The Experiences of Immigrants in South Africa: A Case Study of Ethiopians in Durban

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Abstract

Migration from non-SADC countries to South Africa has become the new trend of population movement in Southern Africa. This research was conducted with Ethiopian immigrants in Durban in an attempt to shed some insights into this new nexus. The aim of the study was to understand the experiences of Ethiopian immigrants before, during and after their migration. In-depth interviews were conducted with 15 Ethiopian immigrants in South Africa. The decision to migrate was mainly motivated by economic reasons. There were many contributing factors in making the decision to migrate. These included social networks, cost of travel, accessibility and availability of opportunities in South Africa. Ethiopian immigrants have used different travel routes and entry points to enter South Africa, both legally and illegally. They selected Durban as their destination city because of the availability of economic opportunities and the relatively less bureaucracy in government offices compared to other cities.

Various literatures suggest that immigrants in South Africa and other parts of the world share the experiences of Ethiopian immigrants in South Africa in many ways. The findings of this research suggest that most Ethiopian immigrants in South Africa are involved in the informal economic sector. The target of their economic activities is mainly South Africans in the townships and Ethiopian immigrants themselves. This research also found that Ethiopian immigrants have not integrated with the local community. The study further explains some of the challenges Ethiopian immigrants face during their travel and stay in South Africa. Most of the Ethiopian immigrants stated that they do not intend to stay in South Africa for long. Most of them plan to go to economically more affluent countries like the United States of America.

Declaration

This research is the original work of the author and works of other writers are properly referenced and cited. The research was conducted between July 2007 and December 2007 under the supervision of Dr. Pranitha Maharaj from the department of population studies.

Liqu T. Gebre

Date

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
CASE	Community Agency for Social Inquiry
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
SADC	South African Development Cooperation
SAMP	The Southern African Migration Project
SAPS	The South African Police Service
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
USA	United States of America

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Background Statement

Human migration is a process that has been going on throughout the history of mankind. It may involve a person moving "to a country other than that of his or her usual residence...so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence (UN, 1998b:18). Migration does not happen spontaneously. People often make informed decisions about why they should leave a place and migrate to other areas, how it should be carried out and the whereabouts of their destination. Migration profoundly impacts the demographic composition of both areas of origin and destination. It affects the cultural and economic context of a community and the ratio of people to resources shared (Ibid).

In the contemporary world, globalization and the introduction of much easier communication routes have given migration a new dimension. People are now moving to farther distances more frequently and in large numbers. Currently about 150 million people live abroad and are joined by another two million immigrants every year (ILO, IOM, OHCHR, 2001). As international migration increases, so does ethnic and social diversity of societies. This brings forth a new challenge of integrating with new people, different cultures, religions and languages. However, the response of the host community in accommodating immigrants varies from country to country (Ibid).

International migrants are flocking to various destinations in search of better economic opportunities, a more peaceful and politically stable environment and versatile cultural setting (De Blij, 1993). Some are forced to run away because of war and natural catastrophes, others are dissatisfied with their economic standings and lack of opportunities in their countries. And many more want to stay in an environment that can accommodate their views, be it political or social (Ibid). With these aspirations and other personal considerations in mind, migrants select a destination among possible destinations that best suits their interest.

Before the actual onset of migration, however, there are "intervening obstacles" that a potential migrant takes into consideration (Lee, 1966 in Weeks, 1999:239). Some of these are distance, affordability, ability to pass through intermediary territories, physical well-being and others. The odds of some of these obstacles deterring the migrants from reaching their destination are not predictable.

On the other end, host countries have their own priorities concerning the improvement of the local community's economic and social welfare. The lack of resources, the introduction of a new culture, the increase in social evils (such as crime) and the increase in health risks often threaten the host community. As a result, migrants are usually welcomed by cold and hostile and sometimes even violent situations (Masuku, 2006; SAMP, 1999). The increasing trend of "irregular and unauthorized" international migration has paved the way for the abuse and exploitation of migrants (ILO, IOM, OHCHR, 2001:1). Migrants in all parts of the world experience similar problems most often based on fear, particularly fear of economic competition, and fear of an increase in crime and loss of identity (Wimmer, 1997).

International migration in sub-Saharan Africa is often overlooked because of the close cultural ties of "homogenous people on opposite sides of national borders" (Adepoju, 2006a:26). Migration of individuals from the rural areas of a country to urban centers of a neighboring country is sometimes considered as just an expanded version of internal migration. Faced with increasing poverty, people are abandoning their rural farmlands and migrating to alternative urban destinations. However, the existing high unemployment in the urban areas limits the opportunities of the migrants. In some countries, migrants from the rural areas are replacing the urban dwellers who have immigrated to more economically affluent countries. This trend is evidenced in some western and northern African countries (Ibid).

In southern Africa, international migration has two main features. Previously, migration was mainly undertaken by unskilled laborers searching for job opportunities in the mining industry. Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa were the major destination countries (Oucho, 2006). Since the end of apartheid, the trend of migration has changed and is skewed towards commercial migration. Many migrants from

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within Southern Africa travel to South Africa and engage in the informal sector economic activities (Adepoju, 2006a). Recently, the areas of origin of migrants coming to South Africa have extended to countries outside the southern Africa region. The number of immigrants from west, central and eastern Africa has shown a steady increase (McDonald et al., 1999).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Post-apartheid South Africa has experienced an increase in the size of its cross border migrant population from other African countries (McDonald et al., 1999). The migration pattern has added a new component in recent years by attracting immigrants from non-SADC countries. Recent studies, considering the more diverse origins of immigrants, estimate that the number of immigrants in South Africa ranges from 500,000 to one million. However, different studies have come up with highly varied figures that go as high as four million (Ibid). In addition, different sources and officials have portrayed immigrants to the larger public as being too many and "enemies who are undermining and exploiting the local opportunities" and resources (Maharaj et al., 1997 in Maharaj et al., 2000:159). As a result, the hostility is pushed further and immigrants, in general, experience harsh responses (Palmary, 2003; McDonald et al., 1999; Mattes et al., 1999; Raijman et al., 2003).

As Berg (2003) stated, inequality in South Africa was and still is highly prevalent. The value expectations and capabilities of South Africans in the lower income section are not always fulfilled. This has led to "subjective feelings of discontent" on the part of South Africans. As a result, unfulfilled expectations sometimes lead to nationals taking out their frustration and bitterness on foreigners (Shindondola, 2003:19).

Research suggests that Ethiopian immigrants come to South Africa in search of better economic opportunities (Gema, 2001). Most of them are self-employed in informal economic activities. This is because of two main reasons. Firstly, most of them lack educational qualification which leaves them no choice but to engage in sectors that do not require skills. Secondly, the educated immigrants do not have access to employment opportunities in their areas of expertise (Ibid). Host communities with

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low income perceive the arrival of foreigners engaging in similar economic activities as a threat to the scarce resources in the country (Shindondola, 2003).

Given the above situations, therefore, this study was undertaken to explore the social and economic experiences of Ethiopian immigrants in Durban metropolitan area. The research tried to understand the migration history of Ethiopian immigrants, their travel routes, modes of entry and settlement in Durban. The interaction of Ethiopian immigrants with the local community and various government authorities is also explored.

1.3. Rationale of the Study

There is a marked regional difference in the level of migration into South Africa. With the creation of a progressive constitution and the introduction of more advanced communication means and the resulting increase in networking among migrants and their families and friends back home, the flow of migrants from non-SADC countries is increasing and it will be a major concern of the 21st century (McDonald et al., 1999).

Accordingly, the immigration of Ethiopians into South Africa is a relatively recent phenomenon and there is no adequate research done to assess and measure the experiences of Ethiopian migrants in South Africa. Some media reports and personal observation of the researcher indicate that Ethiopian immigrants are facing various challenges in South Africa. According to a report by Sunday Tribune (2006, Sept. 24), the number of Ethiopians is increasing in Durban around Albert Park and Point Road and violent attacks on Ethiopians have been reported. Another report by the weekly Ethiopian newspaper, Addis Tribune, reaffirms the statement by Sunday Times. The Addis Tribune (2001, March 30) stated that the number of Ethiopians migrating to South Africa has increased and they have become targets of crime and robbery. In addition, reports on Lindela, a deportation center in South Africa, indicated that there is high level of maltreatment of immigrants (SAMP, 2001). Such reports call for a need for further research on the experiences of immigrant communities in South Africa.

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In addition, as the researcher is from Ethiopia, conducting the research on immigrants from similar place of origin helped to get the necessary information. As indicated by Gema (2001), conducting a research on Ethiopian immigrants is a challenging undertaking because they feel insecure because of their status. Consequently, they are usually reluctant to provide information regarding their stay in a particular country. They are afraid that they might be counter attacked by the community and authorities for what they say (Ibid).

Therefore, a deeper look into the experiences of immigrants from non-SADC countries, especially of Ethiopian immigrants, was imperative to understand and explain the current migration trends.

1.4. Objectives of the Study

Migration into South Africa has extended its areas of origin to non-SADC countries like Ethiopia. Thus, analysis of its dynamics and a deeper understanding of the experiences of Ethiopian immigrants is important. In light of this, the research had set the following objectives:

- To understand the factors influencing the immigration of Ethiopians to South Africa
- To explore the explore the experiences of Ethiopian immigrants during their stay in South Africa
- To examine the social and economic benefits and challenges of Ethiopian immigrants

1.5. Limitations of the Study

The research would have been more comprehensive and representative of the immigrant population from non-SADC countries if it were conducted in a larger scale including immigrants from other countries. It also does not incorporate the views of South Africans. It is undertaken in a relatively small scale within a small boundary. This makes it difficult to generalize the findings of the research to the whole immigrant population from non-SADC countries found in South Africa. This is attributed to financial constraints and shortage of time. Finally, the fact that the

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researcher is from Ethiopia may leave some room for bias. However, the above mentioned limitations, by no means invalidate its findings.

1.6. Theoretical Approaches of Migration

Various theoretical approaches have been developed in an attempt to explain migration. Of the three population processes, namely, fertility, mortality and migration, the last one is the most difficult to conceptualize and measure. This is because it includes "a physical and social transaction, not just an unequivocal biological event" (Zelinsky, 1971 in Kebede, 1991:9). Thus, there is no complete and coherent theory of migration to date. Taking note of the above stated limitations, this section will explore the different approaches that have been put forward to explain migration.

The first approach is the push-pull theory developed by E.S. Lee in 1966 (Gema, 2001). This theory takes into account the socio-economic imbalances in the area of origin and destination. It states that migration flows towards areas that are believed to be more attractive and desirable for either economic or non-economic reasons through the interplay of push factors at the places of origin and pull factors at the places of destination (Lee, 1966 in Kebede, 1998). According to Lee (1966) there are four major factors that influence people to migrate. These are factors associated with the area of origin, factors associated with the area of destination, intervening obstacles and personal factors.

Push factors are disruptive conditions that force an individual to make the decision to leave an area in search of a better place. These factors include unemployment, conflict, political instability, drought, famine, social inequality, lack of economic opportunity, increase in population and others. The pull factors, on the other hand, are factors that stand out as potential solutions for the push factors. Job opportunities, higher standard of living and political and social freedom are some of the pull factors. Intervening opportunities also influence the pattern and stream of migration (Berhane, 2000).

The second approach is the economic theory of migration developed by Michael Todaro in 1976 (Kebede, 1998). The economic theory of migration sees migration as

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an important resource distribution of labor. According to Todaro, the decision to migrate is based primarily on private rational economic calculations by the individual migrant. This is done after weighing the gain and loss at both places of origin and destination. But this theory treats only one component as the cause of migration and thus lack completeness. Other factors indicated in the push-pull theory, such as social, political and psychological factors, are overlooked (Ibid).

A similar but more comprehensive approach to migration is that of the human investment theory of migration. It explains the decision to migrate as an investment decision involving an individual's expected costs and returns over time. This theory, unlike the economic theory, considers psychological costs, such as leaving familiar surroundings and adapting to a new environment, and social compositions. However, some components of the human investment theory (such as the psychological costs) are difficult to measure and thus it is less practical and empirical tests have been limited to income differentials (Kebede, 1998).

The migration systems theory by Castles and Miller views migration as a function of macro and micro structures (Gema, 2001). Interstate relationships, politics and economic conditions in the world market are some of the macro structures. On the other hand, individual social networks, practices and beliefs of the migrants are the micro structures that determine migration. According to Castles and Miller, family and community networks play a paramount role in facilitating the smooth transition of the migrant. Such networks help to settle quickly by assisting the migrant to get accommodation and work. In addition, they provide social and psychological support (Gema, 2001).

1.7. Theoretical Framework of the Research

There are different hypotheses that are put forward in an attempt to define the relationship of immigrants and the host community. The first hypothesis relates to scapegoats (Harris, 2002). With the dismantling of apartheid, there was an increase in expectations for immediate changes. However, such immediate responses could not be realized and frustration followed. People, in general, resorted to keeping their frustration to themselves and suffered the consequences such as committing suicide or

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vent it out on others. According to Tshetereke in Harris (2002), in the second instance "people often create a frustration-scapegoat", i.e., they design outlets for their frustration in the system. And the targets are usually foreigners because they are perceived as threats to their economic and social welfare.

