

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE ARRIVAL, SETTLEMENT
AND DOMESTIC ARRANGEMENTS OF SOUTH
ASIAN MUSLIM SALON WORKERS IN DURBAN**

**BY
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DECLARATION

I, Aneesah Khan declare that this Masters dissertation is my original and independent research. It has not been previously submitted for a degree at any other university. All sources have been duly acknowledged.

Candidate's signature:

Date:

I, Professor Anand Singh (PhD) declare that I have supervised this dissertation to the best of my ability, and I am satisfied that it is now ready for examination.

Supervisor's signature:

Date:

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ABBREVIATIONS

DVD- Digital Video Disc

UAE- United Arab Emirates

UK- United Kingdom

USA- United States of America

ABSTRACT

This study examines the arrival and settlement of a sample of South Asian Muslim male migrants who are salon owners and salon employees in Durban, South Africa. The increasing visibility of the expansion of Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi migrant communities in Durban led to an interest in focusing on those issues which constitute the core of this research, namely: why they migrate, who migrates, how they migrate and arrive here, as well as settle into the work that they do. The broader purpose of this research was to investigate their living arrangements and social dynamics of their working and domestic lives. It also explores the challenges and opportunities that migrants encounter from the time they decide to leave home up until arrival in the country of resettlement and the way in which transnational social ties assist in helping them transcend such obstacles and reap the benefits of available prospects. Central to this project was also the adoption of salon work as a livelihood strategy as well as issues of integration, identity construction and the perceptions of foreign migrants and their enterprises from the view of local salon owners and local customers of foreign owned salons. It shows how migrants remain who they are and how the host society becomes a terrain in which their normative social practices are recreated and enjoyed. The study is anthropological in nature and therefore aims to capture the complexities of the migrant experience from the individuals' perspectives through the use of case studies. As part of the qualitative approach, observations of foreign owned enterprises were conducted, random sampling was used to select participants, and semi-structured interviews made it possible to acquire data. The exploratory goal of the study aims to illustrate that migrants are individuals who leave home with the hope of transforming their dreams and ambitions into a brighter prosperous reality not only for themselves, but more importantly their families too.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration	2
Acknowledgements	3
Abbreviations	4
Abstract	5
Chapter One	10
Contextualising Migration: An overview of South Asian migration	10
1.1 Problem statement, outline of the research, key questions and justification of the study	11
1.2 Migratory trends and patterns	17
1.3 A brief history of migration from the Asian sub-continent	19
1.4 A brief outline of South Asian migration and foreign owned salons in Durban	21
1.5 Conclusion	24
Chapter Two	26
Methodology	26
2.1 Setting the pace for enquiry	26
2.2 Qualitative research methods	28
2.2.1 Sample population and sample selection	28
2.2.2 The interview technique	29
2.2.3 The interview process, fieldwork experience and its associated challenges	30
2.3 Literature review	32

2.3.1 Introduction	32
2.3.2 Why migration?	33
2.3.3 International and internal Pakistani migration	34
2.3.4 South Asian migration and similar migratory patterns among other developing nations	36
2.4 Theorizing migration: Social network theory and Transnationalism	37
2.5 Observations	40
2.5.1 Introducing the observational sites	41
2.5.2 Observations: Durban and Johannesburg	44
2.6 Conclusion	46
Chapter Three	47
The decision and process to leave home	47
3.1 Socio-economic conditions in South Asia	47
3.2 Reasons for leaving	49
3.2.1 Decrepit environmental conditions and unemployment	50
3.2.2 Family support	54
3.3 South Africa as a reception country	58
3.3.1 Why South Africa?	62
3.3.1.1 Favourable socio-economic and political conditions	62
3.3.1.2 Existence of networks	63

3.4 Informal channels: The role of agents	66
3.5. Conclusion	71
Chapter Four	72
Social networking and being ‘South Asian’ in Durban	72
4.1 The concept of network and its place within migration	73
4.2 South Asian networks	75
4.3 Who am I and how do I ‘fit in’?	83
4.4 Perceptions of migrants: Experiences of life in a ‘new home’	90
4.5 The dynamics of domesticity	100
4.6 Conclusion	103
Chapter Five	104
Livelihoods and competition: Foreign versus Local	104
5.1 Livelihoods	105
5.1.1 Previously held occupations in the country of origin	105
5.1.2 Current occupations in Durban	106
5.1.3 Reasons for choosing salon work and preferred occupations of migrants	108
5.2 Foreign versus Local	112
5.2.1 Perceptions through local ‘windows’- salon owners	114
5.2.2 Perceptions through local ‘windows’- local customers	120
5.3 Conclusion	125

Chapter Six	127
Remittances	127
6.1 Global cash flows: Remittances in South Asia and other developing nations	127
6.2 Why remittances?	129
6.3 Conclusion	140
Chapter Seven	142
Conclusion	142
References	149
Appendix 1	157

CHAPTER ONE:

CONTEXTUALISING MIGRATION: AN OVERVIEW OF SOUTH ASIAN MIGRATION

Ever since South Africa's watershed election on 27 April 1994, there has been an influx of migrants into the country, especially for its renowned industrial, economic and relative political stability. Most of the migrants descended upon the country from the rest of Africa, often escaping dire economic woes and political turmoil that has become so characteristic of post-colonial Africa. South Africa's initial response was an accommodationist one, especially since most of the continent stood by the extra-parliamentary (banned movements) such as the African National Congress (ANC), Pan African Congress (PAC), and the South African Communist Party (SACP) until they were allowed to function as all other parties since 1990. However, beyond the African continent, the economic woes and political turmoil in countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh have caused an equally large out flow of people, making South Africa one of its recipient countries. People also came to South Africa from other neighbouring countries in the south Asian sub-continent, including India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Many brought with them entrepreneurial and artistic skills that gradually grounded itself into the tapestry of services that metropolitan areas such as South Africa's big cities have become renowned for. In Durban, many South-Asian migrants have settled and began offering services that have become both a source of curiosity and challenge to related service providers, often because of their persuasive and convincing marketing skills. This thesis aims to examine a segment of these migrants viz. Muslim migrants from especially Pakistan, and to a lesser extent Bangladesh and India-only because the initial random sampling phase of this

research produced such statistics. All of the interviewees were salon workers who have grown in stature and popularity since their arrival and settlement in Durban.

In this chapter, the researcher aims to shed some preliminary light on issues pertaining to this target group through four sections. The first section discusses the research problem as well as the reasons for me choosing to study South Asian Muslim salon workers in Durban. The second section offers a concise outline of migratory trends and patterns. The third section provides a brief historical account of migration from the Asian sub-continent. Finally, the fourth section consists of an examination of the South Asian migratory phenomenon and the emergence of foreign owned salons in Durban.

1.1 Problem statement, outline of the research, key questions and justification of the study

Migrants have been a constant feature of the South African landscape, but despite this, a pertinent question that begs to be answered is: Why is it that migrant populations are becoming a pressing concern in South Africa and other migrant receiving countries? In an attempt to answer this question, it can be said that the scale and complexity of mobility in the 21st century has ramifications for reception countries in that it adds to existing pressures and often provides a platform for the creation of threat, competition of resources and opportunities between local populations and their migrant counterparts. It is against this backdrop that the problem statements of this study can be derived.

This research project on South Asian Muslim migrants in Durban is viewed against the background of high levels of poverty, unemployment and housing shortages.

There is a prevalent view that foreign migrants in South Africa often take jobs at lower than the legal minimum wage just to ensure their survival and settlement. According to Maharaj and Rajkumar (1997), there is the commonly held view that foreign migrants in South Africa are a source of cheap labour that precludes locals from acquiring employment because of legislative protection. However, not all migrants in South Africa necessarily dominate the lower paid and unskilled labour market. For instance, among migrants such as those who come from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, it is visible that many, if not most of them, are self-employed rather than wage employed by local entrepreneurs, find accommodation in established suburban areas, and create opportunities where they often do not exist.

Foreign Muslim migrants are known to engage in entrepreneurial activities ranging from the sale of Bollywood¹ digital video discs (DVDs) and tailoring, to owning take-aways, restaurants and hair salons. For the sake of focus, the researcher has chosen to study foreign Muslim migrants who work in hair salons in the suburb of Overport, Durban. Due to these rapidly growing services provided by them, it creates a platform upon which competition between foreign owned salons and local salons becomes rife. Oda (2009) propounds that Pakistani migrants in countries such as Britain and the United States are often accused of taking away jobs from the locals as well as lowering of wages. In these instances, they are more accurately being charged with taking away business instead of paid employment. As a result, competition arises and migrant enterprises are viewed as a threat to the success of locally owned businesses. From a cursory glance at these foreign owned enterprises, it emerges that these salons appear to be providing a cheaper and more

¹ Bollywood is a popular nickname used to refer to the Hindi language film industry which has its base in Mumbai, India. The language in these films is predominantly Hindi, however in recent years, the use of the English language in music and dialogue is not uncommon.

elaborate service than locally owned salons. Observations brought to the fore that the South Asian Muslim migrant community consists mainly of males with the absence of their spouses, children or other family members. This presented an interesting scenario to find out how they cope with the absence of family and their female counterparts. The concept of arrival for these migrants involved a consultative process in which they had to seek permission and consult with spouses, children and family members before the actual decision to migrate was made. Despite the fact that the heterogenous sample of South Asian migrants consisted of differing linguistic and age groups, but the same religious background, it did not present complex variations in both the data and findings that are viewed within the theoretical frameworks of transnationalism and social network theory. While chapter one provides a historical account of migration, chapter two outlines the methodological approaches of the study and contextualises migration within international literature and the theoretical frameworks chosen for this study. The arduous process that migrants have to endure in order to migrate is highlighted in chapter three of this study. It also provides information on why they migrate, how they migrate and who migrates with them.

With the abolition of apartheid legislation and the adoption of neo-liberal principles within the economy, South Africa has attracted many migrants, thus witnessing a tide of human movement from Africa and various Asian communities such as Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and China (Park and Rugunanan, 2009). Upon arrival in the receiving country, migrants may find it difficult to adapt, obtain employment, get accommodation, or obtain information about their new environment. During the early stage of the migration process, migrants tend to rely on social networks of family or friends to direct them into specific places and jobs (Hu and Salazar, 2005; Poros,

2001; Vertovec, 2002). Chapter four provides an illustration of migrants' social networks and the important role they play in adaptation, adjustment and facilitating movement.

Migratory movements impact upon the way in which migrants identify themselves and assimilate with their own norms and values in the receiving country. The migratory process brings populations of differing backgrounds into contact with each other resulting in the engaging of activities that become the expression of the migrant's ethnic identity (Brettel and Hollifield, 2000). Apart from a discussion on social networks, chapter four focuses on the construction of Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi identity in South Africa- in other words, how they adjust and identify themselves in their new environment, but remain who they are. In conjunction with issues pertaining to identity, the chapter also draws attention to the diverse lifestyles that South Asian migrants lead, as well as their feelings about living and working in Durban. It further examines how their social experiences differ in Durban and the dynamics inherent within their domestic lives. While the focus is on cohesion, issues pertaining to fragmentation, that is, the divisions (class, regional, linguistic) between South Asian migrants, will also be discussed. Chapter five details the adoption of salon work as a livelihood strategy in Durban and the dynamics of the migrants' working lives. The chapter extends focus to issues of threat, competition and service provision. It is often speculated that Pakistani migrants are involved in crime syndicates ranging from phone card scams and the sale of pirate DVDs. With reference to the above, the information in chapter five sheds light on the general perceptions of migrants from the point of view of local salon owners and local customers of foreign owned salons. In chapter six, revenues which are sent to the migrants' families in the form of remittances, will be discussed and contextualised

within remittance sending trends and patterns in other less developed nations. Throughout the data chapters of this research project, case studies will be used to voice participants' experiences, emotions and social meanings that they attach to the migration experience.

The research seeks to provide information on foreign salon owners and employees in Durban, particularly focusing on their arrival and settlement in their work and domestic lives. To achieve the aforementioned objective, the study focused on a range of open-ended questions to acquire data which provided information on why they migrate, who migrates, how they migrate and arrive in Durban, as well as settle into the work that they do. The presence of foreign owned enterprises and the emergence of new ones are often viewed as a threat to the success of locally owned businesses. Preliminary observations revealed that service at these foreign owned businesses appear to be cheaper and efficient. The South Asian migrant community in Durban is dominated by males with the notable absence of females. In view of the above concerns, the key questions of the study ask:

- Are foreign owned salons providing a cheaper and more efficient service than locally owned salons? Are they a threat to locally owned salons?
- What are their relations with local salon owners?
- What are the factors that motivate South Asian Muslims to migrate?
- Why was South Africa their preferred destination?
- In the context of family relations, how was the decision to migrate made?
- In the absence of female counterparts, how do male migrants manage their domestic lives such as cleaning, cooking and washing?

- How do they decide who stays where and how do they network with other South Asians?
- How often do they remit, and how?
- What emphasis do they place on being Pakistani, Indian or Bangladeshi?

The researcher's interest in this topic began when she visited a Pakistani salon in 2009 and chatted with a friendly Pakistani worker. Her conversation with him as well as her observations of the salon and its workers piqued an interest in her that urged her to learn more about how and why these migrants come to Durban and subsequently settle into challenging livelihoods. The researcher's interest in this area prompted her to review literature on Pakistani migration to South Africa. However, the researcher did not come across any studies that have been conducted on Pakistani migrants in Durban or elsewhere in South Africa. Thus, this study aims at contributing to anthropological studies of migration, particularly from South Asian countries to Durban, most of whom were Pakistanis.

The increasing mobility of workers is one of the most important demographic changes taking place worldwide. Given the paucity of data on migration from Pakistan and other South Asian countries to South Africa, this study aims to fill a lacuna that will provide information on a neglected part of the broad migratory tapestry. This research intends to make a valuable contribution towards understanding the arrival, settlement and domestic arrangements of foreign Muslim migrants as well as the increasing prevalence of their salons in Durban. The research demonstrates that despite the negative connotations attached to foreign Muslim migrants, they are individuals with dreams and ambitions who migrate with

the hope of attaining a better life, not only for themselves, but also for their families who they have left behind.

1.2 Migratory trends and patterns

Migration involves “the movement of people from one place in the world to another for the purpose of taking up permanent or semi-permanent residence, usually across a political boundary².” The time frame as well as the border that is crossed determines whether migration is temporary (short period of time) or permanent (indefinite, usually a year or more), and whether it is internal (movement within a country) or international (movement between countries). Furthermore, migration can be a matter of choice (voluntary) or forced (involuntary). It can be argued without doubt, that in the future years of the present century, countries throughout the world will experience large scale migration internationally, both temporary and permanent, as well as voluntary and forced.

Migration and population movements have been an enduring theme of human history. However, what began as a small scale occurrence has profoundly extended itself over the years to become a dynamic and extremely complex global phenomenon. Globalisation has reinforced migration and has stimulated greater interaction between people and societies. With the decline of the economy and heightening political persecution and/or conflict, poverty and unemployment, there has been a considerable rise in population mobility over the last 10 years. By the end of the 20th century, it was evident that almost all urbanized nations across the globe

²<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/09/g68/migrationguidestudent.pdf>

Accessed on 28th October, 2011.

have become home to migrant communities. Moreover, these communities have adjusted and integrated themselves well into the receiving country and have managed to procure employment, housing, and access to resources as well as citizenship.

It is also a fact that by the second decade of the 21st century, thousands of individuals belong to two or more communities with differing and multi-faceted reasons for migrating. Gardner and Osella (2003: 1) concur that “migration has emerged as one of the key issues of the age and has been accompanied by a proliferation of research projects, conferences and publications dedicated to the study of human movement.” It is a reality that an exceptional number of migrants come not only from developed countries, but more so from the developing nations of Africa, Central and South America and Asia. More importantly, developing nations are progressively becoming home to migrant populations, thus reflecting a move away from traditional immigrant countries of reception such as the United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA) and Canada (Massey *et al.*, 1993). However, first world nations continue to be a magnet attracting a volume of migrants from various parts of the globe. This is outlined in the words of Martin and Zurcher (2008: 3) who claim that “the number of international migrants in industrialised countries more than doubled between 1985 and 2005, from almost 55 million to 120 million.” The greatest of these migrant flows are known to come from less developed to more developed countries. It is further elaborated that while large scale movement occurs at a rapid pace from developing to developed countries, the number of migrants who move from one developing nation to another, such as from Indonesia to Malaysia, is just as many (Martin and Zurcher, 2008). “Large flows of people also move from one industrialized country to another, from Canada to the U.S, for example, and much

smaller flows move from more developed to less developed countries, such as people from Japan who work in or retire to Thailand” (Martin and Zurcher, 2008: 3).

1.3 A brief history of migration from the Asian sub-continent

The study of South Asian migrants in post-apartheid South Africa can best be understood by tracing the historical roots of migratory movement from the southern region of the Asian sub-continent. Mobility has been embedded within the fabric of social life in South Asia before, during and post colonial British imperialism. Each period of movement was characterised along the lines of different dimensions. The pre-colonial era was largely marked by circular migration which later extended to become cross border movement during colonial and post colonial rule (Sugata and Ayesha, 1998). In order to free India from the shackles of British supremacy, the Gadar (meaning revolt or mutiny) movement was founded by overseas Indians. Following the Indian mutiny of 1857, this movement was the first organized proposition for freedom and was imbued with the determination and passion of Indians who were living in Canada and America to free their motherland of cruelty, discrimination, subjugation and most importantly oppressive colonial rule (Singh, 2008). The movement was eventually disbanded before India was led to victory with their new found independence in 1947. The Gadar movement was unsuccessful, however, it created an intrinsic desire in the hearts of Indians both within and abroad to fight for and attain freedom (Singh, 2008). It is important to note that colonialism gave birth to many revolutions and freedom fighters, all of who were joined together by the common thread of attaining independence.

It therefore comes to be seen that migration is intrinsically linked to the creation of various South Asian states. The partitioning of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 was

characterised by a wave of population movements (Muslims of Indian origin) from India to Pakistan, and Hindus from Pakistan to India. It was this first wave of migratory movements that resulted in the formation of the state of Pakistan which was then divided into East Pakistan and West Pakistan. Due to the labyrinth of tensions between these two regions, East Pakistan sought independence from West Pakistan. East Pakistan's quest for more autonomy led to a civil war in which the Bengal region of the East defeated the Western region through Indian support, thus giving birth to the independent nation state of Bangladesh in 1971 (Vihe, 2007: 79). Despite an inclination towards democracy and secular constitutions within these countries, they continue to endure political instability as well as economic and social difficulties.

The early 1950s was sparked by widespread movements across international borders, hence the beginning of international migration from the South Asian region. Early mobility was largely directed from Kashmir to the UK. Such migrants included young males who had little or no education, therefore taking up low paid, unskilled work (Gazdar, 2003). A decade later, migration increased, however these migrants were educated professional young males who went mainly to the USA and Canada. Despite earlier migration, it was only during the late 1960s and early 1970s that migration movements began to peak, which was especially due to the oil boom in the Middle East (Gazdar, 2003). The motive behind such movements was directly linked to poor socio-economic conditions in South Asia. Although South Africa did not play host to the early wave of Pakistani migration, it did initially welcome the arrival of Indian migrants, and now accommodates Pakistani migrants in a somewhat uncomfortable manner.

The recent increase in South Asian migrants to South Africa has some measure of historicity and compatriotism attached to it. The year 1860 marked the arrival of thousands of people of Indian origin³ who came to South Africa by ship to work as indentured labourers on the sugarcane plantations in the province of Natal, as it was previously known. As time progressed, the demand for railway workers led to a shift from farming to industrial work. While some migrants later returned to India, others began to settle and take up residency in Natal, thus leading to the eventual establishment of an Indian population⁴. This gave rise to a large, permanent South African Indian population who are typically descendants of the late 19th and early 20th century immigrants that came from India (See also Palmer, 1957)⁵. The ensuing years saw the gradual transformation of these pioneer migrants from mainly farm labourers to a diversity of now mainly urbanised well-established prominent business men, professionals, middle-class blue collar workers as well as lower working class inhabitants.

1.4 A brief outline of South Asian migrants and foreign owned salons in Durban

South Africa is no exception to large scale immigration flows. After the disbanding of apartheid legislation in South Africa, a new wave of transnational migration from India and Pakistan began alongside the movement of Africans from neighbouring African states to what became recognised as the new South Africa. These movements have been propelled by increasing socio-economic insecurities and political crises which produce circumstances of strife and limited prospects. In recent

³Inclusive of Hindus, Muslims and Christians.

⁴<http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/chapter7.pdf>

Accessed on 27th October, 2011.

⁵Palmer, M. (1957). "The history of Indians in Natal". Greenwood Press.

years, the increasing presence of Islamist militant, political organisations such as Al-Qaeda in the Middle East and the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan has accelerated population flows, mainly from Pakistan. While there is also a growing number of migrants from India and Bangladesh in South Africa, the Pakistani migrant population appears to outweigh the number of Indian and Bangladeshi migrants. These migrants have come to occupy various locations across the metropolitan cities of Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town. Within these areas, migrant populations operate their businesses which range from, but are not limited to, restaurants, salons and clothing shops, among others.

Migrants have not been well received by a majority of the local population who feel overwhelmed and threatened by the growing number of migrant communities. While the formation of diasporic communities is often viewed negatively, they do make positive contributions. These include bringing various skills into the receiving country, encouraging diversity by providing new/different services and goods coupled with supplying their own knowledge and experience to the workplace (Cohen and Kennedy, 2000). Their insecurity and vulnerability encourage them to work harder and to generally offer their labour or service below contemporary market rates.

For years, hair salons in the predominantly Durban Indian areas have been dominated by South African born Indians. Their businesses flourished due to the constant and loyal support from local residents. However, with the arrival and settlement of migrants from the South Asian region, the last decade has seen an astounding emergence of foreign owned salons. These salons have come to occupy business space alongside locally owned salons to such an extent that they have radically altered the geographical setting of the city. Foreign owned salons are well

established and their workmanship appears to consist of a unique style and class, thus setting them apart from South African standards. The ongoing support from the local resident population to foreign owned salons displays not only their popularity, but also the way in which their goods and services are welcomed by locals.

A salon can be described as a facility which offers a range of beauty services to both men and women. Salons may differ as most of them are specialized, for example; hair salons and skin care, among others. The foreign owned salons that the researcher has chosen to focus on are hair salons which engage in hair cutting and hair dyeing. In addition, these salons have also developed new services which have expanded their customer base. For instance, they have introduced their infamous head, neck and back massage (this is not offered by locally owned salons) which has been well received by local customers.

Apart from salons being a place of employment and business, they have also become a space for social interaction. While some migrants in the study socially interact through visiting nightclubs/bars and casinos, others were restricted due to constraining work hours, but more so by religion, to engage in such activities. In this instance, work space becomes the playground for these migrants to interact with each other, their customers and for some, their neighbouring business owners. This stands in opposition for other migrants in South Africa. A study conducted on Nigerian migrants in Central Durban by Sausi (2009) shows how saloons as opposed to salons are public spaces in which migrants socialise. These saloons have been adapted from the earlier western version of a bar/tavern in which alcohol is sold and consumed, hence, creating an environment for entertainment, socialising and relaxation. In Durban, most saloons are operated and frequently visited by

foreign African migrants (male dominated) who live in the city, specifically by those who share similar nationalities.

1.5. Conclusion

This chapter focused on the flows and streams of migration from the Asian sub-continent. It has brought into perspective how large scale population movements have led to the formation of Pakistan and Bangladesh. The crossing of international borders highlights the globalisation of migration with a flow of South Asians from developing poorer nations to the developed richer nations of the North. However, the increasing presence of Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi migrants in post-apartheid South Africa signifies a shift away from this dualism in that mobility is now directed from developing poor nations towards better developed nations that are perceived as being more socially, politically and economically stable. These movements have been intensifying due to unstable and poor conditions back home. The recent flow towards countries such as South Africa as well as the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia demonstrates the options that people from politically disturbed nations have. The increasingly tighter controls in the developed northern hemisphere countries serve as deterrents to people wanting to enter them without the intention of leaving. This problem is exacerbated by contemporary threats of violence, especially by Islamic fundamentalists who tend to use vulnerable migrants to create cells and advance their courses through them. However, at the face of things, the salon workers the researcher provided information on were more about work than about engaging in nefarious activities. The chapter also addressed the problem statement of the study against the increasing prevalence of foreign owned salons showing how it creates a platform for competition. It has attempted to contextualise South Asian

migration by retracing its historical roots and in doing so, provides a basis to understand population flows from the Asian sub-continent to Durban.

