to fourteen female were interviewed for the study. Interviews were conducted on three out of the five campuses that make up UKZN. Informants were interviewed on Howard College, Westville and Pietermaritzburg campuses. The choice of campuses was not deliberate; it was rather based on the opportunities that presented themselves through connections by informants' colleagues and friends. The conduct of the entire research was carried out through the snowball method that will be discussed later in this section and other

opportunities through informal contacts. Through the snowball method I spoke to anyone who was willing to participate in the research.

My core research participants came from Nigeria (8 informants), Kenya (5 informants), Cameroon (5 informants), Malawi (2 informants), Zimbabwe (2 informants), Botswana (1 informant), Uganda (1) and Tanzania (1 informant). These people became my key informants. My idea of key informants here is not that they are more knowledgeable than other informants on the topics intended to be covered for this research. Rather my use of key informants here is that these were people who were more interested in discussing the kind of issues raised in the research and they actually gave me the time and attention to have these issues discussed with them.

1.7.2 Sampling technique

Sampling refers to a group of people representing the whole. A sample usually is smaller than the population itself especially when it has to deal with larger population groups. A sample may be considered as a representative subset for the observation on behalf of the entire population in such a way that the conclusions drawn from the subset could stand for the entire group. The research employed the snowball technique as a means of collecting data. This is a referral method in which an informant(s) linked me to another/others he or she knew would be suitable for my sample. The snowball method was employed in this study because I envisaged that there could be a possibility of these professionals being connected through social networks. Bernard (1995: 203) claims that snowball sampling method is most effective in studies of small, bounded, or difficult-to-find populations. This method proved very useful as research participants

connected me with their colleagues. I must acknowledge that I found easier access to informants who had my research interest spoken to them by their colleagues before I could meet such informants than those I met through contact details only.

1.7.3 Method of data collection

The study made use of a combination of methods of data collection that included semi-structured, unstructured in-depth interviews, conversations and participant observation. There was a checklist of questions I developed to guide the research inquiry. With semi-structured interviews, I was prepared to exercise flexibility in terms of the order in which the topics are considered. This was significant in the sense that it gave me room to develop ideas and speak more elaborately on the issues I raised with such an approach. The answers are open-ended and more emphasis is laid on the elaboration of areas of interest by the interviewee (Denscombe 2007: 176).

Unstructured interviews re-emphasise the interviewee's flexibility in his or her thoughts. The role of the researcher is non-intrusive and as far as possible the informant could open up with a minimal control from the interviewer. Unstructured interviews form a continuum in which they both allow their interviewees to use their own words and develop their own thoughts (Denscombe: *ibid*). While allowing informants to freely express their thoughts I did probing wherever necessary. This probing did not get in the way for my informants to lead. Probing was used especially in cases where my informants showed interest in the topics under discussion.

Conversation was another technique used in this research for data collection. Conversations though could be viewed as parts of interviews however do not absolutely share similarities with

interviews. Interviews as explained by Denscombe (1983) and Silverman (1985) cited in Denscombe (2007: 173) “interviews involve a set of assumption and understandings about the situation which are not normally associated with a casual conversation. Conversations were one of the techniques I used in eliciting information from my informants. This was most effective especially with informants with whom I had established a greater rapport. This group of informants automatically translated into my key informants. My identity as foreign student helped a great deal in facilitating encounters and establishing rapport. I deliberately did not position myself in the study because I did not want my identity getting in the way of objectivity. I mostly had conversations with my informants in their offices whenever they were free.

Participant observation was also employed in the study. Although this technique did not involve many of my informants, it however proved useful in the research. I participated in some social functions of some diaspora groups of African origin which involved the participation of those who constituted my sample. In addition to this I also visited some of the homes of my key informants to see how they experience life out of the work space.

Fieldwork for the research started in November 2007 and ended in October 2008. During the research I covered more than one interview with an informant. At least two interview sessions were conducted with each of the twenty five key informants. The depth of the interviews largely depended on the kind of issues raised by an informant in the course of the interviews. My key informants especially were those to whom I paid persistent visits in order to collect detailed information for the research.

1.7.4 Doing fieldwork

Doing research can be exciting especially if one is able to access the kind of people who would make fruitful contributions to the research. For the eleven months that I conducted this research, I must acknowledge that in general I had meaningful encounters with my informants. The choice of the area of my study is something that coincidentally met with those who are either already experts in research or those who are striving to become good researchers in the nearest future. Collaboration from informants for the realisation of this research endeavour cannot be overemphasised. Research participants were very engaging and were enthusiastic spending time with me in discussing the various topical issues surrounding their professional and social lives. I did not encounter major problems in eliciting the kind of responses I wanted from them. Their elaborate explanations on various topics gave me the kind of insights into their lives that helped me to develop more questions that I found relevant for the research inquiry. Because of the high level sensitivity of most of the informants, a lot was covered in an interview that lasted for thirty minutes.

Moreover my identity as a foreign student studying at UKZN made it easier for me to establish a close rapport with my informants. Although I carried the consent ethical form with me most of my informants did not bother much about that since they understood I share a common experience with them. My identity as a foreigner made it possible for them to share intimate and personal experiences about their lives in South Africa and most of them allowed me to store the information in whatever form I wanted. Most of the interviews were audio-taped with the aim of transcribing them later after an interview.

However, researching into the lives of migrants is riddled with dilemmas and obstacles. It is one thing to get information, how to disseminate the information obtained is another thing. It is an ethical obligation that the researcher has to protect the identity and interest of the researched. In this regard confidentiality and anonymity are of paramount importance. With this I assured my informants that their interests would be protected. The dilemma lies with the requirements of meeting with the standards of anthropological research which stresses an emic production of accounts. However the use of pseudonyms employed in this study is not sufficient enough to disguise the display of some information I find unavoidable in the dissemination of this data. In this regard I have used direct functional representation of some informants to put across the kind of information I find worth disseminating. Positions such as Heads of schools are used where it was not possible for me to disguise the information. Besides there are informants who being aware of the richness of the information they decided that I should quote them verbatim. Failure to respect the interest of one's informants may block future researchers from accessing information from the same individuals.

Another challenge faced during the conduct of this research was the issue of time and space. Time was a major difficulty in respecting a scheduled interview. I had to make repeated appointments to have my way through just one interview. This greatly accounts for the long period of my fieldwork. Although it was my plan to make repeated visit to informants in order to get a complete and more sophisticated insights into their lives, the research probably took longer because most appointments with informants had to be re-scheduled. Space on its own constituted another hassle. Most of the interviews conducted were carried out in the offices of those who had an office space. For those who did not have an office space I had to persuade them to retire with

me in a quiet corner on the campus concerned. The busy nature of both academics and students placed me always on negotiation terms with them.

Doing participant observation was not extensive enough as I desired. The limitation to participant observation largely came from the fact that most of them would not allow me to visit their homes. In fact most of them said all I had to observe could be reported orally; therefore they found no need for me to come around where they live. I did not intend to interrogate the reasons that could possibly not want them to let me visit their homes; but what stood out for me is that they did not want me to intrude in their private space. I ended up with two households and two social functions as main sites of participant observation.

1.8 Structure of thesis

The thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter one is an introductory chapter. Since migration is a multidisciplinary area of study, chapter one begins with discussion on migration within an anthropological paradigm. With respect to the topic, the chapter highlights the epistemological and theoretical approaches in studying migration from an anthropological perspective. It also discusses briefly the major trends of African migration and specifically highlights reasons surrounding the inflow of foreign African professionals into post-apartheid South Africa. It equally provides the rationale for study and presents research questions, objectives and significance of study. It ends with a discussion on methodology and methods used in carrying out this study.

Chapter two reviews literature on the causes and effects of African professional migrancy within and outside the continent. It reveals a paradigm shift of African professional migrancy from predominantly South to North, to a significant level of South-bound migration; with

contemporary South Africa taking the lead within the African continent. Chapter three is one of the ethnographic chapters. It examines the structural and individual motivations why foreign African academics migrated to work and study in South Africa.

Chapter four looks at how transnational spaces change the nature of gender relations, while in some cases reinforce patriarchal values.

Chapters five and six deal with the professional lives of foreign African academics at UKZN.

Chapter five shows the contributions that foreign African academics are making to the pedagogic and curricular development of UKZN. Chapter six discusses the commitments of African professional transnationals to the development of African scholarship.

Chapter two

African professional migrancy and the new transnational space of South

Africa

The outflow of African professionals has been an ongoing process since the days of colonialism. Traditionally African skilled migration was made to countries with which they shared historical cultural, linguistic and communication links established through colonialism. In this regard migrants from Francophone colonies migrated to France, those from Anglophone countries to the United Kingdom, while Portugal and Belgium continue to receive migrants from Rwanda and former Zaire (Adepoju 1995: 98). The contemporary situation of African professional migrancy to the north is no longer strictly made to areas with which they share historical links. In addition to their movements to historically-related countries, the United States, Canada, and New Zealand are considered major immigrant-receiving countries of African professionals (Massey et al 1998). Northern countries have continued to dominate as major centres for skilled labour migration from the developing nations because of their incomparable economic and technological resources in the global world economy. Professional African and other categories of migrancy to the north are not necessarily caused by the major economic attractions of the north, but they are rather caused by the inability of African nations to respond adequately to the needs of their citizens.

2.1 Causes of African professional migrancy

Generally migration is undertaken as a livelihood strategy to better the economic, social and professional lives of individuals. Most African countries are faced with socio-economic and political problems that continue to fuel the exodus of their citizens to countries which are more economically and politically stable. Political uncertainty and economic hardship are major factors influencing the outmigration of Africans of various professional and social backgrounds.

Almost the entire continent of Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa is faced with political 'pollution'. Political upheavals such as wars, strikes, riots, political demonstrations and other forms of political unrest are what affect many parts of the continent. The different forms of political unrests and instability are exacerbated by poor governance and the dictatorial and repressive governments of most African polities. Since decolonisation, many African countries have been scenes of constant political crises. Countries like DRC, Rwanda, Sudan, Angola, Liberia, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe have been arenas of political instability and civil strife in Africa (Adepoju 1995, White et al 2002).

The dictatorial regimes of most African countries have stifled freedom of speech, resulting in severe human rights abuse. Those who mostly suffer from such abuse are intellectuals, students, and union leaders (Adepoju, *ibid*). The harassment and intimidation faced by these groups of people stem from the fact that they are those who are most critical and vocal about issues affecting their nations. Under such critical political situations, skilled professionals, technicians and academics are often the first to be forced out. Many intellectuals have sometimes gone into exile as a means of escaping political torture at home.

Following independence, African states were faced with the challenge of putting in place legitimate political systems, developing existing economic institutions and dispossessing the legacy of colonial domination. These attempts were met with pressures that resulted in coups and counter-coup and ethnic conflicts. Political instability has indeed been part of the legacy of colonialism in Africa (Bascom 1995, Lindsay 1985). The different forms of political unrest have promoted the level of involuntary migration in Africa. The intensity of these movements is so great that Bascom (ibid: 198) states that for every three persons, one is an involuntary migrant (UNHCR 1981). After independence some African states with relative political stability provided sanctuary for refugees from countries which faced political turbulence. Somalia, former Zaire and Kenya were once hosts to refugees who largely came from Ethiopia, Angola and Uganda. The political situation of African countries is marked with uncertainty and unpredictability. Somalia, Sudan, former Zaire and Kenya which were once hosting refugees have of late become arenas of political upheavals. The chaotic political governments of these countries is forcing out many of their citizens to areas with less political tensions. Some of this displacement is done internally, while many others have embarked on international migration for their safety and survival (Bascom 1995, White et al 2002).

Since 1945, voluntary migration became free especially after the independence of many African states (Jackson 1969) and since then has increased in leaps and bounds among the different regions of Africa. Most voluntary migration appears to be carried out in pursuit of economic needs. Overtime, economic migration has changed from going into work in agriculture and

mining to more specialized occupations such as; business, vocational, professional and technical and other specialized backgrounds. Skills have constantly been lost to countries which are seen as more economically viable. The international immigration of skilled individuals contributes enormously to the dearth of professional, managerial and technological personnel and expertise and also stifles the development of infrastructural facilities of countries of emigration.

Since the era of colonisation, modern labour migration in Africa has largely resulted from the expansion of the West and the fitful but progressive incorporation of Africa in the emergent global economy (Skinner 1985: 18). Africa has always depended on the West for its economic development, and the lack of socio-economic structures to cater for the development of these countries has made it more difficult for those with skills to meet with their desired intentions. Although migration is an individual's decision, the inability of social systems to respond adequately to the socio-economic lives of individuals can induce migration. The response by African professionals to upward social and professional mobility has been one of the major causes of emigration from their countries to other parts of the world it is believed their professional aspirations would be more fulfilling. Migration in Africa has helped to consolidate the dependency theory with Africa in particular strongly glued to the West for its economic survival. Emigration partly contributes to the slowdown in economic growth of the sending country. Amin (1974) viewing effect of migration from a dependency theory platform diagnosed that:

Emigration impoverishes the region from which the migrants come; it also prevents the socio-economic structures from undergoing radical, progressive change; also to defend themselves to survive, these societies react by reinforcing those aspects of their traditional structure, which enable them to survive impoverishment. But at same time, this impoverishment reinforces the push effect on certain

elements of the population, reproducing conditions of emigration. The form that this development then takes is that of a degenerated, agrarian, capitalism corrupted and poor. (Amin 1974) quoted in Skinner (1985: 20).

At the macro-level, the emigration of people results in a substantial loss of GNP especially for societies with large numbers of emigrants. The continuous reliance of human capital from the South to cater for industrial activities of the North has continuously deprived African nations of skilled labour which is the live wire of the economic development of a nation.

Post-colonial Africa continues to register high numbers of skilled emigrants in search of greater opportunities in the more buoyant economies of the world. Many African countries in the post-colonial era are experiencing a rapid growth in their labour force. This increase in labour force far supplants the capacity of the formal employment sector to gainfully absorb them (Adepoju 1998a). Most countries are faced with harsh economic conditions, sluggish economic growth, coupled with the introduction of economic austerity programmes which have resulted in the sharp deterioration of employment situations in Africa. Austerity economic programmes were introduced by the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) instituted by the Bretton Wood and International Monetary Fund (IMF) in an attempt to improve on the economic situation of African nations. Under the pressure of balance-of-payment support from World Bank and IMF, most African governments were forced to abandon their traditional rulership and started implementing liberalisation policy as prescribed by SAP. In Zimbabwe for example in 1991 the government decided to abandon the socialist policies it had pursued since independence (1980) in pursuance of SAP reforms (Zinyama 2000: 72). The mission of SAP for the developing world and Africa was principally to help bail out these countries from their indebtedness and make a way for their economic recovery. The number of reforms introduced under SAP included:

- Trade liberalisation
- Currency devaluation
- Tight control on money supply
- Cutbacks in social expenditures, particularly education, health and housing
- Removal of food subsidies
- Reduction of public employment
- Privatisation of state-owned enterprises (Adekanye 1998, Adepoju 1998b, Zinyama 2000).

These reforms were implemented by the various governments of African states. However, this had serious ramifications on the economic fibre of African states. Employment situation worsened compounded with the retrenchment of skilled workers in both the public and private sectors. The worsened employment situation in most African states persists till today. Many skilled workers lost their jobs especially as most enterprises in the private sector closed down and many others suffered from severe salary cuts. The repercussions were too severe on most African economies; statistically Adepoju (1998: 307) lists out figures of laid off workers following SAP initiative:

- Ghana 45,000
- Guinea 40,000
- Sierra Leone 30,000
- Tanzania 27,000
- Uganda 20,000
- Cameroon 16,000

- Benin 6,000.

Under these deteriorating conditions international migration became an inevitable lifeline for the economic progress of skilled persons from areas heavily affected by SAP reforms. For many a cut in salary posed a serious adjustment problem as it meant adjusting to an unaccustomed lifestyle; over and above it created serious impact on family and household incomes. Most people moved out of their countries to seek newer and greater opportunities in the more economically buoyant nations of the world.

Besides the worsening employment situation, wage differentials are also an important issue that has led to the migration of most Africans with professional and technical skills. The conspicuous salary disparities among the different categories of the civil society produce discontent from those who are undermined. Adekanye (1998: 199) noted that in Nigeria, SAP reforms led to the “pauperization of Nigerian academics, doctors, engineers, and other professionals, and highly skilled groups in a comparative global context.” Within the country itself, certain groups of skilled workers are privileged in terms of good pay packages over the others. He notes for example that Commissioners, High Court judges, and cabinet ministers earn more than university professors and vice-chancellors. The reaction has been a massive outflow of the disadvantaged income earners to foreign lands to take up newer and better appointments.

The lack of technology and technical equipment, overcrowded working conditions, and the absence or shortage of social amenities are also serious inducements of skilled labour migration from African countries. The lack of working equipment to experiment, constrains professional productivity. Many professionals despite what they may earn have abandoned their jobs back at

home and moved to areas which they believe have adequate technical and technological equipment. It is more fulfilling for them to work in an environment that has all the working gadgets in place for them to display their expertise. The lack of modern health infrastructure and poor educational facilities also form important determinants of migration. Manpower goes where not only economic opportunities are, but also where social opportunities are better.

The poor economic situation and the underdevelopment of Africa are caused by brain drain. Brain drain is defined as “the emigration of skilled and talented persons from their countries of birth to another country” (Johnson 1985: 126). The migration of people with skills from poorer to richer societies is based on the attempt to maximize their earning power and also to best utilize their talents and skills by being employed in societies which are well equipped with the necessary resources they need for their professional empowerment or productivity.

2.2 Brain drain

The term brain drain is simply defined as a phenomenon of skill loss through the emigration of skilled and talented persons to more developed countries; it is a loss of national investment in human capital (Cummings 1985: 153). Literature has shown that the outmigration of African professionals has adversely impacted on the national development of most African nations (Cummings 1985, Johnson 1985, Adekanye 1995, Adepoju 1985). This negative impact results from the loss of professional, managerial and technological personnel and expertise from countries of origin to other countries of the world. African professionals are considered the cream of their societies; their migration implies that national development is at stake because meaningful development can only be achieved through the deployment of intellectual capacities

towards the utilisation of a country's resources. Brain drain from African countries has been a response to the inability of African states to make meaningful provisions for the economic and social wellbeing of their citizens. The migration of African professionals just like any other category of migrants is mostly undertaken for economic motives. The decision of many contemporary African skilled individuals to migrate for work is usually made with "microeconomic concerns in mind" (Skinner 1985: 21). African professional migrants see labour migration as linked to their individual economic and social progress and not necessarily linked to the development of their nation-states. Even though it is true that their migration is undertaken for selfish interests, movements out of their countries of origin invariably affect developmental concerns of their countries.

The phenomenon of brain drain has been promoted by the lack of social and economic infrastructures to accommodate the increasing skilled labour growth in most of African nation-states. Many African countries after independence have experienced a rapid growth in their formal labour force. This rapid growth in the labour force far supplants the existing socio-economic structures that should sustain such labour force. The lack of economic and social infrastructures in African countries has been largely responsible for the unprecedented influx of African professionals to the more buoyant economies of the North. The North has always been a market for the employment of skills from the developing world especially from Africa. Countries of the North are seen as capital intensive economies which are always in need of human labour to run their various departmental services. The growing economic development in the main immigration countries of the North has rendered the need for skilled manpower urgent. Developing countries especially African countries have continued to supply labour to these

countries. The economic and technological advancements of northern countries serve as the major attractions to the migration of skills from Africa. However it should be noted that the migration of African skilled individuals is pushed more by the socio-economic, environmental and political problems faced by African nations than necessarily the vibrant economic indicators of the North (Adekanye 1998, Adepoju 1998b)

Despite the fact that a considerable amount of literature shows that brain drain is a major contributing factor to the development problems of African states, some have however argued that the migration of African professionals cannot necessarily be judged as 'loss of brains' (Agbo 2005, Sevilla 2006). The argument advanced by these writers is based on the claim that when people migrate, they do not sever relationship with their home countries. Even in cases of permanent settlement in country of immigration, most migrants still maintain strong links with their home countries. Migrants' connections with home countries are not only realised through financial remissions, but significantly through social remission. African diasporic networks of professionals from particular countries have been formed in response to addressing the needs of their communities and nations. The development of these networks is what Meyer and Brown (1999) cited in Vertovec (2002: 8) call "distant cooperative work within an intellectual diaspora." Various networks of African intellectuals abroad have developed to look into scholarly and developmental needs of African countries. These networks include the South African Network of Skills Abroad (SANSA), Association of Kenyans Abroad (AKA), Moroccan Association of Researchers and Scholars Abroad (MARS), Association of Nigerians Abroad (ANA). These networks play the role of linking African countries with their skilled nationals abroad through the transfer of knowledge from the transnational African expatriate. These

networks as Vertovec (ibid) observes are becoming systematic to the extent that they have earned the support of international agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme with its initiative of TOKTEN (Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals). These networks have been grouped by Meyer and Brown (ibid) cited in Vertovec (ibid) within four categories namely:

- Student/scholarly networks
- Local associations of skilled expatriates
- Expert pool assistance through TOKTEN
- Intellectual and/scientific diaspora networks.