The second one is isolation hypothesis. Immigration of black Africans to South Africa was not a common practice. Instead, immigration of the white population was encouraged to counter balance the "dwindling proportion of South Africa's population that is White" (Anderson, 2006:99). Thus, foreigners especially those from non-SADC countries, represent the 'unknown' for South Africans. With the opening of South Africa's borders to the international community, however, foreigners have started to come into the country and contacts with the unknown were started. So the basic assumption of this hypothesis is that discrimination is there because of the "foreignness of foreigners" (Harris, 2002:5). In addition to the isolation from the international community, internal divisions among South Africans because of color, race and ethnicity plays a paramount role.

The socio-economic theory assumes that immigrants attempt to integrate with the host community both socially and economically. They initially make the decision to migrate after calculating the benefits at the area of destination. To this end, immigrants make some adjustments in their lifestyle to fit in with the host country. They attempt to reestablish themselves occupationally, learn the culture and language and take part in the social events. On the other end, the reception and social support of the host community plays an important role in the process (Gema, 2001). The social support includes emotional assistance and instrumental aid, provision of services and information. It takes into account the situation in which the immigrants and the host community live in harmony sharing the same social and economic resources with no significant conflict (Ibid).

Social support and integration, however, are determined by the level of the host community's perception of the immigrants as a threat. The power theory states that people "demonstrate hatred and resentment when faced with a threat" (Wimmer, 1997 in Raijman et al., 2003:381). Thus the presumed benefits and achievements of

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immigrants at the destination area will be challenged. The threat basically emanates from insecurity. Even though there is no actual competition in the job market, increase in unemployment or drop in wages, the mere perception of immigrants being around means more competition over scarce resources, fewer jobs, lower wages, a rise in crimes, competition for housing and social services. The competition model contends that individuals identify themselves with a particular group and there will be a struggle between groups for power, resources and benefits. (Bobo and Hutchings, 1996 in Raijman et al., 2003).

This research draws on above mentioned theories. Based on these theoretical approaches, this research investigated to what extent Ethiopians are attempting to integrate with the South African community or remaining as a separate community. The study also examines whether the Ethiopian immigrants perceive South Africans as allowing them to become an integral part of the society by engaging in social and economic relationships with them.

1.8. Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. The first chapter starts by introducing the topic under research. Then it describes the current trend of migration from non-SADC countries and explains the need to undertake this research. Finally, it looks at the theoretical framework that is used to guide the research. The second chapter reviews the literature on migration. It reads up on the experiences of migrants globally and in South Africa, in particular. Chapter three presents the methodology employed in this research. It describes the study area, the research methods and the sampling technique. It also covers the interview process and the challenges in the field work. The fourth chapter examines the findings of the in-depth interviews. It looks at the profile of migrants, factors that influenced their decision to migrate, their travel routes and modes of entry into South Africa, the economic life of Ethiopian immigrants. The final chapter discusses the results and summarizes the whole dissertation and puts forth possible recommendations.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter a comprehensive review of literature related to the topic under research is covered. The chapter starts by exploring the findings of studies on the causes of migration and the experiences of immigrants in different corners of the world. The focus shifts to South Africa and various issues concerning immigrants are covered including the size of the immigrant population, the involvement of immigrants in the economic sector, the social challenges immigrants face in South Africa and the contribution of the media and different government officials to the perception about immigrants in the country.

2.2. Causes of Migration

Various causes impel people to take a risk and leave their familiar homeland for an uncertain new destination. Migration can be voluntary or compelled and the decision to migrate is a function of internal as well as external factors (Adepoju, 2006b). Internally individuals may face economic, social or political pressures that are beyond their control. Attractive factors from the external world might also cause migration (Amisi and Ballard, 2004 in Amisi, 2005).

Although, there are various causes for migration, the quest for better economic opportunities is the overriding factor (Adepoju, 1998 in Adepoju, 2006b:37). This was observed even during pre-colonial Africa where individuals' movements were geared towards better hunting grounds, new pasture land and better farming plots (Gugler, 1969 in Birhane, 1999). Migration in the modern times is described by movement to larger cities and more developed countries in search of better employment and business opportunities (Banton, 1996 in Birhane, 1999). A contributing factor for the potential migrants to make a decision to migrate is the comparative benefits they gain from the destination areas. This is determined by an individual's 'awareness space'. Awareness space is "a function of previous migration experience, education, occupational specialization and exposure to 'outside sources of information" (Shaw, 1974:169).

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The political situation and conflicts in the country of origin are other causes for migration. Political upheavals, insecurity and conflicts among different ethnic, racial or political groups can trigger migration (De Blij, 1993). In 1980, more than 125,000 Cubans on the "Mariel Boat Lift" and hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese fled their countries to escape from the communist dictatorships. Similarly, about 50,000 Asians were expelled from Uganda during the Idi Amin's regime (Ibid).

Cultural disparity is the third factor that can push people out of their communities. Major political and social shocks targeted towards particular cultures and groups might force the movement to other more tolerant destinations (De Blij, 1993). In many rural settings of Africa, people migrated to urban areas because they could not fit into the conservative cultural practices. One the other hand, following the partitioning of the British India in a majority Hindu India and a majority Muslim Pakistan, many Muslim Indians crossed borders to live in Islamic states (Obrai et al., 1989).

In addition to the above mentioned causes, many others might result in migration. Armed conflicts, natural catastrophes and drought and starvation are some. However, it is difficult to conclusively define a person as a migrant because of the intricate nature of migration (Adepoju, 2006b).

2.3. Experiences of Immigrants: Global Perspective

In recent years, the unevenness of development has led to the movement of people away from their homeland (ILO, IOM, OHCHR, 2001). From the time migrants leave their country of origin they experience various receptions at different destination points. Migrants receive subtle and at times overtly hostile responses from host communities. Nevertheless, in some instances, migrants have enjoyed fair treatment (Owen, 2006). In this section, the experiences of different immigrants at various destinations are discussed.

According to an opinion poll, a survey conducted on member states of the European Union, a third of the respondents openly "described themselves as being 'quite racist' or 'very racist'" (European Commission, 1997:1). Belgium leads the pack with 55 percent of its respondents stating that they are very racist or 'quite racist'. The French

are the second racist nation with 48 percent of the respondents identifying themselves as being racist followed by 42 percent of the Austrian respondents.

> "Those who declared they had racist feelings presented common characteristics: many were dissatisfied with their life circumstances and feared losing their jobs; they felt insecure about the future ("the situation will get worse"); and/or had experienced a deterioration of their personal situation" (European Commission, 1997:3).

In Germany, in the 1990s, foreigners became the scapegoats for the rise in unemployment, the decline in the economy and all social evils (for example, the increase in crime and drug use). The number of immigrants was exaggerated in the media and by individuals. The figures from the German government indicate that the frustration and violence against foreigners was alarmingly high (The Human Rights Watch, 1995).

Another study conducted on Germans' acculturation attitudes and perceived threat toward Italian and Polish immigrants supports the reports of Human Rights Watch. Only about 39 percent of the respondents were reported to be willing to accept and live in harmony with Polish immigrants and about 48 percent with Italian immigrants (Pointkowski et al., 2002). Both groups of immigrants were perceived as threats, the Polish being more threatening and less contributing to the economy compared to Italians. However, the tolerance towards Poles and Italians was found to be much better when compared to the Turks. This is because the first group had a more or less similar culture and same religion, i.e., Christianity, which was the main unifying factor whereas the culture of the Turks was rather new and they had a different religious affiliation, i.e., Islam (Ibid).

In support of the above mentioned studies, various incidents are recorded in Germany. The majority of the incidents happened in the eastern parts of the country and among the young population. In one incident extremists firebombed an area where asylum seekers were residing in the town of Rostock (Shindondola, 2003).

Studies showed that North Africans are the most unwelcome people in Spain followed by the gypsies (Shindondola, 2003). Derogatory terms like 'moro' for Moroccans and 'morenito' for black immigrants are used to refer to immigrants. Similar cases like the ones in Germany were witnessed in Spain too. Homes of about 30 gypsy families were burnt down and residents were forced to flee to another town (Ford, 1992 in Shindondola, 2003). Similar attacks are often carried out against different immigrant groups, the most frequently targeted of which are the Magherbi people and black Africans. The locals blamed immigrants for the increase in drug trafficking and crime (Ibid).

Some studies suggest that Sweden, the country known for being the home of the Nobel Prize, is now becoming a hostile destination. Muslims are the most discriminated population in Sweden. About 70 percent of Muslims reported xenophobia and discrimination and 40 percent witnessed verbal abuse directed at Muslims in particular (The Local, 2005). Discrimination against Muslims is increasing dramatically as the number of Muslim immigrants in the country is also increasing. Currently, 87 percent of the population is Lutheran whereas followers of other religions, including Islam, comprise only 13 percent (CIA, 2007).

According to a Swedish government report to the United Nations, from 2002-2005, the highest number of immigrants entering the country are Iraqis (Swedish government, 2006). In a small town in Southern Spain, an 'invandra', a term used to denote a foreigner, was beaten by neo-Nazist skin head youth and left to die in a park. But the individuals who committed the crime were ordered to attend a rehabilitation center for two years with a possibility of remission upon good behavior (El Diairo, 2006).

2.4. Positive Experiences and Contribution of Immigrants

Studies also suggest that the treatment of immigrants is not always negative. A study conducted on the attitude of Norwegians on immigrants and immigration showed that nationals are developing a more positive attitude towards immigrants.

"Two thirds of the Norwegian population has contact with immigrants, and those who do are more immigrant friendly than others. Few people have negative experiences from having contact with immigrants" (Statistics Norway, 2003:1).

An overwhelming 83 percent of the respondents in the study feel that "all immigrants in Norway should have the same opportunities to have a job as Norwegians" and more than two thirds agree that immigrants contribute positively to the economy of Norway. The study found that women and the younger age group have more positive attitudes towards immigrants compared to males and the older age group population (Ibid). Similarly, the attitude of Canadians towards immigrants is reported to be positive (Owen, 2006). The younger population in Canada has a more positive attitude towards immigrants than the older age groups. Even though there are some concerns on issues of racism and discrimination, with the support of good policies the immigrant population is being assisted to better their economic and social well-being (Ibid).

In many instances, immigrants contribute positively towards the social and economic life of the local community (Simon, 1995; Statistics Norway, 2003). In Europe, a study found that immigrants actually complement locals during the peak seasons of the market and serve as substitutes during recession (Narayanan et al., 2005). In the United States, studies have shown that immigrants contribute heavily to the economy (Simon, 1995). A poll conducted on economists suggested that 81 percent of the economists believed that immigration contributes "very favorably" to the economy. The arrival of more immigrants from the Third World and Latin America does not have a negative influence on the well-being of the black population in the lower rank. However, the attitudes of the native population towards immigrants were negative. Studies conducted from the 1930s to 1990s show that Americans are opposed to immigration and immigrants (Ibid).

In Malaysia, a study conducted on labor and the construction sector suggests that there is a large amount of immigrant labor involved in the sector. In addition, these immigrants are not taking away jobs from the locals. The locals abandoned the construction works and fled to more prosperous East Asian economies. In addition,

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others were not willing to work in harsh working conditions and earn lr
immigrants complemented the locals who stayed behind and
construction sector. The immigrants usually engaged in those jobs that ᴀ.
the locals (Narayanan et al., 2005).

2.5. The South African Perspective

Post-apartheid South Africa has witnessed an increase in the influx of migrants from different parts of the world, especially from other parts of Africa (Landau, 2005). Following an increase of immigrants, opposition to immigration and negative sentiments towards immigrants has become commonplace among South Africans. This sentiment goes across the board from ordinary citizens to high-ranking political figures (Ibid). The media has also contributed to a larger extent by reporting misleading and inaccurate information to the public. However, studies show that immigrants are positively contributing to South African economy (Rogerson, 1997). Immigrants in South Africa are involved in various economic activities but most of them are engaged in small businesses (Adepoju, 2006a).

2.5.1. Size of the Immigrant Population in South Africa

There is no data indicating the exact number of immigrants residing in South Africa (Crush and Williams, 2005). This is attributed to the continuous flow of undocumented immigrants into the country and the lack of a reliable methodology to verify the numbers (McDonald et al., 1999). Erroneous estimates are made by different sources on the number of immigrants living in South Africa. The Human Science Research Council (HSRC) conducted a study in the 1990s and came up with figures reaching up to 8-10 million. This study was officially withdrawn by HSRC in 2001 after realizing that is was faulty (Ibid).

Later a census was conducted by the same body, HSRC, which indicated that the number of non-South Africans is a little over one million (Crush and Williams, 2005). This means the immigrant population in South Africa constitutes about 2.2 percent of the total population (Landau, 2005). On the other hand, Statistics South Africa estimated the number to be about 500,000 (McDonald et al., 1999). On the contrary,

however, some police estimates suggest that the figure is 12 million, making one in every four residents an immigrant (McDonald et al., 1999). In some cities like Toronto in Canada the foreign population reaches up to 40 percent. Similarly, in some parts of Tanzania one in every four person is a foreigner (Landau, 2005).