CHAPTER TWO:

METHODOLOGY

Research methods form the backbone of any research project. These methods make fieldwork possible, systematically guide the data collection process and allow for the generation and verification of data. Therefore, the methods employed during research become a powerful mechanism through which the goals of the research project can be met. This chapter discusses qualitative methods and its related techniques that were used in obtaining the data for this study. It will also provide information on the interview process and reasons as to why specific areas and participants were chosen. The chapter also incorporates the relevant literature required for this study. In addition, it consists of a discussion of the theoretical perspectives that will guide the study as well as provide a framework within which the data will be analysed. Finally, it will discuss the research and observational sites as well as the researcher's observations.

2.1 Setting the pace for enquiry

Prior to carrying out the actual interviews which served as the primary source of data for this study, a literature survey was conducted. Factors promoting migration (push/pull theories), the phenomenon of Pakistani International Migration, social networking, transnationalism, remittances and other related readings, were essential to the literature survey that was carried out, after which the researcher conducted a series of observations in enterprises seemingly known to be Pakistani. Initially, the researcher began her research with the assumption that all foreign Muslim owned salons were Pakistani. However this proved otherwise since one salon which the

researcher thought was Pakistani owned (because it had a Muslim name) was actually Bangladeshi, and in another instance, the owner was actually Indian⁶. This only became known to the researcher during the actual interview process. Direct contact brought to her attention that there is the tendency to label foreign Muslims from the South Asian continent and their associated enterprises with the stereotypical reference of being 'Pakistani'. Consequently, the researcher's intentional sample of 30 Pakistani migrants owning/working in salons changed to 25 Pakistani, one Indian and four Bangladeshi migrants. This series of observations was followed by an onward point of entry into the field and the eventual execution of the interview process.

All foreign migrants that were part of this study were Muslim and were males between the ages of 20 and 45. Since Pakistani migrants working in salons were the priority for this study, age was not a consideration. However, as the study progressed, it became apparent that a substantial proportion of migrants were part of the younger age group. As with age, their marital statuses differed with eight migrants being married and 22 unmarried. The age groups of local customers ranged between 21 and 62 while the age groups for that of the local salon owners ranged between 28 and 52. Access to these individuals was relatively easy and they were generally willing to cooperate. This made the researcher's task much easier and lent itself amply to the concept of qualitative data gathering.

The following section will focus on qualitative research methods, sampling and the sample population as well as the techniques used to obtain the data for this study.

⁶ The word 'Indian' is used here as a descriptive reference to people who are of Indian origin.

2.2 Qualitative research methods

This project is ethnographic and therefore drew upon established anthropological methods of acquiring data such as the qualitative approach which consists of techniques such as observations, sampling and personal interviewing. The qualitative approach is integral to anthropological research which has its goal in understanding the nature of phenomena (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002) and does not rely on numerical strength for data analysis. Qualitative research is a broad approach in social research that is aimed at understanding and exploring human behaviour (Activist Guide to Research and Advocacy, 2003). Alan Bryman aptly defines qualitative research as a “research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data” (Bryman, 2004: 266). The sample for this project was derived from these sentiments. All of the respondents provided quality time and information that was complimentary to the approach suggested by Dewalt and Dewalt (2002) and Bryman (2004).

2.2.1 Sample population and sample selection

A total of 50 participants were selected to be a part of this study. To obtain research participants, random sampling was employed. “With random sampling each unit of the population has an equal probability of inclusion in the sample” (Bryman, 2004: 90). The use of random sampling has thus prevented bias in the selection of participants as it ensured equal opportunity of selection from the population (Bless and Smith, 1995) of foreign salon workers, local salon owners and local customers. Fifty interviews were carried out, and of them, 30 were carried out among foreign salon workers while the remaining 20 interviews were done among local salon owners and local clients of foreign owned salons. The first category of participants

included only 30 males who work in foreign owned salons in Overport. The presence of only males is due to the fact that the presence of Pakistani females is literally non-existent in Durban. This second category of 20 participants which included local salon owners (five males, five females) and local clients of foreign owned salons (10 males) has helped in providing a more balanced perspective. This category of informants also assisted in answering research questions pertaining to competition and threat between foreign owned salons and locally owned salons as well as questions with regards to service provision by these salons.

2.2.2 The interview technique

This section details the method involved in eliciting data from the 50 respondents that were part of this study. This study is based on fieldwork carried out between late August and October 2010 for this master's dissertation in Anthropology. Interviews in qualitative research is the most common method used to obtain information from people. Thus, the method utilized in this study such as the semi-structured one-on-one interview served as the primary source of data gathering. A semi-structured interview consists of a "clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered" (Babbie *et al.*, 2006: 176), hence, questions will be open-ended. This is a useful method when conducting qualitative research since its structure is characterized by a high degree of flexibility. This flexibility allows for unrestricted responses from interviewees and the generation of new questions pertaining to the research based on the responses of the participants (de Vos *et al.*, 2005). This method was used as it would prompt participants to speak more widely on the issues raised, thus providing a fuller picture (Babbie *et al.*, 2006). Interviews for the foreign migrants, local salon owners and local customers, which lasted between 30 and 90 minutes respectively, were based on semi-structured, open-ended questioning.

Questions aimed to acquire data on why they migrate, who migrates, how they migrate and arrive in Durban, as well as settle into the work that they do. Open-ended questions for local (South African) salon owners and local customers focused around issues of competition, service provision and perceptions of foreign migrants (Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian) in Durban. The 30 migrant interviews constituted the core, while the 20 local salon owners and local customers' interviews served to highlight the data via the provision of additional pivotal information.

2.2.3 The interview process, fieldwork experience and its associated challenges

Interviews were conducted within the formal setting of the foreign owned salons. The researcher chose to conduct the interviews inside the salons and not outside because she began from the position that the natural work setting is more authentic. The execution of the interview process began with the researcher's presence in a local salon with the intention of requesting permission to conduct her interview with the salon owner. The owner of the local salon appeared interested when she began explaining to her the nature of the research. She then informed the researcher about the large number of Pakistani salons that exist in Overport as well as the Pakistani salon that was next door to her own. Her evident insecurity caused her to exaggerate about the number of foreign owned salons in the area. After this initial interview, the researcher proceeded to the next closest foreign owned salon. This initial interview set the pace and pattern for the point of entry into other salons. The process was as follows: a) approaching workers/owners, b) explaining the purpose of the visit and the nature of the research, and c) requesting permission from workers/owners to be interviewed. The researcher also found that when using the words 'Pakistani migration' in explaining the research, it initially triggered reactions of suspicion and curiosity from them. In this instance, the researcher had to reassure participants that

questions were not intended to discover their immigrant status, but rather to acquire information about their livelihoods, arrival and settlement, as well as their lives in Durban. Before interviews were conducted, participants were also informed about the topic, the objectives and purpose of the study, as well as reassured about their anonymity and confidentiality in the data collection and analysis process.

The process of interviews, in most cases, was not formal since the other workers would often sit around and listen to the responses given by the worker being interviewed. Sometimes the workers would often laugh or display a sense of amusement at the responses given by the interviewee and would even comment in their respective dialects. The willingness and accessibility of the participants coupled with their friendly and hospitable attitude (often expressed through their offerings of something to eat or drink) made it an easy task to accomplish the completion of the interviews with them. The migrants sometimes tried to obtain personal information about the researcher regarding her marital status, work/career and religious affiliation among others, with some even questioning her as to why she did not wear the traditional Muslim headscarf. However, these were questions asked out of jest and curiosity and did not act as a barrier to the communication.

As a female with a Muslim name, the researcher knew in advance that the interview process with the migrants would be a challenge because they were all males. The researcher often experienced a sense of uneasiness when surrounded by all the workers when conducting interviews, when being asked personal questions about herself and when they would speak in their respective languages or dialects among themselves. Language proved to be an additional challenge in that although most migrants displayed quite a good command of the English language, a few

interviewees showed minimal or no familiarity, understanding and comprehension of English. An extreme case included two migrants who could neither speak nor understand any English at all. In these instances, another worker translated the question to the interviewee who would answer in Hindi/Urdu, after which the response would be translated into English. Since interviews were conducted in the foreign owned salons, their busy nature proved to be yet another fieldwork challenge as the researcher often had to wait up to an hour until a worker was free to be interviewed. Moreover, the entrance of a customer/s meant an interruption to the interview being conducted and in this instance the researcher would have to allow the interviewee to attend to the customer and only upon completion of his job, could they return to the question-answer process.

2.3 Literature review

2.3.1 Introduction

Migratory movements are as old as humankind, as people have crossed borders in search of better lives or livelihoods, or to flee degenerating political states or natural disasters⁷. More often than not, the motivation for migration has been inextricably linked to labour. Across time and space, labour/employment has been a driving force steering most migratory movements. Existing literature on migration shows that there is no single definitive or comprehensive theory that accounts for the diverse causes and implications of migratory movements (Massey *et al.*, 1996). Studies on migration encompass a wide range of disciplines such as international studies, economics, geography, anthropology, philosophy and history, each attempting to describe a

⁷Feminization of migration, Remittances, Migrants' rights, Brain Drain.(2006). Economic and social Council.Commission on Population and Development.
<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/pop945.doc.htm>
Accessed on 24th March, 2010.

variety of different perspectives, views and research objectives (Cohen, 1996). A review of the literature reveals that there is a dearth of information available on Pakistani, Indian or Bangladeshi migration to Durban. Literature on migration to South Africa is mainly focused upon those who come from other countries. For example, the Witwatersrand Forced Migration Project and the Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) tend to focus on development and migration issues pertaining to foreign Africans in South Africa. With respect to Muslims from South Asia, there is a fair amount of literature available on their migration to other parts of the world which will be reviewed in the next two sub-sections.

2.3.2 Why migration?

Disparities in income, abject poverty, a lack of job opportunities and escalating unemployment rates are identified as some of the major causes that intensify international migration all over the world. Very often, migration is seen as the only means to escape a poor quality of life with the hope in attaining a better life elsewhere. Migration is an old phenomenon in Pakistan since the concept of migration is intrinsically linked to the country's history and its formation. Since its inception, the country has experienced a wave of migratory movements. Oda (2009) asserts that the five major receiving countries, that is, Canada, US, UK, UAE and Saudi Arabia, are typically known to favour the arrival of Pakistani migrants. There is a tendency for Pakistanis to migrate to those countries occupying first world statuses. Determinants of migration to these developed nations can be explained in terms of 'push' and 'pull' factors. 'Push' factors as put forth by Ahmad *et al.* (2008) include abject poverty and income inequality coupled with unemployment and inflation. Apart from the quest for a higher income, the motivation for migration may also include desire for material consumption, hence the search for a better life.

Promising living conditions, employment opportunities and favourable economic conditions constitute the pull factors that attract migrants to specific destinations (Ahmad *et al.*, 2008). This is integral to this study as it is these social and economic factors that compel Pakistanis, Indians and Bangladeshis to migrate to a metropolis such as South Africa. La Boltz identifies a myriad of reasons for migration and propounds that:

“Contrary to national myth and popular belief, the principal motor of migration has always been economic as people seek economic opportunities, which for most today means wage labour at higher pay. Economic inequalities drive most migration as people leave one country to seek an improvement in their standard of living in another. Many are driven by the lash of scarcity in their own country to seek, if not abundance, at least subsistence in another. While some people did in the past and do at present in increasing numbers migrate to escape war, civil war, political or religious persecution and repression, as well as for adventure and novelty, the driving force of migration has usually been economic opportunity” (La Boltz, 2006: 1).

2.3.3 International and internal Pakistani migration

With the oil boom and its associated economic growth in the 1970s, migration to the Middle East took precedence over other destinations. Initially, migrants constituted skilled workers who occupied positions as carpenters, construction workers and manual labourers. When Gulf States later became centres of commerce, they attracted both large sums of capital and Pakistani professionals (Vihe, 2007). An exceptional aspect of international Pakistani migration is the diversity that is characteristic of the migrant population. According to Addleton (1984: 577), “workers come from all regions of the country and represent a variety of class and ethnic groups”. For example, Pakistanis who come from the medical and managerial sectors of employment occupy high positions in the Middle East (Ahmad *et al.*, 2008). In the US, Pakistani migrants are known to come from the metropolitan

centres of Lahore and Karachi and are well educated and professional⁸. Ahmad *et al.* (2008) notes that in the Middle East, sanitation work, unskilled labour and even skilled craftsmen are positions occupied by Pakistani migrants who come from low income households and are either unskilled or semi-skilled. This complements the researcher's early observations as South Asian migrants in Durban are occupants of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled entrepreneurial activities.

Despite, the large degree of international Pakistani migration, the literature shows that there is also a high prevalence of internal rural-urban migration. Lucrative economic prospects and a host of opportunities, both economic and non-economic, are incentives that motivate and prompt migrants to make the journey from their impoverished rural villages to promising urban localities. In Pakistan, limited opportunities for economic advancement and upward mobility coupled with the "lack of employment opportunities and insufficient income from farming are considered major forces that cause labour migration from rural areas⁹". Favourable urban destinations include the Punjab states of Lahore and Karachi. Such areas are perceived as economic hubs in which improved living standards, better employment opportunities accompanied by higher wage rates are known to exist (Siddiqi, 2004). Implicit in both international and rural-urban Pakistani migratory movements is the domination of males who migrate alone, leaving their wives and children behind. A study conducted by La Boltz (2006) reveals that as early as the 1960s when immigration restriction laws were repealed, males from Pakistan dominated migratory movements with the migration of professional doctors to the UK, later

⁸ Pavri, T. <http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Le-Pa/Pakistani-Americans.html>
Accessed on 10th March, 2010.

⁹ "Labor Migration from rural Pakistan: Evidence from villages in a rain-fed area of Punjab", in International Labour Migration from South Asia, Hisaya Oda (ed).

followed by skilled and semi-skilled migrants, all of who included single young males. Similarly, in another study by Addleton (1984: 577) it was noted that “most workers are males who leave their families behind in Pakistan”. However, he claims that some females, notably nurses or domestic servants also migrate.

2.3.4 South Asian migration and similar migratory patterns among other developing nations

Pakistan is also known to be a country characterised by a “steady flow of Muslim migrants, particularly from neighbouring South Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Burma and India” (Vihe, 2007: 96). Widespread migratory movements are rife within the South Asian continent itself. Underpinning such movements in the sub-continent is poverty and poor socio-economic conditions. With India being bigger and more developed, the presence of Nepalese, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Sri Lankan migrants is common. Thapliyal (1999) states that with its relatively open borders, migration from Nepal to India is perceived as a means of providing employment, from which the money earned is used to take care of families back home in the form of remittances. Economic dictates (better wages and employment prospects), and political instability, have also led a large influx of Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans to migrate to India (Pathania, 2003).

Like Pakistan, workers from other developing nations such as Argentina and Mexico have migrated from their impoverished central American countries to metropolitan cities in the US. Social, economic and political circumstances explain migratory movements to the US. In a paper by Rodriguez-Scott (2002), it is argued that due to economic instability, Mexicans migrate in search of better livelihood avenues in promising urban centres. Mexican workers in the US tend to work principally in

agriculture and unskilled, low-paid work (La Boltz, 2006). Workers from Nicaragua also feature prominently in Costa Rica and engage in farm and construction work (Darling, 1998). Such literature was reviewed since its invaluable knowledge serves as a lens to why people migrate, who migrates as well as the livelihoods which they settle into in the receiving countries.

The following section will look at the theoretical perspectives that will assist in conceptualizing the migration process.

2.4 Theorizing migration: Social network theory and transnationalism

In trying to understand how, why and through who Pakistanis and other South Asian migrants decide to relocate, the researcher was essentially trying to establish their social networks and what form transnationalism takes with such migrants. Hence, social network theory and the theory of transnationalism serve as core frameworks for the study of these migrants in Durban. The term social networks has been used extensively within the body of migration literature. Social network theory emerged during the nineteenth century and continues to be used widely in contemporary studies on migration. This theory asserts that migrants create networks (social relationships) which assist in finding jobs, accommodation, provision of economic and emotional support as well as social information (Vertovec, 2002). Thus, social networks link migrants to both the receiving and host societies, ultimately creating a web of channels for the transmission of incremental information for the migratory process.

Classical anthropologists such as Barnes and Epstein (1969), Bott (1957) and Mitchell (1969), among others, advocated an approach based on social network theory for the analysis of their respective studies. For instance, the type of social network introduced by Barnes (cited in Mitchell, 1969: 3) in his study of a Norwegian island parish was that of the connection between the different people within the network which was assumed as being single links. The notion of network utilised by Bott (1957) and Epstein (1961) “restrict the person in a given network to a finite number and they do not take particular account of the multiplexity of links of the persons in the network” (cited in Mitchell, 1969: 3). This indicates that the concept of network was thought of as being finite, in which several links between those people within the network and these links existed. Bott (1957) in her work on conjugal roles in London families, as presented in her work *Family and Social Network*, elaborates on the concept of network. She states that families consist of a ‘close-knit’ and ‘loose-knit’ network by which kinship patterns are determined. She uses network as a concept to interpret the transmission of information within the network. The concept of network utilised by these early thinkers is integral to this study as it will assist in providing a framework to understand and interpret the role played by social networks as well as the dynamism inherent within these networks. Furthermore, this theory will shed light and aid in examining the migrants’ social networks, how they are formed, how they operate and the purpose that they serve. Thus, this theory utilised by the aforementioned classical thinkers in the nineteenth century, continues to be of relevance and is still applicable in a contemporary global field.

More recent use of social network theory is reflected in the work of scholars such as Gold (2001), Moeran (2003), Poros (2001) and Vertovec (2002) among others. For these authors, networks comprise of multiple, traverse links, and for Moeran (2003:

375) “networks ramify in all directions and stretch out seemingly indefinitely.” His work on social organisation in an advertising agency in Tokyo illustrates how networks intersect, run parallel and branch off into differing paths, thus becoming a ‘network of networks’ (Moeran, 2003: 375). While the participants of his study belong to a different social status to this sample, his study is integral to the researcher’s in terms of how the migrants’ networks intersect and are imbued with similar dynamics. Similarly, Gold’s (2001) work on social networks among Israelis provides an interesting perspective in exploring notions of networks and how they provide a platform upon which critical information and contacts can be transmitted, as well as the way in which it assists new migrants to get through the initial transitional period. His work revolves around transnational Israelis in Britain and USA and how their networks with their Middle Eastern and North African counterparts provide a platform through which migrants acquire resources and information.

As put forth by Glick *et al.* (1992: 22) “transnationalism entails processes by which migrants forge and sustain multi stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement”. The work of Levitt (2001) among Dominican immigrants in Boston as presented in her book *Transnational Villagers*, elaborates on the web of networks at the community level where transnationalism appears to be the strongest. She extends her argument by stating that migrants are transnational in that they move back and forth across borders and that they are occupants in a transnational social field, that is, those who are not necessarily migrants, but live in a space that is characteristic of transnational activity (Levitt, 2001). This specific scenario will help in providing an interesting viewpoint from which to analyse this sample as it will provide a basis for what many South Asians, both in Durban and Pakistan/India/Bangladesh, experience as a result of migratory movements. The use

of transnational migration theory together with social network theory to contextualize and analyse the migratory process and experience provides a wide-ranging perspective of conceptualizing migratory movements which are enmeshed within a broader framework of complex dynamics. Together, both theories assess the interplay of the migratory process in that they portray the links between migrants (networks) and how different kinds of network relations for the migrants stretch across space (transnational), that is, both in Durban and South Asia, hence making possible the provision of a more proactive understanding of the migrant. Given that anthropologists would agree that transnational networks will change in response to wider socio-cultural changes, the clear implication of this change in flows and streams is that these networks are indeed dynamic: transnational networks change over time and across space.

The section that follows provides a glimpse of these issues, beginning with the different observational sites, mainly in Durban and to a lesser extent Johannesburg.

2.5 Observations

A series of observations were carried out in enterprises seemingly known to be Pakistani, and comprised of DVD stores, restaurants and take-aways, tailor shops and hair and beauty salons. Shallcross, Chatsworth, Central Durban and Overport were the four areas in Durban at which the researcher initially conducted the observations, with Overport remaining as the key research site for the actual interview process. Observations were also done in foreign owned enterprises in the Fordsburg area of Johannesburg. Familiarity and the provision of an environment that is congenial are the reasons as to why the researcher chose to conduct observations across these areas. More importantly, these areas have increasingly

become booming localities housing Pakistani/Indian/Bangladeshi migrants and other migrant owned enterprises. The initial reason for these observations arose as a starting point for the data collection process and for the selection of an appropriate area for research. While participant observation remains the central, dominant method and the hallmark of all anthropological research, it is pivotal for the sake of this study to make the distinction between observation and participation. Dewalt and Dewalt make an important point that:

“Participant observation should be distinguished from both pure observation and pure participation. Pure observations seek, to the maximum extent possible, to remove the researcher from the actions and behaviours so that they are unable to influence him or her. Pure participation has been described as ‘going native’ and ‘becoming the phenomena’ (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002: 20).

It can be deduced from this statement that while pure participation seeks to immerse the researcher, on the other hand, pure observation seeks to remove the researcher (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002). Since the observations for this study were carried out within the locales of the foreign owned enterprises, the researcher had to first seek permission from the owners of these enterprises and sometimes the workers themselves before she could begin with observations.

2.5.1 Introducing the observational sites

The apartheid era was one of division and segregation based upon significant visible markers such as skin colour and racial classification. The implementation of legislative laws such as the Group Areas Act of 1950 during apartheid rule gave birth to new Indian areas such as Shallcross and Chatsworth in the late 1960s. This act entailed forced physical and spatial separation between the different race groups through the deliberate creation of separate residential areas in which particular race

groups would have to reside. Chatsworth and an adjacent neighbour, Shallcross, came to be occupied by those classified as 'Indian'. Parts of these former apartheid areas have undergone transition from being previously known as townships to present day modern suburbs.

Presently, both Chatsworth and Shallcross are predominantly Indian and include a mix of middle-class, wealthy and poverty stricken people, although, in recent years these areas have also come to represent a healthy mix of Coloured, White and African residents. Over the years, these areas have been identified as Indian cultural centres displaying ethnic identity and cultural diversity, hence being home to various linguistic affiliations from people of Tamil, Hindi, Telegu, Urdu and English backgrounds. Linguistic backgrounds were further diversified by virtue of the denominations these people belonged to. Apart from being prime cultural centres, these areas have become the hub of both trade as well as formal and informal businesses. Among the many formal and informal businesses that constitute the commercial market sector in these areas, it is common to come across the ever-increasing presence and emergence of foreign owned (Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi) enterprises, offering a variety of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled activities ranging from hair cutting, tailoring and dress making to cooking specialized Indian and Pakistani dishes as well as selling DVDs.

Similarly, like Chatsworth and Shallcross, Overport was mainly home to Indians, but it also consisted of a significant number of those who were conventionally classified as Coloureds. However, from being previously multi-ethnic and multi-racial, Overport

has become increasingly Muslim dominated with Sunnis, Surtees and Memmons¹⁰. The visibility of this transition is depicted in the number of mosques that have become a familiar part of the spatial structure of Overport as well as the significant number of Muslims who have taken up residency there. Overport as a mid-city commercial hub is interspersed with individual housing and apartment-style buildings which are dotted among several fast food restaurants, manufacturing, wholesale and retail stores, textiles and clothing and other professional services. The suburb has also become a thriving and flourishing space which houses a large number of foreigners (mainly Pakistanis) and their associated enterprises.

Central Durban was another area in which the researcher conducted observations of 'Pakistani' enterprises. Over the years, the social mapping and landscape of Durban has undergone transition from being a largely white dominated inner city to a current one characteristic of a majority of African residents coupled with overpopulation and poor social services. This transition was marked by the demographic pattern known as 'white flight'¹¹, occurring in the 1960s. Presently, the city serves as a commercial core where business and pleasure meets. Although the city is constitutive of both a formal and informal sector, it is the latter that dominates the former. Businesses were previously dominated by Indians and even though most still are, a significant number of foreign owned businesses, owned mostly by Pakistani, Chinese and other African migrants, prevail in the city centre. These businesses occupy space in-between a myriad of run-down and often dilapidated apartment-style buildings and other

¹⁰ Sunni, Surtee and Memmon are Muslim ethnic groups. Sunnis refer to those Muslims who follow the tradition and actions of the prophet Muhammad. Memmons are Muslims who trace their ancestry back to the descendants of the community originating from Sindh. Surtees are those Muslims who trace their ancestry back to their descendants from the community of Surat, Gujarat.