The formation of these networks has led to the globalisation of human capital through “brain exchange” (Vertovec 2002) which has further led to the circulation of brains thereby creating a global mobile workforce.

2.3 South-bound migration within the African continent

Immigration today has become a global phenomenon with a significant global supply of immigrants shifting from Europe to the developing nations of the Third World (Castles and Miller 1993, Massey et al 1998). South-bound migration of the southerners, better termed as South-South migration (henceforth S-S migration), is nearly as large as South-North migration (henceforth S-N). Ratha and Shaw indicate that about 74 million southern migrants reside in other developing countries. They further note that about 80% of S-S migration takes place between “countries with contiguous borders”, and also that a large share of non-contiguous borders goes to countries which are relatively close (Ratha and Shaw 2007: 30). Most sub-Sahara

African migration is intra-continental based on specific regions (Lindsay 1985, Appleyard 1998). Intra-regional migrations within Africa are promoted by regional protocols which allow for the free movements of persons across national borders. This mobility as Appleyard (1998: 12) notes is considered as “a means of maximising the utilisation of the regions vast human resources.” Contemporary South Africa is witnessing the influx of migrants both from the traditional sending countries of Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the rest of the sub-Saharan African region.

Contemporary South Africa is among the developing nations that are well known as migrant-receiving countries of the South. Others include India, Russia, Malaysia, and other south Asian countries (Ratha and Shaw 2007). Among the different migrant nationalities in South Africa, the sub-Saharan African region constitutes the highest number of migrant populations in the country. The present paradigm shift of migration to the South is motivated by the technological advancement and the attainment of economic growth by some of the countries of the South. The increasing economic and industrial activities of some Third World countries such as Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, and the more economically viable economies of Africa such as South Africa, Namibia and Botswana (Gwebu 2006) are increasingly becoming centripetal in skilled labour migration especially from Africa. The main drive of professional migrancy from Africa towards the North has been anchored on the sustainable economic structures that continue to entrap migrants from developing countries.

Today, many African countries have a labour force which does not equal the existing structures that should cater for the ever increasing skills. The unsustainable escalation of skilled labour in

most of these countries has exacerbated the phenomenon of emigration. With the advent of globalisation, some developing countries have been put in the ranks of wealthy industrialised nations following a significant growth in their technological, industrial and other economic activities. The advanced status of international communication and technology has translated into a higher global phenomenon of migration. Globalisation processes such as the internet, telephone network and modern transport facilities reinforce the tendency for people to migrate. Usually people with well equipped skills have taken advantage of these global networks in search of jobs and career advancement not only in the developed countries of the North but also in the relatively advanced economies of the South. The growth of transnational activities in South Africa is promoted by the relative buoyant economic opportunities in the country. Globalisation and transnationalism are inextricably linked up to express the phenomena of migration in the contemporary world. The sophisticated technological and communication facilities have led to the rapid dissemination of information across the globe. The rapid flow of information has relatively and absolutely led to increased transnational activities which involve the movement of people across national borders.

2.4 African professional migrancy in South Africa

African migration to South Africa is not a new phenomenon. Historically African migration into South Africa was labour oriented. It began in the middle of the nineteenth century with the discovery of diamond at Kimberly (Crush 2000: 13). The movement of Africans (particularly those from neighbouring countries) was meant to provide unskilled labour that was needed for mining. With the demise of apartheid, South Africa is being swamped by what Crush (ibid: 12)

qualifies a “black tide”.

The political transformation of South Africa into a democratic state has led to South Africa’s (re)insertion into the global world economy (Crush and McDonald 2002). Since the end of apartheid South Africa has moved from its traditional position of recruiting migrant labour from African countries (particularly those from the SADC region), to the recruitment of a more global workforce involving the recruitment of people of different professional backgrounds from all over Africa and different parts of the world. Transnational movements of professionals from other African countries into South Africa are increasingly enhanced by the process of globalisation. With the advent of globalisation, the development of some Third World economies has in a way altered migration patterns in Africa. Because of its position in the global world economy and its geographical positioning on the continent, South Africa has become the African ‘metropolis’ with an ever increasing number of professional and legal migrants streaming into the country to look for employment and career advancement.

South Africa’s ascendancy to democracy has triggered a general restructuring that has tremendously affected the issue of skilled labour distribution in the country. Following this restructuring, the previously disadvantaged people of the black race have been given priority in gaining access to formal employment. The Employment Equity Law categorises skilled job allocations along racial and gender lines. This categorisation puts the once advantaged and those in control and utilisation of resources namely the whites to one of the bottom positions of the employment ladder. This restructuring has further exacerbated the phenomenon of brain drain from South Africa as the whites who possess certain critical skills leave the country for Europe and the United States to seek employment. While most South African skilled workers continue

to migrate to countries like New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia and Canada to seek employment and better wages (Maharaj 2004: 14), the paradox is that professionals from other African countries view South Africa as an 'economic giant'. Its relatively high economic and sophisticated technological and educational infrastructures continue to pull professionals from all angles of Africa. Notwithstanding the high number of African professional migrants in South Africa, Bailey (2003) notes that post-apartheid South Africa has witnessed a downward trend in the number of professionals entering the country. This downward trend as he notes only serves to accentuate the brain drain in South Africa; since there is an unequal proportion of skilled migrants coming into the country to replace the much needed skills lost through emigration.

2.4.1 Migration challenges in post-apartheid Africa

Migration constitutes one of the challenges that are faced by post-apartheid and democratic state of South Africa. The end of apartheid has produced new waves of migration into South Africa which continue to impact on the country's economy and the formulation of migration policies. Research has shown that the implications of current migration trends in the new democratic state of South Africa states have not been fully understood (Crush and McDonald 2002, Maharaj 2004). Being an emerging economy that seeks integration and greater participation in the global world economy and in world politics, "there is a contradictory trend towards exclusivity in respect to its immigration policy" (Maharaj 2004: 2). The challenging difficulties of migrants' acceptance and integration into the South African society significantly result from the loopholes created by the South African immigration policies. Belinda Dodson (2002: 1) attests to the fact that "national politics, bureaucratic bungling, and the very dilemma of formulating democratic,

right-based migration in what is a highly xenophobic state” are responsible for the delay in developing a new progressive immigration policy in South Africa.

Transnational migration contributes enormously to the development of a host nation. The role that migration plays in the development of a nation does not appear to be emphasised in the new South African state. As Matte et al (2002: 1-3) note “immigration is not viewed as a public policy tool that could benefit South Africa. Immigrants and migrants (even the most highly skilled) are more often stereotyped as a threat to the economic and social interests of South Africans... [There] is a misguided assumption that national development and skills in-migration are incompatible”. This ill-conception about the presence of foreign migrants has exacerbated indiscriminate xenophobic attitudes from local nationals. In the words of Crush and McDonald (2002: 7) “most African migrants from panhandlers to professors- are feeling the verbal, and sometimes physical sting of rampant anti-foreign sentiment”. Professional migrants on their part often suffer from xenophobic attitudes due to the fact that they compete with the locals for limited job opportunities. This xenophobia is mostly directed to foreigners from other parts of Africa while their counterparts from Europe and North America remain unaffected. Studies have shown that negative perceptions against these foreigners are widespread and cut across indicators of age, education, gender economic status and race (McDonald et al 1998, Maharaj 2004, Matte et al 2002).

The nexus between migration and national development is crucial in providing the framework for “identifying issues, comprehending interactions among components of the society and formulating plans and programmes to ameliorate social conditions” (Lindsay 1985: 11). The

concept of transnationalism is still at its infancy in the migration discourses of South Africa. Transnational migration as mentioned earlier is perceived as a threatening feature to the social and economic livelihoods of South African nationals. African foreigners are viewed as drainers of resources and job 'stealers'. Studies have however shown that migrants and immigrants are net contributors to the economic growth of host countries and are not parasites as perceived by a cross section of South African nationals. Many migrants pay tax, and through their entrepreneurship, and make a positive injection into local economic development (Maharaj 2004: 13).

However the negative perceptions and attitudes that local South Africans have developed particularly towards African foreigners living and working in the country, this does not deter further immigration into the country. South Africa's dominance as an economic power both in the SADC region and on the continent continues to remain attractive to African intellectuals of different skill backgrounds. The competition for formal employment is a major issue in South Africa. Anti-foreign sentiments largely emanate from the fact that foreign professionals compete with the locals for limited job opportunities. Despite this competition for jobs, South Africa is still faced with an acute shortage of skills. The shortage of skills faced by South Africa is accentuated by the phenomenon of brain drain from the country (Bailey 2003). While foreign African professionals are streaming into the country to look for employment and career advancements, paradoxically South African professionals are migrating to countries like the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and New Zealand for the same purposes that foreign African professionals are migrating to South Africa. The loss of skills from South Africa is promoted by a number of factors that cut across the political and socio-economic domains of

the nation.

One major factor which has been responsible for the migration of skilled persons from South Africa is the political transformation of the country. The new South African government has put in place affirmative action as a guiding tool to the employment of skilled persons in the country. The Employment Equity Policy which is an offshoot of affirmative action places the previously disadvantaged racial groups at top priority in gaining access to formal employment. According to this policy, the order of precedence is blacks, Indians, coloureds whites and then foreigners. This stratified way of skilled labour recruitment has exacerbated the outflow of white people to countries abroad for greener pastures. Most of research carried out by the Southern African Migration Policy (SAMP) show that it is not only the whites who are leaving South Africa to seek employment in the industrialised nations of the North but that a significant number of black professionals have also joined the immigration train to the North . Some studies have shown that amidst the different racial groups that move out of South Africa, the white race tends to dominate. The reasons for this are obvious; the white race tends to suffer from exclusion and most of them are not ready to go through the filtering/delayed process of affirmative action. Secondly it is mostly the white people who possess the most competitively placed skills that can enable them to measure up favourably in the global world economy. Lastly the blacks were given lesser opportunities to train for skills development during the era of apartheid. Numerically speaking the whites outnumber the blacks in terms of skill possessions in contemporary South Africa. This implies that white professionals would eventually dominate in the emigration trend of skilled South Africans (Bailey 2003, Maharaj 2004).

Besides affirmative action, skilled South Africans embark on migration for individual and social reasons. These reasons include the decreasing value of the South African currency (the Rand) and the need to earn higher incomes, the flight from increasing high cost of living and rising insecurity perpetuated by high crime rates. These reasons coupled with the affirmative action mentioned in the preceding paragraph are significantly responsible for the continuous emigration of skilled persons from South Africa.

2.4.2 Contemporary categories of professional migrants in South Africa

Professional migrancy to South Africa is not a new phenomenon. During the era of apartheid immigration laws encouraged the immigration of skilled persons into South Africa. The immigration of skilled persons in South Africa was higher in the era of apartheid than it is the situation contemporarily (Bailey 2003). These migrants were mostly from the developed world who brought in exceptional skills that were critical in the development of apartheid South African economy. Traditionally African immigration to South Africa was labour-oriented; where migrants were recruited from the neighbouring SADC region to work in the mining industries of South Africa. Professional African migrancy in South Africa staggeringly started gaining currency in the 1980s with the recruitment of a few skilled people from neighbouring Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Botswana. As gathered from a few informants of this research most of the African professionals by this period were mostly employed as teachers serving in the then Transkei government of South Africa. Martha an informant from Uganda mentioned that her husband who is also working in the institution was formerly employed from Kenya as a teacher in the Transkei region. At the time of the interview, Martha told me that they have been in South Africa twenty years. It must be noted that by this time South Africa was still under the apartheid regime. The

demise of apartheid has led to a global pan-African migration of skilled labour into the country.

The relative political stability in South Africa following the end of apartheid has made it possible for African professional migrancy to gain momentum. Professionals of different categories such as accountants, engineers, nurses, medical doctors, environmental specialists, biodiversity practitioners, teachers, university lecturers and professors, including students of higher institutions of learning are increasingly making their way to South Africa because of its advanced socio-economic, technological and learning facilities. These professionals are largely from the SADC region and significantly from the anglophone as well as the francophone regions of Africa.

Skilled labour African migration in South Africa significantly portrays the involvement of African women moving to South Africa for education and employment purposes. While studies have footnoted the involvement of women in the process of migration, women just like men are actively involved in the process of migration to meet with their social and economic needs. Most women have independently embarked on migration for their social and economic upward mobility. Educated, skilled and professional migrant women from the different parts of Africa are found across different professions of the South African society. There are a number of African migrant women who are serving as nurses, medical doctors, accountants and lecturers in the universities. The increased immigration of African women of different categories in South Africa engenders a new form of migration in post-apartheid South Africa. Consequently, there is a need to treat this new phenomenon as a discrete entity in order to decipher what female migration represents in post-apartheid South African society.

Feminisation of international migration has become a worldwide trend and the feminisation of African migration is no exception (Adepoju 1996, Dodson 2000). There is a clear visibility of skilled and professional African women moving to South Africa as independent migrants for economic and social progress (Dodson 1998, 2000). In some neighbouring states of the SADC region, women are more educated than men. For example there is a higher number of Basotho women in South Africa working in the formal sector than men (Gay 2000). Even though the number of skilled migrants from Lesotho is relatively small when compared to migrants from the other neighbouring SADC states such as Zimbabwe, Botswana and Zambia, the result is that there is an ongoing brain drain of skilled Basotho (Gay *ibid*: 40).

2.5 Conclusion

The socio-economic and political problems faced by African states continue to affect the international migration of skilled Africans. Worsening economic conditions and political instability remain a colonial legacy. The reforms introduced by SAP for the economic recovery of African states and other developing countries ironically led to the deterioration of the economic and social situations of these states. Unemployment and lower standards of living escalated as family and household incomes diminished. These depreciating conditions have led to the continuous outflow of African professionals to the more buoyant economies of the world. The developed nations of the North predominantly serve as traditional immigrant-receiving countries of skilled labour from Africa. The economic stronghold of northern economies enhanced by intensive capital production has led to an increase in the demand for labour. Developing countries especially from Africa have served as market for the supply of skilled labour to Europe and the United States.

The meaningful integration of some third world countries in the global world economy has led to a significant trend of transnational migration southward. South Africa is prominently ranking among the leading countries of the world seen as preferred destinations for African professional migrancy. The political transformation of South Africa has greatly impacted on the trend of African migration into the country. The relative political stability and economic buoyancy of post-apartheid South Africa have contributed enormously to the movements of skilled labour from Africa towards the South. Because of its economic positioning, South Africa is increasingly becoming centripetal in intra-continental migrations for both the skilled and unskilled Africans. The continuous influx of migrants from the different parts of Africa continues to exacerbate tensions among local South Africans who feel that migrants are threat to their social and economic lives. This tension stems from the main reason that South Africa has not yet grappled with the positive contributions that may accrue from migration. Despite the ill conceptions and attitudes that South African nationals have towards foreign Africans, this does not appear to discourage further immigration of skilled persons from all over the rest of the continent. Currently South Africa stands out as the most economically viable nation on the continent.

Chapter three

African professional migrancy to South African institutes of higher learning

Usually reasons surrounding African migrancy of any category are treated as homogenous factors, largely embedded in the socio-economic, cultural and political realms. By and large the continent of Africa especially south of the Sahara is characterised by common events that contribute tremendously to the increased movements of people. The common platform upon which migration-generated factors (socio-economic, political, and demographic factors) operate across the different regions of Africa, however, does not make migration a homogenous phenomenon. In other words, although reasons for African migration may emanate from common loci, the experiences involved may not be the same. Therefore it is imperative for one to be context-specific in the articulation of these factors.

It is most often through ethnographic representations that the discreteness of the above factors is contextualised. Contextualising migration phenomena within specific compartments, gives room for a thorough and unique treatment of the nature and reasons for such migration components. Although this chapter will look into general reasons for African professional migrancy, it is specifically built against the backdrop of factors determining professional migrancy in the world of academia drawn from the research conducted at UKZN. Consequently the chapter sets out to explore the general, structural and personal reasons surrounding African professional migrants in institutions of higher learning.

Reasons surrounding African professional migrancy in South Africa are multi-layered and cannot be simply understood and explained by push/pull factors. Migration in South Africa is propelled by reasons within and outside the individual concerned. Viewing this sort of migration as articulation becomes crucial for encapsulating reasons why South Africa has become a preferred destination for African professionals.

3.1 General reasons for professional migration

Although most contemporary literature theorizing on migration seems to challenge macro-structures as being inadequate in addressing the phenomenon of migration (Koff 2002), these structures act as the bedrock upon which minimal or micro units can be analysed.

Although mentioned earlier that anthropologists emphasise the role of minimal components such as the individual in analysing migrations, it does not necessarily imply that macro components are precluded from such studies. The current study underscores that even though migration is an individual decision, macro factors inevitably propel individual's decision to migrate. Socio-economic off shots such as lack of employment and promotion opportunities, political reasons, the rising cost of living with an unequal match in salary, are among the reasons cited by some of my informants. Economic hardship which is induced by lack of employment for some, and for many others reduction in salaries and the rising cost of living tremendously contributed to their decision to migrate. Some of the informants said they had graduated from tertiary institutions with the hope of being employed thereafter. After graduating, some stayed for a period of three to five years without a job that fitted their qualification. Such informants also come from

countries with high rates of unemployment.

High unemployment rates have been a major problem that many African countries have been facing since independence. Lack of leadership exacerbated by corruption, tribalism, sectionalism and nepotism, and poor governmental economic reforms are factors that perpetuate increasing levels of unemployment. The growth of skilled labour in post-independent African countries is asymmetrical to the growth of economic structures that should engage the services of skilled personnel. The high labour increase has further exacerbated the level of corruption, tribalism and nepotism which are counter-productive to democratic principles.

Some countries have introduced a system of competitive examinations as a means of getting into professional institutions after obtaining a university degree. These competitive examinations hinge on what appears to be a scrupulous bureaucratic procedural process by which elimination starts at the very beginning of applying to register for the examination. The examination itself is made up of a written and an oral part. It is most especially at the level of the orals that corrupt, tribalistic and nepotic tendencies become so clear. A postgraduate student from Cameroon put it that *“you need a godfather or a heavy wallet”* to gain access into public service. He further pointed out that being in possession of *“heavy wallet”* does not absolutely guarantee one securing the job. This is because the money may fall in the hands of what he described as *“mafia men.”* These mafia men as he explained are kind of intermediaries between ‘clients’ and top government officials.

While some informants left their countries because of economic hardship, others left because of the disturbing political issues in their countries. Political turmoil is in fact a legacy that African countries inherited from colonialism. Some of the informants decided to come to South Africa

because they were directly affected by political harassments in their home countries. Because of the polluting political situation, which is marked by a degree of uncertainty in his country, one of the informants from Zimbabwe could not have the chance of obtaining a legal visa to enter South African territory. He together with his parents had to go into voluntary exile because of the pervasive political situation in their country. His father was an activist and they feared that their safety was in jeopardy. The parents decided to go and live in one of the neighbouring countries of South Africa's, while the informant proceeded to South Africa which to him appeared a place of greener pastures. The informant stayed in South Africa as an illegal doing odd jobs for six years before becoming a legal migrant culminating in his employment at UKZN.

Professionals and students as mentioned before are those who suffer from political prejudice. Some informants intimated that based on their political party affiliations, they had been deprived of employment and promotions as a means of frustrating and forcing them into 'carpet-crossing'. Jude from Cameroon said that he could not enjoy the privileges entitled to postgraduate students of his department because he could not compromise his political ideology. Because of his membership to an opposition party, he was not given the chance of defending his Master's thesis. He had to abandon it and move to South Africa where he is currently doing his PhD. While studying at UKZN, Jude is also enjoying employment privileges given to postgraduate students in the institution – privileges which are not easy to come by in his home country.

International migration is basically taken by individuals as a means of bailing themselves out of the socio-economic and political threats and the uncertainties migrants face in their home countries. Migration offers professional and skilled migrants the opportunity of gaining acceptance and also recognisability in the working environment. Notwithstanding the intensity of socio-economic and political pressures they might be facing back home; migration is not a

haphazard issue. Areas of migrant destination are carefully and thoroughly thought out by migrants (especially those whose movements are not precipitated by untimely occurrences such as wars or natural disasters). Migrants therefore take into consideration what would attract them to a particular area. These attractions would be subsumed under structural.

