

BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EXAMINERS ASSESSED THIS  
AS A GOOD PIECE OF RESEARCH.

**“HOUSING OVERSUPPLY AND IN-MIGRATION  
PATTERNS INTO A DECLINING TOWN, MOOI  
RIVER”**

by

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# 1. CHAPTER ONE

## 1.1 Problem Statement

"A small town in KwaZulu-Natal, Midlands is dying as poverty, unemployment and HIV/AIDS take their toll" (Sunday Times, 21 July, 2002).

A very sad article has recently been published on Sunday Times about the socio-economic circumstances in Mooi River. Whilst this dissertation does not purport to present a journalistic account, it was indeed inspired by similar concerns raised by the article in question. The latter article points out that a huge number of the 1423 low-cost houses built in the late 1990s by the Nelson Mandela Housing Fund have been vandalized and are vacant. It is said that with no prospects of finding jobs, many people have migrated (Sunday Times, 21 July 2002).

However the view that is taken in this dissertation is that it is mostly white, middle-income people who have migrated. The majority of black people are not in a position to migrate due to financial constraints and other problems, which will be explored in this dissertation. In contrast some people have migrated to Mooi River and this is an unexpected mobility trend since the area has recently experienced major job losses. Moreover, it is pointed out that some residents have begun blaming the government for "wasting" taxpayers money on the "ill-conceived" housing project while people suffer from unemployment and the resultant poverty (Sunday Times, 21 July, 2002).

There is an obvious mismatch between housing demand and supply in Mooi River. The low-cost housing project in Mooi River has oversupplied housing disproportionate to the immediate housing need or demand of the people in Mooi River. Whilst it is true, as pointed out above, that some people have migrated out of the area due to lack of job opportunities, business failures, etc, the reality is that some people have been induced to migrate to Mooi River by housing oversupply. Moreover, some people have continued to stay in the area despite economic decline that has been widely reported.

Sipho Majola, a member of the Unemployed Residents Association (URA) had this to say about these houses: "When they built these houses, did they consider the fact that occupants would have nothing to eat as there are no jobs here?" (Sunday Times, 21 July 2002). The article in question also notes that with more than 90% of Bruntville residents unemployed, it is hard to find anyone with enough food to feed their own families, never mind to share it with others.

## **1.2 Research Question**

Why is in-migration occurring into Mooi River in the context of economic decline and how is this process linked to the oversupply of housing?

## **1.3 Sub-questions**

- Has the oversupply of housing induced migration?
- To what extent does "push" off the land account for in-migration?
- Who is occupying the housing provided?
- On what basis was the decision to provide large amounts of housing to Mooi River taken?
- Are the residents able to pay for basic services?
- What livelihood strategies do Townview residents use given the rate of unemployment?
- What is the role of spatial frameworks in redressing spatial disjunctures in the post-apartheid South Africa?

## **1.4 Hypothesis**

- The oversupply of housing in Mooi River has induced in-migration disproportionate to employment.

## **1.5 Key Concepts**

### **Migration**

This is a multifaceted concept and hence it must be treated as such. This dissertation only focuses on internal migration, which is defined as the movement of people from one magisterial district to another of the same country. Internal migration can entail either in-migration, which refers to moves into a specific part of the country from



another part or out-migration, which indicates moves from a particular place to another.

### **Small towns**

It is difficult to come up with a definition for a small town but the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) has defined small towns as centres having less than 50 000 people. It is said that this division should not, however, be viewed as absolute. Within the CDE category, there are three distinct forms of settlements that can be identified, namely, small towns in commercial farming areas, often experiencing economic decline, former homeland area small towns (largely artificial and generally unconnected to agriculture), and “dense homeland settlements” which lack services and facilities and which are concentrations of landless and often displaced people (Bernstein, 1996).

### **Economic decline (in small towns)**

There is no exact definition for this term and its meaning is determined by the context in which it is used. But it could refer to business failures, loss of jobs and population, lack of opportunities for young people, deteriorating infrastructure, loss of hope, to mention the least. All these constitute the daunting problems facing declining small towns. In most cases the local economy in these towns is based on one or two saleable resources such as timber, coal, wheat or a manufactured product. The town may seem prosperous until the international economy makes a slight “adjustment” and their products are no longer worth more than the cost of production. Some of these towns serve as administrative centers for the surrounding rural hinterlands ([www.rmi.org/sitepages/pid371.php](http://www.rmi.org/sitepages/pid371.php)).

### **Housing oversupply**

For the purposes of this dissertation housing oversupply refers to a state whereby the number of houses supplied exceed the number of houses demanded or needed.

## **1.6 Background Information**

“A central feature of the post-apartheid period has been the (national) tension between the heightened material expectations of the newly enfranchised, and

the need for the state to make the most efficient and equitable use of the resources at its disposal for development purposes” (McCarthy, 2000).

The 1994 elections marked the demise of the unpopular apartheid regime. These elections also inaugurated the arrival of the era of democratization and constitutionalism in South Africa. As a result Schwenke (1997) points out that South Africa is now a society reinventing itself. It is rightly pointed out that this is an heroic effort, seeking to undo past wrongs, redress inequalities, and create a foundation for a just, peaceful and vibrant new society (Schwenke, 1997).

There are many challenges and obligations facing the African National Congress government. Some of these obligations derive from the constitution (Act 108 of 1996), which provides in the Bill of Rights that the state must work progressively towards redressing the imbalances of the past by, among other things, prioritizing the needs of the previously disadvantaged people. Whilst the constitution imposes this inescapable task on the state, it acknowledges that this is not going to happen overnight, but it is rather a process.

The allocation of resources in the post-apartheid South Africa has raised a number of controversial debates. This dissertation does not seek to give solutions to these debates but rather to use a housing project in a declining town to see how it has helped to bridge the gap between current location of human settlements and economic activity.

### **1.6.1 The Main Argument Advocated in this Study**

In the recent past the South African literature on migration seemed to suggest that the distorted patterns of migration and residence rested fundamentally on the presence of legal restrictions, which barred permanent urbanisation for black people during the apartheid era. It was therefore thought that with the removal of the influx control or anti-urban policies, many people would then move to areas of economic growth.

In contrast, the draft NSDP (2000) points out that while people are moving closer to places where economic activity is viable and where levels of income and employment

are higher, there are also significant movements into areas with weak, declining or non-existent economic activity. It is also pointed out that notwithstanding the dire circumstances of the majority of the rural population, there is limited migration to metropolitan areas (NSDP, 2000:12). Many people, it is noted, prefer to stay where they are or to migrate to dense settlements located in former resettlement areas or small towns that are better serviced with infrastructure. Historically, it was rural areas that seemed to have been adversely affected by poverty, but now even metropolitan areas have also seen an increase in the absolute numbers of those in poverty (NSDP, 2000:13).

Clearly, current trends in population mobility seem to suggest that the movement to cities is more limited than was expected. This trend is also borne out by a recent case study done in Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal (Todes, 2001). This study revealed, as pointed out above, that while there is evidence that some people are moving to the cities and other centers of growth, there are also important exceptions, with people staying in or even moving to places with weak or declining economic bases.

In line with the recent thinking in the South African migration literature, this dissertation seeks to argue that relatively easy access to housing in Townview, Mooi River, coupled with recent farm evictions and the fact that townships (around small towns and/ or cities) are perceived to have an advantage over rural areas in respect to services, makes Mooi River (or small town/s) an attractive location for migrant households, despite its lack of work opportunities or declining economic base. In other words, the Townview low-cost housing project in Mooi River has oversupplied housing disproportionate to the immediate housing need or demand of the people in Mooi River. In turn, such housing oversupply has induced in-migration to the area and thus contributed to the escalating rate of unemployment, which gained impetus with the closure of the Mooi River Textile industry.

Ideally, a housing project of this magnitude ought to improve the quality of life of many people, but seemingly it has made conditions worse and has not contributed to the development of a socially and economically viable community, as envisaged by the National Housing Policy. The influx of low-income people, who have nowhere to work, is likely to stretch the municipality's resources to a breaking point as most of

the residents would not be able to pay for services or property taxes in the long run. Clearly this is a serious cause for concern because, while Mooi River is declining economically, housing subsidies in the area have induced in-migration and arguably, this is bound to perpetuate rather than to correct the disjunctures of the past, in terms of where jobs and people are. That being the case, it is important to locate this argument within broader debates about the allocation of resources in the post-apartheid South Africa.

### **1.6.2 Debates About the Allocation of Resources in the Post-apartheid South Africa**

At the heart of the challenges facing Mbeki's government, as captured by McCarthy (2000) above, are the controversial issues pertaining to the efficient use and equitable distribution of limited resources, poverty alleviation, sustainable service delivery, the eradication of historic inequalities, and care for the environment. Housing supply is one area where the government is expected to deliver with immediate effect by the newly enfranchised, as McCarthy points out.

Giving a brief background to the daunting problems associated with distorted settlement patterns that need to be tackled, McCarthy (2000) submits that in the past (and to a large extent today) the urban poor were restricted to townships, informal settlements and the former homelands (one might add) located at great distances from the work centers. This resulted in spatial disjunctures that are to a large extent, still characteristic of the South African landscape. The policies that brought about spatial disparities were not only responsible for imposing unreasonable transport costs, and constraints upon the realization of economic opportunities, on the poor, they also limited the overall economic efficiencies within the urban areas by reducing economies of agglomeration (McCarthy, 2000).

In an endeavour to reverse this trend of spatial disparities, there is a need to consider the impact of migration and urbanization dynamics on spatial efficiencies. However, migration is one area of study that has received much scholarly attention over the years and the number of studies undertaken pertaining to it is indeed vast. One might even add that as a topic it has been overdone. Be that as it may, a comprehension of

migration theories leads to an appreciation of the variables likely to influence future patterns of population mobility in South Africa.

It is the contention of this dissertation that by correctly understanding migration and urbanization dynamics, policymakers will be in a better position to contemplate population mobility trends in future. This will enable them to allocate resources accordingly and thus avoid the "ill-conceived" investment projects as noted in the problem statement. Some observers have tended to overlook this fact. This research has also been inspired by an interesting debate raised by Crankshaw and Parnell (1996) in their thought-provoking article with regard to housing supply in the post-apartheid South Africa. Although Townview in Bruntville (a case study of this dissertation) is geographically part of Mooi River and perhaps not a displaced peri-urban settlement as Crankshaw and Parnell use the term, their argument is nonetheless still relevant to the debates dealt with in this dissertation.

Crankshaw and Parnell (1996) argue that the existing housing policy threatens to entrench the spatially distorted patterns of African urbanisation created by apartheid policies. They talk about what they call displaced peri-urban settlements and these are defined as sprawling settlements or dormitory towns with little or no conventional urban infrastructure, industrial or commercial development. By virtue of being South African citizens (one might add), the residents of these displaced urban settlements all qualify for state housing subsidies which will enable them to purchase formal homes or upgrade their existing accommodation.

But the authors doubt whether this is in the beneficiaries' long-term interests. It is argued that the problem with these displaced towns is that they are unlikely ever to become anything but dormitory towns. They offer no long-term work opportunities. The state housing subsidy, it is argued, may improve the quality of accommodation in these settlements, but is not trying to transform them into viable centres with urban facilities and employment opportunities. It is therefore averred that for many generations to come, residents of these displaced settlements will live under the community and migrancy regimes created by apartheid. It would seem that their argument is informed by the realization that there is a disjuncture between current location of human settlements and economic activity.

It can be argued that one of the assumptions which underlies Crankshaw and Parnell's (1996) argument is that since anti-urban policies have been abolished, people in displaced settlements would migrate to cities or localities where jobs or other livelihoods are available. Todes (2001) refers to this assumption as the normalization assumption. In other words, Crankshaw and Parnell (1996) are implicitly suggesting that future government spending on infrastructure and development programmes should not be directed to places that would ultimately become "poverty traps". In line with this argument, the draft NSDP (2000) notes that so as not to ignore the vast majority of people living in depressed places, government will need to provide resources to enable people in these places to become more mobile. As to how this will be done is not clearly spelt out.

It would also appear that there is a legal precedent to back up Crankshaw and Parnell's argument in the form of the Housing Act, which talks about the creation of socially and economically viable communities (although they admittedly point out that the current Housing Policy might perpetuate past disjunctures). However the level of integration that is envisaged in the latter Act is not easy to achieve given the current socio- economic and political context.

Institutional complexity in South Africa is one factor which might hinder this form of spatial integration. This stems from the three tier government system as each sphere is entrusted with various responsibilities that are not always clearly defined, making it difficult to achieve co-operative governance as required by the constitution, and hence to put in place a National Spatial Development Plan. It is argued that the old dichotomies of the past, whereby large numbers of the poor were concentrated in the former homeland areas with weak economic bases, still persist. In other words, as Harrison and Todes (2001) put it, the post-apartheid era has not seen a major correction of these disjunctures, raising significant debates over where development expenditure should be focused.

In an endeavour to correct spatial disjunctures, the South African Housing Policy stresses the need to strive for "the establishment of viable and economically integrated communities, situated in areas allowing convenient access to economic

opportunities as well as health, educational and social amenities” (McCarthy, 2000). This concept of housing as encapsulated in the latter policy, is in keeping with the Constitution, which envisages the development of communities with convenient access to economic opportunities and other basic services.

However in order to persuasively prove its hypothesis, this dissertation has to analyse the in-migration patterns to Mooi River so as to determine if they have been induced by the oversupply of housing. This dissertation also seeks to establish the state of the economy in Mooi River in order to confirm whether or not it is declining. Clearly, in keeping with the latter submission, the migration theories discussed in Chapter two and Three below has shown that the forces behind migration are complex and cannot only be understood in terms of the neoclassical theories. This dissertation adopts a systematic approach to this study by having regard to all the bodies of literature and theories that shed light on the research problem and by avoiding a piecemeal approach in evaluating competing theories and debates.

### **1.7 Research Methodology**

This study sought to analyse the impact of housing oversupply on in-migration patterns into Mooi River, a declining town. It also aimed to determine the extent to which farm evictions account for migration patterns into Mooi River. It was also critical for this study to look at the current situation in the area. The areas of research therefore included migration dynamics in the area, the impact of farm evictions on population mobility trends, and the socio-economic circumstances. It was also imperative for this study to look at housing supply in general and to trace the history of the Townview housing project in order to determine how and why it got approved.

There are various methods that one can use to undertake research and data collection. The nature of the research to be undertaken often determines the most appropriate method to be used. But each method has its advantages and disadvantages.

It is important for any research project to define exactly the study area and which “group” within the population is the focus of the study. The study area that was

chosen for this dissertation is Townview in Mooi River. Townview is a newly established area for low-income people. The Townview housing project has received wide publicity for a number of reasons. A large number of RDP houses have been built in the area. On observation of Townview, many houses remain uncompleted, unoccupied or demolished. On the other hand Townview has also attracted a number of impoverished households despite the widespread economic decline in Mooi River. This is an unusual population mobility trend because people are often drawn to places with economic opportunities. Townview is also an interesting case study because one would have thought that the government that was voted into power mostly by poor people would have as its main priority the task of redressing the disjunctures of the past. On the face of it, providing a large numbers of houses in depressed areas such as Mooi River is unlikely to enable the state to achieve this task.

In order to establish in-migration patterns in Mooi River qualitative interviews were held with about thirty households of the new housing project. The method that was used to select the households interviewed is systematic sampling. Starting from the first house on a row, each fifth household was interviewed. If a house was unoccupied or demolished, the household thereafter was then interviewed. It sometimes became necessary to come back the following day if no one in a particular household was in a position to assist with the interviews. This was done so as to avert the danger of compromising the authenticity of the findings and research process.

A qualitative approach was used in this study because it enabled the researcher to obtain in-depth responses and precise information from the respondents and key informants in order to arrive at more balanced conclusions. The nature of the study did not warrant the use of a quantitative method. Again given the total number of households in Townview it was thought that the information gathered from thirty households and other key informants would be truly representative of the experiences and opinions of the Townview residents.