¹¹A term denoting the fleeing of Whites when Africans come to prevail in a certain area.

informal sector activities. A description and comparison of observations of foreign owned, mainly Pakistani enterprises in Durban and Johannesburg will follow in the next sub-section.

2.5.2 Observations: Durban and Johannesburg

The observations in Durban that formed part of this study were conducted over a one-and-a-half-month period, four times a week, from April until mid-May 2010. Enterprises comprised of 10 salons, three restaurants, two tailoring shops and two DVD shops which were all spread across Shallcross, Chatsworth, Overport and Central Durban. Observations were scheduled at three different times, i.e. 8am, 12pm and 4pm with permission being requested and granted a day before observations were carried out. Observations in Johannesburg entailed a two week process which began in mid-July 2010. All observations were done daily for one week in the area of Fordsburg, which has become increasingly occupied by Muslims from the South Asian continent. These migrants are frequently referred to as Pakistani, yet they are not necessarily so. In recent years, Fordsburg has also become an area largely populated with foreign migrants such as those from Somalia, Nigeria, Egypt, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and their various trade niches. Enterprises in Fordsburg comprised of five salons, two restaurants and one take-away, three tailoring shops and three DVD shops. As with the case in Durban, observations were also scheduled at the same times and permission was granted prior to conducting the observations.

Observations in both Durban and Johannesburg revealed many striking similarities. First and foremost, all the workers in these different businesses consisted of only males who were either from Pakistan, India or Bangladesh, with workers belonging

to various linguistic groups such as Urdu, Hindi, Tamil and Gujarati. Although the absence of females within these enterprises was noticeable, some of them, such as salons and restaurants, employed African females to work as cleaners and waitresses. The owners of these enterprises were mostly Muslim Pakistani males, but they also consisted of Indian and Bangladeshi Muslim males whose shops were designed to create an ambience and appeal to clients. Every shop clearly illustrated the owners' religious affiliation which was depicted through frames ranging from Arabic calligraphic prayer verses to pictures exhibiting the Holy Mosque (Kaaba) in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The television set was constantly switched on with either a traditional Islamic or Bollywood DVD being screened.

Very discernable was the way in which these enterprises and the workers displayed strong connections with their respective homelands. This was evident in their use of language as they all conversed in their native languages with Hindi and Urdu being the most common language spoken irrespective of religious affiliation. The fashion magazines and catalogues in the tailor shop as well as the hair care and styling products in the salons were either from India or Pakistan. In the tailor shop, the researcher also observed how the worker would record measurements and details in Hindi. Relations between workers appeared to be friendly and jovial while interactions between workers and clients seemed to be both distant (no interaction unless if a question needed to be asked) and close (friendly with known customers). Though most salons were unisex, customers consisted of mainly males. In restaurants, customers included mainly those who were Indian (Muslim, Hindu, Christian) with the odd presence of people from other racial categories. Hierarchy among the workers was also evident. For instance, it was noticed that the money paid by customers was given to one specific worker and not to the worker who

attended to the customer. The most salient observation was the busy nature of each of these enterprises with each shop being busy at different times, either morning, midday or late afternoon. The popularity of these foreign owned enterprises was quite apparent in the busy nature of each of them.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter details the qualitative methods that were used in ascertaining data from the sample population of 30 South Asian migrants, 10 local salon owners and 10 local customers respectively. The interview process consisted of formal interviews which altered to become rather informal during conducting the actual interviews. The research was met with challenges which revolved around differences in language, the busy nature of the salons, and the researcher being a Muslim female. The chapter has provided international literature on migration which highlights the trends and patterns that characterize South Asian migration. Push factors of unfavourable socio-economic conditions and pull factors of greater socio-economic prospects account for internal and international migration within and beyond South Asia. Transnationalism and social network theory provide a suitable framework within which the data can be analysed and understood. Lastly, the chapter has provided a detailed description of the areas within which observations were conducted and a discussion on the actual observations.

The next three chapters represent an in depth exploration of the 50 qualitative interviews conducted among the 30 migrants, 10 local salon owners and 10 customers respectively.

CHAPTER THREE:

THE DECISION AND PROCESS TO LEAVE HOME

The migratory phenomenon entails an arduous process beginning from the time the migrant decides to leave home up until arrival at the intended destination. Thus, geographical mobility is intertwined within a web of complex dynamics and processes that involve the actual decision to migrate as well as what influences decisions such as where, when, how and who will migrate. The channels used for migratory movements are several and necessary pre-conditions for a final decision to migrate. Like their counterparts in other lower paid work, salon workers from South Asia who migrate to other countries do so at tremendous risk to their personal safety and future aspirations. This chapter focuses specifically on the migratory process, that is the factors which motivate South Asian salon workers to migrate. In conjunction with the above, a discussion will be provided on the socio-economic conditions in both South Asia and South Africa and the extent to which they 'push' and 'pull' migrants. This chapter will also address why South Africa is chosen as a destination choice over other preferred destinations, the role of family and friends with regards to decision making and the role of agents in making migration possible.

3.1 Socio-economic conditions in South Asia

The developing nations of South Asia, that is Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, are mired with abject poverty, chronic unemployment, income inequality, minimal or lack of opportunities and unstable economic and political structures. In the wake of large populations, the provision of employment opportunities and favourable socio-political conditions become an added impediment to already burdened economies within these countries. Gold (2009: 4) affirms that

“Bangladesh is regarded as one of the poorest countries in Asia with about a 144.8 million population, stereotyped as the archetypical theatre of poverty with more than 50 percent of her population in poverty.” Similarly, Ahmad *et al.* (2008: 85) describe conditions in Pakistan and propose that “the unemployment rate in the country is nearly 9 percent with 33 percent of the population living below the poverty line, and is further exacerbated with 10 to 12 percent food inflation.” Even though a significant proportion of the Indian population is above average wealth and occupies middle class status, those living below the poverty divide line are extremely poor, hence the disparity between poor and non-poor remains considerably high. As stated in an India Urban Poverty Report¹², the towns and cities of India are occupied with more than 80 million poor people and an unemployment rate of 9.4 percent. These statistical measures bear witness to the incidence of unfavourable conditions prevalent in these countries. According to Haque (2005: 42) “economic and social conditions continue to be the major reasons behind population movements in South Asia. With 40 percent of the world’s poor, South Asia remains among the poorest regions of the world. According to the World Bank, 45 percent of the population live below the international poverty line of one dollar a day.” Among the developing nations of Asia, Bangladesh remains the poorest and continues to lag behind.

Concomitant with poverty and other related socio-economic issues is growing political instability, conflict and unrest within these countries. Political turmoil actively hinders and threatens the economic growth of a country. In recent years, political unrest has heightened in these nations, especially in Pakistan, where there is continuous political turmoil. Fighting, wars, bomb blasts and killings are not uncommon and further expose social issues of poverty, unemployment and

¹² India: Urban Poverty Report (2009).

unfavourable living conditions. It is these prevalent tribulations that bring political, economic and social systems in these countries under increasing pressure. The above is infused in the words of Afolayan (2001: 15):

“Lack of employment, poverty and general deprivation is closely connected with political situations. It is therefore difficult to delineate the tenuous frontier between political and economic factors. Political crises that have rocked many developing countries have left them unable to harness and manage adequately their resources. Instability of government is therefore a reflection of the state of the economy and vice versa.”

South Asian countries have failed to provide incentives and opportunities for their citizens to stay within their nations. This failure stems from mismanagement of the economy coupled with weak political structures giving rise to growing civil unrest. While a few enjoy and reap the benefits of a fruitful life, considerable segments of these South Asian populations continue to suffer. Despite the implementation of various structural adjustment and poverty alleviation programmes and strategies, the magnitude of poverty among these nations remains high. Thus, for many, migration is seen as a coping strategy and the only means of escaping the vicious cycle of persistent poverty, unemployment and unstable political and economic structures that plague them.

3.2 Reasons for leaving

A myriad of factors account for and perpetuate international migration. Literature on migration suggests that unfavourable conditions are often the push factors that lead to the decision to migrate. This was evident among the researcher’s sample of the 30 migrants that were interviewed for this study. The motivation of these South Asian migrants for wanting to migrate overseas revolved around several factors. These included: poverty, unemployment, political warfare (fighting/killings/bombings,

especially in Pakistan), the need to provide support to their families, lack of opportunities coupled with the hope to prosper and attain a better life.

3.2.1 Decrepit environmental conditions and unemployment

Poverty and unemployment featured prominently among the reasons for migration. All participants among the migrant sample indicated that the need for employment and poor socio-economic conditions in South Asia were key factors that informed their decisions to migrate. This resonated in comments such as:

- *“I decided to migrate because I needed a job. Things are hard in Pakistan...too much poverty...hard to find jobs there because unemployment is high.”*
- *“Besides my family, there was really nothing much for me in Pakistan...life was not good...my job was temporary...money was too little...eventually I had no job at all so I decided to migrate so that I could find a job.”*
- *“I came to South Africa because of the hardship in Bangladesh...could not find work there...too much poverty...it is hard to make money there.”*
- *“...no chance for my business to grow and make good money because of bad social and economic conditions in Bangladesh...business is very bad...was not making any profit.”*

Case study 1:

Sayed¹³ is a 23-year-old male who is unmarried. It was difficult for him to find a job in Pakistan. In addition to difficulty in obtaining employment, life in general was hard in Pakistani-Kashmir, the region from which he comes. According to him, most areas of Pakistan are beset with poverty. With the high cost of living and a family to support, Sayed decided to migrate with the intention of seeking employment.

¹³ For purposes of anonymity and confidentiality, the real names of the migrants will not be mentioned. Hence, pseudonyms will be used.

Case study 2:

Ebrahim, who is a 21-year-old male from Rawalpindi, said that his life in Pakistan was miserable. Although he was employed, his job was temporary and the money he earned was too little. After a while, he was jobless with no income. Besides having no job, the decline of the Pakistani economy affected his chances of finding a job. He decided to migrate not only because he was in need of work, but also for a better life.

Case study 3:

Thahir is a 28-year-old male who lived in Chittagong, Bangladesh. He is married with two children and did office work for five years. Due to retrenchment of staff, he lost his job. After being retrenched, he found it difficult to find another job. Without money, it became very difficult to survive. The unfavourable socio-economic conditions in his country greatly affected his chances of obtaining work. Being the sole breadwinner and with a family to support, he decided to migrate to find employment.

It can be deduced from the above that the decision to migrate was economically driven since all respondents indicated that they were in need of employment in order to sustain a living. Most of the migrants had no source of income in their home country, while some were employed in jobs where the income was unsatisfactory. Although four respondents had their own businesses (three migrants were owners of hair salons and one migrant was the owner of a restaurant), they also expressed discontentment stating that the current state of affairs in Pakistan and Bangladesh was posing a hindrance to the success of their enterprises. While some of the migrants mentioned that they did not complete secondary and/or tertiary education, one respondent noted that although he had a Bachelor of Arts degree, he was unable to obtain a job in Pakistan. He elaborated further by stating that he would have preferred to have found a job within his field of study, but since he could not, he

was forced to engage in the type of work he is currently doing in Durban because it was the only job that was available to him and also because he needed money.

The intensification of war, political turbulence and civil pandemonium has further exacerbated migratory flows. Over the years, the rate and intensity at which political disorder and turmoil is occurring has worsened, resulting in thousands of civilians losing their lives, with others being rendered homeless. With political instability heightening, fear and a lack of peace and safety have prompted many to leave home with the intention of seeking refuge elsewhere.

Ten of the 30 respondents indicated that their decision to migrate was influenced by the need to escape from fighting to a place that would provide safety and peace. In the words of one respondent:

- *“In Pakistan, I lived in Kashmir. I came to South Africa because there were too many problems. There is a lot of fighting and bloodshed. I could not manage to live in those kinds of conditions any longer, this is why I decided to leave Pakistan and go some place where I could find peace.”*

Similar statements were put forth by the other respondents who said:

- *“There is too much trouble in Kashmir...there is constant fighting. I am afraid to go to the mosque...it is not safe to even go to a place of worship because we fear for our lives.”*
- *“There is too much fighting in Kashmir and all this fighting is having a very bad effect on the economy. No one wants to live in a place where their safety is threatened all the time.”*
- *“...too much fighting and killing and alot of hardship and suffering because of all this fighting and bombings...I am sometimes too scared to go out because a bomb can just explode anywhere.”*

Case study 4:

Azaad hails from Pakistani Kashmir and is 37 years of age. Apart from bad business, political turmoil also encouraged his decision to migrate. He said that there was too much fighting in the region which had a negative impact on the economy. He expressed fear and concern for his safety when he mentioned that he was afraid to go to the mosque because he was scared that it would be bombed.

Case study 5:

Similar to Azaad is 24-year-old Fayaz, who also lived in Kashmir. He stated that there was too much fighting and killing which worsened the socio-economic conditions in his country. He felt that his safety was being threatened in the wake of such war-like conditions. Like Azaad, he was scared to leave his house because a bomb could explode anywhere. The inability to live in such dreadful conditions and the desire for peace and safety led to his decision to migrate.

It is interesting that those respondents who cited political instability as a reason for migrating included only Pakistanis. In addition, six of the respondents lived in Pakistani Kashmir which is typically identified as a war stricken area. It is evident that respondents felt that the ongoing fighting was posing a risk to their wellbeing. Fighting and bloodshed is not uncommon to other poverty stricken South Asian countries such as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. However, in recent years, it is Pakistan that has witnessed alarming rates of bomb blasts, protests and unrest. Such a politically unstable environment is not only applicable to rural settings, but also Pakistan's modern hubs of Lahore and Karachi.

In addition to these decisive factors that led to migration, the reason to leave home for all respondents in the study, centered on the hope to prosper and attain a better life. Conditions in countries that are more favourable and conducive lend themselves to attracting those who are seeking a better life. Hence, migrants are

drawn towards countries in which they can maximize benefits. While the political-economic rationale for migration has been given much attention in the above discussion, it is also noteworthy to acknowledge that the complexity of globalisation does have an enhancing effect on South Asian migratory patterns and its dynamics. The researcher did recognise other reasons for migration apart from the ones mentioned in the discussion, however, the data poignantly revealed economic determinism as one of the key factors shaping and directing mobility from the sending to the receiving country. While the focus of this chapter, both discussion and analysis leans towards a firm political-economic approach, it does not undermine nor sideline the importance of the role of globalisation in explaining migratory movements. Held et al (1999: 2) adequately notes that “international migration is an integral part of globalisation which may be characterised as the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life.” Castles (2000: 27) further notes that the chief indicator of globalisation is the rapid increase in cross-border flows which is not limited to people only, but also material culture, trade etcetera. Such rapid movement of people and consumer culture are significant features of global mobility trends and patterns in contemporary society.

3.2.2 Family support

Apart from poverty and unemployment being the driving force behind migratory movements, the data gathered for this research also revealed that the need to provide for families back home was, for some, a crucial motivating factor to migrate. With poverty and the lack of earning opportunities being rife, it is not uncommon in countries such as Pakistan, India and Bangladesh to have 10 to 12 people or sometimes more living in one household. Twelve of the 30 migrants stated that the

need and concern to take care of their families back home compelled them to migrate.

Case study 6:

The above was expressed by Nasim, a 22-year-old Pakistani migrant who stated:

“There are eleven people that live in my house. Only my father is working and it is very hard for one man to support his family of eleven. My brother is studying and it is also very hard for my father to pay his fees, take care of the house and buy food. I could not find a job in Pakistan to help my father and these are the reasons why I decided to migrate. It was important for me to migrate so that I could help my father take care of our family.”

Similar sentiments were echoed by other migrants:

- *“I needed to support my family. My father has no job because he is very sick. I had to migrate so that I could earn money to support my family. We are desperate to come here because we want to make a living and support not only ourselves but our families too” (Usmaan, 21 years - Pakistan).*
- *“I come from a very poor family. My father works, but the money he earns is not enough for our family of six. My two sisters are still in school and my father can't pay their school fees. I also have a wife to support...this is why I left Pakistan and came to South Africa” (Kareem, 21 years – Pakistan).*
- *“The income of my father and two brothers is too little to take care of everyone...I was forced to find a job to help my family...I had no job in Bangladesh...I had to migrate to find a job” (Raheem, 23 years - Bangladesh).*

It is undeniable that social and economic conditions play a dominant role in directing and shaping migratory movements, however the importance of the role played by the need to support one's family in migratory decisions should not be sidelined. Within the body of migration literature by authors such as Ahmad *et al.* (2008), Massey *et al.* (1993) and Oda (2009) among others, socio-economic conditions take

precedence over other push factors. The data gathered from this research strongly reveals that the need to provide care and support to one's family in the sending country is also a pertinent factor among others that necessitates migration. Apparent from the data is that most of the migrants in this study come from relatively poor families of which there was only one breadwinner whose earnings were not sufficient enough to manage an entire household. Hence, it is such circumstances that compelled respondents to migrate in order to increase the earnings of the household in the form of remittances, thus ensuring that everyone would be properly taken care of.

The family also plays a vital role in migratory decision making. The decision to migrate is not an easy, clear-cut task for the migrant. This could prove to be a stressful and daunting task for those wanting to migrate as many issues and important people (parents, siblings, spouses, and children) would require careful consideration. The decision-making process involves many dynamics since it does not only affect the migrant, but also family and other close kin. Chattopadhyay (2000: 29), for instance, states that "the family is a social unit within which resources are redistributed and critical decisions are made." In the context of family relations, the decision to migrate is not an individualistic one. Instead, families play a crucial role in decision making and may ultimately affect one's decision as to whether to migrate or not, as well as where one will migrate to. This manifests in the words of Massey *et al.* (1993: 436): "migration decisions are not made by isolated individual actors, but by larger units of related people-typically families or households-in which people act collectively not only to maximize expected income, but also to minimize risks and to loosen constraints."

The concept of arrival for the South Asian migrants in this study has involved a consultative process in which they had to seek permission and consult with spouses and family members before the actual decision to migrate was made. Family and friends who had already migrated also strongly impacted on migration behaviour by playing an active role in influencing one to leave home. This indicates, to some extent, the involvement of family members and friends (living abroad) in the decision to migrate. Kwankye (2009: 19) purports that “family and friends in the potential areas of destination, far from acting as a deterrent, may have an enhancing effect on migration decisions.”

With regard to who made the decision to migrate, all migrants took the decision themselves, with parents and wives, as well as friends and family (in both the sending and receiving society) playing a significant part. The number of migrants influenced by family and friends was more or less proportionate with 16 and 14 migrants respectively. Seeking permission from parents was common among migrants who were young while those who were older also had to seek permission from not only their parents, but more importantly, their wives. This was indicated in their responses:

- *“I am married, so I had to ask permission from my wife and discuss my plans with her. Even though she was not too happy, I told her that once I am here, I will arrange for her to come after some time” (Muneer, 45 years - Bangladesh).*
- *“My parents and wife gave me permission to leave Pakistan and come to South Africa. It was difficult for them to do that, especially for my wife because she was pregnant. She understood that I had to migrate in order to support her, my child and my parents too” (Shiraaz, 27 years - Pakistan).*

- *“I had to ask permission from my mother and father. My parents told me that I should go because I am young...they told me that in Bangladesh there are no opportunities for me to be successful” (Waheed, 20 years - Bangladesh).*
- *“I spoke to my parents and told them about my decision. I asked for their permission. It was very difficult for them because I was so young and they did not want to send me...eventually they allowed me to come here. My parents cried a lot and I also cried because this was the first time I was leaving home and going so far. Also, I did not know when I would see my family again once I left...it was very difficult emotionally for me and my family” (Saabir, 23 years- Pakistan).*

While the departure of a loved one was emotionally painful for spouses and parents, however, they were at the same time also aware of the poor quality of life their children and husbands were subject to, with the likelihood of such a life being reproduced if they stayed in their home country. Support and encouragement for the decision to migrate stemmed from parents’ concern for their children’s future as well as the awareness of circumstances at home. In addition, the incentive of an extra income for the household also led to parents and spouses being supportive of the decision to migrate. The following section will provide a discussion on South Africa as a receiving country and the preferred destination choices of the migrant salon workers in this study.

3.3 South Africa as a reception country

With the demise of apartheid and the advancement of the economy, South Africa has attracted many migrants, thus becoming home to a host of migrant communities from several parts of the world. Park and Rugunanan (2009) attest to the latter when they state that various Asian communities such as Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, and Chinese, have grown considerably in the last decade. This is largely due to the fact

that South Africa has become a booming metropolis. In recent years, South Africa has grown to be a popular destination and has experienced a growing influx of South Asian migrants. Historically, Europe and other developed nations were core countries that attracted migrants, however, these trends and patterns have undergone alteration such that developing nations are experiencing high volumes of immigrants. As outlined by Massey *et al.* (1993: 431): "In traditional immigrant-receiving societies such as Australia, Canada and the United States, the volume of immigration has grown and its composition has shifted decisively away from Europe, the historically dominant source, towards Asia, Africa, and Latin America." Apart from being a popular migrant recipient country, South Africa has become a major source of emigration, more so post 1994. Internal rural-urban migration has been the defining characteristic typifying movement in apartheid South Africa. While this trend has extended itself into post-apartheid South Africa, the concept of outbound migration, especially international migration has taken precedence over the former and has intensified over the years with mainly skilled workers being at the centre of mobility. Bailey (2003) emphasises that the increased movement of skilled workers from South Africa is mainly a result of push factors such as high crime rates, job dissatisfaction and poor social service delivery and pull factors of attractive job prospects and higher earnings overseas. This loss of skills has given rise to the concept of 'brain drain'. Cross et al (2008) therefore notes that the large numbers of skilled South Africans overseas represents considerable 'brain drain'.

Despite the prevalence of issues (economic inequality, joblessness and poverty) that characterizes a developing country such as South Africa, the country is perceived as a haven to those seeking 'greener pastures'. The lures of economic stability together with a favourable social environment are incremental factors that direct migrants to

South Africa. This is well illustrated in the words of Sibanda who expounds that “South Africa serves as a magnet to those seeking employment, higher living standards and brighter economic prospects, and the size of the South African economy makes the allure of the country almost overwhelming to many” (2008: 19). Despite high levels of crime, political stability in South Africa acts as a vital factor which attracts migrants who flee civil unrest and war in their home countries. Moreover, in Africa, South Africa is identified as a ‘rich country’ with the most prosperous and stable economy. Immigration South Africa appropriately notes that:

“As an investment destination, South Africa can be ranked on a par with countries such as India and Brazil. The country may be described as ‘developing’, as opposed to the ‘developed’ nations of the world, and is characterised by both first world economic features and third world poverty. South Africa’s GDP per capita is not among the highest in the world, measuring approximately \$3500 per person per annum. However, South Africa produces roughly a quarter of Africa’s entire GDP and more than two fifths of Africa’s manufactured output.”¹⁴

First world destinations of Europe and the Middle East were among the preferred countries to which respondents wanted to migrate. Twelve of the 30 respondents noted London, Dubai and Saudi Arabia among others as initial destination choices:

- *“When I left India, I initially wanted to go to London, but that did not work out.”*
- *“I wanted to go to the UK when I left Pakistan, but things did not work out for me and I did not have enough money.”*
- *“I wanted to go somewhere closer to Pakistan, maybe Dubai or Abu Dhabi, but I did not know anyone there.”*
- *“Before I could leave Pakistan, I wanted to go to London, but I was having too much trouble to get a visa to go there.”*

¹⁴<http://www.immigrationsouthafrica.org/business-south-africa/>
Accessed on 15th March, 2010.

Case study 7:

Zaheer is a 23-year-old Pakistani migrant. The UK was his initial destination choice, however, he encountered a lot of difficulty in wanting to go there. He did not have enough money to migrate to the UK. Apart from financial costs, it was not easy to obtain a visa or work permit to go there. According to him, individuals who do not have the necessary documentation required are hassled and investigated by authorities. Zaheer therefore decided against his initial decision of going to the UK.

Case study 8:

Althaaf, who is 27 years of age, wanted to migrate to a country closer to that of his own (Pakistan). His original destinations included two of the seven countries that make up the UAE, which are Dubai and Abu Dhabi. For him, it was not so much a problem of monetary costs, but rather the absence of networks that discouraged his decision of wanting to migrate to these countries. He felt more comfortable going to a country in which he had networks of friends or relatives.