3.2 Structural reasons for the migration of African academics to South Africa

Economic and social structures are paramount in the development of skills and the growth of a nation. Many African countries suffer from a lack or shortage of economic and social structures that are crucial for productivity. The limited and sometimes the unavailability of these social and economic structures in these countries have led to an ever-increasing movements of academics and other professionals to areas with relatively higher opportunities. The migration of academics just as other skilled labour migration is motivated by mobility in rank, opportunity of higher pay packages, and better employment and educational facilities.

Institutions of higher learning are normally committed to maintaining the highest standards of excellence. In order to achieve the goal of excellence, it is of paramount importance that these institutions should be in possession of maximum and efficient material and human resources to run the different components of the institutions. Most universities across African nations lack the material and technological infrastructures to meet modern standards of knowledge production. The lack of these infrastructures makes it difficult for lecturers and students alike to fully explore and utilize their potential.

Deteriorating conditions of universities such as overcrowded rooms, offices, dilapidated

laboratory equipment and the lack of basic chemicals for experiments are among the outstanding factors accounting for the movement of academic migrants. Some informants complained that they had to share office space with one or two other colleagues. It is such an inconvenience mainly because of distractions from their colleagues. One of the informants complained that not only did he have to share space, but he had to share it with someone who was much lower in rank and younger than him. The colleague's youthful exuberance was not at all appealing to him. According to the informant the colleague was "too excited" and had a wide network of social relationship that he could not keep out of a work space.

Obsolete laboratory equipment and the lack of chemicals for conducting scientific experiments in the departments of sciences is an endemic problem with most African universities. Informants complained about the lack of modern scientific operating equipment in the lab, congestion, and the inadequate supply of chemicals for experimentations. In some universities the situations is further worsened by power failures and the lack of standby generators to ensure the progress of a begun piece of work. The above has the potential of retarding the progress of the inputs and outputs of both students and lecturers.

Besides the deteriorating conditions of most African universities, wage differentials are another significant socio-economic factor that has caused the migration of academics. The conspicuous salary disparities among the different categories of the civil society produce discontent from those who are undermined. Most of the informants when asked about their salary situation in their countries did a kind of 'transvocational' comparison where they complained that lecturer and teachers in general are marginalised in terms of pay packages by their home governments. Even though some university professionals are more qualified, politicians, parliamentarians, cabinet ministers, high court judges earn higher than them. Their relatively lower pay can hardly

afford them to live in the opulence and affluence of politicians and high court judges. Their reaction to such salary disparities has been their out migration to foreign lands to take up new and better appointments.

Since the demise of apartheid skilled labour migration into South Africa has persisted. The influx of skilled personnel into the country from the rest of Africa is highly motivated by the technological, social and economic structures available in the country. South Africa compared to other African countries appears to offer both qualitatively and quantitatively, structures that ensure better standards of living. The advanced economic and technological status of South Africa serves as a major inducement of skilled labour immigration into the country. Since the end of apartheid, South Africa has become a trainer and employer of skilled labour from the rest of Africa.

The University of KwaZulu-Natal has offered employment to persons from all over the different regions and countries of Africa. Professionals and postgraduates students from other African countries are fascinated by the ample opportunities of learning and teaching facilities that are in place at the university. The technological and the communication component of the institution such as the Information Communication and Technology (ICT) and the audiovisual facilities go a long way to facilitate the teaching and the learning process in the institutions. The availability of computer laboratories which are put at the disposal of students is something new to many postgraduate student migrants. On the part of the lecturers, the use of overhead projectors in the classrooms was their first experience when they got to UKZN. At their initial stage, both postgraduate students and lecturers had to enlist the services of colleagues to show them how to operate and use these equipment.

Though migrations are most often economic in nature, on the part of some professionals, manpower does not only go where economic opportunities are available, but also where social conditions are better such as health, good working space and working facilities. Some informants were far from driven into South Africa by economic motives only. Some of the informants; especially those who had previous employment back in their home countries, said that they were driven by the structural and social amenities that are in place in South Africa, and above all they were attracted by the availability of modern learning and teaching facilities that South Africa's institutions of higher learning have. One of the ways through which some of these informants came to be aware of these opportunities, was through their different networks. Networks as will be dealt with later play an important role in the dissemination of information. One of the attractions of UKZN is the good working space provided to lecturers and postgraduate students. Lecturers enjoy the luxury of being entitled to an office which is well equipped with all the global communicative gadgets such as the telephone, fax, computer connected to intranet and internet. With these facilities in place, informants expressed a general sense of being connected to the rest of the world. One informant in his words said with an air of exaggeration "*In just an hour, I can sail round the world in this little room of mine*" (referring to his office) - a luxury he could not afford to enjoy back at home. With some professionals the availability of working facilities is more crucial to their professional fulfilment than the pay package. This implies that this group of professionals are more passion-driven in pursuance of their career than are economically driven.

Curricular programmes of a university play an important role in attracting skilled labour from other African universities. South African universities appear to offer well structured and better organised curricular programmes with well defined theoretical perspectives that explain what

these programmes offer. It is through this well developed curricular structure that graduate students and lecturers from other African universities become aware of the viability of a programme. Some programmes from other universities in Africa are either not fully developed or are not diversified enough to embrace a wider spectrum of knowledge production. One of the informants from Kenya who is a full-time lecturer back in his home country and currently doing his doctoral programme, said the reason he applied to study in a South African university is because he discovered an aspect in the programme he had been dreaming of pursuing which was not included in the same programme run by his home universities. More over as echoed by some other informants, in terms of standards, the system of South African universities were more predictable and there is more “sanity” to the system than it is the case with their home universities. The words predictability and sanity means that one can get things done within reasonable timeframe without the unnecessary hiccups that one experiences in other universities.

3.3 Personal reasons for migration

The individual constitutes an important unit of conceptualisation within anthropological discourses that go beyond macro analysis. The holistic nature of anthropological research takes into account studying and analysing macro as well as micro units. The individual in this study constitutes an important component because he or she forms the basic unit around which larger phenomena are developed. Usually the decision to migrate is borne by an individual. The development of migration factors cannot ignore the role played by the individual because it is the combination of individual experiences that culminate in aggregate determinant factors of migration. The holistic approach utilised in this research revealed that factors determining the movements of academics cannot necessarily be based on generalisation. Even though societal pressures may appear to motivate individuals’ decision to migrate, it should however be noted

that individuals respond differently under the same circumstances. Besides the experiences might not be the same. Therefore there is a need to compartmentalise reasons that may inform individuals' decision to migrate.

Some of the personal reasons cited by migrants in this study tend to overlap due to similarities in the various accounts of migrants and also because these reasons are discussed through a particular angle of scrutiny. This however does not necessarily mean that they share the same meaning in their interpretation. Personal reasons for migration according to this study fall within the broader reasons of family influence, the need for a change in social and geographical space.

3.3.1 Moving under family influence

Family commitment or pressures are among the micro reasons that sometimes inform the migration of individuals. The family is a minimal unit that has the potential upon which social issues can be conceptualised. The family acts as a repository for the pressures that emanate from broader macro societal structures. In other words, the socio-economic, political and cultural factors invariably affect the state of a family. This implies that if these socio-economic, cultural and political indicators bear favourably on family, migration of a member(s) of that family may not be a necessary option to be undertaken. This is because the family is experiencing a level of stability. Migration has been undertaken by some individuals as means to better their lives and that of their families. Conversely if these indicators are unfavourable, such a family can be said to be experiencing instability. Migration as indicated already is one of livelihood strategies.

People with skills in a family usually consider themselves and are considered as an 'investment'. Most often it is the family that bears the onus of taking responsibility of one's education. Some of the people interviewed besides other reasons emphasized that it is because 'they owe it to the

family' that they sought to migrate as a means of meeting with the demands of their individual families. Some of the informants come from highly economically disadvantaged backgrounds, whereby they as educated individuals are looked upon as the economic icons of their various families. Some informants because of loyalty to the family have straddled thick and thin to make it for their families. Their decision to migrate is not necessarily tied to their individual upward social mobility, but is rather generated by the pressures of getting their families out of poverty. Some of them were actually employed back in their countries, but they had their jobs forfeited because these jobs were not paying enough to sustain their families. It should be noted that in most African families, the notion of a family is extensive including an extensive membership of consanguine. Some informants are the firstborn of their families, being the firstborn; it is incumbent on him or her to oversee the wellbeing of his family. Some of them have assumed a parenthood-role of nurturing and assisting their younger ones in their education and social life.

Even though migration is principally undertaken to better the lives of individuals and their families, at the initial stage the idea of moving is quite a consideration. Some of my informants admitted that it was quite a consideration for them to move. Members of their families were reluctant in yielding to their attempt to migrate. One of the reasons was that they were sceptical about the possibility of them getting employment at place of destination early enough for them to continue to be of financial support to their families. Another reason was that they felt the migrant might be corrupted by his new environment and may take advantage of the long distance to actually withdraw from family commitments. Two of my informants indicated that family members are very protective of persons who have a sense of familial commitment. It turned out that these two migrants (both of whom are male) were unmarried. They said their families were apprehensive of the fact that they could face neglect if their sons decide to marry; especially

without their supervision.

One of the informants out of concern for his family said he would not consider marriage an important option until he obtains a significantly stable job. In his words he said *“if God permits I would like my family members to approve of my marriage to any lady... I don’t pray for a partner who would sow a seed of discord in my family..., they mean a lot to me.”* This discord according to him may inhibit him from rendering the kind of support that his family may need from him. Considering his higher income earning status, one of the migrants said it is his responsibility to see that he can empower as many of his family members as possible. He said his family has so much invested in him to the point that he considers himself a valuable asset to be utilized by all who did not spare their resources to see him grow.

Acquiring education is quite a huge investment from one’s family. Familial obligations as derived from this ethnography, requires that the migrant be responsive to the needs of his family members. With regard to migrants whose trip to South Africa was borne by their family members, they carry a fresher burden of putting their family’s interest paramount in whatever achievements they make economically. Some of them have the obligation of remitting home almost on a monthly basis.

3.3.2 Migrating for a social and geographical change

The need for a change of environment though it may not operate independent of other variables inducing migration, is also an important factor that contributed to the migration of some individuals. I would like to quote an informant from Kenya who in expressing the necessity for a change used a Luo idiom *“Ka ma ilwokorie ok itwoe.”* (where you bathe you don’t dry in the same spot). This proverb basically explains that you do not stay in the same place for too long.

She had worked for over twenty years in one university in her home country. Before becoming a lecturer, she had been in that same university at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Experiencing life elsewhere and facing new challenges of the new environment is in itself a learning process. This implies that change is not only motivated by the idea of moving physically, but also that the new environment would offer a better social space with newer options. Change of geographical space does not run independent of other variables namely economic, social and political variables which serve as motivating factors for one's movement into a new place. If political, social and economic factors of a host country are not conducive enough, people would not just move for the sake of experiencing a change. Even though change of environment was among the reasons cited as to why some migrants moved, it however turned out that these migrants moved to South Africa because they were first of all assured of their jobs at UKZN, and also that South Africa would offer newer and challenging options. These options introduce unfamiliar or modified phenomena of social life that would give the individual new experiences that may have the potential of changing and developing individuals' perceptions and ideology towards life.

South Africa being a relatively more buoyant, structured and organised country of the sub-Saharan African region, appears to offer better standards of living and livelihood which are quintessential for those who want to sustainably experience a change of physical space. South African institutions of higher learning offer a scenario of how well structured and organised other institutions function. Martha from Kenya having been a lecturer for twenty years in the same university became keen on experiencing a change in some other university especially outside her home country. She said the option of coming to South Africa was very timely and saw it as the best thing that could ever have happened to her. To her South Africa being more

advanced than her home country, it meant that she would be introduced to a ‘new culture’ of “social reality”- a culture that keeps one abreast of the increasing innovative, technical and technological development. After serving in her home university for more than twenty years, her being in South Africa just for a year has made her to accomplish what she could not accomplish for twenty years in her home university.

What is offered in South Africa however may not be totally new, the major difference is that South Africa’s teaching and learning resources are at the disposal of everyone in the institution. Some of the professionals especially those who migrated from their countries had a sense of how a modern university should be run. But because of the state of their universities, these innovations are a scarce option. The African university usually is slow in embracing not to talk of implementing changes. Because of the inability for an African university to implement changes, many professionals look up to other places which have the kind of facilities they envision for the functioning of their career. Although South Africa is more viable than many other African countries, migrants are not only keen on moving to South Africa because of its economic potentials. To some it is rather because South Africa offers modern facilities that make their jobs more fulfilling.

The preceding discussion has highlighted the fact that change of environment is a factor that can influence one’s decision to migrate. This variable however has to be renegotiated within the socio-economic and political paradigm of the host country. It is an important factor to consider that change of environment becomes imperative when one has stayed for too long in a place. However the new environment should be that which offers newer options and challenges – a

culture that is dynamic enough to embrace the “social realities” of the time. Therefore change goes along with the opportunities that would sustainably guarantee an individual’s life and livelihood while he or she navigates in the pleasure of experiencing a change in his or her new geographical space.

3.4 Professional migration into South Africa and the south-bound migration paradigm

South-bound migration of the southerners, better termed as South-South migration (henceforth S-S migration), is nearly as large as South-North migration (henceforth S-N). Ratha and Shaw indicate that about 74 million south migrants reside in other developing countries. South Africa is among the developing nations that are well known as migrant-receiving countries of the South. Others include India, Russia, Malaysia, and other south Asian countries (Ratha and Shaw 2007). Among the different migrant nationalities in South Africa, the sub-Saharan African region constitutes the highest number of migrant populations in the country.

The political transformation of South Africa to a democratic state has led to South Africa’s (re)insertion into the global world economy. Since the end of apartheid South Africa has moved from its traditional position of recruiting migrant labour from African countries (particularly those from the SADC region), to the recruitment of a more global workforce that involves the recruitment of people from all over Africa of different professional backgrounds. Transnational movements of professionals from other African countries into South Africa are increasingly promoted by the processes of globalisation. With the advent of globalisation, the development of some Third World economies has in a way altered migration patterns in Africa. Because of its position in the global world economy, South Africa has become the African ‘metropolis’ with an increasing number of professional and legal migrants streaming into the country to look for

employment and career advancement.

The demise of apartheid and South Africa's transition to a democratic state triggered a general restructuring that tremendously affected the issue of skilled labour distribution in the country. Following this restructuring, the previously disadvantaged people of the black race have been given priority in gaining access to formal employment. The Employment Equity Law categorises skilled job allocations along racial and gender lines. This categorisation puts the once advantaged and those in control of the utilisation of resources namely the whites to one of the bottom positions of the employment ladder. This restructuring has further exacerbated the phenomenon of brain drain from South Africa as the whites who already possessed the most critical skills left the country for Europe and the United States to seek employment. While most South African skilled workers emigrate to countries like New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia and Canada to seek employment and better wages (Maharaj 2004: 14), the paradox is that professionals from other African countries view South Africa as an 'economic giant'. Its relatively high economic, technological and educational infrastructures continue to pull professionals from all angles of Africa. However the high number of African professional migrants in South Africa, Bailey (2003) notes that post-apartheid South Africa has witnessed a downward trend in the number of professionals entering South Africa. This downward trend as he notes only serve to accentuate the brain drain in South Africa; since there is an unequal proportion of skilled migrants coming into the country to replace the much needed skills lost through emigration.

www.queensu.ca/samp/migrationresources/braindrain/documents/bailey.pdf).

This last section of the chapter therefore attempts to look at the determinants of African professional migrancy into South Africa. These determinants include proximity and affordability,

income differentials, social networks and cultural disposition.

3.4.1 Proximity

Most South-South (S-S) migration is intra-regional and often takes place between “countries with contiguous borders”. Those that share non-contiguous borders usually move to countries which are relatively close (Ratha and Shaw 2007). Contemporary South Africa is increasingly witnessing migrants of all walks of life from neighbouring countries of the Southern region as well as those from other regions of Africa. The demise of apartheid and the ascendancy of South Africa into a democratic state have led to an increased transnational migration of African professionals into the country. The factor of proximity has become much relevant in motivating African professionals to migrate and settle in South Africa largely because of the relative political calm that the country has enjoyed since its ascendancy to democracy. Moreover, the relative economic viability of the country creates better employment opportunities that could be compared to northern standards. This has reversed the flow of African professional migrancy from the North to the South, with South Africa being at the epicentre of African immigration.

The factor of proximity as revealed through the ethnography conducted in the University of KwaZulu-Natal (henceforth UKZN) relates to two categories of people. The first pertains to the category of African migrants to South Africa migrating directly from other parts of Africa. The second pertains to African migrants who migrated from outside the continent. Whatever their differing approaches relating to the factor of proximity, the bottom line is that for both categories the issue of proximity is associated with economic reasons and geographical closeness to their home countries. A combination of South Africa’s geographical positioning and its economic buoyancy on the continent became critical in igniting the flame of ‘homecoming’- a return home

of professionals who are émigrés from countries overseas. This group of migrants stated that the position that South Africa occupies in the global world economy is as attractive as that of any developed nation of the world. South African institutions have the material and financial resources that it takes for career fulfilment. That is why they did not hesitate applying and taking up appointments in South African institutions. Their migration to the North was basically undertaken in pursuit of the advanced educational, technological and professional standards of northern institutions. Since South Africa happens to rank among the leading economies of the world, it has become a preferred destination for most African professional migrants (Gwebu 2006)

Proximity is further considered important because it facilitates the movements of migrants to their home countries. Proximity makes trips to home more affordable. While in South Africa these migrants have been able to make regular trips home – a luxury they could hardly afford while they were working in Europe and the United States. While working and living abroad, these migrants were faced with the problems of temporal disposition, long distance and sometimes heavy financial costs involved in travelling over long distances. Besides, the transitory nature of air transport constituted a major hassle as most often they incurred loss of luggage in the process of them being transported to their final destinations. Because of these reasons, some of them stayed for years without making a trip home. One interviewee mentioned that since he emigrated from his country he actually made his first trip home only when he got to South Africa.

The issue of proximity becomes very crucial when it comes to migrants' income levels. Intra-regional migration is partly promoted by income differentials involved in travelling over greater distances (Ratha and Shaw 2007). The category of migrants who emigrated from their home

countries or better still from the continent were keen to the issue of proximity principally because it was more affordable to make it in South Africa than travelling to Europe and America. This especially applied to migrants who came to the country to study. The affordability is two fold firstly travelling expenses which involve procurement of visa and purchase of air ticket is cheaper with regard to travelling to South Africa than it is the case with Europe and the United States. Secondly, it is much less expensive to study in South Africa than study overseas. Some migrants mentioned having been admitted to some universities overseas and because they could not afford the cost of the programmes for which they applied, they had their opportunities forfeited. An informant stated that though his moving to South Africa was by default, he reckons he has gained as much as he could have gained abroad. Some other migrant students stated that it was even cheaper and more affordable studying at UKZN especially at the postgraduate level than in their home universities. Besides, the availability of graduate support programmes and research funding, go a long way to easing the financial burden of most postgraduate students. The fee remission of 70-80% to meritorious graduate students and money allocated for some research endeavours is something which a cross section of those interviewed have experienced for their very first time. Those who do some part-time work in their different departments usually save some money that can afford them to make sporadic trips home to visit families and friends at least once a year or once every two years. Those who come from neighbouring countries of Botswana, Swaziland, Mozambique and Lesotho can afford the luxury of spending short holidays and weekends in their countries. Most of them travel by road which is far less expensive than taking an airplane.

Geographical positioning has the potential of determining migrants' transnational movements. Long distances often prevent migrants from settling down for a longer period than it would have

been intended. Shorter distance migrations can translate into semi-permanent and permanent settlement of migrants due to proximity. A key factor that enforces a permanent character of migrant settlement is family reunion and formation. Shorter distances make it more possible for migrants to either leave in the company of their families or be joined later by their families. This is mainly because it is cheaper and quicker to relocate with one's family over shorter distances than would be the case with greater distances. Proximity operating alongside other economic and political variables informing African migration to South Africa has helped in shaping the migration character of foreign African professionals. Professional migrancy in South Africa has developed into semi-permanent and permanent settlement by many foreign African professionals because of family reunion. Some informants admitted having never been together with their wives and children ever since they left their homes. Some others could not get married because they were trying to avoid the stress involved in transnational separation of families. One of the interviewees admitted that it was when he got to South Africa that he got married and actually became 'a family man'; after being to countries in Europe and Asia. Some interviewees actually were joined by their spouses and children shortly after relocating in South Africa.