For the purposes of this study, the people that were interviewed are the occupants of the new housing project in Townview, Mooi River, the councilors, local government



officials, people from the national department of housing. For personal reasons the list of the key informants is not given here. The interviews with Townview households sought to establish migration and employment histories, commuting patterns, aspirations and intentions, residential conditions, social and economic circumstances, level of liking of the area, demands for improved services, and livelihood strategies.

The interviews with the municipality officials sought to establish the impact of Townview on the operations of and revenue base for the Mpofana Municipality in general. It was also critical to find out from them the reasons that warranted the supply of such a large number of houses in the context of economic crisis Mooi River is going through. It was also important to find out what mechanisms have been put in place in the area to accommodate the influx of impoverished households and also to ask about the livelihood strategies are used by the residents in the context of joblessness.

It would have been also very useful to interview people from the Department of Housing about the land use application process in order to determine how the new housing development in Mooi River got approved. But it was clear from the speech made by the KwaZulu-Natal Minister of Housing, Dumisani Mkhaye in Townview, that there are many controversies around the Townview housing project. There are some allegations that some officials and politicians misused the funds for this project. This is so serious that criminal cases have been opened against some individuals, particularly the private developer who has apparently absconded to Australia. Even the Minister does not have a clue as to the circumstances surrounding the implementation of this project. Given the controversial nature of the project, it would appear that people are who might have some information about this project are not willing to come forward for the fear of becoming witnesses in criminal cases or getting prosecuted.

The secondary sources of data included literature, background research, government documents (such as the IDP), the Mooi River's Economic Development Plan, and the data from the Water Service Development Plan and pimss.net. Other information was

obtained from the data collected by the Centre for Development and Environment at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

## **1.8 Chapter Outline**

Chapter One begins by explaining why this topic was chosen. It sets out research questions and sub-questions and conceptual framework. It also gives a general introduction to the whole dissertation. It unpacks all the relevant debates to the dissertation, particularly around the draft National Spatial Development Plan (NSDP) and how housing policy in the post-apartheid South Africa has been understood by some authors. It then sets out the points that will be argued in this dissertation. It also outlines out how the research will be carried out.

Chapter Two looks at the theories of migration, namely, Neoclassical, Structural, and Post-structural theories of migration. After setting out the neoclassical theories, it gives a critique of these theories. It then suggests that, while the structural and post-structural theories have their own limitations, they are indeed very useful in terms of explaining migration dynamics in the context of declining economies where economic explanations fall short of accounting for the persistence of in-migration into depressed areas or regions.

Chapter Three gives a brief history of urbanization and national settlement patterns in South Africa. It then goes on to look at contemporary migration and urbanization dynamics in KwaZulu-Natal. This is followed by a brief case study done by Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi in KwaZulu-Natal. This Chapter also looks at settlement patterns in KwaZulu-Natal.

Chapter Four sets out the history, socio-economic circumstances, demographic, and physical characteristics, of Mooi River. It also gives a detailed account of Mooi River's economy. It concludes by giving the history of the low-cost housing projects in the area.

Chapter Five seeks to set out and analyse data. It uses research findings to explain in-migration patterns into Mooi River. It also tries to synthesise research findings by, *inter alia*, interpreting data in light of the theories.

Chapter Six provides conclusions and recommendations.

## 2. CHAPTER TWO

### 2.1 Contemporary Theories of Migration

#### 2.1.1 Introduction

"Social scientists do not approach the study of migration from a shared paradigm, but from a variety of competing theoretical viewpoints fragmented across disciplines, regions and ideologies...As a result there is need for a comprehensive, empirically grounded theory of migration for the 21<sup>st</sup> century" (Massey *et al*, 1994).

This statement captures the nature and essence of the complex debates surrounding the phenomenon of migration, which has been with societies for as long as they have existed. Migration theory has been historically dominated by neoclassical theories. But it is now commonly agreed that the forces behind migration, particularly in Third World countries, cannot only be understood on the basis of "transition models" or neoclassical theories. Whilst the number of studies undertaken over the years pertaining to the theme of migration is vast, a lot of these studies are not empirical at all, consisting of polemic arguments and sometimes illustrated with a few facts (Massey, 1994). It cannot be disputed that, although often criticized as being descriptive, the literature that critiques the conventional neoclassical theories has spawned interesting alternative perspectives on migration. But there is a need among researchers to accept common theories, concepts and tools in order to avoid duplication, miscommunication and sometimes counter-productive viewpoints that tend to underplay the significance of other theories.

Such new theory must be based on a nuanced and variegated synergy, which brings together a number of theories, coalesced to contribute to the emergence of a new discourse that clearly distinguishes between the experiences of the developed and developing worlds. This would ensure that unlike the neoclassical theory with its "totalising effect", the new theory of migration presents a synthetic account of all the claims and counter-claims of competing theories and is sensitive to contexts characteristic of various regions or localities in different parts of the world. But it is important to note that this is not an easy task because of a lack of good

representative data and the fact that a sizable share of migrant flows is undocumented and thus remains outside national statistical systems (Massey, 1994).

This chapter therefore seeks to critically analyse various theoretical viewpoints on migration in the light of the above postulations.

### **2.1.2 Neoclassical Theories of Migration**

Chant (1992) rightly points out that this approach derives from the neo-classical theory and explains migration essentially as a function of wage-rate differentials between regions. It is argued that transition models arising out of this conceptual framework highlight the importance of rational individual decisions which result in population movements. Migration is thus understood as the movement of people to maximize returns on their labour. According to Todes (1997), the neoclassical perspective is therefore based on the assumption that economic incentives lead to migration out of areas experiencing decline, to areas where the prospects of earning a living are greater.

The origins of this model could be traced back to Lewis Theory of Development, which became popular in the late 1950s. This theory postulates that the economy consists of two sectors, namely, a traditional, rural sector characterised by zero or very low productivity surplus labour, and a high productivity modern urban industrial sector into which labour from the subsistence sector is gradually transferred (Todaro, 1981:233). It is argued that, in terms of this theory, both labour transfer and urban employment growth are brought about by output expansion of the modern sector. The process of modern sector growth and employment expansion is assumed to continue until all surplus rural labour is absorbed in the urban industrial sector (Todaro, 1981:234). Clearly this then suggests that migration is likely to result in spatial equilibrium in the context of uneven development.

This model however came under attack for being divorced from reality. Implicit in this model is the assumption that surplus labour exists in rural areas where there is full employment in urban areas. Todaro (1981) submits that in reality the opposite is true.

It would appear that the assumption of urban surplus labour is empirically more valid than what the Lewis model suggests. The model also implicitly assumes that the rate of labour transfer and employment creation is proportional to the rate of urban capital accumulation (Todaro, 1981:235). Again this assumption is at variance with reality because, as Todaro (1981) illustrates, there is no guarantee that surplus capitalist profits would always be reinvested in the existing capital so as to duplicate it. The capitalists might decide to reinvest in more sophisticated labour-saving capital equipment, thus negating the "proportionality factor" outlined above.

As an alternative to this model, Todaro (1981:239) has come up with what has become known as "Todaro Model". This model starts from the premise that migration is primarily an economic phenomenon, which for an individual migrant can be a quite rational decision despite the existence of urban unemployment. The model suggests that migration proceeds in response to urban-rural differences in expected rather than actual earnings (Todaro, 1981:239).

Migrants therefore consider various labour markets, as between the urban and rural sectors, and choose the sector that maximises their expected gains from migration. They do so by measuring the difference in real incomes between the rural and urban work and the probability of obtaining a new urban job (Todaro, 1981:239). However Todaro does acknowledge the fact that Third World countries face serious unemployment problems with the result that a typical migrant cannot expect to secure a high-paying urban job immediately. In that case, it is argued that in his/her decision to move, the migrant must balance the probabilities and risks of being unemployed for a certain period of time against the positive urban-rural real income. But Chapman and Prothero (1985:19) criticise the model for its silence about the vast circulation of labour that occurs within rural areas, where wage differentials are assumed not to exist, and about why workers persistently return to their villages even when wage differentials and levels of unemployment remain constant.

But the so-called behavioural models, within this paradigm, have stressed a wider range of factors at play, thus bringing this particular theory more in line with what actually happens in reality. Moon (1995:504), for instance, reviews migration theory in terms of three dominant perspective of social organisation, namely, social,

personal, and cultural factors. Giving a brief theoretical progression of migration, Moon (1995:506) talks about what he calls "institutional framework" paradigm, which derives from Hawley's inspirational views in the discipline of urban geography. Functionalism, as it was called, saw urban structure as a functional determinant of community development and the behaviour of people in particular. Moon (1995:506) points out that analyzing behaviour using functionalist methodologies allowed researchers to produce concrete results, but effectively resulted in positivist outcomes and hence it is said that this theory is nothing but a theory of status quo. The problem with positivism, it is argued, is that it reduces social action into an ordered structure.

Moon (1995:507) also argues that urban geographers were also influenced by the psychological theory of behaviourism. It is averred that grounded on the premises of functional advantage, as outlined above, early behaviour-based researchers argued that people were socialized to display a logical, and largely inflexible mode of behaviour. A combination of functionalist methodologies and behaviour-based theories led to two problems, namely, ecological fallacy (making assumptions about individuals based on a group) and reductionism (an overly strict limitation on the kinds of concepts and variables to be considered as causes in explaining a broad range of human behaviour (Moon, 1995:507). These approaches also form the basis for neoclassical economics. This can be seen, it is argued, in the notion of push and pull factors as explanatory variables for migratory decision-making.

Moon (1995:507) correctly points out that push factors are those factors at the origin, which are assumed as having a negative influence on the quality indicators of life. In contrast, pull factors are the positive factors drawing prospective migrants to the destination. It is argued that in this behaviourist methodology, there will always be a "symmetrical relationship" between factors that motivate people to leave a permanent residence and those that attract them to a specific destination. However the problem with this model is, inter alia, the fact that it fails to explain why everyone does not move to prosperous areas or why some people continue to move to declining areas.

As suggested earlier on, migration theory also drew from cognitive psychology. Moon (1995:510) notes that the use of cognitive-based theories in migration can be seen in

computational models based on Sjaastad's human capital approach. Todes (1997) argues that the basic assumption underlying this approach was that people are income maximisers who will migrate to achieve this objective. Sjaastad assumed that migrants weighed up their anticipated future benefits in a number of places before deciding to migrate. Migration therefore is viewed as a logical response for people pursuing benefit-cost-type generalizations between places (Moon, 1995:510). Massey (1994) also states that the human capital model assumed that migrants relocate permanently in whatever sector yields the highest expected lifetime income and they play little role in the economic life of the sending community thereafter. Clearly this model stands in stark contrast to the notion of circular migration, which is very prevalent in Third World countries.

It is argued that by rejecting the functionalism central in behaviourism, human action is perceived as responsive more to ideas conveyed by social and cultural signals than controlled by rule-based structures (Moon, 1995:510). Value expectancy theory, for instance, holds that people decide matters based on the best probable outcome after weighing up the expected outcomes and the anticipated necessary investment. In other words, as Todes (1997) argues, the value expectancy approach examines the range of motives for migration, on the assumption that these would be based on "an underlying desire for individuals and families to improve and maintain their quality of life" In the process of selecting an outcome that seems beneficial to his/her personal need structure, a person may reasonably be expected to appraise information s/he considers pertinent. Thus, according to Moon (1995), people make decisions that seem logical at the time of assessment.

Moon (1995:511) also outlines what he calls a pragmatic approach in terms of which people are socialised to act and react within their surroundings. It is argued that this aspect has its roots in behaviourism, where socialisation was thought to enable a person to act without cognitising. Therefore while the decision to migrate is personal, it is undertaken within an institutional framework.

In trying to explain migration in terms of culture, it is argued that although people do migrate to optimize their experiential circumstances as cognitively inspired models assumed, instead of making the decision according to some functional structure or



rationalization of evidence, they do so in response to signals perceived as being transmitted from a variety of cultural symbols (Moon, 1995:512).

The critiques of the neoclassical theories argue that a number of works on neoclassical migration theories there is a curiously "individualist" approach. Migrants are seen as individuals who emigrate because they are attracted by the lure of better pay elsewhere (Baker and Aina, 1995:31). It is therefore said that these theories do not teach us anything that we do not know. Implicit in the neoclassical paradigm are the assumptions that all migrants, across space, have resources to embark on migration, that there are no constraints to migration and that migrants have free access to markets in destination areas/places. These assumptions must obviously be treated with caution because there is, for instance, substantial evidence to suggest that it is, for instance, important for a would-be migrant to have substantial information about possible destinations prior to deciding to move. Although perhaps the latter criticisms are over-stated, their cumulative effect tend to undermine the credibility of the neoclassical theories.

In terms of neoclassical theories migrants should go to the country or an area in which they expect to earn higher incomes and clearly a situation where migrants move to declining areas is not envisaged within this paradigm as it goes against and raises questions about some of the assumptions upon which this paradigm is founded. Therefore the orthodox neoclassical theory views economic determinants as primary causes of migration. But as Moon (1995:514) correctly points out, if relative economic advantage were a major determinant, then in an economically depressed region there would be mass out-migration.

But it must also be borne in mind that although neoclassical theories attach more weight on economic factors, they also consider non-economic factors as illustrated by the following point. Todes (2001:15) submits that policies that influence spatial access to housing, education and health might also be influential in distorting the workings of the market. But in terms of neoclassical theories, they would be less influential than policies which affected the spatial distribution of economic opportunities. In effect, as indicated earlier on, this dissertation partly seeks to prove that the oversupply of housing has induced migration into a declining town. Charney

(1993) also corroborates the latter point by arguing that virtually all categories of government action can have a direct impact on migration flows.

It is argued that there is substantial evidence to suggest that low-income people are attracted to places by high welfare benefits rather than other economic incentives. Charney (1993:314), for instance, points out that in the early history of the United States, the federal government played an important role in the redistribution of population and employment. In this regard taxes and education were shown to be very significant in terms of achieving the set objectives, whereas programmes designed to increase regional employment were relatively insignificant. Chant (1991:247) also observes that there is no doubt that relatively easy access to housing in Guanacaste towns, coupled with an ongoing tradition of temporary labour migration, and the fact that towns have an easy advantage over rural areas in respect of services such as schools and medical amenities make it attractive locations for migrant households, despite their lack of work opportunities.

This is also reported to have been the case with the Canadian economic policy. Charney (1993:315) reports that market forces that would normally induce migration and equalize wages were undermined or short-circuited by a fiscal structure that subsidized residence in depressed regions. In the South African context, Todes' (1997) research on in-migration into Newcastle, with depressed economy, also provides an invaluable insight in this regard. It explains why some people could not break ties with the area in the context of economic decline, thus negating the notion of permanent transition to urban areas underlying the neoclassical theories.

Another example of state policies that influenced population mobility could be seen in the past state policies of industrial decentralization, the creation of homeland governments, and the development of public services (Todes, 2001:14). It is argued that the latter policies were instrumental in generating employment on the periphery and in part undermined settlement patterns. However Aina and Baker (1995:57) suggest that in the African context, it is time-place specific actions and the myriads of day-to-day decisions at the micro-levels, not the performance of the state that should be the concern when attempting an understanding of African and peasant realities, including spatial movements.

Moreover, it is argued that despite the familiarity and the widespread acceptance by scholars and policymakers, the neoclassical theory has not been put to rigorous test in explaining migration (Massey, 1994). However it is important to note that the latter author was reviewing the theories of migration based on the studies conducted mainly in North America. In South Africa, Mabin, Cross, Todes and many others have also rigorously challenged neo-classical transition models. But based on the account of the North American migration as reported by Massey (1997), the neoclassical theory is clearly supported, but the results suggest that, by itself, it does not constitute a complete explanation of migration and hence it has become unpopular over the past years, although it is still dominant in some places. This again highlights the fact that the neoclassical account of migration is too narrow to be used as the basis for analysing the forces shaping migration.