Another surprising view is about the number of immigrants from non-SADC countries. It is evident that there is increase in the number of immigrants from non-SADC countries in recent years (Adepoju, 2006b). It followed the improved inter-regional trade and political relationships coupled with a more progressive constitution and the introduction of the Bill of Rights (SAMP, 2001). However, the popular notion is much more exaggerated than the fact. It is believed that immigrants from other impoverished African countries have taken South Africa by storm. A census conducted by HSRC in 2001 found that only four percent of the total number of immigrants in South Africa was born outside non-SADC countries (Crush and Williams, 2005).

2.5.2. Immigrants in the Economic Sector

"Southern Africa is the epicenter of labor migration in sub-Saharan Africa, whether viewed from historical perspective or in contemporary terms" (Oucho, 2006:67). In the past, migration to work in the mine fields of Zambia and South Africa was common. Migration of unskilled labor into South Africa is still a predominant feature of migration in the region. The immigrants are coming predominantly from the "traditional supply areas", i.e., SADC countries. However, the number of immigrants from outside the southern region is increasing (Rogerson, 1997).

A pattern observed among immigrants in South Africa is that most of them are involved in micro-economic activities such as petty trading, flea markets and street vending (Adepoju, 2006a). This means they are working in areas where resources are scarce and there is higher rate of underemployment and unemployment (Raijman et al., 2003). In addition, the host community does not have adequate access to social services like health care and education. The cumulative effect of all the above will force the host community to defend the introduction of another resident in the area

(Shindondola, 2003). In support of the findings of the study by Shindondola (2003), a number of incidents have been recorded. In 2002, four people were killed in the Joe Slovo settlement in the Western Cape as a result of a clash between Angolan refugees and South Africans (CTRC, 2002 in Palmary, 2003). The cause of the conflict was stated as refugees taking up "jobs and women" of the locals. A similar conflict was started around Du noon in the Western Cape and 70 Angolans had to flee. In Port Elizabeth riots broke out in 2001 and Somalis were attacked and their shops and mosques were looted (Kellet, 2002 in Shindondola, 2003). Another respondent for a study conducted by the Mail and Guardian reported that South Africans are out on the streets looking for jobs but could not find one because "companies have given the jobs to foreigners" (Danso et al., 2000).

However, in contrast of the above mentioned views, research states that migrants in South Africa create jobs and start their own businesses (Danso et al., 2000). A study showed that businesses run by immigrants from SADC countries created jobs for an average of 2.65 persons and businesses from non-SADC countries created jobs for about four people per enterprise (Rogerson, 1997). "In the long-term, given the continuing prosperity and growth of these enterprises, an ever-increasing proportion of South African workers will be absorbed into these small businesses" (Rogerson, 1997:3).

In addition to creating job opportunities, immigrants set up their own business (Palmary, 2002). A case in point would be the Nigerian market in Cape Town. There are about 27 traders working in that market. The foreigners struggled so much and survived the pressure to establish a good market but they are facing a fierce challenge because the locals want to take over the area. This is because of the successful businesses foreigners have established and the belief that income generating opportunities for South African are lesser because foreigners have come to share resources and compete for jobs (Ibid). A refugee street vendor reflects his concern saying "If you put R1000 and go to the streets and sit there and the next day someone comes and calls you 'makwerekwere'...and they may come take your stuff and kill you" (Palmary, 2002:15).

A number of reports in the media suggest that foreigners are taking over the informal sector which is the basic livelihood of many South Africans (Danso et al., 2000). Thus immigrants, especially those involved in micro-businesses, are considered as illegal job stealers. In an incident, two Senegalese and one Mozambican immigrant were killed by a mob because they were perceived as "job stealing foreigners" (Ibid).

2.5.3. Xenophobia

Xenophobia basically is a fear of foreigners or outsiders. It is a perception that is developed based on an individual's place of origin. A person coming from another place outside the host community, the society or the nation is considered to be a foreigner or an outsider. Xenophobia is an attitude and prejudice developed by the host community that often results in the 'newcomers' being rejected and excluded from the rest of the community (IOM, ILO, OHCHR, 2001). It is also explained as a "bitter outcome of the exertion of collective identity" that springs from economic, political and cultural demands (Shindondola, 2003:6). Although it is harmless to identify oneself with a group, not recognizing the presence of others leads to xenophobia.

The underlying cause of xenophobia as outlined in literature is fear (Raijman et al., 2003). Locals are afraid of economic competition, increase in crimes and loss of identity or acculturation. They often feel insecure because of the threat posed by the 'outsiders'. The level of fear usually varies based on the socio-economic, educational and employment status of the residents (Landau, 2005). In addition, the existence of conservative and extremist groups also contributes to the level of fear. For these groups, the introduction of 'alien' values and practices might well be perceived as destructive (Raijman et al., 2003).

Locals from humble economic backgrounds usually develop a stereotype that their economic well being is at risk because of foreigners as they are believed to take up all the jobs (Raijman et al., 2003). This same case is witnessed in South Africa where immigrants are stigmatized as people who undermine economic development and are economic threats to locals (Maharaj et al., 2000). One official is quoted as saying "There is no land for these immigrants...they are taking each and every piece of land

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they can and occupying it" (Palmary, 2003:9). This notion is shared by others who think that "immigrants weaken society and threaten the nation's health" (Mattes et al., 1999).

Acculturation is another factor that can cause xenophobia or contribute to its rise (Pointkowski et al., 2002). Immigrants travel to another country with the cultural heritages and values from their own respective countries and upon their arrival they are introduced to the cultures of the new community. This can cause cultural friction between the two groups. As stated by Berry in Pointkowski et al. (2002), the attitude of the community and the immigrants is a major factor in the rise of xenophobia.

In 1997, xenophobia was declared to be a major concern for South African democracy (Crush, 2001). Many South Africans are still uneasy about immigrant treatment (ANC Today in Masuku, 2006:19). A study by the South African Migration Project (SAMP) supports this statement. Twenty five percent of South Africans totally oppose immigration of any form and 45 percent favor strict immigration policy. Only six percent support an open door policy and about a fifth of the respondents support a more flexible immigration policy that takes into account the availability of jobs (Mattes et al., 1999).

According to a study conducted by the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) in 1998, only 55 percent of the population is aware of the existence of the Bill of Rights in the constitution. More than 50 percent believed that the rights stated in the constitution are extended to South Africans only (SAMP, 2001). About 40 percent of the respondents said immigrants should not be given equal access to basic services of health and education. More than half are opposed to equal access to housing for immigrants. Another interesting finding is that South Africans almost exclusively choose European and North American immigrants over African immigrants. From within Africa, there is a marginal preference for immigrants from SADC countries over the rest of Africa. When it comes to undocumented migrants an overwhelming 85 percent of the respondents said that these groups should not be given freedom of speech and movement (Ibid).

South African's lack of knowledge of rights of refugees might have contributed to the mistreatment of immigrants. But even the law enforcement body is also accused of violating refugee rights. A report by the South African Human Rights Commission stated that:

> "Arrested persons were deliberately prevented from providing accurate document, valid identity documents were destroyed, and bribes were taken for avoiding arrest or for release without documentation..." (SAMP, 2001:22).

Even though, the above statement is made concerning Lindela, a deportation center, similar cases from various areas are reported in the previous sections of this chapter.

At times, even South Africans have become victims of negative sentiments (Masuku, 2006). One off-duty South African police official was arrested in a bar because the officers on duty thought he was an illegal immigrant. Even though he tried to explain that he is a police official, he was locked up for a night in jail until a policeman he knew showed up for his rescue (Ibid). In another instance a young woman was standing by the door of her house around Forest Hill, South of Johannesburg, when the police asked her where she is from. Despite telling them that she is a South African, they took her to their car and started driving her to a deportation centre. In the meantime she spoke to them in Afrikaans and immediately they stopped the car and dropped her around Krugersdorp (Shindondola, 2003). There are many more who became victims of such allegations based on their appearance.

2.5.4. Immigrants, Media and the Authority in South Africa

The government has more or less taken some measures like setting up rules and accepting the refugee rights documents of the United Nations to safeguard immigrants in the country. The President has made a crucial speech to discourage xenophobia in the aftermath of the world conference on racism and xenophobia that took place in Durban. In his speech the President underlined that mistreatment of people who come to South Africa as friends is 'wrong and unacceptable' (SAMP, 2000). This is an important message particularly because other high ranking officials in the government have been spotted promoting exclusionary attitudes since the end of apartheid.

In 1994. The Minister of Home Affairs said "if South Africans are going to compete for scarce resources with millions of 'aliens' that are pouring into South Africa, then we can bid goodbye to our Reconstruction and Development Program" (Palmary, 2002:5). Three years later, in 1997 the former Minister of Home Affairs Mangosuthu Buthelezi, while addressing a meeting on migration in the region, stated that

> "South Africa is faced with another threat and that is the SADC
> ideology of free movement of people, free trade and freedom to choose
> where you live and work. Free movement for persons spells disaster for
> our country" (Landau, 2005:5-6).

In addition, the executive mayor of Johannesburg in his 'state of the city speech' said that migration even though it is good in some ways; also puts a severe strain on employment, housing and public services (Ibid). However, as argued by Landau, the level of strain exerted by international migration cannot be calculated given the lack of sufficient data. These stances are observed in other government service providers too. The South African Police Service (SAPS) is a typical example.

With a little support from the law, the SAPS is one of the nightmares of immigrants in the country, not because the immigrants commit too much crime but because of arbitrary arrests by the police (Masuku, 2006). The police has legal powers to "apprehend individuals who are suspected to be undocumented non-citizens" (Shindondola, 2003:22). These arbitrary arrests often are not well founded. For example one of the methods the Internal Tracing Unit of SAPS uses to identify undocumented immigrants is language (Harris, 2002). If an immigrant cannot pronounce one word in three local languages properly, then he is liable to arrest. In addition, an individuals' complexion, dressing, and hair style are some of the factors that are taken into account.

A study by Harris (2002) further explains the treatment by the police. One Rwandese refugee was kidnapped by gunmen, stabbed and robbed. The kidnappers also threatened to kill him unless he pays them three hundred rand every month. The refugee, after his horrific encounter goes to the police to report the incident but upon his arrival the police did not even bother asking him question; rather they tore up his

refugee paper and put him in jail because he does not have the 'proper document'. After spending the weekend in jail he had to bribe the police to get out of jail and continued to pay three hundred rand to the kidnappers for three years (Harris, 2002).

It is important to also point out that the police are under pressure to meet arrest targets for the month (Masuku, 2006:22). For a police officer to get a promotion and respect, he or she has to have a number of arrests under his or her name in a month. To meet this demand, police usually "round up the usual suspects" (such as refugees, asylum seekers and other immigrants) that are vulnerable because of their tenuous legal status. In addition to getting arrests under their names, the police also benefit financially from the immigrants. Immigrants are considered as "mobile ATMs" because they often carry cash as they do not have access to financial services (Ibid).

The media also plays a paramount role in portraying a negative image of immigrants in the minds of the host community (Danso et al., 2000). According to a study by South African Migration Project (SAMP), more than half of the articles in print media contain at least one negative reference to immigration and 36 percent make two or more negative references in a single report (Danso et al., 2000). In addition, the information and data presented on the media should be evaluated for its authenticity and accuracy. For example, reporting of the number of undocumented immigrants in South Africa as being between 2.5 and 4.1 million lacks critical assessment of the matter. Such coverage of migration issues is clearly biased and instigates fear and discomfort on the part of the audience. Thus a more balanced and in-depth approach should be sought while reporting on migration (Ibid).

2.6. Summary

Migration is an intricate issue that has stayed debatable and difficult to conceptualize. Different scholars have attempted to define and explain migration but a comprehensive explanation is yet to come. International migration is increasing as a result of globalization (IOM, ILO, OHCHR, 2001). The increase in migration has resulted in a number of different responses by host communities. Americans are opposed to immigration and immigrants while Norwegians have positive attitudes towards immigration (Simon, 1995; Statistics Norway, 2003). Thus migrants are faced

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with vastly different experiences. Some have enjoyed better economic opportunities and a better life. At the same time, they faced challenges and experienced xenophobia and discrimination from different bodies in the host country including the community and some government bodies like the police.

The experience of immigrants in South Africa is by no means unique. Many immigrants, especially the ones from other parts of Africa, have come to South Africa in search of better economic opportunities and a better life. While they may be benefiting economically, they may also become victims of mistreatment, xenophobia and discrimination. The attitude of South Africans is constructed based on the information they get from the media, authorities and their personal experience (Danso et al., 2000; Landau, 2005).

Despite all the above experiences immigrants have in South Africa, they still prefer to stay in the country. A study by SAMP indicated that about 75 percent of the respondents said that overall conditions in South Africa are better than their home country and more than half of them are satisfied with their life in South Africa. Only a quarter of the respondents indicated that situations in South Africa are worse than their home country. Immigrants have better access basic services like health care, water and education. However, the majority of immigrants (86 percent) are not satisfied with personal safety, xenophobia and crime rates (McDonald et al., 1999).