3.4.2 Income differentials

Usually, the out migration of professionals is motivated by income levels. In most African countries as was mentioned before, the out migration of teachers and academics of higher institutions of learning is often provoked by the income earning gaps that exist between them and other skilled workers either in their country of origin or in countries of immigration. The marginalisation of African academics within their home institutions is crucial in promoting

emigration from the different African states. It is partly because of better wages that African academics straddle geographical boundaries in search of employment. The movements of African academics to the North are largely motivated by expectations of higher pay packages.

In terms of the power of currency, countries within Africa may not offer as much as countries of the north may offer to a migrant. Countries of the north are considered as higher currency zones. Skilled individuals from developing countries are motivated by these higher currencies to look for and take up employment in the developed countries. It is believed that through remittances, the conversion of these currencies into local currencies of the different African states will yield a significant effect on an individual's progress or development of his family back in his home country. Through conversion the money would be multiplied and would serve to achieve more meaningful economic progress than one would achieve working in his own country. One of the informants who happened to work on contract in Europe in the same capacity as he worked in his country, said his economic achievements, were greater than what he could achieve while previously working in his country.

However insignificant income differentials may appear between developing countries of a particular region, these differentials in a way influence S-S migration. Middle-income earning countries of the south have become centripetal in attracting skilled labour migration from lower income countries. This phenomenon operates mostly between countries of the same regions. The middle-income position of South Africa especially after the end of apartheid, has led to a pan-African nature of immigration of skilled personnel from Africa. Many informants (especially those who travelled directly from their countries) indicated that they were partially motivated by the power of the South African Rand to migrate to South Africa. Those who moved from their home countries to South Africa as employees of UKZN said they were not only motivated by the

higher pay packages, but that the Rand was higher than their currencies. Amidst the higher cost of living in South Africa, migrants commented that their pay packages were heavy enough to afford them a comfortable life in South Africa, and can also afford offering support to family members and relatives back at home. Most of them acknowledge that despite the heavy bank charges, the money remitted home afford more meaningful economic engagements than they could actually achieve while working back in their countries. Some of these individuals serve in a lower capacity at UKZN than they served in their previous universities; yet their pay packages are more attractive than what they used to receive at home universities.

Available data on income differentials between countries play a limited role in S-S migration (Ratha and Shaw 2007: 30). Ratha and Shaw (ibid) further reveal that about 38% of identified S-S migrants come from countries with higher income than their host country. Through this study, it was revealed that some migrants actually left higher income zones of the developed world to take up employment in South Africa. Their need was motivated by patriotism and proximity. One of such migrants said he left the United States for South Africa because he had stabilised himself economically in his country. He did not find the need of staying any longer in what he considered an “alien land.” After stabilising economically, he then felt an urgent need of ‘returning home’. His choice of coming to South Africa was incidentally motivated by the availability of facilities that are in place in the institution. This he said would give him the opportunity of expanding and imparting his knowledge and expertise to African students and others. He said he could not go directly to his home country because it did not have the material resources which are very much relevant to the execution of his career.

Income differentials between countries of a region also play a limited role in S-S migration with regard to cost of travelling outside migrant’s native region. Usually differences in income are

largely smaller on average for migrants who travel intra-regionally than those travelling outside their native regions. Because of the larger income differences to overcome higher cost associated with travelling over greater distances, some migrants in this study chose the option of coming to South Africa over the option of travelling overseas. The South African option was reinforced by the fact that South African institutions of higher learning meet modern standards and can compete globally. Migrants who were motivated by lower travelling expenses to come to South Africa were mostly the category of students.

3.4.3 Social Networks

Social networks play an important role in inducing migration. Network channels through which migration is promoted include ethnic, community and family ties. In Africa, migrant networks play a crucial role in magnifying outflow once migration is underway (Lucas 2005) cited in Ratha and Shaw (2007: 29). Network theories have the potential of creating migrant niches. By this, networks have the impact of creating linkages between nationalities and jobs. These niches according to this study are evident in the presence of a number of academics; staff and students coming from the same country.

Most skilled migrants rely on networks of colleagues and organisations (Shah and Menon 1999) cited in Vertovec (2002: 4). This study reveals that most of the foreign African academics (in their different categories) at UKZN were brought in through network connections. The student population sample represented in this study shows that the migration of most of the postgraduate foreign African students was done through connections of colleagues who had arrived earlier. The story seems to be the same for all nationalities that are covered in this study. During my interviews with the students concerned, it came to my knowledge that migrant niches are

developing in the institution whereby students from the same geographical space study for the same programmes at different or the same levels. The lucrativeness of such programmes is usually made known to informants through social connections of friends and colleagues who arrived earlier in the country. Networking is therefore an effective referral method among postgraduate students at UKZN. In an interview with Theresa the postgraduate student from Kenya already mentioned, she said:

Initially I had wanted to study in the U.K, but that didn't work. It was through the presence of my sister in this institution that influenced my coming to South Africa. She told me that studying for a postgraduate degree at UKZN is cheaper than I would have it in Europe. That is how I became a student here. She and I study for the same programme but at different levels. I was initially admitted to this university at the level of master's.

Just like this student, for many others migrating to South Africa had not been their initial option. Some came by default due to either failure in obtaining admissions in other universities outside Africa or financial constraints. Whatever the situation it became clear that their choice of moving to South Africa turned out to be the best than they could imagine. South Africa tends to have offered them an appropriate space for the fulfillment of what they had envisioned in pursuance of their academic aspirations. With the structural and financial facilities in place to assist postgraduate students, a lot of them have been able to accomplish so much to the point that some of them do not longer find a need of moving to Europe or America in search of greener pastures. On the contrary most of them have developed an interest in investing their expertise either in South Africa or back in their home countries.

The study also underscored that though many of the informants are not working in the same departments as colleagues and friends from the same country, the new arrivals became interested in applying for employment at UKZN because of the presence of colleagues and friends who arrived before them. Through this research I discovered that there are a number of migrant communities among the foreign African employed professionals in the institution. Kenyan and Nigerian academics are among the predominant foreign African communities at UKZN.

3.4.4 Cultural Affinity

The term “culture” as animated in contemporary anthropological debates has been dislodged from its basic roots of space and temporal boundedness. The fundamental idea of space in anthropological discourses rests on images of “break, rupture, and disjunction” (Gupta and Ferguson 2001). Globalisation and transnational activities have led to the constant movements of people, goods and services beyond geographical boundaries. As these elements shift boundaries transnationally or translocally, cultural values are redefined and take on new forms of meaning. Culture is one major area in anthropological discourses that has faced a redundancy in the elements of time and space due to globalisation and increased transnational movements. Culture in anthropology has lost its meaning as a bounded entity.

The increased movements of people out of their geographic areas of origin have led to the deterritorialization of cultures - a “loss of ‘natural’ relation of cultures to geographical and social territories” (Tomlinson: 1999). The idea of culture expressed in spatial and temporal rootedness in current transnational discourses does not absolutely affect the way people conduct and live their lives out of their territorial cultural and geographic spaces. This is because when people migrate, they carry along with them cultural norms and values (Ojong 2006) that may continue to

inform the way they go about socialising in their new geographic environments. A reterritorialised kind of culture emerges as people, goods and services from a particular cultural and geographic space are represented in the new migrant space. Representation therefore becomes very crucial in connecting and rekindling one's sense of cultural belonging. It is for the reason of representation that this study attempts to problematise the debates surrounding 'the culturised' lives of professional migrants out of their geographical background.

As cultures become increasingly deterritorialised and reterritorialised facilitated greatly by translocal or transnational movements, one would begin to interrogate why culture should play such a fundamental role in (re)considering one's decision to migrate. The ethnography at UKZN advances a number of reasons why cultural meanings become influential in shaping the course of migration decision. The main drivers connected with the expressions of cultural affinity by African professionals include; lack of cultural ties, racial differentiation, the problem of socialising in new geographical spaces, and their desire to serve the African course on the continent.

The lack of cultural ties is one of the reasons raised by African professionals who have been to and lived in Europe and the United States. The lack of this comes as a result of the 'under-representedness' of a particular cultural migrant community. Migrants expressed that in the communities where they lived they hardly found someone of their 'cultural type'. Viewing the postcolonial world as an interconnected social space (Gupta and Ferguson: 2001)), cultural affiliations need not be connected to a confined geographical space for them to be displayed. Images of cultural affiliations begin to set in when host communities appear to be too exotic for migrants to integrate into. Some of the professional migrants expressed a sense of cultural alienation as they worked and lived in northern countries. They found western culture very

‘uninteractive’ for their integration. Migrants complained that social life in these countries is so individualistic and that it took a lot of trust from the migrant to socialise and earn the friendship of a local. Their frustrations were accentuated by the absence of other migrants from the same geographic – thus cultural background. Commenting on the exotic nature of western culture, Jennifer from Kenya who had studied in Europe and since then has been paying occasional visits to her siblings who are living in Europe said:

No I can never live in Europe, definitely not for any longer period. I studied there for two years. I would rather want to work here or wish for a more paying job here (referring to South Africa) than in Europe. Their culture is too different for my lifestyle. People don't care about you, they won't greet you, you greet them they don't answer. Their interaction with people is just too professional.

Comparing the South African situation to that of the West, Jennifer said she finds both her working environment and her social space much more conducive and accommodating. This does not imply that South Africa does not have its own hiccups – the main one being xenophobia. However she said the reason she finds life more comfortable (culture-wise) in South Africa than in Europe is that South Africa is predominantly a black country where racial differentiation in terms of colour cannot easily be noticed. Another informant mentioned that the reason she finds Europe uncomfortable for her is that she would “*stand out among so many white people*” because she is black.

The process of socialising in the host country is another key issue that influences and determines migrant’s disposition to stay in a particular space. The main reasons that most African professionals stay and work in Europe as revealed by this ethnography are motivated mainly by

economic factors. Migrants have to go through the ordeal of 'cultural loss' in order to meet with their economic demands in the countries of the North. As aforementioned, the process of socialising in these countries is strongly glued to professional interactions. Incidentally all of the African professionals interviewed for this study lived in those countries without any intention of settling down with their families. Besides, generally speaking it was difficult to find someone that came from their different communities.

Looking at culture as one of the driving forces that led to the migration of African professional migrants (both from outside and within the continent) to South Africa is not suggestive that African cultures are homogenous. Despite the heterogenous cultural backgrounds of professional migrants at UKZN, it turned out that South Africa is a preferred destination over the countries of the North for both categories of migrants referred to in the preceding paragraphs. South Africa is a preferred destination because of a combination of factors that are related to its economic relevance, and its geographical and cultural positioning on the continent. South Africa has been described as rainbow nation because of the presence of multiplicity of ethnic groupings which include the different immigrant groups. Since the end of apartheid movements to South Africa have become increasingly pan-Africanised. Diaspora communities in South Africa from the rest of African region abound. These diaspora communities are both at a national (macro) and ethnic (micro) levels. African migrant niches have developed in both the informal and the formal sectors of the South African economy.

The ethnography shows evidence of a number of foreign African professional migrants who have come from the same national territory and also from the same ethnic group. Some of these migrants came through established social networks of friends, colleagues and relatives. There is a number of Kenyan and Nigerian migrants working and studying at UKZN. Some of these

migrants come from the same ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. It is partly because of this reason that most migrant expressed their desire to live in South Africa. The presence of other migrants from the same region gives them the opportunity of a reconnection to a nurtured and an accustomed cultural lifestyle. Each and every individual was nurtured into a culture that has the potential of shaping the individual's social orientation and integration. Although there may exist cultural differences between South African 'culture' and other immigrant cultures, the presence of other migrants of the same cultural and linguistic backgrounds helps in activating migrants' social life. Language plays an important role of keeping migrants connected to their cultural roots while in diaspora. Rose from Uganda who has been a lecturer in the institution for over ten years said:

imagine how lonely I would feel working in an institution of this nature in Europe, where the chances of seeing someone from my country might be so slim... here I have a handful of people from my community with whom I can speak the language.

This kind of feeling expressed by Rose is an important cultural phenomenon which keeps migrants culturally closed to their linguistic community while in diaspora.

3.5 Conclusion

Migration in Africa is one of the livelihood strategies that individuals embark on in order to escape hardship at home. The unprecedented outflow of African skilled persons to the more developed parts of the world is mostly induced by socio-economic and political pressures faced by African countries. As shown by this ethnography, macro-related factors remain endemic in pushing African professionals to leave their countries for foreign lands where it is believed they

would find employment opportunities and better options for career advancement. The chapter equally has analysed the phenomenon of migration as a micro-related process. By this the individual became central in understanding the specific reasons why foreign African professionals migrate to South Africa. The ethnography has demonstrated that viewing migration solely from a macro perspective is inadequate in addressing the reasons surrounding the phenomenon of migration.

Chapter four

Negotiated gender and household dynamics within transnational migration of African professionals

This chapter sets out to explore the social dynamics that are inherent in the construction of gender and household roles in the transnational lives of African professionals. Professional migrancy in particular and migration as a whole have exclusively been treated as a male preserve (Buijs 1996). The complexity of transnational migration today has ushered in a myriad of social and economic dynamics laden with multi-layered interpretations of migration related phenomena. Gender and household constructs are relatively recent phenomena that have been incorporated in transnational migration discourses due to an unprecedented increase in transnational activities in the new South African state (Dodson1998). Transnationalism is an ongoing process with the potential of transforming traditional forms of migrants' behaviour and perceptions. Up until the 1970s women had been invisible in the whole process of migration (Buijs 1996). Traditional migration discourses had shown women as passive recipients of migration related issues, and their migration experiences were viewed through the lens of men. The male-dominated traditional pattern of African migration within and outside the continent is increasingly becoming feminised. African professional women are increasingly becoming autonomous in their migration decisions as they seek to see their economic and social needs fulfilled (Adepoju 2004: 1).

Transnational migration plays an emancipatory role by facilitating the liberation of women and younger men from patriarchal authority. The rising number of women in transnational migration has spurred the interest of feminist anthropologists who are interested in understanding the involvement of women in migration as well as the impact of migration on gender relations back at home (Eades 1987: 4-5). The combination of education and transnational movement constitutes a liberalising force providing opportunity for women to assert themselves and renegotiate their perceptions towards certain socio-cultural phenomena.

The gender dynamics in this study are played out in the areas of career, domestic role of marriage and singlehood and the subversion of patriarchal roles in the lives of African professional migrants. Discussions on this chapter deliberately lay emphasis on the role of the women migrant group. This deliberate intention is against the backdrop that women have for long been ignored in migration; and the migration experiences of women migrants in this study indicate a departure from traditionally circumscribed gender roles that relegated African women to the background.

4.1 Career and gender

Education and employment remain the sole avenues of economic betterment and social mobility (Thandani and Todaro 1984: 4) for both men and women. Career driven motive for migration is not only a prerogative of African men, but has become dominant in informing the migration decision of African women. The migrant women interviewed for this study came to South Africa for reasons that cut across educational and career fulfillment. This group of women is embedded in the categories of students, lecturers, single and married women. They were

individually driven from different backgrounds in their decision to migrate to South Africa. Notwithstanding the various reasons that pushed them out of their home countries the corollary is that economic independence and social upward mobility are instrumental in inducing migration among contemporary African women.

Women migrants in this study come from societies which are not gender sensitive. This gender insensitivity leaves many professional African women unemployed as they are left to compete with their male counterparts for limited job opportunities in their countries. Thandani and Todaro (1984: 47) quoting a study made by the International Labour Organisation (1972) note that the percentage of employed skilled Kenyan women stood at fifteen percent as opposed to thirty percent for men. Women migrants complained that due to gender insensitivity they had to face stiff competition with men of their societies in gaining employment into the civil service. Some of these women mentioned that in some other services for which they were qualified back home (especially in the private sector) men are often preferred over women. This concerns jobs which are considered to be more vigorous and take longer working time a day than it is with the ordinary. These women therefore appeared to be fighting 'a war on two fronts' namely competition with both men and women over scarce employment opportunities, and competition with men only who are somewhat favoured over women in certain jobs.

The study also reveals that African women with educational skills are becoming more career-focused. For the unmarried woman professional migrant, her career is a top priority towards her upward social mobility. To the married woman migrant it takes more than just an accompanied husband's visa to cause her to move to another country. Even though some of the women got to

South Africa on accompanied husband visas, they were partly motivated by the chances of them gaining employment in the country. This is assured by the relatively better economic and employment opportunities in South Africa than what they have back in their home countries. Although the earning capacities of their husbands may appear sustaining for their wives and children this does not automatically translate into wives and children leaving in the company of men. Some of these women have family members who look upon them for bread and butter support. Therefore they need to seek employment in order to be of assistance to a larger family membership.

Some of these women left their countries with no prior employment experiences. In order for them to be marketable in a competing growing economy like South Africa's they had to go an extra mile in their higher educational pursuits. Most of them got into South Africa with at least a first degree and they had to enroll for postgraduate programmes with most of them ending up with doctorate degrees. It is through these higher qualifications that some of them became staff of UKZN on a contract and permanent basis.

Career driven migration in contemporary Africa is no longer the exclusive domain of African men. The study reveals the active involvement of women in transnational migration in search of better jobs. The desire for education and career advancement has promoted autonomous decision of African professionals as they take up the initiative of engaging in transnational migration. The study reveals that African professional women just like the men apply to study and seek employment across national boundaries. Their movements are induced by the need to find jobs that are commensurate to their qualifications. Some of these women have travelled across

different geographical areas in order to meet with their career aspirations.

Case study

Dolly is a part-time lecturer in one of the departments at UKZN. Before moving to South Africa she had worked in Kenya as a full-time employee for two years. She left Kenya and moved to Botswana to take up a job offer on contract. She left Kenya because as she explained Kenya at that time has started facing an over-flooding of graduates in the job market so it was difficult for one to earn a job that she would be happy with. She said what she was earning in Kenya did not allow her to live the kind of life that she anticipated when she left college. While working in Botswana Dolly met a man from Kenya to whom she is married and has two children. While working and living in Botswana Dolly and her husband used to visit South Africa and since then it had always been her plan that one day she would move to South Africa. So when she learnt of the job vacancy at UKZN she could not hesitate to apply because it is a place she had always longed to stay. When she was finally given the job she first of all moved alone and later on her children and her younger brother joined her. Her husband is left alone in Botswana and he plans on joining them as soon as he gets the relevant documents that would enable him procure a job and live legally in South Africa. Dolly and her husband visit each other frequently since Botswana and South Africa happen to be neighbouring countries. During holidays Dolly takes the children to Botswana where they spend the holidays as a family.

This case study illuminates an African woman who is determined to transcend geographical boundaries in search of better employment. In an informal conversation with Dolly in her office, she said she would not hesitate to move elsewhere in Africa if she finds a better offer to her career. She said it is not that she takes a delight in staying away from her husband; it is just that necessity warrants her to be “on her toes” to move to wherever she would find her career more fulfilling especially in terms of remuneration.

4.1.1 The professional married African woman

The patterns of life related to the institution of marriage within migration discourses have shown

the predominance of men in decision making and decision taking. The involvement of women (especially those in a marriage situation) in migration decision was and continues to some extent circumscribed by their men. Most migration undertaken by married women is made on accompanied husband visa. Even though this is true of some women in this study, it took more than just the so called 'accompany husband visa' for them to migrate to South Africa. While the idea to join their husbands may appear important, these women were equally motivated by the chances of them getting employed or continuing with their studies at the destination area. Not a single woman came to South Africa with the mind of staying home and looking after the children and her husband. The house-bound phenomenon of African married women in general is of no consequence to the professional African woman. One of my female key informants from Nigeria employed on part-time basis said:

I would never wish for a situation that would keep me away from my husband. Truly I came to South Africa on accompanied husband visa... I had some little work I was doing some where at home. I gave it up because it was not paying enough. I had to yield to the temptation of joining him in South Africa primarily because I wanted to be with him. However that would not have been possible if I didn't understand the potentials of the state of South Africa. I saw the opportunities here, I compared them with those at home, and I told myself it is worth making it since my husband is already there.

The above interview indicates that even though some women find it necessary to live together with their husbands, it is not an absolute necessity; it becomes quite a consideration for women to simply move on that account.

Employment at place of destination constitutes an integral reason for the migration of African professional women who desire to join their husbands. The professional African woman finds life more fulfilling in the practice of her profession than in her domestic role. Marriage to the

women in this study appears to be something supplementary and not complementary for their lives and livelihoods. Marriage to the contemporary professional African woman is basically for the fulfillment of emotional and biological functions. Their observance of this institution does not limit the kind of aspirations they may want to pursue in life. Therefore the issue of them working or pursuing their education after getting married becomes critical. The women claim that they have come a long way for them to have their career aspirations forfeited for the sake of marriage. The women who are passionate about this are especially those whose education was taken care of by their family members before they had a husband come into their lives. This group of women indicated that in no way would they compromise their career if their men happen to oppose. This is because they need to earn their income which will enable them to be of financial assistance to their families.