In short, it is clear that migration is sensitive to gaps in wage rates between places of origin and destination (Massey, 1994). Perhaps the latter finding warns critics against adopting what may be informally called a "blanket" approach in exposing the inefficiencies of the neoclassical theory, by highlighting the fact that some aspects of this theory can be supported and hence the theory must not be discarded as totally unfounded. However it is also clear that migration is not only determined by wage gaps alone as implied in the neoclassical paradigm. Neoclassical theory is also silent about how violence impacts on migration patterns. In this regard Todes (2001:15) quotes Morrison as saying that although violence is of secondary importance to economic factors, a narrow focus on economic factors is inappropriate in violence-torn countries.

Applying the neoclassical theory in the South African context, it would mean the state should tailor its spatial policies in a way that only allows minimal intervention on its part in the hope that migration and the market forces would redress the spatial disparities firmly entrenched by the legacy of apartheid over time as is implied by the normalisation hypothesis.

### 2.1.3 The New Economics of Migration

This theory has added greater theoretical sophistication to the neoclassical paradigm. But unfortunately it has not received as much attention as it deserves in the literature. This theory states that migration stems from failures in other markets that threaten the material well being of households and create barriers to their economic advancement (Massey 1994). It is argued that this theory also acknowledges that third world countries, in particular, lack or have imperfect and inaccessible markets for capital. It therefore avoids the rather naïve "totalising effect" of the traditional neo-liberal theory by taking note of the inherent distinction between economic development trajectories in developed and developing countries. In order to self-insure against risks to income, production, and property, households send one or more workers to various labour markets. Massey (1994) submits that given the relatively higher wages in developed countries, international migration offers an attractive and effective strategy for overcoming capital constraints.

It is argued that this theory is consistent with circumstantial evidence from the North American migratory systems, which suggests that poor households deliberately use migration to diversify their labour portfolios. The households combine foreign wage labour with local work and other economic activities. It is clear that in these areas rural communities are not isolated, economically autonomous entities. They are closely connected to urban markets and they rely on migrant earnings to support local investment (Massey 1994). This closely resembles the notion of circular migration.

Massey (1994) also submits that the new economics of migration has challenged the neoclassical assumption that higher income has a uniform effect in promoting migration at all socio-economic levels. This school of thought disproves the assumption in question by drawing one's attention to the concept of "relative deprivation", which holds that households not only migrate to improve absolute income, but also to increase their incomes relative to others in the community.

Through migration, households attempt to ameliorate their sense of relative deprivation. Clearly relative deprivation depends on where one is located in the income distribution scale (Massey 1994). In effect households located at the bottom of the income scale are more likely to migrate than those situated toward the top. Likewise places with unequal income distribution are more likely to send migrants than those where income is equally distributed. Perhaps in testing the feasibility of this concept in the context of developing countries, a "cautionary rule" must be applied because there is more at stake in these countries than this concept simply assumes. But still it adds sophistication to the narrow neo-liberal theories.

In conclusion, although often stressing different factors, the new economics of migration and the neoclassical model appear to complement or dovetail each other in explaining migration. Massey (1994) submit that both models are important and that either one, by itself, would constitute an incomplete explanation of migration. However the discussion of the above two theories has raised serious concerns about the often abstract and oversimplified assumptions upon which these theories are based. Todes (1997), in particular, has exposed the limits of these theories in explaining the nuances and intricacies involved in migration and urbanization dynamics, particularly in South Africa. The picture that begins to emerge is that the causes of migration are complex and go far beyond purely economic considerations.

#### **2.1.4 Structural theories of Migration**

Todes (2001:16) correctly points out that major critiques of neoclassical theories have emerged from both structuralist and post-structuralist perspective. Basically the structuralists focuses on macro forces and seek to explain population mobility in the light of economic development trajectories and other state policies. In other words, as Todes (2001:16) notes, migration patterns are likely to vary according to the changing trajectory of economic development in particular countries.

Chant (1992) points out that structuralist explanations are largely concerned with understanding migration movements within the context of historical transformations in social groups. Chant (1992) notes that special emphasis is placed on the reorganization of production during which migration arises from the spatial

distribution of labour requirements among the different sectors of national and international economies. Todes (1997) notes that the structuralists have, for instance, examined the way in which labour markets and particularly labour segmentation provide differential opportunities and access for potential migrants, and thus influencing the patterns of migration.

#### **2.1.4.1 Segmented Labour Market Theory**

Massey (1994) submits that in contrast to the neoclassical and new economic theories, both of which view migration as originating in rational calculations made by individuals and families responding to market forces, the segmented labour market theory sees migration as demand-driven, built into the economic structure of advanced industrial societies. Todes (1997) argues that migration is linked to the supply and demand for particular occupations, rather than the situation of the labour force as a whole.

It is pointed out that inherent tendencies in modern capitalism, such as the exercise of power and strategic actions by the capitalists, affect the processes of migration. As a way of illustration, Todes (1997) makes mention of differing recruitment processes, which may exclude particular groups. Contrary to the general belief, it is also argued that even the informal sector is not easily accessible. This implies that social networks also play a powerful role in migration processes. Even Massey (1994) submits that the accumulated evidence appears to indicate that the United States labour markets are indeed segmented. As a result the selective exclusion of the segmented labour markets means, according to Todes (1997), that the probability of low-skilled, unemployed workers migrating would be lower than for the more educated and skilled workers or professionals.

#### **2.1.5 Post-structural Perspective**

Chant (1992) submits that more recently, this approach to migration has been proposed as a means by which to take into account not only the response of individuals to structural constraints, but also opportunities. In this approach, the structural causes of the labour market formation and uneven spatial distribution are combined with an awareness of the highly selective individual responses of developing countries' inhabitants who are often faced with a limited number of

strategies to utilise for survival, one of which is migration. This approach is useful as it does not lose sight of the micro-social circumstances which give rise to participation in migration (Chant, 1992).

Ferguson (1990) looks at migration theories from a postmodernist perspective and tries to "deconstruct" the grand narratives underpinning these theories. First, Ferguson analyses population mobility in Copperbelt and spells out various traditional accounts advanced and tools used to get into grips with all the complexities and nuances of migration in terms of traditional theories of migration. It is argued that although changes in migration patterns and government policies are important, their nature is not uni-directional as migration theories seem to suggest, but they are complex and ambiguous (Ferguson, 1990:616). It is also pointed out that there are not well-captured in a linear sequence of phases.

It is argued that while constructing a sequence of "phases" or ideal types can be a useful device for bringing order and meaning to apparently chaotic and disordered processes and events, it is important to understand the limitations imposed on understanding by such typological approach to historical (Ferguson, 1990:620). This can be seen, it is argued, in the appearance of distinct "stages". The author also points out that another feature of this procedure is a "typical" figure, which has a way of standing in for or taking the place of serious analysis of diversity. The effect of this process is that it ends up annulling diversity and papering over the variations relating to gender, social structure, culture, etc, that make each migrant different from another, thereby ignoring the entire sociological problem one set out to study (Ferguson, 1990:620).

Another narrative device that is contested is the so-called "periodisation" or the division of history into periods. Ferguson (1990:620) argues that this process enables migration theorists to put meaning into the flux of historical process. But the difficulty with it is that it carries an ideological load. As a way of illustration, Ferguson (1990) cites the notion of phasing migration processes into "migrant labour", "temporary urbanisation", and "permanent urbanisation". It is argued that these phases in the conventional narrative emerged/not as simple labelling of empirical processes on the ground, but as an ideological formulation of these processes for the insertion into a

colonial discourse centred on the political and social status of urban Africans (Ferguson, 1990:620). Clearly some of the analytical tools that are used in migration are, according to the author, inappropriate for the kind of scrutiny that is required if migration processes are to be understood.

#### **2.1.6 Network Theory**

Massey (1994) points out that 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. The positive spin-offs of network ties are, *inter alia*, lowering the costs of migration, raising the benefits, and mitigating the risks of international movement. This is sometimes referred to as the "family and friends effect", whereby the concentration of particular population groups in certain cities or regions dramatically increases the probability that other members of the same groups will migrate there (Massey 1994). The incidence of "pipeline connections" is not only unique to the developed countries, but also widely reported throughout the developing world, and often operating over considerable long distances and this is discussed below in Chapter Three.

In practical terms it is said that networks function to guide new immigrants to jobs on arrival. Some people refer to this state of affairs as "immigrant multiplier effect", whereby immigrant flows become less selective, even though they often begin selectively with skilled workers. Ultimately these flows become dominated by relatives in the interests of family re-unification (Massey 1997). It is argued that the accumulated evidence in the United States, for instance, confirms the observation that settlement patterns of immigrants are to a large extent determined by social networks. Although this work is based largely on Mexican Migrants, Massey (1994) also notes that more and better research on non-Mexican migration samples is clearly needed to confirm the generality of these findings.

#### **2.1.6 Livelihood Strategies**

It is outside the scope of this dissertation to analyse the literature on livelihood strategies and see how it relates to the debates at hand. But it is indeed a useful lens through which to view population mobility trends as pointed out by Todes (1997). It is



asserted that this perspective is an important lens through which the intersection between structural forces and micro-level responses linked to migration might be understood. The literature on livelihood strategies further provides evidence on how poor households survive and respond to declining economic conditions. The concept of households is a controversial one though. Todes (1997) rightly points out that although some of the literature sees households as unified organisations, within which livelihood strategies are developed and migration decisions are made, there is increasing recognition of the way in which power relations within households influence patterns of mobility.

It is argued that for low-income households livelihood strategies are likely to be multiple and diverse, and they are likely to change. This enables people to engage in a wide range of economic activities over space. It is therefore imperative to unpack this theoretical perspective and infuse it into the conceptualisation of migration theories. This could be an interesting area of research for anyone who is interested in Mooi River because the socio-economic conditions in the area.

## **Conclusion**

In this Chapter different theoretical accounts of migration were explored, namely, Neoclassical theories, Structural, and Post-structural theories of migration. According to these theories the factors that determine population mobility trends are complex and hence not prone to generalisations.

Although they also look at other factors such as cultural, behavioural, and cultural factors, the neoclassical theories of migration emphasise economic incentives as the main determinants of migration. People are seen as income maximisers and they embark on migration in order to achieve this purpose. However, the critics of this theory were, *inter alia*, quoted as saying that if economic advantage were a major determinant, then in an economically depressed region there would be mass out-migration. It also became clear from the discussion of the neoclassical theories that policies that influence spatial access to housing, education and health are also influential in distorting the workings of the market.

An international precedent to the effect that all categories of government action can have an indirect impact on migration flows was also set out. The Guanacaste case study is of particular relevance in this research. It was pointed out that there is evidence to suggest that market forces that would normally induce migration and equalise wages were undermined or short-circuited by a fiscal structure that subsidised residence in depressed regions.

The latter point was also collaborated by the observation that low-income people are attracted to places by high welfare benefits rather than other economic incentives. The persistence of in-migration into a depressed town could not only be explained in light of the economic factors. Surely these play a part, but there are clearly other factors that propel this mobility trend.

The Structural theories of migration were also analysed. These theories focus on macro-forces that influence population movements. In analysing the Post-structural theories, it was pointed out that they are important because they not only look at the Structural causes of the labour market formation and uneven spatial distribution, they also consider the selective individual responses of poor people who are often faced by a limited number of strategies to utilise for survival. In other words, over and above structural constraints, this approach does not lose sight of the micro-social circumstances.

As part of Post-structural theories, Ferguson looks at migration from a postmodernist perspective. In this regard it was pointed out that although changes in migration patterns and government policies are important, their nature is not uni-directional as migration theories seem to suggest, but they are complex and ambiguous. In effect this perspective only serves to warn against blind faith on the tools embraced in the other theoretical perspectives.

## 3. CHAPTER THREE

### 3.1 Introduction

#### 3.2 Brief History of Urbanisation and National Settlement Patterns in South Africa

It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to review the international literature on national and regional settlement patterns and policies. This section rather focuses and seeks to give a brief historical overview of urbanisation dynamics and national settlement patterns in South Africa. The term urbanisation, for the purposes of this research, refers to population increase in urban areas. To begin with, urbanisation takes place for a range of reasons, namely, economic growth in urban areas, relative decline or stagnation of rural economies, to mention the least. In most cases urbanisation occurs through the processes of rural-urban migration and population growth. In turn the causes of and processes through which urbanisation takes place are complex and susceptible to, inter alia, various interventionist modes adopted by governments as demonstrated by the South African apartheid case scenario.

Hindson and McCarthy (1997:21) submit that historically, the migrant labour system was the centre of South Africa's political economy. It is pointed out that research reveals that flows of black rural-urban migrants in Southern Africa preceded efforts made by the colonial state in the late nineteenth century to organize a cheap labour system for the region's mines and farms (Rogerson, 1995:110). It provided the basis for a system of exploitation in which the wealth of whites, particularly in urban areas, grew at the expense of the mass of Africans located in rural areas in Bantustans. The discoveries of diamonds at Kimberly and on the Witwatersrand, for instance, propelled the recruitment of black workers to the mines, construction, and other urban activities. In order to give effect and maintain this rather "parasitic" relationship between blacks and whites, the apartheid government promulgated a plethora of legislation.

It is argued that during the 1920s and 1930s worsening landlessness and escalating rural evictions, coupled with the tightening of state legislation, coalesced to forge the basis of what was to become an exploitative system of cheap labour in South Africa

(Rogerson 1995:111). It is said that the most notable innovation was the enactment of the so-called "pass laws", which were also strengthened after 1948 with the coming into power of the National Party with its commitment to apartheid. This was to give birth to what became known as South Africa's "closed city" programmes of influx control to contain permanent black urbanization in white areas. The effect of these discriminatory laws or policies was to deny permanent urbanisation to a large section of the African workforce in the cities. The status of black workers, in law if not in reality, was therefore that of temporary migrants (Hindson and McCarthy, 1997:23). It is argued that this forced African workers to commute daily across Bantustan borders to work in the industrial and commercial centres within the white core cities. This is one feature which makes the patterns of human settlement in South Africa differ markedly from those in other countries (CDE, 1998:1).

Hindson and McCarthy (1997:4) argue that during the 1970s, and earlier still, it could be argued that grand apartheid had managed at considerable economical, political, and personal cost, to maintain a pattern of "dynamic equilibrium" between urban and rural areas based partly on the migrant labour system. The so-called Bantustan policies, influx controls, and anti-urban policies, motivated out of separate development objectives, severely impacted on the national settlement patterns. Dewar (1996), therefore, points out that historically, regional and national settlement patterns in South Africa have been distorted through the influence of politically, as opposed to economically, motivated factors.

Rogerson (1995:112) notes that one of the most heinous aspects of apartheid social engineering was the uprooting and forced removals of established communities and their relocation or, more correctly, dumping in more remote and often barren rural slums. It is averred that this exercise was the cornerstone of apartheid planning for separate "ethnic" Bantustans and this form of planning devastated the lives of up to seven million people. Even today most of the previously disadvantaged people are still suffering while the majority of the whites (including the new black elite group) continue to indulge themselves in the wealth of the country.

In the 1980s the term "displaced urbanisation" was coined to capture the notion of dense impoverished black settlements located some distance away from urban

areas. Crankshaw and Parnell (1996) point out that these sprawling settlements are, as it were, dormitory towns with little or no conventional infrastructure, industrial or commercial developments. They are not functionally autonomous as they are linked to and dependent on urban incomes and other transfers for survival. Hindson and McCarthy (1997:22) note that the argument underlying the concept of “displaced urbanization” was that it was largely a consequence of apartheid prohibitions on settlement within the white urban areas that Africans settled in remote quasi-dense urban areas. It is therefore argued that these areas represented “the need to find a place to live under constrained circumstances which has led to a growth of a new form of urbanism” (Hindson and McCarthy, 1997:22).