Although the migrants were in favour of these specific destination choices over others, the reasons given for why these destinations were not pursued were as follows: a) not enough money, b) the absence of networks, and c) difficulty attaining required documentation (visa). Six respondents from the migrant sample stated that they did not have any specific destination in mind before leaving home, but rather: a) they wanted to go to any country where conditions are better than that of their own, and b) any place where they could find a job and make a decent living. Twelve migrants mentioned that they had no desire to go to any country except South Africa.

The data also interestingly revealed the way in which South Africa is perceived by migrants as a gateway/passage to other destinations. This was specifically noted by three respondents:

- *“If I want to leave South Africa and go to the UK, it will be easier for me from here as compared to Pakistan where it is much more difficult. My brother is in the UK. He told me a lot of people come from South Africa to the UK and that I must do the same” (Zaheer, 23 years – Pakistan).*
- *“I thought I could come to South Africa and from here I can try to go to London because it is easier to go to London from South Africa...I can easily get a visa from here for London” (Kareem, 21 years - Pakistan).*
- *“It is very difficult to go to London, so I thought of coming to South Africa first and then after a few months leave to London from here” (Asif, 27 years - Pakistan).*

3.3.1 Why South Africa?

The respondents that were part of this study were asked questions relating to why South Africa had been chosen as a choice of destination as opposed to other countries. Responses centered on issues of better employment prospects, improved living conditions, higher wages and more importantly, the existence of networks (friends and family). These factors will be discussed in the following sub-sections.

3.3.1.1 Favourable socio-economic and political conditions

Improved and encouraging living conditions in South Africa, as well as the knowledge of a better wage, has attracted South Asian salon workers to settle in South Africa. Additionally, a more favourable and stable political landscape has drawn those migrants who desire to escape the political disorder of their respective South Asian countries. The above is evident in the following statements:

- *“I come from Kashmir and there is too much trouble and fighting there. This increases unemployment and poverty. I wanted to get away from all this, which is why I came to South Africa. My friend’s cousins are working here and they told me to come to South Africa because it is a nice country and I will find*

a job here. It is also peaceful here. There are no bombings and killings here like there is in Pakistan” (Asad, 23 years - Pakistan).

- *“Although my mother is South African and she influenced my decision to come here, I also came here with the intention of opening my salon, so in a way, employment also motivated me to come here” (Imran, 35 years – India).*
- *“Besides having no job, the economy in Pakistan is so bad and this affected my chances of finding a job even more. I wanted a better life and I knew that I will get it here in South Africa. These are the reasons why I wanted to come here. I also have friends here and they told me they were able to find jobs easily and that the money is good here” (Nasim, 22 years- Pakistan).*
- *“I came here to make money. The social and economic conditions are good here as compared to Bangladesh. There are no opportunities for me in Chittagong. I have a friend here and he told me that business is good here, this is when I decided to leave and come here to open my salon” (Thahir, 28 years - Bangladesh).*

It is notably evident that respondents migrated in response to wage differences, the provision of a healthier political and economic climate, coupled with better standards of living conditions and chances of employment. Being a rich country with opportunities for employment and better living conditions were some of the preconceived ideas that migrants had about South Africa. Such perceptions arose from ‘stories’ and ‘talks’ from friends and family who have either migrated or know of people who have migrated. Favourable opportunities for upliftment and prosperity were rewarding incentives for migrants to come to South Africa.

3.3.1.2 Existence of networks

Solomon (1996) proposes that there is the “tendency of migration flows to be directed towards an area in which there is already an initial nucleus of immigrants from a given country.” This phenomenon is no exception to South Africa where a solid nucleus of immigrants from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh already exist. Such

social linkages of family and friendship networks are pivotal factors that induce migratory flows to a specific locality. In addition to favourable conditions and job prospects cited as reasons for choosing South Africa as a destination choice, a significant proportion (17) of migrants in this study noted that they came to South Africa, specifically Durban, because their family members or friends were either living or working here. This was echoed in the words of these migrants:

Case study 9:

Afzal is 23 years of age and is formerly from Pakistan. He has an uncle and a cousin who has been living and working in Durban for approximately 15 to 16 years, both of whom have managed to acquire South African citizenship. His uncle and cousin were influential actors in guiding him to South Africa. He was aware of the fact that if he came to South Africa, he would have the assistance of this family network. The existence of these ties was the reason for him choosing South Africa as a migratory destination.

Case study 10:

Zaheer, a 23-year-old Pakistani migrant, did not wish to go anywhere except South Africa when he left his country. He chose South Africa because he had friends who were already working here. This friend-based network played a dominant role in persuading him to come to Durban. The lack of ties or networks elsewhere and the existence of such ties in South Africa prompted Zaheer to come here.

Case study 11:

Zakir, a 21-year-old Pakistani migrant, initially wanted to go to Australia or New Zealand. However, he did not have any contacts there. In Durban, he has friends who are of Pakistani origin. The fact that he had friends in Durban was a source of comfort to him as he was aware that they would help him. He also felt that his chances of finding a job would be greater due to the number of Pakistanis he knows in Durban.

Case study 12:

Munaf is a Pakistani migrant and is 23 years old. Like the cases of the migrants outlined above, Munaf did not want to go anywhere else because his brother is living and working in Durban. In addition, he did not have ties of family and/or friendship elsewhere. Knowing that he would have the support of his brother and that he would be given a job in his salon, Munaf chose to come to Durban because of the existence of networks that prevail here.

Networks play an important role in influencing one's decision regarding where one will migrate to. In the words of Massey *et al.* (1993: 460):

“The probability of international migration should be greater for individuals who are related to someone who has prior international experience, or for individuals connected to someone who is actually living abroad. Moreover, the likelihood of movement should increase with the closeness of the relationship (i.e. having a brother in Germany is more likely to induce a Turk to migrate there than having a cousin, a neighbour, or a friend).”

The latter part of this statement as put forth by Massey *et al.* (1993) may not necessarily stand to be true. The data from this research aptly shows that migrants have the tendency to migrate not only to a destination where a brother/s reside but also to a place where a cousin, neighbour, friend or anyone else known is residing. Thus, apart from one's immediate kin, significant others such as extended family members (uncles, cousins) friends and neighbours played a vital role in directing the mobility of migrants to a specific locality. The reliance on kin and friends by migrants is not finite, rather it is a constant feature of the migratory process, beginning from the time the decision to migrate is made, and continues even after settlement in the receiving country has taken place. It is also evident from the data that a substantial proportion of these migrants are part of the younger age group ranging between 20 and 32 years. The ages of these young migrants connote their bravery,

courageousness and determination because migration to South Africa, for most, marks the first time that they have left their home/families and their country. Therefore, in a new and unfamiliar environment, family and friends prove to be critical in providing information about the receiving society, assist in finding accommodation and aid in the adaptation process as a whole.

Once the decision to migrate is made, the next fundamental step in the process is that of who one migrates with and how one will migrate; the latter referring to the channels that will assist in making mobility possible. More often than not, individuals tend to migrate with family and friends, however, in the data gathered for this study, individual mobility took precedence over collective mobility. Of the 30 migrants, 20 migrated alone while six migrated with friends, and four migrated with family (cousins and uncles). Among the migrant sample, the use of informal channels for migration was attributed with more favourability over formal channels.

3.4 Informal channels: The role of agents

In this context, informal channels make reference to the use of personalized and family networks that are undocumented. Informal channels for migration have been used since time immemorial, however, over the years there has been a surge in the use of such means for migration. Informal methods are marked by an absence of appropriate documentation, waiting period and approval, which formal methods require. As a result, it is the more preferred method for those who wish to by-pass this extensive process, hence migrating without authorization from the country of birth to the country of resettlement.

Twenty-nine of the 30 migrants that were part of this study stated that they utilized informal channels to make the move from the sending to the receiving society. More specifically, illegal agents were the most important actors in this process. Their role is to facilitate and assist migrants with mobility. In her work on Pakistani economic immigrants in Greece, Nawaz (2010) contends that migrants paid agents to make the move from Gujarat to Greece. She also elaborates the way in which agents direct the movement of migrants to their contacts at respective border posts/crossings and how these contacts further direct these migrants to their place of destination. The movement of the migrant from home to the place of destination is not a simple, one way, straight forward process as it might appear. Once migrants depart from their home country, various routes are used to ensure arrival at the receiving country. The data gathered for this study revealed an assortment of common routes used by those migrating from South Asia to South Africa. Routes included: Abu Dhabi, Doha, Dubai, Qatar, Muscat, Delhi, Pakistan, Malaysia, Egypt, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Swaziland and Mozambique. Such routes serve as key transit hubs en route to South Africa, particularly Durban.

The above is reflected in the responses by migrants:

Case study 13:

Althaaf is 27-years-old and is a Pakistani migrant. He came to Durban in February 2010. Various routes were utilized to ensure his arrival in Durban. From Pakistan, he went to Dubai, then Muscat, Kenya, Mozambique, Johannesburg and then Durban. A Pakistani agent assisted him in making his move from Pakistan to Durban. A large sum of R40 000 (forty thousand rands) was paid to the agent who has contacts in most countries on the African continent, those of whom are not Pakistani. Upon arrival in the various countries, the contacts of the agents aided him in advancing to the next border crossing until his intended destination was reached. Althaaf added

that they take a big risk because they have no guarantee of whether the agent will assist them or take their money and escape.

Case study 14:

Munaf, who is 23 years of age, came to South Africa in 2006. From Pakistan, he went to Dubai, then Kenya, Mozambique, Johannesburg and then Durban. He utilized the same Pakistani agent that his brother used when he migrated to South Africa. He paid the agent R30 000 (thirty thousand rands). In each of the countries that he had to go through, the agent got his contacts to help him. His contacts are citizens of the various countries mentioned (above) and are middlemen who are involved in helping migrants move across borders. He further added that these routes are used because there is no visa required to stay in these countries, thus making it easier to get into and out of these places in order to reach his destination.

Case study 15:

Thahir, a 28-year-old Bangladeshi migrant, arrived in South Africa in 2009. From Bangladesh, he went to Abu Dhabi, Muscat, Egypt, Kenya, Mozambique, Johannesburg and then Durban. He was also given assistance by a Pakistani agent who guided and directed his movements. He came to know about the agent from a Bangladeshi migrant who had used the same agent when he migrated. Unlike the previous two cases in which migrants paid much larger sums of money, Thahir paid his agent a sum of R25 000 (twenty five thousand rands). He also felt that he was taking a great risk by entrusting the agent with his money and his life as he was uncertain of whether he would reach his destination safely.

The empirical findings reveal that migrants sought help from agents to facilitate movement from their country of origin to South Africa. Family and friends play an important role in aiding and directing the migrant to specific agents. In an Overview Report (2008: 6)¹⁵ it is argued that in most instances “they are illegal, unregistered individual agents (dalals), middlemen or sub-agents who engage in fraudulent practices. These unregistered agents are known to proliferate in areas affected by

¹⁵ HIV and Mobility in South Asia: Overview Report (2008).

poverty, economic disparities, conflict and other factors that cause people to migrate.” South Asia is characterized by the aforementioned social ills and it is these ills that render migrants vulnerable and dependent upon these agents. Similarly, it is stated by Nawaz (2010) that it is common practice for low-income migrants to use the illegal route for migration. However, such clandestine methods play a pivotal role in the migratory process as a whole. Agents tend to use routes in which entry and exit regulations are lax or where officials can be easily bribed. Exorbitant amounts of money ranging from R12 000 (twelve thousand rands) to R40 000 (forty thousand rands) were paid by migrants to the agents for their assistance and of the 30 migrants, 28 stated that they had no personal, one-on-one contact with their agents. The use of illegal routes and the payment of large amounts of money are not only limited to international migrants but also to internal migrants within the South Asian continent itself. This is apparent in an article by Shashikumar (2009) who notes that large amounts of money are paid by migrants who leave India to go to Bangladesh. He further mentions that officials and personnel at borders are usually bribed and that agents and officials assist in arranging documentation for migrants in exchange for money. His work is an illustration of the ease with which migrants come to infiltrate a space illegally. Since most, if not all, respondents in the study come from relatively poor backgrounds, the money is often paid by a relative while some borrow from friends and family. Despite the uncertainty of whether or not agents would help them or flee with their money, respondents were willing to take the risk because of their desperation to escape their unfavourable circumstances. Only one respondent indicated that he did not use an agent to migrate:

- *“My mother who is South African married my father who was of Indian origin. Following the death of my father, my mother wanted to resettle in South Africa*

and as a result, relocated to Durban in 2007 with myself, my sister and her son. We all came here legally because my mother had South African citizenship and because we are her children, we had no problem in coming to South Africa”(Imran, 35 years - India).

Ambiguous information was given by migrants since 16 intimated that they were not legal residents in South Africa, while 13 were concerned about the authenticity of documents acquired. Fake permits and other false documents are allegedly available to buy from many individuals and private sponsors who engage in this type of trading in the host countries (Nasra, 2002). Thus, it remains a challenge to precisely say who has genuine permits and who has fake permits. Illegal agents paired with illegal emigration methods appear to be synonymous with South Asians such as Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Indians. Research conducted by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (1996) explicates this phenomenon. Their findings have accurately shown the soaring numbers of illegal Pakistani and Indian nationals in countries such as Hong Kong, The Netherlands, Greece, Canada, Britain, USA and other North and South Eastern European countries. Moreover, it is stated that such illegal migrants pay large amounts of money to illegal agents who not only ensure mobility, but also aid in the provision of documentation, often false.

With regards to South African legislative policies for foreign nationals, it is stated by South African Immigration Services that an individual must first hold permanent residency for five years before applying for South African citizenship. It is further noted that for any person who is married to a South African, citizenship becomes naturalized two years after receiving permanent residency¹⁶. Despite the hardship these migrants have to endure in the migratory process, they risk their lives to come

¹⁶<http://www.intergate-immigration.com/south-africa-immigration-citizenship.php>
Accessed on 15th April, 2011.

to the 'dreamland' of prosperity, hoping that life will be better. In all likelihood, most migrants will apply for passports and identity cards since they have indicated that they would like to continue to work in their current occupations and settle in South Africa permanently.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has brought into perspective the process migrants endure, beginning from the time they decide to migrate up until arrival and settlement in the host society. Poor socio-economic conditions coupled with political instability are the reasons for migrants leaving their countries of origin. Apart from these circumstances, the need to support one's family proved to be an important factor determining migration. Findings show that the decision to migrate extends beyond the individual migrant and occurs at the level of the family and household who play a critical role in the decision making process. The chapter also illustrates the way in which South Africa's stable socio-economic and political climate is a magnet attracting an influx of migrants from poorer developing nations. It has assessed the way in which the existence of networks in South Africa lend themselves greatly to play host to the growing number of established and new migrants. Despite the uncertainty inherent within informal channels of migrating, migrants are forced to utilize the assistance of agents due to the lack of appropriate documentation, but more so because they wish to by-pass the laborious process which formal methods entail. Thus, migrants endure many risks and encounter lots of difficulty in searching for what they strongly yearn and hope would be a better life.

CHAPTER FOUR:

SOCIAL NETWORKING AND BEING ‘SOUTH ASIAN’ IN DURBAN

A central component of migration is the triple-sided process of the creation, existence and incremental role that social networks play in providing information and facilitating migration. In trying to establish how and through who Pakistanis and other South Asians migrate and settle into their livelihoods in the host society, it would be appropriate to understand and explore the social networks that they create or join. These networks are imbued with transnational features by virtue of their links between both the receiving and host societies. It is against this issue that this chapter aims to provide a discussion on the social networks of South Asian migrants and the purpose played by them. Migratory movements also impact upon the way in which migrants identify themselves and assimilate into the receiving society. Thus, this chapter also intends to bring attention to the construction of South Asian identity in South Africa, in other words, how they adjust and identify with their new environment and whether they blend in as South Africans or integrate aspects of their own social norms with that of the host society in Durban. In conjunction with issues pertaining to identity, focus will also be attributed to how their lives as migrants in South Africa differ from their own country, their feelings about living and working in Durban, as well as the way in which the social environment in their own country differs from their experiences here. While the focus is on cohesion, issues pertaining to fragmentation, that is, the divisions (class, regional, linguistic) among migrants from South Asia, will also be explored. Networks play a role with regards to who migrants socialise with as well as where and with whom they live. This chapter

will provide an outline of the domestic and social lives of South Asian migrants in Durban, focusing on where and with whom they have taken up residency, management of domestic tasks in the absence of female counterparts and how their leisure time is spent.

4.1 The concept of network and its place within migration

While the section 'existence of networks' in the previous chapter presented an outline on how networks initialise and actually start off the migratory process, the section on networks in this chapter will focus specifically on the role of social relationships in assisting migrants through the adaptation process and everyday living in the receiving society. Migration flows and streams cannot be explained without understanding how they are stimulated by social networks of kin and friend-based relationships. Many studies pertaining to migration openly attribute acknowledgement to the pervasive role of networks in mobility. Boyd aptly highlights the importance of studying social networks when she states that "existing across time and space, social networks are highly relevant for studies of international migration" (1989: 639). According to Massey *et al.* (1993: 448), "migrant networks are sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship and shared community origin." Networks determine migratory patterns and ultimately impacts on where, when, with whom and how one will migrate. Networks not only foster but also function to sustain the process of migration beginning from the time an individual decides to leave home, continuing through the journey, arrival, settlement, adaptation and everyday living in the receiving society. Hence, networks do not cease to exist at any given time, rather they are constantly perpetuated by the

migrant through ongoing social ties. While networks are infinite, they are also relatively flexible, fluid and dynamic, in that they may undergo alteration as people may leave, enter or re-enter. Hu and Salazar's (2005) study on Chinese migrants provides an appropriate example of the intrinsic dynamism, fluidity and cyclical process of migrant networks. Their work illustrates how networks reconfigure to accommodate external changes and to satisfy the altering needs of the migrants within the network.

Upon arrival in the receiving country, migrants may experience difficulty in adapting, obtaining employment, obtaining accommodation or information about their new environment. During this initial stage of the migration process, migrants tend to rely on family, if any, or friends. Hu and Salazar (2005), Poros (2001), and Vertovec (2002), purport that social networks play a pivotal role in guiding migrants into specific places and jobs, and ultimately assist in the migratory process itself. The work of Carletto *et al.* (2005: 3) attests to the latter when they note that migrant networks "influence the migration decision by increasing expected returns and reducing costs and risk associated with migration. This occurs through the provision of direct assistance (cash, food, housing and transport), information on job opportunities and border passage, and even a cultural or social predisposition to migration." Thus, networks serve as a buffer against risks, loosens constraints and also acts as a safety net for resettlement difficulties faced by newly arrived migrant. Therefore, the existence of networks for migrants is crucial because their absence can prove to be an impediment to the adjustment, adaptation and integration process.

4.2 South Asian networks

The formation of social networks attracts interest since migrants are in a situation “in which social relations transcend typical local, geographical and cultural boundaries” (Pohjola, 1991: 435). Migratory movements cannot be understood nor explained in isolation from social networks. The period of arrival and initial resettlement is a critical phase that may bring about social, cultural and physical changes (Cox, 1989). Migrants make use of ties/networks to either accommodate or resist difficult circumstances. Therefore, in order to understand arrival, adaptation and settlement patterns among the migrants in this study, it was only significant to examine the way in which they mobilise social networks to overcome such radical change. From the sampling population, all migrants stated that they arrived in South Africa through the assistance of agents to which they were directed by family or friends. In addition, migrants noted that familial and friend-based relationships in South Asia and South Africa initiated their actual decision to migrate through providing information on the availability of employment and the quality of life prevalent in the host locale. Respondents indicated that their web of networks existed in their countries of origin (Pakistan, India and Bangladesh) and the country of reception (South Africa) and that they (all except one migrant) had friends and/or relatives and acquaintances in the recipient country prior to their arrival. As a result, different kinds of network relations for these migrants adopt transnational characteristics as these ties ‘stretch’ across space, that is, both in South Africa and South Asia. The latter is neatly summed up in the words of Boyd (1989: 641):

“Networks connect migrants and non-migrants across time and space. Once begun, migration flows often become self-sustaining, reflecting the establishment of networks of information, assistance and obligations which develop between migrants in the host society and friends and relatives in the

sending area. These networks link populations in origin and receiving countries and ensure that movements are not necessarily limited in time, unidirectional or permanent.”

The utilisation of networks and their role in guiding migrants into specific places and occupations is illustrated in the words of some of the participants:

- *“I arrived in South Africa through my uncle and cousin. I came here because I knew people from my family that were already here. They told me to come here to work in the salon in Durban.”*
- *“I came to South Africa through a friend who is Pakistani. This friend is actually my neighbour’s son. He migrated before me and he works here in Durban. My friend knew the boss of this salon where I am now working and that is how I got this job.”*
- *“I came to South Africa through my uncle who gave me the contact of the Pakistani agent who helped me make my way here. My uncle told me to leave Bangladesh and to come to South Africa to work in his salon.”*
- *“My brother encouraged me to come here. He gave me a lot of information about South Africa and told me that there is a job for me in the salon he is working in.”*

Case study 16:

Shiraaaz, a 27-year-old male from Lahore, Pakistan, indicated that he came to South Africa on request by his uncle and cousin. His uncle, who is a tailor and a resident in Johannesburg for the past 15 years, informed him of the Pakistani agent that would assist him in making arrangements to travel from Pakistan to South Africa. After arrival, his cousin organised him a job in a Pakistani owned salon in Durban. He wanted to continue with salon work in South Africa since it was his profession in Pakistan.

Case study 17:

Similarly, another respondent from Islamabad named Zaid, who is 21 years of age, came to South Africa because of his brother who had migrated a few years ago. Since he was unemployed in his home country, his brother, who is a salon owner in Durban, encouraged him to travel to South Africa to work in his salon. Zaid further

mentioned that prior to leaving Islamabad, his brother proved to be an important source of information because he was constantly kept informed about prevalent socio-economic conditions and other general insights into life in South Africa.

Evident in these two case studies is the influential role that networks of friends and family played in spurring migration and directing migrants into certain jobs. Apart from family and friends constituting the migrant's network, members from the migrant's community of origin, for example; a neighbour's son, was also part of the network. Five of the 30 respondents stated that community members from their home country aided them through disseminating information about employment opportunities and other general insights about the migratory process and the host society. Furthermore, it reveals how personal networks for the South Asian migrants serve to function as conduits for transmitting information such as the use of agents in making migration possible, providing information about the intended destination and available occupations present there. It also brings to light the way in which migrants rely on such ties to migrate and obtain employment since the primary motivation for respondents in this study were people who were inclined to migrate to improve their economic statuses. Such networks shape migration and guide migrants since they encourage them to solicit assistance and resources (material and non-material) from kin and friends in South Asia and South Africa. It is these ties that migrants have to people in Durban that encourages and promotes their relocation to South Africa. This emanates in the work of Dunlevy and Gemery (1977), who contend that family or friend-based networks facilitate migration to destinations where such networks exist and dissuades migration to other countries.

The purpose of social networks is two-fold. Firstly, they share an implicit connection in steering and increasing the likelihood of migratory movements; and secondly, they

provide assistance (social, emotional, financial) upon arrival and well after the settlement and adaptation process. The host locale to a newly arrived migrant is foreign, unfamiliar and alien. The presence of familiar faces/nationality/language in an unfamiliar environment makes adapting and settling in easier. Respondents were asked about adjustment patterns post migration and these were some of the responses given:

- *“When I came here, it was very difficult to adjust because I was new to the place. My friends who were here before me helped me to move around and showed me everything I needed to know.”*
- *“When I came to South Africa it was not very hard to adapt because I had a lot of friends that were here before me. They helped me a lot by guiding me and showing me around Durban. They also helped me to look for a job and showed me where I could stay.”*
- *“When I came here it was difficult just to be in a new place because I had to adapt to the weather, the people and the environment. Everything here is so different from Bangladesh. My cousin helped me a lot.....helped me get this job....introduced me to the Bangladeshi workers in the salon who became my friends. The workers helped me by allowing me to live with them.”*

Case study 18:

Asad is a 23-year-old male from Pakistani Kashmir. Adjustment for him proved to be difficult because he was new to the place. He has friend-based ties with other Pakistani migrants in Durban. Having friends who were of the same nationality as him made the adaptation process easier since his friends not only provided him with information about Durban, but also assisted in finding a job and a place in which to live.