Even those whose education was taken care of by their husbands argue that it would not be justified for a husband not to allow his wife to forge ahead with her career dream. Their determination to push ahead with their career pursuits does not differ with the group of those whose education was taken care of by family members. They claim that in the event of a conflict, they would not stop at any thing to get their husbands on their side - not even when their husbands' incomes are reasonable enough to afford them what they want. With some of these women it is not just about earning an income, but also about the sheer pleasure of exercising what they have acquired- the sheer pleasure of work.

Feminisation of migration discourses in Africa (Adepoju 2004: 1) have shown women moving as independent migrants in pursuance of their economic and social needs. As noted above, African

women whether married or single, are increasingly becoming autonomous in their decision to migrate. Some women as revealed by this study actually undertook the decision to migrate to South Africa without necessarily joining a husband or family member(s). Although a husband might have initiated the move, as mentioned earlier it does not suffice a woman to simply move on the note of accompanying her husband. Before deciding to join their husbands, a careful search is made of the education and career opportunities at the host country that would guarantee their desire of becoming economically empowered and financially autonomous. The term “independent” as defined by Chant (1992: 14) refers to “physical act of migration which is undertaken alone”. Abadan-Unat (1986) cited in Ojong (2002) further states that independent migration “represent an individual decision and should be accounted for as a product of emancipatory process”. Independence does not only suggest the idea of moving alone, but rather emphasises the reliance on the initiatives of one-self in embarking on migration. My interviews with African professional female migrants revealed that some women only moved to South Africa to join their husbands only after their husbands have stayed in the country for a considerable period of time. This ‘delayed move’ was orchestrated by the need for the women to get their professional bearings straight before they could engage in travelling to meet their husbands. For some of these women, their husbands migrated from their family base to South Africa. Bureaucratic procedures involving the procurement of visas presented a possibility of the women to leave in the company of their husbands. However they could not simply move because of the reasons already cited above; such as job security in the new environment.

The study also illuminates a category of married women who have migrated to South Africa alone in pursuit of their academic and professional goals. These women are studying or working

in the institution without the presence of their spouses or children in the country. The propensity to pursue their academic and career goals has made these women to sidestep the sedentary domestic life of care giving to husbands and children as they engage in transnational migration to satisfy their personal inclinations. Their involvement in transnational migration has led to reversal of role in the domestic life of an African marriage. Men have come to terms in bearing a kind of 'situational widowhood' as they are left back to look after the children while their wives are away.

Case study

Bridgette is a Nigerian postgraduate student doing her doctorate degree at UKZN. Back in Nigeria she is a full-time lecturer in one of the universities there. She left Nigeria solely to advance her education so that she could climb to a higher echelon of the university employment ladder. Prior to her coming to South Africa, she had attempted to apply to study in the United Kingdom and the United States. She was successful in getting admissions in both cases. However she could not travel to those places because it was difficult for her to get visas. She finally settled to study in South Africa. Bridgette is married and has five children. Her husband is working and the kind of job he does keeps him very busy. Bridgette explained in one of my interviews with her that she could not give up her dream of advancing her education and career even though she knew her husband is a busy a man and probably the children would not be well catered for while she is away. The husband had to enlist the services of Bridgette's mother to with live the children up until when Bridgette will complete her Programme in South Africa. Bridgette plans on returning home as soon as her Programme winds off. She said even though there may be the possibility of her getting employed in South Africa she does not intend to live in South Africa. She claims that her husband may not be opposed to her working in South Africa, but She needs to work where her family is. Besides, South Africa is too far from Nigeria. While she has been studying at UKZN for three years her husband has paid her just Three visits (this was by the time I conducted my last interview with her). She is the one who has made more visits to Nigeria for obvious reasons that her husband is busy and also it has been difficult to travel to South Africa with the children.

Bridgette's and Dolly's case discussed earlier present the struggle of contemporary African career housewives who are traversing traditional roles of care-giving that have pinned many others to the post of immobility. This position should however not be misconstrued for neglect

on the part of the transnational African woman. At one point they tend to miss their spouses and children. Even though their migration is motivated by their desire to uplift their educational and career options, in the long run they do this as a way of supplementing income and giving their families a better life. Career is no longer a choice for the educated African women because of the growing economic demands. Contemporary African men have become more tolerant in allowing their wives to engage in the search of jobs to the extent that some of them are no longer in opposition of their wives travelling out of home country in pursuit of their career. The pain of widowhood is alleviated by the sporadic visits either by husbands or wives. For the case of Dolly she and her husband could exchange several visits by virtue of proximity. The sense of missing her husband does not appear as severe as Bridgette's case. Dolly's situation attracts a situation of permanence (that if she stabilises) with or without her husband. Bridgette has to return to Nigeria upon completion of her programme to continue with her work.

4.1.2 Singlehood gendered

Culturally migration is sought as a means of escaping from some cultural practices that constrain the freedom of younger men and women. Freedom to marriage is one area in which the younger men and women cannot freely express themselves in most African communities. Singlehood among younger African men and women is perpetuated by patriarchy where younger people are challenged to obey patriarchal authority. Migration presents an emancipatory process that helps to make loose the patriarchal chords that attach younger people to the post of subordination. Being out of parental and kinship supervision, educated young men and women African migrants have become independent in decision making and implementation. The study reveals recourse to singlehood by both men and women because of various factors. Singlehood according to this

study falls mostly within the category of students.

One of the reasons expressed by this group of migrants for remaining single at the moment is their economic positioning. Informants expressed the need to complete their programmes before they can think of establishing a marriage bond. It is believed that they would become more economically empowered when they get to the completion of their programmes; because it is at this level that they would have the qualifications that would enable them to access more meaningful employment. Being economically empowered before marriage according to these informants is a way of consolidating one's personhood. This issue is of relevance to both genders. On the part of the men, they expressed that operating on a sound economic platform marriage becomes more sustaining and accommodating. As men their perception is that they have to play the role of breadwinners irrespective of the kind of women they would get married to. Single women's expression of economic empowerment runs in the line of having financial autonomy so that they can be free to make decision over their resources within and outside their family cycles.

Education through migration has impacted on the perceptions of African single women with regard to the institution of marriage. Cultural expectations have been reconfigured and marriage no longer seems to safeguard the traditional expectations of providing security, getting full recognition within one's community (Preston-Whyte 1978: 160) and catering for women's economic needs. Moreover, even the biological function of reproduction does not appear to be a major issue to some of the single African women. To them marriage is primarily for emotional fulfillment and not necessarily the usual expectations that go with it. Marriage should be able to

make a difference in their lives more in terms of emotional fulfillment than otherwise. The traditional expectations of marriage are downplayed by African women transmigrants because they have reached a self-sustaining level that they do not need a man to provide them with the basics. This therefore implies that they are not ready to get into a marriage situation out of ‘traditional necessity’ but out of their own desire for marriage. This would eventually come at a time which would be most convenient for them.

Through informal and intimate chats with one of my female key informants from Kenya, Theresa made it clear that she has tried to create her social status in a way that she would not compromise her personhood and beliefs for the sake of marriage. She claims that whoever is going to get married to her will be determined by the fulfillment of a number of criteria she has defined as being suitable for marriage. By this she says she would not wait “*to be chosen*” but rather she would be the one to choose. Theresa is currently on the verge of completing her doctorate programme and she is bent on securing herself a job before being engaged to anyone. Even at her present level she regards herself as an accomplished woman. She is constructing a house back in her home country. In addition to her educational, career and material positioning, Theresa is a highly spiritual woman who would not be ready to compromise her philosophy and ideology about her life for the sake of marriage. As she put it “*I must make a careful search on the kind of person I would spend my entire life with*” in order to be in a happy marriage situation.

Singlehood among younger people in a transnational context is further perpetuated by the scarcity of ‘potential candidates’ from the same community. Even though some of these singles have displayed a sense of cultural detachment both male and female singles expressed that they

would feel more comfortable in settling for marriage with someone from their own community than getting married to someone who is not from their home country. On the part of single women, they complain that male migrants from their community who could be seen as potential are either married or their educational levels are incompatible with theirs. Some of these women think the only possibility of them getting married to men from their areas is only when they can either return home or visit on regular bases.

4.2 (Re)construction of household roles within transnational contexts

Household is a fluid concept that has been defined or reinvented in various forms to meet specific contextual analytical frameworks. I do not intend to indulge in the debates surrounding the fluidity of the term “household” but I rather would want to highlight the dynamism inherent in the construction of the concept of household within transnational contexts. This study reveals a reconfiguration of what constitutes migrant ‘householdship’ and family composition.

Transnationalism as a migration process invariably impacts on the way social and cultural phenomena have been constructed. In other words transnational migration has the potential of altering traditional forms of life due to migrants’ exposure to newer forms of life orchestrated by their new environments of socialisation. Therefore the traditional construction of household undergoes a process of renegotiation as migrants tend to incorporate their new experiences with their initial construction of the concept.

Households are instrumental in individual’s decision to migrate. The motivation by household for a family member to migrate is basically for economic reasons. Consequently it is the most resourceful members of a family (household) who are sent out to plough for economic benefits

of the entire family. In addition the household constitutes a space within which gender relations and power are negotiated. This research illuminates the role played by migration (in terms of remittances) in the economic livelihoods of migrants' households back home, and equally looks at how transnational migration has contributed in reshaping household constitution.

4.2.1 Migrant remittances

Most migration decisions in Africa are premised on the decision of the household. Usually it is the most educated and industrious members of a family (household) who are allowed to migrate so that they can improve the livelihoods of their family. Migrant remittances play a key role in the social and economic development of both the migrant and his household members back at home. Skilled and professional migrancy is motivated by the search of better employment opportunities that would provide better pay packages for individual and collective household economic progress.

Most of the informants took the decision to migrate substantially through the influence of their families. The dismal economic status of some of the migrants' members of household back home contributed tremendously in the movement of such migrants to South Africa. Whatever the status under which they entered South Africa, the end result is for them to be engaged in meaningful careers and jobs that would give them the opportunity to salvage their families or households from economic hardship. Some of the people interviewed for this study left their countries without prior formal employment experiences. This particularly concerns those who came to South Africa to study. Before migrating to South Africa, some of them were involved in informal activities to generate income for their sustenance and that of their households. Whatever they

were doing was not enough to serve the purpose of curbing let alone eradicating the economic hardship faced by members of their households. Since most of them could not find more gainful income-generating employment in their home countries, migration became the only option for the pursuance of economic progress.

The above category of migrants have not relented their efforts of continuing to play the role of breadwinners to their individual households or families. All migrants located within the category of students without prior employment continue to render their financial support for the education of their siblings and the welfare of the entire household membership back at home. Although most of these migrants are on part-time jobs at UKZN, some of them reported that they have been able to contribute substantially to the social and economic progress of their family members more than they could actually deliver prior to their migration to South Africa. Most of the money remitted home as reported generally by this group of migrants is invested in the education of their siblings. The effectiveness of this as they argue is that human capital developed through education is a prerequisite for economic and social progress. It is believed that investing in the education of their siblings and younger ones of their and other younger family relatives would enlarge and maximise opportunities towards the economic progress of their families.

Their remittances are not only in terms of financial support, but they also remit in terms of ideas. This phenomenon is what is known as “social remittance”. Massey et al (1993) quoted in Hear (2000: 22) claims that “network connections constitute a form of social capital that people can draw upon” to migrate Transnational migration (especially migration to more advanced nations) opens way to newer experiences that reinforce further migration based on networks- in this

regard kinship networks. Some migrants reported playing the role of influencing the degree choice of their younger ones as they enroll in tertiary institutions back in their home countries. The new environment has offered the migrants the opportunity of identifying areas of studies that appear to be more lucrative and accessible to job markets both at countries of origin and elsewhere. This assertion is made more poignant by the excerpt of an interview with Cecilia a Cameroonian postgraduate student at UKZN. She says:

My coming to South Africa has been a kind of an eye-opener to the things I was blind about. I hadn't the least idea of what options the degree I was doing back home offers....Now I can see clearly that the future is not so promising with Such a degree. However I do not intend for my younger ones to be confronted with such a situation. I have told my sister and Husband to save enough money for their son to come and study for an IT course in one of the universities of South Africa. I have discovered that their universities are relatively better equipped than ours at home. He has been admitted to the Durban University of Technology, and he is coming in next year.

The example above positions the migrant as an important person within the family as he/she is takes upon the role of mentorship based on his/her wider experiences accentuated by transnational migration. This role extends to other informants who network with colleagues, friends and relatives back at home telling them about the opportunities they could utilise in South Africa and back at home.

Remittances also serve as form of insurance (Gallina 2006) meant to guarantee migrants' future rewards. Remittances sent home for investments featured significantly among the different categories of migrants. Although most of the informants tend to have obligations towards those left behind and also are engaged in the development of their home communities, they in addition to this remit home to set up businesses and build properties that would safeguard their future in

case they begin to face some tough times while in diaspora. Some of the migrants own more than one property in their home countries meant for their accommodation and that of their families. Some of the properties are meant to generate income on which migrants would sustain their lives while they go back home upon retirement.

Social remittance is equally of paramount importance in maintaining migrants' connection with home country. The sample reveals that not only do migrants remit home financially, but their remittance in terms of ideas cannot be underestimated. Most of the informants have maintained close contacts with their friends and colleagues in and out of their former institutions. These close contacts are reinforced through research collaborations and sharing of some other vital information with non-migrant friends and colleagues back home. Highlighting on the importance of this one informant said:

Since my arrival in South Africa, I have made sure that I keep in contact with colleagues in my former university and elsewhere in the country. This to me is a way of showing your commitment to your country. Things may turn out different in your new environment. You may not want to continue living here you may want to return home for one reason or the other...you need to survive. You never can tell, be there for others so that they can be there for you when in need.

The above highlights the role of social remittance in terms of safeguarding the interest of the migrant. Social remittances run through colleagues and friends are meant to create a space for employment in case the migrant seeks to return home and remain active in formal employment.

4.2.2 A reconstituted African household

The study reveals a turn in the traditional form of African composition of household. The traditional form of African householdship is a conglomerate of wife, children, siblings, cousins, nephews, nieces and other extended relatives whose livelihoods are most often sustained by the better economically positioned family members. Transnational migration has impacted on the

constitution of traditional structure of an African household. Some migrants have reduced traditional household membership and have limited their households to their nuclear family of procreation- involving spouses and children. These migrants have restricted themselves to a husband-wife-children relationship at the expense of a wider kinship unit. To some migrants this position is perpetuated by limited resources that incapacitate them from embracing a wider network of relatives. Informants reported that the cost of living in South Africa is so high that it becomes difficult for them to extend their support to family members outside their immediate family (involving spouse and children). Being out of home and therefore out of the sight of their relatives, transnational migrants have the opportunity of minimising external family pressures by becoming individualistic in their socio-economic operations.

The limited household membership approach adopted by some of these migrants sometimes becomes a matter of choice. Some migrants have deliberately refrained from giving support to their other family members because they want to guarantee a comfortable life for their children. Their children attend the best primary and secondary schools in Durban (South Africa), and at home the children continue to enjoy the luxury of modern life as their parents provide them with communicative and entertainment gadgets such as the internet, television games and the installation of DSTV that connects them to channels solicited by their children. Transnational migration as expressed by this sample of migrants presents an escape from external family pressures and makes room for individual migrants to live an up-to- standard modern life that it is believed they deserve. Some informants admitted that distance has given them the freedom to improve on their individual lifestyle as they now can freely utilise their resources in ways that best suit them. They do not feel constrained by family pressures in the utilisation of their

resources. Being out of home they have been able to salvage themselves from family commitments and they feel any assistance rendered to a family member is no longer an obligation but rather it is based on the goodwill of the migrant. Most often the kind of support they give to their family members is in terms of gifts. One of my key informants together with her husband bought an expensive wedding ring for her niece just as a token for their love for her and not necessarily out commitment.

Some of them claim that they have all along been of financial and economic support to their families to the level that they could not adequately look after themselves. However they stressed that it is not strictly out of choice that they have decided to restrict their resources from spilling over to other family members; but it is rather out of the necessitated lifestyle that has been adopted by the individuals concerned in keeping with better standards of living.

It is within the transnational context that some of the migrants in this study have begun raising families of their own. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, some informants became spouses and parents only after migrating from their home countries. Their relatively late entry into marriage and parenthood was partially owed to their commitments to their families, and this was further exacerbated by limited financial resources which left them with no thought of getting married for a considerable period of time. Their employment at UKZN has offered them relatively and absolutely better pay packages that have enforced an elevated lifestyle among this group of migrants. The higher pay packages and the availability of natural and modern recreational facilities in South Africa increase their desire to meet with modern standards of life. Their preoccupation is to render the best social services to their children and spouses. These migrants often give a treat to their children and spouses for instance by going for a holiday to different

parts of South Africa they find interesting for their relaxation. Their new transnational space has afforded them the luxury of pursuing a selfhood modern identity that falls short of showing concern over family members back at home. Where money is remitted home, it does not absolutely reflect an act of obligation on the part of the migrant to the family but rather it is out of necessity that such money is sent. Comments such as *I can't be pressured to send money home, I now have my own family to look after, I send money when I have the means* are the usual comments that surfaced during my interview with informants that have adopted this kind of outlook in life.

4.2.3 Gendered responsibilities within transnational households

A household constitutes one of the micro spaces within which gender relations and power are negotiated. In the patriarchal societies of Africa, household gender relations show the subordination of women to men. Gender relation of power in patriarchal societies place men at headship position while the women are confined to the domestic circumference of care-giving. Traditional African households show a differentiation of gender roles where the men are viewed as the main breadwinners and the women as caregivers. Increasingly these traditional gender roles are being modified or altered by new social experiences. African women have become emancipated through educational attainment and empowerment from international organisation advocating the rights of women (Cohen et al 1993). Transnationalism on its own has engendered modified forms of household responsibilities whereby traditional gender differentiation of tasks and power have become negotiable.

The research reveals negotiated patterns of gender roles between professional women academics

and their spouses. Transnational male migrants have become more understanding and are ready to compromise traditional gender roles that may stand in the way of the family progress. There appears to be no clear-cut roles in the domestic life of African migrants within this sample. Most of the married couples interviewed for this study are working and studying in the same environment (UKZN). The role of care-giving is to some extent no longer a female preserve. There appears to be a “joint conjugal relationship” (Bott 1977: 254) between men and women in carrying out domestic roles. Although some of the domestic work like cleaning and cooking is entirely done by the woman, other roles are equally shared by both the woman and her husband. One of my key informant’s household Bessie from Nigeria exemplifies shared domestic responsibilities between husband and wife:

Case study

Bessie and her husband are part-time employees at UKZN. Bessie serves as lecturer and an out-of-classroom trainer in helping out to build students with special skills in terms of language and research. These roles are so tasking in a way that she spends more of her time at the workplace than at home. Using her own words, Bessie once said “it is not easy to balance your professional life with your domestic role, as a woman some domestic chores are not a matter of choice. Every woman has to do cooking for the children and her husband.” Sometimes she gets home very late and exhausted but she has to make sure that she prepares supper for the family. Bessie has two children and both are attending school. It is her husband’s responsibility to drop off and pick up the children from school. At home her husband helps the children in doing their homework. Sometimes when the children want their mother to help them out their father would cut in saying “can’t you see that mummy is tired?” with that said Bessie’s husband would take what it takes to get the children to his side, so that his wife can have some rest. On weekends Bessie’s husband assists her to do shopping the household. You can see him pushing the trolley while Bessie picks up items from the counter. When they get home, it is the husband who takes out everything from the car and puts them in their respective places. To make work light for Bessie, they have employed a housemaid who comes in once or twice a week to help with cleaning of the house and washing of clothes.

Transnational migration has not much altered the traditional domestic role of an African woman as evidenced in the above case study. Bessie despite the busy nature of her profession still plays

the role of care-giving- that of making sure that she prepares food for the family. Even though she has a maid who helps out she does not allow her to cook especially for her husband. Bessie strongly subscribes to the cultural tenet that an ideal Nigerian “*housewife is one who personally takes care of her husband’s stomach*”. In addition to cooking the rest of the days that the maid does not come cleaning and washing is done by her. Sometimes when the husband helps out it is just a display of ‘romantic attachment’- something that would be misconstrued for being a henpecked husband who is controlled by his wife in the traditional setting of their home community. The transnational space has given the man the opportunity of freely exercising his feelings by assisting his wife in domestic chores as the occasion may warrant.