For the purposes of this dissertation it is not necessary to give a breakdown of migration dynamics in the 1980s to 1990s. But it is argued that with the weakening of pass and influx controls in the 1970s and 1980s, and their abolition in 1986, more permanent urbanisation and settlement occurred as thousands of Africans settled in squatter areas mainly on the urban peripheries, especially where these fell within Bantustans (Hindson and McCarthy, 1997:23). There was however a widespread expectation that the abolition of influx controls would change the nature of migration and then lead to concomitant changes in settlement patterns. To be more specific, there was a belief that with the termination of apartheid controls, people would migrate to the cities, and “artificially created” settlements would wither away (Todes, 2001:1) and this has become known as normalisation assumption. There is however substantial evidence to suggest that, contrary to the popular opinion, blacks have not been moving in large numbers from rural homelands into the “white cities”.

### **3.3 Contemporary Migration/Urbanisation Dynamics and Settlement Patterns in KwaZulu-Natal**

The dynamics of settlement systems are driven by complex interaction of demographic factors – such as growth and urbanization (Foundation for Contemporary Research, 1997:4.9) and this is particularly true of KwaZulu-Natal, which is regarded as one of the most populous province. Cross, Mngadi, and Mbhele (1998:71) argue that the force of migration is probably the most neglected dynamic in South Africa’s social policy and that little is known about how people move from place to place. Contrary to the widespread expectation that temporary migration

would give way to permanent settlement with the abolition of influx control, it has become apparent that metropolitan destinations are not necessarily the obvious choice of all migrants (Hindson and McCarthy, 1997:4). In other words, as Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1998:72) note, migration is not an easy choice to make because of thin competitive job markets in urban areas.

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Cross, Mngadi, and Mbhele (1996:9) note that the current level of flow for rural to urban migration in KwaZulu-Natal is not clear. It would seem the lifting of influx controls has not propelled the rate of rural-urban migration as it was envisaged. But what begins to emerge though are the complex patterns of rural to rural or rural to urban migration as households try to sustain themselves through the maintenance of rural-urban links in an endeavour to minimize risks and maximize income. In general terms, it is argued that the general inward drift of population from the farms and tribal areas is pulling households into densifying areas in and around population centres. The notion of peri-urbanisation has particularly been noted both in and around metropolitan areas and small towns.

✱ An understanding of the economic well-being of the province is crucial as it leads to an appreciation of the variables that influence population mobility in the province. The latter observation is informed by the assumption that, according to Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1996:10), the destination areas which are receiving in-migration in KwaZulu-Natal are places with location advantage in terms of access to work. Whether or not this assumption is valid is not material for now suffice to say that access to employment is indeed one of the range of factors that sheds light on population mobility.

The primary economic sectors in KwaZulu-Natal are agriculture and a declining mining industry and with the main economic activity being mainly concentrated in the short interior corridor between Durban and Pietermaritzburg and also in a narrow strip along the coast. Cross, Mngadi, and Mbhele (1996:5) also make mention of the fact that the interior white farming areas, historically committed to uncompetitive maize production, have stagnated overall. The authors observe that overall, the provincial interior is losing ground economically against the coastal strip and this could, inter alia, be attributed to the drought years of the 1980s and early 1990s.

It is argued that what does seem to be new about the new migration trends is that given that the metropolises are not generating economic opportunities on the scale that would be required to accommodate previously projected population growth, migration to these areas has slowed (Hindson and McCarthy, 1997: 4). Wolpe (1997:4.1) sets out the major migration processes, which are currently underway in South Africa as follows:

- Differential Urbanisation - where more than one migration process is operating at the same time
- Urban Transition or permanent movement to urban areas
- Circular migration – where people move to an urban area for a period before returning to the rural areas
- Step-wise migration – where people move from one settlement to another which is usually larger than the previous settlement
- Counter urbanization – where secondary cities in close proximity to metropolitan areas absorb the decentralisation of both population and economic activity

For the purposes of this dissertation the focus will be on differentiated forms of circulatory migration, namely, chain and stepwise migration. Cross, Mbhele and Mngadi (1998:71), as indicated above, argue that rural to urban migration is usually assumed to be the migration flow and that most of it has been thought to be circulatory, according to the rhythm of labour migration. But the indications suggest that population movement no longer seem to conform to this paradigm.

Hindson and McCarthy (1997:23) are in congruency with the above authors and point out that recent case study evidence suggests that while circulatory migration may remain important, there is growing evidence that the form of circulatory migration may have modified in many ways. They cite the example of the so-called “chain migration” as one example in this regard. “Chain migration” is defined as a process whereby a relative or acquaintance “acts as a pioneer to facilitate the migration of other members of the chain in a serial fashion once he or she is established” in an urban area (Hindson and McCarthy, 1994). It is argued that in most cases these “pioneers” or direct migrants tend to be younger and to have few and younger

children. Cross (1994:91) refers to the latter process as “migration through a pipeline process”, whereby accommodation is sought and found through relatives, home people, friends, and co-workers, while the African independent churches may also play a crucial role in this regard.

Another dimension of circulatory migration identified by Hindson and McCarthy (1997:23) is that of stepwise migration. It is argued that this process is associated with poorer rural households that are unable to mobilise resources for long distance travel to centres with the greatest opportunities. Hindson and McCarthy (1997:23) argue that in so far as poorer households, or their individual members do migrate, it tends to be in a stepwise fashion, namely, short distance moves, usually to neighbouring rural areas or small town rather than initially to a large town. It is also interesting to note that, according to Cross (1998:75) for the first time in history, it looks like people can now do better in small rural centres than in the city.

Hindson and McCarthy (1997:23) contend that through stepwise and chain migration households develop new survival strategies by maintaining linkages across a number of urban and rural areas. It seems the rationale behind this, to borrow Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi's words (1998:72), is that moving from one area to another usually means trying to improve access to wage income at the cost of losing access to land, to the production economy, and to natural economy. Resorting to stepwise and chain migration therefore enables migrants to take advantage of differing resources, employment, and other opportunities in urban and rural areas.

### **3.3.1 Case Study: Migration Dynamics in KwaZulu-Natal**

The Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) initiated this research in order to explore the influence of migration on population and land needs. In order to gather information for the purposes of this study, surveys of 487 rural and urban areas were undertaken, together with the information gathering workshops and interviews. Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1998:72) point out that based on the study sample, most of disadvantaged population in KwaZulu-Natal has moved away from their home communities. About 30% said they moved primarily to find work, another 30% because of difficult conditions at home, and 15% because of conflict and violence. The authors point out that what was unexpected was that the great majority of the



moves away from home – over 75% - were rural to rural. It is also noted that movement from rural communities into the urban sector meant, in practice, movement into the urban shack communities, the only urban settlements that take in outsiders. But the problem, as highlighted above, is that unemployment in the metro shack areas has risen and job markets are swamped with aspiring rural work-seekers.

The authors also highlight the fact that the average monthly income per person, based on this study, in urban shacks was R257, compared to R175 in the rural Tribal Authority areas. Surprisingly, it is noted that the better-off rural peri-urban areas recorded per person incomes well over three hundred per month, and metro peri-urban areas were nearly as high. The authors therefore suggest that rural peri-urbanisation looks like the future trend.

In line with the latter findings, Hindson and McCarthy (1997:24) argue that one of the outcomes of stepwise and chain migration is that it results in the gradual sifting out of households into economically and socially differentiated settlements. In this regard, Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1998:72) point out that in KwaZulu-Natal the regional disadvantaged population appears to be breaking into three broad categories, namely, a permanent urban-born population located in townships and older informal settlements, a conservative rural population in Tribal Authority and mission areas, and a large mobile population originally linked to labour migrancy, forced removals, and refugee processes. The advantages and disadvantages of these groupings differ.

The so-called permanent urban-born population has large economic advantages and now dominates urban job markets. The conservative rural population has its advantage in land access and security networks, and finally the mobile population is said to be forward-looking in terms of development and poverty reduction. Moreover, it is pointed out that the mobile constituency has also the most difficulty in accessing resources (Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi, 1998:73).

With due respect, whilst the above three categories are useful in terms of capturing the general trends and patterns, care must be taken not to attach too much weight to

them because in reality there are also other nuances pertaining to population groupings some of which do not necessarily conform or lend themselves to the identified neat categories. As pointed out in Chapter Two, Ferguson (1990:620) also cautions against the use of this narrative device or “typological” approach because, while it brings order and meaning to apparently chaotic and disordered migration processes, it does so to the detriment of understanding other processes that inform population mobility. An example in this regard could be former farm tenants who get displaced from farm communities as a result of farm evictions. This phenomenon is, for instance, so pronounced in Mooi River that the area’s Integrated Development Plan (IDP, 2002) points out that farm evictions have only helped to exacerbate an already tense stand-off between farmers and farm tenants. It can be argued that this latter grouping could in fact constitute another category, adding to the three categories identified by Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1998).

This population group appears to be the most disadvantaged group because, unlike its “conservative rural population” counterpart, it does not have access to land since farmers own the land. To illustrate the point further, Hadingham (2000) notes that many of the new residents of the Townview Housing project in Mooi River were “dumped” in response to the new legislation that extended the security of tenure to farm workers. Given that eighty percent of land in Mpofana Municipality (Mooi River) is privately owned, this group constitutes a significant part of Mooi River’s total population and must now be accommodated by the town’s “shrinking” job markets. To date the research that was done for the purposes of this dissertation revealed that most of them are struggling to survive. This is therefore a long way to illustrate the point that population movement is not only limited to the three categories identified above and hence they must not be seen as “be-all-and-end-all” situation as the Mooi River case study reveals.

Hindson and McCarthy (1997:24) note that Kok and Gelderblom argue that some evidence exists to suggest a process of socio-spatial differentiation in which proximity to the core urban industrial areas is correlated with the spatial distribution of poverty, the better off settlements being located closer to the core urban area and the poorer communities more distant. In this regard it is averred that Kok and Gelderblom have

postulated the existence of “zones of relative exclusion”, radiating out in concentric circles from major metropolitan areas (Hindson and McCarthy, 1997:24).

Hindson and McCarthy (1997:24) submit that the patterns of concentric spatial differentiation will be cross cut by a range of factors including the development of transport systems which alter the cost of distance and historical linkages between rural and urban areas connected by migration. Hindson and McCarthy (1997:24) warn that the concentric model may oversimplify conditions within the urban periphery. They cite the example of Cato Manor in Durban, which is the most central of informal settlements. But its residents, although this may not necessarily be the case any longer, are the poorest and most marginalised of all in the region.

Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1998:73) talk about “storm cells” in terms of which local cells of movement seem to be building up within the KwaZulu-Natal province, as opposed to a dominant rural to urban flow of people. The authors contend that these demographic pressure cells resemble weather cells and they can be identified in the combined metro/peri-urban region, in the northern interior, and to a lesser extent in the south interior and south coast. The apartheid displacement processes and the resulting overcrowding and land loss in the areas receiving the dispossessed, have acted as a demographic engine for the north interior of KwaZulu-Natal province (Cross, Mngadi, and Mbhele, 1998:74). It is argued that the results are easy to see: a demographic pressure cell has built up where the removals have peaked. The authors argue that, based on their research findings, nearly 80% of all farm origin people had moved at least once, and three quarters had made crisis moves.

According to Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1998:74) there is strong evidence to indicate that the demographic map of KwaZulu-Natal gets its structure from the transport arteries making up the three existing development corridors. It is also argued that in certain circumstances road provision provides significant opportunities that could support latent patterns of movement. It is argued that migration flow in KwaZulu-Natal is mainly local. People seem to be moving cross-wise, from the adjacent areas into the corridors themselves, more than along the corridors into their central terminus in the Durban area. Whilst this assumption may still need more evidence to confirm it, Kiepel (in Hindson and McCarthy, 1994) clearly corroborates it

by arguing that the exact location of different facilities on such routes varies and this may affect migration flows. In the so-called interior transport corridor, which runs through Mooi River and the economically depressed Estcourt sub-region, Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1998:74) point out that there is more population instability, with people moving inward toward what economic opportunity the area still holds. This is also the case in the north of the inland corridor than in the south, where there is less instability in terms of population movement.

Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1998:75) point out that migration is a strategy that works. In terms of their research, migrants to urban areas were better off than some of those in outlying areas, but not as well off as those who have positioned themselves in the rural sector with access to the city. To conclude, it is argued that, in relative terms, urban incomes had dropped the last five years. But it seems that attaining simultaneous access to both land and the city is a better strategy than urban migration right now, and that rural land based strategies can also work very well (Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi, 1998:75).

### **3.4 Settlement Patterns**

The variegated migration trends identified above affect the very diverse settlement systems and hierarchies in various provinces. In addition, the current subsidy programmes for human settlement, it is argued, have managed to provide almost one million housing opportunities, but many of these settlements are located on the peripheries of urban centres thus reproducing the apartheid spatial planning forms (NSDP, 2000:27).

It is pointed out that although part of the problem of dispersed settlements lies with the developer-driven model used to deliver the bulk of housing subsidies, since developers have been taking advantage of available holdings of land to keep down costs, the other part of the problem arises because the current subsidy is generally inadequate to cover costs of well-located land in many of the major urban centers (NSDP, 2000:27). It is also noted by a number of departments involved in the delivery of household infrastructure that, in the absence of any national guidelines to the contrary, provinces are allocating such subsidies to localities that have almost no potential to develop. As a result these settlements are not fully utilized because

ostensible owners of the household infrastructure are living elsewhere in informal settlements where they are employed.

It is also argued that high levels of mobility and an unstable population are putting strain on settlement processes in KwaZulu-Natal, both in urban and rural areas (Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi, 1996:13). Wolpe (1997) argues that in the post-apartheid South Africa, the settlement systems are rapidly changing. This could be attributed to a number of factors, including but not limited to, poor land management systems and the weakening of institutions on the ground, thus opening the system to abuse. The issue of traditional land markets deserves special mention. In rural tribal areas, for instance, getting a piece of land is complicated and expensive. The complications arguably stems from the fact that in terms of the Ingonyama Trust Act, individuals cannot own land, as all the land vests in the ownership of his Majesty, King Zwelithini.

In practice the exposition of tribal land has been delegated to the chiefs and this kind of activity seems to be on the informal system and often buyers only have limited rights over land once they have purchased it (Cross, Mbhele, Mngadi, 1996:14). This fact also seems to question the validity of the assumption that seem to dominate the South African migration literature that the majority of rural population has easy access to land compared to its urban counterpart. But Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1996:15) report that their research reveals that in spite of land deprivation and all strings attached to owning rural land, the people they interviewed indicated that rural tribal districts are the most favourable accessible location for land security. With that said, it is argued that in relation to regional migration streams, tribal areas serve as sending areas. They also seem to be responsible for most of the flow of rural people to into the metropolitan shack settlements. However, this is not a uni-directional process because some tribal areas also receive significant levels of in-migration from the farms and from more remote tribal areas (Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi, 1996:15).

The other major sending areas, it is argued, are the commercial farms, and this affects farm tenants. Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1996:16) correctly points out that most white farms were established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, through massive clearances of indigenous people. In order to deprive farm workers and farm tenants of land rights

which vest to them by virtue of being farm tenants, the farmers want to push them off the land so that they can give up their claims to land entitlements. The aim is to change the nature of the "farm-tenant" contract to free labour units.

The promulgation of the new land tenure legislation, which extends tenure rights to farm workers or tenants, has spiraled the incidence of farm evictions. As a result, it is argued that farm evictions are continuing at a high rate. This in turn leads to forced migration throughout the farming districts and tribal areas. It is also important to note the impact that farm evictions have on the lives of the victims. As most labour tenants invest in livestock, on eviction they lose most of their accumulated savings and this also causes hostile relationships between farmers and farm workers or tenants. As indicated earlier on, displaced farm workers often target peri-urban areas around small towns.