Chapter Three
Research Methodology

Introduction

This chapter is intended to present the details of the study area, methodology and methods and the challenges faced during the research. It starts by providing geographic and demographic information about the study area. Then procedures followed in data collection and analysis is explained in greater depth. Finally, the challenges faced during the course of the study are discussed.

3.1. Description of the Study Area

South Africa is located at the southern tip of Africa with a geographical alignment of 29^0 00 latitude and 24^0 00 longitude (Statssa, 2007). It covers a total of over 1.2 million square kilometer of area. The country is divided into nine provinces, the largest in population size being KwaZulu-Natal province. According to Statistics South Africa's mid-year estimates, the population of South Africa was 47.9 million. The unemployment rate was reported to be 25.5 percent (Ibid).

According the pre-1991 South African law, the population of South Africa was divided into four major racial categories: blacks, whites, coloreds and Indians (U.S. Department of State, 2007). The majority of the South African population is blacks-comprising about 79 percent of the total. The whites constitute about 9 percent of the population, coloreds 9 percent and Indians a little more than 3 percent (Ibid).

South Africa stayed mostly isolated from the rest of the world prior to the apartheid era. It first signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 1993 to allow refugees to enter South Africa. The refugee act was passed in 1998 and the immigration act in 2002 (Palmary, 2002). The refugee act is acclaimed and it had been repeatedly revised. According to the refugee act any person has the right to apply for asylum in South Africa.

Since the post apartheid period, the number of refugees flocking into the country has increased and a new trend of migration, i.e., migration from outside the SADC

countries, emerged. Currently it is estimated that between 500,000-1,000,000 migrants are living in the country. But the figures are still debatable as there has not been a comprehensive study done so far (Mcdonald et al., 1999).

One of the major industrial centers of South Africa is Durban. Located in the province of KwaZulu Natal, Durban, with an estimated population of three million, is one of most densely populated cities in South Africa. Migration into the metropolitan has been increasing in recent years (Maharaj et al., 2000). Despite the availability of a sea port and an airport in Durban, the majority of the immigrants came through other entry points. Many immigrants came through borders or they initially entered South Africa through entry points outside Durban and traveled to the city afterwards. Increasing number of immigrants choose Durban as their destination point because they believe that crime is less compared to other major cities and the immigration process is easier (Ibid).

3.2. Methods and Data Source

The study employed a qualitative approach. By using the qualitative approach, the researcher was able to get a more realistic and holistic perspective on the experiences of Ethiopian immigrants in South Africa. It also created the opportunity to interact with the respondents in their own language and on their own terms. Some of the shortcomings of the approach are that it is time consuming, more expensive and liable to bias (Kirk and Miller, 1986).

Of the various qualitative approaches, in-depth interview was found to be the best fit for the purpose of this research. The use of in-depth interviews allowed the researcher to probe as needed to get some information that respondents believe are personal or confidential and thus might not feel comfortable talking about (Kirk and Miller, 1986). In addition, personal observations and informal discussions were also used to support the findings. As the researcher was also Ethiopian it was much easier to initiate discussions and get as much information as possible. It also helped the researcher to win the trust of respondents. In some instances, however, some respondents felt uncomfortable being interviewed on some issues like "income

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status". Thus they were reluctant to open-up as needed. On the other hand, the researcher being Ethiopian might have left some room for subjectivity.

The data required for this research was collected from Ethiopian immigrants living in Durban metropolitan area. The researcher located their places of gathering and residence based on his previous contact with the Ethiopian community. The majority of immigrants were located on West Street and Point Road. Immigrants either live and work in these areas or work in other places and live in these locations.

An interview guide was developed to guide the interviews. The guide included questions that focus on immigrant profile, interaction with South African community, interaction with government authorities, access to services and quality of life. The guide was then piloted and revised. The informal discussions and literature review also helped the researcher to revise the interview guide.

3.3. Sampling

Snowball sampling method was used to identify respondents from the Ethiopian immigrant community. In this method a respondent was asked to recommend someone he/she knows from the Ethiopian immigrant community who is willing to be interviewed. This method allowed the research to be more random. In addition, it built the confidence of the interviewees in that he/she was recommended by a friend. As a result they were more relaxed and free to discuss. This method, however, has limitations in that a person might have recommended someone who will concur to his own opinion. Secondly, there is a possibility that a respondent might only be exposed to an environment where he/she shares similar educational, social and economic experiences and backgrounds and thus recommend from that circle. This also might have affected the data quality.

In this research, a total of fifteen in-depth interviews, comprising of eleven males and four females were conducted. The exact number of Ethiopian migrants in Durban is not known because of lack of reliable data (McDonald et al, 1999). As a result, the sample size was determined after observation of Ethiopian immigrants at places of their social gatherings. Even though, the researcher attempted to keep the balance

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between the number of male and female respondents, it was not successful. The number of Ethiopian female immigrants found in Durban is very few and thus respondents only managed to recommend more male immigrants.

3.4. Field Work

After obtaining ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu Natal, the researcher, along with a research assistant, spent a total of 13 days in the field. The first goal was to identify the initial respondents. Once that was done a schedule was set with the respondents and the interviews were conducted in different locations based on the interests of the respondents. Before each interview, the researcher read out the consent form. Upon their agreement to participate in the research, respondents signed the consent form and retained a copy. All the interviews were tape recorded.

3.5. Analysis

After transcription of the recorded data, particular themes were identified. Then the responses were organized under these themes including background and migration routes, interactions with the community, interaction with government authorities, access to social services and quality of life in South Africa and future plans. The data was analyzed based on these themes and specific sub topics.

3.6. Challenges in the Field Work

The first challenge was finding respondents willing to participate in the research. Some immigrants were members of political parties back in Ethiopia and thus were not comfortable to be interviewed as they thought this might compromise their position. Others did not want to speak about their lives in South Africa stating that they might get into trouble afterwards.

The other constraint was the busy schedule of immigrants. Many of the Ethiopian immigrants work long hours including weekends. Others commute to the suburbs around Durban daily in order to conduct their business. As a result, they could not afford to spare two hours for this research. To address this issue, the researcher had to convince them to participate in the interview at their workplace during working hours or at night after work. However, most often their work places are shops and

restaurants; it was very noisy to record their voice. Added to that, customer visits interrupted the interviews repeatedly. However, the researcher was able to locate the respondents afterwards and ask for clarification on areas that were not audible and clear. In some cases, the interviews had to be conducted during meal hours. In such cases the researcher had to cover the costs of the respondents to motivate them to participate in the interview. Interviews with respondents willing to commit their time exclusively for the interview, were also conducted in the residences of immigrants.

Chapter Four

Analysis of Research Findings

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. It starts by outlining some background information on the immigrants and then considers some of the factors immigrants take into account during their decision making process and the importance of social networks. The travel routes to South Africa and various modes of entry are presented. This chapter also reports on the social and economic interactions of Ethiopian immigrants and the challenges they face. Finally, the chapter examines the future plans of Ethiopian immigrants.

4.2. Background and Migration History of Immigrants

4.2.1. Migrants Profile

For the study, a total of 15 Ethiopian immigrants were interviewed; of which 11 were males and 4 were females. Even though an attempt was made to locate more female immigrants, most respondents recommended other male immigrants as there are very few Ethiopian female immigrants in Durban. The age group of the respondents ranged from 23 years to 42 years. The majority of respondents were between the ages of 25 to 30 years. Six of the respondents have completed high school and three have attended university education. The rest have only completed certain levels in junior high or elementary school. Information about respondents' duration of stay in South Africa indicated that the longest stay is six years while the shortest is one year and a half. Most of them have stayed in some other cities like Johannesburg before coming to Durban. The following table summarizes the profile of Ethiopian immigrants.

Table 1: Gender, Age and Education Profile of Respondents

Name (Pseudonyms)	Gender	Age at completed year	Highest level of education	Duration of Stay in SA
Tizita	Female	29	Completed high school	4 years
Lili	Female	23	Grade 11	4 years

Mihret	Female	25	Completed high school	2 years and 6 months
Firehiwot	Female	25	Completed high school	2 years
Tekleab	Male	30	Completed high school	4 years and 6 months
Sintayehu	Male	26	Completed University 1st year	3 years
Yoseph	Male	25	Completed Junior high	1 year & 6 months
Yared	Male	28	Completed high school	2 years
Mesfin	Male	28	Completed high school	2 years
Desta	Male	29	Diploma graduate	4 years
Andualem	Male	26	Completed Junior high	3 years
Dawit	Male	42	Teaching certificate (12+1)	2 years
Brook	Male	30	Completed elementary school	1 year and 6 months
Tagel	Male	27	Grade 4	2 years
Ephrem	Male	31	Masters Graduate	6 years

All of the respondents are legal immigrants in South Africa. They obtained legal status immediately after they entered the country. All (with the exception of three) respondents are asylum seekers. Three respondents have been granted refugee status that lasts up to two years. Only two immigrants reported their reason for migration as being politically motivated. However, all respondents applied for asylum or refugee status as political migrants. According to the respondents, political migration is a more plausible justification to be accepted as an asylum seeker or a refugee.

4.2.2. Decision Making

The decision to migrate by Ethiopian immigrants is a result of various socio-economic factors. The majority of respondents identified poor or limited economic opportunities as one of the main reasons for migrating to South Africa. This is reflected in the following comments:

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The main reason I left Ethiopia is to improve my life economically, live a better standard of life than the one I used to live in Ethiopia and help my family. My life in Ethiopia was fine but when you live in your country you take things for granted. You find every thing as 'normal' and life won't be as challenging as when you are outside of your country. But when you think of the places outside of your country, you think that it is always better to go abroad than to stay in your country. Moreover, when you hear from other people who have been to other countries, you get agitated to leave your country (Tekleab).

I came to South Africa because there are more economic opportunities here than in Ethiopia. Here I can work and improve the economic situation of myself and my family (Mihret).

From the above responses it can be understood that the decision to migrate is mainly motivated by economic factors. The limited economic prospects in Ethiopia have played a major role in the decision-making process. Immigrants also reported that they took into account the situation of their families. The poor economic condition of families acted as a push factor. In addition, some of the respondents argue that the poor economic conditions of immigrants and the people around them were not the only factor influencing their decision to move. It is also influenced by others who already have gone abroad and managed to improve their economic situation.

While more than half of the respondents identified the poor economic situation in Ethiopia as one of the main factors motivating their decision to migrate, others have indicated various other reasons that compelled them to migrate. Disagreements with family members and other members of society are observed to be contributing factors for migration. Too much influence from family on personal choices like future career and lifestyle have pushed some Ethiopians to migrate.

...I couldn't get along with my family well. We had differences concerning my choices in life and I couldn't live with them. And the second reason is that I didn't want to live in Ethiopia... (Lili).

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Apart from the quest for economic opportunities and an accommodating environment, some Ethiopian immigrants left the country in search of better educational opportunities. As a result of the lack of adequate number of tertiary educational institutions and their small intake capacity, a few Ethiopian immigrants have fled to South Africa to pursue their academic interests.

> I couldn't see a bright future for myself. The educational level I attained is not something demanded in the job market. And I doubted that I would get any further. Looking at the situation, I was worried about my future and that is why I left (Lili).

> My reason to come here is not economic at all. I wanted to get a better education. In addition to that there are some issues that I am not comfortable to talk about, issues related with politics (Sintayehu).

The above quote indicates that lack of political freedom is also another reason to migrate. Two respondents explained that they left the country for political reasons. One of them identified lack of freedom to express political views in educational higher institutions as one of the major factors motivating his decision to migrate. Another respondent added that the ruling party put a lot of pressure on neutral citizens and members of the opposition parties.

> The situation in the country (Ethiopia) is not comfortable to stay there.
> The political condition makes it hard for neutral citizens or supporters
> of opposition parties (Dawit).

During the decision making process, immigrants take into consideration a range of possible destination areas. The options are determined by the information immigrants have about the destination areas. In the case of Ethiopian immigrants, almost all of them consider the United States of America as the most desirable destination. This is most aptly capture in the following comments:

> You take so many elements into consideration when you think about
> leaving your country; the main one being the financial capability to go
> to other countries. I have, for example, thought about going to the

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> United States of America before I came here…who doesn't want to go
> to 'mother America'? (Tekleab).

However, there are other intervening factors that hinder Ethiopian immigrants from going to their desired destination- the United States of America. Firstly, many of them find it unaffordable as they would have to pay four times the amount they spend to come to South Africa. In addition, distance plays a crucial role. As it will be explained in the following sections, many of the Ethiopian immigrants came into South Africa through borders using trucks and buses as the primary mode of transportation and are not able to use this means of transportation to get into the United States of America. As one respondent explained,

> I thought about going to other countries with better opportunities. But fulfilling the formalities to go to other countries is much harder than coming here. To go to other countries such as America you need to win the DV (Diversity Visa) lottery, you need to have a higher educational background than what I have and you need to have more money than what you need to come to South Africa. But to come to South Africa there are illegal ways to enter the borders if you couldn't manage to get here legally. As long as you have money it is much easier to come here than to go there (Yoseph).