Case study 19:

Likewise, adjusting and adapting was difficult for Thahir, a 28-year-old male from Chittagong, Bangladesh. The difference and unfamiliarity of his new surroundings made it difficult to adjust. However, his cousin helped him a lot through this difficult

phase by assisting him in getting a job and also extended his network by introducing him to fellow Bangladeshi co-workers who provided Thahir with a place to live.

Evident from the data is that friends and relatives played a crucial role in administering support to migrants through the arrival, adaptation and settling in phase. Informational, emotional and social companionship support was among the themes that emerged with regards to social networks. Twenty-three of the 30 respondents indicated that they did not experience too many problems after arrival due to the presence and assistance of family and friends who helped make the process one of ease. On the other hand, six migrants stated that adaptation post arrival was difficult. Reasons for such difficulty centred on issues of not knowing anyone except one or two friends, having to make new friends, and being in a foreign environment. Five respondents mentioned that language proved to be a barrier for adaptation since they spoke and understood very little or no English at all. Apart from language, migrants identified diversity of religion and people, the weather and the fast pace of life, accompanied with modernity as some of the things that required adjusting to. While some have said that they adjusted quite comfortably, others stated that they were still adjusting even though they have been in South Africa for a few months. Respondents also widely attributed acknowledgement to their social networks stating that without such networks, adaptation and integration would be complex, tough and strenuous.

Most of the migrants in this study did not necessarily create their own networks, but instead joined existing ones. This was mainly due to the fact that most migrants had connections in Durban with people who had already migrated. On the opposite side of the coin, some migrants built and expanded their networks by making and being

directed to new friends who would provide them with support. For this reason, “one must create the network oneself. They have to make choices about whom to ask for advice or help because they lack independent anchoring” (Pohjola, 1991: 435). Hence, as stated earlier, bonds are neither permanent nor fixed, they are in a constant state of flux and must be created and maintained by the migrants themselves. Carletto *et al.* (2005) note that networks form because similar individuals choose to come together and also because such individuals require the fulfilment of related goals. Unlike the other migrants in the study, one respondent revealed that he did not have the assistance of a network to adapt.

Case study 20:

Rehaan, a 27-year-old male Pakistani-Punjabi migrant, found it hard to adjust. He had a lot of fear because at night, he could not walk by himself due to the fact that it is very dangerous in Johannesburg and Durban. In both places he adjusted alone without the support of a social network. If he required any information, he would randomly ask local people, for example, if he wanted to know how to take the taxi, he would approach people on the street. Step by step, he learnt everything on his own. Unlike the other respondents in the study, the absence of networks for Rehaan led to difficulty in adapting and adjusting.

The above excerpt offers an insight that is suggestive of migrants who do not have ties prior to migration, thus creating their own networks only when they arrive in the society of resettlement. It also shows how migrants come to develop ties with locals and how such ties are utilised for adaptation and settlement in the country of reception. Migrants themselves become the key players in managing networks through the activation of ties or the ceasing of these active ties. Considering the prevalent view that migrants almost always have networks prior to their arrival, findings as outlined in the case above, serve to challenge such conventional thought.

Networks play a role in who migrants socialise with as they may be directed to specific people by members from the network. Coleman (1988) asserts that networks play an instrumental role in creating productive social relations, which in turn facilitates integration. Socialising also impacts upon the way in which migrants view and perceive themselves compared to others. As a result, it was the aim to gauge whether migrants socialise with people from their country of origin only, country of destination, or both. In addition, focus was also centred on whether concepts of class, language, or region create barriers and/or divisions among the migrants. Questions were put forth to migrants in order to elicit information on who comprised their social circle and these were some of their replies:

- *“I associate with some locals....the lady who owns the shop next door is my friend. My mother’s side of the family are all South African and I associate with all of them. I do not really have any close South African friends. All my close friends are in India.....do not associate with any other Indian migrants here because I do not know anyone except the Bangladeshi guys who work in the salon here in Overport.”*
- *“I socialise with Pakistanis and locals. I have been here for a long time....have lots of local friends. I am very close friends with a South African Christian family.”*
- *“I socialise with the locals, but only the customers because they come here often and I have to be friendly with them. I also socialise with a few Pakistani guys who work in the salon across the road.....no one of my own nationality to socialise with except for the other Bangladeshi guys that I work with. I have no local friends.”*

Case study 21:

For Rehaan, a Pakistani migrant, his social circle was replete with diversity. He noted that he socialises with his fellow Pakistani friends as well as the locals in Durban. He indicated that he befriended many locals who he considered to be his good friends. Being close friends with a local Muslim and Christian family was unique

to Rehaan for he is the only respondent in the study to have such close relations with local families, some of whom did not belong to the same religious group as him. Adjacent shop owners also constituted his social circle.

Case study 22:

In contrast to Rehaan, Waheed, a 20-year-old male of Bangladeshi origin, did not socialise with any locals. Salon customers were the only locals with whom he would interact. He stated that it was only courteous and respectful to converse with regular local customers. His Bangladeshi co-workers and a few Pakistani salon workers were his circle of friends.

The findings illustrate that migrants kept friends that were of the same nationality as them. The majority of the Pakistani migrants indicated that their friends were only Pakistani with the exception of a few who said that they also had local friends. Similar patterns reflect the case of the Bangladeshi migrants who noted that they interacted with co-workers who shared the same nationality as them and that even though they did converse with other South Asian migrants such as Pakistanis, they did not consider them to be close friends. The Indian migrant stated that he associated with other Bangladeshi migrants but not Pakistani migrants, who he perceived to be rather hostile. Twenty-one of the 30 migrants pointed out that the only locals with whom they socialised were the customers who went to the salon. As a worker and out of a sense of duty, migrants felt that it was only correct to greet, respect and be friendly with local customers. Five respondents mentioned that they were friends with other local business owners in the vicinity of their shops. These friends included local salon and other neighbouring shop owners. An interesting finding that surfaced from the data is that most migrants stated that despite them socialising with locals or other foreign migrants, they regarded some of them not so much as friends, but rather as acquaintances. Seven migrants expressed the desire

to make friends with locals, however, this proved to be difficult due to unfamiliarity with the English language. Hence, language can create barriers for social interaction. Also interesting was the fact that four migrants were close friends with local Muslim and Christian families. In addition to all of the above, two Pakistani migrants professed that they lacked the time to socialise due to their long working hours and also because they perceived locals to be unfriendly. While some of the migrants did not have many local friends, they believed that local friends in the host society were important.

It is clear that most of the respondents had friends who were of the same nationality as them since they felt it easier and comfortable to relate to those who they regarded as similar others. Migrants contain the tenacity to create enclaves, a basis for which helps in preserving identity and customs. Such enclaves also promote solidarity and a sense of belonging. It is through the existence of such an enclosing that it becomes possible for migrants to integrate and assimilate with their own social practices in the receiving society. Migrants do interact with locals and may do so to try and 'fit in' or advance their way in the host society, so that the more contacts one has, the more assistance one can receive. Migrants were also aware that it is necessary to have local contacts as these connections could prove to be critical during times of impending need. The following section will focus on identity construction and the level of integration that respondents demonstrated.

4.3 Who am I and how do I 'fit in'?

Identity is usually informed by the physical space we live in, the people we interact with, as well as the linguistic groups and religious/cultural denominations to which we belong. When an individual is exposed to a socio-cultural environment which differs

from that of their own, there is the likelihood that identity becomes subjected to being re-negotiated and/or re-constructed. This is especially applicable to people who live elsewhere for long periods of time, such as those who migrate. "Identity is generally used to define and describe an individuals' sense of self, group affiliations, structural positions, and ascribed and achieved statuses" (Peek, 2005: 217). Negotiating identity is part of the migrant experience. Brettel and Hollifield (2000) contends that the migration process brings populations of differing backgrounds into contact with each other, resulting in the engaging of activities that becomes the expression of the migrant's ethnic identity. South Africa is a country characterized by a variety of ethnic and cultural compositions. It is within this diversity that the aim was to establish how migrants identify themselves:

- *"I see myself as Pakistani because Pakistan is my birth country and I speak Urdu. Pakistan is where I come from, so that is who I am. I cannot see myself as South African because this is not my country."*
- *"I identify myself as being Indian. South African Indians are very different from Indians in India. Very few Indians here speak their mother tongue. In India, our way of living is also very different. I completely see myself as Indian, not South African Indian."*
- *"I identify myself as Bangladeshi because that is my nationality. I still speak the language of my country even though I am in South Africa. My nationality and language defines the person I am and it is through this that I am able to identify myself here."*

Case study 23:

Ebrahim, a 21-year-old male from Rawalpindi, Pakistan, identified himself in accordance with his nationality. He recognised himself as Pakistani due to the fact that he is a born Pakistani. In addition, speaking the same language in Durban which he spoke in Pakistan and eating the same kind of Pakistani food were some of the things that make him view himself as Pakistani. Despite the fact that people may

have negative perceptions about Pakistanis, he liked being identified as Pakistani since he was proud of who he is and where he comes from.

Language and nationality were found to be the most salient features of identity. Similar patterns and trends emerged from the data in that all of the migrants that were part of this study identified themselves according to their country of origin. The 25 migrants of Pakistani nationality identified themselves as Pakistani, the four Bangladeshi migrants identified themselves as Bangladeshi, and the one migrant from India identified himself as Indian. All migrants felt a strong affinity to their country of birth stating that their nationality, similarity in language, food and lifestyle were distinct markers of how they viewed themselves in Durban. The purchasing and/or cooking of meals that was close to their traditional food connect migrants to their homeland. In doing so, they do not only recreate home, but also serve as a basis for the preservation of their ethnic identities. Migrants said that they were able to identify with other Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Indians respectively because they shared similar sentiments. Respondents made note of the languages they spoke, which is Urdu, Pashto, Hindi, Bengali and Kashmiri among others, and said that language reminded them of where they came from. These findings mirrors the work of Taylor *et al.* (1973) and Giles *et al.* (1977), who argued that language emerged as a fundamental dimension of identity in their individual studies of Canadian and Welsh migrants. While all migrants had a tendency to identify with other migrants who were of the same nationality as them, five of them mentioned that they identified to some extent with the locals. Reasons given for such identification was that some of the locals were Muslims who followed the same Islamic religion and also because many of them spoke Urdu. Even though a few migrants felt some form of identification with a few locals, all of the respondents revealed a preference for identifying with those

who shared the same nationality since it was easier to relate to those who they felt as being the same as them. This is well represented in the words of Hiller and Franz who wrote that:

“A specific location of origin may be extremely important to a migrant’s personal identity because it is often a birthplace that generates strong emotional ties and which can continue to serve as a significant community of reference. It is not only past memories and old ties that produce a sense of belonging and rootedness in a territorial homeland, but also how new ties can be discovered and nurtured because of a common identity that is based on a former place of residence” (2004: 733).

The respondents expressed a sense of pride with regards to how they identified themselves stating that despite negative stereotypes towards Pakistanis such as fraudsters, troublemakers and criminals, they were proud of their identity and heritage. An interesting finding that arose from the data was that of three migrants perceiving themselves differently when interacting with people of opposing nationalities. For instance, migrants stated that they did not see themselves as Pakistani when they spoke English with the locals. Speaking English gave rise to feelings of being different and that of being South African. Cohen (1994) utilises the term ‘situational identity’ to explain such a situation. He proposes that “multiple social contexts lead to individuals perceiving, constructing and presenting varied identities when exposed to different circumstances” (Cohen, 1994: 205).

It is evident from the data that migrants rejected a South African identity and affirmed an identity that is in alignment with their respective countries of origin. These findings are similar to that of Manning and Roy (2007) who conducted research with a variety of immigrants in Britain, who also included people from Pakistan and Bangladesh. Their work concluded that “Muslim immigrants in Britain do not think of themselves as British, have no aspiration to do so.....subscribing

instead to some other identity and creating little enclaves that resemble, as far as is possible, the countries from which they came” (Manning and Roy, 2007: 4). In this study, the ethnic component of the migrants became central for self-identification. Reitz (1980) propounds that studies of ethnicity illuminate the factors that pave the way for maintaining ethnic cohesiveness. Al-Haj elaborates on the above by pointing out that “large numbers, demographic concentration in specific areas and physical distinctiveness are often mentioned as factors that strengthen a distinct ethnic identity” (2002: 50). It also brings to fore how migrants use identity to maintain ties with their homeland. Shared commonalities, especially language and nationality among migrants provide a basis for them to relate to their fellow ‘brothers’, hence, a sense of belonging (closeness to their homeland) and sameness.

Even though migrants may be well adjusted and integrated into the host society, some may still view themselves as outsiders. However, this was not the case for most migrants in this study since the majority of them did not view themselves as outsiders in Durban. Respondents noted that there are many South Asian migrants in Durban and that they were able to relate to them. In addition, migrants felt a sense of belonging not to South African society as such, but rather to a wider migrant community of Pakistanis, Bangladeshis or Indians, with affiliation to these groups depending on the migrant’s nationality. The added token of befriending locals led to the migrants feeling absorbed into South African society, hence not feeling like a stranger. They also mentioned that they did feel a sense of being different among local friends, but did not feel like an outsider. It is for these reasons that migrants felt more a part of a migrant community as opposed to being outsiders. However, at least five migrants did intimate that they perceived themselves as being outsiders in South Africa. The fact that they spoke a different language from the locals, being

foreigners and migrants, as well as the usual stares and glares from locals, were among the reasons as to why migrants regarded themselves as foreign and being outsiders. They also felt feelings of estrangement when they would be referred to as Pakistani or Bangladeshi by local customers and friends. Thus, it can be seen that a large concentration of migrants from the same country can enhance feelings of belonging in the host society while noticeable differences in language and regarding one's self as foreign can add to feeling like that of a stranger.

Identity is also very much interdependent with the conceptualization of space. Migrants may create a sense of home in a different social setting which, very often, mirrors their identity. It was apparent from the data the way in which migrants sought to integrate and assimilate through their own social practices in the host society. Despite Bollywood DVDs and Islamic recitals constantly being screened all day at work, respondents were also avid movie goers, keeping in tune with the latest movies being released back home. They also kept abreast with the latest current affairs and developments in their home countries through news channels which the researcher took note of during the observational phase of this research. Migrants also made mention that they watched television programmes about their home country via satellite. It was also put forward by migrants that they engaged in discussion with their fellow migrant counterparts about latest conditions and news about their respective home countries. Some migrants said that they even played cricket in Durban in their free time, a sport which is a popular hobby in the South Asian sub-continent.

Thus, it can be seen that these migrants embrace representations, discursive and material aspects of Pakistan, Bangladesh and India respectively as home to form a

framework for everyday life as migrants in South Africa. The data coincides with what Wiles argues about immigrants' identification to home:

“Migrants create a sense of home through frequent discussions about home and also through everyday social and cultural activities such as less tangible media connections, websites, newspapers, television news. They develop new understandings of home and self in relation to home, and generate a sense of community and bonds among themselves by performing this home away from home” (2008: 127).

Like the immigrants from New Zealand in Wiles' study, the South Asian migrants in this study recreated a sense of home in a transnational social space through symbolic attachments to objects and other material that depict and illustrate a familiarity to home. The recreation of home and its associated sentiments also shapes the way in which migrants identify themselves.

The emergence of a transnational perspective provides a new lens for the study of migration because it illustrates that while migrants are being uprooted, they are becoming fairly rooted in the host country through maintaining multiple linkages to their homeland. This was exemplified in their responses with regards to how they maintained contact with family in the sending society. Migration literature documents that migrants do not cease ties with their loved ones, but rather retain and maintain relationships. This is apparent in the work of Gold (2001: 57) who contends “that people often remain intensely involved in the life of their country of origin even though they no longer permanently reside there.” All migrants that were part of this study said that they maintained contact with their family and friends through telecommunications (cell phones, which includes sending sms's), emails, and internet chat (Skype), as well as other social networking sites such as Facebook and Mxit. This demonstrates how these migrants live in transnational communities, that is,

living their everyday lives across borders both imaginatively and practically through communicative structures. There is, in the words of Portes *et al.* (1999: 217) “..... a growing number of persons who live dual lives: speaking two languages, having homes in two countries, and maintain ties through continuous regular contact across national borders.”

4.4 Perceptions of migrants: Experiences of life in a ‘new home’

Occupying a new space can bring about changes in not only our ways of living, but also the way in which we view ourselves. In conjunction with identity, it was also appropriate to establish how migrants live in and perceive their new ‘world’ against that of their society of origin:

- *“I do not view myself in the same way in Durban because my life is different and I am in a totally different environment. The culture is very different and everything such as the weather, food and lifestyle is also very different from Pakistan. I am also very modern here.”*
- *“In Durban, I have become naughty because I have a girlfriend. She is an Indian Christian girl. I also go to clubs with her and I drink alcohol sometimes. In Bangladesh I never did these things. All these things I do here makes me view myself differently.”*
- *“I view myself differently because I feel alone with no family. Even though I have friends, it does not replace my family. I am very modern here also. I speak English to the customers.....when I speak English I do not feel like a Pakistani.”*

Case study 24:

A 22-year-old Pakistani migrant named Nasim mentioned that he viewed himself differently in Durban because he has South African friends and converses with them in English. He did not speak English in Pakistan and speaking the language with local friends in South Africa led to him perceiving himself differently. Speaking English provoked feelings of South Africanness and of being different. The absence

of loved ones such as parents, siblings and extended family members, aroused feelings of isolation, thus leading to this young migrant viewing himself differently.

Case study 25:

For Raheem, a 23-year-old Bangladeshi, modernity, coupled with the freedom to express himself, were some of the factors that made him view himself differently in Durban. He noted that he had no freedom to openly have a girlfriend in his home country. In Durban, he has a girlfriend who belongs to a religious group which differs from that of his own. In addition to having a girlfriend, he consumed alcohol and visited nightclubs regularly, all of which he did not do in Dhaka. It is for these reasons that he viewed himself differently in the host society.

Of the 30 migrants, 12 noted that they viewed themselves differently while the remaining 18 viewed themselves as being the same as they were in their country of origin. A shift towards modernity was a popular reason cited for migrants viewing themselves differently. Fourteen respondents said that in their home country, they would wear the traditional Kurta or Salwar Kameez¹⁷. However, this has undergone transition to modern dressing of jeans and T-shirts in South Africa. In addition, other changes included that of not having a beard, which in Pakistan is a must for most men. Being rid of restrictions and/or limitations and having freedom is another important aspect that led to migrants viewing themselves differently. Migrants felt they were free to do as they wished without constraints from anyone or anything. Again, language featured as a prominent component which made some migrants perceive themselves differently. Seven migrants indicated that they did not talk in English at home in Pakistan and Bangladesh. They elaborated on this point further and stated that when they conversed in English with local friends or local customers, they felt different and viewed themselves as South African. Other reasons

¹⁷ Kurta is a traditional item of clothing worn by men in South Asia. Salwar Kameez refers to a type of dress, similar to pants and a shirt worn by both men and women in South and Central Asia.

for being/feeling different included being employed, a different lifestyle, smoking, alcohol consumption, having girlfriends of different race groups and religions, changes in religiosity and being alone with no family. On the other hand, those migrants who mentioned that they viewed themselves as being the same, listed simplicity of lifestyle, eating similar food to what they ate back home and speaking their mother tongue as reasons to substantiate their claims.

It is evident from the data that changes in lifestyle and making comparisons between the things migrants did in Durban and in their respective home countries led to them perceiving themselves as being different or the same depending upon their social contexts. Language also proved to be a defining component, showing how migrants associated English with that of being different, and of South Africanness. This ties in with the words of Esser who proposes that “languages and accents can act as symbols of belonging or foreignness and give rise to differentiation” (2006: 1). For the South Asian migrants in this study, their respective languages created a sense of belonging to Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India, while English was related to foreignness and being different. The respondents’ conception of their new social environment also constituted an integral part of their identity.

With regards to whether respondents would prefer to live in South Africa or South Asia, all of them fervently expressed a preference to live in South Africa:

- *“I would prefer to live in South Africa because life is better here. Previously, Pakistan was nice. Now there are bombings and too much poverty and fighting in my home country.....living conditions are better and the economy is also better here compared to Pakistan.”*
- *“I prefer to live here because there is a lot of freedom. I also like the life here. It’s not hard like life in Pakistan. Life has more opportunities here.”*

- *“I prefer to live here because life is not as difficult as it is in Bangladesh..... there are better chances of finding jobs here. There is a lot of crime here and it is unsafe at times.....but I still like to live here because conditions are not as bad as my country. I think even the poor people in South Africa have better lives than the poor in Bangladesh.....for us coming to South Africa is like paradise.”*

Case study 26:

Like most respondents in the study, Suhail, a 24-year-old male from Kashmiri, Pakistan, said that he preferred to live in South Africa. For him, living conditions are better in South Africa compared to Pakistan, the latter being entrenched with poverty, constant fighting and bombings. He also indicated that life in Durban is free of hardships and other stressors such as being unemployed and having no money, things that made life difficult in Pakistan. Suhail perceived South Africa as being a haven in which plentiful opportunities exist for growth and prosperity. Apart from South Africa’s favourable social conditions, the economic stability of the country also influenced Suhail to express a preference to live in South Africa as opposed to Pakistan.

The respondents noted that South Africa is more economically and socially stable than their respective South Asian homelands. Moreover, they felt that life here is easier, peaceful, free and comfortable devoid of hardships and struggle. Conducive conditions for living and working coupled with favourable opportunities for upliftment presented South Africa as being a preferable choice over South Asia. Migrants were aware of the escalating crime rates in South Africa and despite knowing this, they conceded that South Africa is better since there is no war-like conditions, bombings and killings, as is the case in their South Asian countries. Another reason for wanting to live in South Africa as opposed to South Asia was that of higher earnings in terms of wages. Four respondents said that they earned more money here (salary being twice the amount as compared to back home) and those who were salon owners

made note that their businesses were making good profit in Durban which provides a means for them to invest money in more businesses within South Africa. Despite the problems and social ills of their home countries, migrants still stated that they loved their countries of origin, the culture and the people.

Respondents also mentioned that the lifestyle people led here is very different because people lack respect and do as they please. This is in accordance with Wiles (2008: 117), who stated that “migrants occupy a transnational social space shaped by a relationship between two places and periods of residence in both, and shaped by a diversity of lifestyle patterns and trends.” Furthermore, the migrants compared this lifestyle against their own and concluded that back home they have a lot of respect for their parents and did not succumb to certain habits (smoking, gambling, consuming alcohol), since these habits did not have the approval of their parents. A few migrants made note of the fact that despite receiving a higher wage, they still lead simple lives in Durban, avoiding a life of luxury. Instead they wanted to make good money to provide not only for themselves, but more importantly for their families too. Most of the migrants were in agreement that working conditions here were more favourable in contrast to poor management, lack of respect from employers, and difficult conditions that characterise work back home. It is for the reasons above that migrants experienced working and living here different from their countries of origin.

Yet in Durban, some did concede that they gambled in exclusive casinos, drank alcohol, were guests of upmarket nightclubs and could openly have not one but multiple girlfriends. Such were the reasons given mainly by the younger males in the study. The lives of the migrants in Durban are characteristic of modernity and

freedom with no restrictions. Their lives also differed here because they did not have their family and also because most of them did not have the time to engage in social activities such as playing cricket and kite flying which they did in their respective home countries. These comments exemplify how participants attempted to describe a South Asian identity by contrasting it with people, places and situations around them. It also highlights what Al-Haj (2002: 53) advocates about “immigrants living in ‘two worlds’, with the will to preserve their own original culture and their desire to be open, to some extent, to the host society.” Migrants’ indulgence in material aspects of South African life depict how they are also somewhat open to the lifestyle of the receiving society, while at the same time, to some extent, also maintaining their own normative beliefs and practices.