The history of urban shack settlements is slightly different from the one noted above. The emergence of this form of settlement could be seen as an unintended result of anti-urban or influx control policies. Since the latter policies aimed to push black people further away from "white areas", blacks developed shacks mainly on private land owned by Indian or African Landlords, where they were safer from action by the municipality. With the weakening of the policing of urban land, squatting and shack settlement spread out very quickly (Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi, 1996:17). It is said that these areas absorbed much of the natural increase of the established township population, since virtually no houses were built since the 1970s. Land insecurity in these areas seem to be very high and in the near past these areas were also torn by violence. The shack areas, it is argued, usually have no livelihoods.

In the post-apartheid South Africa, it is argued that certain settlements are experiencing what is usually considered abnormal tendencies of growth in either economy or population and decline in the other variable. Wolpe (1997:4.5) submits that certain previously disadvantaged settlements in the former homeland areas are experiencing rapid population and sometimes economic growth, whereas border towns in the former white South Africa are experiencing decline trends. This could partly be attributed to the freeing up of economic activity, location, and reduced size of captive markets.

It is also contended that provinces with undeveloped settlement systems tend to be numerically dominated by small towns. Hindson and McCarthy (1997:12) submit that these towns are often the first port-of-call for displaced farm workers. Since these towns are often the target location of migrants, their future economic health will be critical in influencing the economic health of certain rural areas. Wolpe (1997:4.6) argues that there is a need to also consider the impacts of a range of government policies on settlement patterns. The author cites the example of the National Housing Policy and Subsidy System in this regard.

It is argued that the latter system is not promoting settlement restructuring and integration. One observer has argued that the “spray and spread” approach that seems to have characterised the activities of the latter department in the recent past might perpetuate new forms of spatial disjunctures. The location of new housing settlements is an important issue in relation to where people will find work and where new jobs are being created. The problems associated with either the lack of shelter or unemployment cannot be tackled without an acknowledgment of the interconnections between them. As a way of illustration many urban areas contain deficient services and job opportunities relative to their population size. If new houses, for instance, are oversupplied in these already depressed areas for various political reasons as opposed to immediate housing needs, the municipalities become forced to service larger than normally expected deprived populations. This problem might also be exacerbated by the fact that, in line with new patterns of migration, whole families now engage in migration as opposed to just males or females before. It is pointed out that this has significant implications for urban management in these towns.

### **3.5 Problems of Small Towns**

The South African scene is characterised by the hierarchy of towns and cities. But this dissertation focuses on small towns. In terms of the definition of small towns given in Chapter One, small towns could be categorised into three categories. The category that is of concern here is that of small towns in commercial farming areas, often experiencing economic decline.

Small towns dominate the settlement systems of certain provinces. Dewar (1996) correctly points out that the circumstances of small towns vary and they all display varying competitive and comparative advantages. Small towns in general are often seen as distribution centres for the produce of the city. They are rarely seen as areas of production, although some have resource-based industries. According to Dewar (1996) it is important to note that for a town to qualify as a town, it must have an economic base. In effect the economic base provides the reason for the town's existence. The author also submits that some small towns have arisen around limited specialised functions, for example, the exploitation of a local mineral resource, transport, tourism, defence, administration, to mention the least. Most importantly, Dewar (1996) argues that although the town will inevitably perform some functions for its hinterland, its fortunes are inextricably linked to the specialist function which called it into being.

Hindson and McCarthy (1997:12) point out that on the basis of the analysis of small town trends, their populations have been growing (between 1981 and 1991) at 2.67% per annum – a slightly higher rate than the national average of 2.4%. Dewar (1996) argues that the primary reason for the population growth has been the displacement of farm workers off white-owned farms. However in terms of economic growth, Hindson and McCarthy (1997:12) argue that the situation is in general terms very problematic. It is said that more than two-thirds of South Africa's small towns experienced decline in their Gross Geographic Product (GGP). This is a serious cause for concern as it is shown below.

Dewar (1996) correctly points out that there is a correlation between population growth and economic growth, with economic growth being the main variable. It is argued that a fairly common characteristic of South Africa's small rural towns is static or declining economic base, a white, wealthier population and an increasing black, poorer population. Unemployment has thus become a common feature in most of these towns. According to Dewar (1996) in a period of low-economic growth, the consequences of pumping infrastructural services into situations where household incomes are very low and there is a little scope for the development of productive activities will be a waste of time. It will be impossible to provide these services without high levels of state subsidy.



### 3.6 Conclusion

This Chapter began by analyzing urbanization dynamics and national settlement patterns in South Africa. In tracing the history of urbanization, it looked at the migrant labour system. It went on to talk about "displaced urbanization". The important point made was that most people thought that with the removal of influx controls, most people would move to towns and that this would change the nature of migration and lead to concomitant changes in settlement patterns.

The Chapter then shifted its focus to current population mobility trends in KwaZulu-Natal. It was said that there is evidence to suggest that the lifting of influx controls has not necessarily propelled the rate of rural-urban migration. What has emerged though are the complex patterns of rural to rural or rural to urban migration. In this context, the diversification of income sources through the maintenance of rural-urban links is very important. A number of major migration processes were also outlined. But the focus was more on chain and stepwise migration. A case study by DBSA done in KwaZulu-Natal was also analysed. This study looked at migration dynamics. One of the important conclusions reached was that those people who position themselves between urban and rural areas tend to do better than those households who remain in rural areas. The Chapter also talked about farm evictions. It was noted that farmers are pushing farm workers off the land so as to avoid the implications of the Land Tenure Act, which has extended tenure rights for farm workers. Finally, a brief outline of problems facing small towns was made. The next Chapter will focus on the study area, Mooi River (Townview).

## **4. CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4.1 Mooi River**

#### **4.1.1 Introduction**

This chapter seeks to set out the history of the study area, its context, socio-economic aspects and the history of the Townview low-cost housing project. A reference to “Mooi River” refers to the former white town west of the N3 (National Route), while references to “the Mooi River” refers to the river that runs through the town. The Mpofana Municipality (previously known as Mooi River Transactional Local Council) is composed of three separate towns, namely, Bruntville, located to the east of the N3, Mooi River, located to the west of the same highway, and Rosetta, located fourteen kilometers south of the town of Mooi River.

#### **4.1.2 Mooi River in Regional Context**

Mooi River is a small town in the Mpofana Municipality, which is located approximately 40 km west of Pietermaritzburg. This area falls within Umgungundlovu District in the Midlands area of KwaZulu Natal (IDP, 2002). In terms of the IDP (2002) this area is bounded by three municipalities, namely, Umngeni in the south, uMshwathi in the east, and Impendle in the west.

In terms of the IDP (2002), Mooi River with its immediate outer areas of Bruntville and Rosetta constitutes a hub of economic/commercial and social activities in the Mpofana municipal context. Hence Mooi River has become an administrative centre of a municipality extending from the foothills of the Drakensburg in the west to the R74 to Greytown in the north-east (IDP, 2002). It is also pointed out that the peripheral areas included into Mpofana municipality during the delimitation of new municipal boundary are rural in nature, sparsely populated and the predominant land use is commercial agriculture.

The N3 (National Route) linking Durban and Gauteng bypasses the town. Mooi River therefore benefits from its strategic location which has easy access to road infrastructure and rail. The IDP (2002) points out that being located along the N3 and R103 as regional and national access corridors, Mooi River provides a prime

opportunity for attracting visitors and bypassers to the Greater Mpofana area. But noticeably no use is presently made of this opportunity and the economy of the area continues to decline as it is shown in 4.1.3 below.

#### **4.1.2 The History of Mpofana Municipality (Mooi River)**

Getting an authentic account of the history of Mooi River proved difficult and hence this section draws heavily on the works of Hadingham (2000) and Seneque Maughan-Brown (1995). Hadingham (2000) points out that early development in Mooi River occurred to the east of where the Mpofana Municipality is currently located. It is also said that the main road between the town of Estcourt to the north and Curries Post to the south crossed the Mooi River at a drift (Seneque Maughan-Brown SWK, 1995). In 1866 a bridge was built across the river and by 1872 a layout for a township, which became known as Western, had been completed. Seneque Maughan-Brown SWK (1995) points out that the first land uses to be built on the southern side of the Mooi River were a hotel, a store and a church. This development was initially oriented to the movement of goods and people.

Hadingham (2000) submits that in 1879 Alexander Lawrence bought the farm of Grantleigh to the west of Western. The site where the towns' central business district (CBD) today sits used to be the site of the latter farm. A railway line was constructed two kilometres to the west of the township in 1844 (Seneque Maughan-Brown SWK, 1995). When the land that was required for the railway reserve had been acquired, a station was built and this meant trains could now stop in the town. Hadingham (2000) then points out that development gradually moved westwards and clustered around the station. Even today commercial activity is still concentrated around the railway station.

The passing of time saw the town changing from being a stop on the transit route to inland to a market where local farmers could sell their produce and export it to the other parts of the country (Hadingham, 2000). The town also became a service center for the surrounding farming areas and eventually a small agro-processing industry was created (Seneue Maughan-Brown SWK, 1995). It is also said that the latter activity was related to Natal Co-operative Dairies and to the Mooi River Bacon Factory, which later merged with Estcourt Bacon Factory. The merger of these Bacon

Factories meant that the Mooi River Bacon factory had to relocate to Estcourt and the dairy operation also closed down due to pressure in the broader industry (Seneque Maughan-Brown SWK, 1995). It could therefore be said that the town is not involved in agro-processing anymore, except for the small scale agro-processing that has recently emerged along the Midlands meander.

Hadingham (2000) submits that after World War Two the economic base of the town diversified as a result of the construction of a textile factory in the town. This industry was attracted to the town partly because of the incentives offered by the national government. The river running through the town, the railway line and the road network also gave the town an advantage over others as it meant the town had relatively good infrastructure, readily available water, and workforce.

Hadingham (2000) notes that in 1921, the Old Western, New Western, Grantleigh, and Lawrenceville were amalgamated and the first town board of Mooi River was created. After the establishment of the textile factory, Councillor Brunt donated a portion of her farm for the settlement of the black workforce working in the textile factory (Senque Maughan-brown SWK, 1995). This area for black people became known as Bruntville. Like many other former black townships in the country, Brunville's "dormitory status" was to remain for many years to come.

#### **4.1.4 Demographic Characteristics**

In order to get a glimpse of the Mooi River's total population, three sources were used, namely, pimss.net, Municipal Demarcation Board (also based on the adjusted 1996 census figures). Whilst pimss.net estimates the Mooi River's total population to be approximately 26110, the Municipal Demarcation Board's estimate is 24785. The municipal officials also believe it to be around 26000. Whilst the sources are not agreed as to the exact number, clearly the gap between the sources is not huge and it is therefore safe to take the average of roughly 25000 - 26000 as the total population. It is important to note that this figure represents all racial groups i.e. Blacks, Whites, Coloureds, and Indians within Mpofana Municipality's area of jurisdiction. Bruntville's total population is estimated at 6193 by pimss.net.

Moreover, greatest population densities are found at Bruntville with 3621 population per square kilometre (IDP, 2000). The IDP (2000) asserts that the high rate of population concentration and the resultant high densities found in Mooi River town peripheral areas is a cause for concern in terms of pressures on basic services. It is said that this coupled to the 73% rate of unemployment explains the low rate of payment for municipal services. According to the IDP (2002), a significantly high proportion of the population is dominated by children at 43.6%. It is said that this will have far reaching implications for the current and future labour absorption capacity of the commercial sector of the Mpofana municipality.

In terms of the research done by the Centre for Development and Environment (2002), poverty and HIV/AIDS have become inseparable in Mooi River. High unemployment and the town's location near the Mooi Plaza N3 toll gate make it vulnerable to the epidemic. It is said that hungry women sell their bodies to the truck drivers at the toll gate in order to make a living. The article in question also notes that according to a study by the University of Natal's Centre for Environment and Development in Pietermaritzburg, there were 353 confirmed AIDS mortalities in 2000, and a greater number of what are probably AIDS-related deaths. It is said that these include the 3045 tuberculosis deaths recorded during the same year (Centre for Environment and Development, 2002).

#### **4.1.5 Spatial and Physical Characteristics**

The N3 and the Toll Plaza could be seen as key structuring elements that separate Mooi River (the former white urban area) from Bruntville (a black peri-urban township). The new Townview area, which forms the case study of this research, is situated in the west of Bruntville, adjacent to the N3. Whilst Townview is a new residential development for low-income people, Bruntville is an old residential establishment born under the draconian apartheid policies. Due to Bruntville's "dormitory status" of the apartheid, it is not an economically active node. In other words, whilst Bruntville and Townview are geographically absorbed within Mooi River, they still remain weak economic nodes. The land where Townview sits today used to be a wide, private-owned piece of land and was initially zoned for agricultural purposes, but this was to change when the demand for housing arose as discussed in 4.1.4 below.

#### 4.1.6 Mooi River's Economy

According to the Sunday Times article (IDP, 2002), Mooi River has never been a prosperous town but a combination of economic and political factors in recent years has plunged the town into abject poverty. Primary among these, it is argued, was the partial closure of the town's biggest employer, Mooi River Textiles. In terms of the IDP (2002), the current trends and dynamics in Mooi River point to a number of pressing challenges facing the Mpofana Municipality, namely, declining economic activity, weak and fragmented economic development structures, poorly skilled local government, limited diversification of the economic base, to mention the least.

The following table gives a breakdown of various sector's contribution to GGP in Mooi River:

**Table 1: Production Structure and Percentage Share of Gross Geographic Product (GGP)**

Sector	Percentage Share of GGP
Agriculture	24.3
Manufacturing	4.50
Utilities	0.69
Construction	5.35
Trade and Tourism	2.60
Transport	2.06
Social Services	0.44
Finance	1.24
Government	1.14

**Source: Department of Economic Development and Tourism: Directorate (LED)**

According to this source Mooi River was strong on agriculture at 24.33%. Mooi River also enjoyed reasonable share in construction and manufacturing output at GGP share output of 5.35% and 4.50% respectively.

Historically, the manufacturing sector, particularly the textile and clothing factories, made a significant contribution to the economy of Mpofana Municipality (Haddingham,

2000). Since the 1950s, the town had depended heavily on Mooi Tex for survival, but increased competition as a result of the opening up of the South African market to cheap products, and the political violence that engulfed the Midlands in the late 1980s and early 1990s, conspired to turn the factory into an unprofitable business venture (Sunday Times, 21 July 2002). It is also pointed out that during its hey-day Mooi Tex employed 1350 people and produced yarn and woven fabric for the national market (Seneque Maughan-Brown SWK, 1995).

The downturn of the area's economy began in the mid 1980's and has been steadily marked by the closure of or flight of particularly textile and manufacturing industries (IDP, 2002). When the German textile tycoon Claas Dauns acquired the Mooi Tex in the 1990s, it was hoped that he would save it. But the textile factory wound up most of its operations in June 1999, following years of unprofitability and only the Cut, Make and Trim Department was left to continue. During the winding up process, the company retrenched about one thousand workers. Early this year, it retrenched thirty six of its one hundred and forty staff and warned that it would have to shut down completely in June next year if it failed to meet production and sales target (IDP, 2002).

It is averred that the downsizing of Mooi Tex, in particular, coupled to increases in unemployment and the general decline in the revenue base for the municipality. In other words the loss of jobs had an impact on the ability of households to pay rates or service charges and this is causing a devastating effect on the town. At present the municipality has a deficit of more than R30 million as most of the residents cannot afford to pay for services. It is said that through financial help from the national government, the council has started subsidizing residents who are unable to pay for services. If a resident owes the council R138, the municipality pays R69 from the indigent aid granted by the national government. Sunday Times (21 July 2002) also points out that even those with a source of income are finding it difficult to meet their obligations to the council.

Hadingham (2000) also points out that the Mpofana Municipality used to derive seventy percent of its income from the sale of electricity to the textile factory and since the closure of the factory, the municipality was deprived of this valuable source

of income. Not only was the factory a major contributor to the municipality's revenue, its closure has seen many smaller businesses in town shutting down.