As a result of their inability to go to the United States of America, many Ethiopian immigrants are forced to consider countries that are closer and more affordable. However, the harsh socio-economic conditions might deter them from going to particular countries. For example, neighboring countries like Kenya are not economically affluent countries with many opportunities. Thus they are not mostly considered as destination points. On the other hand, the social setting of the more affluent countries in the Middle East is constructed on Islam. As a result, most immigrants with other religious affiliations find it difficult to migrate to these countries. In addition, there are limited economic opportunities, especially for men. In the case of women, they migrate to the Middle East to work as house maids. The strict immigration policy and rigorous control of illegal immigrants also discourages Ethiopian migrants. One male respondent explained that:

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I tried to go to many other countries. I even went to Jeddah only to
come back to Ethiopian on the second day because I was caught by the
police. I went to Kenya and stayed for only a week. Finally, I came
here and succeeded (Desta).

4.3. Social Networks

Social networking is an important factor that contributes to migration. Social
networks are crucial links before and during their journey, upon arrival and settling in
South Africa. Some Ethiopians have friends, siblings or some kind of acquaintance in
South Africa before they came to the country. A female Ethiopian immigrant stated:
"My brother lives here in South Africa and I decided to come here just because he was
here" (Tizita). Social networking helped immigrants to get information about the
journey to South Africa, business opportunities and destination cities. It also
contributed to the decision making of Ethiopian immigrants.

> I had no plan to go to an African country. I came to South Africa just
> by chance. If I had to go to another country, the only country that was
> in my mind was USA. A family friend came to our house and told us
> about her brother who lives in South Africa. She also told us that her
> brother is facilitating her to travel to South Africa. She was getting her
> travel documents by that time. In a few months she left and she
> promised to do whatever she can to help me to go to South Africa. The
> woman came to South Africa and told her brother about me. At the end
> of the month he facilitated things and I came here (Lili).

Most Ethiopian immigrants indicated that they came to Durban because they knew
someone who lives here or they heard that the living conditions were better. The other
factor that attracts immigrants to Durban is that there is less bureaucracy at home
affairs compared to other cities, especially Johannesburg. Most of them first went to
Johannesburg on their arrival in South Africa. Ethiopian immigrants came to Durban
after communicating with other Ethiopians who live here to find out more about
economic opportunities and benefits.

I lived in Johannesburg for two months. But I didn't like the living and working conditions there. One of my connections in Johannesburg had his brother here. He talked with his brother and I came here (Yared).

I came to Durban to work in the restaurant business because I heard that this business was booming. My brother introduced me to a businessman here and we started working together (Tizita).

I lived in Nelspruit for a week. Then I went to Joburg for about two months. I have a friend here in Durban. I called him and he encouraged me to come to Durban. I came here and started working (Mesfin).

Social networks are instrumental when it comes to starting a business as well. As explained in the previous section, social networks help Ethiopian immigrants in exploring business opportunities and starting up their own business.

Because I had connections here, it was not difficult to get a job here. My brother helped me to familiarize myself with the situation here. But generally it is very difficult. When you come here without having someone to introduce you to employers, it is not easy (Tizita).

4.4. Travel Routes and Modes of Entry

Ethiopian immigrants used various means of transport to reach South Africa. Once they reach South Africa, their entry points are partly determined by their routes. Some of them came into the country through airports and entered with a visitor's visa and stayed. Some entered as transit passengers to Botswana and then they sneaked into South Africa and others come through borders of neighboring countries (See Appendix II). As discussed in the first section of this chapter, most of the respondents reported that they entered South Africa without being documented as legal immigrants on the border. Instead, they obtained legal status after they came into the country through brokers who bribe home affairs official. This will be explained in detail in section 4.9.

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Ethiopian immigrants cross the borders of each of the countries between Ethiopia and South Africa with road transport and on foot. These countries include Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. In most cases, there are brokers to receive them in each country and transport them across the borders of that country. The most commonly used means of transportation are trucks. Once they reach the borders of a particular country they have to get off the truck and continue their journey on foot. It takes between one to four months to get to South Africa from Ethiopia. However, there are also brokers who drive from Kenya to South Africa. One Ethiopian immigrant revealed during an informal discussion that

> There is one Ethiopian guy who drives all the way from here (South Africa) to Moyale (Ethiopian-Kenya border) to collect immigrants. He is a very smart guy. He speaks the local languages of the countries in between. So whenever there is a problem he deals with the police and border patrol and gives them money in return for passes (Informal discussion, Sept 20, 2007).

A number of respondents reported that they, along with their friends, came to South Africa through borders of many countries between Ethiopia and South Africa. One respondent said they used a boat to cross the border between Burundi and Uganda. From there they had to use trucks in the different countries. Another respondent explained his route of his travel as,

> I got a Botswana visa from Ethiopia and I came here as a transit passenger. I arrived at Johannesburg international airport. I was with my friend who stayed here for two years and went back to Ethiopia. We had an eight hours gap between our connection flights. We had to make some phone calls to some people who had connections with the immigration. Unfortunately things did not go as planned... So we decided to go to Botswana. In Botswana we finished our immigration formalities and at the gate there was a Kenyan broker waiting for us...Then the Kenyan made a deal with a hospital vehicle driver that was going to Johannesburg. We paid hundred dollars for the Kenyan guy and proceeded to Johannesburg. We arrived at Johannesburg around two o'clock in the morning (Yared).

Another female respondent explained that she used mainly road transport to get to South Africa. She explains her journey as follows:

> There were a group of us. We flew from Ethiopia to Zimbabwe. Then from Zimbabwe to South Africa, it was a combination of road transport and walking. We took road transport up to the borders and we crossed the borders walking (Tizita).

The respondents further explained that sometimes they had to hide during the day to avoid being spotted by the patrol officers and travel at night. Brokers play a pivotal role in coordinating their travel and guiding the Ethiopian migrants through safe travel routes. However, there are many risks involved while traveling through borders. Respondents recalled some cases where Ethiopian migrants were jailed for entering a country illegally, abused by local communities or authorities like police and sometimes they were even robbed of their possessions.

Many Ethiopian immigrants also used the airport as an entry point. They got visitors' visa for a short period of time. Once they enter the country they destroy their passport and apply for asylum status as political refugees. They explained that it is easier to get asylum when applying as political refugees. As described by the previously stated respondent (Yared), some of them sneaked into South Africa when they came as transit passengers to Botswana. The transit gap is deliberately arranged to be as long as possible to ensure that they have enough time to make enough attempts to walk out of the airport. However, some respondents reported some strange incidents at the airport.

> I started my journey to South Africa on a Friday midnight. I had no visa. I and the other people who were traveling with me were promised that we will get a South African visa in Kenya. The flight arrived in Kenya around three in the morning but we couldn't get the visa. The broker in Kenya bribed the immigration workers and we boarded the flight to Johannesburg without a visa. He told us we have to contact a woman on the immigration desk at gate number nine at the Airport. She has put a bottle of Coke on her desk as a sign. We found the

woman and she let us enter the country. We contacted an Ethiopian

broker in Johannesburg and we went to the city (Desta).

This report and the previous ones show that the network of the brokers is extensive and effective. The brokers also get a good amount of money from this job. Immigrants pay up to R18,000 to get to South Africa. However, they often have to risk their lives in the hazardous journey with the hope of getting better opportunities.

4.5. Economic Benefits and challenges of Ethiopian Immigrants

Many of the Ethiopian immigrants start off their business venture in South Africa by street vending, which is known as "hoza hoza" among Ethiopians or house-to-house selling of items in the African townships that are situated close to the major cities. Some of the locations are Umlazi, Port Shepstone, Amstel, Kwamashu, Isipingo and Umzinto. Some of them continue the same business while others switch to various activities like opening a barbershop, a restaurant and shops for clothing and other goods.

I first started working by selling cloth on the streets in Joburg. One

Ethiopian shop owner gave me some clothes on credit. I sell the cloth,

pay the credit back and take the next round. I did that for about three

months. A friend of mine was in Durban working in the location. So I

came to Durban and started to work in the location (Tagel).

The reasons for changing their economic activities are varied, the main one being having enough money to start up a new business. Many of them do not have enough money to establish a business when they arrive in South Africa. In addition, they do not have a work permit and thus cannot get any support from government. Therefore, they are forced to look for employment or they take loans from other Ethiopians and start petty trading or house-to-house selling in the locations. However, it is difficult to get a job as an immigrant.

I think it is easier to start up your own business than getting a job with

employers. It is very difficult for employers to hire a foreigner. You

need to show some paper work which will not be easy in our case. It

might be easier to get a job with Ethiopian employers. Even this one is

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getting tougher and tougher. The other reason is that the money you get from employment is very small and you find it very difficult to use that money to fulfill all your needs. There is almost no holiday. And that makes it very challenging to meet your social expectations. When you have your own business then you can have control over everything. The only thing that makes it difficult to start up your own business is the starting capital (Lili).

Once they save enough money, they become involved in bigger businesses that are more profitable. Some respondents have indicated that they are working in the same jobs since they first came to South Africa but most of them have switched to other business as they earned more money. One respondent reported that he started working 'hoza hoza' but later got a job as a driver. He saved some money and opened an Ethiopian spice shop. He explains,

> I opened a CD copy shop next to one Ethiopian restaurant. A friend joined me and we started working together. After months, the owner of the Ethiopian restaurant went bankrupt and decided to sell it. So we bought it and started a restaurant business (Yoseph).

Another reason for changing is because of the nature of the job and the risk involved in the jobs. Some jobs are more demanding and risky. All respondents who are and were working in the townships reported that the job is extremely tiring and very risky. They had to live in the townships or commute daily from Durban. As one barbershop owner puts it:

> I worked at the location for about four months. Then I quit and started this barbershop. Working at the locations is profitable but it is extremely difficult. Carrying all the items for sale on your back and walking house to house the whole day. The sun rises and sets while you are walking. It's so tiring. On top of that you might get robbed and beaten by local youngsters. There was a time when a dog came towards me from one of the houses and as I retreated backwards, I fell on a thorn bush (Andualem).

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The interviews reveal that most of the immigrants in the research earn much more than they used to earn in Ethiopia and as a result they are able to support their families back home. However, when they were asked about their income respondents were reluctant to openly disclose the amount. Some of them do not know how much they earn on monthly basis as their businesses are not necessarily the same every month. One respondent reported that they sell items on credit in the townships and it takes up to three months to collect the full amount of money. Only one respondent was willing to discuss his monthly earning.

> I work together with two other people. Together, we earn about
> R40, 000 a month but spend most of it on house rentals and buying
> items for the shop and restaurant. But still we can save about R15, 000
> every month (Desta).

These figures show that Ethiopian immigrants earn much more than many South Africans. The researcher observed that most of the businesses Ethiopian immigrants are involved in are related to the immigrant community. They employ South African nationals. They are involved in activities like barbershops, Ethiopian music shop, Ethiopian restaurant and clothing shops. As a result, the business ventures of Ethiopian immigrants do not interfere with the activities of South African businesses. This is explained by one Ethiopian immigrant.

> Usually we start up businesses that are particularly related to the
> Ethiopian immigrant population such as running Ethiopian restaurants.
> But there are cases where we run similar business such as running
> clothes and shoes shops. I don't see any serious bad attitudes. I can't
> say that we are friends with these people, but they are not hostile to us
> either. Some Ethiopians might even be bitter when you open similar
> business as them than the South Africans (Brook).

Ethiopian immigrants not only have limited contact with South African citizens, but also they do not communicate with many governmental or non-governmental organizations. All the respondents reported that they never heard about any organization that works with refugees including the United Nations (UN). They stated that their only contact is with the South African government through the department of home affairs.

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organization that works with refugees including the United Nations (UN). They stated that their only contact is with the South African government through the department of home affairs.

> It is strange that in this country I haven't seen or heard of any organization that works with refugees and immigrants. Our relationship is directly with the South African government. I have never heard of any UN organization concerned with the issues of refugees and immigrants in South Africa (Mihret).

In addition to the lack of support from international organizations, they do not have access to financial services in the country. They cannot therefore deposit their money at the bank or get services like credit and loans. Thus many of them hide their money at home. In a country like South Africa where the crime rate is high, their likelihood of being a crime target increases. During an informal discussion with an Ethiopian immigrant, he indicated that he keeps his money inside a tape recorder and behind the plugs on the wall. Many of them usually travel between Durban and Johannesburg for business reasons. They hide their money in obscure places like inside the spare tyres or in the roof of the car.

They are not only afraid of criminals from South Africa and other countries, but Ethiopians themselves are a threat to each other. The respondents mentioned a number of incidents where other Ethiopian immigrants collaborated with robbers and attacked them. Such robberies are more costly as the Ethiopians robbers are 'insiders'. As a result, some immigrants prefer to send the money to Ethiopia through informal transfer services offered to them.

> I cannot use the South African banks...So I rather send money back home than keep it here. But still it would have been safer to keep my money in the banks than keeping it at home where it can expose me to the risk of robbery and even murder (Yoseph).

As indicated in the previous sections, social networking is the backbone of the economic success of Ethiopian immigrants. Similar to immigrants from other countries, their relationship goes beyond business partnership or casual gatherings.

However, some Ethiopians abuse their intimacy to commit crimes. In addition, it has limited their interaction with and exposure to other communities.