The social dimension of a migrant’s life encounters an array of hues that colour the lives of the migrants differently in the country of destination from the country of origin. This was apparent from their responses. Their social lives were characteristic of an assortment of leisure activities which did not equate with the activities they were used to from where they came. Most migrants stated that they did not have much free time here because they were constantly working with only one or two days off. Due to long and exhausting work hours, free time was used to rest and sleep. Migrants mentioned that their leisure time was also spent at popular shopping malls, casinos, nightclubs, beaches, watching television and going to cinemas. Apart from these activities, spending time with their migrant family counterparts, friends (local and South Asian) and girlfriends were also common, as well as travelling and exploring different places in Durban. Only four migrants indicated that they played cricket with their friends in Durban. The utilisation of free time in their countries of origin differed from that of the host society. Back home, quality time was spent with

family and visiting relatives and friends. Cricket, kite flying and motor bike riding were popular daily and/or weekly activities in which migrants were involved. Respondents indicated that gambling and consuming alcohol is considered 'haram' (forbidden) in their home countries and therefore they did not indulge in such habits. This is in relation with the work of Dupre (2008: 8) who argues that "the teachings, traditions and habits of a specific religion will influence people in their behaviour, approaches to situations and relations to each other. A person's value system is often based on religion." A few migrants noted that they maintained regular prayer by going to mosque daily and that they also attend Qawaali (devotional music) programmes when they are held occasionally. Thus, the receiving society becomes a playground in which migrants can freely express themselves and overcome restrictions imposed on them in the sending society.

Religious life is generally intertwined within the social component of the respondents' lives. Upon arrival in the receiving society, migrants are exposed to a diversity of religions which may differ as well as complement that of their own. Muslims constitute an integral part of the diverse South African religious landscape. Therefore, it was only suitable to explore the extent to which migrants maintain their religion in Durban. With reference to mosque attendance, 23 migrants said that they only attend weekly Friday prayers while the remaining seven migrants indicated that they attend night prayers daily. Salon owners stated their businesses were closed between 12pm and 2pm for Friday prayers. Migrants said that their mosque visits were accompanied by their migrant friends and kin. Easy accessibility to a number of mosques within Overport made it convenient for migrants to attend prayers. Regardless of the close proximity of mosques to their homes, long working hours made it difficult for the majority of migrants to maintain daily prayer. In their home

countries, most migrants mentioned that they were regular mosque attendees. Reasons for this emanated from the fact that they belonged to religious families with parents who exercised strict religious control. With the absence of such regulation, some migrants openly admitted that they were not as religious in Durban as they were in their home country.

Attending Khathams¹⁸ here was not common among respondents since they did not have many local friends who held such prayers. In contrast to this, three migrants stated that they were invited by local Muslim customers to attend such functions. The Indian migrant said that he attended many Islamic prayers because most of his mother's relatives held such functions. Migrants compared these functions with that of Muslims in South Africa and Muslims in their home countries and conceded that Khathams did not feature prominently in Pakistan, Bangladesh or India. Instead, individual families would pray in their homes. Regular visits to holy shrines such as those of Soofie Saheb and Badsha Peer (saints) were common among a few (eight) migrants. These respondents said that they also visited similar shrines and sites of worship in their countries of origin. Despite sharing commonality of religion with that of the local Muslims, migrants commented on the perceived religious differences between Muslims in South Africa and Muslims in their country of origin. For instance, one migrant noted that local Muslims are modern and that religious festivals such as Eid differed from their home countries where such festivals are marked with grand celebrations. Similarly, another respondent held the belief that local Muslims have

¹⁸ Khatham refers to a gathering of people in which the Quran is recited and praises and salutations are sent upon the prophet Muhammad and/or saints in Islam. Khathams may also involve the rendition of Islamic lectures. Such a gathering is usually conducted by certain Muslim sects and is therefore not a practice intrinsic to all Muslims.

too much modernity. He also remarked that it is easier to maintain and practice their religion in Pakistan and Bangladesh respectively, since these are Islamic countries.

In spite of busy work schedules, most migrants made the effort to maintain their religious practices to the best of their ability. Practicing their religion in Durban with their local Muslim counterparts was, for many respondents, very different. This was as a result of modernity and variation of practice in religious ceremonies and festivals. Most migrants maintained parity with marked religious festivals in the Islamic calendar. While some migrants took care to sustain their religious practices, others deviated from it due to the absence of strict regulation from parents. Thus, migration acts as a tool in retaining and/or altering the pattern of religious practices among migrants in the country of resettlement.

With regards to whether migrants only associated with those who are of the same class/linguistic/regional grouping as them, responses were similar:

- *“I do not have a problem in associating with other Pakistani’s. We are all Pakistanis irrespective of which region or class group we come from. We share the same nationality and this is our brotherhood.”*
- *“For me, class and language is not a problem. I treat everyone the same whether they are Pakistani or not. Some of my Pakistani friends speak different languages from me such as Punjabi and Kashmiri....they also live in these regions.”*
- *“I do not have a problem associating with anyone. For me everyone is equal; we are all human beings irrespective of our language, race, colour, and nationality.”*

Case study 27:

Khalid, a 20-year-old male from Karachi, said that for him, factors such as class, region and language did not create divisions for interaction. He viewed all Pakistanis

as being the same despite which regions they came from, languages they spoke or class groupings they belonged to. Sharing common nationality evoked the ethos of 'brotherhood'.

Case study 28:

Similar to Khalid is Waheed, a young Bangladeshi male who stated that he did not have a problem associating with people who differed from his class, region and language grouping. He perceived everyone as human beings who are equal and should be treated with respect. He further noted that having the same nationality as his fellow people took precedence over such divisions and that belonging to the same country serves to strengthen ties, hence promoting cohesion.

Most respondents stated that class, language and region were not obstacles for association. Explanations given for this was that they shared the same nationality and that they were Pakistani/Bangladeshi/Indian despite belonging to diverse regions, language and class groupings. The South Asian migrants also claimed that an individual's character was more important than the social divides of language and class. Nationality seemed to be the common thread which stimulated cohesiveness among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis respectively. Even though migrants did not have issues with class, language and region, one migrant said that he did not associate with other migrants because of language. He added that he could not speak their language even though they shared the same nationality and therefore preferred to associate with those who spoke the same language as him, which is Urdu or Punjabi. The data brings to the fore relations of cohesion as opposed to fragmentation. This cohesion strengthens ties and networks which are necessary for migrants to adapt, integrate and advance in the receiving society.

4.5 The dynamics of domesticity

Where and who migrants live with connects to the concept of social networks. This is a result of migrants being reliant upon such networks (comprising of both locals and their foreign counterparts) to guide them into specific places. Overport and surrounding areas such as Sydenham, Sherwood and Westville, were the predominant localities in which migrants chose to reside. Twenty-seven respondents stated that they were residents of Overport while three said that they lived in Sydenham, Sherwood and Westville respectively. The latter mentioned areas were occupied by those migrants who comprised the middle aged group and those who were salon owners. These respondents noted that they were home owners in these areas while those migrants living in Overport said that they were renting in flats. Convenience to their places of employment was the key reason as to why migrants chose to live in Overport and its neighbouring suburbs.

The most common type of living arrangements among migrants was that of shared accommodation with kin, fellow workers and close friends. This allowed for the lowering of high living costs and ultimately the migrants' expenses. Five respondents lived with their uncles, three lived with their cousins and two lived with their brothers. The Indian migrant lived with his mother, sister and nephew and was the only migrant in the sample to have females living with him. Those migrants that lived with co-workers and friends revealed that flat mates shared the same nationality as them. Migrants listed the different ways in which they were informed about their places of residency. From local customers and newspaper advertisements to family ties with uncles, cousins and brothers as well as friends, migrants were enlightened and notified as to potential and/or available spaces for living.

The data represents the way in which respondents find accommodation in established suburban areas. Furthermore, living with migrants whom they shared common nationality with reveals the preference of respondents wanting to be with their 'own people'. While migrants' networks of family and friends assisted them in finding a place to stay, locals played an equally vital role in not only helping, but also guiding migrants into specific living spaces. Therefore, it should be reiterated that like their South Asian networks, local networks also function as important suppliers of information.

Decision making regarding who and where one will stay is linked to the migrant's social network as it is these networks that assist in finding and providing accommodation to the newly arrived migrant. A majority of the respondents said that the decision as to where and with whom they would take up residency was entirely their own to make. In contrast to this, a few migrants mentioned that their migrant relatives in the host society such as uncles, brothers and cousins, as well as friends, were the decision makers. All migrants pointed out that they were reliant upon their friends and kin since being a new resident of an unfamiliar environment rendered them vulnerable and dependent.

The notable absence of female counterparts such as wives, mothers and sisters, among others, proved to be an interesting scenario to explore with respect to how they cope within the domain of domesticity. With the exception of one migrant, all the other South Asian respondents had no females living with them. The Indian migrant was the only male among the sample that lived with his mother and sister. The assistance of a domestic worker for household duties such as cleaning, washing and ironing was common among most migrants in the study. Domestic helpers

comprised of Black South African women. Migrants said that they were made aware of these workers through local customers, neighbours, their bosses, and also through Black women coming to the salon seeking employment. While maids were responsible for basic domestic chores, cooking was shared among flat mates. Migrants noted that the food they cook in Durban is similar to the food they eat in their home countries. Buying food that was close to what they were used to back home was also not uncommon due to late working hours and its resultant tiredness. Four migrants said that they did not have the help of a maid and that they managed their own domestic chores. These respondents made note of the hardship experienced without female counterparts since back home, everything was done by the women (folk).

The researcher's curiosity regarding the domestic arrangements of the migrants prompted her to observe their living conditions. While a few (seven) migrants were keen on allowing the researcher to enter their living spaces, others were not. Unfortunately, the researcher did not get the opportunity to visit the living spaces of those migrants who had their own houses in Westville and Sherwood. It would have been an interesting point from which to make comparisons between the domestic arrangements of those who took up residence in flats and those who were home owners. Nevertheless, with the permission of those seven migrants, the researcher was accompanied by them to their particular flats. Observations revealed that migrants lived simple lives with mainly bare necessities that made up the contents of their flats. Their flats consisted of only necessary and relatively simple furnishings and lacked fanciful items. Like their salons, their living spaces also contained Islamic pictorial frames and Arabic calligraphic prayer verses. Despite the fact that migrants said they had maids, their flats appeared to be cluttered with clothing and other items

lying about. With reference to size, their flats were small with either one or two bedrooms, a kitchen, bathroom and a lounge. Notwithstanding the limitations of space, six to eight migrants occupied each flat, sleeping on mattresses on the floor.

4.6 Conclusion

South Asian migrants who come from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh demonstrate that their networks exist in a web of channels that intersects between their countries of origin and Durban, thus adopting transnational characteristics. The chapter also highlights the vital role that social networks of family and friends play in guiding and directing migrants into specific places and jobs as well as providing assistance in the settling-in processes of adaptation and adjustment. It has also discussed how socialising and associating with similar others leads to the removal of desolation and towards invoking a sense of belonging. The creation of migrant enclaves serves as a foundation for recreating and assimilating with the social practices of their respective countries of birth. The data gathered on the domestic domain of these migrants outlines how migrant households in the receiving society reconfigure to become units which are male-headed. While most migrants appropriated the newfound modernity they are exposed to in Durban, others retained their normative beliefs and practices by maintaining their religion to the best of their ability.

CHAPTER FIVE:

LIVELIHOODS AND COMPETITION: FOREIGN VERSUS LOCAL

Labour migration has been and continues to be a major livelihood strategy for those seeking to improve their socio-economic status. Migration is perceived as an opportunity that assists in alleviating unemployment and reducing the depth and severity of poverty through generating monetary transfers in the form of remittances. This chapter will focus on salon work as a livelihood strategy among South Asian migrants in Durban, both at the level of ownership and the level of employee. Additionally, it also deals with the contestation between foreign owned salons and locally owned salons. For decades, South African born salon operators have worked in the comfort of niches that provided them with a captive market drawn from the local residents. In the absence of competition and through an established clientele, their services remained unchanged for years. As a result of competition being non-existent, the service offered by local salon owners remain somewhat complacent. The recent arrival and settlement of South Asian Muslims from countries such as Pakistan, India and Bangladesh who are well trained in the art of hairdressing, head massages and hair dyeing, has created an atmosphere of intense competition with local salon owners. It appears that foreign owned salons provide a more elaborate, efficient and cheaper service than those services provided by locally owned salons. In light of the aforementioned statement, this chapter will further explore relations between local and foreign owned salons and issues regarding service provision and competition. It will also investigate the perceptions of locals towards these migrants and the increasing presence of their salons in Durban.

5.1 Livelihoods

Simply put, a livelihood consists of those assets and activities that contain the ability to generate income. Livelihoods play an important role in sustaining daily living and satisfying basic needs. From formal sector work to informal trade, individuals adopt varying ways to produce an income. Before discussing the adoption of salon work by migrants in Durban, it is only appropriate to explore livelihood strategies in the country of origin prior to migration. In this study, respondents engaged in various types of work in their countries of origin, among which salon work was only one form of work.

5.1.1 Previously held occupations in the country of origin

A majority of respondents from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh were employed in both formal and informal sector work while a few of them (four) were jobless. Six respondents engaged in restaurant work. Of the six, two worked as chefs, three of them were waiters and one worked as a cleaner doing menial chores. Other occupations included working in clothing shops as sale assistants (three respondents), repairing cell phones (two respondents) and being rickshaw/taxi drivers (two respondents). Apart from these migrants, one Bangladeshi respondent and one Pakistani respondent were employed in office work. In this study, the one Indian migrant, worked as an accountant for seven years and later engaged in salon work following retrenchment from office work. The majority of migrants (13) were involved in salon work. Of the 13, six migrants said that they were labourers who cut hair while three of them noted that they were salon owners. Although a majority of respondents were employed in their home country, it was the completion of their contracts that led to job loss. In addition to the ending of contracts, other common

reasons cited for job loss were as follows: a) less pay (hard work was not sufficiently compensated), b) lengthy work hours, c) workers were relieved from duties as they were no longer needed, and d) quarrels with employers resulted in them being removed from the job. For salon owners, the experience of bad business and the lack of substantial profit making were circumstances that led to the eventual closure of their businesses. It is these reasons outlined above that initiated migratory flows. It is also brought to the fore that migrants were subject to poor pay and difficult/strenuous working conditions. Despite such hardships, they patiently pursued their jobs due to the desperation of wanting to ease their dismal circumstances.

5.1.2 Current occupations in Durban

Prior to arrival in Durban, respondents were informed and aware of job opportunities by their migrant kin and friends in the receiving country. It was this social network of family and friends that provided a backbone for the migrants because of its supportive and directive role in exposing the migrants to their first jobs as well as to their current position. This social network comprised of immediate and extended kin. Five respondents indicated that their uncles were salon owners in Durban and it is through this relation that they were able to gain employment in their salons. Although respondents currently engaged in salon work, two of them initially occupied positions in other niches:

Case study 29:

Rezwan, a 23-year-old Pakistani migrant, worked as a chef at Emperor's Palace in Johannesburg in an Indian restaurant called "Taste of Mumbai". He left the job because he was having a difficult time. His friend in Durban had told him about a job opportunity at a Pakistani owned salon in Durban. He is currently working in this salon.

Case study 30:

Yaseen, a 23-year-old Kashmiri migrant, worked in a Pakistani restaurant upon arrival in Durban. He alternated between being a waiter and a cashier. He however, left the job because it was too difficult. He is now working as a barber for a Pakistani owned salon.

Apart from these two respondents, the majority of migrants were involved in salon work from the time of their arrival in Durban to the present:

Case study 31:

Imran, who is the only Indian migrant in the study, worked at a Pakistani owned salon for three months when he first arrived in Durban. He did not like working there because he was over-worked. Moreover, he was the only worker in the salon who was of Indian origin. He decided to leave the job in this salon and assumed work for Carlton Hair in Durban's Gateway shopping mall. After working for one-and-a-half years for this salon, he left the job with the intention of opening his own salon in Durban, which he did.

Case study 32:

Rehaan, a 27-year-old Punjabi-Pakistani migrant, said that upon arrival in South Africa, he worked for a Pakistani owned salon in Johannesburg. While working there, he began planning to open his own salon in Durban. When his plans came to fruition, he left Johannesburg and came to Durban. He now has his own salon.

Case study 33:

Hoosen, who is 23 years of age and is from Lahore, Pakistan, used to work for a locally owned salon in Durban when he first arrived. After working at the salon for a year, the salon closed and he began searching for another job. He found work at a Pakistani owned salon in which he is still presently working.

Salon work featured significantly in the country of resettlement as shown by the data above. Being employees of locally owned salons was not uncommon for a few migrants. This demonstrates how migrants are absorbed within the local labour

market by working in local businesses. More importantly, information has illustrated that those migrants who have acquired the skill and trade of cutting hair, transport this skill with them to the host society. It is one of the most important socio-economic assets that respondents have brought with them because it opens up avenues for them to engage in gainful employment. This skill serves to function as insurance for respondents in times of economic uncertainty and the lack of formal employment, for example, practicing this skill informally from home or backyard garages. The observational phase of this research confirms this deduction. The researcher observed how a few migrants were engaging in hair cutting from small informal rooms and garages, rendering them with the opportunity to be self-employed. Therefore, salon work is a type of work that is classified as skilled labour and, for respondents in this study, hair cutting is an acquired skill. All respondents in the study are currently involved in salon work in the host society, with four of them being salon owners and the remaining 26 engaging in hair cutting. Also remarkable was that the Indian migrant was able to gain employment in a Pakistani salon despite ongoing hostilities between India and Pakistan. The continuation of such hostilities is evident in this case as the Indian migrant stated that he found it difficult to work with the Pakistani colleagues whom he considered unfriendly.

5.1.3 Reasons for choosing salon work and preferred occupations of migrants

While some individuals have the freedom of choice with regards to accepting or declining job opportunities, others, especially those who are exposed to poverty and unemployment, are unfortunately left with minimal or no options. Thus, it was important to uncover the reasons as to why salon work is chosen as a livelihood strategy:

- *“Everyone in my family was doing this job and I am used to cutting hair because I was doing the same thing in Pakistan.”*
- *“I did not choose this job. I was desperate for a job, any job that was available.”*
- *“This is the only job I have done all my life and therefore I am used to it.”*

Not being certified through tertiary education was especially why these individuals had such limited choices. Sheer survival forced them into accepting whatever was made available to them, allowing them the opportunity to adjust and adapt.

Case study 34:

Rehaan is involved in salon work because hair cutting in his family has been passed on from one generation to the next. From the age of 20-years-old, he has been involved in hair cutting. He noted that cutting hair comes naturally to him and described himself as a ‘machine’ and a ‘pro’ with the scissors.

Case study 35:

Twenty-two-year-old Ahmed from Karachi did not have a choice about doing this job. He noted that his main priority was to secure a job and therefore took whatever work was available to him. According to him, it is the income derived from the job that is important and not the occupation type.

Case study 36:

The Indian migrant, Imran, noted that he chose this job because he likes creation. Although he worked as an accountant, he was not formerly qualified as one. In addition, he did not want to do any other job except salon work when he arrived in South Africa.

Respondents outlined different reasons as to why salon work is taken up as a livelihood strategy. It is notable that the trade of cutting hair has spanned over generations for some migrant families. This was evident for three migrants who contended that their engagement in salon work is a continuation of the work their grandfathers, fathers and uncles did. They expressed a sense of pride and honour

as they considered themselves as upholding the family tradition. For these migrants, salon work and its associated skills are a family tradition and not just an occupation generating an income. For eight migrants in the study, salon work was not really an occupation of choice. These respondents stated that they would have assumed any position of work due to their desperation of wanting to earn an income. Despite the absence of autonomy in choosing a job, migrants were content and thankful that they were employed, and some even stated that in their home countries, their chances of finding employment in salon work or any other work was bleak. Apart from these explanations for salon work highlighted above, eight respondents stated that this trade was completely new to them. These migrants did not work in salons and had no previous experience in cutting hair. Hair cutting was taught to them by their employers, uncles who were salon owners and friends or co-workers. The teaching of hair cutting by family and friends is an exemplary display of the way in which these members are imparting skills to the migrant. In doing so, they are actually supporting and protecting migrants from the entrapment of unemployment in a foreign country. Once again, this brings to the surface that social networks are central and play an over-arching role in providing a cushion for migrants against external constraints.

Although respondents were currently undertaking hair cutting as a way of making a living, they articulated a preference for other occupations. The one migrant in the study who is in possession of a university degree said that he would have liked to obtain a job related to his qualifications. Playing professional cricket was a preferred job for five of the Pakistani migrants while three respondents stated that they would have liked to do professional office jobs such as working in banks or becoming a lawyer. They, however acknowledged that due to a lack of experience and their life situations, the desire for professional work would only remain a dream. Four

respondents were in favour of being businessmen involved in any other trade except salon work. The desire to study at tertiary level was expressed by five respondents (these five migrants were part of the younger age category) who earnestly said that they wanted to study and have better jobs. In sombre tones and facial expressions, they mentioned that a lack of funds prevented them from pursuing their goals. In studying migrants, priority is regularly given to them in the 'here' and 'now' and their lives in the host country. By becoming engrossed in this way, it is often forgotten that migrants are individuals who also have ambitions and dreams which they forego for migration just so that they can give not only themselves, but their families, a better life.

The number of respondents who disliked cutting hair were few in relation to those who enjoyed it. The 20 respondents who held a positive attitude and the 10 respondents who held a negative attitude towards their job were clearly evident in their responses:

- *“I like this job because it is not very hard and I am used to it because I have been doing it for the past five years.”*
- *“I like to cut hair. I have been cutting hair for a long time. It is an easy job because it does not take long to cut someone’s hair and also I am experienced in it...it is not a demanding job.”*
- *“I like cutting hair. I meet a lot of new people because we have different customers that come to the salon. Also, I am used to it and it is not a hard job.”*
- *“The hours I have to work are too long. Most of the time the salon is busy and I have to attend to customers which is very tiring.”*
- *“I find this job very boring. Everyday I am doing the same thing. It is not an easy job because the hours are long and I work six days a week.”*

- *“All my time is spent working because I work everyday from 8am to 8pm. I do not really like it because I have to work so much with only one off day a week.”*

Various reasons account for why most migrants enjoyed their jobs and why a few of them expressed discontentment. For those who held a negative attitude towards their job, their attitude stems largely from the lengthy working hours and its resultant fatigue, as well as the lack of challenge within the job. These migrants noted that they found salon work to be monotonous since it entailed a repetition of the same duties everyday. The fact that respondents were only given one day off per week left them with limited time to enjoy and pursue their social lives. In contrast, a majority of respondents displayed feelings of satisfaction and happiness towards cutting hair. These respondents explained that hair cutting was not a challenging or demanding job. Familiarity and being well trained in this line of work led to these migrants being content with their job. Furthermore, for some migrants, salon work provided a space for social interaction because respondents come into frequent contact with a diverse range of people. Irrespective of their feelings towards hair cutting, all respondents showed gratitude towards the fact that they were either wage/self employed.

5.2 Foreign versus Local

The rise and emergence of foreign owned enterprises has altered the geographical mapping and the landscape of South African cities. In recent years, there has been an influx of migrants, mainly from parts of Asia and Africa, who engage in entrepreneurial work. In South Africa, migrants have been charged with accusations of stealing jobs from locals, increasing crime and adding to the existing socio-economic burdens. These perceptions have been nurtured by statements from

recognised political figures such as Chief Buthelezi, the then Minister of Home Affairs, who vehemently argued that “the employment of illegal immigrants is unpatriotic because it deprives South Africans of jobs and...the rising level of immigrants has implications for RDP as they will be absorbing unacceptable proportions of housing subsidies and adding to the difficulties we will be experiencing in health care” (Reitzes, 1994: 8). Circumstances of destitution, civil wars, as well as economic and political crises, impel a vast majority of these migrant individuals to leave their country of origin and seek a better quality of life elsewhere. In the receiving country, migrants are either wage employed or self employed. Migrants who belong to the latter grouping create and exploit opportunities in areas where such prospects are untouched or non-existent. Common entrepreneurial areas of work consist of the sale of clothing items, repairing and sale of technological goods (cell phones, computers, radios, television sets), ownership of restaurants and hair salons, among others. Those migrants of South Asian descent now living in South Africa engage in various trade niches ranging from salon work, owning of restaurants and/or take-aways, the sale of DVDs, tailoring and selling traditional garments from their respective countries. Despite their various trade operations, this study has chosen to attribute focus on salon work and the skill of hair cutting by South Asian Muslim migrants.