According to the IDP (2002), Mpofana once had a 23% rate of unemployment. But after the downsizing of the lead industry (accounting for 80% of industrial land currently used), the unemployment rate shot to unprecedented 75%. Given that Mooi Tex was the largest employer, the dramatic increases in unemployment rates resulted, not only from Mooi Tex, but also a host of satellite industries and businesses whose main reason for existence had been Mooi Tex. Hadingham (2000) rightly points out that while an attempt is being made to offset some of the job losses through small scale local economic development (LED) projects, these projects are not recreating jobs on the same scale as they were lost. Moreover, it is argued that the employment that is created is not necessarily taken over by the former textile factory workers.

It is also important to note that the Mpofana Municipality also serves as a service center for the rural hinterland. Hadingham (2000) argues that the municipality provides a range of banking, personal, and retail services for the hinterland. However, in terms of the IDP (2002) the Financial and Services sector is very weak and the area remains with only two branches and an agency of larger retail banks. It is pointed out that even these have been recorded to raise concerns about offering loans to local industries due to "perceived risk" in the area. However the IDP (2002) acknowledges the fact that the growth of the service sector, like finance, is essentially a spin-off from other activities, without which it cannot expand.

As pointed out earlier on, the location of the Mpofana Municipality in terms of Johannesburg Durban holiday traffic provides an opportunity for attracting visitors and bypassers to the area. Hadingham (2000) notes that the Mpofana Municipality already forms part of the Midlands Meander, an arts and craft route which winds its way along the R103 between Pietermaritzburg and Mooi River. The IDP (2000) therefore points out that the Mpofana Municipality possesses a wealth of untapped natural assets that can be converted to cash income with relative ease. But no concerted planning has been put in place to take advantage of this in order to boost



the tourism industry. However the Midlands Meander in its own right is highly developed.

The Government sector is hampered by the shortage of adequately skilled personnel. This sector is definitely not the larger provider of employment and according to the IDP (2000) its GGP contribution is 1.44%. Because of the close proximity of residential settlements to the CBD, the Transport sector remains relatively inactive, save for long distance passenger service (IDP, 2002). The Town Secretary also pointed out that to date a number of LED projects have been recorded. But more has to be done given the rapidly increasing rate of unemployment, the decreasing labour absorption capacity of the local industry, and the rate of matriculation school leaving.

Hadingham (2000) notes that informal economic activity is mainly around transport nodes and in the former township of Bruntville. It is also rightly pointed out that the informal activity in Bruntville is a result of apartheid planning policies that limited the extent of commercial activities that were permitted to take place in black townships. To sum up, some people have argued that high levels of joblessness have contributed to a rise in crime.

#### **4.1.7 History of the Mooi River (Townview) Housing Project**

The history of the low-cost housing projects in Mooi River dates back to 1995 and 1996 when the Mpofana Municipality drew up a housing waiting list in order to determine housing backlog within its area of jurisdiction. In terms of that list about 200 households were in need of houses. The potential beneficiaries were low-income people, in line with the national housing policy, which focuses mainly on low-income people. In order to qualify for the full housing subsidy, a household had to demonstrate that its monthly income was R800 or less than that. If the monthly income was between R800 and R1000, the household would then be entitled to a certain percentage, as opposed to the full subsidy. A low-income housing project was then undertaken to meet this urgent need for housing and the potential beneficiaries were meant to be within 5km radius from the Central Business District (CBD). Besides that list, according to the Town Secretary, there was also pressure from the provincial Department of Housing, which wanted to have a stock of 1400 houses built in the area.

Shortly after the first project had been implemented, a private developer-housing scheme was also proposed and this section of Bruntville township was to become known as "Townview". The Townview housing project was implemented after much deliberation between the municipality officials, who were opposed to its implementation, and the councillors who, for some reasons, were interested in the project being undertaken. But the councillors and politicians emerged victorious and the private developer was given the go-ahead. According to the KwaZulu Natal Minister of Housing (Dumisani Makhaye, 2002), the R24 million Townview Housing Project was approved in 1997.

It is interesting to note that, according to Hadingham (2000), much of the funding for the Townview project was sourced outside the municipality. Moreover, when the Townview project was conceptualised, there was already economic decline in Mooi River because the Textile industry, which formed the backbone of the area's economy, was closed down in 1996 and only few departments were left to continue. But the politicians were still willing to assume the risks of providing more housing in a place where there are limited job opportunities.

The municipality was not actively involved in the Townview project as it only monitored progress and it is not clear as to what was the municipality's role on the approval of the of project. The Town Secretary pointed out that at most the notion of integrated development planning was overlooked. Even on observation of the area its clear that this particular project is not, for instance, well integrated into Mooi River's space economy. In other words the symbiotic relationship between housing supply, social amenities, and economic opportunities was compromised.

In a speech made by the Minister of Housing in Mooi River, it is alleged that the developer absconded between 1998 and 1999 and he is now in Australia. When he absconded, which he did after the department had paid him R22 million, it meant that the work had to stop.

It is also alleged that the private developer came in and implemented the project without any public participation or community involvement whatsoever. The

developer scaled down as much as possible on the money for the top structure and the structural defects in most of the houses are, inter alia, a testimony to this. Clearly durability and workmanship in the Townview project is a matter of concern and one informant pointed out that "it is unlikely that many houses in Townview would survive foul weather conditions in the long term".

The Townview housing project was meant to house 2000 households, but for some reasons some houses were not completed, with the construction material being stolen and others have since been demolished as they remain unoccupied. In terms of the Integrated Development Plan (Analysis Phase, 2000), an estimated 134 housing units have been left unoccupied at Townview and have been subject to vandalism while 34 remain unclaimed. This could, inter alia, be attributed to the fact that with the closure of Mooitex, some people who had registered for houses are not interested to come back and take ownership of the houses because there are no job opportunities anymore.

It is also interesting to note that according to Dumisani Makhaye (2002), this is a historical problem. He points out that they were not in office when this project was approved and that this is not his Department's problem. The blame therefore shifts to the developer. It is clear that no one seems to know how this project was approved. Unfortunately the Department of Housing is still trying to track down the developer in Australia. But it would seem that even though some local politicians might know something about this project, they are not willing to come forward and explain the circumstances under which it was approved.

However the minister has assured Mooi River residents that they are going to deal with this developer and many others who may think that they can breach a contract and run away with money meant to help people. The department in question is also going to make funds available to repair destroyed houses.

But this only presents one part of the picture and from the interviews that were conducted with the Townview households, it is clear that there has been an influx into Mooi River of low income people who had previously been living outside the Mpofana Municipality's area of jurisdiction and the 5km radius from the CBD that was initially

meant to be the determining factor of the potential beneficiaries, has not worked. A lot of these households are without jobs and hence they cannot afford to pay rates, property taxes, and for service charges. The Town Secretary has said that the municipality is "breaking financially" and a financial deficit of R30 million is a testimony to this. It is said that the municipality has become worse off because of the latter project. Hadingham (2000) points out that the Mpofana Municipality has had to face the prospect of an increasing population that is unable to pay for services.

## **4.2 Conclusion**

This Chapter began by locating Mooi River in its regional context. It then traced the history of Mooi River from its early beginnings as a center oriented to the movement of goods and people. However this role was soon to change. As time went by Mooi River became a market where local farmers could sell their produce and export it to other parts of the country. Agro-processing contributed substantial to the economy of the town. The construction of Mooi River Textiles after WWII also boosted the economy. The importance of the textile industry was to remain for many years. However international pressures have recently forced the company to close down and relocate to other places and this has been accompanied by unprecedented job losses in the area. This has also affected the other businesses. Even the municipality has felt the "shock".

This Chapter also analysed the demographics of the area. It was pointed out that while some sections of the population, particularly white people and some business people, have migrated out of Mooi River, there has also been a remarkable influx of low-income people. Most of these people are drawn to either Townview or Bruntville. The location of these townships in relation to the former white town was set out in the section that looked at spatial and physical characteristics. This Chapter also looked at Mooi River's economy which is declining. The important point here is that the partial closure of Mooi River led to job losses and that it also affected other businesses. Finally it traced the history of the Townview housing project, which has a lot of controversies around its implementation or approval. The next Chapter seeks to analyse and synthesise data and findings.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## Migration Trends and Patterns: The case of Mooi River

As shown in the previous chapters, the factors that drive migration are not prone to generalisations. Different theoretical accounts suggest that some factors are more important than others in terms of either inducing or discouraging migration. Migration is often thought to be driven by, *inter alia*, the search for work, access to infrastructure and services, access to social networks, to mention the least. This dissertation sought to explore the impact of housing oversupply on in-migration patterns into Mooi River. According to some of the theories set out above, migration to Mooi River is an unexpected mobility trend because of the declining socio-economic conditions in the area. The topic of this study asserts that low-income people are drawn to Mooi River, particularly the new Townview low-cost houses.

Townview is an interesting case study because out of 1232 houses built, 180 houses remain empty while 34 remain unclaimed. Clearly there has been an oversupply of houses if this information is anything to go by. The issue of unoccupied, uncompleted, and unclaimed houses presents one part of the picture because the other houses have been occupied and there has therefore been an influx of low-income people who had been previously residing outside the Mpofana Municipality's boundaries. Questions therefore need to be asked as to what informs this mobility trend.

In order to determine why these people are drawn into Mooi River in the context of economic decline, thirty households in Townview were interviewed. Given the total number of households, it was thought that at least the information gathered from thirty of them would be representative of the opinions and experiences of Townview residents in general. This information was further consolidated by the information gathered from interviews with key informants.

Based on the study samples household sizes differ, with the average household size being six people per unit. Most of the households interviewed (57%) are female-headed households. Unemployment in Townview is rife. Results suggest that income

levels are also very low. Most of the respondents complained about the lack of job opportunities and poverty. They isolated this as the main cause for the social ills such as crime and prostitution. It was discovered that in Townview the average monthly income is R400. This is not surprising given the fact most of those who are working do low-paying jobs in the supermarkets, garages, domestic work, restaurants, Toll Plaza, etc. The table below gives the breakdown of the number of the households with at least one working adult against those households with not even a single working adult:

**Table 2: The Breakdown of Employment Status of Households**

State of Employment for Each Household	Number of Households	Percentage (%)
One (more) member in the household has a job	7	23
No one in the household has a job	23	77
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Whilst again the study sample is perhaps too small to constitute conclusive evidence, most of the households have to survive without formal or basic income. This is clear from the above table, with 77% of the households not having even a single employed member.

However this is the general trend in Mooi River and is not only affecting the newcomers. The IDP points out that there is 75% rate of unemployment in the area. Normally, one would expect that people who are born in peri-urban areas dominate urban job markets as opposed to the newcomers from tribal areas, etc. But the latter distinction is not as apparent in Mooi River and it would seem that everybody is on the "same boat" as far as employment is concerned. According to the IDP (2002), unemployment is one of the major challenges facing all townships residents alike. This could be partly attributed to the partial closure of the largest contributor to Mooi River's economy, Mooi Tex. This also explains why people who had registered for houses in Townview have not showed up to take occupation of their houses as and when they became available. It can therefore be argued that Table 1 does paint a realistic picture about the state of unemployment in Townview.

### Migration and Employment Histories

Based on the study sample, most of the Townview residents are newcomers in Mooi River. About 60% said they come from the farms, another 33% from tribal areas, and only 7% previously lived in Bruntville township. This is apparent from table 2 below:

**Table 3: Place of Residence Before Relocation to Mooi River**

Sending Area	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Farm	18	60
Tribal Area	10	33
Other	2	7
Total	30	100

The reasons for re-locating to Mooi River vary. It must be borne in mind that for those who come from tribal areas, they face a choice. They can either remain in tribal areas and rely on agriculture and other survival strategies offered by a rural economic base or alternatively move closer to urban centres to try to find better paid work. But in an area such as Mooi River, the chances of getting better-paid work are slim, if not non-existent, and hence this is a difficult choice to make. On the other hand, farm tenants do not have much of a choice given the violent nature of farm evictions. But even among them, there is evidence to suggest that some of them voluntarily moved to Mooi River. The reasons for this mobility trend will now be explored.

It appears that while the majority of the poor in tribal areas rely on agricultural activities for survival and hence value rural security offered by rural economic base, access to infrastructure and housing is also equally or even more important than the former. The story by Ndoda Dlamini (one of the residents interviewed) illustrates this point. He indicated that it is important for people to understand that being in a tribal area does not always mean that one is only concerned about farming or growing crops.

In most cases crops produced through small-scale farming are only for family consumption purposes and families do not always make any significant earnings or savings from growing crops in this manner. They often have to supplement their produce with products bought from the markets and to do this they need money. But

subsistence or home agriculture is indeed a viable survival strategy for some people and is often used as a fallback option for impoverished households in the context of joblessness.

But Ndoda Dlamini also indicated that some tribal areas have a serious problem of soil erosion because of, among other things, overgrazing and poor ploughing methods. This reduces the fertility of the soil and hence the profitability of subsistence agriculture. In order to compensate for this shortcoming, rural households have to seek for alternative means of survival. Migrating to urban areas is obviously one of the options, but in the context of increased urban unemployment and poverty, the viability of this option is not always clear-cut. However, the results for this study suggest that sometimes people are willing to forego "rural security" if they are assured of access to infrastructure and housing. Based on the study sample, 83% of the respondents said they moved to Mooi River because of relatively easy access to housing and services. This is apparent from the following table:

**Table 4: Main Reason for Relocating to Mooi River**

Reason for migrating to Mooi River	Number of Households	Percentage (%)
House/services	25	83
Job Opportunities	3	10
Other	2	7
Total	30	100

It appears that the availability of infrastructure and houses in Mooi River is pulling in migrants rapidly. The notion of job opportunities in this case is of secondary importance, with only 10% of the respondents having moved to Mooi River because of this reason. People only start attaching more importance to the element of job opportunities once they are in the area. This trend is also collaborated by the following story:

"My name is Elizabeth and I am 61 years old and my husband passed away in 1990. Since I am not working, I am only surviving from my pension. But the problem is that I have six dependants to look after. Before I moved here, I was living in a rural area called Zwelisha in Bergville. But only one adult (my eldest son) was working then as a truck driver. But he was not sending us any money as he has



got his own family. My family did not like it in Zwelisha. In Zwelisha we had no electricity, and clean, running water and we were living in a mud house. The roads are not in good condition. Although there are clinics and schools, they were very far from where we were living. I then heard about the new houses that were being built in Mooi River and then decided to get my family one. Getting a house did not prove difficult because I already have relatives in Bruntville. Although the houses here are small, but they are better than what we had in Zwelisha. Besides if you can't afford a big house, you have to appreciate what the government is providing you. I think the problem with this area is the lack of job opportunities. Everybody around here is not working.

Although I would have liked to go to a bigger city, I couldn't afford to do so because I don't have enough money. At least Mooi River is closer to where I was living before and I already knew some people as I indicated earlier on. I would have also liked to move to Estcourt, but I haven't heard about RDP houses in Estcourt. There is no one in my family who is commuting to any town for work purposes".

While access to housing and infrastructure in Mooi River could not be singled out as the main cause for the above family to move to Mooi River, it certainly played an important role in the decision-making process. Service provision in the area is perceived to be relatively better than in Zwelisha tribal area. The RDP houses are also preferred to mud houses in tribal areas. In addition to access to infrastructure and housing, most of the respondents from tribal areas also pointed out to the locational aspect as one of the reasons for migrating to Townview. This is apparent from the following story:

"My name is Ndoda Dlamini and I am 28 years old. I am married and have two children. Before moving to Mooi River I was living in Hlathikhulu. I am a primary school teacher and I am working at a school in Lowlands, a commercial farm somewhere in the Broader Mpofana area. I sometimes stay in school or commute to school. Some members of my extended family live in Mooi River. Some of the reasons why I migrated to Mooi River are that, as a married man, I needed my own house. I particularly chose Mooi River as my place of residence because of its close proximity to many places like Pietermaritzburg, Esctourt, Ladysmith, to mention just a few. Again the living standards here are relatively better compared to Hlathikhulu. In Hlathikhulu, the transport system is inefficient. There is no electricity, clean water, police station, and sanitation. The clinic is very far and in cases of emergency it is difficult to get help. There is only one primary school which also lacks facilities".