4.6. Integration of Ethiopian Immigrants into the South African Community

Ethiopian immigrants in South Africa live isolated from other groups. The residential areas of Ethiopians are communal in nature as many share flats and rooms. Most of them rent residences in the same area. Ethiopians usually reside in the West Street and Point Road area. They do not socialize with the South African community or other refugee communities. They keep up their social networks within their own community.

> I have no social interaction with them except for business purposes. I have no friends and acquaintances with them. When and if I have spare time I spend it with my Ethiopian friends and my brothers (Mesfin).

> I have no South African friends. I don't have much spare time for socialization. I work long hours and my routines are work-home-work (Mihret).

Most Ethiopian immigrants do not speak any of the local languages. Many of them have knowledge of basic English, but not enough to communicate freely. This is one of the factors that prevent them from interacting with other communities. It is also possible that their limited exposure to other communities might have contributed to their low level of language proficiency and development.

> I have no interaction with them. I have no South African friends. All my friends are Ethiopians. I don't speak any local languages and that has no effect on my life here. This is mainly because of nature of my business. It only requires me to interact with Ethiopians. Speaking other languages is good. It helps you have better interaction and I have noticed that when I worked in the locations. I have worked there for three months. But now my knowledge of any of the local languages doesn't affect my business and life (Dawit).

Another Ethiopian immigrant explains the advantage of speaking local languages while working in the locations. The ability to communicate in the local language brings economic benefits.

> Yes, I speak a bit of Zulu. This somehow helped me when I worked in the locations. The people in the locations don't speak English. So, speaking theilocal language is very advantageous. But more than that what helped me know these languages is that I am always curious to learn languages (Tagel).

Although many of the respondents stated that not being able to speak to local languages did not have a significant impact on their lives here, informal discussions with various Ethiopian immigrants revealed that some of them had a very hard time working in the townships. At times, they had to carry a pen and paper so that they communicate with their clients in writing. They write the prices of the items on paper and their customers write down their preferred price and negotiation continues in the same way.

In most cases, Ethiopian immigrants' economic activities and business ventures in Durban city target their Ethiopian compatriots as clients. They usually open their businesses around Ethiopians' residential quarters. The exceptions in this regard are those working in the locations and also, those working "hoza hoza" on the streets. Respondents who used to work in the townships explain their interaction with the community as:

> The families in the locations are very good people, especially the mothers are very good. They are real mothers. Ethiopian mothers are very good mothers but that is only to their children. But the mothers in the locations are mothers to everyone. They sympathize with us when they see us hungry and tired from working the whole day, carrying the goods on our head. They give us something to drink. They are kind. They trust us and we like them. So, I had a very good relationship with the people in the locations, especially the mothers (Tekleab).

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> Generally speaking, I would say they are hospitable people. But this mostly applies to South Africans who live in locations. I have worked there for four months. When we go there they invite us to their houses, give us food and drinks and even advise us on which route is safe. They are very good people. I think this is why most of the time Ethiopian immigrants choose to work in the locations than in the cities (Sintayehu).

Many other respondents who worked in the townships describe their relationship with women in general as being very good. The women treat them well and they don't have any bad feelings towards Ethiopian immigrants. Older men are also reported to have good attitudes towards Ethiopian immigrants. They appreciate the Ethiopians' commitment and hard work and throw some encouraging words. Ethiopians, in general, have good impression about people in the rural areas and the women. Their positive perceptions of the women can partly be explained by the sexual interactions they might have with them.

However, the respondents described their relationship with South African young men as being not as smooth.

> The youngsters are a little bit tough to deal with. I think it is because, being in the same age group we work and earn more and that makes them feel inferior to us. But still once you know them well, they would treat you OK. In general, I had much better relationship with the locals when I was working in the locations than now (Tekleab).

Comparing their experiences in other cities in South Africa, Ethiopians explained that Zulu people are not as friendly as other ethnic groups. One respondent compares her stay in Durban and Rustenburg stated: "when I was in Rustenburg I felt at home. The Tswanas are very friendly. They greet us whenever we meet and we got along very well. But here it is different, people are less friendly". It is also reported that some cities in South Africans are friendlier than others. For example, Johannesburg is seen as more friendly than Durban. Similarly, white and Indian South Africans are reported to be less hospitable and accommodating compared with black South Africans. As one

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Ethiopian immigrant put it "There is a difference in treatment between the blacks, the Indians and the whites. I think the whites and the Indians are a bit unfriendly". However, respondents agreed that Ethiopians enjoy better treatment than immigrants from other countries.

> They treat us much better than immigrants from other African countries. This is because Ethiopian immigrants don't have a criminal reputation. Most South Africans know that we are hard working (Brook).

They pointed out that South Africans' treatment of immigrants depends on the immigrants' country of origin. Compared to Ethiopians, immigrants from countries like Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Congo and Tanzania receive a more hostile treatment from South Africans. The basic reason for the difference in treatment, according to Ethiopian immigrants, is the security threat posed by immigrants from other countries.

> They respect us much more than they respect immigrants from other African countries. This is because Ethiopian immigrants are hard workers and they are not involved in criminal activities. But the problem is that they don't know who is Ethiopian and who is not Ethiopian. You can't tell for sure from our looks and physical appearances. But when they know that someone is Ethiopian then they pay more respect. I think this attitude is even common among the government officials (Tagel).

But immigrants are skeptical about the good treatment they get from the government officials. They state that government officials who have frequent contact with immigrants (such as the SAPS and home affairs) treat Ethiopians somehow better than the others for the reason that "they benefit from Ethiopian immigrants as Ethiopians work and earn money". This means Ethiopians have money to bribe the officials and thus they get a better treatment. The lack of access to financial services has forced immigrants to carry cash.

Some respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the treatment of South Africans. They explained that South Africans believe that they are superior people from the rest of Africa and often intimidate immigrants.

> They consider themselves as superior to other Africans. They call us "makuerekuere". That is common. But this doesn't make me feel inferior to them. I am Ethiopian and I know who I am (Dawit).

> They think that we are here because we are hungry in our country. They tell us that we are lucky that we came here and got food to eat. There is a video footage most of them have seen from somewhere. It is about a small starved boy with a big head and belly. They think that every Ethiopian is like that. They don't even know that we are here just to do business (Andualem).

All respondents have the experience of being called "makuerekuere" by South Africans. The immigrants reported asking South Africans what the term means and some of them defined it as "a foreigner" while others put it as "a person with a bad smell". Even police officers use the term when dealing with immigrants.

> Three of us were walking around workshop area. Two police officers stopped us and asked us for our identity document. We all produced our identity document and asked them why they picked us in particular. They said they were told that 'some makuerekuere guys are walking around with drugs' (Tekleab).

Some Ethiopian immigrants found the treatment of South Africans as discriminatory. They reported that authorities like the police favour South Africans over immigrants. A respondent asked about South Africans' attitude towards immigrants stated:

> In general it is not good. There are some segments of the South African population that are hostile towards immigrants. For example the police don't even take us for human beings. Once a Tanzanian and an Ethiopian immigrant fought and the police was called. They came and when they saw that they were immigrants fighting, they went back without intervening. On the other hand, when there is any argument or

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fight between an immigrant and a South African citizen, the police clearly favour the citizens (Sintayehu).

The attitude of locals towards foreigners was reported to be comparatively better in Ethiopia than South Africa. They claim that Ethiopians treat their guests better than South Africans. The respondents consider their social networking and intimacy as the fruit of good social interactions back in Ethiopia.

> They are no way near to Ethiopians when it comes to hospitality. Here everything is weighed in terms of money. In Ethiopia you respect your guest and the treatment you offer is in no way related to what you might gain from the friendship. But South Africans expect some kind of momentary benefit from friendship (Tagel).

Therefore, it can be seen from the above sections that the majority of Ethiopian immigrants have a good relationship with the local community. Even though they raised some concerns, it can be said that overall most of the respondents report positive interaction with ordinary South Africans.

4.7. Interactions with Law Enforcement Authorities

Most Ethiopian immigrants (with the exception of one) in Durban reported that they are not aware of their rights and obligations as immigrants.

> I don't know and I never asked what they are. I don't know what my rights are. But I think my duties are that I need to carry my asylum seeker ID and I mustn't be involved in any crime activity. I don't know anything else that I have to fulfill as an immigrant here. I don't know what rights I can ask for (Mihret).

A respondent with better awareness of immigrant rights explained the rights put forth by the South African constitution including freedom to stay in the country, procedures to get refugee status and so on.

> Not so many people know about this but through a series of procedures and fulfilling the minimum length of time you can acquire the status of a South African citizen. It is in South African law. You can first apply for permanent status then South African ID and then South African

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passport. But most of Ethiopians don't make use of this. As to my duties, there are no special duties here. They are the same even if I was in Ethiopia. Don't do any thing bad and nothing bad happens to you, simple (Dawit).

As a result of lack of awareness, Ethiopian immigrants often fail to claim what they are entitled to. This is used by law enforcement authorities and some individuals to exploit Ethiopian immigrants.

People have their own "police cover" from a group of policemen. People give the police some money and they would get other people in prison. For example, if I have a problem with you I would give some cash to the policemen I know and you would go to jail for no reason. It is mostly dangerous because most people don't know their rights and duties in the South African context (Tekleab).

Such incidents usually happen among Ethiopian immigrants involved in the same business. To get rid of their competitors, they bribe the police so that they arrest the target for no reason or even at times without any justification. As the detainee does not have knowledge of his or her rights and out of keen interest to avoid the hassles at the court, he or she has to bribe the police to get out of prison.

Yes. I stayed in jail over night. I was jailed because I had problems with an Ethiopian guy. He had money and he paid the police to arrest me. But I wasn't jailed for long because other Ethiopians who were in jail at the same time with me were going out. So they gave a R800 bribe to the police for my release (Sintayehu).

Offering bribes to the police for various reasons is a very common phenomenon among Ethiopian immigrants. All respondents have reported that they had given bribe money in one way or another.

I have never given a bribe to anyone face to face. But once, a police office was about to get me arrested. He already had got some illegal money from other immigrants and was told where I lived. So I gave him money through my employer and I was rescued from jail (Ephrem).

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In some cases where the immigrants failed to pay the bribe money, they usually are mistreated by the police. An Ethiopian immigrant who did not have money to give to the police describes how he ended up in a deportation center.

> Once the police stopped me on the street and asked me for my identity documents. I did not have my documents with me. Then they asked me to pay some bribe but I couldn't as I didn't have money. I was taken to a place called 'Lindela', a place where you will be detained until you get deported. Later on, friends of mine who new my detention came. They gave the Lindela guards some money and the guards let me escape (Dawit).

Arbitrary stopping and questioning on the streets is another feature of the life of Ethiopian immigrants in Durban. An individual's complexion, dressing, and hair style are some of the factors that are taken into account when identifying immigrants. The respondents reported that they have been stopped by the police at various times. They assume that they were identified from the crowd because of their style of dressing and physical appearance.

> Once I was walking with another Ethiopian girl. The police were stopping people randomly and they stopped us. I think we looked a bit different than regular South Africans. We were also wearing Ethiopian traditional clothes which might be also a reason for us to stand out. But we had our home affair's identity documents with us and there was no trouble (Lili).

> When I was in Johannesburg, I have been stopped so many times. In Durban I was stopped twice. Once it was a random questioning on the street. The second time I was chased by six policemen and when I stopped, my car was searched at gun point. All of the policemen were carrying machine guns. It was scary but they didn't find anything. I don't know why they followed me but I think it is because I was driving a 'City Golf'. I heard that thieves mostly drive that car. They might have also known that I was an immigrant (Sintayehu).

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Such questionings and searches are usually followed by demand for bribe money irrespective of the outcome.

> If the police know that you are a foreigner, they would come up with all silly reasons to ask for bribe. They tell you that you have parked your car in the wrong place when you didn't and ask you for some money for cold drinks (Desta).

Ethiopian immigrants are also responsible for the increasing practice of corruption among the police. They prefer to give a bribe than use legal options even when they are not guilty. In cases where they are found violating the law, they usually resort to offering bribe money. The amount of money the immigrants pay to the police is small compared to the consequences that might follow. There is the possibility of detention, imprisonment or deportation. One respondent said he gave a police officer fifty rand because he was caught with an expired document. He explained that if he did not do that he would have ended up in being deported- something he could not afford.

4.8. Crime

Crime is of major concern to every individual in South Africa. The same is the case among Ethiopian immigrants. All respondents in this research identity crime as the number one concern during their stay in the country. There are four major reasons identified in this research that make immigrants vulnerable to crime.

The first one is area of residence. Immigrants in general and Ethiopian immigrants in particular live in areas where accommodation and services are cheaper and the level of crime is high. For example, the majority of Ethiopians in Durban live on Point Road and West Street where the crime rate is high. Secondly, the economic activity Ethiopian immigrants are involved in makes them targets of crime. Most Ethiopian immigrants in Durban are engaged in micro-economic activities such as house-to-house sales in the townships. In the case of house-to-house sales, they have to travel from one house to another carrying with them items for sale. Those working in the city of Durban usually stay open until late at night. This puts them at risk of robbery, confiscation of their goods and other criminal attacks.