The increase in foreign owned businesses that are similar to localized ones may evoke feelings of intimidation and competitiveness. The validity of such a hypothesis was tested through exploring the relations between locally owned salons and foreign owned salons, as well as the perceptions of services rendered from locals who are customers of these foreign owned salons. These local-foreign relations will first be examined from the point of view of the migrants. The majority (26) of respondents

said that they shared no relations with locally owned salons while a few stated that previous employment was the only link that they shared with them. Two migrants said that social interaction with local salon owners was minimal and comprised of greeting and/or casual talk. On the contrary, 27 respondents mentioned that they maintained relations of friendship with Pakistani and Bangladeshi workers from other foreign owned salons, with three migrants sharing no links to these salons. These findings reiterate the deduction that migrants tend to uphold relations with similar people, especially those with whom they share a common nationality. Of the three, one migrant who is of Indian origin proclaimed that he preferred to foster relations with other Indian or Bangladeshi migrants and not Pakistanis for whom he expressed a dislike. The remaining two respondents noted that they did not like to keep too many friends, but rather to sustain existing bonds between their employer and fellow workers.

The following two sections address issues regarding service provision and perceptions of South Asian migrants and their salons from the viewpoint of local salon owners and local customers.

5.2.1 Perceptions through local 'windows'- salon owners

From the position of the local salon owners, three respondents noted that they were friends with a few workers from neighbouring Pakistani owned salons. Despite these three local salon owners indicating that they had cordial relations with a few foreign owned salons, most local salon owners stated that they do not share significant relations with any of the salons in their vicinity. The issue of threat by foreign owned salons is reflected in the following extracts:

Case study 37:

Mary is a 45-year-old Indian female and is the owner of a local salon in Overport, Durban. She agrees to some extent with the view that foreign owned salons are a threat to the success of her salon. She has had a few clients who no longer come to her salon, but have now become customers at Pakistani owned salons in the same area. She noted that foreign owned salons take her clients away and that she knows of a few clients from other locally owned salons who are now regular customers of Pakistani owned salons. She felt that this was the reason for loss of business and profit.

Case study 38:

Prakash, a 52-year-old Indian male, has his own salon in Overport. He feels that foreign owned salons are a threat to the success of his salon because they are situated too close to his business, thus attracting his customers. Many of the customers who go to these salons would in actual fact be customers of locally owned salons had these foreign owned salons not been in existence. Therefore they have become a threat to local businesses.

Case study 39:

In contrast to the above, Faizel, a 28-year-old Indian male who is also a local salon owner, does not really feel that foreign owned salons are a threat to his salon currently because his salon is still busy and he has been able to retain his regular customers. However, he did note that these salons can be threatening because there are so many of them all over Durban and other parts of South Africa. Overport is cluttered with foreign owned salons and there is also a Bangladeshi owned salon and an Indian owned salon, but Pakistani owned salons outnumber these other foreign owned Muslim salons.

Case study: 40

Faraaz is a local Indian male salon owner in Overport and is 32 years of age. He does not really view foreign owned salons as a threat to the success of his salon. Even though there are so many of them, he argued that his salon stays busy and he makes a comfortable living out of it. He believes that while foreign owned salons may not be a threat to his salon, they may be a threat to other locally owned salons. This

is due to the fact that foreign owned salons are supported by many locals and their busy nature is indicative of their success.

Two competing arguments emerged from the data. On the one hand, four local salon owners were of the view that foreign owned salons were not a serious threat because their businesses continued to thrive despite the increasing existence of these salons. Six local respondents held opposing views and argued that the emergence and increasing presence of foreign owned salons were a threat to the success of locally owned salons because of their popularity and the fact that they were so busy. With regards to competition, several local salon owners said that it was difficult to compete with foreign owned salons because they are different and have a unique way of hair cutting and conducting business. Most local salon owners admitted that the proliferation of foreign owned salons in their vicinity has led to a growing concern for their own salons. Those local salon owners who did not view foreign owned salons as a threat argued that there was no need to compete with them and that it would be easier to compete with locally owned salons because of the similarities they shared.

All local salon owners offered good appraisal of foreign owned salons and their services. Common statements included: *“foreign salons do a good job and offer people affordable, friendly and efficient service”*; *“they are absolutely skilled in what they do and are artists in their trade”*; *“these salons are well-established and the interior of their salons are reflective of five star statuses”*. Some local salon owners themselves confessed that they have been customers of foreign owned salons and held their work in high regard. Local salon owners also commented on the noticeable differences between locally owned and foreign owned salons with regards to

services rendered. All of them stated that the most significant difference was the famous head massage that is characteristic of foreign owned salons. In addition, they remarked on the extensive business hours by foreign owned salons which are offered from early morning (8am) until late night (usually 8pm or 9pm). Local salon owners said that they were amazed at the way, in which these migrants came to South Africa, opened their businesses and run them so successfully. They further commented in amazement on the absence of problems among the many foreign owned salons, even though they were situated side by side or opposite each other. With reference to their opinions on the increasing presence of foreign owned salons, all local salon owners expressed dissatisfaction:

- *“I am not very pleased to see our city being decorated with these foreign owned salons. These salons are basically in every corner and it is not good for our business.”*
- *“These foreign owned salons are flooding our city and if this continues, they will eventually put our locals out of business.”*
- *“The foreign owned salons are really booming in Durban. They stay very busy and enjoy good business from our locals. These salons are taking away customers from local salons because most local customers that now go to foreign owned salons were previously customers at locally owned salons.”*

The dislike by local salon owners towards foreign owned salons stemmed largely from the negative implications that they hold for South Africa:

Case study 41:

Mary, a local salon owner, does not approve of the idea that there are many Pakistani owned salons, and even worse, is the fact that there are too many in certain areas. She noted that Overport is overpopulated with foreign owned salons and that if more of these salons open up, locally owned salons would probably be out of business. She was also of the opinion that there should be stricter regulations for foreign owned businesses in South Africa.

Case study 42:

Faizel, who is also a local salon owner, mentioned that he did not like the fact that there are so many foreign owned salons. He expressed dissatisfaction about the ease with which these migrants opened up their salons here which is not possible for him or others to do in another country. While he acknowledged that these migrants are good people, he also stressed that they have made themselves too comfortable in South Africa. According to him, the money these foreign owned salons make is circulated here, but not all of it, because a substantial proportion of the revenue is remitted at South Africa's cost.

These findings paint a clear picture of the negative perceptions held by local salon owners towards the rate and intensity at which foreign owned salons are increasing. Respondents expressed concern for their own businesses stating that the emergence of additional foreign owned salons would result in the loss of profit for that of their own salons. Not only do they view them as being a threat to their own salons, but also to the local economy. Local salon owners also gave their views of how they felt towards South Asian Muslim migrants:

- *“Some Pakistani migrants are nice and friendly. I admire their work and also the fact that they leave their country to come here and work. On the other hand, there are also those who are bad and partake in criminal activities. These migrants also marry South African women for citizenship. It is not fair that they enter our country freely, invade our space and pose a threat to our businesses.”*
- *“The Pakistani and Bangladeshi migrants do their work without causing any trouble. Some of them are very friendly while there are those who are involved in illegal activities. These migrants are overpopulating our cities and our country.”*
- *“Personally, I feel that these migrants, whether good or bad are invading our space and our country. There are just too many of them and our government needs to do something urgently to limit the inflow of these migrants.”*

Findings revealed a mixture of feelings among local salon owners. A double-sided view emerged in that all of them stated that these migrants and their services are worthy of commendation, but, by the same token, they also conveyed strong feelings that stood in opposition to such praise. The negative feelings of local salon owners towards South Asian Muslim migrants, specifically Pakistanis, are similar to their perceptions regarding the increasing presence of these foreign owned salons. A majority of respondents stated that Pakistani migrants who they had contact with appeared to be pleasant and friendly individuals. Other respondents (eight) mentioned that as with people from anywhere in the world, there are both good and bad Pakistanis. Respondents also brought to the fore the common stereotypes associated with Pakistani migrants such as the involvement in criminal/fraudulent activities (phone scams) and the marrying of South African women just to attain citizenship. They also noted that these migrants further corrupted South African law. Such statements gave an impression that these migrants are invading/infiltrating space in South African cities. Additionally, it can be argued that such views are suggestive of xenophobic (fear/hatred of foreigners) behaviour. Local salon owners indicated that their attitudes towards these migrants was in no way a personal vendetta against them, rather, it is their deep rooted concerns for the future of the country and its citizens. The data reflects that local salon owners felt that an influx of migrants is unacceptable since most of them migrate using illegal strategies, but more so because they crowd urban spaces and pressurize the social service sector. To curb the rapid influx of these migrants, local salon owners said that stringent laws should be implemented by the government who have been rather nonchalant in controlling border posts, migration streams and foreign owned enterprises. Of the 10 local salon owners, six of them said that these migrants should not be allowed to

enter and live in South Africa with the relative ease that they do; instead, they should be deported to their respective countries of origin.

5.2.2 Perceptions through local 'windows'- local customers

The popularity of foreign owned salons among South African residents is portrayed by the busy nature of these salons. In trying to understand this fame, an exploration of service provision by these foreign owned salons as well as perceptions of these salons and these migrants was required from the viewpoint of local customers. The 10(local) people interviewed were local customers who frequently make use of services provided by foreign owned salons, and these were their feelings regarding services received:

- *“Their services are excellent and better than that of local salons. They are cheaper than locally owned salons.”*
- *“The Pakistani guys are very skilled at the job they do. Their services are efficient and convenient because of the flexible trading hours which allow me to cut my hair whenever I have time. In comparing prices, they are cheaper than locally owned salons.”*
- *“Not only do they offer exceptional services, but they are also affordable. These salons give clients a head massage after their haircut. They are convenient because they open early and close late.”*

The local customers' encouraging perceptions on service provision illustrate their appraisal and fondness towards foreign owned salons.

Case study 43:

Noor is a 42-year-old South African male who is a regular customer at a Pakistani salon. He loves these salons because they are excellent in the job that they do. In addition to his haircut, he also receives a head massage. According to him, their services are nothing short of excellent which he also described as warm, friendly,

cheap and convenient. He feels that a head massage together with welcoming service is a good enough incentive to make anyone want to go to these salons.

Case study 44:

Indran is 54 years of age and has been a customer at a Bangladeshi owned salon for two-and-a-half years. He stated that their services are excellent. In his view, these salons are efficient, neat and available all the time. For him, their head massage is the best and the technique is so special and unique that it cannot be found at a locally owned salon. He also commented that the services of these salons came at a cheaper price since he only paid R25 (twenty-five rands) as compared to locally owned salons which charged between R40 (forty rands) and R50 (fifty rands).

Local customers interviewed said that services provided by foreign owned salons were excellent. They openly praised migrants on the good job that they do and stated that the workers in these salons are in possession of a unique skill. All local customers indicated that in comparison to locally owned salons, foreign owned salons were cheaper and better. These customers also felt that they were receiving value for money since they were offered friendly service from workers who are experts in their jobs. They also commented on the free head massage that they received which is synonymous with foreign owned salons, which local salons lack. The establishment of foreign owned salons was applauded with admiration by local customers who mentioned that they are well set up and boast an inviting, relaxed atmosphere coupled with quality service. The accessibility of foreign owned salons featured importantly in their responses. Not only are these salons geographically well dispersed, they also have flexible trading hours which give customers the option to utilise these services at any time, usually from early morning (8am) until late night (9pm). It is for the reasons outlined above that foreign owned salons are popular among local residents. It is also these added advantages that explain why foreign

owned salons are a threat to locally owned salons and why business for some locally owned salons may be experiencing a decline in those areas in which foreign owned salons are rife.

Local customers commented on the increasing presence of foreign owned salons and whether or not they pose a threat to the success of locally owned salons:

- *“These salons are a threat to our locally owned salons which hinders growth and profit making for them. The number of Pakistani owned salons in areas such as Overport and Central Durban outnumber locally owned salons in these areas. The threat which they have begun to impose will further intensify in future years to come.”*
- *“The fact is that there are too many foreign owned salons, especially Pakistani salons. If they continue to increase, locally owned salons will soon be out of business. There should be foreign salons, but the number of these salons should be limited. These salons are a threat to locally owned salons because they have been able to attract a large number of South Africans.”*
- *“These salons do pose a threat because they are literally everywhere from a narrow side walk alley to well established business premises. They have a large South African clientele base which shows that they are taking away local business. This could have detrimental consequences in years to come.”*

From the view-point of local customers, they noted that the presence of foreign owned salons is indeed a threat to locally owned salons because they expropriate customers which results in a loss of business and ultimately profit making. Local customers raised pertinent questions such as how locally owned salons could reap profits in the wake of foreign owned salons that are thriving. Local customers agreed with the statement that foreign owned salons infiltrate not only business space, but living space too. They further argued that such overcrowding increased urban decay. Such arguments demonstrate concern regarding the increase in these foreign owned

salons not only for local businesses, but also for the future of South Africa. While customers were critical towards foreign owned salons, they also shed light on the advantages of these enterprises. They mentioned that the type and quality of services offered provided variation which local salons are devoid of. These findings illustrate two different arguments which, on the one hand show that the presence of foreign owned salons can be damaging, and on the other that despite customers knowing this, they still offer their patronage to these salons. Thus, it can be seen that local customers are the very individuals that enhance the damaging effect that foreign owned salons may inflict due to their constant support.

Local customers were also asked to offer their perceptions towards these foreign migrants and this is what they had to say:

- *“These foreign migrants are nice people. I personally have very good relations with them. As much as I like these foreign migrants, they are posing problems for local salons.”*
- *“These migrants are friendly people and treat customers with a lot of kindness and respect, but they are overpopulating our country.”*
- *“Some of these migrants are good people who just want to make a living. As much as these migrants are not creating any major observable problems, we cannot take it lightly and allow more and more Pakistani migrants to come here and flood our country.”*

While local customers held a favourable outlook with regards to the character of these migrants, they also identified and spoke about their negative feelings towards them.

Case study 45:

Prem is a 46-year-old local Indian male customer at a Pakistani salon. He likes these migrants as they are sociable and pleasant people. Despite his liking for them, he

argued that some of these migrants come to South Africa to have fun and engage in illegal activities. In his view, government needs to take stricter action against these migrants and should focus on improving conditions in the country, especially for the poor. He emphasised that this can be achieved if migrants are sent back to their respective countries because they bring their own problems to South Africa and add to the difficulties that locals are facing. He also mentioned that there is no need to have so many foreign owned salons.

Case study 46:

Jeremy, a 35-year-old Indian male local customer offers similar views to that of Prem. He notes that while some of these migrants are jovial and nice people, some, if not most of them are involved in fraud and other deviant behaviour. Despite how excellent their services are, he believes that the South African government needs to eliminate the increasing number of foreign owned enterprises and that stricter laws should be enforced when it comes to migrants and their entry into the country.

All local customers that were interviewed for this study stated that in general, foreign Muslim migrants were good, friendly and pleasant individuals. They also acknowledged that some of these migrants were bad because they tended to engage in illegal businesses and other fraudulent scams. Local customers also highlighted another negative connotation associated with Pakistani migrants such as marrying South African women for citizenship. They extended this argument further and said that most of these migrants were already married with a wife and children in their country of birth. Of the 10 local customers, five of them noted that these migrants should be sent back to their respective countries of origin. The responses elicited from local customers accentuate a stance that while these foreign owned salons are providing a cheaper and elaborate service, they are at the same time enhancing problems in South Africa which requires immediate attention from those in power (government). Above all else, local customers indicated that they would

continue to support foreign owned salons by making use of their services. Through continual support of these foreign owned salons, locals are creating a flourishing market for their goods and services and are therefore providing a stronger foothold that strengthens the success and growth of these salons.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the adoption of salon work as a livelihood strategy among South Asian Muslim migrants in Durban. In doing so, previous occupations held by migrants in their respective countries of origin were first explored with focus then shifting to their current involvement in salon work either as a worker or an employer, their perceptions towards their present jobs and their preferred occupational choices. For most migrants, hair cutting was the only type of work that they have had exposure to while for a few others, the salon trade spans across several familial generations. Due to the increasing presence of foreign owned salons in the midst of locally owned salons, this chapter has also investigated the dynamics of competition, threat and service provision relating to salon work. The assessment of these issues from the perspective of local salon owners and local customers has assisted in providing critical information concerning the local and foreign salon trade in Durban. While some local salon owners did not view foreign owned salons as a threat, many of them were of the view that the increase in the number of these salons will surely create a competitive market in years to come. Attention was also attributed to local salon owners and local customers' perceptions regarding the rise and growth of foreign owned salons and the influx of foreign Muslim migrants of South Asian origin. Perceptions towards migrants, particularly Pakistanis, were two-fold in that they were viewed both negatively and positively. The negative aspects

revolved around Pakistanis being involved in criminal activities, while the positive aspects focused on the kind and humble nature of some of them.

CHAPTER SIX:

REMITTANCES

Remittances have become a growing theme in academic literature in the past decade. This is mainly due to the radical scale and speed at which migrants across the globe are remitting to their families in the country of origin. Remittance recipients are largely those countries who are poor and characteristic of unbalanced political and economic systems. It is against this milieu that this chapter aims to discuss the remittance patterns of South Asian migrants in Durban. It will do so by contextualising global remittance trends within international literary texts and then shift focus to why they remit, who remits, how they remit, and the supportive role that remittances play for families and households as well as poor socio-economic and political systems.

6.1 Global cash flows: Remittances in South Asia and other developing nations

Remittances have become one of the main contributors to foreign revenues in developing countries. According to Al-Hasan (2006: 9) “remittances are the surplus portions of earnings sent back by nationals or the expatriate community from the country of employment.” In recent years, the surge in global remittances, especially for developing and/or impoverished nations, has been sparked by the intensification of migratory movements. The proliferation of migrant mobility for countries of the developing world provides an impetus for migrants to ease and lessen economic burdens in their home countries on a micro (household) and macro level through

monetary transfers. According to a Bangladeshi Report¹⁹ (2010: 4) “migrant remittances are estimated to have grown to \$433 billion in 2008 depicting an increase of \$53 billion or 12 percent over the corresponding amount in 2007 which was \$380 billion.” Similarly, reports by the World Bank (2006) illustrate the phenomenal rise in global remittances. These reports show that “from \$2 billion in 1970, it increased to \$130 billion, and by 2000 it had reached \$268 billion, out of which \$199 billion went to the developing countries” (Khatri, 2007: 5). On a global scale, India, China and Mexico have retained their position at the apex of the remittance-recipient scale in 2007 and 2008 (Ratha *et al.*, 2008: 3), with India and Mexico dominating the developing world in overall remittance shares (Orozco, 2005: 13). According to the State Bank of Pakistan (2006), remittances reached up to \$430 million during the years 2005-2006, indicating an increase of more than 10 percent in remittance flows. In Bangladesh, remittances have “maintained a hefty growth in recent years, from \$2.07 billion in 2001 to \$9.69 billion in fiscal year 2008-2009, an average growth of 17 percent per annum. Remittances to Bangladesh during the last quarter of 2008 slackened momentarily towards the end of 2008 but picked up renewed momentum from the beginning of 2009” (Bangladeshi Report, 2010: 16). Based on the latter, it can be argued that the decline in these flows could possibly stem from a slump in money sending from the country of settlement, or the recent economic meltdown triggered by the global financial crisis. For other South Asian countries such as Nepal and Sri Lanka, remittance sending figures depict a sharp increase from migrant receiving countries and contribute 15 percent and 9 percent to their respective Gross Domestic Products (GDP) (Khatri, 2007: 6). Among the

¹⁹ This is a migration report submitted to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) from Maxwell Stamp Ltd, Bangladesh. The report is entitled “A Study on the International Demand for Semi-Skilled and Skilled Bangladeshi workers”.

developing nations of South Asia and elsewhere across the globe, India continues to remain the largest remittance receiving country in the world with Pakistan being ranked fifth and Bangladesh seventh (Khatri, 2007).

Remittance figures for other developing nations reflect similar patterns. Hilgert *et al.* (2006: 211) maintains that “\$30 billion in remittances was sent from the US to Latin America and the Caribbean in 2004.” Orozco (2002) states that the flow of remittances in Latin America has shown a steep rise from the 1980s. Research conducted by the World Bank illustrates these swelling cash flows. “The flows to Mexico and selected Central American countries increased from nearly \$1 billion in 1980 to \$3.7 billion in 1990 and more than \$10 billion in 2000. Remittances to Mexico rose from \$800 million in 1980 to \$2.4 billion in 1990 and to \$6.5 billion in 2000” (World Bank, 2000). While these figures signify considerable growth, they only reflect cash transfers through official channels. If the flow of remittances through informal channels is documented, remittances for developing nations will be considerably higher:

“Because most migrants come from the developing world and work in high income countries, remittances are overwhelmingly a source of foreign capital to individual family members in the developing world. While developing countries are the dominant recipients, some developed and wealthy countries such as Spain and France also receive substantial remittances. In practice, many developing countries increasingly can count on labour as one of the most valuable export commodities, sometimes the most valuable export commodity” (Orozco, 2005: 10).

6.2 Why remittances?

The trends and patterns characterising the sending and receiving of remittances has been well documented in migration literature and will continue to be given attention due to heightening global migrant mobility. A plethora of reasons account for why

migrants remit to their families in the sending society. Amuedo-Dorantes *et al.* (2004: 38) mentions that altruism is one of the most important underlying factors that motivate migrants to remit. They argue that migrants feel compelled to share their earnings with those family members who they have left behind. In addition, Stark (1991) states that affection and concern for the welfare of kin are factors which enhance remittance sending. This correlates with Rosenzweig and Stark's (1989) ideology of migrant cash transfers. They note that the underlying principle behind remittances is to diversify earnings for the household in the country of origin, thus supplementing existing income. The migratory process is fraught with costs which require the expending of a sizeable amount of capital. To meet these expenses, migrants may take loans from family, friends or money lenders. Therefore remittances, in this instance, may be explained by the loan/debt repayment rationale (Connell and Brown, 1995). Migration is a process laden with uncertainties. In the wake of such doubt and unpredictability, the intention behind remittance sending, especially for those migrants who have the desire to return home, may be to accumulate savings. Such savings serve as an insurance against possible risks migrants may encounter upon returning home (Amuedo-Dorantes *et al.*, 2004). Of the 30 respondents in this study, 29 stated that they were remittance senders. Remittances are usually sent by individuals, however, collective remittances are not uncommon especially to those households who have more than one family member living abroad as migrants. Among the researcher's sample, the diversification of household earnings and altruism featured prominently as reasons for remittance sending:

- *“My father is the breadwinner in my family. He does not earn enough money. I have to send money home in order to help my parents and to make it easier for them to take care of the household.”*

- *“My brother and father are the only two people in my house that work. They do not have high paying jobs. They are barely able to manage with the money they earn because our family is big. The money I send home helps them a lot.”*
- *“My father used to work, but due to his health condition, he had to leave his job. My brother who is also a migrant living in London sends money home. I also send money home. This is the only income that my family receives. If we do not send this money, my family will not be able to manage their everyday living.”*

Case study 47:

Raheem is a 23-year-old migrant from Dhaka, Bangladesh. His father is the sole breadwinner and works as a taxi driver. The income derived from his father’s job is minimal and therefore insufficient to manage the household. With this situation in mind, Raheem feels obligated to assist his parents through sending home a portion of his earnings every month which adds to his father’s earnings and helps to ease the economic burdens of his family.

Case study 48:

Similar to Raheem’s case is that of Usmaan, a 21-year-old migrant from Lahore, Pakistan. Within his natal household, his brother and father are employed, however, they both have low paying jobs which makes it difficult to manage household expenses. In addition to these expenses, Usmaan noted that he has two younger siblings, who are both schooling. His family encounters a lot of financial stress because they have to not only meet household responsibilities, but have to also incur the added expense of his siblings’ school fees. To lighten his family’s monetary tribulations, he sends a share of his wages home every month. His family relies upon the money he sends and it therefore helps in alleviating their financial burdens.

With reference to the data outlined above, it is evident that respondents’ primary motives for remitting is not rooted in self interest, but rather out of concern for the well-being of their loved ones. Respondents expressed a genuine sense of duty to

their families which led to them initiating these monetary flows. However, there is literature that suggests that motives to remit income are not entirely altruistic. For instance, Thieme and Wyss (2005: 84) persuasively argue that:

“Remittances are not an outcome of pure altruism. They are, together with the financing of migration, part of an implicit agreement, which governs the allocation of investment and return between parents and children. Families invest in education of children or migration of family members, expecting remittances and old age insurance. At the same time, migrants keep good relations with the family to ensure that they inherit family properties later.”