What is remarkable about this story is the importance attached to the relative good location and accessibility of Mooi River. About 70% of the respondents from tribal areas said that they chose Mooi River because of its relatively good location. The

story above also stresses the significance of relatively better health, educational, and transport facilities in the area. Since Ndoda is a teacher, the problem of unemployment has not affected him and despite all the problems that have been identified about Mooi River, he still thinks that his life has been improved by moving into the area. If the stories related by Ndoda Dlamini and Elizabeth are combined, it is clear that because the natural resource base in tribal areas is increasingly depleted, people are now flowing to areas like Townview in order to substitute for the shortcomings of the rural resource base and lifestyles. Another reason for this trend is that migrant incomes are also declining or disappearing. These stories also point to a serious problem facing tribal areas about the backlogs in terms of service provision. In contrast, one of the key informants pointed out that Townview residents have above average access to basic services, a situation inviting questions because this carries cost implications. Most of the respondents did not complain about service provision. They only complained about the lack of job opportunities and the fact that their lifestyle in Townview is dependent on cash income.

A similar concern about housing oversupply in relation to job opportunities was also raised by one of the key informants:

"Whilst a lot of houses have been provided despite economic decline, it is unfortunate that they only serve to attract a lot of low-income people who cannot even afford to pay for services in our area. This is also contributing to unemployment and poverty. This problem is so serious that the municipality and various church organizations have recently embarked on a project where the parties work hand in hand to make food supplies to poor families in Bruntville and Townview. But this is like a 'drop in the ocean' given the large number of households without anything to eat everyday. But in terms of basic services, such as water, sanitation, electricity, etc, these houses are well provided for".

Clearly most respondents are agreed that the municipality is now worse off because of housing oversupply in Mooi River. The sustainability of these houses is also a cause for concern. The residents live in abject poverty. Whilst the area is well provided for in terms of services, the problem lies in the cost recovery potential of the municipality.

It must be borne in mind that the two stories above were related by residents who come from a tribal rural area, it is necessary to contrast them to the stories of those residents who come from a different background altogether:

"My name is Mthiza Xaba and I am 25 years old. There are only three adults in my family i.e. my mother who is now a pensioner, my sister and myself. Before we moved to Mooi River, we were living in Bitchwood Farm. My mother was working in the farm and my sister was employed there on temporary basis. At that time I was not working. As time went by, the farm was sold and the new owner expelled us from the farm and promised to build new houses for us, but that never happened. This move was so unexpected that we had to sell the livestock we had because we did not have a place for them anymore. Mooi River is the closest town to where we were living and we decided to come here. Whilst we would have liked to go to a bigger town, like Pietermaritzburg, it was a question of money. With the new houses having been built here it became easier for us to get ourselves a new house. But I still believe that life was better off at Bitchwood farm because at least we never starved. Here there are no jobs and the closure of Mooi Tex was very unfortunate. Everyone is complaining about the lack of jobs and I think this is the reason why young people are involving themselves in crime".

Clearly this is a case of a crisis move given the urgency and the violent nature of farm evictions. The family was not prepared for it and it ended up having to part with some of its belongings such as the livestock and thus got deprived of a livelihood strategy. However housing provision in Mooi River made the transition possible. Whilst former farm tenants are happy to have houses, most of them still think they were better off on the farms. Therefore if they had a choice, they would have remained. Only strong farm worker households are able to adapt quicker to urban lifestyles and hence establish themselves.

Nearly two-thirds of the respondents said they (or at least members of their households) had jobs before re-locating to Mooi River, both the former farm tenants and former rural dwellers. Although incomes varied between groups depending on the types of jobs people were doing, the income for farm workers ranged between R150 to R261. Those who are now working in Mooi River are now getting slightly higher incomes and most of them said they take in more than R400 per month. It would appear that, in relative terms, although urban incomes are relatively higher than rural or farm incomes, the comparative advantage of the urban sector over the rural sector in this case is downplayed by the high rate of unemployment in Mooi

River. This is also happening at a time when people's lives are mostly dependent on cash income. Since many Townview residents are unemployed, questions need to be asked about how they are surviving.

Normally, in the context of economic decline and where the majority of the households are female-headed, one would expect that a large number of the people would get involved in the informal sector enterprises. This is particularly so because in most cases female headed households suffer a number of disadvantages and tend to be poor. Results suggest that a large number of women heads are either widowed or divorced.

There is also a large group of relatively young female heads in Townview, who have never been married but have one or two to three children. Although there is little evidence to base this on, it could be argued that this group emanates from the problem of teenage pregnancies. When this happens these young girls or females become social outcasts and their parents abandon them. They end up in cohabitation relationships with young men who are also not well established and often irresponsible. Townview is therefore an attractive place for this group because anyone who can prove that they are poor and have children, do qualify for housing subsidies. This research discovered that a number of Townview residents, especially women, are involved in the informal sector. About 64% of the respondents said that at least they (or someone in their families) are involved in the informal sector. Most of them run spaza or tuck shops and some are street vendors. The story below illustrates this point:

"My name is Phumzile Ziqubu, from KwaMaloba Farm. I am 22 years old and have two children. While at the farm, I was living with my parents. Both of them work there and I still visit them. The relationship between my parents and myself started to deteriorate when I fell pregnant. I was sixteen years old then. They expelled me from the house but my uncle (who also works in the same farm) offered me accommodation. I dropped out of school and I had to start working in the farm in order to support my baby because the child's father was still doing standard eight. I worked for a year and I stopped working. During that time my parents had forgiven me. The reason why I stopped was that I could not work for R12 a day. After that the farmer could not let me live in his farm. I was forced to move to Bruntville where my fiancé was living. His family accepted me and we lived there until we got our own

house in Townview. We now have a second child, but recently the father moved out of the house and we are now living in separation. I now survive by selling one or two bags of oranges a day"

In line with this story, the results for this study suggest that mobility rates for women are relatively high although these women end up getting involved in relationships with "transient" male partners. These relationships are often disastrous once the male partners begin to run away from their responsibilities of caring for the children often born out of wedlock. Zanele Ziqubu above has to take care of the two children by herself and this is proving difficult in the context of economic crisis that Mooi River is going through. She has to survive by selling oranges and the income derived from this activity is not enough to take care of all her families needs.

Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1998) in their KwaZulu-Natal research suggest that mobile households generally obtain more effective access to the job market and are also more active in the informal enterprise. Whilst this study has uncovered evidence to support the second part of the latter statement, there is no evidence to support the finding that mobile households obtain effective access to job markets in Mooi River. This is apparent from the following story:

"My name is Nonhlanhla Mkhize and I am 26 years old. I have two children. I am single and unemployed. My parents live at a farm in Hidcote. I have been living with my fiancé but he just moved out of the house for some personal reasons. I have to take care of my children. I am only surviving by selling second hand clothes in this neighbourhood or in town. I have tried to look for a job in Mooi River but unfortunately I have not been successful. I cannot go to look for a job in other places because my children are still young and besides I would need a lot of money to do that. I wish I could go back to my parents in the farm but I know they will not take me back because I left them".

Most of the respondents are finding it hard to get jobs in the Mooi River's formal sector and the informal sector is always a viable option for them. Therefore few of the residents have jobs and the rest are involved in the informal sector, unemployed or retired. Nonhlanhla Mkhize's story also suggests that with the poor access to outside job markets, as people do not have money for travelling, people compensate for this by becoming actively involved in small businesses.

## Farm Evictions

Another question that has to be addressed relates to the extent to which farm evictions account for the in-migration that has occurred to Mooi River.

"My name is Musa Dlamini and I am 27 years old. There are only five adults in my family i.e. my parents who are now pensioners, my two siblings and myself. We used to live in KwaMagwababa Farm. My parents were working in the farm but when they retired the farmer told us to leave his farm. At that time I was not working. He told us that if we go to Townview we could get a RDP house. Although I personally would have liked to move to a much bigger town, I could not do that because my parents are old now. I have to take care of them. I do not necessarily think that life is better off here. Well maybe in terms of basic services, we are well provided for here but the problem is that one must always have hard cash to survive. The lack of jobs makes it difficult for us to survive. We all have to rely on my parents' pension".

Clearly migration in this case was a result of a farm eviction. As pointed out in Chapter Three, small towns are indeed attractive locations for the victims of farm evictions. Housing provision in Mooi River makes it easy for people who make crisis moves to find accommodation. But what is interesting from the findings is the fact that most of the respondents pointed out that they think life was better off in the farms. This means that if they had a choice, they would have remained there.

It is also interesting to note that as Mooi River is located in the Midlands along the N3, it is supposed to experience a lot of farm evictions according to Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi who point out that in this part of the province, the levels of population mobility and instability are very high. As the above stories reveal, farmers want to deprive farm workers and tenants of land rights bestowed to them by virtue of being farm occupants, with limited real rights over the land. Since the government started to extend security of tenure to this population group through the promulgation of the Land Tenure Act, farm owners know that it would be difficult in future to just evict tenants as they please. Therefore they tried by all means to push them off the land before this legislation became operational. There is also evidence to suggest that a lot of farmers are dumping workers in Townview. The table below shows the place of origin of the respondents:

**Table 5: Place of Residence Before Relocation to Mooi River**

Sending Area	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Farm	18	60
Rural Area	10	33
Other	2	7
Total	30	100

This table indicates that most residents of Townview come from the farms. Only 33% come from rural areas. It should be born in mind that some of the residents from the farms were not necessarily “kicked off the land”. There is evidence to suggest that some of them voluntarily moved to Mooi River because they wanted to own houses. This is illustrated by the following story:

“My name is Nokulunga Ndawonde and I am 25 years old. I am from KwaMhlakaza Farm and both my parents still live there. Before I moved here I was working on a farm. My parents are still working there. I moved from home because I wanted to have my own house and besides, my fiancé lives here in Mooi River. I had also hoped that I would get a job here but up until now I am out of work. I still go to visit my parents on the farm, but the farm owner does not like me anymore because I refused to work for him. Whilst it is good to have a house, I still think that life in the farm was better than here. Here we are starving, at least in the farm, there is food security”.

Clearly not all residents who come from farms were expelled. Some of the respondents, especially those in their early twenties, pointed out that they wanted to break away from the farms. partly because they wanted to get exposed to a new environment in the township and the prospects of owning houses also served as an incentive for migrating. Some of the respondents also pointed out that they did not like the nature of farm work and they had hoped that they would get better paying-jobs in Mooi River. One of the respondents had the following to say in this regard:

“My name is Bongani Ndlela and I am 23 years old. I used to live at Avalon Farm in Mooi River and I am now working at a supermarket. My parents are working there. Although I own a house here, for all intents and purposes, I still go back home, three to four times a month. The reason why I decided to come here was that I knew I was going to get a house and I was also not happy with the living standards in the farm. You can’t improve your life in a farm, you cannot run a business, there are just so many things you cannot do there. But the problem here is crime and unemployment. I would still say that socially life is better in the farm. There you get free food and there is less or no crime at all. At

least I am fortunate that I am working, although it is a low-paying job, I just wonder how people survive around here”.

Clearly when Bongani left the farm, in addition to owning a house, he had high dreams about what Mooi River was going to offer him, in terms of improved quality of life, jobs, business opportunities, etc. But what he was not aware of was that the economy of the area where he was headed is declining. This is a worrying trend because, in general, small towns’ populations often grow faster than job markets can accommodate growing numbers of job seekers. This is particularly the case in small towns like Mooi River with declining or non-existent economic bases.

People only realise late that they should have continued with the jobs they had in the farms because there are virtually no job opportunities in some small towns. Under those circumstances it becomes difficult for them to pay service charges and to sustain themselves. For this group of respondents, it is clear that for them owning a house served as an exit strategy but they did not envisaged problems associated with township life. This is borne out by the fact that most of them wish they could go back to the farms or to some other places. This is clear from the responses that were given about “the level of liking of the area”, as illustrated by the story below:

“My name is Thandi Mbatha. I am 24 years old and I was once married but got divorced. My parents live at a farm in Howick. I have been living with someone but he left for Johannesburg . I have three children and their father rarely sends us money. I am running a tuck shop but with so many of them around, I hardly make profit. I have tried to look for job around here but unfortunately I have not been successful. I can’t go to other places to look for jobs because I can’t live my children without anyone taking care of them. I would not really mind living here if I had a nice job. But since I cannot find a job, I can say that life on the farm is better”.

It would seem that people would preferably go to bigger towns to try and look for jobs. But for most of them this option is impractical due to various reasons, namely, lack of financial resources, the problem of having to look after the children, to mention but a few.

### **5.1.3 Level of Liking of the Area**

This section seeks to establish, among other things, why people may continue to live in the area in the context of economic decline or even migrate there. The Mooi River



IDP (2000) has indicated that there has been a degree of out-migration from the area by particularly business people. If that is the case it is important to establish why low-income people still continue to take occupation of the newly built houses. Such data is important as it sheds light on the extent to which migration could be seen as an equilibrating force in the context of uneven development.

**Table 6: The Level of Liking of the Area (Only residents from Farms)**

Sending Area (Farms)	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Prefer Life in the Farm	16	89
Never Go Back to the Farm	2	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 6: The level of Liking of the Area (Only residents from Tribal Areas)**

Sending Area (Tribal Areas)	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Prefer Life in the Tribal Area	3	30
Never Go Back to the Tribal Area	7	70
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Whilst these samples are perhaps too limited to be regarded as conclusive evidence, the general feeling from most of the respondents who came from the farms was that, if they had a choice they would either go back to the farms or move to other bigger towns. In contrast the majority of those who came from tribal areas feel that their life has been improved by moving to Mooi River. Common to all the residents is the assertion that if they had enough resources, they would not mind moving to bigger towns such as Pietermaritzburg, Ladysmith, etc to look for jobs.

As suggested above, it must be borne in mind that not all respondents who came from the farms voluntarily chose to do so. There is evidence to suggest that "push" off the land did account for in-migration. For some farm tenants or workers migration was a violent process.

There is also another trend of mobility that begins to emerge from the findings showing systematic change of places of residence from rural or other areas to Mooi River in support of the network theories of migration. Most of the respondents,

especially those from rural areas, indicated that finding a house in Mooi River did not prove difficult because they already knew some people in the area. According to the network theories of migration as set out above, having friends in a destination area is important in terms of minimizing risks associated with migration. This is well illustrated by the following story:

"My name is Thembeni Sibanyoni and I am 20 years old. Before moving here, we were living in Ermelo. There were three adults in my family when we were still there. My father passed away and since no one was working, we were forced to move here. We could not afford a house in a bigger town. The reason why we specifically chose to come here is that we have a lot of relatives here and since the passing away of my father they have been taking care of us".

## **5.2 SYNTHESIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

Having set out the findings it is crucial to interpret them in light of the theories outlined above and also to address all the questions that were posed at the beginning. This dissertation has tried to ascertain why in-migration is occurring into Mooi River and whether this is linked to the oversupply of housing in the area. A number of migration theories were analysed and discussed with the hope that, together with the research findings, these might help to explain the rather unexpected population movement into Mooi River in the context of economic decline.

In terms of the neoclassical theories, the in-migration that is occurring into Mooi River is, *inter alia*, motivated by income incentives. The assumption here is that because of wage differentials between urban areas (which ought to maximize expected gains in terms of the Todaro Model) and sending communities (in this case, commercial farms and rural tribal areas with the surplus of labour), the migrants as income-maximisers, are likely to migrate to urban areas. But as outlined in Chapter Four, Mooi River's economy is in deep crisis and people are complaining about the lack of job opportunities.