Lack of access to banking services is another factor that increases their risk of becoming targets of crime. As discussed in the previous section, immigrants do not have access to banking services. Therefore, there are forced to carry cash or keep their money at home. Thus they are easy target for robbery and other criminal activities not only by robbers but even members of the police service. Finally, the mere fact that they are immigrants has made them targets of crime by members of the police and Department of Home Affairs.

The immigrants, however, acknowledge that crime is a concern for every individual living in South Africa including South Africans themselves.

> Here basically everyone is a target of crime and everyone is cautious. I work and make money. I can be a victim of criminal attacks at any point just as everyone else. I know my routine and I try to avoid incidents that might expose me to mugging and the likes (Yoseph).

> It depends on my movements. Sometimes when I am around unsafe places, when I have my cell phone and some money in my pockets I feel like I might be target of crime...I don't think citizenship makes any difference with regard to the degree of criminal incidents you might suffer from. The crime rate here is high and it is the same for everyone (Ephrem).

Interestingly, the researcher observed that one respondent, upon arrival at the shop he works at, removed the belongings from his pocket and placed them on one of the shelves with the other items on the shelf. This is a very good indicator of the level of threat that the immigrants perceived in the country.

4.9. Interaction with the Department of Home Affairs

Immigrants in South Africa have very close contact with the Department of Home Affairs. It is from this department that they obtain their legal status during their stay in South Africa. Without proper documents from the Department of Home Affairs, an immigrant is either illegal or undocumented (Department of Social Development, 1998).

For Ethiopian immigrants, the Department of Home Affairs is a symbol of bureaucracy and they often experienced mistreatment from their officials. As one of the respondents observes:

> This is the place where I really feel who I am here, an immigrant. They mistreat you and they are very bureaucratic. For example, when you go there to renew your permit, knowing that your temporary permit has only one day left to expire, they would tell you to come the next day. The next day, you might not find it convenient to renew it and from that day on you are illegal in the country. When you go to home affairs you will be told to go to the police and bring reports that show that you are clear from any criminal activities or a medical report that shows that you were not able to go to the Department of Home Affairs before the expiry date of your permit (Yoseph).

Another respondent in this study explains the situation at home affairs as being very inefficient and corrupt. He stated that the workers in the department are not doing their job properly. According to the respondent, even South Africans suffer from the inefficiency of Home Affairs

> I think they don't do their jobs properly. OK we are foreigners. But I hear even the citizens complain that the Home Affairs don't do the national identity documents properly. They mistake people's age, they put wrong surnames and correcting them takes up to six months and a year. I think these people are very lazy and careless. I heard that immigrants are entitled to get legal citizenship status if they stay in the country (South Africa) for longer than two years. I know people who stayed for more than five years and yet didn't get the status. On the contrary there are some people who got this status after having lived for a year or a year and half. I heard that to get the status you should first get the "red ID" after you lived for two years in the country. But getting that is very difficult and one needs to have a lot of bribe money and strong connections. If you get it without paying bribe, it is considered as a visa to USA (TekJeab).

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Such frustrating performance by the department has paved the way for bribes and corruption. At present, as the immigrants explained, almost everything is done by brokers.

> For instance, when we go to renew our temporary permits, there are a series of bureaucratic procedures. It takes a lot of time. However, it would be even worse if you go there for the first time to get the permit. There is a lot of hassle. You almost can't get it without paying bribes. The amount of money you will pay might range from R500 – R1500 depending on the time you get there and the person facilitating the payment. There are brokers who go between the responsible government officials and the migrants (Tagel).

The interviews suggest that the problem of corruption is two-sided. On one hand, Ethiopian immigrants themselves prefer to bribe officials and get things done quickly so that they can get back to work.

> Yes. For example I used to work as broker between people who buy cars and the officials in the Road Authority. Because I give some money to the staff in that particular office, then I will save myself the long queues and the inconvenience (Tekleab).

On the other hand, the officials in the offices, especially in the Department of Home Affairs are used to obtaining bribe money. Ethiopian immigrants claim to have suffered more compared to immigrants from other countries. The bureaucracy gets even longer for those who are not willing to pay bribes.

> They are very used to bribe money, especially from Ethiopian immigrants. They know that Ethiopians are hard workers and they have money. It is very difficult for Ethiopians to get things done at the Home Affairs Department without bribing the officials. It is partly our responsibility that we give them money. These services are supposed to be for free. They don't bother immigrants from other countries because they know that most of them don't work (Ephrem).

One thing I am sure is that I won't get it if I go by myself and without paying the bribe. Everyone and every application go through the brokers. It is a serious business there and only people with connections do it. There are so many people in the line as there are so many immigrants here. I would say that we [Ethiopians] are lucky as there are those people to take care of the applications. I sympathize with people from other countries because they wait for ten to fifteen days to get it done. People even stay several nights on the side of the road waiting. The worst thing is that they might not still get it. (Brook).

Another feature of the situation at home affairs is that Ethiopian immigrants themselves act as brokers going between other Ethiopian immigrants and the officials. This helps them to create connections with the immigrants and at the same time safeguards their stay and livelihood in South Africa.

The Ethiopians take money from me and they work with their connections in the Home Affairs Department to renew my document. They share the money with the people in the Home Affairs Department. But later the Home Affairs Department notified me that I can no more renew my temporary permit in Durban but in Johannesburg. So now my case was transferred back there. However, I did not go there to renew the permit. Instead I pay the brokers to renew it in Johannesburg (Yoseph).

When I renew my document I pay R50 to R100 to an Ethiopian guy who does it. He shares the money with the officials in the Home Affairs Department (Lili).

This serious case of corruption has a long standing history. As stated by Gema (2001:80) the department has "come under fire recently amid allegations of bribery, corruption and intimidation of refugees and asylum seekers". From the respondents of this research it is clear that despite the continued reports of bribe and corruption, the same trend is still going on at the department.

4.10. Quality of Life and Future Plans

Ethiopian immigrants in South Africa express mixed emotions when asked about the life they have in South Africa. Economic security is the most dominant feature of their life in South Africa. Most immigrants reported that they are better off economically in South Africa than in Ethiopia.

> With all the insecurity, lack of freedom and rights, South Africa is much better for me. I have better economic status here. I can make much more money than I can do in Ethiopia. I can help my family. I am sending money back home so that I can start a better life when I go back. So, I like South Africa (Brook).

> Economically, I think I live a better life here. I have a better job and better income compared to what I did at home. However, in other aspects, I believe living in Ethiopia is better than living here. The very idea of living as an immigrant does not feel good. In this country there is a high rate of crime and you feel insecure all the time (Dawit).

The economic well-being of immigrants is overshadowed by the high rate of crime and insecurity. Crime, coupled with the inaccessibility of banking services for immigrants, puts the immigrants' economic success and future plans at risk.

> ...it is easier to work and earn more money as compared to Ethiopia. But at the same time you have a higher chance of losing all your money as there is a much higher chance of getting robbed. All in all, I prefer South Africa over Ethiopia for the economic opportunities (Mesfin).

> Here there are more economic opportunities and you make more money. This doesn't mean that you have more money though. You make more money and you spend more. You shouldn't also forget the crime here. The thieves know that we keep our money at home. So, they come and take the money. I know so many Ethiopians who have been robbed. For example, not so long ago a guy was robbed of R80,000 from his home (Sinayehu).

Even though most of them expressed concern about the challenges of achieving economic success in Durban, all of the respondents plan to stay in the city until they achieve what they came for; going to a wealthier country. Most of them expressed that they came to South Africa with a hope of going to another developed country, especially the United States of America. As one respondent put it "I don't think I will stay here much longer and I don't think I will go back either. I will try to go to other countries". Durban has become a destination for immigrants who wish to stay in South Africa for a while and proceed to other countries. This is attributed to the availability of more economic opportunities and the relatively less hostile community as compared to other places like Gauteng. They acknowledge that this is time consuming and costly and as a result none of them are certain about the duration of their stay in South Africa.

> What I really hope to do in the near future is to change my status from a refugee to a permanent resident permit holder. That makes things easier if I decide to stay in this country longer. It would also be good if I could go to other countries. I don't know how long I am staying here (Ephrem).

It is also worth noting that while most of them agree that they are economically better off here, they do not recommend South Africa as a migrant destination. There are two main reasons identified from their responses. Firstly, Ethiopian immigrants believe that the economic opportunities in South Africa are diminishing. In particular, the informal sector where most Ethiopians are engaged in is saturated.

> I don't recommend them to come here. Things are not as they are earlier. Now there are so many immigrants and not enough business opportunities. It will not be easy for someone to come here and succeed. It was much easier a few years ago than it is now. Now it is not worth paying all that money to get here. I know some people who come here and go back home because it was not easy for them to stay (Yoseph).

Secondly, the travel route to get to South Africa is dangerous and life threatening. As explained in section 4.4, some Ethiopians experience incidents like robbery, bribe and the likes. Consequently, respondents stated:

> I won't advice anyone to come to South Africa. People shouldn't leave their countries. I don't want others go through the sufferings I have experienced. Both my journey to South Africa and the life I am leading in here are not comfortable (Brook).

> I won't advise anyone to come here. But sometimes some youngsters bitterly speak about the bad economic conditions in Ethiopia. In that case I tell them that economically South Africa is better. But generally I discourage people to come here. I don't want people go through the sufferings I have experienced; the insecurity, the thieves (Sintayehu)

4.11. Conclusion

Ethiopian immigrants, as is the case for other immigrants, left their country mainly for economic reasons (Adepoju, 1998 in Adepoju, 2006a). To fulfill their economic and social ambitions they are coming to the new migrant destination in South Africa, Durban (Maharaj et al., 2000). Their journey to South Africa is mostly one step towards migrating to other more developed countries. Ethiopian immigrants face many hardships and spend a fairly substantial amount of money with the hope of obtaining better opportunities in South Africa.

Upon their arrival in South Africa most of them faced different challenges and opportunities. Most of them have reportedly success in achieving economic progress. Contrary to most literature, Ethiopian immigrants do not have exaggerated complains about the treatment of the local community, especially the rural residents (Gema, 2001; Mattes et al., 1999; Palmary, 2003).

However, this study found out that immigrants face abuse from the police and government offices which have made the lives of Ethiopians very difficult. They are not able to access financial services, or rent a house with their asylum seeker documents. They also lack start-up capital for business activities and support from

governmental and non-governmental organizations. The segregation of the Ethiopian immigrants themselves, their inability to speak local languages and their involvement in illegal activities like bribes and corruption contribute to the situation. Finally, none of the respondents plan to live in South Africa permanently and thus want to migrate to other countries or go back to Ethiopia and "start a life there".

Chapter Five
Discussion and Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

Migration is a complex and dynamic population process. In the pre-modern times, the rate of migration was low. But following the migration transition that occurred along with the fertility and mortality transition, the volume of migrants increased and the process became more dynamic (Zelinsky, 1971 in Weeks, 1999). This research examined the experiences of migrants from non-SADC countries to South Africa. In order to understand the experiences of the contemporary migrants in South Africa, this research was undertaken with Ethiopian immigrants in Durban. This chapter provides a discussion of the results.

5.2. Discussion

The migration of Ethiopians is mainly initiated for economic reasons. Almost all respondents in this research explained that they left Ethiopia in search of better economic opportunities. This finding goes in line with the findings of other researchers on various refugee populations (Adepoju, 2006a, Ochou, 2006). In addition, a study conducted by Gema (2001) on Ethiopian immigrants in Durban found the same result. In this research, Ethiopian immigrants described the lack of educational and economic opportunities in Ethiopia as the driving forces in their decision to migrate. However, a small number of immigrants left their country for political reasons. The study also found that, when making the decision to migrate, immigrants also took into consideration the economic condition of family members in Ethiopia. Almost all immigrants indicated poor economic conditions of their families back home as one of their reasons to migrate.

Following their decision to migrate, the next thing they had to decide on was the destination country. Four things were taken into consideration with regard to the country of destination: cost, accessibility, availability of opportunities and socio-political composition of the country. Cost refers to the total amount of money that is required to reach the destination country. It includes cost of transportation, accommodation and other indirect costs to facilitate the travel. Accessibility includes

distance from the country of origin to the country of destination and the control on the borders. The third and probably the most important point is the availability of opportunities. Most Ethiopian immigrants left their country in search of better economic opportunities. Therefore, identifying potential employment, educational and other opportunities was crucial for them. The last one is the socio-political composition of the destination country. The migrants assessed if the social, religious and political composition of the potential destination countries was suitable to achieve their goals.

It is noted that all Ethiopian immigrants identified the United States of America as their primary destination point. This is because they believe that the United States of America is a "safe haven" and "greener pasture" (Adepoju, 2006b:26). However, because of the cost and accessibility, most of them find it hard to go there. It costs between R50,000 - R80,000 to go to the United States. In addition, the process of getting a visa is a very long and difficult. On the other hand, it costs about R15,000-R18.000 rand to get to South Africa. South Africa is accessible in more ways than one. Immigrants can process their travel through the South African embassy or pay illegal agents and enter through the borders. Thus, with all the above points considered, Ethiopian immigrants selected South Africa as their preferred destination. This proves the assumption in the socio-economic theory that immigrants calculate the benefits in the area of destination before making the decision to migrate (Gema, 2001).