Respondents stated that they remit to their families to add to the existing pool of income back home and to also assist with maintenance of the household. Findings disclose that respondents come from relatively impoverished families who are dependent on these cash transfers. The principle reasoning behind migratory movements for respondents in this study centred on uplifting their socio-economic standing not only for themselves, but also for those family members who they leave behind. This obligation to kin manifests in the words of Suro (2004: 4) who puts forth that “at the simplest level...remittances are the expression of profound emotional bonds between relatives separated by geography and borders, and they are the manifestation of a profound and constant interaction among those relatives regardless of the distances between them.” In a broader sense, remittances become a pivotal element of migration because of the relative importance it holds for improving the quality of lives for those who remain in the sending society. Without these monetary flows, many families would be unable to manage and/or fulfil not only their domestic responsibilities, but also obligation to other kin within the household such as children (young and old). For most of the respondents in this study, remittances are the supplementary if not primary source of income for their

families. It is often assumed that all migrants remit, however, it should be noted that this is not true, and as a result not all migrant households receive cash transfers. One migrant in this study said that he did not send remittances to his family.

Case study 49:

Rezwan is a 23-year-old migrant who lived in Lahore, Pakistan. He does not send money home to his family. He earns R4500 (four thousand five hundred rands) a month of which R3000 (three thousand rands) is used to pay rent for the house in which he lives. After using the remaining funds to buy food and other items, he does not have enough money to send home. Instead, his parents send money to him through the 'hawala' system. He stated that even though he does not remit, his parents still receive cash transfers from his brother who is working and living in London.

Twenty-three respondents mentioned that they remit every month while six respondents said that money is sent home after every two months. The need to save enough money was the explanation given by those respondents who do not remit monthly. The wages for migrants in this study ranged from a minimum of R3000 (three thousand rands) to a maximum of R5000 (five thousand rands). These figures are representative of those migrants who are salon labourers and are therefore not applicable to those respondents who are salon owners. The amount sent home to their families depended upon the earnings of the migrant and their expenses in the receiving country. Twenty-eight of the 30 respondents indicated that they remit between R2000 (two thousand rands) and R3000 (three thousand rands), with one migrant indicating that he sends home R1000 (one thousand rands). Salon owners were inclined to remit more with remittances amounting to R5000 (five thousand rands) or R6000 (six thousand rands). In order to discern how these cash flows were

made available to their families, migrants were asked about the medium employed to send remittances:

- *“I send money home to my family through my uncle’s bank account. My uncle has South African citizenship, so he is able to have a bank account. I give the money to my uncle and he deposits it into my father’s bank account in Pakistan.”*
- *“My mother has a bank account here, so I use my mother’s account to transfer money into my brother’s bank account in India.”*
- *“I send money through the hawala system. I give the money to a Pakistani money agent who sends it to my family in Pakistan.”*

Case study 50:

Hoosen is from Lahore and is 23 years of age. He has an uncle in South Africa who has attained South African citizenship. Like a few other migrants in the study, Hoosen uses his uncle’s bank account to send money home. He states that electronic transfers through his uncle’s account are a convenient and trustworthy method for him.

Case study 51:

Despite Imran’s relocation to Durban, his two younger siblings (a brother and sister) still reside in India to whom he regularly remits. Since his mother has South African citizenship, he uses her bank account to transfer funds into his brother’s account in India.

Case study 52:

Rehaan, who is from Punjabi-Pakistan, sends money home through a system called ‘hawala’. The money is given to an agent who is Pakistani and the funds are then converted into dollars and sent to his family in Pakistan. When the money reaches Pakistan, Rehaan’s family is contacted and asked to collect the money from the agent.

The data shows that migrants employ a diverse range of mechanisms to ensure that remittances reach their recipient families. Using bank accounts of their migrant kin in

the host society for remittance sending was not uncommon. Four migrants used their uncle's bank accounts, one migrant used his cousin's account, and three noted that they used their own accounts because they had South African citizenship. In addition to family ties, three respondents stated that they deposit funds into their bosses bank accounts after which their bosses' would make the necessary transfers into the account of a respective family member, usually parents or siblings. The remaining 21 respondents utilised the traditional informal channel to transfer funds abroad, a mechanism well known as 'hawala' or 'hundi'. This system entails the movement of money from one country to another via private agents/money-changers (Suleri and Savage, 2006). In this case, migrants give money to a 'hawala' operator in the country of employment and his agent in turn delivers the money to receiving families in the recipient country. This system is used extensively in other parts of the world. In a briefing note by The International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, it is stated that:

“The hawala system emerged to finance trade without having to travel with gold or silver, which used to be dangerous, as roads were beset with pirates and bandits. The system flourished in China, Asia and the Middle East. The current primary users of IFTs (Informal Funds Transfer) are individuals from the Indian subcontinent, East Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere, who live and work in Europe, the Persian Gulf region, and North America. These individuals often use hawala to send remittances to their relatives back home.”²⁰

The constraints imposed by official channels predispose and invite migrants to use informal channels. The informal 'hawala' mechanism was favoured by those respondents who used it. Reasons for favourability and/or popularity centred on cost effectiveness and efficiency which formal regulatory channels lack. If fees are charged by 'hawala' agents, it is usually lower than regular bank fees (Orozco,

²⁰ Kfir, I. (2005). Briefing note - The Hawala System and the International Monetary Fund/Financial Action Task Force. International Institute for Counter-Terrorism.

2002). Additionally migrants contended that the simplicity of the system is predicated upon the fact that it is easily accessible with no identification or bank account required by the migrant or their relatives in the sending society. Despite being advantageous, a drawback related to such methods may be that they lack the reliability inherent within formal systems of sending money. They are unreliable because it does not provide the individual migrant with any guarantee that the money will be sent. Also, there is no formal documentation that can act as proof against money laundering incidences, if and when they arise. Despite this, migrants were willing to take the risk and utilise what they believe is an inexpensive and simple method of money sending. Respondents pointed out that networks play a fundamental role in remittance sending. They note that family and friends in the country of resettlement assist in directing them to specific agents who are involved in the informal transfer of funds to relatives back home. An interesting finding that arose from the data is that the 'hawala' system is not relative to the individual migrant only. This method is utilised by the parents of Rezwan who is the one migrant in this study that is a remittance recipient as opposed to a remittance sender. It may perhaps be possible that this type of informal mechanism may be used by other migrants like Rezwan who receive remittances from their families abroad. While 'hawala' is assumed and attributed with the recognition of being an illegal system, the Anti-Corruption Resource Centre disputes such ideology by arguing that:

“Hawala remittance systems are not per se illegal. As a remittance system, hawala is submitted to the national regulations governing remittance services. In some countries, hawala is illegal from a regulatory perspective, although enforcement is difficult as such services are usually advertised in ethnic media or via internet in vernacular languages. In addition, Hawala brokers often run legitimate businesses alongside the

remittance services that they offer, which further challenges potential detection.”²¹

An enquiry based on whether respondents will continue remitting resulted in a ‘yes’ answer. Reasons for answering ‘yes’ were rooted in the incessant obligation to family members they depart from in the country of origin. This featured boldly in comments such as *“those are my parents...I have to take care of them”*; *“the money I send allows my family to live a comfortable life”*; *“my money is a help to them...it adds to the little money my father earns”*; *“I am not only living and working here for myself...but for my family too”*; *“my family depends on the money I send.”* While migrants may feel responsible to remit to their kin, job loss may result in the ceasing of these cash transfers, periodically or permanently.

Remittances contain the probability to generate positive socio-economic impacts for recipient households and countries as they have become a valuable and inexpensive catalyst for progression and expansion. This is evident in the words of De Bruyn (2006: 2-3) who points out that “remittances contribute significantly to the national economy...on the plus side, remittances allow families to meet their basic needs; open up opportunities for investing in education, health care, etc; loosen up constraints in the family budget to invest in business or to save; are a kind of emergency resource; provide a social security for the elderly; and can boost the local economy.” Respondents were questioned about the utilization of remittances by their families and these were some of their responses:

- *“My family uses the money for taking care of the household and whatever they need for their daily living.*

²¹Chene, M. (2008). “Hawala remittance system and money laundering”. Anti-Corruption Resource Centre.

- *“My family uses the money for food, paying my sister’s college fees and whatever else they need at home.*
- *“My parents use the money for whatever they need, mostly for taking care of the house and for food. The money is also used to pay my children’s school fees.”*

Case study 53:

Thahir, who is of Bangladeshi origin, is one of the few migrants in this study who is married. His wife and two children live in Bangladesh with his parents. He sends money home every month which is primarily used for taking care of the household such as buying food and other consumer items, as well as paying rent. In addition to sending money to his parents, he also sends money for his wife and children. This cash transfer to his wife is invested in education for his two children who have just begun schooling.

Case study 54:

Yaseen is 23 years of age and lived in Kashmir, Pakistan. He described this region as one of poverty and ongoing conflict. Such a situation entrenches the incidence of joblessness. He sends money after every second month. The money he sends is used for managing the needs of the household such as buying food, paying bills, clothing and other items needed. Moreover, Yaseen notes that he has a younger sister who has begun college. A share of the money he transfers to his family is also used to pay his sister’s college fees and buy required academic material such as text books. Therefore, the remittances he sends home act as a safety net against difficult conditions of poverty, unemployment and political conflict and it also allows his sister access to education.

The ethnographic data in relation to the usage of cash transfers clearly depicts the functions they play in sustaining households in the sending country. At a household level, remittances expose individuals to an array of opportunities which can promote upward social and economic mobility. One such opportunity is that it allows families to invest in human capital such as educating children as outlined in the excerpt

above. It also lightens the financial burdens of respondents' families by increasing household income and fostering poverty reduction, thus providing a lifeline for the poor. The transfer of cash by respondents to their native areas such as Kashmir also serves to sustain its economy in a region that is suffused by armed conflict. The findings reveal that migrant monetary transfers are typically used to satisfy basic needs of food, household rent and bills, clothing and other items of need. This data converses with findings in other studies conducted on the usage of remittances. Wood's (2006) paper on Mexican remittances demonstrates that Mexican families in the country of origin use most of the money for the satisfaction of daily needs and items of consumption. Likewise, the work of Suleri and Savage (2006) among Pakistanis show that cash funds sent by migrants from the host society are predominantly used to meet daily expenses of food, household bills, consumer goods and education. Respondents were also asked about how their earnings are spent in the receiving society. Paying rent, buying food, clothing, airtime and other consumer items were some of the common things that migrants spent a share of their wages on. Those respondents who are salon owners mentioned that in addition to spending on items of basic need, paying salon rent and workers were also part of their monthly expenses. With regards to whether respondents and their remittance receiving families manage their expenses in their current economic situation, migrants said that they live simple lives in the host society and work towards meeting basic needs. Although they do manage to cover their expenses, they maintained that they did sometimes face difficulty and hardship. In terms of their families back home, migrants noted that remittances minimised the dreadful economic situation of their respective households by increasing income. With the current rise in global

recession, remittances may play a critical role now more than ever in absorbing those households from the brunt of poverty and financial adversity.

Apart from positive benefits at a micro level, the transfer of funds by migrants may enhance the economic development of a country. The statistics discussed earlier in the section pertaining to global cash flows illustrate the crucial role that remittances play in increasing the GDP in poor, low-income countries such as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Siddiqui and Abrar's (2003: 22) work on migrant worker remittances in Bangladesh conclude that "remittance has a major role in the Bangladeshi economy. Not only does it provide valuable foreign exchange that the country needs, it also has an important multiplier effect on GDP as well as on other macro-economic determinants." While it is apparent that remittances have a progressive effect, Wood (2006: 5) propounds that "developing nations such as Mexico are becoming dependent on these inflows, thus reducing pressure on the government to make the necessary structural reforms that are needed to increase competitiveness and create jobs." He expressed concern for other developing nations, who he believes, may become exclusively dependent on migrant remittances. Remittances therefore become a vehicle for upliftment and serve to safeguard families, households and communities against financial, social and political distress.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated that the surge in global remittances since the last decade of the 21st century is rooted in widespread migratory movements of individuals from low income, less developed countries to higher income, better developed countries. In the wake of disturbing and unsympathetic conditions, remittances absorb poor households from socio-economic stressors. The data outlined that migrants are

inclined to remit due to altruistic sentiments and familial obligations. Such revenues are used to meet educational, household and other personal needs of the migrant's family members in the sending society. More importantly, cash transfers diversify existing household income, therefore serving as a supplementary mechanism through which households are protected from harsh realities. The chapter also brings to the fore the formal, but to a greater extent, informal methods that characterise cash transfers from Durban to Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. With contemporary political turbulence and decrepit socio-economic circumstances, remittances are and will continue to be a major source of income for households and distressed economies.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

CONCLUSION

Initially, this research intended to focus on Pakistani migrants in Durban based on assumptions that any foreign Muslim from South Asia was 'Pakistani'. However, exposure to the field nullified my assumption and revealed that not all foreign owned Muslim salons were Pakistani. This led to the research focusing not only on Pakistani owned salons, but also on Indian and Bangladeshi ones as well. This study, then sought to explore South Asian migrants in Durban along the dimensions of their arrival and settlement in their work and domestic lives. Drawing on the latter, the study showcases migration as a rewarding and beneficial strategy that minimises risks, loosens constraints, diversifies household income and makes possible the provision of an array of opportunities that had been previously unknown to the migrant. The utilisation of open-ended questions made it possible to generate a wealth of information on why they migrate, who migrates, how they migrate and arrive in Durban, and then settle into their livelihoods. The literature review presented in chapter two of this dissertation provides a suitable framework within which to understand the internal and international dimensions characterising migration from South Asia to South Africa. It also highlights the push and pull factors that imposes a need to relocate. Violence in Pakistan and Bangladesh, and marginalization of Muslims in India constitute push factors and South Africa's relative stability and prosperity are pull factors.

The study takes cognisance of the fact that migration is a complex and dynamic process and has attempted to illustrate this by outlining the course that migrants have to endure beginning from the time they decide to migrate up until arrival at their

choice of destination. With regards to their arrival, the research attempted to provide information on various related issues such as reasons for migrating, the decision to migrate, South Africa as a destination choice and the channels that make mobility possible. An analysis of the push factors indicate that socio-economic conditions in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh are unstable and that weak political structures coupled with poor governance creates an environment that breeds poverty, famine and unemployment. The information gathered from some respondents points out that most households are relatively poor with no stable income. The income received is insufficient to sustain a living. Therefore, in the midst of such adversity, migration of a family member/s becomes a lucrative strategy that serves to decrease risks that threaten and hinder the well-being of families and households as well as the migrant. This highlights the two-fold nature of migration in that movement is not solely driven by the pursuit and fulfilment of the migrants' goals and desires, but also that of their loved ones who they leave behind. The research shows that South Asian migrants come to Durban with the hope of attaining a better life and ultimately 'greener pastures'.

In terms of the decision to migrate, the research depicts the dynamics inherent within decision making and how it is affected by social institutions such as the family and to some extent by the larger community, for example, friends and/or neighbours (see chapter 3, page 63 and chapter 4, page 74). Decision making is not individualistic, but ultimately becomes a consultative process, with families and households being the decision making unit. With borders becoming more porous and increasing interconnectedness between countries, globalization allows for migrants to maintain contact easily with their family and friends through various technological devices. Therefore, movement does not signify the breaking up of ties. The rights and

obligations that migrants have to fulfil to those who remain in the country of origin such as investing in education and the household serves to strengthen existing ties between the migrant and his family.

Throughout the world, metropolitan cities attract migrants due to their attractive prospects that foster upward mobility. Being a metropolis, Durban, in South Africa, is no exception to the exhilarating number of migrant communities. It is evident that Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi migrants are becoming increasingly intertwined within the South African social fabric. An examination of the pull factors revealed that it is a country which is known to have the strongest and most prosperous economy on the African continent with conditions that are conducive for success. Consequently, South Africa has become a haven for those migrants who flee socio-economic destitution, civil unrest and war. The inflow of South Asian migrants to South Africa is made possible by an agent who oversees the migrant's movement from the country of birth to the country of resettlement. With the lack of authentic documentation, such clandestine methods become the only means through which these migrants can seek passage into South Africa and escape their miserable circumstances.

Discussions with participants in the study disclosed that settlement revolved around creating or joining existing networks which assisted them through the social processes of adjustment and adaptation. Without the assistance of family and friendship networks, migration would be impossible. Social network theory proved to be a suitable framework within which the dynamics of South Asian networks could be understood. It was brought to the fore that networks prompt migration. Not only do networks help migrants finance migration, but they also become channels through

which access to employment, housing and other resources are appropriated and secured. While social networks prove to be an advantage, it should not be assumed that migrants always have access to a network. This emanated in the case of one respondent who lacked the assistance of family/friends during the adaptation, adjustment and resettlement process. Potential migrants and those who are already migrants therefore come to rely upon transnational networks and it is these networks that continue to sustain the expansion of South Asian migrants in Durban.

Transnationalism served to be an appropriate theoretical framework guiding the issue of migration across international borders. Firstly, transnationalism as put forth by proponents of the theory, was used to explain how migrants have developed multi-stranded social ties and networks that exist across time and space, thus linking the sending and receiving societies. The transnational framework therefore accurately reflects the complexity of the migrant experience and how migrants are ultimately members who experience living in 'two worlds'. Together, both social network theory and transnationalism help in understanding and contextualising the phenomenon of migration in that they shed light on the form that migration takes as well as its inherent characteristics.

The study shows how space and place impacts on the creation of identity and integration. For South Asian migrants, ethnic and national identities provide a platform for the creation of a spirit of togetherness and belonging. The information in this work suggests that in the absence of family, migrants tend to create ethnic enclaves in an unfamiliar environment. Sharing the same nationality and language secures affiliation to such enclaves. In the host society, these enclaves become a means through which normative beliefs and practices are re-invented and enjoyed.

Similarity in religion also provokes a sense of community among migrants. Being Muslim and being part of a wider Muslim community in Durban provide a basis for migrants to take note of perceived religious differences between themselves and the local Muslims. Differences in class/language groupings did not pose as an obstacle for association and while cohesion exists among South Asian migrants in Durban, this may not be the case back home. It is clear that the transnational social space that migrants have come to occupy shapes the diverse social lives that they lead in Durban. On the personal side, some migrants maintain their customary beliefs and practices, while on another side, some migrants deviate from them. Therefore, it would be incorrect to assume that the lives of the migrants in the sending and host society take on the same traits. In the absence of mothers, wives and sisters, the majority of South Asian migrant households in Durban are male-headed, usually containing five or more migrants. Apart from interacting with their co-nationals, migrants also recreate home through wearing traditional clothing and buying and/or cooking food that is similar to what they are used to in their country of birth. Observations of their living arrangements revealed that migrants lead simple lives in Durban.

Families of migrants, especially in the developing world, have come to rely on funds that they receive from their migrant family member. Remittances are one of the major sources of foreign revenues for South Asia. Some migrants come to Durban in order to lend support to their impoverished families. The sending of funds becomes a vehicle through which responsibilities and commitments are fulfilled. This income derived from salon work augments the probability for a sustainable livelihood for the migrant and his family. The research has found that the economic impact of

remittances therefore provide a lifeline and increases the resilience for poor families and households left behind in the South Asian sub-continent.

The descriptive evidence generated by this study indicates that the surge in foreign owned salons over the last decade has provoked feelings of threat and anxiety among local salon owners. The support of foreign owned salons from local residents provides a growing market which paves the way for them to prosper and flourish. In all likelihood, South Africa will continue to witness the emergence of not only foreign owned salons, but other foreign owned enterprises as well. The lack of adequate government regulation strengthens the foothold that these businesses have managed to attain. The negative stereotypical images and ideas of South Asian migrants, especially Pakistanis, has been reinforced by the media's portrayal of them. Regardless of these negative connotations, the researcher's interactions with the Pakistani migrants as well as the interaction with them by some of the local salon owners and customers, disprove the negative generalisations about Pakistanis. In fact, a majority of them are individuals who just want to earn a living. The skill of hair cutting which most migrants bring with them, and which others are taught by their networks upon arrival in South Africa serves to open up avenues to be wage or self employed. While migrants are currently involved in salon work in Durban, some of them may leave South Africa and return home, others may leave to go elsewhere and some may remain in Durban with the hope of acquiring citizenship. For some of the migrants in the study, Durban is a gateway for gaining entry into their preferred destinations.

Finally, the study demonstrates that population flows are almost always from those countries which are poor and less developed towards better developed countries

with greater prospects for growth and upward mobility on the socio-economic ladder. It shows that with the abolition of apartheid, population flows to South Africa has intensified and grown considerably over the last decade. This has led to the emergence of a number of migrant communities especially from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, China and Africa who are joined together by the thread of nationality and ethnicity. With conditions worsening in many South Asian and African countries, migration will continue to occur at a rapid pace and occupy a foothold at the forefront of the global agenda.

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APPENDIX 1

Name:

Age:

Gender:

Location:

Interview Schedule- South Asian Muslim Salon Workers

The migratory process

1. Why did you decide to migrate?
2. What was your preferred destination when you left Pakistan/India/Bangladesh?
3. Why did you choose South Africa as a destination?
4. Can you reconstruct the route of your migratory movement? When and how did you make the trip to South Africa?
5. How was the decision to migrate made? Was the decision to migrate influenced by family or friends? Explain
6. Did you migrate alone or have you migrated with family members or friends?

Livelihood and remittances

1. What was your occupation in Pakistan/India/Bangladesh? Are you still occupying the same occupation here in Durban?
2. How did you come to know of this job?
3. Why did you choose to do this job? Is there any other job that you wanted to do?
4. What is your relationship with other salons, both local and other foreign owned salons?
5. Do you send remittances home? If not, what do you spend your money on?
6. How often do you send money home?

7. If you do send remittances, do you think you will continue sending them? Why?
8. How are the remittances that you send to your family spent?
9. Do you cover your expenses and those of your family (either here or in Pakistan/India/Bangladesh) in your current economic situation?

Networks and Identity

1. Did you arrive here through anyone (Family/Friends)? Explain
2. Who do you socialise with here in South Africa? Is it only other Pakistani/Indian/Bangladeshi migrants, locals, or both?
3. How do you keep in contact with family/friends in Pakistan/India/Bangladesh? How often do you communicate with them?
4. Do you have any local friends or Pakistani/Indian/Bangladeshi friends only?
5. Do you associate only with Pakistanis/Indians/Bangladeshis who are of the same class/linguistic/regional grouping as you? Explain
6. Upon arrival, how did you adjust in this new environment? Was it through family or friends living here?
7. Do you identify yourself as being Pakistani/Indian/Bangladeshi here in Durban? Explain
8. Who do you identify with here in Durban? Is it other Pakistani's/Indians/Bangladeshis, locals or both?
9. Do you view yourself in Durban in the same way in which you viewed yourself in Pakistan/India/Bangladesh? Is there any difference? Please elaborate
10. How long have you been in South Africa and would you prefer to live in South Africa or Pakistan/India/Bangladesh?
11. How do you feel about living and working in South Africa? Is it different from living and working in Pakistan/India/Bangladesh?
12. Does the life that you have now differ from the one you lived in your own country?

Domestic and social lives

1. Where and with whom do you live in Durban?
2. How did you come to know about the place where you are living?
3. Whose decision is it regarding who stays where?
4. Are there any females (spouse/family/friend) that live with you? If not, how do you manage domestic tasks such as cooking, washing and cleaning?
5. What do you do in your free time? Do you do the same things here that you did back home in Pakistan?
6. Do you attend mosque in Durban? How often?
7. With whom do you spend your free time?

Interview Schedule- Local (South African) Salon owners

1. What are your relations with foreign owned Muslim salons, if any?
2. Do you view these foreign salons as being a threat to the success of your salon?
3. Do you feel that there is a sense of competition between your own and these foreign owned salons?
4. What is your opinion of these foreign owned salons?
5. Do you feel that there is a difference, if any, between your salon and foreign owned salons with regards to services rendered? If yes, what is the difference?
6. How do you feel about the increasing presence of these foreign owned salons in the midst of local salons such as your own?
7. What are your perceptions of South Asian migrants, specifically Pakistanis in Durban?

Local (South African) customers of foreign owned Muslim salons

1. Have you ever been a customer at a foreign owned salon? If not, would you consider or would you like to visit these salons?
2. What is your opinion of these foreign owned salons?

3. What do you think about the service of these foreign owned salons? Are these salons cheaper and efficient in comparison to local salons?
4. What is your opinion of the increasing presence of foreign owned salons?
5. Do you think that the presence of foreign owned salons are a threat to locally owned salons? Explain
6. What are your perceptions of South Asian migrants, specifically Pakistanis in Durban?