By migrating to Mooi River the migrants could not expect to maximize their earnings. Although there are many theoretical slants within this paradigm, common to most of them is the view that migration originates in rational calculations made by individuals and families responding to market forces. Based on the evidence at hand, 83% of the respondents pointed to relatively easy access to housing and service provision as the

main inducements for migrating to Mooi River. Some respondents also pointed out that Mooi River is relatively well-located and accessible. Most respondents, particularly those from rural tribal areas, complained about the lack of water, electricity, schools, clinics, mud houses etc, in rural areas.

In contrast, it was pointed out in Chapter Four that most households in Mooi River have above average access to basic services. Therefore there is no doubt that Mooi River has an advantage over rural areas in respect to service provision and there is no reason why people could not migrate to the area solely for this reason. Clearly this reduces the weight to be attached on the view that migration is determined by economic considerations more than anything else. This is not to say that neoclassical theories do not look at factors like housing and infrastructure. According to the paradigm in question, these factors are of secondary importance to monetary factors.

It can be argued, however, in favour of the neoclassical paradigm that the disparities in terms of service provision between the receiving and sending communities could be explained in terms of the push-pull model. This could be a valid argument because services in Mooi River could be seen as pull factors and the lack of services in rural areas could have a negative impact on the quality of life and thus serve as push factors. But the problem with this model is that it does not explain why everyone in rural areas, for instance, does not migrate to Mooi River. Moreover, many rural areas now have basic services such as water, electricity, etc, but people from them still migrate to areas like Mooi River with declining economies. One of the respondents pointed out that on the farm where he used to live they had electricity, water, to mention the least. But he still re-located to Mooi River because he admires township lifestyle and he does not think that one can establish oneself on a farm.

To sum up, as outlined in Chapter Two, some models within the neoclassical paradigm have stressed wider range of factors at play, including but not limited to, psychological, cultural, and sociological factors. From the findings set out above, it is apparent that while economic factors are important in determining population mobility, in Townview they were revealed as of secondary importance. Clearly answers should be sought from other avenues.

Charney (1993) in Chapter Two was quoted as saying that there is evidence to suggest that low-income people are attracted to places by high welfare benefits rather than economic incentives. This assertion marks a paradigm shift as it begins to draw one's attention to other factors as opposed to narrowly focusing on economic factors. Chant (1991) also corroborates Charney by pointing out that there is no doubt that relatively easy access to housing in Guanacaste and the fact that towns are well provided for in terms of services, induced in-migration to Guanacaste, despite the lack of work opportunities there.

The Guanacaste case study is very relevant to this dissertation and clearly there are some parallels that could be drawn between it and the Mooi River case study. Both these towns have declining economic bases, but they are surrounded by rural hinterlands that are deprived of basic services. They also have easily accessible housing and adequate service provision and they both end up with an influx of low-income people. There is also evidence from Canada that policies that subsidized housing in depressed regions induce in-migration. This dissertation has also revealed that 83% of the respondents were partly induced to migrate to Mooi River by the same reasons that induced in-migration in Guanacaste. The scale seems to be tipping in favour of the view that housing oversupply and service provision played a role in inducing in-migration into Mooi River.

Another perspective through which to analyse migration is, as pointed out above, the structural theories of migration. This perspective is important because it does not only focus on segmented labour markets but also on the macro-economy and how it shapes the pattern of incentives and the role of the state. However if one is to narrow the focus to only the notion of segmented labour markets, it is clear that in Mooi River, there was only one big company and its closure had a huge impact on the other companies. A host of satellite industries and businesses which were reliant on Mooi Tex for their existence, also closed down. Moreover the local economic development projects that have been tried to offset job losses have not yet gained ground. There is therefore not too many things to be said about segmented labour markets in Mooi River when in effect these are non-existent. This is particularly so because, as Todes (1997) notes, in terms of this paradigm, migration is linked to the supply and demand for particular occupations, rather than the situation of the labour

force as a whole. It is said that as a result of the selective exclusion of the segmented labour markets, the probability of low-skilled, unemployed workers migrating would be lower than for the more educated and skilled workers.

But it is also important to also look at the national patterns. The downsizing in Mooi Tex was in a way a result of macro economic forces. It was pointed out in Chapter Four that increased competition as a result of the opening up of the South African market to cheaper foreign products, and the political violence of the late 1980s combined to turn the factory into an unprofitable business venture. Had it not been for the policies that allowed cheap imports and those that directly or indirectly contributed to political violence in the 1980s and 1990s, the future of Mooi Tex would have been different.

It is the Post-structural theory that begins to seriously shed light on in-migration patterns in Mooi River. This is particularly so because this perspective looks beyond structural constraints and begins to take into account opportunities available to migrants. It is useful in the sense that it does not lose sight of the micro-social circumstances. Interpersonal ties such as kinship, friendship, to mention but a few, are very important in this regard.

Some of the respondents in Townview did mention the importance of having relatives or knowing some people in terms of accessing housing in Mooi River with ease. The story told by Elizabeth above illustrates this point as she points out that getting a house in Mooi River did not prove difficult because he had relatives there. Ndoda Dlamini also indicated that having some members of his extended family in Mooi River also made the re-location from Hlathikhulu to Mooi River easier. Some authors refer to this phenomenon as "pipeline connections". Therefore in addition to macro factors that determine population mobility trends, it is important to consider micro-social factors. This however does not mean that the other theories does not consider the latter factors.

One of the questions posed relates to the issue of farm evictions and to what extent it contributes to in-migration. The literature that is analysed in Chapter Three is very critical in this regard because it focuses on migration and urbanization dynamics in

KwaZulu-Natal. Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi were cited as saying that there is substantial evidence to suggest that blacks have not been moving in large numbers from rural homelands into white cities. In contrast it was pointed out that most movement has been occurring from white farming areas into peri-urban or informal settlements. It was also suggested that, according to Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1998) Mooi River is supposed to experience a lot of farm evictions because there is a lot of population instability in this part of the region as farmers want to deprive farm tenants of land rights in order to avoid the legal implications of the Land Tenure Act.

This dissertation, as pointed out in Chapter Three, also uncovered substantial evidence to support the view that farm evictions does contribute to migration. Out of thirty households interviewed, eighteen (60%) of them come from the farms. But it was indicated above that not all of them were evicted. Some of them voluntarily moved to Mooi River for various reasons. But in general there is a strong case for the view that the incidence of farm evictions accounts to a greater degree for in-migration in Mooi River as the stories related above illustrate.

Another theoretical slant through which to unpack migration dynamics in Mooi River is chain and stepwise migration. Themebeni Sibanyoni's story of a family that comes from Ermelo illustrates the notion of chain migration. Her relatives in Mooi River could be seen as "pioneers" who then facilitated the migration of her family as indicated above. There are also many respondents who pointed out that, although they would have liked to move to bigger towns, but they could not mobilise resources for long distance travel and could be seen as supporting the notion of stepwise migration. In Mooi River there is indeed substantial evidence to support the notion of stepwise migration.

The literature on problems facing small towns is also important in terms of explaining why low-income people are attracted to small towns even in the context of economic decline. This phenomenon is not unique to Mooi River. It was mentioned that these towns are often the first port-of-call for displaced farm workers. Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi also mentioned that, migration as a strategy, works even better for those people who position themselves between rural and urban areas.

In this regard it is important to note that when people talk about “rural security”, they are not only talking about having land for small farming or subsistence agriculture. As Ndoda Dlamini indicated above, the benefits to be derived from small farming or home agriculture are often limited and needs to be supplemented by other livelihood strategies. In this case some of members of the households move to areas around small towns or urban areas. In the context of economic decline particularly in small towns, people resort to informal enterprises. It was also shown that it is mostly females who dominate the informal sector.

Owning a house in areas such as Townview is very critical for the impoverished households because they use whatever space they have for informal enterprises. However this dissertation did not uncover much evidence to support the view that those households who position themselves between urban and rural areas tend to do better than those who either remain in rural areas or townships. This is partly because few respondents are still maintaining rural-urban links in the sense spoken about here. In other words only few households pointed out that they still go back to rural areas and thus supporting the notion of back-migration into the rural economy. This is also the reason why this dissertation suggested that the literature on livelihood strategies is important when one tries to understand migration dynamics, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has tried to set out research findings by grouping data into small themes in order to see emerging trends and patterns. The findings have revealed that while infrastructure and housing oversupply did induce in-migration into Mooi River, farm evictions were also equally or even more important than housing oversupply. But on close scrutiny, it appeared that there is a subtle correlation between the two because as Haddingham (2000) notes some farm tenants were dumped into Mooi River by farmers into the new houses. Moreover some farm workers voluntarily chose to migrate to Mooi River because they wanted to experience new lifestyle in the township and own houses. This chapter went on to apply the theories as discussed in Chapter Two and Three in order to make sense out of the data.

To sum up, two population mobility trends emerged from the data. The first is a movement of impoverished households from tribal areas to Townview. In this instance infrastructure, access to services, houses, and accessibility of Townview play an important role in inducing migration into Mooi River. The second is movement off the farms, mainly from evictions. Townview, as Hadingham (2000) also notes, has become a "dumping site" of farm tenants and labourers by those farmers who are trying to avoid the repercussions of the Land Tenure Act, which extends tenure rights to tenants. There is also another subtle trend of farm workers who voluntarily move to Mooi River for less apparent reasons, including but not limited to, preferred lifestyles, jobs and housing opportunities, etc. These patterns overlap with one another, making the emerging trends more complicated and fine-grained. Chapter six is the final chapter and it will then pull together the findings and draw conclusions thereof.



## 6. CHAPTER SIX

### 6.1 CONCLUSION

In light of the previous discussions of various migration theories, migration dynamics and settlement patterns in KwaZulu-Natal, the history of the Townview housing project, the socio-economic circumstances in Mooi River, and the research findings, this chapter seeks to draw conclusions about the impact of housing oversupply on in-migration patterns into Mooi River and to outline lessons to be learnt from the Townview housing project and the implications of the findings for future policies.

This dissertation sought to argue that relatively easy access to housing in Townview, Mooi River, coupled with recent farm evictions and the fact that townships (around small towns or cities) are generally perceived to have an advantage over rural areas in respect to services, makes Mooi River an attractive location for impoverished migrant households, despite its lack of job opportunities or declining economic base. Without necessarily repeating the debates and analysis made in the previous chapters, it is clear that housing oversupply, the need for access to infrastructure, and farm evictions did contribute to in-migration to Townview. However the extent to which each factor is responsible for in-migration varies.

It is clear from the literature and this study that, to the impoverished rural households and farm tenants, the returns from labour migration have declined, partly because of limited chances of finding jobs in urban areas. This is also happening at a time when these households are attaching less significance to rural livelihood strategies such as small farming and home or subsistence agriculture. This means that "rural security" must not only be understood in terms of access to land for farming and related activities, but also to the way rural livelihoods are diversified with non-agricultural strategies. Therefore in the context of massive unemployment in both urban and rural areas, the diversification of income sources through the maintenance of rural-urban links is critical to the survival of these people and it enables them to survive without formal incomes.

In this regard, infrastructure and housing opportunities enables impoverished households to reach out for new livelihoods and to mobilise an escape from poverty

(Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi, 1998). However in line with the policies of apartheid, tribal rural areas were largely neglected in terms of service and infrastructure provision in the past. In order to access physical infrastructure people have move to urban areas, particularly around small towns. This study has indeed shown that for a large number of Townview residents, access to housing, infrastructure, and accessibility were critical factors to the households' decision to relocate to Mooi River. However this is not to say that the displacement of farm workers from white-owned farms accounted less for in-migration to Townview.

Whilst the benefits of having access to infrastructure and housing are clear, there are also cost implications that go with it. As Cross, Mbhele, and Mngadi (1998) note, demand for infrastructure raises the household's need for cash to cover recurrent charges, and increase in risk associated with migration. Townview residents indicated that since relocating to Mooi River, their life is now dependent more on cash income and this is very problematic in the context of unemployment. The situation is even worse for the victims of farm evictions because people preparing to move to town need to be ready to make full entry into the urban economy and its complicated lifestyles.

Clearly the debates about where government investments (physical infrastructure, housing, transport, etc) should be directed are sensible. However this does not seek to give answers to the debates raised in the draft NSDP and by Crankshaw and Parnell, as outlined in Chapter One. But the Townview housing project has somehow demonstrated the point that material incentives, either real or imagined, have a noticeable impact on people's locational aspirations. It is clear that most families want access to housing and the related infrastructure.

Housing and infrastructure delivery therefore provide an opportunity for the state to guide and control migration patterns. This means, among other things, that there is a need to draw a closer link between, for instance, housing and employment because people are likely to be drawn to places where they get these facilities. Uninformed delivery projects such as the Townview project will only serve to perpetuate distorted migration patterns and hence entrench poverty.

In Chapter Four, it was also pointed out that there are many controversies around the implementation of the Townview housing project. Results of this study suggest that this project was implemented after much deliberation between the politicians and the municipality officials. But the politicians emerged victorious and a private developer who has allegedly absconded to Australia was given a go-ahead. One of the key informants pointed out that the Department of Housing wanted a large number of houses built in the area for reasons which could not be established in this study for reasons which are not important here as stated in Chapter Five.

In Chapter One it was also pointed out that some Townview residents feel that the provincial government, which is dominated by IFP, is ignoring the plight of Bruntville or Townview residents because of their former ties with its former foe, the ANC. Whether or not these allegations are true is not for this dissertation to decide. However there are indications that "constituency" politics did contribute to the shady *modus operandi* in terms of which the Townview project was approved. The Minister has also hinted that, including the private developer, there are other people who may have unjustly benefited from this project. Surely if the politicians at the time pushed for the project to get underway against the will of the municipality officials, then there must have been good reasons for that. Although the politicians need to be given the benefit of the doubt, one cannot rule out the possibility of corruption in this case.

One lesson to be learned from this project is that political determinism must not be allowed to prevail over rationality. It is clear that the market forces did not warrant the oversupply of housing in this context. This study has revealed that the Townview housing project was approved after the partial closure of Mooi River Textiles, the then biggest employer in Mooi River. But whoever approved the project was still prepared to assume the risk of providing large amounts of housing despite unprecedented job losses that had been experienced in Mooi River.

It cannot be disputed that there was a time when there was an urgent need for housing in Mooi River. But the first housing project surely closed that gap. It is however unclear whether or not the Townview housing project was dictated by an absolute need for housing. Perhaps the fact that a large number of Townview houses remain unoccupied is a testimony to the assertion that the project was ill-conceived.

If all the facts and circumstances surrounding the implementation of the project are considered it would not be unreasonable to conclude that the existence of the project is largely justified on political grounds.

It was also pointed out above that for the impoverished migrant households who, more often than not, have to sustain themselves through informal means, the diversification of income sources is very important. It is the assertion of this dissertation that government policies must be tailored so as to facilitate and dovetail this trend. In terms of the Housing policies however, the beneficiaries of low-income or RDP houses are not entitled to sell these houses if they decide to move to other places. The motive behind this restriction is beyond doubt *bona fide*. It aims to prevent corruption by people who might be tempted to sell these houses on black markets. But it might also have unintended results.

Whilst people are not allowed to sell these houses, they are allowed and even encouraged to improve them. This is implied from the fact that these houses are widely known as "starter houses". Once people start improving their houses, they become tied to them. They cannot move to other places because they cannot get compensated for the improvements they have made since the houses are not for sale. Given the dynamic nature of livelihood strategies that have as its basis the diversification of income sources through the maintenance of rural-urban links and other complicated arrangements between various places, tying people to places through housing subsidies of this nature might cause problems for transient migrant households. In other words, it might discourage them from migrating to other places where they derive other livelihood strategies.

It is also submitted that something needs to be done about Mooi River. Living conditions in Townview and Bruntville are appalling. People live in abject poverty. The Townview housing project has not improved the quality of life of the people. Instead it has made conditions worse by attracting a relatively large number of poor people who have nowhere to work. At the same time they need to be provided with services which they are unable to pay for.

It is submitted that unless the provincial government intervenes, living conditions will continue to deteriorate and this might prove dangerous in the long run.

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