The basic platform for the decision making and execution of migration in the case of Ethiopian migrants is social networks between Ethiopians in South Africa and back in Ethiopia. This finding is consistent with research done on Congolese refugees in Durban by Amisi (2005). As indicated by Amisi:

> They [social] networks] provide useful information about migration
> routes, costs and opportunities, financial support, first accommodation
> and first job on arrival and provide a social net in case of need such as
> illness or long-term unemployment (Amisi, 2005:117).

The respondents in this research used four different routes to enter South Africa. The first route is through Johannesburg international airport. It is found out that those who came through the airport had visas. One surprising mode of entry is reported by a respondent where he, along with other Ethiopian immigrants, entered South Africa through the airport without a visa. Immigrants who took the second route come to South Africa as transit passengers to Botswana and they sneak out of the airport. The third group came to Zimbabwe and from there they used a combination of vehicles and traveling on foot to enter South Africa. The immigrants who used the fourth route traveled all the way from Ethiopia to South Africa through the borders of the countries in between using road transport and walking.

Ethiopian immigrants start their business ventures in South Africa in the informal sector. Most Ethiopians are involved in street vending, house- to-house selling of items and small businesses like barbershops. Other researchers have pointed out that the economic activity of immigrants entering South Africa has taken a new direction from working for the mining industry to commercial migration, which is mostly involvement in the informal business sector (Adepoju, 2006a; Oucho, 2006). Once they earn some money and feel more settled in South Africa, many immigrants switch to businesses of their preference. They indicated that working in the townships was tough because it is physically tiring and they are easy targets of crime.

As discussed in the previous paragraphs, social networks play a paramount role in selection of business activities and provision of start-up capital for new arrivals. Many Ethiopian immigrants reported that they first became involved in businesses other Ethiopians were already practicing. In a similar study, Amisi (2005) indicated that Congolese immigrants also got a strong support from the Congolese refugees who came to Durban earlier.

All of the respondents in this research stated that their economic situation was considerably better in South Africa than in Ethiopia. Many reported that they were financial supporting their families back home. While some are reluctant to disclose the amount of money they earn others do not know the amount of money they earn per month because they frequently switch from one job to another and in some businesses

like house- to-house selling, the return takes months. A study on Ethiopian immigrants in 2001 also showed that Ethiopian immigrants do not have steady jobs (Gema, 2001).

The first challenge reported in the business sector is the lack of access to financial services. This has limited the expansion of their businesses. In addition, they are forced to keep their money at home, which makes them easy targets to robbers. Not only are they at risk of losing their money to robbers, they are also taken advantage of by the police who consider them 'mobile ATMs' (Masuku, 2006:22). The findings of this research correspond with other studies (Amisi, 2005; Gema, 2001). Amisi (2005:120) states that "the lack of access to banking facilities worsens their unstable living conditions because of criminal attacks on the street and at home."

The second challenge is inability of Ethiopian immigrants to secure employment in the formal sector because of their asylum seeker status. The documents that are provided to immigrants do not allow them to get formal jobs, rent accommodation and access financial facilities. Thus their economic activities are limited to the informal sector and low paid jobs. A previous study on Ethiopian immigrants in Durban confirms this finding (Gema, 2001).

The third challenge in the business sector is disagreements and rivalry within the Ethiopian immigrant community. The basis of the disagreement between Ethiopians is conflicting business interests. In cases where Ethiopians are engaged in similar businesses in the same area, the sense of insecurity grows and thus they resort to finding ways to attack the businesses of their rival. For example, they bribe police officials to arrest the other person and spread false rumors about the person. The finding of a study on Congolese refugees also found:

> "...well established refugees strengthen their social and economic
> position while those who struggle to survive try to keep their head
> above water by spying and reporting, if need be incorrect information
> against other refugees" (Amisi, 2005:98).

With regard to the social integration of Ethiopian immigrants into the South African community, this research found out that Ethiopian immigrants live a segregated life

from the South African community and other refugee communities. The socio-economic theory claims that immigrants make some adjustments in their lifestyle to fit in with the host country, attempt to learn the culture and language and take part in the social events (Gema, 2001). However, in contrast to the assumptions of the socio-economic theory Ethiopian immigrants barely make attempts to mix with other communities. This can partly be attributed to their inability to speak English or any other language than Ethiopian dialects. Thus it has deterred them from participating in the social life of other communities. In addition, it might also have kept them from finding more steady jobs. A study conducted on the English speaking ability of natives and immigrants found out that speaking English was essential to the economic and social life of immigrants in the United States (Carliner, 2000).

> Speaking English well is important to success in the US labor market
> and to full participation in American society. Immigrants who speak
> little or no English have greater difficulty of finding jobs...outside
> immigrant enclaves (Carliner, 2000:158).

The inability to speak any of the languages spoken in South Africa has adverse effects on the businesses they run. Some of those who work in the townships are forced to negotiate with their customers in writing.

The exceptions in the segregated life of Ethiopian immigrants are those working in the townships. They have more frequent contacts with the locals than those working in the city. Ethiopian immigrants describe their relationship with the females and older people as being very good. These sections of the local population are reported to be more positive towards the hard working immigrants. However, Ethiopian immigrants explain that the younger population is more hostile. This may emanate from the fact that immigrants have come from another country and managed to succeed in their business venture. This in turn creates jealousy on the part of the locals. Treatment of locals along the lines of race and ethnicity did not show a substantial difference. However, Zulus are reported as being less friendly than other groups. Similarly, the findings of Gema (2001) indicated that 77.3 percent of the respondents received good or very good treatment from the South African population.

The treatment of Ethiopian immigrants compared with immigrants from other countries is reported to be better. Immigrants from countries like Tanzania, Congo, Nigeria and Zimbabwe receive more hostile treatment than Ethiopians. According to Ethiopian immigrants, this is attributed to the fact that Ethiopians do not have a reputation of involvement in criminal activities and they are hard workers. Ethiopian immigrants enjoy better treatment not only from the community, but also from the government officials. However, they report harsh and unfair treatment from the officials. The immigrants claim that, it is only because the officials benefit financially from Ethiopian immigrants.

A smaller proportion of respondents in this research reported that they are not happy with the treatment of South Africans. All respondents reported they were called "Makuerekuere" at least once, a derogatory term to denote a foreigner. A study on Ethiopian immigrants in Durban in 2001 found similar results. Only 22.9 percent of the respondents were dissatisfied with the treatment of South Africans (Gema, 2001). In addition, Ethiopian immigrants reported that South Africans perceive them as threats to their security. This corresponds with the assumptions in the power theory that locals mistreat immigrants because of the perceived threat (Wimmer, 1997).

The 1948 declaration of human rights states that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" (UN, 1948). They should be treated properly irrespective of their nationality or race. To this effect, law enforcement authorities have to make sure that this declaration is put into practice. On the other hand, individuals should also be aware of their rights so that they can demand what they are entitled to and execute their obligations properly. However, it is found out that Ethiopian immigrants do not know their rights as refugees or asylum seekers in South Africa. This has created a loophole for some government authorities to exploit Ethiopian immigrants.

Government officials who have frequent contact with immigrants often demand bribe money in return for the services they provide. Some Ethiopian immigrants pay almost R500 to R1500 to obtain asylum seeker status from the Department of Home Affairs. They also pay between R100 and R200 to renew their status every few months. The demand for bribes is reported to be more when it comes to Ethiopian immigrants than

immigrants from other countries. According to the immigrants, the main reason is because Ethiopians are believed to have money. On the other hand, the immigrants themselves contribute to the corruption because they prefer to get done with things faster and get back to work. There are Ethiopians who work as brokers between the immigrants and officials at the home affairs.

The South African Police Service is another office that is known for maltreatment of immigrants. Ethiopian immigrants reported that they are frustrated by the treatment of the police. They are detained for unknown reasons and asked for bribes in order to be released. They identify Ethiopian immigrants by their complexion and physical appearance and stop them and look for reasons to ask for bribes.

The findings of Gema (2001) concur with the findings of this research. More than half of the respondents claimed that they received 'bad' or 'very bad' treatment by the Department of Home Affairs. Almost 75 percent said that they received 'bad' or 'very bad' treatment from the South African police. Similarly, a study of Congolese refugees revealed that 83.3 percent of the respondents reported having problems with home affairs, the police or city officials (Amisi, 2006).

Finally, most of the Ethiopian immigrants report that they are living a better life in South Africa than in Ethiopia. Most of them are satisfied with their lives in South Africa. However, they do not recommend South Africa as a destination for potential immigrants. This is because the opportunities in South Africa are now being saturated and the risk involved during the journey is not worth it. In addition, they stated that the crime rate in the country is very frustrating and shared their experiences where Ethiopian immigrants were robbed of huge sums of money they have saved for a long time. Most of them indicated that they do not have intentions to stay here for a long time. They would like to go to a more developed country or return to Ethiopia.

5.3. Conclusion and Recommendations

This research looked at the experiences of Ethiopian immigrants in South Africa. It attempted to understand the lives of Ethiopian immigrants, the factors that contributed to their migration, their journey to South Africa, their arrival and settlement, and the

benefits and challenges during their stay. The research has also reviewed literature from different corners of the world to understand the experiences of the immigrant community.

The research would undoubtedly shed more insights into the new migration nexus to South Africa, i.e., migration from non-SADC countries. As there is limited research on this new trend of migration, the contribution of this research to literature will be immense. This study however has its own limitations as discussed in the first chapter. The fact that the research is conducted by an Ethiopian may have left some room for bias. Some Ethiopian immigrants were not willing to participate in the research because there felt insecure about openly discussing their life in a foreign country. In addition, there were time and financial constraints.

Ethiopian immigrants in South Africa are more or less satisfied with their lives in the country. They have benefited economically and are able to support their families back home. By doing so, they have achieved the main objective of leaving their county. Most of them reported that they do not have plans to stay in South Africa for long. They want to go to more developed countries or return to Ethiopia.

The poor treatment that they received from government authorities has limited the potential of Ethiopian immigrants to achieve greater success. Thus, due attention should be given to address the issues at these offices. This would better the lives of not only Ethiopian immigrants, but also immigrants from other countries. In addition, the lack of access to financial services has become a bottleneck on Ethiopian immigrants that prevents them from expanding their business ventures. It has also made them vulnerable to criminal attacks. Therefore, the government should come up with mechanisms to allow immigrants to access financial services. By doing so, not only the immigrants will benefit, South Africa will also gain from the legal monetary transactions undertaken by immigrants.

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Appendix I
Interview Guide for In-depth Interview

Gender:

Age at last completed year:

Highest Education achieved:

1. Why did you decide (what forced you) to leave your country?
2. Why did you select South Africa as your destination? What other options have you considered?
3. How did you enter South Africa? How did you end up in Durban?
4. How do South Africans perceive non-South Africans? Do you think they have a different attitude towards Ethiopians?
5. How is your participation in social events like weddings, funerals etc?
6. With whom do you spend most of your time during weekends and holidays? Why?
7. What effects does your relationship with South Africans have on your social and economic life, health, security?
8. How do you define hospitality? How do you define the hospitality of South Africans?
9. How do you compare the hospitality extended to foreigners in Ethiopia and South Africa?
10. What factors do you think expose you to mistreatment?
11. How do you compare the treatment of South Africans to Ethiopians and immigrants from other African countries?
12. What is you legal status in South Africa? Refugee, Asylum seeker…
13. What are your rights and obligations as an immigrant in South Africa?
14. Have you ever been stopped and questioned by SA police? If yes, how did they treat you? Do you think there would be a difference in the treatment if you were a South African or from another country?
15. Have you been arrested in SA? If yes, what was the reason for your arrest? How did you get out?

16. Have you ever been in a position to bribe a police or any civil servant? If yes, what for?

17. Have the police ever visited your residence? If yes, what was the purpose of their visit?

18. Do you see yourself as a target of crime? Why? Does your foreign origin contribute to that?

19. Which South African government offices do you have official relationship with?

20. How do you describe the treatment you receive from them?

21. How do you explain the service at home affairs? Is there any different treatment for Ethiopians and immigrants from other countries?

22. Have any of your applications been turned down? For what reason?

23. Do you get any support from NGOs, CBOs and other international agencies? If yes, what kind?

24. Do you have access to social services like health care, education, and housing? How do you describe it?

25. How was it to get a accommodation in Durban

26. What do you expect from the government concerning social services like health care, education

27. Are you working? Looking for a job? What do you do for a living in Durban?

28. How much do you earn per month?

29. How was it to get a job/set up a business in South Africa? Was there any challenge you faced?

30. Are there South Africans involved in a similar business as yours? How is your relationship with them?

31. Did anyone (government, CBO, friends) assist you in finding a job/setting up a business? If any, how far did the assistance go?

32. Do you have access to financial services? If no, how does it affect you?

33. How do you compare the life in South Africa and Ethiopia?

34. What is your future plan concerning your stay in South Africa?

35. How long do you intend to stay in South Africa?

36. Do you recommend South Africa as a destination for Ethiopians planning to leave their country? Why?

Appendix II

Travel Routes of Ethiopian Immigrants to South Africa