However the observance of the traditional domestic tenet of looking after the house by African women has become a matter of choice with the transnational professional African woman. Inasmuch as most of the professional African women in this study do not ignore their domestic roles despite their demanding professional tasks, it is worth underlining that it is not incumbent upon them to strictly exercise these roles. Gender distribution of household responsibilities in some homes of these professional women does not necessarily show clear-cut dichotomies in carrying out household work between men and women. Even though it is the women who do most of the domestic chores, the assistance that their husbands give them especially when they are in need cannot be underestimated. A husband can cook for the family in the case where the woman is sick or when she is busy doing some thing else which may involve her profession. What I intend to highlight here is that transnational space gives an opportunity for gender roles to be negotiated. This role negotiation is epitomised by the following case study.

Case study

Paulette is a postgraduate student doing Master's at UKZN. She is married and has children. Her husband is a lecturer and he travels to other universities in South Africa as guest lecturer. Paulette is on part is busy with degree programme. The only time she actually spends together with her husband is during weekends. at weekends the husband would stay at home to look after the kids while she goes to the university library to do her work. With the help of the housemaid her husband makes sure that the house is in the order that she usually keeps it. On one of my visits to their home her husband was right Paulette was not at home and I found her husband in the kitchen with the maid trying to guide the maid in a traditional dish from their area he wanted cooked for that day. Paulette got back home before the meal was finally cooked. She wanted to go to the kitchen and take over the cooking but her husband would not allow her saying she needed rest after returning from studying. In a chat with Paulette she said it has almost become a routing for her husband to carry on with such tasks, saying this the only time that she could spend reasonable time on her work.

With no relatives around who can help out most husbands and wives have relied on mutual support from one another in the accomplishment of their domestic tasks. The absence of family members who could be of assistance may count for the negotiated domestic roles between African professional husbands and wives in transnational contexts.

African households have placed men as the main breadwinners. Transnational African households as revealed by this research show that men have largely become symbolic heads of households. Bott's conception of segregated conjugal relationship does not seem imminent in the transnational African households of professionals. According to this kind of relationship Bott's definition suggests that husbands and wives have a clear differentiation of tasks and a considerable number of separations of interests and activities (Bott 1977: 254). Many informants mentioned that they pull their resources together for the livelihoods of their households and those of their families back at home. However the involvement of professional African women in joining the mainstream of breadwinning is not out of obligation but out of concern over the progress of their children and other family members. Despite the collective utilisation of their financial resources women informants intimated that they still have the autonomy to do what

they would like to do with their finances. Notwithstanding this, the professional African women in this sample have demonstrated vigorous efforts in supporting their husbands financially in the execution of tasks that are traditionally viewed as men's enclave.

4.3 Conclusion

Transnational migration has the potential of altering and modifying traditional patterns of life. The social life of transnational African academics covered in this study has shown shifting paradigms in gender and household constitution of African patterns of life. Being far away from home and most especially out of the sight of family members, professional transmigrants of African origin have redefined household and gender responsibilities. This redefinition shows that African men can no longer be considered traditionally as heads and breadwinners of household on whom rests the phenomenon of decision taking. Transnational migration is one of those areas that were hitherto a great consideration among African women. As evident from this study, many African women are engaging independently on migration ventures as a means to empower themselves both economically and socially. The study has also revealed that African men based on their transnational experiences are becoming more flexible in embracing new lifestyles that sometimes stand in opposition to patriarchal authority.

Chapter five

Foreign African professional migrants' participation and adjustment patterns

5.1 Contributions of foreign African professional migrants to the University of KwaZulu-Natal

The University of KwaZulu-Natal is currently operating on a staff membership of 3485 permanent and contract staff. An analysis of the permanent staff shows that 70% of UKZN are black. This is historic as it is the very first time that the majority of academics at UKZN are blacks (Makgoba, November 2008) Out of the total number of academics in the institution foreign African academics form a significant part of the academic membership of the institution. These foreign African academics are both permanent and contract members of staff.

The presence of foreign African professionals at UKZN is indicative of the fact that these foreigners possess the kind of skills that are very critical in promoting and maintaining standards of excellence in the institution. It should be noted that UKZN just like other departments of the South African workforce adheres to the principles of affirmative action and employment equity policy. This is made poignant by the University's mission statement which reads thus:

“A truly South African University that is academically excellent, innovative in research, critically engaged with society and demographically representative, redressing the disadvantages, inequities and imbalances of the past” (see www.ukzn.ac.za).

This mission statement is an eloquent testimony that the institution strives towards prioritising to redress the imbalances that existed in the past. However institutions of higher learning are committed to maintaining the highest standards of excellence. This therefore implies that quality cannot be compromised just for the sake of keeping in line with governmental policies. Truly UKZN subscribes to the policy of affirmative action, but this does not run counter to the overall motive of breeding excellence in the institution as also indicated in its mission statement quoted above. The recruitment of foreign African academics in the institution is par excellence. Job vacancies at UKZN are made public and information about such vacancies is disseminated through the various communicative media. Such posts are advertised on the internet, newspaper and other forms of media communication. This publication means that everyone in the world can apply for the job. The presence of foreign African professionals in the institution is not by accident; they became members of staff following their qualifications coupled with the fact that they had to go through an interview before they could be recruited.

Studies have shown that South Africa is seriously bleeding its human capital to the North (Bailey 2003, Dodson 2002, Maharaj 2004). This has led to escalated levels of brain drain from the country. Bailey (2003) points out that the phenomenon of brain drain in contemporary South Africa is higher than it was the situation during the era of apartheid. This phenomenon as mentioned before has been exacerbated by the policy of affirmative action which has relegated the whites who are in higher possessions of skills that are needed for service delivery of the different components of government institutions. Many black South Africans are also leaving the country for Europe and the United States to seek employment, higher pay packages and for other personal reasons. Foreign African professionals have taken advantage of these vacancies created

by the exodus of skilled local South Africans to seek employment in the country.

Institutions of higher learning are one of those departments in South Africa that are faced with critical skills shortage. The significant number of foreign African professionals at UKZN can be partly explained by the fact that qualified local South Africans are not willing to dedicate their services to their local institutions. They prefer to work in institutions abroad or in the private sector where they are allured to higher pay packages. Some of the local professionals are ready to take up positions which are lower than the ones they previously occupied in their country. Interviews with some of my research participants revealed that some local South African working in UKZN actually seduced them to apply and take up appointments in the institution when they (the locals) are not prepared to spend their entire career life working in South Africa.

This point is made poignant by one of the foreign African Heads of School (HOS):

Professor Daniel is from one of the neighbouring countries of South Africa. His employment at UKZN was encouraged by one of his friends (a South African) who was working in the institution. He had to leave an Asian institution where he was serving as the HOS to take up a lectureship position with UKZN. Besides the friend's encouragement, he found the opportunity at UKZN more lucrative because it offered him a permanent position than what he experienced in the Asian institution. Even though he at the time he was leaving Asia was at a higher level both in terms of position and remuneration, he still preferred to come to (South) Africa. After working in UKZN for three years, he became an HOS. The friend, who encouraged him to take up the appointment at UKZN, was appointed to work in Europe. Immediately his friend's appointment came through, Professor Daniel was unable to talk him out taking up the appointment. His friend left and worked there for three years. Towards the end of his friend's second term of contract in Europe, there was a vacancy in the school that Professor Daniel's friend qualified. Since the school is one of those departments in the institution that faces scarce skill problem it is always in need of staff. This is how Professor Daniel's friend became reemployed in the institution.

The case above is indicative of lack of commitment on the part of some South African professionals to be engaged meaningfully in delivering services for their institutions.

Interrogating further, Professor Daniel intimated that the friend came back to UKZN because he was getting to retirement age and wanted to be retired in his home country. Besides he had gained the experience he wanted to have. However his friend's departure from the school created a serious problem as students who were under his supervision had to be shared among the other members of staff to be supervised. Some of these were junior staff members who were not qualified enough to supervise students on their own. As a result Professor Daniel ended up having more than the number of students he could cope with. Some of the students could not complete their programmes within the required time because of the vacuum created by the absence of Professor's Daniel's friend.

Most foreign African academics in the institution are in strategic positions as head of schools (HOSs) and head of departments (HODs). These offices are empowering professional spaces that provide these foreigners with legitimate power to press on with ideas that they find constructive for the development of the institution. One of the outstanding commitments of black foreign academics of African origin in the institution is their commitment towards the empowerment of local South African students. Such empowerment is mostly directed to the black students of South African origin who were previously among the disadvantaged groups of people during the period of apartheid. Many foreign academics who are at headship positions in the institution have introduced capacity building programmes that help in the development of skills for students of UKZN. Through the initiative of an HOD (a foreign African national) and collaboration from colleagues in one of the departments of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, resourceful postgraduate students have been employed as 'lay lecturers' to help equip students with academic writing skills. From my observation those who mostly attend these 'help classes'

are black students. Asking why such a programme was in introduced, the HOD said:

My experience ever since I came to this university is that black students hardly speak in class. Black students hardly do well in their assignments, tests and exams. I saw a need to go an extra mile in helping these students out. That is why I came up with this idea of organising 'help classes' to improve on students' response to academic work and to improve on their writing skills. It is true the University has put in place structures such as the writing place which is meant to help students through their academic work. But this structure does not isolate disciplinary approaches. For me I see a need for departments to have independent academic support structures such as the one we have created in our department.

Based on a common identity as blacks, foreign African academics tend to identify with the problems faced by black students. Most South African black students hardly venture beyond honours level. This can be attributed to a range of factors which include the pressures of contributing to family finances and the relative availability of good employment opportunities without higher degree qualifications. Most foreign African academics are working on targeting South African black students (most especially) to train them at the master's and doctoral levels. Foreign African academics bemoan the small number of capable South African student who are leaving the institution without fully grounded academic training in pursuance of employment outside the University. In one of my informal encounters with an HOS from Nigeria in his office, he received a telephone call from one of his postgraduate South African black students announcing to him that he would not go further with the master's programme he intended doing because he has 'hit a jackpot' yielding employment. The HOS was a bit saddened by this piece of information because according to him this student was among the brightest students that he had at the honours level. According to him this employment opportunity has only robbed the student's ability to fully develop his potentials. He said the honours level serves as an identification point where students' potentials are needed to be developed at subsequent levels of

the academic ladder.

One of the strategies that foreign African academics at UKZN have developed in helping to bail out the unceremonial exit of black South African students who enroll for postgraduate programmes is to provide them with sustainable employment opportunities while their studies are underway. Some foreign African academics in line with the agenda of black empowerment pursued by the current government of South Africa have prioritised the recruitment of South African postgraduate students in positions of tutors, graduate assistants, and also junior lectureship. In most departments the number of postgraduate students is dominated by foreign students from other African regions. Gathering from various interviews I had with foreign African academics who are at headship positions in the institution, it became clear to me that the main reason they prioritise the recruitment of local South African postgraduate over foreign students is a bid to prevent local students from dropping out of their programmes.

Informal interviews with some local South African postgraduate students across the different disciplines in the institution show a preference of students to be supervised by foreign nationals. Most departments have an organised way in which lecturers get into supervising students. Students' interests are pursued under the guidance of supervisors who qualify for the areas in which their (students') interests are based. Moreover the supervision of students depends on the supervision law that the university has put in place to guide the number of students that a lecturer is entitled to supervise. Sometimes it is difficult for lecturers to limit themselves to this law as students keep coming to them to be mentored. The local South African postgraduate students I interviewed for this study intimated that they find the courses handled by foreign African

professionals very interesting and they are seduced into developing research interest around such courses because they want to be supervised by these foreign lecturers. Besides some of the South African postgraduate students just like their foreign counterparts find themselves in departments that are dominated by local white South Africans and foreign African lecturers. The black students in such departments prefer to go to foreign African lecturers for mentorship based on the issue of identity as black people.

One of the goals of UKZN is to “promote excellence in teaching and learning through creative and innovative curriculum design and development, pedagogical strategies and assessment of practices in accordance with sound quality assurance principles.”

Most of the foreign African academics working in the institution have had extensive working experience before taking up appointments at UKZN. Many of the professionals interviewed for this study have worked in other places in the world including their home countries, other African countries and countries abroad- such as the United Kingdom and the United States. Their long working and transnational experiences constitute a wealth of knowledge that brings in newer insights into the curricular and pedagogical development of the institution. Most of them said introducing ‘something new’ constituted a prerequisite to their employment as academics at UKZN. Following their employment at UKZN, these professionals in their different capacities have been committed to developing and implementing the curricular needs that serve the relevance of UKZN as the “Premier University of African Scholarship”. As mentioned before most of these professionals are in headship positions that make it easier for them to influence the implementation of innovations that would meet the need of quality assurance for their departments and the institution as a whole. Those who have had working experience before

coming to South Africa, have been able to introduce modules which were not at first offered within their different disciplines. Not only are these modules introduced, foreign African professionals also dedicate their time in developing the modules in ways that would meet the relevance of knowledge production relating to contemporary times. That is to say such modules are readjusted to reflect the South African and African contexts.

The research also revealed that many departments in the institution are facing a major staffing problem. In some departments the more qualified members of staff are mostly foreigners of African origin. The locals who are serving in such departments are either lecturers or junior lecturers. This therefore implies that foreign African are those who are mostly found in the positions of senior lectureship while the locals are either found in lectureship or junior lectureship positions within such departments. During my research I also came across a department in the institution which was run entirely by foreign African academics with the exception of the HOS who is a local South African white.

Being in positions of senior lectureship foreign African professionals are making enormous contributions towards the sustenance of higher postgraduate degree programmes such as the master's and doctorate programmes within their different departments. The departments which are predominantly manned by foreign African academics are those seen to have the problem of scarce skill. Examples of such departments are School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, School of Civil Engineering and School of Architecture. It should be noted that supervision of higher postgraduate students goes with qualification. Accordingly it is only those who are in possession of doctorate degree and above are eligible to supervise master's and doctoral students. However work and research experience have given room for lecturers without doctorate degrees

to supervise students at the master's level. Presently in order not to have standards compromised the university has emphasised the need for lecturers who are currently serving in the institution without doctorate degrees to work towards the completion of their doctorate degree programmes. All the foreign African professionals interviewed for this study serving as permanent members of staff and also most of them who are on contract are in possession of doctoral and professoral qualifications.

The contributions of foreign African migrants in UKZN can also be measured through the active involvement of some foreign African doctoral students in assisting in the teaching and research training processes within their departments. As gathered from the research, the number of students found at higher postgraduate levels (most especially the doctorate level) are foreign students of African origin. As discussed in the preceding paragraph, some departments in the institution are faced with the problem of inadequate teaching staff. In such departments the services of postgraduate students are enlisted in order to meet up with the required teaching material that should be covered for the academic year. Most of the foreign African doctoral students I interviewed are qualified lecturers back in their home countries who enrolled in the institution to obtain a doctorate degree. As mentioned in chapter three, some of these students came to South Africa (UKZN) because of a more focused orientation of the various programmes that individual migrants enrolled for. While at UKZN, these students are serving as research assistants and tutors in the various departments. These positions are however a matter of job allocation convenience. The reality is that these foreign students do more than they are actually paid for. In an interview with Raymond a doctoral student from Kenya he had this to say about what he is currently offering for his department:

I am a university lecturer back in Kenya. I have been supervising postgraduate students in my university at home. When I came here I was employed as a tutor and in fact since then I have been working as a tutor. When the department identified what skills I possess, I was made research adviser for one course in addition to the position of tutorship. Being a research adviser, I help in equipping students with basic research skills and also supervise students for particular programmes. The benefits I make from these responsibilities in terms of experience are good. In terms of finances I can say I don't earn what is commensurate to my inputs. Practically I do not see a difference between me and a full time lecturer following the kind of services I offer for the department.

Raymond's case resonates in almost all the interviews conducted with other doctoral students over the same issue. Another doctoral student Theresa also from Kenya said she has been serving as lecturer without portfolio in her department; teaching, mentoring and supervising postgraduate honours students. She said sometimes her HOD refers master's students to meet her for guidance. Even though she said she enjoys what she is doing, she however is not comfortable with the fact that the university treats her more of a student than a member of staff. She says her office does not have a telephone and she is still registered as a student using the university groupwise.

5.2 Migrants' integration and adjustment

Migration and in particular immigration issues are complex. This is because they relate to almost every aspect of the host society (Koff 2002). Integration constitutes a major area of migration-related discourses in which scholars indulge in exploring the broader relationships among different arenas of immigrant integration. These arenas cut across the socio-cultural, economic and political domains. The process of integration constitutes one of the major challenges faced by foreign migrants in South Africa. As has been discussed so far foreign migrants in South Africa have been stereotyped as drainers of South African resources. This has provoked anti-immigrant feelings which in turn have impacted on the process of their integration in the country.

Because the issue of immigration has not been fully understood by the South African government and its nationals, foreigners (particularly those from the African region) are going through different states of hostility which run through discrimination, verbal and physical attacks.

This study it should be noted is a case-oriented research whereby the researcher set out to examine questions within specific contexts in order to provide a more nuanced understanding of individual actions in the whole process of immigration. Therefore this section brings to the fore individual accounts related to the process of integration. The research reveals some of the challenges that African migrants face as they attempt to readjust their lives in the new South African setting. Accounts given by individuals concerning their lives and livelihoods in Durban and South Africa present challenging experiences that migrant go through within and outside the workplace.

At the level of social integration within and outside the working space, most informants complained that they are faced with the problem of social ostracism. It must be noted that these migrants come from a background of interactive cultures where they find it easy socialising with others. According to many informants, social life forms an integral part of their professional life. They therefore do not feel that comfortable when colleagues relate strictly on a professional note. A lecturer informant from Nigeria had this to say about interaction with colleagues at the workplace:

This is an African country and I expected a more friendly atmosphere here than where I was before (referring to Europe). As Africans we need to socialise at all levels. I find

the lifestyle here a bit bizarre. A colleague would walk up to you only when he wants to say something that is work-related.

This kind of feeling reverberates throughout the accounts of many other foreign African nationals at UKZN who feel that a South African working space is void of social interaction. Some informants complained that the absence of social warmth is a stumbling block to collaborative efforts towards decision taking and implementation in their respective departments. Some of the people interviewed for this study hold administrative offices either as academic coordinators (head of departments- HODs) or head of Schools (HOS). One of my key informants from Nigeria serving currently as an HOS said one of the challenges he is facing in the institution is his status as a foreigner. He said colleagues under his school have this tendency of undermining his position and decisions simply because he is a foreigner. In addition to this his school is predominantly run by whites; and sometimes he is tempted to look at the shabby treatment he gets from colleagues more of an issue of race than the notion of just being a foreigner. Living in a country with a high level of xenophobia, foreigners are quick to conclude that whatever negative treatment they get from the locals is masterminded by xenophobic feelings. In the event where deliberations seem to approach a deadlock, foreign African migrants working in the institution often have to rely on their ingenuity in taking up decisions for the interest of their various departments.

Integration is broadly defined by levels of participation in the host society which indicates the degree of migrants' involvement in the socio-economic and other activities in the host country. The participation of foreign African academics in pursuit of resources that would bring meaningful contributions to UKZN and thus South Africa is constrained by their status as

foreigners. As foreigners many well qualified academics in the institution are not entitled to grants that would enable them to assist postgraduate students with their research endeavours. Many foreign academics have repeatedly attempted to apply for grants both locally and internationally but they have been unable to access such grants because they are not South African citizens. While some who have qualified for citizenship and have actually applied for it, others do not see a need for that because of bureaucratic bottlenecks. The process is unnecessarily long and tedious because as skilled migrants they do not see a need for the government to be so rigid towards skilled migrants obtaining the documents they need in order to be fully integrated in the country.

Moving into a wider cycle that involves migrants' lives out of the workplace is another challenging area for the foreign African migrant in South Africa. Out of the working environment migrants often relate with people of different classes. These encounters are registered at the level of the church, neighbourhood and shopping centres. Many informants mentioned that they have faced rejection in the above mentioned places. This rejection mostly comes from black South Africans who prejudice foreign Africans in general because they do not speak their language and thus are branded with name *amakwere-kwere* (a word referred to "foreigner" used in a derogatory sense). The *amakwere-kwere* syndrome which has affected the way in which foreigners are perceived by local South Africans seems to know no bounds. Even in the church people are referred to as *amakwere-kwere*. Such an appellation breeds a sense of insecurity and some feel like packing their bags to leave the very moment they would have an opportunity elsewhere in the world including going back to their home countries. In an interview with one of the lecturers from the faculty of Engineering he said:

Yes I have had some negative experiences even within the department. They always say you Nigerians are terrible people. Then I ask them of all the good things that Nigeria has done for this country you still call us names. I can't imagine this kind of resentment. They think that every Nigerian is a drug dealer. It is a terrible thing my sister. I can also see elements of xenophobia especially on black on black. They speak the language, you respond in English the attitude changes. It is not like that elsewhere, they too are equally foreigners in other countries, it doesn't matter where you come from...but here when you don't speak the language you become an enemy.

In another interview with this same informant, he said because his wife was embarrassed in the bus he has to quit UKZN, he said *"I can't put the life of my family in jeopardy because of attractive pay packages. My wife feels so insecure, we must leave"*.

A cursory look at the literature on South Africans' attitude towards African foreigners reveals an extremely xenophobic character of South Africans towards African foreigners in particular (Maharaj 2004, McDonald et al 1998). I would like to once more allude to the statement made by Crush and McDonald (2002: 7) "most African migrants from panhandlers to professors- are feeling the verbal and sometimes physical sting of rampant anti-foreign sentiment". This statement depicts an apparent indiscriminate xenophobic attack on all groups of foreigners irrespective of their classes. Even though xenophobia might not be glaring in formal settings such as academic environments, it does not mean that foreigners in such environments are completely precluded from anti-foreign sentiments. However, these anti-foreign sentiments are not enough to deter most migrants from staying in South Africa. Job security and comfort are very instrumental in keeping foreign professionals in place. As mentioned in the preceding chapters, South Africa's economic and social standards are incomparable on the continent. The problem of integration or acceptance into a community has appeared to be the least of worries in the lives of most of the professional migrants in this study. Some informants intimated that due to high levels of xenophobia in South Africa, they have decided to limit their social interactions

only to fellow migrants from their countries and other parts of Africa. Their interaction with the locals is just a matter of convenience. In one of my interviews with an informant from Tanzania, he said” *my interaction with local South African colleagues is just an aspect of accommodation not that I really feel a need of acceptance from them.*” This kind of feeling is what filters in the minds of many others interviewed for this study.

Some of the interviews conducted revealed that South Africa is not preferably a final destination for a couple of informants. These informants include professional employees as well as the student category. Their main reason of thinking of leaving South Africa is predicated on the general xenophobic attitude of local South Africans towards foreign African migrants. This became heightened following the most recent xenophobic outburst towards African immigrants in June 2008. Foreign lecturers of African origin working on contract at UKZN indicated a likelihood of moving out of South Africa upon the end of their contracts. Most of the students indicated that after the completion of their programmes they may only stay in South Africa temporary for work experience, and thereafter they would think of migrating elsewhere. In a formal university space such as the one of UKZN, the kind of xenophobic threats that most migrants reported they experience is mostly through verbal utterances. This to them does not pose a serious threat as such because they have a way escaping any confrontation with anyone.

The interviews show a general tendency of migrants’ diligence in the discharge of their various functions. Through participant observation on some postgraduate students serving as graduate assistants and tutors alongside South African colleagues, I observed that some foreign students go an extra mile in the discharge of their duties. This is done as explained by many as a means of

calling for attention especially from the South African superior staff members. In some cases as I observed some foreign African students go as far as doing work for their colleagues who are of South African origin. This work include consulting with students from their colleagues' (South Africans') tutorial groups, and also helping them in marking tests or assignment papers allocated to them. Most of them do this as a means of gaining friendship and entering into some kind of network with local students that would guarantee foreign students' interests and safety in the country. One foreign African postgraduate student reported to me that during the xenophobic outburst his South African colleagues and friends were very protective of him. They were ready to accommodate him if things turned out uglier for him.

While some of the informants are thinking of moving out of South Africa because of the level of xenophobia, some are struggling to renegotiate their stay in the country despite its various forms of hostilities. The minimal degree response towards the process of socialising (thus integration) from South African nationals with other foreign African nationals does not constitute a major problem for some foreigners to consider making a home in South Africa. According to a group of foreigners who subscribe to the idea of making a home in South Africa, depending on the resources that one has one can live a secure life in South Africa free from the most violent forms of xenophobia which involve physical attacks. In connection with this feeling, most informants (especially those who are lecturers) reported that they avoided living in Durban cosmopolitan neighbourhoods where African foreigners are highly concentrated for fear that they may fall victims in an event of xenophobic upsurge. Most of the informants who are on a reasonable pay package live in houses with well run security systems. Some of them are owners of such houses. The secure environment in which these professional migrants live coupled with the fact that they

have their wives and children living with them consolidates their desire to live and work in South Africa despite its 'odds'.

Being employed in South Africa as professionals from other countries is quite a consideration. It is expected of every formal setting to take into consideration affirmative action in the employment of skilled workers in South Africa. While taking cognisance of affirmative action within the university, the bottom line is that the employment of foreign academics in UKZN is par excellence. Once employed, it means that the professional migrant has tacitly been accepted and integrated into the South African nation albeit xenophobic attitudes from the locals. In the world of academia, higher institutions are committed to maintaining the highest standards of excellence. The presence of African professional migrants in UKZN is an indication that they are equipped with the relevant skills that are critical to the development of the institution in particular and South Africa as a whole. The kind of qualifications and skills possessed by foreign African professionals working in a South African institution puts them in a much more needed position than they may be wanted. The feeling of being needed that these migrants are aware of put them in a position where they sometimes tend to overlook some negative experiences that they might encounter orchestrated by xenophobia.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter has looked into some of the contributions that foreign African professionals are making towards the development of skills in the institution. Discussions on the various points mentioned in the chapter are geared towards the establishment of the fact that foreign African academics at UKZN form an integral and formidable force in relation to what the institution may

achieve. The chapter has shown the role played by foreign African professionals towards the empowerment of black South African students who had been hitherto placed at a disadvantaged position following the history of apartheid. Some of the South African postgraduate students have developed inclinations to be supervised by foreign African professionals based on a common identity. Some departments are predominantly run by African foreigners which implies their presence is instrumental in the development of the institution.

The chapter has also shown the challenges that these group of migrants go through in negotiating their integration within and out of their working space. Despite their legal status and the contributions they seem to make to the South African society, their presence does not seem to be appreciated. Thus skilled migrants are also a target of xenophobic feelings. Notwithstanding the threats exhibited by this ethnography that skilled migrants in South Africa might be facing, for many migrants South Africa remains fertile for career and intellectual growth.

Chapter Six

The commitment of foreign African Academics towards a Regeneration of African Scholarship.

6.1 African scholarship explored

A simple attempt to explain African scholarship would mean a form of scholarship that serves to meet the curricular and developmental needs of African institutions of learning. The category of African scholarship is an elusive category which attempts to map out a scholarship that would take into consideration the African identity; built on its socio-cultural and economic realities. It is a category that seeks to free itself from the hegemonic dictates of northern epistemology in the production and dissemination of knowledge, and seeking to provide a niche for the African University that would enable it to meet the challenges that Africa faces (Mthembu 2004).

The acquisition and production of knowledge in Africa by Africans have been a heritage from the North. The intrusion of the North into African traditions and cultural values in the era of colonialism has impacted tremendously on the ways in which knowledge is acquired and produced about Africa by Africans for Africans. This intrusion has much been contested by both historical and contemporary leaders and educators of the African continent. Efforts towards establishing an African Scholarship have been a longstanding burning issue among some African scholars and leaders since independence. The pioneering president of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah had this to say about the development of an African university:

“We must in the development of our universities bear in mind

that once it has been planted in the African soil it must take root amidst African traditions and culture.” (Kwame Nkrumah 1955) cited in Makgoba and Seepe (2004: 13).

By this Kwame Nkrumah is calling for an institutional transformation of African universities which would reflect the socio-cultural realities of the continent. The organisation of a workshop by the Association of African Universities in Accra- Ghana in 1972 has always been alluded to by contemporary African scholars who subscribe to the development of an African scholarship course (Johnson 1985, Mthembu 2004). This workshop was critical in articulating the position of African scholarship in the global world of knowledge production. The workshop endorsed a number of provisions that would guide the functioning of African universities. These included:

- Pursuit, promotion and dissemination of knowledge
- Research
- Provision of intellectual leadership
- Manpower development
- Promotion of social and economic modernization
- Promotion of intercontinental unity and international understanding (Johnson 1985: 129-130).

In pursuance of an African course, these provisions have to be punctuated within the socio-economic and cultural contexts of the region. The realities of African experience would make knowledge production more relevant. Talking on the relevance of knowledge production for the continent, Mahmood Mamdani (1997) cited in Makgoba and Seepe (2004: 13) had this to say:

Excellence has to be contextualized and knowledge made relevant
Shed this mimicry of the West that continues to parade as
universal excellence and take on the challenge to produce
knowledge that takes the African condition as its central problem.

The African condition is historical and not biological.

The “parade” of the West as “universal excellence” was instituted through colonialism and today it has been legitimised by the overdependence of African countries on the West for resources. Shedding the “mimicry of the West” necessitates African scholars to produce scholarly accounts that would pay tribute to the uniqueness of knowledge about Africa in all its forms. This would take into consideration content, structure, transmission and acquisition (Mthembu 2004: 79) of knowledge.

Institutions of higher learning are a reservoir of the creation and development of skills towards knowledge production resource management, and economic development. In Africa the university has long been regarded as a key component in the development process of the continent (UNESCO 1963) cited in Johnson (1985: 129). It is the university that provides and nurtures skills that are meant for service delivery of a nation.

There has been growing concerns about the (re)generation of African scholarship most especially in South African institutions of learning. These concerns have been geared towards the establishment and sustenance of the African intellectual property housed in the continent. In this context the African university becomes crucial in raising awareness among scholars on the need to promote an educational culture of Africa. The African University as defined by Makgoba and Seepe (2004: 20)

“ is an institution that has the consciousness of an African identity from which it derives and celebrates its own strengths and which uses these strengths to its own comparative and competitive advantage on the international stage”.

The above definition is suggestive of the fact that there is a difference between an African University and a university in Africa. Most universities on the continent can be regarded as ‘universities in Africa’ and not necessarily ‘African Universities’. This is because most of these universities are far from embracing Africa as an institutionalised content material in the transmission of knowledge; (Lansink 2004) but Africa has rather been objectified as a relational area of inquiry in the global production of knowledge. An African University attempts to build consciousness on the relevance of contextualising knowledge acquisition, production and dissemination operating from an African platform. To build on African consciousness implies a reclamation and establishment of African knowledge. Reclaiming and establishing the ‘African order’ would go a long way in reversing the issue of brain drain from Africa (Makgoba and Seepe, *ibid*). African scholars are increasingly becoming critical about the concept of African scholarship- a scholarship which they intend to extricate from northern hegemony.

As Premier University of African Scholarship, this chapter intends to explore the views and contributions of foreign African professional migrants at UKZN. These views and contributions collapse in the following areas

- South Africa representation of African scholarship
- African scholarship at the interface of global knowledge production
- Networks of African scholars towards the consolidation of African scholarship

- The debate of brain drain and brain circulation
- The way forward.

6.2 South African institutions at the centre of African scholarship

In the words of Kwesi Prah, “South Africa is the most affluent and infrastructurally enchanting residential neighbourhood in Africa, which will most easily rival whatever can be found in Beverly Hills, California (Prah 2004: 93). This is the position that has caused the unprecedented influx of African skilled migrants into the South African territory. South African institutions of higher learning are relatively the well-equipped on the continent. Their standards could be seen as measuring favourably with the North. South African universities have the material and financial resources that contribute enormously in promoting standards of excellence.

As Premier University of African scholarship, UKZN is committed to promoting an African scholarship that would serve the developmental needs of South Africa and those of the continent in general. This vision appears to arouse enchanting feelings among foreign African academics in the institution. Some of the informants said that besides their personal motivations for accepting their job offers at UKZN, they had always desired an opportunity where they could integrate their knowledge for the service of an African course. The ethnography revealed a kind of monocultural standpoint in which foreign African nationals at UKZN have indicated their commitments in developing an African scholarship in their respective areas of expertise. Although these foreigners come from a heterogeneous background, this does not stand in the way of them displaying their passion to pursue the ideology of African scholarship. The vision of UKZN- to champion African scholarship falls in line with what has for long been the agenda of some foreign African scholars. In an interview with the Head of School (HOS) of Politics at

UKZN, he said: *“I came here really aspiring towards helping to bring about meaningful transformation in the areas that I am involved.”* Foreign African professionals are further motivated to forge with the agenda of African scholarship by the incentives they get from the publication of articles in the South African Post Secondary (SAPSE) journal. SAPSE is the biggest South African based journal which provides incentives for both local and foreign nationals who engage in research that promote the standards of excellence in South Africa and the continent.

The University of KwaZulu-Natal has the technological, managerial and structural facilities that facilitate teaching/learning process and research engagements in the institution. Foreign African migrants at UKZN from both within and outside the continent were unanimous in acknowledging that UKZN in particular and South Africa as a whole is the only country in sub-Saharan Africa that provides incentives for research inputs. These migrants have taken advantage of the research facilities to indicate their desire to valorise ‘things Africa’. In valorising things Africa, these professionals have shown their commitment in engaging in research that identifies with the contemporary culture of Africa. As long as these facilities are in place migrants said they need not to have recourse of moving to the outside world for career fulfillment. Some foreign African professionals are very much comfortable with what UKZN and South Africa offer in terms of research facilities. In asking whether migrants would move to areas with greater economic opportunities namely the North, some migrants said South African institutions of higher learning possess the kind of facilities that are resonant of modern scholarship. These facilities offer them job satisfaction as they are able to meet with their goals. One of the informants the HOS of Electrical Engineering had this to say about his job comfort at UKZN:

Moving as an academic, there are whole lots of considerations to look at and these considerations depend on where in life you are. I have fair research group at UKZN. I am not really short of research funding. I have research that can take me for a period of ten, eleven, twelve years, and I am sort of reasonably comfortable. I am able to do all the work that I would want to do academically.

The richness and texture of South African universities provide fertile grounds for skills training and career advancement. The movement of most African skilled individuals to the North is principally in pursuance of economic and career achievements. The absence of resources for human and economic development in most African countries has largely been responsible for the exodus of skilled individuals and professionals out of the continent. One of the outcomes of my research is that in the world of academia, contemporary South Africa has become a convergence zone for the training and participation of African scholarly efforts. Its curricular organisation and pedagogic approaches speak loudly for both students and lecturers from other parts of the African continent. Besides all these, South Africa is relatively and absolutely a better employer of skills than elsewhere on the continent. These factors have promoted the desire of a significant number of African skilled individuals' preference to stay in the continent to discharge their acquired knowledge. In this regard a post graduate student from Cameroon said:

*Why should I think of moving to Europe or America for greener pastures?
In the first place I had never thought of moving to those countries.
South Africa has so much to offer. And one's skills become employable
especially as you move to higher heights of academic qualifications.*

Their conviction of earning jobs that are commensurate with their skills pushes further their determination to stay and work in the continent. Some expressed skepticism over their chances of procuring jobs that are commensurate with their qualifications in Europe and the United States. Some informants mentioned that they know of friends and relatives in the United States

and Europe who are unable to earn formal employment in areas in which they are well qualified for. They end up doing menial jobs in order to eke out a living for themselves and their families back home. The category of students indicated a strong willingness to work in South Africa and at a later stage in life move back to their respective countries to continue working there. Drawing from their professional experiences in South African institutions, most of these migrants in their different capacities have indicated a transfer of skills to their home universities. Transfers of skills to home universities would lead to an enlarged pan-African scholarship agenda. Some others have maintained links with their former universities by exporting ideas and encouraging friends and colleagues to come to South Africa to be trained or to develop their career options. Some of the postgraduate students studying at UKZN on sabbatical believe that the skills that they have acquired from South Africa would expose them to better opportunities over their colleagues who acquired their degrees solely from home universities.

Advocacy and implementation of policies are facilitated by the flexibility of gatekeepers in responding to the expressed needs of institutions. South Africa is the only country of the sub-Saharan region which is reputed for its democratic approach towards developmental concerns. On a comparative note a Kenyan professor who has served in her home country for twenty years had this to comment about advocacy and policy implementation:

The government's (the South African government's) input is not only emphasised on paper and planning, there is some action that accompanies it. The situation in my country is far from measuring up with South African standards. Everything is so politically chained that it becomes very difficult for one to come up with any meaningful proposals let alone implementing them. Indeed even when resources are there, it takes the intelligentsia to develop them. Being at a headship position didn't really make much of a difference back in my home country. It is here that I have really felt that I am needed.

This feeling of 'being needed' is shared by some other foreign migrants whose professional roles

are compounded with administrative responsibilities. Being at headship positions, African professional migrants at UKZN expressed satisfaction in the sense that they find their services more engaging and their contributions made more relevant in South Africa than it was the situation in their home countries. This applies most especially to migrants who are serving in the same capacity as they were in their home countries. What is insinuated here is the relatively liberal approach of South African institutions towards decision making and implementation that motivates individuals to put forward ideas that they find innovative for the running of their departments. This is considered an instrumental motivation that African foreign migrants have considered living in the continent to develop and utilise their knowledge towards service delivery for the continent.

6.3. African scholarship at the interface of global knowledge production

The continent of Africa has been the most marginalised and under-represented in the world in terms of global standards of production. Knowledge production constitutes one of the glaring areas in which the entire continent of Africa has constantly contended with the North for legitimacy. Objectivity of scientific knowledge is largely constrained by the context in which it is produced. Scientific knowledge production in the world has been tailored in conventions and conditions that have so far succeeded in securing the political patronage of the North. Contemporary anthropologists among other social scientists have raised debates around the discrepancies that exist between the North and the South, and also the crossroad position within which southern scholars find themselves in meeting the local perspective of global knowledge production (Karim 1996, Moore 1996, Nencel 1991, Quinlan 2000). Tim Quinlan's article entitled "Anthropologies of the South" is very telling of the struggles and the dilemmas that

southern anthropologists are confronted with in an attempt to establish ‘a southern order’ of scholarship (Quinlan 2000). African scholarship is meant to extricate the African continent from northern control by legitimising the continent’s scientific production of knowledge that would be based on the contextual realities of Africa. This section attempts to analyse the positionality of African scholarship in the global production of knowledge from the perspective of foreign African professionals at UKZN.

As Premier University of African Scholarship, UKZN is committed to an agenda which subscribes to the concerns of South Africa in particular and the African continent as a whole. These concerns are promoted through the teaching/learning process and research component of the institution. The institution is significantly manned by foreign African professionals from all over the African continent. Foreign African migrants on their part are striving towards an African scholarship that is made relevant to the African context. An exploration of the professional lives of foreign African academics revealed their inclination towards establishing an African course that attempts to contextualise knowledge production. Their inclination towards the development of African scholarship has largely been expressed in their ideologies and their determination to pursue this course through their presence in the continent.

By concentrating and understanding issues that are relevant to Africa, foreign African professionals are committed to promoting Africa as a space and ideology. This can only be achieved through the collective responsibility of African scholars to engage in discourses that speak of Africa from an insider perspective. This insider perspective can only be realised if African scholars dedicate their intellect to producing knowledge that valorises Africa, thereby

legitimising its place in the global world of knowledge production. In this regard most of the foreign African professionals in the institution are increasingly engaged in research and discourses that speak of Africa and are striving towards making Africa a habitable place for its intelligentsia. Many African professionals view the continent as a place not worthy enough for the sustenance of their intellectual capacities. It is in line with this that one of my key informants a senior lecturer from Tanzania said, “*we have to outgrow the notion that nothing good can come out of Africa. Many of us take a pride in valorising things that are externally driven while demonizing things African.*” According to this professor, he does not understand why African students studying on the continent should learn about American politics without knowing for example that “*the capital of Cameroon is Yaounde*” yet a student is quick to know about “*London being the capital of England.*” Informants believe that sensitisation campaign towards an Afrocentric scholarship should not exclusively be the preoccupation of African tertiary institutions, but should rather include African secondary and high schools in the development of a general curriculum that embeds Afrocentrism.

Curricular structuring reflects the kind of programme an institution intends to run through its students. The term ‘curriculum development’ as defined by Nicholas and Nicholas (1975) cited in Manda (2000: 78) refers to “the planning of learning opportunities to bring about certain changes in students and the assessment of the extent to which these changes have taken place.” Traditionally, most educators have carried on with curricula that have been long established in schools and universities without looking at their relevance to contemporary learners (Manda 2000: 79). This is a situation that poses a major challenge to African academics. African academics who subscribe to the agenda of African scholarship are confronted with the challenge

of developing an Afro-centric approach that takes cognisance of the socio-economic and political changes that are taking place in Africa. Foreign African academics at UKZN are committed to bringing about a transformation of the curriculum- a curriculum that would speak audibly of South Africa and Africa. In this regard some of the migrants interviewed indicated that they are pushing through to see that Africa is more meaningfully integrated in the list of modules they have developed. In this regard the HOS of Politics and Political Sciences said his department is committed to seeing that it offers a solid broad-based political science that is cognisant of its South African and African contexts. In collaboration with colleagues in the department he has introduced a module entitled “African Political Thought” which will be introduced in the beginning of 2009 academic year.

In establishing an African scholarship African writers and researchers are called upon to come up with theoretical, epistemological and methodological frameworks that would speak better of African situations. This position is well explained by a Kenyan doctoral student who is also a permanent staff in one of the universities in Kenya. He said

I believe as African scholars we have reached a level where we need to relate closely with what is happening in our countries. We need to start appreciating issues from our own perspective. Not just incorporating theories from the West which tend to romanticise African affairs. The picture that the West has of Africa is prejudiced on its colonial agenda which has continued to misdirect even our own African scholars in their narratives about Africa.

He further said that his experience at UKZN has helped in enhancing his academic outlook on the concerns of Africa. He said he would do all he can to raise awareness among colleagues and students back in his home university towards developing an African model in the general process of knowledge production.

The romanticised nature of depicting African conditions mentioned above is exacerbated by African scholars who seem to be engaged in discourses about Africa from the outside. As one informant put it, “*a boxer cannot win a fight by boxing out of the ring.*” In order to establish a meaningful agenda for Africa, geographical space becomes very crucial in understanding the problems that people are facing in the continent. African intellectuals cannot claim to produce objective and unbiased accounts when they claim to write from outside the continent. However an African perspective does not mean knowledge is exclusively specialised on Africa. Foreign African academics have indicated their willingness to expose students at UKZN to good scholarship elsewhere around the world they believe would not override their primordial engagement to African scholarship. The category of foreign African professionals who left Europe for UKZN represents those academics that have come to contribute to the development of skills in the continent. Some of them have been to other parts of the world where they have accumulated different skills that they are now engaging to studying ‘things Africa.’

The present world has experienced the emergence of a southern scholarship. Some of the countries of the South have succeeded in positioning themselves on the map of knowledge production. This position however has not been earned without resistance from the North. Foreign African academics are making a clarion call to the African intelligentsia to plough their knowledge in African soils so that their intellectual growth nurtured in African soils would be better placed in articulating African affairs. In this regard African professionals migrants at UKZN strongly recommend that for a meaningful scholarship to be established, African scholars should prioritise studying ‘Africa’ in African institutions than moving to the North to

learn about Africa. Put in a rhetorical question the HOS of Politics the Nigerian referred above said:

How is it that people who want to study African politics have to go to places like the University of North Carolina, Wisconsin, Harvard, Oxford or Cambridge?

Definitely Africans cannot claim that they would have first class experience of African situations by studying or writing about Africa out of the continent. One of the major challenges faced by African scholars on the issue of fully integrating African scholarship in the global world knowledge production and dissemination is the lack of standardised publishing houses. The best journals on scholarship and the biggest publishing housings are not in Africa. With their little resources, foreign Africans migrants at UKZN in conjunction with some interested local South African nationals are striving towards setting up research groups that would eventually be in ownership of publication houses for African journals. The HOS of School of Political Sciences mentioned above said he is the editor of a new journal named Afrika- Journal of Politics, Economics and Society, which is a biannual publication of the newly formed Forum For Constructive African Scholarship (FCSA).

Human capital flight from Africa has generally been predicated on the lack of resources to sustain the burgeoning skilled labour increase in the continent. The North has always succeeded in attracting swarms of African skilled personnel because of its vibrant economic indicators, and strategised funding schemes that are meant to entrap skilled labour from the continent. The governments of the North have embarked on subsidising the acquisition of skills from Africa through a liberal funding of scholarship (Darko 2002: 6). Many European countries and America are offering scholarships to many African students and researchers to study and sometimes work

in these countries. Most of the foreign African academic migrants interviewed for this study were trained and worked in Europe and America. Some of them were sponsored by their governments to study in these places with the expectations that they would come back to serve in their countries. In a general sense, structural factors have been attributed as the main reasons that demotivate the African intelligentsia from staying or returning home. This assertion is far from invalidation owing to the visible economic and political depreciation of almost the entire continent. Though these structural factors appear to be critical, they do not necessarily present a situation which is insurmountable.

As gathered from the research African countries are faced with issues which are more than just 'structural crises'. Judging from the comments made by the various research participants, Africa has remained under-represented in the world in the various facets of human life because of a 'brain wash syndrome' that has corrupted the African intelligentsia's sense of belonging. This assertion is made poignant by the comments of one Nigerian informant:

"Our educational system is training African people to hate being Africans. Our elites are dysfunctional people because of the way the educational system has constructed their minds."

Most of the informants complained that the general impoverishment of the continent could be blamed largely on the nonchalance and the indifference of the African intellectual diaspora to contend with the malpractices of their home governments. This indifference stems from individualistic motivations perpetuated by the drive towards personal gains. The refusal of some African professionals to return to their countries is driven by fulfillment for the essentials. Some informants acknowledged having yielded to the temptations of the North for some time before they finally made their way to Africa. Their presence in (South) Africa has positioned them to a

place where they have actually come face-to-face with the African reality. They now stand in a position where they can actually condemn African intellectuals who are serving in the North claiming that their presence there is out of necessity that Africa cannot afford them what they want.

South Africa as previously discussed has standards that could be compared with those of the North. These standards in the eyes of many South Africans do not appear to be appealing enough. This is evident in the increased out-migration of South African professionals across the different racial groups to northern countries for employment and their livelihoods. It is paradoxical that while the country seems not to offer enough for its nationals, it appears to be a lucrative place for Africans from other regions. Relating to the role that the South African nation plays on the continent one of the informants described South Africa as “an island on the continent”- meaning South Africa is the only country in Africa at the moment which has relatively better resources that can accommodate a higher rate of skills. Because of the economic positionality of South Africa most informants chastise the idea of most Africans (most especially South Africans) moving out of the continent to study and take up employment in Europe and America. They also decry that Africa’s top ranking and best students are sent to continue studies in Europe and America. The continuous outflow of African skills remains one of Africa’s major tragedies.

6.4 The brain drain controversy in Africa

Simply defined, brain drain is the loss of human capital of a particular region to another- a loss of national investments in human capital (Cummings 1985: 153). “It is the emigration of skilled

and talented persons from their countries of birth to another” (Johnson 1985: 126). The issue of brain drain from Africa is a well documented area in skilled labour migration. The different regions of Africa have lost significant percentage of skills predominantly to the developed nations of the North and also to some of the developing industrial nations of the South in a bid to meet with their economic and professional needs.

The phenomenon of brain drain in Africa results from macro-related causes that span the socio-economic and political landscapes of a region. The deteriorating economic conditions of most African countries coupled with poor governance policies have led to a mass emigration of skilled professionals and technicians from the region (Adepoju, 1998, Adekanye 1998). Insofar as the development gaps between regions or between nations remain wide, there is bound to be loss of skills from the less developed to the more developed nations of the world. African professional migrancy to the North has not necessarily been induced by the economic attractions of the North, but rather has been pushed by lack of adequate economic structures that should cater for the increasing growth of the labour force in most African nations (Agbo 2005).

Most individuals who migrate from their home countries still maintain strong links between their new geographical space and country of origin. With regard to the out-migration of African professionals to the different parts of the world, the effects of ‘brain drain’ have become highly contested by researchers, governments and scholars. The major problem that emerges out of the outmigration of professionals is the loss of ‘brains’ to areas that are more developed. This situation has led to the development of the more developed economies of the world while the less developed economies have remained impoverished. With the connections that people maintain

with their home countries, the reality of brain drain has become a controversial topic in migration discourses. While many governments of the less developed world are disappointed by the exodus of skilled individuals from their national territory, contemporary scholars and researchers have adopted a more critical outlook in exploring and understanding the dynamics of the so-called brain drain. The controversy surrounding the brain drain has driven others to the usage of the term 'brain circulation'- (Vertovec 2002: 7) a position I intend to problematise through the group of foreign African professionals at UKZN.

The study of African professional migrants at UKZN provides a scenario for the controversial and complex analysis of the brain drain phenomenon. Basing my argument on the heterogeneous backgrounds of foreign African professional migrants in the institution, one would want to question the relevance of 'brain circulation' in the continent. At a regional level, the return of African professionals from Europe and the United States to the continent can be qualified as 'brain gain'. It is an aspect of brain gain because these professionals are using their expertise in their different capacities for service delivery in the continent. One major concern I would like to raise here is about the representation of South Africa as a bonafide recipient of skilled migration returns of foreign African professionals from the North. The category of foreign Africans at UKZN from the northern economies expressed that they have always desired to return 'home' and invest their skills. In the context of advocating an African scholarship, this group of migrants has taken advantage of their presence in South Africa to objectify their passion to meeting with the developmental needs of Africa. Since the end of apartheid South Africa has become a focal point for skill immigration of Africans from the different parts of the world. South Africa has contributed significantly in the growth of South-South migration because of its attractive

economic activities on the continent and its position in the global world economy. This position has impacted on the trend of African skilled migration- with a significant number of African professionals having a preference to migrate to South Africa.

With respect to the idea of brain gain, South Africa may not appear to be representative enough for the development of an African course. The position of macrocosm that South Africa happens to occupy as revealed by this study emerges out of the global concern of foreign African scholars at UKZN over the development of an African model of scholarship. Human brains and ideology cannot operate in a vacuum. Knowledge acquisition does not automatically translate into development without adequate resources to back up intellectual initiatives. Lack of material and financial resources in most African countries is what principally accounts for skills emigration from these countries. Some informants said they never would have moved out of their home country if they had the resources that would yield them job satisfaction. It is principally this lack of resources in home countries that some of the professional migrants are not willing to apply and take up appointments in their home countries. Professionals both from within and outside the African continent have found it convenient to operate from South Africa because its institutions of higher learning possess modern technological and material resources for career fulfillment.

However, the presence of these academics in (UKZN) South Africa has not meant a disconnection with their home countries. Most migrants have continued to maintain links with their former universities and their home countries as a whole. These links involve research collaboration with migrants' previous universities at home countries and also the desire expressed by migrants to have their newly acquired skills initiated to meet the material and intellectual needs of their home universities. It is believed that this would be achieved at a later

stage in life. Some of the people interviewed are employees who came to South Africa on study leave and who upon completion of their programmes will eventually return home. Most of them are permanent staff in their universities back at home. In seeking to know if migrants would stay in South Africa or move elsewhere if given greater economic benefits than what is offered in their home institutions, most migrants showed a disapproval to remain in South Africa or move elsewhere. It is believed that their higher qualifications and new experiences and exposure would guarantee them better positions and better pay packages than they had before. With these positions it is assumed that they would stand the chance of making and taking decisions for their institutions within their different capacities.

6.5 Skilled migrant networks and brain gain/brain circulation

It is generally assumed that the migration of skilled individuals is a major setback of the development of a nation. The discussions so far have highlighted the causes of professional migrancy in Africa. These causes cut across social, economic and political domains. Skilled migration is largely undertaken due to the inability of different state governments to respond adequately to the needs of their nationals. Migration has become an inevitable path to the economic and social progress of skilled migrants as they tend to move to more developed places for education, employment and career advancement. The migration of skilled labour in Africa is on the upsurge. Professionals are the cream of society, and consequently their migration impacts on the development of a country. The impact of migration on a country's development is a two-way process- migration can either positively or negatively impact on the development of a country.

Notwithstanding the brain drain syndrome which has affected most migration discourses about the exodus of the African elite, some literature has however shown that professional migrancy contributes to the development of migrants' country of emigration (Sevilla 2006, Vertovec 2002). Networks of skilled labour migration are one of the ways through which migrants contribute to the development of their countries of origin.

Migrant niches at UKZN have developed into intelligentsia diasporic groups from the different nations of Africa. These diasporic groups function either as organised associations or otherwise. The intellectual class of Kenyans at UKZN provides leadership for the Kenyan diaspora in Durban and its environs by engaging in the debates meant to address economic and political issues affecting their country. In one of their forums hosted at Blue Waters Restaurant in North Beach Durban, the Kenyan staff at UKZN conspicuously participated in what constituted the agenda for the day. The occasion was in honour of their Deputy Prime Minister who was in the country for a private visit. Those who attended the function included the business class, academics and postgraduate students, medical doctors and Kenyan farmers. On this occasion the Kenyan diaspora came up with a number of propositions that they would want the government to take into consideration. The major issues that were discussed include

- voting while in diaspora,
- dual citizenship for Kenyan diaspora in South Africa (a position that was stressed because of the recent outbreak of xenophobia in South Africa.)
- the need to strengthen diplomatic relation and promote bilateral cooperation between Kenya and South Africa,

- the need to advocate balance of trade between South Africa and Kenya (a situation they claim is highly skewed in favour of South Africa).
- The need for Kenyan government to negotiate for an agreement with the South African government to curtail the rates of tuition for Kenyan students. The suggestions were made that the Kenyan government should use its diplomatic relationship with South Africa to see into it that Kenyan students and the rest of African students should pay the same rates as students from the SADC region.

Concerning the issues discussed on that occasion, academics stood out as the greatest contributors to the Kenyan course. Most of the key speakers for the function were lecturers from UKZN. On a key note, one of the Kenyan professors at UKZN called for the need for collective action from the Kenyan diaspora towards decision making and implementation concerning issues affecting their country. The Kenyan example discussed here buttresses the idea of skilled migrant networks in the development of a nation.

The research also underscores student leadership in the formation of migrant association. Under the influence of Cameroonian students at UKZN the Cameroonian community in Durban has an existing association named Cameroonian Community in Durban (CAMCOD). This association is the brain child of a Cameroonian postgraduate student at UKZN who thought of creating a platform whereby Cameroonians living in Durban could come together to socialise and foster unity among them. The association principally was formed to serve as a support network to be of mutual assistance to members. This association is composed of self-employed business men and women, and more than half the membership is composed of students (with just a few postgraduate students). CAMCOD as it unfolds wants to build up a strong diaspora identity that

would gain recognition from the government at home as well as the South African government. Unlike the Kenyan diaspora meetings which register the involvement and participation of Kenyan academics and the general Kenyan elite, the few Cameroonian elites at UKZN and other government institutions in Durban do not participate in Cameroonian meetings. Notwithstanding their absence, CAMCOD under the leadership of students aims at establishing itself as a strong force that would influence Cameroon's democracy and also to invest their skills at home for the development of the nation. In an interview with the founder of CAMCOD (the post-graduate student mentioned above) in one of their functions which took place on July 26 2008 she said the following:

The reason behind my advocating the formation of this association was an attempt to bring Cameroonians together so as to identify what potentials each Cameroonian possesses in order that we may build up a strong Cameroonian diaspora in South Africa. One whose voice would be heard in the democratic process of our country. This should not be mistaken for a political forum. We are not here to discuss party politics. What we are interested in is to see how much of our potentials can be deployed to serve the developmental needs of our country. I am looking forward to that day when the voice of CAMCOD will reverberate to other parts of the world Cameroonians are so that together we can change the present state of our beloved fatherland. It is our strong opinion that upon accomplishing our individual agenda here we should try to go back home and invest our new experiences. South Africa has definitely offered us a lot in terms of skills and other experiences.

Students constitute the future leadership of a nation. The above interview coalesces with the opinions expressed by some other student informants who have indicated their willingness to engage their skills for the interest of their countries. Asking whether there exists any Cameroonian intellectual diaspora movement anywhere, she said to the best of her knowledge there is non in existence. She said the few Cameroonian associations that she is aware of are not formidable enough to articulate the issues affecting Cameroon. Most of the associations are based on al Mater and ethnic diaspora associations. She said her mission of CAMCOD is an

attempt to initiate an intellectual movement that would develop into a more global force of a Cameroonian diaspora that would be committed to looking into issues that are at stake in their country.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the positionality of foreign African professionals at UKZN in the development of skills in the institution, South Africa and Africa. Premised on the UKZN slogan- “Premier University of African Scholarship”, foreign African nationals in the institution have taken advantage of this vision to forge ahead with the ideology they had envisioned for service delivery for the continent. Professional foreign migrants of African origin at UKZN have demonstrated their passion to promote an African scholarship which would identify and meet the needs of different parts of Africa. As academics they have pledged their commitments towards valorising things Africa by developing a curriculum that would adopt an Afrocentric approach in methodological, theoretical and epistemological paradigms in the production and dissemination of knowledge.

The African intelligentsia cannot operate its philosophy in a vacuum. They need resources that would facilitate them in pursuing their course. Presently South Africa appears to be the most lucrative country on the continent with financial and material resources that can be utilised for policy implementation. In addition South Africa’s democracy is considered an enabling factor for the intellectual growth of the country. Some foreign African migrants who are at headship positions at UKZN express a sense of satisfaction in the exercise of their roles as administrators. They find their initiatives more engaging at UKZN than it was the situation back home where

they operated in similar capacity. While in South Africa they can freely express the kind of interests they want for their various departments without the fear that their positions can be threatened. Since everything seems to be politicised, back home migrants expressed that they would dare not put up proposals that may run counter to the operation of a government's policy machinery.

Despite the problems professional migrants might face in their countries of origin, informants indicated their commitment to the intellectual and developmental growth of their countries. Both the already employed and the unemployed (postgraduate students) African migrants at UKZN demonstrated their desire to go back home and engage their skills in promotion of an African course of scholarship.

CHAPTER Seven

CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate African professional migrancy to South Africa in the world of academia. Using a qualitative approach the study has looked at different reasons surrounding the migration of foreign African skilled individuals into South Africa. The study illuminates the growing trend of African skilled migration towards the South. This has been done in conjunction with existing literature on south-bound migration. The research and the literature reviewed for this study reveal South Africa as an emerging economy with relatively more vibrant socio-economic and technological indicators on the African continent. These indicators have contributed in positioning her among the ranks of immigrant-receiving countries of skilled persons particularly from the rest of the African region.

Reasons surrounding foreign African professional migration to South Africa according to this study cut across macro and micro units of analysis. Lack of employment opportunities, political bottlenecks, inadequate material and financial structures are some of the macro-related factors that foreign African academics at UKZN cited as major problems they faced back in their home countries. South Africa's economic and social structures appear to meet modern standards that can measure favourably with the economies of the North. Findings of this study have revealed that foreign African academics are prepared to stay and work in the continent provided African countries can improve on their socio-economic and political conditions. Besides structural factors, cultural and geographical reasons also accounted for the movement of these migrants to South Africa. Cultural and geographical factors have hardly been given a thorough treatment as

part of the reasons responsible for the immigration of skilled individuals into South Africa from the rest of Africa. An ethnographic representation that took into cognisance the role played by an individual by producing accounts from an individual perspective has given a kind of holistic analysis of African professional migration in South Africa.

The study has also indicated that foreign African professionals form an integral part in promoting and maintaining academic standards in the institution. Their previous employment opportunities have contributed in strengthening the curricular and pedagogic needs of the institution. The study has equally shown the commitments of foreign African academics towards the empowerment of the previously disadvantaged local students of the black race. Some of the foreigners at headship positions have developed strategic mechanisms that help in encouraging local students (especially the blacks) to continue their education to meaningful academic levels. Such mechanisms include providing financial supports through job creation and also the creation of in-house capacity building programmes in their different departments.

The study has further highlighted the role played by foreign African migrants in South Africa towards the development of an African scholarship. This scholarship is meant to contextualise African affairs and articulate them with specificity in order to make knowledge production more relevant for the continent. Viewed as “Premier University of African Scholarship” some foreign African academics in the institution view UKZN as a vantage point where African knowledge production can be expanded and legitimised.

The lives of African professional migrants in South Africa as shown by this study are riddled with dilemmas and contradictions. South Africa appears to be the most relevant economy on the continent for career advancement and fulfilment. However its xenophobic character appears to

be a threatening factor to the integration of African foreigners. Even though the issue of xenophobia was raised among a number of African foreigners in this study, some are not prepared to leave South Africa just for this reason. Some others have indicated their desire to leave South Africa the very moment they would find an opportunity elsewhere including going back to their countries of origin. Since professional (and for some other migrants economic) satisfaction take precedence in the lives of these migrants, they have decided to minimise the challenges posed by xenophobia; until they can be able to find rewarding opportunities elsewhere.

The research has further looked at the changes that are made in the lives of African professional men and women as they transcend national boundaries. The transnational experiences of these migrants have revealed a renegotiation of gender and household roles among the lives of professional African migrants. The ethnography reveals the active involvement of African women in the whole process of migration. The study reveals that foreign African professional women are motivated to move to South Africa for the same reasons men do. As revealed by the ethnography African women with educational skills whether married or single have become more career focused in the process of migration. Migration to them represents an emancipatory process in which they seek to assert their status quo. Transnational experiences have in a way altered some of the traditional gendered and household roles and men and women have become active partners in sharing domestic responsibilities.

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